

North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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VIEWING ST. PAUL'S TOMB — Pope Benedict XVI looks into the crypt area of what church officials have identified as the tomb of St. Paul in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome Jan. 25. The pope celebrated an ecumenical prayer service in the basilica with representatives of Orthodox, Anglican, and Lutheran churches. (CNS photo/L'OSSESSATORE ROMANO)

Pope urges Christians to end divisions in face of global problems

By John Thavis

ROME (CNS) — In the face of global instances of racism, poverty, and conflict, Christians need more than ever to end their divisions and proclaim the Gospel with one voice, Pope Benedict XVI said.

He made the comments at a Jan. 25 ecumenical prayer service, the liturgy that closed the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, in the Rome Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

After entering the brightly lit basilica, the pope was joined on the altar by representatives of Orthodox, Anglican, and Lutheran churches.

Below the main altar was a recent architectural opening that

allows visitors to glimpse what church officials have identified as the tomb of St. Paul. The pope said he was happy that the tomb is now visible to pilgrims and called St. Paul a "tireless builder of unity" in the early church.

After the service, the pope walked into the crypt area and peered through the opening to see the saint's burial place.

In a sermon, the pope said the theme of this year's ecumenical prayer week, "Open Our Ears and Loosen Our Tongues," made reference to Christ's healing miracles in order to underline the importance of healing "incommunicability and division" in the Christian community.

SEE POPE ENCOURAGES..., P. 12

Notre Dame task force issues report on future of Catholic schools

By Carol Zimmermann

WASHINGTON (CNS) — For today's Catholic schools to thrive, school officials must rethink traditional ways of operating and try innovative approaches, said a report highlighting the current challenges facing Catholic schools.

The report also calls on the Catholic community at large to play a key role in restoring its schools.

The 32-page report, "Making God Known, Loved, and Served: The Future of Catholic Primary and Secondary Schools in the United States," was prepared by the University of Notre Dame

"Catholic schools matter more now than ever, and they work, as study after study demonstrates."

— Report by
Notre Dame Task Force
on Catholic Education

Task Force on Catholic Education — a group of educators, administrators, diocesan representatives,

philanthