

# North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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**MARCH FOR LIFE** — Young people lead the 34th March for Life in Washington Jan. 22. The annual event solemnly marks the anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

## Culture of life means changing hearts, president tells March for Life

By Jerry Filteau

WASHINGTON (CNS) — "A true culture of life cannot be built by changing laws alone. We've all got to work to change hearts," President George W. Bush told tens of thousands of participants in the 34th annual March for Life Jan. 22.

Bush spoke by phone at the beginning of a two-hour rally on the National Mall preceding the marchers' slow, peaceful trek around the Capitol to the steps of the U.S. Supreme Court.

With temperatures hovering right around freezing, the marchers packing several square blocks of the Mall and overflowing onto

side streets turned the previous day's snowfall into acres of muddy slush.

Among featured speakers was U.S. Sen. Sam Brownback, a Kansas Republican whose appearance at the microphone sparked huge cheers from a large Kansas delegation just in front of the stage. Hundreds of people in all parts of the crowd waved blue "Brownback for president" signs, reflecting support for his decision to make a bid for the Republican presidential nomination next year.

"We need a culture of life that respects all life... from conception  
SEE TENS OF THOUSANDS..., P. 12

## In World Day of Sick message, pope laments deaths from curable diseases

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The incurably and terminally ill have a right to medical treatment and spiritual assistance to ease their suffering and help them die with dignity, Pope Benedict XVI said.

In his annual message for the World Day of the Sick, the pope also decried the fact that too many poor people and people in underdeveloped nations are dying of diseases that are curable.

"The church wishes to support the incurably and terminally ill by calling for just social policies which can help to eliminate the causes of many diseases and by urging improved care for the

*"The church wishes to support the incurably and terminally ill by calling for just social policies which can help to eliminate the causes of many diseases and by urging improved care for the dying and those for whom no medical remedy is available."*

— Pope Benedict XVI

dying and those for whom no medical remedy is available," the pope said in the message

published Dec. 13.

The World Day of the Sick is celebrated Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes. In 2007, the annual Vatican-sponsored conference and principal Mass for the observance will be held in Seoul, South Korea.

Pope Benedict said the world needs to do more "to promote policies which create conditions where human beings can bear even incurable illnesses and death in a dignified manner."

In addition, he said, more structures must be put in place to ensure the dying have pain medication, human assistance, and spiritual accompaniment as  
SEE POPE ENCOURAGES..., P. 14

## Pro-life official decries passage of 'misguided' stem-cell bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A pro-life official of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops criticized House passage Jan. 11 of a bill that would expand federal funding of stem-cell research that involves the destruction of human embryos, but expressed confidence that an expected presidential veto of the "misguided and unethical legislation" would stand.

Richard Doerflinger, deputy director of the bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, said in a statement that the 253-174

vote indicated that there were not enough votes to override the veto that President George W. Bush has promised.

The bill now goes to the Senate for a vote; if it passes there, it will be sent to the White House for action by Bush.

But Doerflinger said both houses of Congress should turn their attention "to stem-cell research that poses no moral problem — constructive research that is already beginning to help  
SEE PRESIDENT BUSH..., P. 15

## Pope baptizes infants, calls sacrament invitation to human freedom

By John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI closed out the Christmas season at the Vatican with an annual Mass to baptize infants and kept up a tradition of his own — an extemporaneous sermon on the meaning of the sacrament.

Baptism is not some "magical" rite of words and water, but a lasting invitation to human freedom to cooperate with the Holy Spirit, the pope said Jan. 7, the feast of the Baptism of the Lord.

As the cries of babies echoed through the Sistine Chapel, the pope poured water from a gilded scoop onto the heads of 13 infants and pronounced the words welcoming them into the church. Most were children of Vatican employees.

He held a prepared text in his hand as he gave his homily, but referred to it only sporadically, preferring to ad lib as he did the year before. One by one, he explained the symbols of the sacrament, then spoke about its

central meaning.

In a sense, he said, Christians are "adopted" by God the Father in baptism. In a similar way, the church should be seen as the mother of this family, he said.

"Thus we see that Christianity is not only a spiritual or individual reality, a simple subjective decision that I make, but is something real and concrete and material. The family of God is constructed in the concrete reality of the church," he said.

SEE EVERY CHILD..., P. 3



**POPE BAPTIZES** — Pope Benedict XVI baptizes a baby in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican Jan. 7. The pope called the sacrament a lasting invitation to human freedom to cooperate with the Holy Spirit. (CNS photo/Alberto Pizzoli, Reuters)

## Boston's Cardinal O'Malley focuses column on abuse

BOSTON (CNS)—In a column marking the fifth anniversary of the crisis over clergy sexual abuse of children, Boston Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley said that scandal was a "dark and unremitting truth" that had to be confronted.

Cardinal O'Malley's comments appeared Jan. 7 as an opinion piece in the *Boston Globe*, the daily newspaper whose unrelenting expose of child sex abuse by priests in the Boston Archdiocese turned the secret of such abuse into a national crisis five years ago.

Cardinal O'Malley noted that on Jan. 6 Catholics celebrate the Epiphany, "the manifestation of God's love for all humanity."

"Five years ago, as we marked the feast on Jan. 6, 2002, the devastating revelations that Catholic clergy had sexually abused children shook the Archdiocese of Boston and the wider community," he said. "The contrast between the feast, which celebrates the

light of Christ, and the dark and unremitting truth of clergy sexual abuse seemed, at first, impossible to accept."

"But the truth of the abuse had to be confronted," he added. "These crimes against children were all the more heinous because they were committed by men who vowed themselves to emulate Christ and were further enabled by the failure of the church leadership to respond appropriately."

Cardinal O'Malley took the occasion of the anniversary to apologize again to all those who had been abused by priests. "Your wounded hearts and shattered spirits have a special claim on the church," he said.

To their families, whose "trust was betrayed," he said, "You will always remain in my heart and mind."

"The impact of the clergy sexual abuse scandal has reached

deep into the lives of parishioners and the faith-filled priests who minister to them. They have borne the shame, grief, and confusion of these devastating revelations with heroic faith," he said.

"During the course of the past five years we have learned much due to the generosity of so many who have committed themselves to the rebuilding of the church," the cardinal wrote. "There is much yet to be done to regain confidence and trust. The feast of the Epiphany reminds us that the church's mission is to make God's universal love visible in the manner in which we live out our faith."

The *Globe's* investigative series on abusive priests focused especially on how successive archbishops of Boston regularly returned many of them to ministry after counseling or treatment, without effective measures to prevent contact with children.

The *Globe* coverage prompted other major newspapers across the country to conduct similar investigations, and as the crisis built nationwide the bishops took the unprecedented step of setting a strict national policy to be followed by all bishops in dealing with allegations of abuse and with those priests who were found to have sexually abused children.

The wide news coverage and new church policies led thousands

of victims to come forward and report childhood sexual abuse by priests—in many cases revealing for the first time abuse that had occurred decades ago.

The crisis led to Cardinal Bernard F. Law's resignation as archbishop of Boston in December 2002. Cardinal O'Malley replaced him the following July and quickly reached an \$85 million settlement with more than 500 clergy abuse victims in the archdiocese.

### Bishop Vann announces mailing of safe environment resource

Bishop Kevin Vann has announced that in the next few weeks the safe environment resource "A Culture of Safety" will be mailed to every Catholic household in the Diocese of Fort Worth. This mailing is part of the diocese's ongoing effort to

make it a safe place for children and teens. In support of that effort, Bishop Vann is asking that parents look for this material and use it with their families as one more means of helping protect our children and youth against sexual abuse.

## Forum examines media obligation to serve all audiences

NEW YORK (CNS) — Religious groups have to harness the unity in their diversity and work together to ensure that broadcasters respect their obligation to serve the needs of all viewers and listeners — and not only those who are shareholders.

This was a conclusion at a historic round-table forum on religion and broadcasting held Jan. 9 at the WNET television studio in New York.

Representatives from two dozen Catholic, Protestant, Jewish, and Islamic groups met with two commissioners of the Federal Communications Commission for a spirited discussion organized by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, in cooperation with the National Council of Churches and the United Church of Christ.

Media consolidation, in which large companies own television, radio, newspaper, cable and Internet outlets in a single market, is seen as a hindrance to creativity and the thoughtful portrayal of religious viewpoints and shared values.

The effect of consolidation, according to Bishop Joseph A. Galante of Camden, New Jersey, a former chairman of the USCCB Committee on Communications, is "we get fed a steady diet of 'reality' programs and dreck. We have so dumbed-down our culture that we have a deadening of spirit. What we see in no way contributes to the dignity of the human being."

In the absence of programming that examines values, said Bishop Galante, "what we have today is a value which is no value. It has

coarsened our sensibilities."

FCC Commissioner Jonathan S. Adelstein said that the First Amendment requires the government to promote the uninhibited marketplace of ideas and to protect the free exercise of religion.

"The FCC has a role in making sure we don't trample on these fundamental rights," he said. "Left to their own devices," said Adelstein, "the voracious search for profits will drive programming toward the lowest common denominator while neglecting the positive aspect — including religious life — of our communities."

"Media is too important to our future to be left to the whims of advertisers or the financial masters of the market," said FCC Commissioner Michael J. Copps. "Media has immense social and civic responsibilities. As citizens, we have responsibility to demand and to secure a media environment that informs, reflects, and nourishes the great diversity of America."

The Rev. Robert Chase, executive director of the Office of Communication of the United Church of Christ, said, "Despite what the media portrays, it is a myth to assume that there is a monolithic national Christian religious message. In virtually all faith groups, the foundational unit of mission and ministry is the congregation. Local culture and events shape religious expression.

"Since 1995, the number of entities owning commercial TV stations has dropped by 40 percent and consolidation in radio is even more dramatic," said Rev. Chase. "If ownership caps are further

relaxed, airtime for diverse, locally based religious and cultural voices will diminish, washed away in a homogenization of simplistic platitudes."

Copps described a 2003 citizens' effort that mobilized public protest against a relaxation of media ownership rules that was proposed by a former FCC chairman.

"An unprecedented army of left and right, liberal and conservative, ... nearly 3 million of them, contacted the FCC to protest," said Copps. The rules would have allowed a single owner to control as many as three television stations, eight radio stations, the cable system, cable channels, and the local newspaper in an individual market, he explained.

Copps urged the forum participants to discuss the consolidation issue with their constituents and organize efforts to support media policy that "recognizes their existence, covers their issues, and provides them ample opportunity for expression."

Rabbi Marc Gellman, co-host of TV's "The God Squad" with Msgr. Thomas Hartman, said that the FCC should be pressured "to encourage creation of a true national religious channel which will give flesh and bones and heart to the notion that we can live together."

He suggested that retired television executives create a national production house to develop talent in seminarians and get them onto Clear Channel, a big media company with radio and television stations.

Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas of


Tucson, Arizona, a member and former chairman of the USCCB Committee on Communications, said that the most difficult part of the forum is the follow-up.

"We have to educate our people and work together to use our mutual strengths" to make sure that broadcasters balance economic forces with the obligation to serve the needs of all the members of the local community, he said.

Katherine Grincewich, USCCB associate general counsel, who organized the event, the first of its kind, said she anticipates there

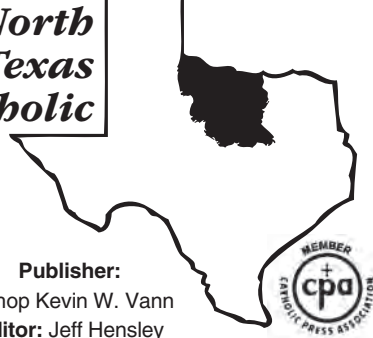
will be an ongoing cooperative effort among the participants, including an electronic filing with the FCC of the statements made at the forum.


Among the participants were Msgr. Francis Maniscalco, former USCCB secretary for communications and a consultant to the USCCB Committee on Communications; Msgr. Michael J. Dempsey, president of the Catholic Television Network; and Atonement Father James Gardiner, chairman of the Tri-State Catholic Committee on Radio and Television.



15 Years in a Row

### North Texas Catholic





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## In World Peace Day text, pope urges respect for dignity, human rights

By John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Welcoming in the new year at the Vatican, Pope Benedict XVI said a world suffering from wars and terrorism can find peace only through respect for human dignity and human rights.

The pope celebrated Mass in St. Peter's Basilica Jan. 1, which the church marks as World Peace Day, and quoted from his peace day message that was sent to governments around the globe. The theme of the message this year was "The Human Person, the Heart of Peace."

In order for peace agreements to last, the pope said, they must be based on respect for the dignity of the human being created by God. This dignity is the foundation of peace and cannot be viewed as something subject to popular opinion or negotiations between parties, he said.

He urged the international community to make greater efforts to ensure that "in the name of God a world is built in which essential human rights are respected by all."

Every Christian has a special vocation as a peacemaker, he said.

"Faced with threats to peace, unfortunately always present, and situations of injustice and violence that continue to persist in various regions of the world, faced with continuing armed conflicts often forgotten by the vast public opinion and the danger of terrorism that disturbs the serenity of peoples, it becomes more necessary than ever to work together for peace," he said.

Speaking afterward from his apartment window above St. Peter's Square, the pope returned to the theme of his peace day message, saying the value of the human person is the key to lasting peace.

"Today one talks a lot about human rights, but it is often forgotten that they need a firm foundation, not a relative one, not one subject to opinion," he said.

"And this foundation can only be human dignity. Respect for this dignity begins with the

recognition and protection of the person's right to live and to freely profess his religion," he said.

The pope offered a prayer to Mary for increased respect for human dignity and for the "firm repudiation of war and violence."

On Dec. 31, the feast of the Holy Family, the pope prayed at his noon blessing for all families, especially those in difficulty.

"May they know how to resist the disunifying pressures of a certain contemporary culture that undermines the very foundations of the family institution," he said.

Later the same day, the pope presided over a prayer service in St. Peter's Basilica to give thanksgiving at the end of the year. He said he wanted to offer particular thanks to Mary for the "special protection" she gave him during his pilgrimage to Turkey a month earlier.

The pope also reflected on New Year's Eve celebrations, a few hours before Rome exploded in its annual midnight frenzy of fireworks and "spumante."

Such festivities are common social rituals, the pope said, but are often experienced as "an evasion of reality, as if to exorcise the negative aspects and invoke improbable fortunes."

The Christian approach to the end of the year should be far different, he said. Like Mary, the mother of God, the Christian community should be keeping its gaze fixed on the baby Jesus, he said.

The pope then paid an evening visit to the Vatican's own Nativity scene, a tall structure erected in the middle of St. Peter's Square. After kneeling in the square to pray, he was helped up inside the replica of the grotto of Bethlehem for a close-up view of the larger-than-life statues.

*For the complete text of Pope Benedict's World Peace Day message, visit the Vatican Web site at [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_mes\\_20061208\\_xl-world-day-peace\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/peace/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20061208_xl-world-day-peace_en.html).*



**BAPTISMS IN SISTINE CHAPEL** — Pope Benedict XVI baptizes a baby in the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican Jan. 7. The pope spoke extemporaneously at the ceremony on the meaning of the sacrament. (CNS photo/Alberto Pizzoli, Reuters)

## Every child who is born brings the smile of God, says pope in celebrating baptisms

FROM PAGE 1

The pope asked the parents and godparents of the newly baptized to be vigilant so that the children grow up knowing how to love and serve God.

He suggested that the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* might be an aid to religious education, but said parents teach their children above all by their own

example. Despite the hectic pace of modern life, they should also make room for family prayer, he said.

"Every child who is born brings us the smile of God and invites us to recognize that life is his gift, a gift to welcome with love and to protect with care, forever and in every moment," he said.

Later, speaking to thousands

of people from his apartment window above St. Peter's Square, the pope encouraged adult Catholics to remember the commitment that began in baptism, which he said is primarily to "listen to Jesus" and to follow his teachings.

This is the way to holiness, the vocation of every Christian, he said.

## Pope encourages today's 'Wise Men' to shape a world based on Christ

By John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI said the age of globalization is challenging political, scientific, and religious leaders to shape a new world order based on spiritual values.

This means an encounter with the "light of Christ," which can reveal the deepest values of all cultures, the pope said.

"To all people of our time, I want to repeat today: Do not be afraid of the light of Christ!" he said.

The pope made the remarks at a Mass Jan. 6 on the feast of the Epiphany, which marks the manifestation of Jesus as savior to the world. In his sermon, he recalled the New Testament account of the three Wise Men or Magi, guided to Bethlehem by a star, who were the first to come and adore Jesus.

The Wise Men were mysterious but important figures as the church began its mission of bringing Christ to the world, he said. Then he posed the question, "Who are the Wise Men of today?"

He answered by identifying three classes of leaders: political authorities, people of intellect

and science, and the leaders of the world's faiths. All three categories are important as the church continues its task of transforming the world, he said.

"Two thousand years later, we can recognize in the Magi a sort of prefiguration of these three dimensions that make up modern humanism: the political, scientific, and religious dimensions. The Epiphany shows them in a state of 'pilgrimage,' that is, a movement of searching that has its ultimate point of arrival in Christ," he said.

The world has changed dramatically since the birth of Christ, the pope said. Today a global civilization is emerging that no longer has Europe or even the West at its center, he said.

The explosion of mass media, a key component of this new civilization, has connected people around the globe and created an immense flow of information, but also seems to obscure humanity's ultimate goals and weaken the capacity for critical judgment, he said.

The pope noted that the Second Vatican Council in its closing messages in 1965 made a point to address politicians and scientists,

asking them not to forget God in their work and not to forget Christ as the great builder of peace and order in the world.

Today, he said, it is particularly important to add to this list the leaders of the great non-Christian religions, "inviting them to confront themselves with the light of Christ, which came not to abolish but to bring to completion what the hand of God has written in the religious history of civilizations."

"Christ is the light, and light cannot obscure but only enlighten, clear up, reveal. No one therefore should be afraid of Christ and his message!" he said.

He added that, even if Christians through the centuries had fallen short of Christ's own teachings and betrayed him with their behavior, that does not lessen the importance of his message but only throws it into higher relief.

After the Mass, tens of thousands of Italians streamed to St. Peter's Square to listen to the pope's noon prayer and to visit the Vatican's giant Nativity scene. The Epiphany, a national holiday in Italy, is largely dedicated to children, and the square was full of young people.

### 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. 9 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Jan. 31. Items for the Feb. 23 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Feb. 14.

## Women's Super Bowl Retreat to be held Feb. 2-4

The annual Women's Super Bowl Retreat, offered during Super Bowl weekend at the Catholic Renewal Center (CRC), will be held Friday evening, Feb. 2, at 7:30 p.m., through noon on Sunday, Feb. 4. CRC is located at 4503 Bridge Street, next to Nolan Catholic High School, in East Fort Worth.

The presenter for this year's retreat, Sister Fran Ferder, FSPA, is an author, therapist, and expert in human communication, according to a CRC press release. Focusing on the topic "Can We Talk? Deepening Relationships through Communication," Sr. Ferder will lead participants in the reflection on important themes of human communication from Scripture and human psychology. "Openness, self-knowledge, good communication skills, and willingness can help us to experience the kind of communion in relationships that we can truly call holy," state retreat materials.

All women are invited to participate. The cost of the retreat is \$100. Reservations are requested by Jan. 29. For more information or to register, call CRC at (817) 429-2920.

## Msgr. Don Fischer to offer seminar on 'Paradox of Relationships' Feb. 14



Msgr. Don Fischer

The Advocates of Catholic Charities and the Catholic Renewal Center (CRC) of North Texas will host "Love and Fear: The Paradox of Relationships" at CRC, located at 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth, Wednesday, Feb. 14, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. The evening of reflection will be led by Msgr. Don Fischer, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Richardson and founding pastor of the Chapel of the Incarnation at the University of Dallas.

Msgr. Fischer is known for his weekly "Pastoral Reflections" program of Scripture readings, music, and preaching aired each Sunday morning on the WRR (101.1 FM) classical radio station. Program materials note, "His background as an artist, liturgical consultant, and spiritual director enriches his primary work of preaching."

Space is limited. Participants are asked to RSVP by Monday, Feb. 12, to Erinn Hall at (817) 413-3916 or by e-mail to ehall@ccdfw.org.

## Dr. Toni Craven to explore Book of Psalms in four-part series

Dr. Toni Craven, who is the I. Wiley and Elizabeth Briscoe Professor of Hebrew Bible at Brite Divinity School at Texas Christian University, will present a four-week series on the Psalms at St. Andrew Church, 3717 Stadium Drive in South Fort Worth. The sessions will be held on consecutive Thursday evenings, Feb. 1, 8, 15, and 22, in the parish hall from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

The series will focus upon the shape of the Book of Psalms and the range of the prayers. "The whole of life is meant for public and personal worship — celebration and joy, grief and loss, lament and praise," say program materials. "Come, bring your memories of the Psalms and learn some more."

All are invited to attend. To reserve childcare, call (817) 924-6581 at least 48 hours prior to each session. To register for the series, call the pastoral center at (817) 927-5383, or e-mail to acurran@standrewcc.org.

## SEAS School in Keller to host open house Jan. 28

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, 2016 Willis Lane in Keller, has announced that it will host an open house Sunday, Jan. 28.

"Come help us kick off Catholic Schools Week by joining us from noon to 2 p.m. to learn more about what Catholic education and our school has to offer you," a SEAS School press release states.

For more information about the open house or St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, call the school office at (817) 431-4845.

## Calix support group meets monthly 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 Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth. The next meeting will be held Feb. 3, beginning at 10 a.m. in the chapel.

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 or Tim S. at (817) 735-1519.

# People & Events

of Importance for the Church of Fort Worth



**CHURCH UNDER RENOVATION** — Visitors to St. Joseph Church in Rhineland during the weekend of Jan. 6-7 might have found the sanctuary to be a little stark with the absence of statues and the replacement of pews with folding chairs. However, the situation is not a cause for worry, because the church community recently announced that renovations are underway. As of Jan. 2, the church pews were removed so that they might be refinished, and the statues were removed in anticipation of the renovations as well. The Rhineland gym is currently being used for Mass until renovations are completed.

## Yoga / Meditation Retreat to be held at CRC, Feb. 23-25

A Yoga/Meditation retreat will be offered at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street, in East Fort Worth, Feb. 23-25. The retreat will begin at 7 p.m. on Friday and will conclude Sunday afternoon at 2 p.m.

The retreat, led by certified yoga instructor Janie Portele, will be an opportunity to enjoy relaxation, learn deep-breathing methods, and receive direction in achieving easy meditation. It is designed for students of all experience levels.

Prior to an early registration deadline of Feb. 5, the cost is \$154, which includes lodging, vegetarian meals, and classes. After that date, the cost is \$184. For those interested, experienced massage therapists will be available to provide massages at the cost of \$50 per session. For more information or reservations, e-mail to yoga@our-town.com, or call (254) 967-2384. More information may also be found online at www.stephenville.com/yoga.

## 'Gather Up the Fragments' to be theme of Lenten retreat at CRC, March 16-17

Sister Margarita Armendariz, ASC, a certified spiritual director who has served in the dioceses of El Paso and Las Cruces, will return to the Catholic Renewal Center of North Texas to lead a Lenten retreat, "Gather Up the Fragments." The retreat will begin Friday, March 16, at 7:30 p.m. and conclude Saturday, March 17, at 5 p.m.

"Through prayer, teachings, and dynamics, we will walk through a four-step process in which we allow Jesus to transform the broken pieces of our lives into bread for a hungry world..." CRC materials explain.

CRC is located at 4503 Bridge Street, next to Nolan Catholic High School, in East Fort Worth. An overnight room and meals are included in the \$55 fee. For more information or to make a reservation by the March 12 deadline, call CRC at (817) 429-2920.

## Faith and Fiction group to discuss novel *Stones from the River* Feb. 15

"Faith and Fiction: Conversations on Spirituality and Imagination," a venue for discussing novels and films with themes that shed light on the journey of faith, will meet Thursday, Feb. 15, at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street, Fort Worth. The topic of discussion will be the novel *Stones from the River* by Ursula Hegi.

Those planning to participate are asked to read the book, reflect on it in light of personal experiences, and come to the session with questions, insights, or observations to share. A potluck supper will be served at 6:15 p.m., and the discussion will take place from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

To ensure good conversation, space will be limited. To reserve a spot or for more information, contact Dan Luby at (817) 560-2452 ext. 259, or by e-mail to dluby@fwdioc.org.

## 'Sensible Scripture Study' to begin March 11 in Grapevine

"Would you like to get more out of Mass? Would you like to know where Catholic doctrine is found in the Bible?" ask organizers of "Sensible Scripture Study" at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine. A four-week course, designed to give participants specific techniques for reading and understanding Scripture, will be held March 11 through April 4 in the parish hall, located at 861 Wildwood Lane in Grapevine.

The sessions will be held from 10:15 a.m. to 11:15 a.m. on consecutive Sundays, beginning March 11 and continuing on March 18 and 25, and April 1. The sessions will be repeated on Wednesday evenings from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. beginning Wednesday, March 14, and continuing on March 21 and 28, and April 4.

Program materials encourage all to attend, saying, "Watch Mass come alive as you apply the same techniques to the liturgy!"

To reserve childcare, call Carol at (817) 481-2685. For more information, call Steve Kellmeyer at (817) 481-2685 or e-mail to skellmeyer@sfrancisgrapevine.org.

## St. Augustine Men's Purity Group meets weekly

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 Tuesday evenings at 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, 2016 Willis Lane in Keller, in Room 213, and on Sunday evenings at 7 p.m. at the Padre Pio House, 1301 Paxton in Arlington.

For more information, visit the group's Web site at www.sampg.org or e-mail to Mark at seasmenspurity@yahoo.com or call the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish office at (817) 431-3857.

## Marriage Encounter weekend to be held Feb. 16-18 at CRC

A Marriage Encounter weekend will be held Feb. 16-18 at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth. Marriage Encounter, a marriage enrichment program, is centered on three principles: building communication between husband and wife, nurturing the commitment of marriage vows, and strengthening the couple's faith.

"It is a great opportunity for a weekend away to deepen, renew, and refresh your marital love," according to Marriage Encounter materials.

Reservations are required. For more information or to make a reservation, call (817) 451-6005. More information is also available online at www.ntexasme.org.

## Author Linda Schubert to speak at Magnificat breakfast Feb. 24

Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women, will be sponsoring a breakfast for women only Saturday, Feb. 24, at the DFW Hilton, 1800 Hwy. 26 East in Grapevine, from 9 a.m. to noon. The event will include opportunities for eucharistic devotion, the sacrament of penance, and time with prayer teams.

The breakfast's keynote presentation will be offered by lay evangelist Linda Schubert, author of the best-seller *Miracle Hour*. Schubert will discuss prayer, healing, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit.

Tickets may be purchased prior to the Wednesday, Feb. 21, deadline at Keepsakes Catholic Books and Gifts in Arlington; Little Angels Boutique in Coppell; or Catholic Art & Gifts in Farmers Branch, or by calling Lucy Gonzales at (972) 393-2518.

For more information about Linda Schubert, visit www.linda-schubert.com on the Web.

## Seminar on annulment process to be offered Feb. 6

Father Hector Medina, pastor of St. Matthew Church in Arlington, will lead an interactive session entitled "'Til Death Do Us Part? Marriage: A Sacramental Sign of God's Faithful Love" Feb. 6 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Good Shepherd Church, 1000 Tinker Road in Colleyville.

Catholics who have divorced and wish to remarry, as well as those taking part in the RCIA process, often have questions about a decree of invalidity and what it means for them and for the children of a marriage that is declared "invalid." This is an opportunity to explore the answers to questions pertaining to the sacrament of marriage and to learn about the possibilities for healing within the annulment process.

All are invited to attend and to bring a friend. Childcare is available if requested prior to Jan. 26. To arrange for childcare or for more information, call the church office at (817) 421-1387.

## Official Assignments

The following assignments have been made by Bishop Kevin Vann:

Father Karl Schilken has been assigned as the pastor of St. John the Apostle Parish, North Richland Hills, effective Feb. 24.

Father Timothy Thompson has been assigned as the pastor of St. Mark Parish, Denton, effective Feb. 24.

## People and Events

### Nolan Catholic to present 26th Mardi Gras event Feb. 10

Nolan Catholic High School will present its 26th annual Mardi Gras Dinner, Auction, and Dance Saturday, Feb. 10, at the Fort Worth Convention Center in downtown Fort Worth.

"Mardi Gras is a grand tradition at NCHS," according to 2007 event chairs Jerry and Kerry Reis. "We want to invite everyone to share in the magic of this wonderful event."

Although Mardi Gras is primarily a great way for the Nolan Catholic community to come together for an evening of fun and fellowship, income generated from this event helps to fund improved academics, facilities, and programs. It also helps to keep tuition at the lowest level possible, according to a Nolan press release, and provides financial aid for families who otherwise would not be able to share in the benefits of a Catholic education.

The evening's activities will include a live auction; items on which to bid include a trip to Los Cabos, Mexico. A silent auction format using bid boards will also be conducted during the evening.

Reserved Krewe tables, which seat 10 and come with special amenities, are \$1,200; individual tickets are \$85 each and are open seating. For more information on the Mardi Gras event, visit online at [www.nolancatholics.org](http://www.nolancatholics.org); e-mail to [mardigras@nolancatholics.org](mailto:mardigras@nolancatholics.org); or call the school office at (817) 457-2920.

### Local Knights to sponsor Youth Free Throw Championship

Boys and girls ages 10 to 14 as of Jan. 1 are invited to participate in the 2007 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship to be held Saturday, Jan. 27, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Forestwood Middle School, located at 2810 Morriss Road in Flower Mound. The competition is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council #9884 of St. Philip the Apostle Church in Lewisville.

Youth residing in Lewisville, Flower Mound, Highland Village, Copper Canyon, Double Oak, or Lake Dallas may participate in this competition free of charge. Contestants will compete in their respective age divisions.

The championship is an annual event. Winners progress through local, district, regional, and state levels; in 2006, nearly 179,000 youth participated in over 3,000 competitions across the country.

All contestants at the local competition are recognized for their participation, and trophies will be presented to the first, second, and third place winners in each age group. Entry forms will be available at the competition site; participants may register at any time between 1 p.m. and 3 p.m. and must furnish proof of age and written parental consent. Basketballs will be furnished at the event. For more information, contact Tom Kupper at (972) 436-3945.

### Denim and Diamonds Dinner, Auction set for Feb. 17

All Saints Church will host its 10th annual Denim and Diamonds Dinner and Auction Saturday, Feb. 17, at Lockheed Martin Recreation Center, 3400 Bryant Irvin Road, Fort Worth. The event will begin at 6 p.m. and will conclude at midnight.

The evening's program will include dinner provided by San Marcos Catering. Music will be provided by Eso Es Sounds, with DJ Bob Bonilla. Volunteers David and Mary Vela will be honored for their 10 years of service on the event's

committee.

The cost per ticket is \$35 prior to the dinner or \$40 at the door. Advance tickets for a reserved table of 10 may be purchased for \$350. Limited seating is available. Tickets may be purchased at All Saints School, 2006 N. Houston in Fort Worth, at the All Saints Church rectory, or by calling (817) 578-5519.

For more information or to make a donation, contact Gladys Perales at (817) 578-5519 or by e-mail to [gerales@allsaintscatholicschool.org](mailto:gerales@allsaintscatholicschool.org).



**SCOUTING AWARDS** — Bishop Kevin Vann (center, left) stands with five adults who were honored by the Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Diocese of Fort Worth at a Scouting dinner Dec. 21. The honorees are (others, l. to r.) Charlie Levitt, Jeremy Stephens, Dziemy Nguyen, Father Jeff Poirot, and Father Anh Tran. Both Levitt and Fr. Anh received the St. George Award, which is presented by the National Catholic Committee on Scouting, acting through the local diocese, to individuals who have made significant and outstanding contributions to the spiritual development of Catholic youths through Scouting. Nguyen, Fr. Poirot, and Stephens were recipients of the Bronze Pelican Award, a diocesan award given to individuals who have made outstanding contributions to Scouting. Bishop Vann was present to congratulate each person on their achievement.

### Texas Mission Council to hold conference at Cedarbrake Feb. 16-18

The Texas Mission Council invites all Catholics who are interested in the missionary work of the Catholic Church to attend its annual mission conference at Cedarbrake, the Austin Diocese Retreat Center, from Friday, Feb. 16, through Sunday, Feb. 18.

The conference will focus upon the call for U.S. Catholics to become active missionaries in today's world. Julie Lupien, a former missionary and current educator in modern, short-term mission work, will serve as keynote speaker and director of the conference's dialogue sessions.

The Texas Mission Council, organized under the auspices of The Texas Catholic Conference, exists to create mission awareness and support through the collaborative efforts of diocesan mission directors, representatives of mission organizations serving in Texas, and individuals and groups interested in mission work.

All who are interested in any form of mission work are invited to attend the conference. For more information, contact Awanda Whitworth at (713) 529-1912 or (713) 688-1060; e-mail to [mklawandaw@aol.com](mailto:mklawandaw@aol.com); or visit the Web site at [www.texasmissioncouncil.org](http://www.texasmissioncouncil.org).

### Catholic Divorce Ministry Conference to be offered in Belleville, Illinois

"Building Blocks: Structures for Healthy Relationships," a multi-region conference co-sponsored by Catholic Divorce Ministry of The North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics, will be held March 31-April 1 at the National Shrine of Our Lady of the Snows, 442 South De Mazenod Drive in Belleville, Illinois.

The conference will feature a presentation on healthy relationships, given by family therapist Dr. Richard Marks. Dr. Marks, who serves as executive director of Marriage for Life, Inc., also conducts retreats and seminars designed for youth, singles, and engaged and married couples. He serves as a commissioner on the Florida Commission on Marriage and Family Support Initiatives.

Conference participants may register prior to the Feb. 27 deadline by calling (618) 394-6272 or (314) 241-3400 ext. 6272, or by visiting the Shrine Web site at [www.snow.org](http://www.snow.org). Hotel rooms may be reserved prior to Feb. 27 by calling (618) 397-6700 or (800) 682-2879. Prices for hotel rooms range from \$46 for one person in a room to \$55 total with four persons per room. Participants must note their registration for the Catholic Divorce Ministry Conference when registering at the hotel.

For more information about the conference, contact the diocesan Family Life office at (817) 560-3300.



**PRO-LIFE BILLBOARD** — Members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court St. Mary #249 of Muenster, gathered Dec. 8 to celebrate the arrival of a new, professionally designed billboard in Cooke County. Father Kyle Walterscheid, holding a framed photograph of the billboard, joined them at a pro-life reception marking the event. Designed to catch the attention of any woman experiencing a crisis pregnancy, the billboard offers help through a national hotline where assistance is available 24/7. The billboard is currently located on Highway 82, approximately a tenth of a mile east of Interstate Hwy 35. The idea of a pro-life billboard originated with Catholic Daughters of Muenster, however many organizations throughout the region participated in the funding of the project.

### Knights of Peter Claver Council #89 plans Mardi Gras event

The Knights of Peter Claver Council #89 of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth, will hold their 17th annual Mardi Gras and Zydeco Dance from 8 p.m. to midnight on Saturday, Feb. 17. The event will be held at the Meadowbrook Lions Club, 6013 Craig Street in Fort Worth. All proceeds will be used to assist in funding the many charitable activities of the Knights' organization throughout the year.

The theme of this year's event is "A New Orleans Good Time in Fort Worth, Texas." The \$20 donation per person includes authentic Louisiana gumbo and red beans and rice.

For more information or to purchase a ticket, call (817) 253-0806 or (817) 534-7652, or contact any of the Knights of Peter Claver at Our Mother of Mercy Church.

### St. Joseph's singles group to host Sweetheart Dance Feb. 10

A Sweetheart Dance, benefiting the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics — Region 10, will be held Saturday, Feb. 10, at St. Joseph Church, 1927 S.W. Green Oaks Blvd. in Arlington. A potluck dinner will begin at 7 p.m. with dancing to DJ music following at 8 p.m.

The St. Joseph Parish singles group, who is hosting the event, invites both singles and couples to attend. For more information, call Greg Mills at (817) 731-4666; Vince Chairez at (817) 896-5726; or Sylvia Salinas at (817) 845-2718.

For more details about the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics, visit online at [www.nacsc.org](http://www.nacsc.org).

### Marriage Encounter of North Texas gathering set for March 4

The National Marriage Encounter of North Texas will hold its annual gathering Sunday, March 4, from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth.

The evening will begin with a potluck dinner, followed by a program and a brief annual meeting. Drinks and the main dish will be provided; participants are asked to bring a side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Those planning to attend are also asked to bring a "white elephant" gift for exchange.

For reservations or for more information, call (817) 451-6005.

### Mother-Daughter Tea planned for Feb. 25 at Catholic Center

A Mother-Daughter Tea, sponsored by the diocesan Office of Family Life, will be held Sunday, Feb. 25, from noon until 4 p.m. at The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South in West Fort Worth.

Young women, ages 10 to 13, are invited to attend with their mother, grandmother, or other special woman in their lives to spend an afternoon sharing experiences of being female. Discussion from a faith-based perspective will concentrate on the physical, emotional, and psychological changes that occur in young women during the adolescent years and will address many relationship issues faced by teens today.

A light lunch, tea, and dessert will be served. The cost is \$12.50 per person. For more information or to make a reservation, call Nancy Novak at (817) 656-9633 or Kathy Stojak at (817) 773-8096. Space is limited.

### Dr. Sandra Kennedy to speak on 'What is a Catechist?' Feb. 1

Dr. Sandra Kennedy will offer a presentation entitled "What is a Catechist?" at Good Shepherd Church, 1000 Tinker Road in Colleyville, Thursday, Feb. 1, from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Dr. Kennedy is a national consultant for William H. Sadler, Inc., a publisher of religious education materials. Kennedy holds a doctorate in education and religion from Columbia University in New York.

All catechists, directors of religious education, and others with an interest in religious education are invited to attend the free presentation. Ginny Phoenix and Mary Kelly, coordinators of religious education at Good Shepherd, encourage all to attend, saying, "Dr. Kennedy's presentation is dynamic, humorous, and full of practical suggestions."

For more information, contact Mary Kelly or Ginny Phoenix at (817) 421-1387.

### Seymour's Czech community to lead Polka Mass in Arlington, Jan. 28

The Czech Community of Sacred Heart Church, Seymour, along with Sacred Heart pastor Father Richard Eldredge, TOR, will bring a Polka Mass to Arlington Jan. 28. The Sacred Heart Czech Choir and musicians will lead the music at the 12:30 p.m. Mass at their sister parish, St. Vincent de Paul Church, 5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Road in Arlington.

Bohemian sausage and kolaches will be available for purchase following Mass.

All are welcome to attend. For more information, contact St. Vincent de Paul Church at (817) 478-8206.

## Diocesan

# Ministry Formation Day offers enlightenment for faith journey

**Left:** Bishop Kevin Vann addresses the Ministry Formation Day assembly Jan. 6.



Story and Photos by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

More than 2,000 years ago, the Magi embarked on a journey of faith to find the Christ child, guided only by the brilliance of a new star.

So the feast of the Epiphany seemed an appropriate time for a gathering of parish leaders eager to continue their own faith journey while leading others to Christ.

Five hundred and fifty catechists, Catholic school teachers, pastoral council members, and others called to serve the church in the Diocese of Fort Worth attended a Ministry Formation Day Jan. 6 at Nolan Catholic High School in East Fort Worth. Bolstered by an array of informative small group sessions and a keynote address by Bishop Kevin Vann, the event registered one of the biggest turnouts in its history.

Greeted warmly with a standing ovation, the bishop used the occasion to point out how the story of the Magi and the challenges facing today's ministry leaders are intrinsically linked. In his home state of Illinois, the Catholic community of Teutopolis honors the legacy of the Three Kings with a longtime ritual that doubles as an outreach ministry. Each Jan. 6, teams of three men travel from house to house in the town delivering gifts and the message of Christ's birth.

"I would hope all of us here today can stop a little and appreciate this day and take what we are learning, praying, and reflecting on into the context of the Epiphany," he told the crowd, before asking some thought-provoking questions. "How do the Magi teach us about our journey of faith? What are the gifts in our lives that we need to present to our Lord? What will he ask us to give to others?"

The three kings brought the outside world to the Nativity in Bethlehem, and they remind us to do the same, the bishop contin-

ued, adding that our ministry and mission enables us "to welcome those 'out there' who come to us, to be part of our communion of faith — part of the family of God."

In his address, Bishop Vann also announced plans to release a statement on the nature of the church as "communio" (communion) in the near future. The local church is the strongest when its parts are not isolated but united together as a community of faith, he said. It's a theme discussed in many writings by Pope John Paul II and now Pope Benedict XVI.

"We're not a bunch of individual churches or communities but a family of faith — a 'communio' of faith," he added. "Especially at this time of year — the Epiphany — we should reflect on how God showed his love for the whole world through the Christ Child and the Magi and how that brings us together as a diocese and a family of faith."

Bishop Vann ended his remarks with an excerpt from Pope Benedict's Christmas Day 2005 homily.

"When we celebrate the Eucharist we find ourselves in Bethlehem in the house of Bread. Christ gives himself to us and in doing so gives us his peace. He gives it to us so that we can carry the light of peace within and give it to others."

The bishop's message of peace and unity resonated with audience members who traveled from as far away as Gainesville, Morgan, and Glen Rose to attend Fort Worth's Ministry Formation



**Above:** The Multi-Purpose Center at Nolan Catholic High School is filled with some 550 ministry leaders interested in gaining enlightenment in various areas of ministry.

**Left:** Nolan Catholic student Jessica Huff leads the assembly in song during a morning prayer service.



**Above:** Women from the Vietnamese community scan the list of available workshops in the event program. Workshops were offered in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.



**Above:** At one of the 30 Ministry Formation Day vendor booths, Amy Zeder, a member of the diocesan Mission Council, displays items crafted by women from Bolivia. Funds raised in the sale of these crafts help these Bolivian women and their families in meeting their daily needs.

**Right:** Jeff Hedglen, director of youth ministry at St. Bartholomew Parish in Fort Worth, leads a Ministry Formation Day workshop.



**Left:** Ministry Formation Day participant Anthony Roffino (left) of Glen Rose visits with Father Kyle Walterscheid, diocesan director of Vocations.



Day. Similar programs are held each year in Wichita Falls and Mineral Wells.

"I think it's a great idea to bring the parishes closer together and start thinking of ourselves as one spiritual community," explained Mark Philp, a member of St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills.

Fellow parishioner Byanka Peffers agrees. "We need to be one church — a global church — and not think of ourselves as a bunch of separate parishes."

Kevin Prevou, director of the diocesan Office of Youth Ministry and Adolescent Catechesis, organized the Ministry Formation

Day and was pleased with the layout and program structure chosen by the planning committee. This year's Fort Worth event, which made available sessions in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese, included an additional set of small group sessions. The crowd also benefited from easier access to an exhibit area where 30 Catholic vendors advertised products and resources.

"We wanted to change the setup in the main area, so we could incorporate the keynote sessions and the exhibitors in the same location," Prevou said. "We think this was a great success."

A color brochure publicizing

the event and the ease of online registration boosted attendance. "I think all of that added to the energy around the day," Prevou said. "Additionally, I think Bishop Vann's keynote address went very well."

Anthony Roffino, who attended a 2006 Ministry Formation Day, was glad he returned for this year's program.

"It's an awakening and a great way to start the year," enthused the Glen Rose resident, who belongs to St. Rose of Lima Church. "It brings things into perspective," Roffino said. "I believe that if you put faith in God, all things will come to us."

## Diocesan

At Life Revival Youth Rally, former 'Apprentice' cast member Tarek Saab talks to teens about importance of . . .

# Prayer OVER POPULARITY

Story and Photos by  
Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

**“W**e have a culture that is totally, undeniably addicted to entertainment.”

The author of that statement should know. He became an instant celebrity after appearing on one of the most highly rated and critiqued shows on network television.

St. Anselm University and Catholic University graduate Tarek Saab spent 10 weeks on the reality TV hit “The Apprentice” before hearing the words, “you’re fired” from the program’s executive producer and host Donald Trump. The 27-year-old lost a chance to work for the high-profile financier but gained valuable insight into the power of fame and its impact on society.

A devout Catholic and daily communicant who belongs to the genius group MENSA, Saab now uses his business acumen and new visibility to advance pro-life causes across the country.

Being rejected by Trump in front of millions of viewers wasn’t easy, but the former Massachusetts resident doesn’t regret his television-born notoriety.

“It opened up a lot of doors that ordinarily wouldn’t be there and gave me a platform from which to speak about faith to other young people,” Saab told the *North Texas Catholic*. “It’s no mystery that those in the entertainment world have a strong voice with youth. I’m trying to do something positive with the voice that’s been given to me.”

The attractive, articulate “Apprentice” star wielded some of that celebrity influence during an appearance at the Life Revival Youth Rally 2007, held Jan. 12-13 at St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills. More than 375 teens and their parents braved torrential rains and a winter storm warning to hear Saab recall his “Apprentice” experience and to listen to his life-affirming message.

Hosted by St. John’s youth ministry program, the two-day rally is designed to expose young people to a broad range of issues that affect their physical and spiritual health. Other speakers who were invited to present

life-oriented views included musician Daniel diSilva, leader of the jazz-funk group Crispin; Jessica Volcansek; Potter’s House minister Anthony Myers; and Carol Evertt, a former abortion center director. Father Bernard Marie Murphy, a Franciscan Friar of the Renewal, spoke with teens during small group breakout sessions and celebrated Mass with them Saturday evening. Music, art projects, and a youth talent show also highlighted the weekend’s theme “Life Revolution — it’s more than you know, it’s deeper than you think, it’s now.”

“We want to help teens understand the sanctity, dignity, and value of life, including their own,” explained St. John Youth Director Suzette Chaires, who planned the program along with teen leaders and Sue Laux, director of Youth for Life in the diocese. “Every year we’ve had the rally there has been a conversion of hearts.”

Some participants come to the event because their friends belong to the parish.

“There are young people who never have been taught the right thing to do when it comes to alcohol or sex,” Chaires added. “We teach them that being pure leaves them open to God’s abundant blessing.”

Preaching and teaching life lessons to teenagers isn’t easy, so members of the planning committee tried to choose speakers who would appeal to young listeners. The 9th through 12th graders had no problem relating

**Below:** Lauren Molina (left) and Natalie Montya perform hand motions to lively praise and worship songs, encouraging participation from the youth assembly.



**Left:** Teen participants of the Life Revival Youth Rally clap to the rhythm of the beat.

to the boyish-looking “Apprentice” cast member who shared some inside information about the filming of the reality TV show before launching into a heartfelt talk about the importance of prayer over popularity.

Selected as a cast member for the fifth season of “The Apprentice” after a production crew visited his office at Texas Instruments in Dallas, Saab was surprised to find himself showered with attention just days after the first show aired.

“Every day I’d go on the Internet and see my face splattered on the screen and people talking about me on blogs,” he explained. “There were different articles in the newspapers too. I began to think, ‘Gosh, this is more than just being on a show.’ People are really captivated by reality TV, and that’s a little bizarre.”

Saab, who doesn’t own a television set, advised his impressionable listeners to stop spending so much time on entertainment and start thinking about what’s really happening in the world around them.

“There’s a lot going on out there [that] we need to know about,” the speaker insisted, citing legislation and politics as examples. “In the past 50 years, there’s been a complete disregard for the dignity and sanctity of life.”

The effect on society goes beyond abortion and teen pregnancy rates, he pointed out. Infanticide, euthanasia, and embryonic stem-cell research are

other issues young people need to study.

“Why do we need to know about these things? Because, as my father used to say, ‘Evil happens when good men do nothing,’” Saab continued. “And the only way to stop evil starts with a change of heart and a change of behavior.”

The newlywed who lives in Keller with his wife, Kate, encouraged young men in the audience to embrace their natural inclination to provide and protect.

“One of the ways we protect those around us from evil in today’s environment is to change the way we act,” he pointed out. “Pornography and how we look at and treat women is part of that. We need to recognize that some of the entertainment we’re addicted to, and some of the things society tells us are perfectly fine, are really not good for us.”

Addressing the female members of the audience, the speaker called women the heart and soul of the family and the world.

“They represent our compassionate emotion and thought,” said the Maronite Catholic who was born in Lebanon. “Women are leading the charge in how we view the dignity and sanctity of life. If you’re not passionate about it, if you’re not thinking about it, then no one else is.”

He counseled the teenage girls to show their respect for life through chastity and respecting the physical nature of womanhood.

**Left:** Life Revival Youth Rally speaker Tarek Saab, a former contestant on “The Apprentice,” encourages teens to look beyond the superficial and to take steps to interface with God to find true meaning in life.

**Center, left:** Life Revival Youth Rally coordinator Suzette Chaires (left) visits with speakers Father Bernard Marie Murphy, CFR, and Tarek Saab during a break at the rally.

**Below:** Songwriter/guitarist Jessica Volcansek leads songs of worship at the rally.

In closing, Saab asked the young audience to study and know their Catholic faith, read the lives of the saints for inspiration, and receive Christ in the Eucharist.

“You have an opportunity to interface with God in a very real way in the Eucharist,” he said. “Recognizing that privilege is one of the key steps to understanding what life is truly all about and what I’m talking about in terms of the dignity and sanctity of life.”

Raised in public housing by divorced parents, the self-made CEO of the Christian apparel company Lionheart considers himself blessed. In his short life, he’s worked his way up to a six-figure salary, traveled all over the world, and had his life profiled in *US Weekly* and *TV Guide*.

“But none of it truly made me happy,” Saab admitted. “Happiness doesn’t come in the form of being worshiped. Happiness comes from worship. It comes from submitting ourselves to something greater than we are.”

That was the message 14-year-old Xochitl Juarez-Jacinto wanted to hear when she decided to attend the rally for the first time with friends.

“I resolved to put God in the middle of my life, so this is one way of doing that,” said the St. John’s youth group member. “All of the speakers were good. I learned a lot of new things about abortion and other issues like teen suicide. I’ll definitely be back next year.”



**PRO VITA AWARD RECIPIENT** — Longtime pro-life activist Bill Pasteur (left) accepts the Pro Vita award from Chuck Pelletier (right), founder of Mother and Unborn Baby Care of North Texas. Pasteur is credited with helping to eliminate the practice of abortions at John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth — an action which has saved “countless thousands of lives,” said Pelletier.

## Bill Pasteur receives Pro Vita award from Mother and Unborn Baby Care

Dedicated pro-life advocate Bill Pasteur received the prestigious Pro Vita (Pro Life) award from Mother and Unborn Baby Care of North Texas at a small gathering of pro-life volunteers just before Christmas. The honor has only been bestowed four times in the 22-plus-year history of the organization, according to information from Chuck Pelletier, founder of Mother and Unborn Baby Care. Past award recipients have included Father Tim Thompson and Father James Hart.

“If we had half a dozen more people with [Pasteur’s] intelligence, dedication, and perseverance working for the babies and their moms, we’d see the number of abortion victims in the Diocese of Fort Worth decline substantially, if not disappear altogether,” Pelletier said, upon making the award presentation.

Pasteur is credited with founding NE Tarrant Right To Life (a stand-alone organization; not an affiliate of the National or Texas Right To Life groups) over two decades ago with his wife, Ta-

mita, and several other dedicated pro-lifers in the Hurst-Eules-Bedford, Mid-Cities area.

Pasteur’s efforts in the very early years were met by huge success, Pelletier noted, explaining that Pasteur and his group were able to eliminate the practice of abortions at John Peter Smith county hospital. Pelletier credits Pasteur with saving “countless thousands of lives” because of his work with JPS in the mid 1980s. Pasteur has continued to ensure that the hospital has not returned to the practice of abortion because of his ongoing work with the JPS board and its CEO.

Pasteur’s most recent pro-life efforts successfully culminated in the city of Bedford passing a resolution asking for Planned Parenthood to close its offices in the Mid Cities.

“Pasteur truly imbues the Pro Vita spirit in both prayer and action,” Pelletier said in a written statement. “He is a real blessing to all of [the babies and their moms] and to the church in Fort Worth.”

## KXEB radio’s Teresa Tomeo to speak at women’s breakfast

Women for the Third Millennium will be holding a women’s breakfast Saturday, Feb. 3, at the Cooper Guest Lodge – Berkley Room, 12230 Preston Road in Dallas. Registration will begin at 9 a.m., with breakfast following at 9:30 a.m.

The guest speaker will be Teresa Tomeo, radio host of “Catholic Connection” on Dallas’s KXEB 910 AM. Tomeo will present a program entitled “Extreme Makeover: Seeing

Ourselves Through the Eyes of Love.”

Women for the Third Millennium is an organization designed to promote and support the authentic dignity and femininity of all women.

Reservations are required. To register by the Jan. 29 deadline or for more information, call Patricia Sherk at (214) 348-6191, or Carolyn Rekerdres, (214) 739-5257, or visit the Web site at [www.womenthirdmillennium.org](http://www.womenthirdmillennium.org).

## Texas couple’s child born on *Roe* anniversary seen as a miracle baby

By Janet M. Crowe

EL PASO (CNS) — Sofia Alomia of El Paso will celebrate her first birthday this January much like any other toddler. However, amid the cake and presents, Sofia’s parents, Yvonne and Santiago Alomia, will take time from the joyous celebration to commemorate the millions of babies killed by abortion.

Sofia was born Jan. 22, 2006 — the 33rd anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s *Roe v. Wade* decision legalizing abortion throughout the nine months of pregnancy.

She could be considered a miracle because several doctors, fearing she might have a severe cardiovascular disorder, repeatedly urged her parents throughout the pregnancy to abort her.

But Yvonne Alomia refused to consider abortion, despite the repeated urging of doctors, colleagues, friends, and her own patients from her optometrist practice.

Sofia was born with heart problems. When she was 3 days old she had heart surgery. She is due to have a second surgery after her first birthday and faces additional heart surgeries, but her parents are optimistic.

“We would not do anything differently,” Alomia said, and Sofia’s every smile proves that “it has definitely been worth all the trials.”

During her third month of gestation, Sofia was diagnosed with DiGeorge velo-cardio-facial syndrome; a portion of her 22nd chromosome was missing. It can result in conditions ranging from relatively mild to severe, including cleft palate, Down syndrome, immune deficiencies, kidney abnormalities, and cardiovascular diseases. The concern for Sofia was cardiovascular.

Two fetal echocardiograms showed no pulmonary arteries from the baby’s heart to her lungs, which meant she might die shortly after birth or have a range of critical medical problems affecting her health and life. The doctors said the arteries perhaps existed and maybe were too undeveloped to see, but they



Yvonne Alomia plays with her daughter Sofia in their home in El Paso. Sofia will celebrate her first birthday this year on the Jan. 22 anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision. Her mother Yvonne feels that is significant because during a difficult pregnancy she was frequently advised to have an abortion rather than carry Sofia to term. (CNS photo/Noheemy Gonzalez, RIO GRANDE CATHOLIC)

also strongly encouraged Alomia to terminate the pregnancy.

Alomia and her husband concentrated on what Sofia would need after she was born. Late in the pregnancy, Sofia’s heart was enlarged and appeared to fill her chest cavity, making successful heart surgery questionable.

Still, Alomia refused to consider aborting her baby but sought advice from doctors, priests, and El Paso Bishop Armando X. Ochoa on making a decision regarding extraordinary medical measures, including immediate surgery after birth, which might only cause Sofia pain without increasing her chances of survival.

“We just wanted to make the best decision according to the progress that Sofia made or did not make,” Alomia said in an interview with *The Rio Grande Catholic*, El Paso’s diocesan newspaper.

“We were expecting her to die within hours of birth since no pulmonary arteries were seen and it was the most probable outcome,” she said.

A Caesarean section was scheduled for Jan. 24, 2006, but during morning Mass Jan. 22, Alomia went into labor, and the doctors decided to deliver the baby at 3 p.m.

Alomia considers the day and time of Sofia’s birth no mere coincidence. She credits the interces-

sion of a neonatal nurse on duty at the El Paso hospital who began praying her Divine Mercy chaplet when Sofia was delivered, who convinced the neonatal doctor to take a second look at the baby and who talked Alomia into surgery for Sofia.

Recalling that Jesus died at the age of 33, Alomia stated, “I do not feel that Sofia’s birthday being the 33rd anniversary of *Roe* and the C-section starting at 3 p.m. are coincidences.”

Alomia feels that her difficult pregnancy was planned by God so she and her husband would “reach out to people who have had abortions and convince them of God’s infinite mercy and to let people know it is wrong to abort.”

Although many people urged Alomia to have the abortion, many others supported her decision to nurture life.

“The response was incredible and is still ongoing. The people of El Paso are beautiful people, and we are thankful to God for allowing us to be surrounded by them,” Alomia said.

For others experiencing a difficult pregnancy, Alomia recommended Prenatal Partners for Life ([www.prenatalpartnersforlife.org](http://www.prenatalpartnersforlife.org)) for assistance and support.

Alomia said she would tell those parents: “They are not alone and that God has a special plan for each and every one of us.”

## Natural Family Planning classes will be offered

The Couple to Couple League offers classes in the symptothermal method of Natural Family Planning. The group finds Natural Family Planning to be safe, healthy, and effective, and indicates that many couples who use NFP “grow in love and respect for one another as they

learn to appreciate God’s design for marriage.”

NFP classes will be offered Jan. 28 at 3:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 1501 9th Street, Wichita Falls, by Charles and Renée Gartland, (940) 855-2235; and Jan. 28, 6 p.m., at Mary Immaculate Church, 14032 Dennis Lane, Farm-

ers Branch, by Scott and Amy Rustand, (817) 581-6266.

Because each class consists of four meetings at monthly intervals, engaged couples are encouraged to attend a class starting at least four months before their wedding. For more details, call (817) 560-3300 ext. 304.



# Diocesan

## Father Harry Fisher, senior priest of the diocese, dies at age 92

Father Harry W. Fisher, 92, formerly the oldest living priest of the Diocese of Fort Worth, died Sunday, Jan. 7, following several months of hospice care. The funeral Mass was celebrated Saturday, Jan. 13, at his home parish of Sacred Heart Church in Muenster, with Bishop Kevin Vann presiding. Vigil services were held at Holy Family Church in West Fort Worth Thursday, Jan. 11, and on Friday, Jan. 12, at Sacred Heart Church. Burial was at Sacred Heart Cemetery in Muenster.

Harry Walter Fisher was born Nov. 6, 1914, in Muenster, one of 12 children born to Joseph Sr. and Emma Pulte Fisher. His father and his uncle, John Fisher, were the original owners of the well-known Fischer's Meat Market of Muenster, founded in 1927 and still owned and operated by members of the Fisher family.

Fr. Fisher grew up on his family's farm, leaving Sacred Heart School as a teenager in order to work on the farm and in the oil fields to help support the family after the death of his mother in 1930. He served with the 32nd Infantry Division in Australia, New Guinea, and the Philippines during World War II, spending 654 days in combat duty.

After the war, Fr. Fisher traveled through the Northwest and Southwest United States, working in the harvest fields before returning home to Muenster to pursue his dream of becoming a priest. With the encouragement of Father Thomas Weinzapfel of St. Pius X Church in Dallas, Fr. Fisher entered St. Mary College in St. Mary, Kentucky, in 1956, later transferring to St. Bernard Seminary in Cullman, Alabama. He went on to complete his



Father Harry Fisher

theological studies at St. Maur Seminary in South Union, Kentucky. Fr. Fisher was ordained May 30, 1964, at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Dallas at 49 years of age by Bishop Thomas Gorman of Dallas.

The newly-ordained priest's first assignment was to serve briefly as associate pastor at St. Mary Church in Gainesville; he went on to assignments at Holy Family, St. George, and St. Rita churches in Fort Worth, and at Sacred Heart Church in Wichita

Falls before serving as pastor at St. Jude Church in Burkburnett from 1973 to 1976. He then served as pastor at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Pilot Point from 1976 until 1982, when he was assigned as pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Seymour and of St. Mary of the Assumption Church in Megargel.

In August 1989, Fr. Fisher officially retired, but went on to serve as pastor of St. John Church in Valley View for 11 years before retiring from active ministry at the age of 86 in 2000.

While living with the family of longtime friends Judy and Larry Snyder, parishioners at Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, he continued to inspire all who knew him with his special care for the elderly, as he traveled to retirement communities and nursing homes within the Fort Worth area, celebrating Mass and praying with the residents of the homes.

Carol Coffey of St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Pilot Point recalled his years at the rural parish. "His love for children, the sick, and the elderly was always evident," she wrote. "He spent many hours visiting the sick and

shut-ins, and the children were always there to grab his hand and walk out of church after Mass with him."

"He was such a loving, wonderful man," said his friend and caregiver Judy Snyder, noting that she first met Fr. Fisher in 1973 when he was first sent to St. Jude Church in Burkburnett. "My husband and I always promised him that he had a home with us. My children grew up thinking of him as a grandfather. He had such a sense of humor; he was full of life, and he continued, always, to have a strong desire to serve."

Remembered for his storytelling abilities and his talent for gardening and for baking and sharing homemade bread, Fr. Fisher was also fondly praised by others who recalled his gratitude for his own priestly vocation.

He is survived by his sister, Lorena Taylor of Muenster; many nieces, nephews, and extended family members; and by longtime family friend Judy Snyder, her children, Keith Snyder and Keisha Matthews, and their spouses, and the six Snyder grandchildren.


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# Viewpoints

## A moment of solidarity in a busy store

By Dan Luby

**T**he checkout lines at the grocery store are clogged with a small army of weary shoppers, bound for home after a long day's work.

Ordinarily, this is a store I find pretty pleasant to shop at. It's right on the way home from work, so it couldn't be more convenient. It carries the brands we like, at prices that seem competitive. The produce is usually fresh, and the layout of the aisles makes sense.

Perhaps most appealing though, is that since the store opened years ago, it's made it a practice to hire mentally challenged folks as sackers and stockers. Many of these workers have been there a long time, and that, combined with my observations as a regular customer, give me confidence that they are well-treated, valued employees. I like supporting such a socially responsible enterprise.

But tonight, I and my fellow shoppers are doing a slow burn. It's quarter to six on a cold Thursday evening, and as we stand impatiently in our heavy coats and hats, the lines are moving at a molasses-in-January pace. We are chafing, not only at the guilty knowledge that we ought to have shopped more wisely last weekend, but even

*The woman ... starts to leave, then stops to make one more comment.*

*It stuns me. "See him; that one over there?" she asks, whispering loudly...*

more at the utterly inexplicable, though consistent, shortage of checkers and sackers at such a busy time of day, a practice the store's management seems to have enshrined in policy.

So in spite of my usual customer satisfaction, tonight I am sympathetic to the grumbles and gripes being muttered back and forth among the waiting shoppers. And when the woman in front of me makes a few sidelong cracks about how annoying it all is, I nod and smile in support.

The checker is a girl in her teens, working as fast as she can and soldiering through the ordeal cheerfully and politely. Her partner is an older man, a retiree who sacks the cans and frozen dinners and soda cartons efficiently. The talkative woman in front of me keeps up a steady stream of chatter, peppering her comments and questions with unusually personal information about her own life.

Finally, the girl announces the total, the woman fishes through her purse for a checkbook, and pays. The sacker puts her groceries in a cart and asks if she needs help.

The woman declines, and starts to leave, then stops to make one more comment. It stuns me.

"See him; that one over there?" she asks, whispering loudly. The checker looks in the direction of her glance.

"You mean Little Bobby?" she asks.

I look too, now, as do all the people in earshot. Little Bobby [not his real name] is one of the store's developmentally handicapped employees.

"Well, he's just standing there not doing anything. You should tell your manager," the woman says forcefully, then grins at all of us as she rolls her cart toward the door.

The checker is flustered, uncertain how to react, but I cannot help but put in my two cents. I tell her that I for one appreciate the store's hiring policies, and ask her to be sure to tell her manager that their hiring people like Little Bobby is one of the reasons I shop at the store.

For the second time in a minute, the checker looks confused and troubled. Briefly, I regret my intrusion into the harried teenager's thoughts. And then I am stunned again.

She thanks me for my comment. Little Bobby works pretty hard, she says. And her older sister, she tells me, is like Little Bobby, another of the store's challenged employees. She tells me how much her sister likes her job, how she looks forward to coming to work. Then the checker tells me how happy she herself is to see her sister included in the world.

I thank her, pay for my groceries, and leave, quiet on the outside, but stirred in my heart.

It is more than a little sobering to witness just how easily a minor irritation, even when justified, can lead us to hurt people without even knowing it. It is more than a little humbling to glimpse in the midst of a grocery store checkout line the hidden depths of the struggles ordinary families face day to day. It is more than a little comforting to then recognize the hidden beauty of solidarity and compassion in ordinary life.



*Dan Luby is the director of Christian Formation for the diocese. In May, for the third time, his column received first place honors among regular columns on spiritual life in the Catholic press of the U.S.*

*and Canada. Dan's column earned the same recognition in 2001 and again in 2003. Dan and his wife, Theresa, have two children, Kate and Peter.*

## TCC's 'Legislative Rally Days' will put bishops' agenda before the Texas Legislature

By Jennifer Carr

**T**he 80th Texas legislative session is in full swing. For legislators and lobbyists, this means hours of committee hearings and thousands of bills to read, debate, and work to pass or fight to fail. For advocates, it is time to bring attention to causes and issues at a time when public attention can translate into new laws. The church comes together during session to highlight the moral dimensions of issues through the public policy efforts of the Texas Catholic Conference and advocate rally days focused on issues of importance to the bishops and the church.

### CATHOLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION DAY — JAN. 30

The Catholic Health Association of Texas responds to the call of the Gospel by advocating for health care policies and programs that provide quality, affordable, and accessible health care for everyone in Texas. They focus especially on the needs

of the poor and vulnerable persons in our state and promote collaboration among Catholic health care providers and other ministries and organizations. They will be at the Capitol doing legislative visits as well as hosting a reception for members of the Legislature the evening of their visits.

### CATHOLIC CHARITIES DAY — FEB. 6

More than 400 staff, volunteers, and clients of Catholic Charities agencies from throughout Texas will rally on the Capitol steps and then be honored in the Texas House of Representatives and Texas Senate. After all of this pomp and circumstance, these advocates will visit every member of the Texas Legislature to urge them to join Catholic Charities in providing help and creating hope for the poor and vulnerable of Texas. Catholic Charities will be asking legislators to increase their investment in the Children's Health Insurance Program and Medicaid, and to

improve foster care and adoption services in Texas. In addition, they will remind legislators of the valuable contributions of immigrants to our state's economy and culture and ask the Legislature to resist efforts to deny them access to healthcare and education. The Catholic Charities Advocacy Day is an opportunity for many supporters of Catholic Charities to directly interact with representatives at the Capitol and ask them to work for solutions to the cycles that keep people in poverty.

### SCHOOL CHOICE DAY — FEB. 7

School choice is an important part of our Catholic education agenda in Texas. Our Catholic schools have benefited from a variety of scholarship programs that have given an opportunity to many children who would not have been able to attend our schools otherwise. The Education Freedom Rally at the Texas Capitol will include various Catholic schools and groups from throughout the state. The plan is to get as

many school choice supporters from the state as possible to show up at the Texas Capitol and show our dedication to our communities and children.

### RESPECT LIFE DAY — MARCH 6

Our foundational principle to protect the life and dignity of all human persons calls us to work to end abortion, euthanasia, destruction of human embryos, cloning, assisted suicide, and the death penalty. While there will be a Pro-Life Mass and march in Austin Jan. 27, the official Catholic Respect Life Day will take place March 6. Directors of respect life ministries are working to bring volunteers to the Capitol to support life and dignity of the human person from conception to natural death.

*Jennifer Carr is the associate director of the Texas Catholic Conference. The TCC is the lobbying and administrative arm of the Catholic bishops of Texas.*

# Facts vs. Politics

## on stem cells

By Richard M. Doerflinger

An unusual thing happened on the way to Congress's latest vote on stem-cell research: A science journal, and secular news media, got something right on this issue.

Media bias in favor of the (speculative) "promise" of stem cells obtained by destroying embryos has been obvious for years. As for the journals, three of the most prestigious — *Nature*, *Science*, and the *New England Journal of Medicine* — had to retract part or all of articles extolling advances in that field in the past two years when it turned out they were misleading or falsified. But on Jan. 7 the journal *Nature Biotechnology* reported a real breakthrough, and the media accurately noted how it changes this debate.

The advance comes from researchers at Wake Forest University in North Carolina and Children's Hospital in Boston, who isolated extremely useful and versatile stem cells from the amniotic fluid surrounding unborn children in the womb. The cells were found in fluid left over from amniocentesis procedures, but could also be obtained from this fluid or the placenta at the time of live birth. The cells grow rapidly and easily, and apparently produce a wide variety of cell types for research and future therapies, without forming the tumors that have plagued many animal trials using embryonic stem cells.

In short, these cells (along with similar cells recently found in cord blood, bone marrow, and elsewhere) may have the practical advantages of embryonic stem cells for helping patients, with none of the practical or moral disadvantages. And the 4 million live births in this country

*In short, these cells (along with similar cells recently found in cord blood, bone marrow, and elsewhere) may have the practical advantages of embryonic stem cells for helping patients, with none of the practical or moral disadvantages. And the 4 million live births in this country every year offer an ample supply of such cells for treatments without harming anyone.*

every year offer an ample supply of such cells for treatments without harming anyone.

A win-win situation, you might say? A development everyone can praise? Maybe even a reason to stop trying to force taxpayers to help kill embryos?

Not if you're immersed in the political drive for embryo destruction. Researchers committed to that approach, and their allies on Capitol Hill, quickly recovered from this surprise and marshaled their arguments against taking the new study too seriously.

Those arguments are, to say the least, weak. One scientist/advocate, Lawrence Goldstein, even criticized the new cells for not making tumors, saying that this makes him doubt they are really "pluripotent." (So embryonic cells are better because they would give patients tumors?) Another, George Daley of Harvard, said the cells are "not a substitute for human embryonic stem cells, which allow scientists to address a host of other interesting questions in early human development."

To be more candid Dr. Daley should have added that to study early human development, embryonic stem cells are

no substitute for being able to develop and manipulate embryos themselves as research material, the real goal of some of his colleagues. He could have noted as well that stem cells from so-called "spare" embryos (the subject of the House vote) are no substitute for the tailor-made embryos he is now pursuing through human cloning research at Harvard. Congressional supporters of the embryonic stem-cell bill actually rejected an amendment designed to keep federal stem-cell grants from encouraging human cloning for stem-cell research — because cloning may be their next necessary step in trying to derive benefit from the destruction of life.

Supporters say they will keep bringing up the embryonic stem-cell bill, again and again, until it is law. Or, perhaps, until suffering patients and their families cry "Enough!" and remind them they were supposed to be working for cures.



Richard Doerflinger is Deputy Director of the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

## LOVE STORIES

They take many shapes and forms, but all are colored by the 'giving your life for your friends' story at their core

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

Our family was lucky this year. We celebrated two weddings, a baptism, and a cure. And, although they were large and life-altering, those events were simply ceremonial.

The more vital, essential elements were more significant: We experienced two marriages, a new life, and the improved health of someone we love. To borrow a favorite phrase from Father Jim Pemberton, one of our newest diocesan priests, "We were blessed."

Once, in mid-summer, all those happy events coincided. The baby, Emma, was christened, and Abby, who would be married just one month later, was the baby's godmother. Emma's father Dustin had just finished his first round of chemotherapy, one-third of the way back to health; Julie and Matt were congratulated at a family engagement party.

To enrich those joys John's student, Michael, arrived for the weekend. Michael has become an essential element himself, since John met him at Malibu High School in California. Michael is an artist, an extraordinarily intuitive and brilliant individual. He is also autistic.

Michael gave the toast to celebrate Julie's engagement. "Welcome congratulations Julie and Matt. Thanks everyone for coming for engagement for party. We are buckaroos, we are live in Los Angeles, my California, where many years ago we were all buckaroos and we all have fun and my friend Kaffy and Abby and Meredith and John. We went to Texas to the buckaroo ... like Walker Texas Ranger! We went to the church, to Dustin house and families.

"We celebrate and have a wonderful congratulations Julie and Matt and a wonderful marriage and a wonderful happy ending after all and Julie and Matt is like Princess Bride! Have a wonderful story and wonderful the end and a wonderful happy end after all."

Peppering his thoughts with film references, Michael has a romantic and poetic heart. He also walks on his toes, which I choose to believe signifies his closeness to God.

Michael had a girlfriend, Christine. I believe he loved her, truly, and during high school, she became ill and finally passed away. He had visited her in the hospital many times and was saddened at her death.

But with the understanding that blesses this faithful, clear-minded young man, he communicates with her still, in the same way he greets other people, and the same way he gives toasts at parties.

Michael looks up at the sky and says, "Are you having you good day?"

For the past two months, another love story has unfolded, as my friend Pat lies in a hospital room after being struck by a huge, falling tree limb, a week before Thanksgiving. Pat's survival and health remain in question.

See HAMER, p. 22

# Tens of thousands march on Capitol to promote Culture of Life

FROM PAGE 1  
to natural death," said Brownback, a Catholic.

"The unborn person is unique, is sacred, is beautiful," and he or she "deserves protection," he added.

Later Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City, Kansas, who also attended the rally, spoke privately with the senator.

The archbishop told Catholic News Service that he "thanked him for making the sacrifice for running for national office."

"We support the values he stands for," Archbishop Naumann added. "We need people like him."

Among the more than 20 Catholic bishops at the rally were Cardinals Justin Rigali of Philadelphia and Sean P. O'Malley of Boston.

Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis, who led the rally's final prayer before the start of the march, thanked the marchers for their "daily engagement in the fostering of human life ... without exception, without compromise."

The theme of this year's march was "Thou shalt protect the equal right to life of each innocent human in existence at fertilization. No exception! No compromise!"

Nellie Gray, who has led the March for Life since its inception in 1974, said she warned abortion advocates back then that they were on a "slippery slope" that would also lead to euthanasia.

Among people she introduced on the stage were Bobby Schindler and Suzanne Schindler Vitadamo, the brother and sister of Terri Schindler Schiavo, the Florida woman who two years ago died after her life support was removed by court order at her husband's request, despite efforts by her parents and siblings to keep her alive.

Carl A. Anderson, supreme knight of the Knights of Colum-

bus — which in 1954 led a successful campaign to get "under God" inserted into the Pledge of Allegiance — led the rally in reciting the pledge. As the people recited "with liberty and justice for all," he added a three-word phrase, "born and unborn."

Gray summarized the purpose of the march: "We're not here to reduce abortion; we're here to stop it."

"Feminist abortionists, listen up," she said. "You may not kill innocent human beings in my name."

Standing behind the speakers for most of the rally were more than 20 women with signs, "I regret my abortion." The sign held by the one man in the group said, "I regret lost fatherhood."

Georgette Forney, president of Anglicans for Life, said abortion not only kills the unborn child but harms the woman and man left behind. She urged women who have had an abortion and are hurting to seek out groups like hers. "There's help and healing available," she said.

Rep. Mike Pence, R-Indiana, said the large numbers of young people at the rally signaled the growth of opposition to abortion among younger Americans. Despite the best efforts of abortion advocates, he said, "they're hearing it's not a choice, it's a baby."

Rep. Steve Chabot, R-Ohio, noted that the U.S. Supreme Court is currently considering the constitutionality of the federal Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act. Citing the changes in the makeup of the high court over the past two years, he said, "I'm cautiously optimistic that they will uphold that law."

No estimates were immediately available for the number of marchers.

At a press conference two hours before the march, leaders of the National Right to Life



Below: Young people lead the 34th annual March for Life in Washington Jan. 22. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Right: Teens cheer at the March for Life rally in Washington Jan. 22. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



## At vigil Mass, Cardinal Rigali says that 'reasons for rejoicing' exist despite legalized abortion

By Mark Pattison

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Despite the fact abortion has been legal throughout the United States for 34 years, there are "reasons for rejoicing," primarily because of lower abortion rates and increased public opposition to abortion, said Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia.

Cardinal Rigali, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, was principal celebrant and homilist at a Jan. 21 Mass on the eve of the annual March for Life. It was held at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington.

"The rate and number of abortions in the United States continue to decline, most notably among teens," he said to applause during the homily. He said many teens "are wisely choosing to abstain from sexual activity" because of religious and moral values and also to avoid sexually transmitted diseases.

"To be free of disease, to be free of the fear of an ill-timed pregnancy, to be free of a broken heart — this is the freedom that we want for our young people, and we rejoice that it is unfolding," he added to further applause.

"Another reason to rejoice is that the American people are becoming more pro-life. According to a significant poll last year, general support for *Roe v. Wade* fell under 50 percent for the first time since 1973," Cardinal Rigali said, eliciting more clapping.

"More and more citizens are coming to question abortion and to recognize — as a starting point for deeper conversion — that there is something radically wrong with abortion and the support given it by our laws," he added.

"In the midst of the enormous challenge posed by threats to life, there are new reasons to hope that the truth of God's law will prevail as a great light in our nation as our people move increasingly toward valuing human life from its earliest and most vulnerable stages onward. This indeed is cause for rejoicing in the Lord!"

The church's position on abortion is "one of profound concern for the unborn and deep compassion for all those affected by abortion," Cardinal Rigali said. "With utmost respect we express in the public debate our strong conviction that something terribly wrong has weakened our nation — something that flagrantly violates human rights and human dignity, in addition to the law of God."

The cardinal blasted "the so-called freedom of choice" that resulted from the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973, which legalized abortion virtually on demand, saying that those who get abortions do not experience freedom.

"Freedom comes only when they are able to turn to God in their sadness and brokenness and accept his forgiveness, his mercy, and his healing grace," Cardinal Rigali said. "They become truly free when they are able to acknowledge the truth of the wrong that they committed, and the greater truth that there are no limits to God's loving mercy or to his desire for our salvation. Jesus himself tells us, 'You will know the truth, and the truth shall set you free.'"

Despite an afternoon snow that made Washington's streets slick, the shrine was again filled to capacity with worshippers who had set out from home in chartered buses long before winter's first snowfall in the nation's capital. Worshippers, many of them students, also crammed the back vestibule and the side chapels of the shrine, and filled up its lower level as well. Many of them wore T-shirts or sweatshirts with pro-life slogans, although some wore replica jerseys bearing the name and uniform number of their favorite sports star.

With the crowds in the upper church and on the lower level, the shrine estimated the number at 10,000. Cardinal Rigali told the young people, "You are called to fulfill a special role: to bring all your energy to promote the cause of life. The Lord is calling you and confirming you in strength. The church and the nation are asking you to rise up to this challenge."



Below: Morgan Geile, 16, from St. Louis prays at a youth rally at DAR Constitution Hall in Washington Jan. 22 prior to the March for Life. Two youth rallies were held in Washington prior to the march. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Above: Pro-life supporters approach a counterprotester in front of the U.S. Supreme Court during the 34th March for Life in Washington Jan. 22. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Above: Pro-life supporters march in the 34th March for Life in Washington Jan. 22. The annual event solemnly marks the anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

Committee called the high court's 1973 abortion decisions a contradiction of the Declaration of Independence's pronouncement that life is among the unalienable, God-given rights which governments must protect.

Since 1973 "there is no 'unalienable right to life' nor is that right a 'self-evident truth.' Instead, we have the feelings of the mother," said Wanda Franz, NRLC president.

Karen Cross, NRLC political director, said that in a Polling Company survey last November "24 percent of voters were opposed to abortion except when the mother's life is in danger or in cases of rape." She said an additional 14 percent opposed abortion except to save a mother's life and another 14 percent opposed it in all circumstances, adding up to 52 percent "opposed to abortion except in very rare circumstances."

She said the Democratic swing

in the November elections has led many to think abortion opponents took a beating at the polls. But in the 18 competitive races where the National Right to Life Political Action Committee supported a candidate running against an opponent backed by Emily's List — which supports only candidates who back abortion on demand — 14 of the NRLC-backed candidates won, she said.

Contributing to this story was Paul Haring.

## Young people get energized for pro-life march by joining conga lines

By Agostino Bono

WASHINGTON (CNS) — For youthful demonstrators during Jan. 22 pro-life events in Washington, coming in from the cold meant joining a conga line, doing "the wave" cheers, and singing at the top of their lungs.

The young people gathered for a musical rally at Constitution Hall close to the White House and near the staging area for the March for Life. The rally preceded a youth Mass, also in Constitution Hall.

What does snaking through the aisles at 9 a.m. have to do with stopping abortions?

"It gets everyone hyped up for the day. It's going to be cold outside today," said Andrew Hanley, 17, of North Huntingdon, Pennsylvania, as temperatures hov-

ered around the freezing mark outside in the hours before the March for Life, an annual event protesting legalized abortion.

"It gets you psyched up for the march. It gets you excited," said Paige Kowatch, 16, of Pewamo, Michigan, who was with a group of 51 people who had arrived the day before after a 12-hour bus ride.

For Ryan Leighton, 17, of St. Louis, the rally was also a reminder that "our society is very music-oriented," she told Catholic News Service.

Her friend, 16-year-old Savannah Myers, said the rally "gets everybody energized for the real purpose of being here" — participation in the March for Life.

Along with most of the 2,000 people attending the morning musical Rally for Life aimed at

teenagers, the four youths who spoke to CNS planned to join the march to the U.S. Capitol later in the day. The annual march is held on the anniversary of the Supreme Court's Jan. 22, 1973, *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion.

The Washington Archdiocese sponsored the Constitution Hall event as well as a bigger event for young people across town at the Verizon Center, a downtown sports arena.

Hanley said that marching in Washington is important "to show legislators that a lot of people support pro-life issues."

Myers said that "if we all cry out in one voice [abortion] will stop." For many of the youthful demonstrators, coming to Washington

was only one of the ways they have been supporting pro-life issues.

Hanley, a senior at Greensburg Central Catholic High School in the Diocese of Greensburg, Pennsylvania, said that his school encourages students to send letters on the issues to their congressional representatives.

Leighton and Myers, students at the all-girls St. Elizabeth Academy, said that the school encourages students to develop projects to deal with abortion and other pro-life issues such as helping the elderly, addressing human rights, and protecting the environment. The academy is located in St. Louis and run by the Sisters of the Most Precious Blood of O'Fallon, Missouri.



Above: Maria Pezza, 17, prays with other pro-life supporters at the March for Life rally in Washington Jan. 22. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

## Senators, workers in trenches agree: Children must get health care

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Among four U.S. senators in Washington, there was optimistic talk of a bipartisan commitment to expand health coverage for the nation's 9 million uninsured children. But 40 miles away at a Catholic hospital in Baltimore, there was more nitty-gritty talk of getting children into state and federal health programs — and keeping them there.

Both events were part of a national town hall meeting on children's health care, broadcast by satellite to 34 hospitals across the country Jan. 11. National sponsors of the meeting included the Catholic Health Association and the Campaign for Children's Health Care, whose partners include Catholic Health Initiatives and Network, a national Catholic social justice lobby.

"We're the only industrialized nation that doesn't cover all its children," said Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity who is CHA president and CEO, in a panel discussion during the broadcast.

She finds that situation perplexing, adding, "We love our children as much as any other nation."

Universal coverage of children also would be good for society. Studies have found that children who receive regular health care are less likely to miss school and do better in school and in life.

According to the four senators who spoke at the town hall meeting, prospects are bright for the reauthorization of the State Children's Health Insurance Program, known as SCHIP, and possibly for expansion of the joint state-federal Medicaid health program to cover more children of the working poor.

Although SCHIP has brought health coverage to an estimated 6 million U.S. children since it began 10 years ago and another 28 million children are enrolled in Medicaid, more than 9 million remain uninsured. Nearly three-

fourths of those 9 million are eligible for Medicaid and/or SCHIP but not enrolled, according to the Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured.

At St. Agnes Hospital in Baltimore, a group of hospital officials, political aides, medical professionals, and others who watched the national town hall presentation shared their day-to-day struggles with keeping Maryland children healthy, and brainstormed about ways to bring more children into the programs.

Kathleen Westcoat, president of Baltimore HealthCare Access, the lead outreach and eligibility determination agency in Baltimore City for the Maryland Children's Health Program, said efforts to enroll more children have been hurt by a new federal requirement that applicants — and those seeking renewal — prove both their U.S. citizenship and their identity.

The requirement has led to such absurdities as "sending an infant to the DMV (Department of Motor Vehicles) to get an identity card," Westcoat said.

Back in Washington, Sen. John D. "Jay" Rockefeller IV, D-West Virginia, said SCHIP was developed "in the most ideal circumstances, which all of us here yearn for — a totally bipartisan atmosphere."

Rockefeller would like to see a major expansion of health coverage for children. His MediKids proposal, which he admitted "has gotten absolutely nowhere" since it was first introduced in 2001, would enroll every child in Medicaid at birth and automatically cover them through college.

Sen. Orrin G. Hatch, R-Utah, an original co-sponsor of the legislation that created SCHIP, said the effort to help uninsured children brought together a divided Congress back in 1997 and was "the glue that helped pass the first balanced budget in 40 years."

Hatch said the first priority must be the outreach to all eligible

children not yet enrolled in Medicaid or SCHIP. "We must take care of these children," he said, to make the United States "the compassionate, caring, giving country we all want it to be."

"I think the passion is still there" for ensuring health coverage for every child, said Sen. Max Baucus, D-Montana, the new chairman of the Senate Finance Committee. He pledged to begin hearings on SCHIP reauthorization within "the next few weeks" and to bring the issue to the floor of the Senate "by the spring."

Sen. Gordon H. Smith, R-Oregon, noted that he and eight other Republican senators wrote to President George W. Bush late last year asking that his fiscal 2008 budget — due out Feb. 5 — ensure "adequate federal funding for states to both maintain their existing SCHIP caseloads and for states to cover all children and pregnant women up to 200 percent of the federal poverty line."

The 2006 poverty guidelines of the Department of Health and Human Services say a family of four living in the 48 contiguous U.S. states and making \$20,000 a year or less is living in poverty. The levels are higher in Alaska and Hawaii. The 2007 guidelines were due out by the end of January.

Whatever Congress does this year, political pundits seem to agree that health care will be a crucial issue in the 2008 election.

"I promise that in 2008, [health care] will be the biggest issue in the election," said Terry McAuliffe, former chairman of the Democratic National Committee, at a forum in Washington late last year sponsored by Ceasefire on Health Care, an organization seeking to find common ground on health care.

And Ed Gillespie, former head of the Republican National Committee, agreed, calling health care "the defining domestic policy debate in the 2008 presidential campaign."

## Pope encourages terminally ill to turn to God with complete trust

FROM PAGE 1  
they end their earthly lives.

"This is a right belonging to every human being, one which we must all be committed to defend," he wrote.

Writing directly to those suffering from incurable and terminally illnesses, the pope said, "I encourage you to contemplate the sufferings of Christ crucified and,

in union with him, to turn to the Father with complete trust that all life, and your lives in particular, are in his hands.

"I ask the Lord to strengthen your faith in his love, especially during the trials you are experiencing," he wrote.

The pope said Catholic health care professionals and chaplains want to assist the sick and "stand

at your side, helping you in your hour of need and thus making present Christ's own loving mercy toward those who suffer."

The full text of the papal message is available online at [www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/messages/sick/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_mes\\_20061208\\_world-day-of-the-sick-2007\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/messages/sick/documents/hf_ben-xvi_mes_20061208_world-day-of-the-sick-2007_en.html).

## NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

### Unity week highlights what religions have in common, priest says

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) — The commonality that religious faiths share goes back thousands of years, and Jesus' intent was for the different faiths to work together, said a San Francisco priest. The annual Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, observed Jan. 18-25, offers an opportunity for religions to celebrate what they have in common and to promote dialogue among them. The weeklong observance was started in 1908 by Father Paul Wattson, founder of the Atonement Friars, said Father Gerard O'Rourke, who recently retired as director of the Office of Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations for the Archdiocese of San Francisco. "Dialogue between and among the different faiths has been the focus of the friars, and the week of prayer gives fuel to the effort each year," he told *Catholic San Francisco*, the newspaper of the archdiocese. Ecumenism means getting along even with differences of opinion, Fr. O'Rourke said. "The unity Jesus talked about didn't mean conformity and lock stepping and marching down through life. The spirit of ecumenism includes that we are able and committed to work together. That was Jesus' intent when he says, 'That all may be one,' in John's Gospel."

### Rev. King's legacy 'alive and well,' says leadership conference head

ROMEVILLE, Illinois (CNS) — "I have a dream," the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. said more than four decades ago from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington. This simple phrase still has the compelling strength to evoke the slain civil rights leader's likeness and message in the minds of countless people throughout the world. "His legacy is alive and well," said Charles Steele, president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, speaking about his institution's founder in a telephone interview with the *Catholic Explorer*, newspaper of the Diocese of Joliet. This year the federal holiday commemorating Rev. King's birthday was Jan. 15; he was born Jan. 15, 1929. Launched by Rev. King in 1957, the conference is an Atlanta-based advocacy organization committed to achieving social, political, and economic justice through nonviolent actions, said Steele. Staff counselors and other employees advocate "Kingian nonviolence," a philosophy designed by Rev. King that underlines peaceful problem-solving strategies, and techniques, he explained.

### New 'Seeking Balance' statement lists priorities for next farm bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The National Catholic Rural Life Conference in Des Moines, Iowa, has joined 350 other organizations in a statement calling for substantial revisions to U.S. agriculture policy in the 2007 farm bill. "We have witnessed the continued loss of farms, farmers, and valuable farmland. Unprecedented farm and agribusiness consolidation limits competition and innovation in the marketplace," said the statement, "Seeking Balance in U.S. Farm and Food Policy." "Current farm and food policies have contributed to the overproduction of certain crops, creating artificially low prices that imperil the livelihoods of farmers here and abroad," the statement said. "Moreover, the benefits of farm subsidies flow disproportionately to very large farms and specific regions of the country, neglecting entrepreneurial and diversified farms and regions that raise livestock and grow other types of crops, including fruits and vegetables. As a nation, we can and must do better," the statement said. "These problems and trends are not inevitable, but rather the result of public policy choices."

### Vatican secretary of state hosting meeting on church in China

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican secretary of state was hosting a Jan. 19-20 meeting of Chinese Catholic and Roman Curia officials to discuss the situation of the church in China, said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman. He told reporters Jan. 18 that the participants were attending from "China and interested Vatican agencies" and that a statement would be issued at the end of the meeting. Fr. Lombardi said Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the secretary of state, was chairing the meeting. He declined to name other participants, but sources said Cardinal Joseph Zen Ze-kiun of Hong Kong was expected to attend, as well as officials from the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples. The Rome-based AsiaNews agency reported Jan. 18 that the participants also were to include retired Cardinal Paul Shan Kuo-hsi of Kaohsiung, Taiwan; Bishop Jose Lai Hung-seng of Macau; Hong Kong Auxiliary Bishop John Tong Hon; and Anthony Lam Sui-ki, a China expert from the Holy Spirit Study Center in Hong Kong.

# Amniotic-fluid stem cells hailed as another alternative to embryo use

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The recent announcement by scientists at Wake Forest and Harvard universities that the amniotic fluid surrounding a child in the womb can be the source of medically useful stem cells is just the latest in a series of studies showing the research value of the by-products of live birth, according to the deputy director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities.

Richard M. Doerflinger told Catholic News Service Jan. 8 that various studies have shown that the placenta, cord blood, the umbilical cord itself, and other byproducts of birth "may all contain very versatile stem cells, with many of the advantages of

embryonic stem cells without the practical disadvantages or moral problems."

"With 4 million live births every year in our country alone, an ample supply of these cells lies readily at hand," he added.

The study was reported Jan. 7 in the online edition of the journal *Nature Biotechnology* and included research by scientists at the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, and Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School in Boston.

In the journal article, Dr. Anthony Atala of the Wake Forest Institute said he and his colleagues had used stem cells derived from amniotic fluid to create muscle, bone, fat, blood, nerve, and liver

cells in the laboratory.

"It has been known for decades that both the placenta and amniotic fluid contain multiple progenitor cell types from the developing embryo, including fat, bone, and muscle," said Atala in a statement. "We asked the question, 'Is there a possibility that within this cell population we can capture true stem cells?' The answer is yes."

Doerflinger said it is "especially ironic" that the frozen embryos that some scientists want to destroy for stem cells "may produce more beneficial stem cells if allowed to survive and be born."

"New life, not premature death, may show us the way to a brighter medical future," he added.



**NEW STEM-CELL SOURCE** — Dr. Anthony Atala is pictured in his lab at Wake Forest University Baptist Medical Center in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. The recent announcement by scientists at Wake Forest and Harvard universities that the amniotic fluid surrounding a child in the womb can be the source of medically useful stem cells is the latest in a series of studies showing the research value of the byproducts of live birth. (CNS photo/courtesy of Wake Forest University)

# Bishop Wenski expresses hope for immigration reform law in 2007

By Agostino Bono

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Growing public awareness that U.S. immigration laws are outdated, inhuman, and unfair increases hope that Congress will pass a comprehensive immigration reform bill in 2007, said Bishop Thomas G. Wenski of Orlando, Florida.

Immigrants illegally entering the United States face exploitation by employers, abuse by smugglers, and death in the desert, he said.

Immigrants "are hardworking, not lawbreakers. An antiquated system is breaking them," he said during a Jan. 18 teleconference with representatives of Hispanic, labor, business, and public policy organizations.

The organizations form part of the Alliance for Immigration Reform 2007, which plans to pressure Congress and President George W. Bush to enact a law this year.

Bishop Wenski represented the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops at the teleconference. He is a former chairman of the bishops' migration committee and has been involved for decades in church immigrant programs and issues in Florida and on the national level. He currently is chairman of the bishops' international policy committee.

During the teleconference, speakers supported legislation that would include a temporary work program for foreigners, a path to legalization for the 12 million immigrants in the U.S. illegally, and improved measures to help employers verify the legal status of their workers.

They said that the shift of con-

gressional control to the Democrats coupled with Bush's support for comprehensive reform legislation strongly improves the chances of a new law this year.

"Some see undocumented workers as the problem. Human beings are not problems. The problem is antiquated laws," said Bishop Wenski.

The U.S. cannot afford to have a huge segment of the population which is unequal under law, he said, referring to immigrants who illegally entered the country.

"The last time U.S. society created an underclass, it was called 'Jim Crow,'" he said referring to the segregation laws discriminating against African-Americans in the South that started after the Civil War and stretched into the 1950s. "I don't think we want to create another underclass."

Bishop Wenski said that there has been "some backlash" by Catholics against the bishops because of their strong support for comprehensive immigration reform measures, but most Catholics support reform efforts.

They have seen that the current system is unfair, he said.

"Our Catholic people believe in fair play," he said.

The bishop cited the December raids of meatpacking plants in several states in search of workers without legal residency. One result was that children were left alone at schools because their parents had been arrested and could not pick them up, he said.

Any system that allows this "is not fair and just," he said.

R. Bruce Josten, executive vice president of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said that it is not true

that employers want to loosen immigration restrictions so that they have continued access to "cheap labor" from abroad.

"We need a mechanism to bring workers out of the shadows so they can work legally" in the U.S. and fight for better wages, he said.

Josten also supported a temporary worker program that would legally allow foreign workers to enter the U.S. to fill jobs when there is a shortage of U.S. workers.

Temporary workers would hold their jobs under the same laws as U.S. workers, he said.

Strict enforcement of rules against illegal workers, such as raids, also creates major problems for employers, he said.

California has been suffering from a shortage of farmworkers, yet because of stepped-up enforcement, workers are reluctant to come across the border and employers are reluctant to hire people, he said.

New legislation also needs to include a security system for checking the legality of workers, he said.

Tamara Jacoby, senior fellow at the Manhattan Institute, said many small- and medium-size businesses "are not bidding for jobs" because they are afraid stricter enforcement "will put them on the wrong side of the law." The institute, based in New York, is an independent public policy organization.

Jacoby said that anti-immigrant sentiment is not large. Polls show that anti-immigrant feelings do not top 20 percent, she said. "We want to remain a nation of immigrants," she said.

# President Bush promises veto of stem-cell bill

FROM PAGE 1

patients with dozens of conditions in clinical trials."

"Unlike embryonic stem-cell research, research using stem cells from adult tissue, umbilical-cord blood, amniotic fluid, and other sources is showing enormous promise and is likely to produce new treatments for patients now living," he added.

Noting that most Americans prefer stem-cell research that takes place "without harming or destroying human life at any stage," Doerflinger said, "the truly statesmanlike approach to this issue would be to take up this challenge, supporting medical progress that all Americans can live with."

During the House debate on the legislation, Rep. Chris Smith, R-New Jersey, decried the abundance of misinformation surrounding the debate on stem-cell research and called for federal resources to go to effective, ethical stem-cell research.

Before the vote, Philadelphia Cardinal Justin Rigali, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, urged House members to "consider the fundamental moral line" they would cross if they approved H.R. 3, the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2007.

Cardinal Rigali called it a "sad reality" that other forms of stem-cell research have received inadequate funding and attention while there has been "an exaggerated and almost exclusive focus on destructive embryo research in the political and policy-making arena."

"Even the national cord-blood stem-cell bank that Congress approved a year ago, which could benefit many thousands of Americans immediately, has received minimal funding," he said.

Other forms of stem-cell re-

search made news Jan. 7 based on a report from scientists at Wake Forest and Harvard universities that said the amniotic fluid surrounding a child in the womb can be the source of medically useful stem cells. The report was published in an online edition of the journal *Nature Biotechnology*.

In a letter to House members dated Jan. 9 and released Jan. 10, Cardinal Rigali said the lawmakers should support "better solutions" than the "most speculative and most divisive type of stem-cell research," that which involves the destruction of embryos.

"On a practical level, embryonic stem-cell research has been as disappointing in its results as it has been divisive to our society," he said. "After almost three decades of research in mouse embryonic stem cells and nine years in the human variety, researchers can scarcely point to a safe and effective 'cure' for any condition in mice let alone human beings" using embryonic stem cells.

"At the same time," he continued, "ethically sound research using nonembryonic stem cells has continued to advance, helping patients with over 70 conditions in early peer-reviewed studies."

"Since Congress debated this issue last summer, further evidence has emerged on the versatility of adult stem cells, and on the likelihood that they can be reprogrammed to enhance this quality," he said.

Cardinal Rigali told House members also to consider "the fundamental moral line" they will cross by approving the measure.

"The federal government has never taken the crass utilitarian approach of forcing taxpayers to support the direct killing of innocent human life, at any stage of development, in the name of progress," he added.



February 4, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time.  
Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8  
Psalm 138:1-5, 7-8
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:1-11  
Gospel) Luke 5:1-11

By Beverly Corzine

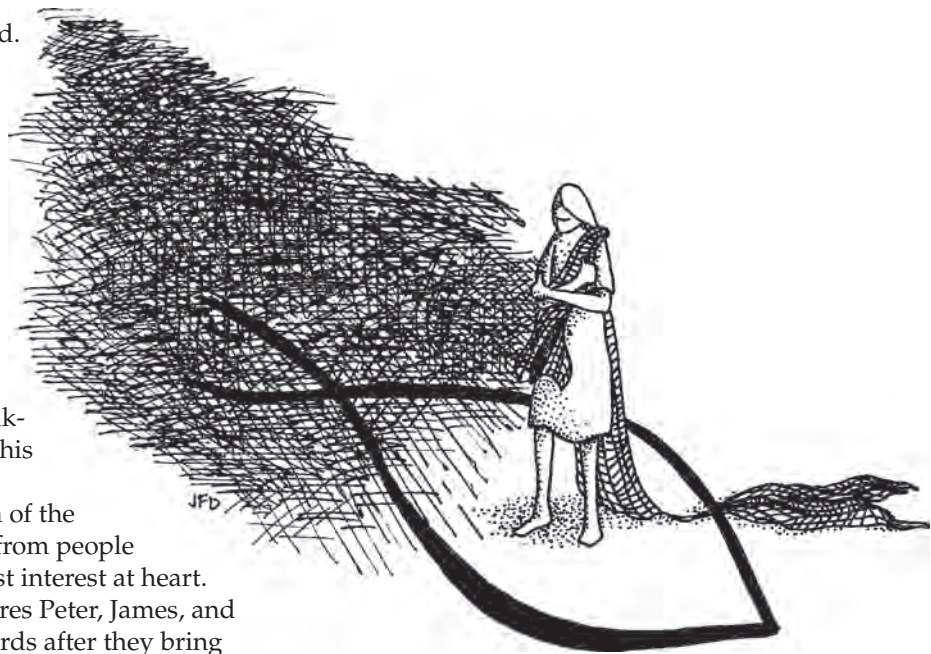
“Don’t be afraid” seems to be a command or words of consolation that we hear throughout our lives. One morning long ago I was preparing an elegant tea party for my saintly black and white terrier — a dog that is surely in heaven after a lifetime of playing dress up and tea parties. I was about ready for us to have our “tea” when I decided that I’d had my fill of imaginary cookies. On the silent march to procure the real thing from the cookie jar, I heard my parents discussing something called “three in one” and that perhaps I needed this new thing.

My dad broke the news to me. I was going to get this new “medicine.” I shouldn’t be afraid. Suspicion reigned. We would have to go into town three different times to get it. The very fact that my dad was the messenger in this scenario signaled red alert.

Into the doctor’s office we walked. I again had

been assured not to be afraid. Why the nurse wanted to rub my arm with alcohol was a mystery. I offered my arm. Then just as I was distracted, the nurse plunged a gigantic needle into my arm. My screams rocked the office. Lost in my own suffering, I never would have guessed that when my dad said there is nothing to fear, he was speaking out of his own fears for his only child.

We often hear a variation of the words, “Do not be afraid,” from people who love us or have our best interest at heart. In Luke’s Gospel Jesus assures Peter, James, and John with these familiar words after they bring in the most astonishing catch of fish. Jesus knows that when they lay down their nets and follow him, their lives will never be the same because becoming fishers of men will become a rewarding as well as a dangerous occupation. For some it will mean prison or execution. Ultimately, they, along with the countless millions who will answer Jesus’ invitation, will be strengthened by his words of counsel, “Do not be afraid.”



“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send?...”

— Isaiah 6:8a

## QUESTIONS:

What emotions or memories arise in you when you hear the words, “Do not be afraid”? Name a recent time or times, when your faith in God’s promised reward helped dispel your fears so you could serve the Lord.

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## Pope says Christians show ecumenical commitment through charity

By John Thavis  
Rome Bureau Chief  
Catholic News Service

VATICANCITY(CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI offered prayers for this year’s Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, saying Christians need to demonstrate their ecumenical commitment through concrete acts of charity.

The pope, speaking at his weekly general audience Jan. 17, said the road to Christian unity was a long and difficult one, but the important thing is not to become discouraged. Prayer is essential for ecumenical progress, he said.

“Every Christian worthy of the name should unite with their brothers and sisters to implore the gift of unity and communion,” he said.

The pope, who addressed about 6,000 people in the Vatican’s audience hall, was scheduled to close the Jan. 18-25 Christian unity week by presiding over a vespers liturgy with other Christian leaders in the Rome Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

He said the theme of this year’s prayer week, “Open our ears and loosen our tongues,” referred to



The faithful greet Pope Benedict XVI as he arrives for his general audience in the Paul VI Hall at the Vatican Jan. 17. (CNS photo/Daniele Colarieti, Catholic Press Photo)

Christ’s healing of a deaf man and to the missionary responsibilities of all Christians.

Through baptism all Christians have been freed from

“spiritual deafness,” he said, and become capable of listening to God’s word and communicating it to others.

“The theme underlines how im-

portant it is to translate the message of Christ into concrete initiatives of solidarity,” the pope said.

“This favors the path of Christian unity, because every action,

however small, which Christians make together to relieve the suffering of others helps make more visible their communion and their fidelity to the commandment of the Lord,” he said.

The pope asked everyone to pray for “significant steps on the road of full communion” between Christian churches, not only during the week dedicated to ecumenism but every day of the year.

Over time, the pope said, he has come to appreciate the deep desire for unity among Christian leaders. This desire was especially evident in his recent meeting in Istanbul with Orthodox Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, he said.

The pope also noted that in Italy and some other countries Jan. 17 was dedicated to Christian-Jewish relations.

“Friendship between Jews and Christians, in order to grow and be fruitful, must be founded on prayer,” he said.

“I ask everyone to pray insistently so that Jews and Christians may respect each other, appreciate each other, and work together for justice and peace in the world,” he said.

## Scripture Readings



February 11, Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time.  
Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) Jeremiah 17:5-8  
Psalm 1:1-4, 6
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20  
Gospel) Luke 6:17, 20-26

By Jean Denton

The Manhattan restaurant was packed with customers enjoying a fine dining experience before hurrying to the theater for an evening show. Suddenly the excited hum of the atmosphere was silenced by the angry shouts of a customer. All eyes turned to the 20-year-old waiter stoically enduring the loud, blistering complaint of a woman jabbing her finger in the air at him. This was the worst service she'd ever seen; she was going to be late! The young waiter's face reddened as he apologized.

The manager intervened and later assured the waiter he'd done nothing wrong. The young man was embarrassed. It ruined his day. But not his life.

Luckily, he'd learned from a similar experience years before in high school. His baseball team was slumping, and the coach regularly rebuked the players for lacking talent. When practice began to conflict with rehearsals for the

school musical, the boy asked to leave practice early. The coach refused, but not before uttering a few snide comments about participating in theater.

But the boy knew what was in his own heart. He was directing the music he'd composed for this play which was written by a fellow student.

He spoke respectfully to his coach. He thanked him, said he appreciated the experience and regretted that he had to quit because of the conflict. The coach's response was to say nothing at all, snatch his uniform from his hands, and yell at another player that he had a better shirt for him now.

The musical, however, was an exhilarating, fulfilling success. In the excitement, the baseball experience quickly faded. What the coach said or thought didn't matter.

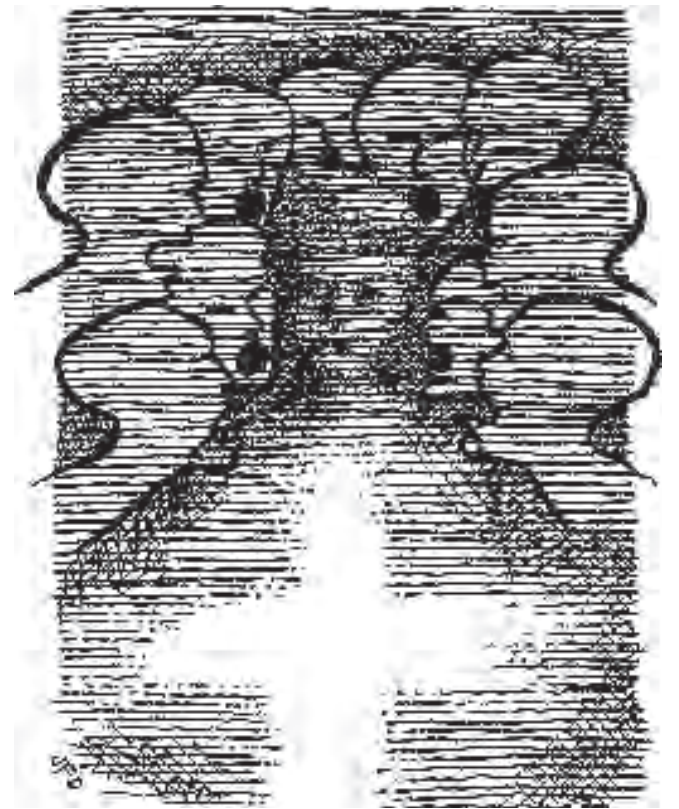
Failure, isolation, hurt, insults. They force our deepest search for strength and assurance.

This weekend's first reading explains that human beings' capacity to provide understanding or acceptance is shallow. True, deep strength will be found only through the one who created us.

In the Gospel, Jesus' Beatitudes tell us not that we *must* be poor to have the kingdom of God, or that we must be hungry to be filled. He is telling us that *when* we are poor and alone, and when we are hungry — or sorrowing or insulted — is when we find God. Finding God we come to the core meaning of our lives.

### QUESTIONS:

When have you endured pain or insult that has forced you to look beyond human strength for assurance of your worth and dignity? How have such experiences deepened your reliance on God?



**"Blessed are you who are poor,  
for the kingdom of God is yours."**

—Luke 6:20

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## Serving young adults: Is God Calling You?

By Jeff Hedglen

The image presented by almost all the media sources imaginable says that the best time of your life is in your 20s. If you believe the advertisers, in your 20s you are in great shape, look good, make lots of money, hang out with beautiful people, and have not a care in the world.

Yet, if a Super Bowl ad was going to be made from my third decade, it would not be a pitch for beer or a hot new dotcom, it would probably be a marketing campaign for the book *Growing up for Dummies*.

Looking back on my life reveals that the years 20 to 30 were the hardest thus far. I was in school on the seven-year plan at UTA; working full time in a job I loved but was clueless how to pull off; trying to find a woman who could put up with me (and not having much luck); searching for time in between all of this for friends; and struggling to grow in faith.

In almost every area of my life I felt inadequate. I ques-

The saving grace of my 20s was that [young adult] Bible study group. When I think of what it means to be church, I think of them.

tioned almost everything about myself and wondered who I really was. The confusing part of this is that I was over 18, and being this age was supposed to mean that I was an adult and had it all figured out. I was stupefied to realize that 18 was

not the age of completion and dominance, rather it was the beginning of the end of "knowing it all" as a teenager.

How did I go from knowing everything to questioning everything in just a few months? How was I going to be a professional at my job? How was I going to finish school? How was I going to get around when my car seemed to only run every third day and on Fridays with odd-numbered dates?

Speaking of dates; how was I going to get one, and if I did, what would I do on the dang thing? Where was I going to get the money to do anything interesting? Speaking of money, where was that going to come from?

Interwoven with all of this was my relationship with Jesus. This one aspect of my life appeared to be going perfectly. Three months after I graduated from high school my parish started a young adult Bible study. I attended almost every week, and I developed a close group of friends. I remember being very much on fire for

Jesus when I was 20 and thinking, "If this is what it's like at 20, I cannot wait until I'm 25."

Well, five years later the fire appeared to have cooled, and it looked as if the only aspect of this decade that was going well had now climbed the long stairway and added itself to the bell tower that was ringing in my ears.

Question after question clanged in my head. All of the quandaries had a common theme: Who am I; who am I going to be; what am I going to stand for; and when will these questions begin to get answered?

The saving grace of my 20s was that Bible study group. When I think of what it means to be church, I think of them. They are the people who I grew to an adult faith alongside. The fact that the centering point of our relationship was the Word of God provided us with a rudder to navigate the stormy seas of young adulthood. That group, and the person who led it, are a huge reason I am the man I am today.

I shudder to think of that time of my life without that group, but the shudder turns to outright quaking when I think of the tens of thousands of young Catholics who have not had this experience, and even if they are looking for it, cannot find a group to hook up with.

One person stepping up at my parish changed the lives of hundreds of young adults. Who is that person at your parish? Is it you? If not, pray that the one the Lord is thinking about will come forward. The emerging faith of young adults is calling.

For information on Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese of Fort Worth go to [www.fwdioc.org](http://www.fwdioc.org). Click on Faith Formation, then Young Adult Ministry.

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](mailto:jeff@stbartsfw.org).



## Células madres de líquido amniótico aclamadas como otra alternativa a uso de embriones

Por Nancy Frazier O'Brien

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El anuncio reciente por parte de los científicos en las universidades Wake Forest y Harvard de que el líquido amniótico que rodea al niño en la matriz puede ser fuente de células madres médicamente útiles es sólo lo más reciente en una serie de estudios que demuestran el valor investigativo de los productos secundarios del nacimiento vivo, de acuerdo con el diputado del director del Secretariado Para Actividades Pro Vida de los obispos estadounidenses.

Richard M. Doerflinger dijo a Catholic News Service el 8 de enero que los varios estudios han demostrado que la placenta, la sangre del cordón, el propio cordón umbilical y otros productos secundarios del nacimiento "pueden todos contener células madres muy versátiles, con mu-

chas de las ventajas de las células madres embrionarias y sin las desventajas prácticas ni los problemas morales".

"Con 4 millones de nacimientos vivos cada año solamente en nuestro país, una provisión amplia de estas células yace fácilmente a nuestro alcance", añadió él.

El estudio fue reportado el 7 de enero en la edición electrónica de la publicación Nature Biotechnology e incluyó la investigación realizada por en el Instituto Wake Forest Para Medicina Regeneradora, en Winston-Salem, Carolina del Norte, y el Hospital de Niños y la Escuela Médica Harvard, en Boston.

Se esperaba que la Cámara de Representantes de Estados Unidos votara el 11 de enero sobre expandir el financiamiento federal para la investigación usando células madres que implica la destruc-

ción de embriones humanos. El presidente George W. Bush vetó una medida similar en julio y el 109no Congreso no pudo anular el veto.

En el artículo de la publicación el Dr. Anthony Atala, del instituto Wake Forest, dijo que él y sus colegas habían usado células madres derivadas del líquido amniótico para crear en el laboratorio células de músculo, hueso, grasa, sangre, nervios e hígado.

"Se ha sabido durante décadas que la placenta y el líquido amniótico contienen múltiples tipos de células progenitoras del embrión en desarrollo, incluyendo de grasa, hueso y músculo", dijo Atala en una declaración. "Preguntamos '¿hay posibilidad que dentro de esta población celular podamos capturar las verdaderas células madres?'. La respuesta es sí".

## Caridades Católicas orientada a recortar pobreza en Estados Unidos a la mitad para 2020

Por Jerry Filteau  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Caridades Católicas USA lanzó el 10 de enero una ambiciosa campaña para recortar la pobreza en Estados Unidos a la mitad para el año 2020.

"Los pobres sí nos pertenecen. ... Ellos son nuestros hermanos y hermanas", dijo padre Larry Snyder, presidente de Caridades Católicas USA, a una multitud que no cupo en un salón en Capitol Hill durante una charla anunciando la Campaña Para Reducir la Pobreza en Estados Unidos.

Señalando que 37 millones de estadounidenses, el 12.6 por ciento de la población, viven actualmente bajo el nivel de pobreza, él dijo que Caridades Católicas USA y sus afiliadas, trabajando en sociedad con el gobierno, con el sector privado y otras agencias no lucrativas, lanzarán "un esfuerzo concentrado y sistemático para recortar la pobreza a la mitad para el 2020".

A la charla presentando la campaña asistieron los medios de comunicación, legisladores, ayudantes de legisladores y líderes de otras organizaciones católicas activas en el servicio social y la defensa de los pobres.

Los participantes recibieron un documento de política de Caridades Católicas USA recién emitido, "La Pobreza en Estados Unidos: Una Amenaza Contra el Bien Común". Éste establece el marco moral y analítico para la

compañía y describe propuestas específicas de política para un impulso sostenido para revertir el crecimiento de la pobreza en Estados Unidos.

La charla fue realizada mientras la Cámara estadounidense debatía un proyecto de ley para cambiar el salario mínimo del actual \$5.15 por hora, tasa que no ha cambiado desde 1997, a \$7.25 por hora para el 2009.

Maureen Murphy, gerente asociada de división de Caridades Católicas Chicago, dijo que con los precios de vivienda en el Condado Lake, Illinois, uno tiene que ganar \$17 por hora en un empleo de jornada completa para poder costear un apartamento de dos dormitorios. Para alguien que esté ganando el salario mínimo actual eso significaría trabajar 133 horas por semana, dijo ella.

Diciendo que una sociedad

es juzgada por cómo trata a sus pobres, padre Snyder describió la situación actual en Estados Unidos como una "crisis moral".

Él dijo que el número de personas que buscan ayuda de parte de las agencias de Caridades Católicas de todo el país está aumentando más rápidamente que la cantidad de recursos disponibles para ayudarles. Desde el 2002 el número de personas que busca ayuda de emergencia ha aumentado a casi 8 millones por año.

"Como sociedad no podemos continuar abandonando" a aquellos que son pobres y están en necesidad de ayuda, dijo él.

Citando la importancia de un salario mínimo más alto él dijo: "Hoy día demasiados estadounidenses están trabajando arduamente sin poder hacer que el ingreso sea suficiente".

## Monseñor Vann anuncia el envío por correo del nuevo recurso para promover un ambiente seguro

Monseñor Kevin Vann ha anunciado que en las próximas semanas el folleto informativo "Una Cultura de Seguridad", que busca promover un ambiente seguro en las parroquias, será enviado a cada hogar en la Diócesis de Fort Worth. Este envío por correo es parte del continuo esfuerzo en la diócesis

por mantener un ambiente seguro para los niños y adolescentes. Monseñor Vann está solicitando la colaboración de los padres en este esfuerzo y los invita a utilizar este material con sus familias para así continuar en nuestra tarea de proteger nuestros niños y jóvenes contra el abuso sexual.



Estatuas de los Reyes Magos son llevadas por bote en el lago Cajititlán, México, el 8 de enero durante un festival religioso que honra a los santos patronos del pueblo. En la tradición mexicana los tres reyes traen a los niños regalos de Navidad el "Día de los Reyes". (Foto CNS/Steven H. Miller)



Encarnación Torres cosecha maíz cerca de un poblado de San Nicolás de los Ranchos en el estado de Puebla, México, el 17 de enero. Reciente alza del precio de la leche, la harina de maíz y otros suministros alimenticios ha causado protestas, especialmente entre los pobres. La Conferencia Episcopal Mexicana expresó su preocupación acerca del alza de precios, diciendo que "el alimento suficiente y que se pueda adquirir es un derecho humano inalienable". (Foto CNS/Imelda Medina, Reuters)

### La Oficina de Servicios Pastoral Hispanos de la Diócesis de Fort Worth Les invita al Retiro—Taller Cuaresmal 2007

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## Oración a la Santísima Virgen María inspirada en los escritos del Papa

Por Pedro A. Moreno, OPL  
Director, Instituto Luz de Cristo

**M**adre de Dios y madre nuestra María, tú vida santa le ha dado al mundo el ser más importante, la verdadera luz, Jesús, tu Hijo, el Hijo de Dios y nuestro hermano mayor. Gracias por el don de tu Hijo.

**A**mor es lo que ha motivado tu completa entrega a la llamada de Dios, y te has convertido así en fuente de la bondad encarnada, el amor encarnado, que mana de Él el Amor de Dios hecho carne salvadora. Ayúdanos a responderle siempre al Señor de la misma manera que lo has hecho tú, con amor filial y confianza en los caminos del Señor.

**R**evélanos a Jesús, muéstranos a Jesús. Guíanos hacia Él. Ayúdanos a comprender la gran Verdad de su Buena Nueva y caminar siempre dentro de la Iglesia que Jesús fundó sobre Pedro, la Iglesia Católica y cuida de nuestros pastores, sacerdotes, diáconos, religiosos y religiosas.

**I**nstrúyenos y Enséñanos a conocer a tu hijo Jesús como tú lo conoces, personal e íntimamente. Enséñanos a acogerlo como el centro de nuestras vidas y la fuente de vida eterna que es. Guíanos por el camino del verdadero discipulado, discipulado que comienza con el amor y respeto en cada familia y que continúa en cada comunidad parroquial. Virgen María, ayúdanos a mantenernos entusiasmados por tu divino hijo Jesús y seguir valientemente cargando nuestras cruces diarias mientras proclamamos con nuestras vidas su evangelio.

**A**mar profundamente y servir fielmente a Cristo, la Palabra de Dios encarnada, es nuestra meta y deber. Servirle a Él, que esta presente de forma especial entre los más pobres y necesitados, es algo que podemos aprender de ti, Virgen y Madre Nuestra María. Ayúdanos Madre a crecer cada día un poco más en este amor servicial que nos convierte en fuentes del agua viva del Amor y la Vida de Dios en medio de un mundo sediento de ese Amor y Vida divina, tu hijo Jesucristo. Amen.



Pedro Moreno es director diocesano del Instituto Luz de Cristo. Sus escritos espirituales han recibido múltiples premios de la Asociación de Periodismo Católico de los Estados Unidos y Canadá. Vive en el noroeste de Fort Worth con su esposa María Mirta y sus tres hijas María, Patricia y Mirangela. Pedro es Laico Dominicano.



Yvonne Alomia juega con su hija, Sofía, en su hogar en El Paso. Sofía celebrará su primer cumpleaños este año en el aniversario del decreto en el caso *Roe versus Wade* el 22 de enero. Su madre, Yvonne, cree que eso es significativo porque durante un embarazo difícil a ella se le aconsejó con frecuencia tener un aborto en vez de llevar a Sofía al término. (Foto CNS/Nohemy González, Rio Grande Catholic)

## Niña de pareja de El Paso nacido en aniversario Roe visto como nena milagrosa

Por Janet M. Crowe

EL PASO (CNS) — Sofía Alomia, de El Paso, celebrará su primer cumpleaños este enero en gran medida como cualquier otro bebé. Sin embargo, en medio del pastel y los regalos los padres de Sofía, Yvonne y Santiago Alomia, tomarán tiempo de la celebración feliz para conmemorar a los millones de bebés matados por el aborto.

Sofía nació el 22 de enero de 2006, el 33er aniversario del decreto de la Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos en el caso *Roe versus Wade* legalizando el aborto durante los nueve meses del embarazo.

Ella podría ser considerada una bebé milagrosa porque varios médicos, temiendo que ella podría tener un desorden cardiovascular severo, en varias ocasiones le pidieron a sus padres durante el embarazo que la abortaran.

Pero Yvonne Alomia se rehusó a considerar el aborto, a pesar de las peticiones repetidas de médicos, colegas, amigos y sus propios pacientes en su práctica como optómetra.

Sofía nació con problemas del corazón. Cuando ella tenía 3 días de nacida recibió cirugía del corazón. Ella está por recibir una segunda cirugía después de su primer cumpleaños y enfrenta cirugías adicionales del corazón, pero sus padres son optimistas.

"No haríamos nada diferente", dijo Alomia, y cada sonrisa de Sofía comprueba que "definitivamente ha valido la pena todos los problemas".

Durante su tercer mes de gestación, Sofía fue diagnosticada con el síndrome velo-cardio-facial de DiGeorge; una porción de su 22do cromosoma faltaba. Éste puede resultar en condiciones que van desde relativamente menores hasta severas, incluyendo paladar hendido, síndrome de

**D**os ecocardiogramas fetales no demostraron ninguna arteria pulmonar desde el corazón hasta los pulmones de la bebé, lo que significaba que ella podría morir poco después del nacimiento o tener una gama de problemas médicos críticos que afectarían su salud y su vida.

Down, deficiencias inmunológicas, anomalías del riñón y enfermedades cardiovasculares. La preocupación por Sofía era cardiovascular.

Dos ecocardiogramas fetales no demostraron ninguna arteria pulmonar desde el corazón hasta los pulmones de la bebé, lo que significaba que ella podría morir poco después del nacimiento o tener una gama de problemas médicos críticos que afectarían su salud y su vida. Los médicos dijeron que las arterias quizás existían y que quizás estaban demasiado subdesarrolladas para ser vistas, pero ellos también exhortaron fuertemente a Alomia a terminar el embarazo.

Alomia y su esposo se concentraron en lo que Sofía necesitaría después que naciera. Tarde en el embarazo el corazón de Sofía estaba agrandado y parecía llenar su cavidad pectoral, haciendo cuestionable el éxito de una cirugía del corazón.

No obstante, Alomia rechazó considerar abortar su bebé pero buscó consejos de médicos, de sacerdotes y del obispo Armando X. Ochoa, del El Paso, para tomar una decisión sobre las medidas

médicas extraordinarias, incluyendo cirugía inmediata después del nacimiento, que podría sólo causarle dolor a Sofía sin aumentar sus posibilidades de supervivencia.

"Simplemente queríamos hacer la mejor decisión de acuerdo con el progreso que Sofía hacía o no hacía", dijo Alomia en entrevista con *The Rio Grande Catholic*, periódico diocesano del El Paso.

"Esperábamos que ella muriera en cuestión de horas del nacimiento, ya que no se veían ningunas arterias pulmonares y este era el resultado más probable", dijo ella.

Una cesárea fue programada para el 24 de enero de 2006, pero durante la Misa matutina del 22 de enero Alomia entró en parto y los médicos decidieron alumbrar el bebé a las 3 de la tarde.

Alomia considera que el día y la hora del nacimiento de Sofía no son mera coincidencia. Ella acredita la intercesión de una enfermera neonatal de turno en el hospital del El Paso, quien comenzó a orar el rosario de la Divina Misericordia cuando Sofía fue alumbrada, quien convenció a un médico neonatal que le hiciera un segundo examen al bebé y quien convenció a Alomia de la cirugía para Sofía.

Recordando que Jesús murió a la edad de 33 años, Alomia indicó: "No creo que el cumpleaños de Sofía, siendo el 33er aniversario *Roe*, y la cesárea comenzando a las 3 de la tarde sean coincidencias".

Aunque muchas personas le pidieron a Alomia tener el aborto, muchos otros apoyaron su decisión de nutrir la vida.

Para otros que experimentan un embarazo difícil, Alomia recomendó a Socios Prenatales por la Vida ([www.prenatalpartnersforlife.org](http://www.prenatalpartnersforlife.org)) para ayuda y apoyo.

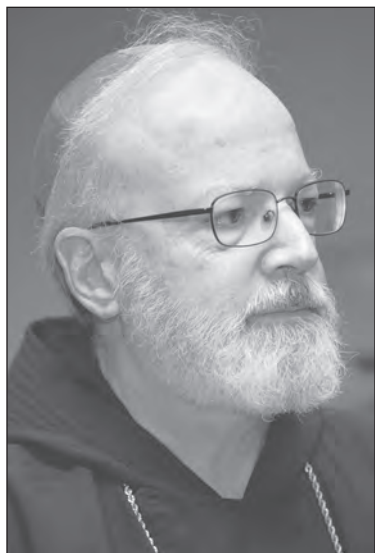
## Cardenal O'Malley, de Boston llama abuso 'verdad oscura' en iglesia

BOSTON (CNS) — En una columna marcando el quinto aniversario de la crisis por el abuso sexual de niños por clérigos, el cardenal Sean P. O'Malley, de Boston, dijo que ese escándalo era una 'verdad oscura y constante' que tenía que ser confrontada.

Los comentarios del cardenal O'Malley fueron publicados el 7 de enero como un escrito de opinión en el Boston Globe, diario cuya exposición persistente del abuso sexual por sacerdotes en la Arquidiócesis de Boston convirtió el secreto de tal abuso en una crisis nacional hace cinco años.

El cardenal O'Malley señaló que el 6 de enero los católicos celebran la Epifanía, "la manifestación del amor de Dios por toda la humanidad".

"Hace cinco años, mientras marcábamos la fiesta el 6 de enero de 2002, las revelaciones devas-



El cardenal Sean P. O'Malley, de Boston

tadoras que clérigos católicos habían abusado sexualmente de niños sacudió la Arquidiócesis de Boston y la comunidad en general", dijo él. "El contraste

entre la fiesta, que celebra la luz de Cristo, y la verdad oscura y constante del abuso sexual por clérigos parecía, originalmente, imposible de aceptar".

"Pero la verdad del abuso tenía que ser confrontada", añadió él. "Estos crímenes contra los niños fueron aún más atroces porque fueron cometidos por hombres que juraron emular a Cristo y fueron habilitados por la falla del liderato de la iglesia en responder apropiadamente".

El cardenal O'Malley usó la ocasión del aniversario para pedir disculpas otra vez a todos aquellos que habían sido abusados por sacerdotes. "Sus corazones heridos y espíritus quebrados tienen un reclamo especial ante la iglesia", dijo él.

A sus familias, cuya "confianza fue traicionada", él dijo: "Ustedes siempre permanecerán en mi corazón y mente".

## Obispos mexicanos expresan su preocupación sobre el alza de precio de alimentos

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (CNS) — La Conferencia Episcopal Mexicana expresó su preocupación sobre el aumento de productos alimenticios básicos.

"El alimento suficiente y que se pueda adquirir es un derecho humano inalienable", dijeron los obispos el 17 de enero.

Este derecho implica un compromiso para que se produzca y se ofrezcan suministros alimenticios a precios asequibles a la gente en las regiones más pobres del país, dijeron los obispos.

La especulación de precios es injustificable y es "un crimen ante Dios y el pueblo", dijeron, llamando a esta práctica poco ética y un "pecado social".

Los obispos exhortaron al gobierno de México y a la sociedad mexicana a que se reaccione de una manera vigorosa y rápida en contra de cualquier estafa

con precios injustos y prácticas ilegales de monopolio.

Los mexicanos han estado protestando en contra del reciente aumento de precio de la leche, harina de maíz y otros suministros alimenticios de primera necesidad.

El precio de la leche ha aumentado cerca de un 50 por ciento. El alza de precio de la harina de maíz ha causado que la tortilla, que es alimento esencial para una mayoría de familias mexicanas, aumente también.

El cardenal Norberto Rivera Carrera de la Ciudad de México dijo, el 13 de enero, que le preocupaba que (el alza de) precios causara dificultades a las familias.

El cardenal también expresó confianza en el gobierno mexicano y aplaudió el afloje en las tarifas para mayor cantidad de maíz importado proveniente de los Estados Unidos.

## El obispo Wenski expresa su esperanza para la reforma de las leyes de inmigración en 2007

Por Agostino Bono

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El aumento en la conciencia pública de que las leyes de inmigración ya están anticuadas, son inhumanas e injustas, acrecienta la esperanza de que el Congreso apruebe un proyecto de ley de reforma completa de inmigración en 2007, dijo el obispo Thomas G. Wenski de Orlando, Fla.

Inmigrantes que ingresan ilegalmente a los Estados Unidos se enfrentan a explotación por parte de los patrones, a abuso por parte de contrabandistas y a la muerte en el desierto, dijo.

Los inmigrantes "son trabajadores y no son violadores de la ley. Un sistema de leyes anticuado los quebranta", dijo durante una teleconferencia del 18 de enero con representantes de organizaciones hispanas, de trabajo, de negocios y de plan de acción pública.

Las organizaciones forman parte de la Alianza por Reforma de Inmigración 2007, que tiene planes de ejercer presión ante el Congreso y el presidente George W. Bush para que aprueben y sancionen una ley este año.

El obispo Wenski representó a la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos en la teleconferencia. Con anterioridad, había ocupado el cargo de presidente del comité de los obispos encargado de inmigración y

ha estado involucrado durante décadas en programas y asuntos de inmigración en Florida y con alcance nacional dirigidos por la iglesia. Al presente, el obispo Wenski es el presidente del comité de plan de acción internacional de los obispos.

Durante la teleconferencia, los presentadores de ponencias se manifestaron por una legislación en la que se incluya un programa de trabajo temporal para extranjeros, un camino para la legalización de los 12 millones de inmigrantes que se encuentran ilegalmente en los Estados Unidos y mejores medidas para ayudar a los patrones a que verifiquen el estado legal de sus trabajadores.

Se dijo que el cambio de control en el Congreso a favor de los demócratas, unido al apoyo de Bush por una legislación de reforma completa, aumenta la posibilidad de una nueva ley este año.

"Algunas personas ven a los indocumentados como problema. Los seres humanos no son problema. El problema son las leyes anticuadas", dijo el obispo Wenski.

Los Estados Unidos no pueden darse el lujo de contar con un gran segmento de la población que ocupe un puesto desigual ante la ley, dijo, refiriéndose a los inmigrantes que ingresan

ilegalmente al país.

"La última vez que la sociedad de Estados Unidos creó una clase marginada, se le llamó 'Jim Crow' (o segregación sistemática)", dijo, refiriéndose a las leyes de segregación que discriminaban a los afroamericanos en los estados del sur, que empezaron después de la Guerra Civil y permanecieron hasta bien entrada la década del 1950. "No creo que queramos crear otra clase marginada".

El obispo Wenski dijo que ha habido "algo de reacción violenta" por parte de algunos católicos que están en contra de los obispos debido al fuerte apoyo que los dignatarios de la iglesia le han dado a las medidas por una reforma completa de inmigración, pero la mayoría de los católicos apoyan los esfuerzos de reforma.

Se han dado cuenta de que el sistema actual es injusto, dijo.

"Nuestra gente católica cree en el juego limpio", dijo.

El obispo mencionó las redadas que se llevaron a cabo en el mes de diciembre en plantas empacadoras de carne, en varios estados del país, en busca de trabajadores sin residencia legal. Un resultado de las redadas fue que a los niños se les dejó abandonados en las escuelas pues sus padres habían sido arrestados y no podían ir a recoger a los

niños como de costumbre en la escuela, dijo.

Cualquier sistema en el que esto sea permitido "no es ni adecuado ni justo", añadió.

El obispo dijo que la diversidad de grupos representados en la alianza demuestra que existe un amplio consenso de base a favor de la reforma de inmigración.

R. Bruce Josten, vicepresidente ejecutivo de la Cámara de Comercio de los Estados Unidos, dijo que no es cierto que los patrones quieran mitigar las restricciones de inmigración para poder tener continuo acceso "a mano de obra barata" proveniente del extranjero.

"Necesitamos un mecanismo que saque a los trabajadores de las sombras para que puedan trabajar legalmente" en los Estados Unidos y luchar por mejor paga, dijo.

Josten también apoyó un programa de trabajo temporal mediante el cual se les permita a los trabajadores extranjeros el ingreso a los Estados Unidos a fin de que se llenen las plazas vacantes de trabajo cuando haya escasez de trabajadores de Estados Unidos.

Los trabajadores temporales mantendrían su trabajo bajo la protección de las mismas leyes que lo hacen los trabajadores de Estados Unidos, dijo.

La aplicación estricta de las normas en contra de trabajadores ilegales, como las redadas, también crean problemas para los patrones, dijo.

California ha venido sufriendo por escasez de trabajadores de agricultura; y, sin embargo, debido a la aplicación intensificada (de la ley), los trabajadores se muestran renuentes a cruzar la frontera y los patrones se muestran reacios a contratar más gente, dijo.

En la nueva legislación se necesita incluir un sistema de seguridad para comprobar el estado legal de los trabajadores, dijo.

Tamara Jacoby, miembro del consejo de gobierno de más alto rango del Instituto Manhattan, dijo que las encuestas demuestran que los sentimientos en contra de la inmigración no pasan del 20 por ciento.

"Queremos permanecer como una nación de inmigrantes", dijo.

Además de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de EEUU, de la Cámara de Comercio y del Instituto Manhattan, entre los miembros de la alianza se incluye el Sindicato Internacional de Empleados de Servicio, la Asociación Nacional de Restaurantes, el Consejo Nacional de La Raza, la Asociación Americana de Abogados de Inmigración y el Foro Nacional de Inmigración.

# National / Diocesan

## Special Collection: World Mission Sunday / Propagation of the Faith

Parish Name	Parish Location	Propagation of the Faith October 2005	Propagation of the Faith October 2006
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Abbott	137.00	236.00
Jesus of Nazareth	Albany	547.00	158.00
Holy Redeemer	Aledo	1,018.20	1,095.28
Most Blessed Sacrament	Arlington	3,559.61	3,160.04
St. Joseph	Arlington	3,242.33	2,637.49
St. Maria Goretti	Arlington	2,812.25	0.00
St. Mary the Virgin	Arlington	689.00	251.00
St. Matthew	Arlington	757.00	655.25
St. Vincent de Paul	Arlington	882.00	812.00
Vietnamese Martyrs	Arlington	3,232.00	1,932.00
Holy Trinity	Azle	713.00	913.00
St. Michael	Bedford	2,473.00	2,799.00
St. Jerome	Bowie	40.00	102.00
Sacred Heart of Jesus	Breckenridge	256.86	224.02
St. John the Baptizer	Bridgeport	343.22	480.81
St. Jude Thaddeus	Burkburnett	350.00	275.00
St. Ann	Burleson	1,212.00	1,100.00
St. Catherine of Siena	Carrollton	2,435.00	2,014.00
Holy Rosary	Cisco	63.76	75.13
St. Joseph	Cleburne	511.36	618.25
Holy Angels	Clifton	223.00	191.37
Good Shepherd	Colleyville	1,415.00	1,701.00
Holy Cross	The Colony	267.00	569.00
Sacred Heart	Comanche	0.00	143.00
St. Joseph	Crowell	16.00	30.00
Assumption/Blessed Virgin Mary	Decatur	700.03	1,085.82
Our Lady of Guadalupe	De Leon	117.81	90.65
Immaculate Conception	Denton	1,634.99	1,009.00
St. Mark	Denton	3,371.45	2,878.76
St. Mary	Dublin	770.00	703.00
St. Francis Xavier	Eastland	100.00	44.00
St. Paul	Electra	0.00	0.00
All Saints	Fort Worth	1,513.00	1,364.07
Christ the King	Fort Worth	691.00	547.00
Holy Family	Fort Worth	2,338.00	3,014.00
Holy Name of Jesus	Fort Worth	0.00	247.00
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Fort Worth	2,499.24	2,961.24
Our Lady of Fatima	Fort Worth	0.00	1,688.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Fort Worth	3,201.00	2,484.00
Our Mother of Mercy	Fort Worth	280.00	87.00
San Mateo	Fort Worth	348.00	495.00
St. Andrew	Fort Worth	2,234.50	3,611.59
St. Bartholomew	Fort Worth	4,224.69	5,813.72
St. George	Fort Worth	512.00	440.00
St. John the Apostle	Fort Worth	932.75	2,152.82
St. Mary of the Assumption	Fort Worth	630.50	378.00
St. Patrick Cathedral	Fort Worth	3,501.20	4,125.50
St. Paul	Fort Worth	852.90	832.95
St. Peter the Apostle	Fort Worth	755.00	1,174.00
St. Rita	Fort Worth	202.00	319.05
St. Thomas the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,381.96	1,919.00
St. Mary	Gainesville	461.50	416.25
St. Rose of Lima	Glen Rose	185.00	331.87
St. Francis of Assisi	Graford	0.00	0.00
St. Mary	Graham	530.28	579.00
St. Frances Cabrini	Granbury	1,124.00	0.00
St. Francis of Assisi	Grapevine	1,600.00	2,207.25
St. Mary	Henrietta	70.00	95.00
Our Lady of Mercy	Hillsboro	361.79	388.20
Korean Catholic Community	Hurst	0.00	0.00
Christ the King	Iowa Park	34.00	85.00
St. Mary	Jacksboro	65.00	91.00
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	Keller	5,026.75	4,209.23
Santa Rosa	Knox City	37.00	0.00
St. Philip the Apostle	Lewisville	2,910.28	2,656.99
St. Peter	Lindsay	1,119.00	2,012.47
St. Jude	Mansfield	268.00	916.35
St. Mary of the Assumption	Megargel	30.00	0.00
Our Lady of Lourdes	Mineral Wells	503.53	45.00
St. William	Montague	0.00	0.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Morgan	103.25	125.00
Sacred Heart	Muenster	1,847.60	1,565.90
St. Joseph	Nocona	30.00	0.00
St. Theresa	Olney	172.00	105.25
Nativity/Blessed Virgin Mary	Penelope	184.00	113.00
St. Thomas Aquinas	Pilot Point	453.00	513.00
St. Mary	Quanah	62.00	122.00
St. Rita	Ranger	56.00	74.00
St. Joseph	Rhineland	0.00	530.25
St. Boniface	Scotland	93.00	80.00
Sacred Heart	Seymour	111.00	195.00
St. Brendan	Stephenville	190.31	204.39
St. John	Strawn	64.00	87.00
St. John	Valley View	35.00	0.00
Holy Family of Nazareth	Vernon	171.00	312.00
St. Stephen	Weatherford	2,218.00	1,851.00
Immaculate Conception of Mary	Wichita Falls	0.00	757.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Wichita Falls	1,019.93	1,169.39
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Wichita Falls	607.00	1,144.30
Sacred Heart	Wichita Falls	978.00	584.00
St. Mary	Windthorst	665.00	583.00

83,373.83 85,784.90

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

# Poverty in United States called a major moral, policy challenge

By Jerry Filteau

WASHINGTON (CNS) — "Poverty remains our nation's most serious political blind spot and one of our nation's most profound moral failings," says a new policy paper of Catholic Charities USA, "Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good."

The policy paper, published in the form of a 28-page booklet released Jan. 10 at a briefing on Capitol Hill, sets the framework for Catholic Charities' new Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America. The paper is also available in Spanish.

The goal of the campaign is to cut poverty in half by 2020. That would mean that the 37 million Americans now living below the poverty line, who form 12.6 percent of the country's population, would have to drop to about 6 percent within 13 years.

"Poverty in this nation is an ongoing disaster that threatens the health and well-being of our country, which our children will inherit," the paper says.

It says the spread of poverty in America "has been largely ignored" in recent years by politicians and the media, while the federal government "has substantially reduced the resources" devoted to assisting the poor.

"There has been a conscious and deliberate retreat from our nation's commitment to economic justice for those who are poor," it says.

The paper pledges Catholic Charities USA and its members — more than 1,700 local agencies and institutions nationwide — "to attack the structural roots of poverty by advocating in Washington, D.C., and state capitals for the policy changes outlined in this paper."

It pledges a campaign to speak out in the public square and raise public understanding of poverty and its causes.

It says Catholic Charities agencies will continue to serve individuals and families who are poor, uphold their dignity, and work to enable them "to actively participate in and share in the responsibility for addressing the issues that brought them to our doors."

At the same time, it says: "Faith-based groups and the nonprofit sector do not have the resources to replace those functions which are the legitimate responsibility of government and the private sector. Catholic Charities USA will not accept the proposition that agencies such as ours should substitute for some of the basic functions of government."



Father Larry Snyder, the president of Catholic Charities USA, speaks Jan. 10 at a Catholic Charities press conference on Capitol Hill in Washington where the agency unveiled its plan to cut poverty in America in half by 2020. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

It says Catholic agencies will work in partnership with other social service agencies, the private sector, the nonprofit sector, and government on programs to decrease poverty.

The paper bluntly confronts the question of the revenue needed to fund such programs. "The taxes on America's wealthiest families and on businesses have been reduced dramatically in the last 25 years.... It is upper-income families who have prospered most during the last 25 years.... Therefore it is only fair and just to ask these same families to bear a greater share of the responsibility for the costs of fighting poverty," it says.

It points out that in 1998 the top 20 percent of the population held 83 percent of the total net wealth of the country and the remaining 80 percent held only 17 percent of the wealth — and "the gap is growing at rates that historically are almost unprecedented."

"Our nation has not seen such extreme inequality since the 1920s," it says.

The paper devotes five pages to specific policy proposals, which it summarizes in terms of two basic areas:

— "Creating more livable-wage jobs and raising the wages of existing low-paid jobs."

— "Investing more of our common wealth in social welfare policies for low-income people."

The paper notes that unemployment and old age are not

the main causes of poverty in the United States: Nearly two-thirds of all families living below the poverty line have one or more workers.

It calls for raising the minimum wage from the \$5.15 level established in 1997. The day the policy paper was released the House of Representatives voted to raise the minimum wage incrementally, to \$7.25 in 2009.

A summary of the social policies it calls for says the government should: strengthen and protect the nation's nutrition safety net; improve the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program, known as TANF, to benefit more families; ensure universal health insurance coverage; support policies that strengthen families; create more affordable housing; improve the Earned Income Tax Credit so it is more inclusive; improve access to education and training; and address the growing wealth disparity.

To accompany the policy paper, Catholic Charities USA also published a 31-page "Tools for Reflection and Action" with resources for use in charities agencies, in parishes, and in study groups, including suggestions for developing an action plan for anti-poverty work and advocacy.

The policy paper, reflection, and action guide and other resource materials connected with the campaign are all available on the Internet at [www.catholic-charitiesusa.org](http://www.catholic-charitiesusa.org).

## Local Catholic Charities joins national campaign to reduce poverty

In a Jan. 22 press release, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Fort Worth announced that it has joined the multi-year initiative lead by Catholic Charities USA to cut poverty in half by 2020.

Heather Reynolds, president and CEO of the local charity, stated: "Poverty impacts each of us in this community and in our nation. Our mission calls us to advocate for those in need in all structures of society. Catholic Charities is here not only to provide services to those among us in need, but also [to] help them

reach self sufficiency. We are committed to cutting poverty in this community we serve, so that every child and family among us can reach their full potential while maintaining their dignity."

Through this campaign, Reynolds added, "...we will encourage our members of Congress and elected state government representatives to improve programs and policies in four key issue areas: health care, affordable housing, nutrition assistance, and economic security for the poor and vulnerable."

# Diocesan

## Pope John Paul considered resignation, but felt it was God's will he remain

From page 24

It also established a specific procedure for giving his resignation, in case he would not have been able to carry out his ministry as pope to the very end," Cardinal Dziwisz said.

"So, as one can see, he considered this possibility," he said.

The book recounts other behind-the-scenes moments, according to excerpts provided by the Italian publisher, Rizzoli:

— On Sept. 11, 2001, shortly

after two planes crashed into the twin towers in New York, the phone rang in the pope's office in Castel Gandolfo outside Rome.

"On the other end of the line was the frightened voice of Cardinal ([Angelo] Sodano, the secretary of state. We turned the television on, and the pope was able to see those dramatic images, the collapse of the towers with so many poor victims imprisoned inside."

The pope passed the rest of

the day going back and forth between the television and the chapel to pray, he said.

"He was worried, strongly worried, that it wouldn't end there, and that the attack could set off an endless spiral of violence," Cardinal Dziwisz wrote.

— Recalling when the pope was shot in 1981, Cardinal Dziwisz said he was convinced his assailant, the Turkish gunman Mehmet Ali Agca, was "sent by someone who thought the pope was dangerous." He said

it seemed logical to conclude, at least as a hypothesis, that the Soviet KGB was involved — an allegation made later by Agca when he described a supposed "Bulgarian connection" to the shooting.

But Cardinal Dziwisz added: "In fact, there was no belief in the 'Bulgarian connection,' nor in the many other reconstructions in circulation." Likewise, he said, he gave no credence to journalistic theories that the disappearance of a Vatican City teenager, Emanuela Orlandi, was in any way connected to the papal shooting.

— Toward the end of the book, Cardinal Dziwisz described the pope's final moments.

"It was 9:37 p.m. We had

noticed that the Holy Father had stopped breathing. But only in that precise moment did we see on the monitor that his great heart, after continuing to beat for a few moments, had stopped." Someone, he said, blocked the hands of the clock to mark the hour of the pope's passing. Those around the pope's bed began singing a *Te Deum* of thanksgiving, not a requiem.

"We were crying. How could one not cry! They were tears of both sadness and joy. It was then that all the lights in the house were turned on. ... And then, I can't remember. It was as if it had suddenly become dark. It was dark above me, and it was dark inside of me," he said.

## Hamer...

From page 11

She wanted to drive her grandchildren home from school. She had no idea — nor did they — that the end of that school day would alter their lives. None of us ever knows that in advance.

Eleven of Pat's children are with her, supporting her, but she is largely unaware of their presence, sleeping most of every day, her husband Jessie says. "Then she wants to be awake all night," he smiles.

Endlessly patient with his wife of more than 30 years, Jessie has stayed with Pat continually since the beginning, having slept only one night at home in more than two months. He cleans her, inspects the gauze around her tracheotomy and feeding tubes, moves her fingers and arms. He even devised a blue plastic cushion from a rubber glove with cotton stuffed inside. "It's more comfortable under her hand," he said.

As February nears, and the stores, already full of Valentine reminders, are bursting with lace, hearts, chocolates, and romantic music, there are certain kinds of love stories that make more sense than those on display.

There are love stories like Michael.

Love stories like Pat and Jessie Molina.

At the 34th anniversary of

the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion, the Diocese of Fort Worth celebrated its annual respect Life Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral. Present were stalwart advocates of life, like Chuck Pelletier, who, in his wheelchair, has spent years praying outside local abortion clinics, several days each week.

"We're God's hands to hug and hold. We're his mouth to speak and his feet to walk up and down in front of these centers," he said, in a previous *North Texas Catholic* interview. "Babies die if we're not here to help. If we're here, some babies get saved."

(A life story is always a love story.)

A few nights ago, in the kitchen of my daughter Meredith and her husband Dustin, I stood rinsing dishes (like Cinderella!) and inconspicuously listening (like James Bond!).

Nearby, at the dinner table, I heard childlike conversations about Valentine's Day. Sam said, "Love is something good. I show people I love them by giving them hugs when they need hugs."

Natalie, clearly waiting for dessert, said, "Valentine's Day has good food — milk and ice cream make me really happy."

"I show my love by following directions and hugging Emma," she ended.

Their mother, rocking the baby, smiled wearily and said, "Emma thinks 'Love means never having to go to sleep.'"

But it was Sam's last observation that drew my attention.

When his daddy asked, "How does God show he loves us?" Sam replied, "He gives us another chance."

I stopped rinsing dishes and turned my head. "What did you say, Sam?"

"My teacher said God always gives us another chance," Sam replied simply. "Because he loves us."

There are many love stories out there, some with an intensity most of us may never understand.

Life-and-death love stories. Getting-well love stories. Great-beginning love stories. Life-saving love stories. Care-taking love stories. Filled-with-grace love stories.

But above all the rest, is the one we all know about and celebrate. It is the simple one Sam's kindergarten teacher, Mrs. Linda Loughry, taught her students, right there at St. Andrew's Catholic School.

It is God's story. The always-gives-another-chance love story.

The giving-your-life-for-your-friends love story.



Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. Andrew's, has five children, Meredith, John, Julie, Andrew, and Abby. Her column is syndicated in a number of the best Catholic diocesan newspapers across the U.S. In May of 2005, her column received the first place award for best family life column by the Catholic Press Association of the U.S. and Canada.

Abby. Her column is syndicated in a number of the best Catholic diocesan newspapers across the U.S. In May of 2005, her column received the first place award for best family life column by the Catholic Press Association of the U.S. and Canada.

## Skiing escapes helped keep JP II from feeling a prisoner of the Vatican

From page 24

mountain excursions.

And the odd thing was that, for a long time, no one recognized the pope, Cardinal Dziwisz said. He would dress as other skiers, with a ski jacket, beret, and sunglasses, taking his place in line at the lifts with the rest.

One of the first people to recognize the pope was a young cross-country skier, a boy no more than 10 years old, who was lagging behind the rest of his family when he came upon the papal party. He asked them if they had

seen his family go by, and one of the priests pointed to the trail.

At that moment, the pope arrived at the bottom of the slope.

The boy looked astonished, pointed to the pontiff and began yelling, "The pope! The pope!"

One of the pope's aides intervened quickly: "What are you saying, silly! You'd better think instead about hurrying up, you're going to lose your group."

The boy skied away, and the pope and his friends quickly returned to their car and headed for Rome before the word got out.

## The FLOCK

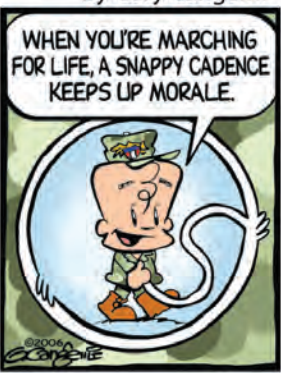
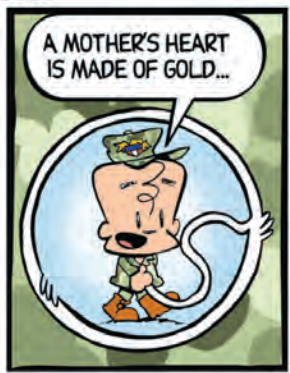
By Jean Denton

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## Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



# Calendar

## SCHOOL OPEN HOUSE

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, 2016 Willis Lane, Keller, invites all to its open house Jan. 28 from noon to 2 p.m. Help kick off Catholic School's Week by learning what Catholic education has to offer. For more information, contact the school office at (817) 431-4845.

## MAGNIFICAT BREAKFAST

Magnificat, a ministry to Catholic women, will sponsor a breakfast with praise and eucharistic devotion (open to women only) from 9 a.m. to noon Feb. 24 at the DFW Hilton in Grapevine. The keynote speaker will be Linda Schubert, lay evangelist and internationally known author of the best-seller, *Miracle Hour*. Schubert's focus will be on prayer, healing, and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Confession and prayer teams will be available following the presentation. Call Lucy Gonzales at (972) 393-2518 to purchase tickets by Wednesday, Feb. 21, or visit these Catholic stores: Keepsakes Catholic Books and Gifts in Arlington; Little Angels Boutique in Coppell; or Catholic Art and Gifts in Farmer's Branch. Additional information about Schubert may be found on her Web site at [www.linda-schubert.com](http://www.linda-schubert.com).

## CATECHIST PRESENTATION

Dr. Sandra Kennedy will offer a presentation entitled "What is a Catechist?" at Good Shepherd Church, 1000 Tinker Road in Colleyville, Feb. 1, from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. All catechists, directors of religious education, and others with an interest in religious education are invited to attend the free presentation. For more information, contact Mary Kelly or Ginny Phoenix at (817) 421-1387.

## WOMEN'S SUPER BOWL RETREAT

The annual Women's Super Bowl Retreat, offered during Super Bowl weekend at the Catholic Renewal Center (CRC), will be held Friday, Feb. 2, at 7:30 p.m., through noon Sunday, Feb. 4. CRC is located at 4503 Bridge Street, in East Fort Worth. The presenter for this year's retreat, Sister Fran Ferder, FSPA, will focus on the topic "Can We Talk? Deepening Relationships through Communication." Sr. Ferder will lead participants in the reflection on important themes of human communication from Scripture and human psychology. All women are invited to participate. The cost of the retreat is \$100. Reservations are requested by Jan. 29. For more information or to register, call CRC at (817) 429-2920.

## YOGA MEDITATION RETREAT

The Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth, will host a Yoga/Meditation Retreat, led by Janie Portele, Feb. 23-25 beginning at 7 p.m. Friday and ending Sunday at 2 p.m. No yoga experience is required to participate. The all-inclusive cost is \$154 before Feb. 5 and \$184 after Feb. 5. To register, contact Janie Portele at (254) 967-2384 or by e-mail to [yoga@our-town.com](mailto:yoga@our-town.com).

## LENTEN RETREAT

Sister Margarita Armendariz, ASC, a certified spiritual director who has served in the dioceses of El Paso and Las Cruces, will return to the Catholic Renewal Center to lead a Lenten retreat, "Gather Up the Fragments." The retreat will begin Friday, March 16, at 7:30 p.m. and conclude Saturday, March 17, at 5 p.m. "Through prayer, teachings, and dynamics, we will walk through a four-step process in which we allow Jesus to transform the broken pieces of our lives into bread for a hungry world..." CRC materials explain. CRC is located at 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth. An overnight room and meals are included in the \$55 fee. For more information or to make a reservation by the March 12 deadline, call CRC at (817) 429-2920.

## ST. AUGUSTINE'S GROUP

St. Augustine's Men's Purity Group, a ministry for men who struggle with sexual impurity issues on the Internet and other sources, meets Tuesdays at 7 p.m. in Room 213 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, located at 2016 Willis Lane, Keller, and Sundays at 7 p.m., at 1301 Paxton (Padre Pio House) in Arlington. For additional information, visit the Web site at [www.sampg.org](http://www.sampg.org), or e-mail to Mark at [seasmenspurity@yahoo.com](mailto:seasmenspurity@yahoo.com).

## 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](mailto: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. 107 and ask for the vicar general, Father Michael Olson.

## To Report Abuse

Call the **Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services)**  
1 (800) 252-5400

## SCRIPTURE STUDY

A four-week course offering specific techniques for reading and understanding Scripture will be offered Sundays, March 11 through April 1 from 10:15 am to 11:15 a.m. and repeated Wednesdays, March 14 through April 4, from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Church, 861 Wildwood Lane, Grapevine. Learn how to read Scripture the same way the earliest Christians did using the four senses of Scripture described in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Reservations for childcare may be made by calling Carol at (817) 481-2685. For more information, call Steve Kellmeyer at (817) 481-2685 or e-mail to [skellmeyer@stfrancisgrapevine.org](mailto:skellmeyer@stfrancisgrapevine.org).

## EVENING OF REFLECTION

The Advocates of Catholic Charities and the Catholic Renewal Center (CRC) of North Texas will host "Love and Fear: The Paradox of Relationships" at CRC, located at 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth, Wednesday, Feb. 14, from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. The evening of reflection will be led by Msgr. Don Fischer, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Richardson and founding pastor of the Chapel of the Incarnation at the University of Dallas. Msgr. Fischer is known for his weekly "Pastoral Reflections" program of Scripture readings, music, and preaching aired each Sunday morning on the WRR (101.1 FM) classical radio station. Program materials note, "His background as an artist, liturgical consultant, and spiritual director enriches his primary work of preaching." Space is limited. Participants are asked to RSVP by Monday, Feb. 12, to Erinn Hall at (817) 413-3916 or by e-mail to [ehall@ccdfw.org](mailto:ehall@ccdfw.org).

## SWEETHEART DANCE

A Sweetheart Dance, benefiting the North American Conference of Separated and Divorced Catholics - Region 10, will be held Feb. 10, at St. Joseph Church, 1927 S.W. Green Oaks Blvd., Arlington. A potluck dinner will begin at 7 p.m. with dancing to DJ music following at 8 p.m. The St. Joseph Parish singles group, who is hosting the event, invites both singles and couples to attend. For more information, call Greg Mills at (817) 731-4666; Vince Chairez at (817) 896-5726; or Sylvia Salinas at (817) 845-2718.

## Catholic Pilgrimages From DFW

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## ANNULMENT PROCESS

Father Hector Medina, pastor of St. Matthew Church, Arlington, will lead an interactive session entitled "Til Death Do Us Part? Marriage: A Sacramental Sign of God's Faithful Love" Feb. 6 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at Good Shepherd Church, 1000 Tinker Road, Colleyville, in Rooms 2 and 3. Catholics who have divorced and wish to remarry, as well as those taking part in the RCIA process, often have questions about a decree of invalidity and what it means for them and for the children of a marriage that is declared "invalid." This is an opportunity to explore the answers to questions pertaining to the sacrament of marriage and to learn about the possibilities for healing within the annulment process. All are invited to attend and to bring a friend. Childcare is available if requested prior to Jan. 26. To arrange for childcare or for more information, call the church office at (817) 421-1387.

## MOTHER - DAUGHTER TEA

A Mother-Daughter Tea, sponsored by the diocesan Office of Family Life, will be held Feb. 25, from noon until 4 p.m. at The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South in West Fort Worth. Young women, ages 10 to 13, are invited to attend with their mother, grandmother, or other special woman in their lives to spend an afternoon sharing experiences of being female. Discussion from a faith-based perspective will concentrate on the physical, emotional, and psychological changes that occur in young women during the adolescent years and will address many relationship issues faced by teens today. A light lunch, tea, and desserts will be served. The cost is \$12.50 per person. For more information or to make a reservation, call Nancy Novak at (817) 656-9633 or Kathy Stojak at (817) 773-8096.

## WORLD MARRIAGE DAY

World Marriage Day is celebrated nationally on the second Sunday in February. This year it falls on Feb. 11. "Now is the time to gather a committee to plan this day of celebration," encourages Deacon Dick Stojak, diocesan director of Family Life. Information packets containing ideas for planning a World Marriage Day program are available through the diocesan Family Life Office. For a copy of the materials, call (817) 560-2452 ext. 256. Materials are also available online at [wmd.wmme.org](http://wmd.wmme.org).

## DENIM AND DIAMONDS

All Saints School will be hosting its 10th annual Denim and Diamonds Dinner and Auction Feb. 17 at Lockheed Martin Recreation Center, 3400 Bryant Irvin Rd, Fort Worth. The event will run from 6 p.m. to midnight and will include dinner provided by San Marcos Catering and a silent and live auction. Items for the auction will include theme baskets donated by the All Saints community, event passes, and decor. Music will be provided by Eso Es Sounds with DJ Bob Bonilla. The cost per ticket is \$35 presale or \$40 at the door. Advance tickets for a reserved table of 10 may be purchased for \$350. Limited seating is available. Tickets are available at All Saints School, 2006 N. Houston, Fort Worth, at All Saints Church rectory, or by calling (817) 578-5519. For further information or to make a donation, contact Gladys Perales at (817) 578-5519 or by e-mail to [gperales@allsaintscatholicsschool.org](mailto:gperales@allsaintscatholicsschool.org).

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## NOLAN MARDI GRAS

Nolan Catholic High School will present its 26th annual Mardi Gras Dinner, Auction, and Dance Feb. 10 from 5:30 p.m. to midnight at the Fort Worth Convention Center. Income generated from this event helps fund improved academics, facilities, programs, and provides financial aid for families who otherwise would not be able to share in the benefits of a Catholic education. The evening's activities will include a live auction with items to bid on such as a trip to Los Cabos, Mexico, including airfare and a three-night stay at a luxury suite at the Las Ventanas al Paraiso resort, and a Drive Your Dream "2000HP Tour," which puts the winner behind the wheel of a Lamborghini Gallardo, Ferrari F430, Aston Martin V8 Vantage, Porsche Twin Turbo 911, and a Corvette Z06. Reserved seating is offered in the form of Krewe tables. Krewe tables are \$1,200, seat 10 people, and come with special amenities. Individual tickets are \$85 each and are open seating. For more information on Mardi Gras, visit [www.nolancatholic.org](http://www.nolancatholic.org) or e-mail to [mardigras@nolancatholic.org](mailto:mardigras@nolancatholic.org).

## SUBIACO OPEN HOUSE

Subiaco Academy, an all-boys Catholic boarding and day school in western Arkansas, will host a free Discovery Sunday for parents and prospective students Feb. 4 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Those visiting will have an opportunity to meet members of the administration and faculty, and have a guided tour of the campus. Interested students may also take the preliminary placement exam. Established in 1887 by the Benedictine Monks of Subiaco Abbey in Subiaco, Arkansas, the academy offers a college prep program for grades 9-12 that challenges young men academically, as well as in the arts, athletics, and other activities. For additional information, contact the Subiaco admission office at (800) 364-7824, e-mail to [admissions@subi.org](mailto:admissions@subi.org), or visit the Web site at [www.subi.org](http://www.subi.org).

## OMM MARDI GRAS

The Knights of Peter Claver, Council #89 of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth, will hold its 17th annual Mardi Gras and Zydeco Dance from 8 p.m. to midnight Feb. 17. The event will be held at the Meadowbrook Lions Club, 6013 Craig Street, Fort Worth. All proceeds will be used to assist in funding the many charitable activities of the Knights' organization throughout the year. The theme of this year's event is "A New Orleans Good Time in Fort Worth, Texas." The \$20 donation per person includes authentic Louisiana gumbo and red beans and rice. For more information or to purchase a ticket, call (817) 253-0806 or (817) 534-7652, or contact any of the Knights at Our Mother of Mercy Church.

## NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING

According to The Couple to Couple League, Natural Family Planning is safe, healthy, and effective. CCL offers classes in the sympto-thermal method of NFP. Since the class consists of four meetings at monthly intervals, engaged couples are encouraged to attend a class starting at least four months before their wedding. For more information or to register for a class starting Jan. 28 at 3:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 1501 9th St., Wichita Falls, contact Charles and Renée Gartland at (940) 855-2235, and for a class starting Jan. 28, at 6 p.m. at Mary Immaculate Church, 14032 Dennis Ln., Farmers Branch, contact Scott and Amy Rustand (817) 581-6266.

## POLKA MASS

The Czech community, along with Father Richard Eldridge, TOR, from Sacred Heart Parish in Seymour, will celebrate with friends in the Metroplex Jan. 28 at a special 12:30 p.m. Sunday Polka Mass at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd., Arlington. Bohemian sausage and kolaches will be sold following each Mass. For additional information, call Sacred Heart Parish at (940) 889-5252.

# Classified Section

## HR DIRECTOR

The Diocese of Fort Worth is seeking a director of Human Resources. This position is responsible for policy development and implementation for the parishes and schools of the diocese. Qualified applicants will be practicing Catholics and have a minimum of three years experience in human resource administration with specific training in human relations, conflict management, compensation, and federal and Texas law. MA or equivalent is required along with an understanding of the teachings of the Catholic Church and principles of just treatment. For a required application, contact Steve Landon at 800 W. Loop 820 South, Fort Worth 76108, (817) 560-3300, or e-mail to [slandon@fwdioc.org](mailto:slandon@fwdioc.org). Applications will be accepted until Jan. 31.

## ACCOMPANIST

An accompanist experienced at three-manual pipe organ is needed for four weekend Masses at Holy Family Church in Fort Worth. Responsibilities include rehearsals with two choirs weekly, Holy Day Masses, availability for parish funerals, weddings, and major parish celebrations throughout the year preferred. Applicant must be familiar with post-Vatican II Catholic liturgy. Send résumés to Holy Family Church; Attn: Diane Kain, 6150 Pershing Avenue, Fort Worth 76107 or call (817) 737-6768 ext. 104, to apply.

## PRINCIPAL

Principal for fall 2007 needed at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hattiesburg, Mississippi. Active Catholics with administrative experience may send résumés by mail to Rev. Ken Ramon-Landry, Sacred Heart Church, 313 Walnut Street, Hattiesburg, MS 39401 or by e-mail to [sacheartpastor@aol.com](mailto:sacheartpastor@aol.com)

## YOUTH MINISTRY

St. Gabriel Catholic Community in McKinney is a young parish of 2,000 plus families seeking a Spirit-filled servant leader to coordinate its developed, yet quickly growing, youth ministry's vision of "Get It, Live It, Pass It." Primary roles include overseeing the vision of middle and high school comprehensive programming, directing the high school youth nights, and collaborating with others to provide a unified, nourishing environment, giving attention to empowering adult and youth volunteer leadership. Candidate should demonstrate strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills. Bachelor's degree, previous experience required; youth ministry certificate preferred. Details may be found at [www.stgabriel.org](http://www.stgabriel.org). If interested, submit a résumé to Mike Seibold, 110 St. Gabriel Way, McKinney 75071 or by e-mail to [mseibold@stgabriel.org](mailto:mseibold@stgabriel.org).

## ACCOMPANIST

St. Rita Church is looking for an accompanist for Sunday Masses. Must play the organ and piano and be able to coordinate a choir. Salary negotiable. Call Ann Ward at (817) 451-9395.

## CEMETERY PLOT

Double burial plot with marker for sale by owner. Located at Moore Memorial Gardens on North Davis Drive in Arlington. (817) 860-1011.

## HOME CAREGIVERS

Visiting Angels, a non-medical home-care service, is seeking experienced caregivers for on-call positions, PT to live-in. Great supplemental income. Call (817) 224-9701.

## SERVICES AVAILABLE

Topsoil, sand, gravel, washed materials, driveways, concrete, backhoe, and tractor services. Custom mowing lots and acres. Call (817) 732-4083.

## Good Newsmaker

# New book offers inside glimpse of John Paul II's life in Poland and Rome

By John Thavis  
Catholic News Service  
ROME

**P**ope John Paul II consulted with top aides about possibly resigning in 2000 and set up a "specific procedure" for papal resignation, says a new book by the pope's former secretary.

The pope eventually decided that it was God's will that he stay in office, despite the illness that left him more and more debilitated, wrote Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz of Krakow, Poland, the late pope's closest aide.

In the book, *A Life With Karol*, Cardinal Dziwisz offers an inside glimpse at key moments of Pope John Paul's life in Poland and his 26-year pontificate. The book was to be published in Polish and Italian in late January.

In his last will and testament, made public after his death, Pope John Paul strongly hinted that he had considered resignation as he prepared to turn 80 in the year 2000.

Cardinal Dziwisz said the pope, in fact, decided at the time to consult on the question with his closest aides, including then-Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

The pope concluded that he would remain in office, saying that God had called him to the papacy and that "God will call me back, in the form that he wishes," Cardinal Dziwisz wrote.

"At the same time, John Paul  
SEE POPE JOHN PAUL, P. 22

**ABOVE:**

Pope John Paul II walks with aides (among them, Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz) outside a mountain retreat in Les Combes, Italy, July 15, 2001. (CNS photo from Reuters)

**RIGHT:**

Pope John Paul II waves his cane at the end of his general audience at his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, July 17, 2002, Cardinal Dziwisz, once again, at his side. (CNS photo from Reuters)



## Hardly a Vatican prisoner: JP II made secret outings

By John Thavis  
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — Pope John Paul II made more than 100 clandestine trips to ski or hike in the Italian mountains and was rarely recognized by others on the slopes, his former secretary said.

Polish Cardinal Stanislaw Dziwisz described the secret outings in a book of memoirs, *A Life With Karol*, which was being published in late January. An excerpt appeared Jan. 23 in the Rome newspaper *Il Messaggero*.

The cardinal, who was Pope John Paul's personal secretary for 38 years, wrote that the pope, an avid skier and hiker in his youth, often felt pent up inside the Vatican.

In the winter of 1981, the pope, his secretary, and two of his Polish aides decided to make a "get-

away" to the mountains from the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo.

They packed into a car owned by one of the priests, in order not to raise suspicions, and when they passed the Swiss Guard post one prelate opened wide a newspaper to hide the pontiff in the back seat.

Then they drove to the central Italian ski town of Ovindoli without an escort, winding through mountain towns and carefully respecting the speed limits.

Once they arrived, they chose a deserted slope and the pope was able to ski all day long. On the way back, the pope smiled and said, "We did it!" It was the first of many such escapes, the papal secretary said.

In the beginning, no one — including journalists and other Vatican officials — knew about the  
SEE SKIING P. 22

**RIGHT:**

In an undated photo, the new Pope John Paul II admires a pair of skis during one of his first audiences.

An avid sportsman, the pontiff often skied incognito, it turns out, in the mountains of Italy. (CNS photo by Arturo Mari)



## Inside... This issue of the NTC

Ministry Formation Day, Fort Worth, was on Epiphany this year, helping set the theme for this gathering of servants of God as they sought both the Savior and how to lead others to him. **6**

When Tarek Saab appeared on the reality show "The Apprentice" he didn't quite know what he'd gotten into, but as to the rest of life — well, let's just say he finds his faith a pretty sure guide. **7**

Columnist Jeff Hedglen shares some of his cosmic young adult quandaries about life, jobs, faith, dating, and looking for God, and how all that fits in with young adult Bible study. **17**

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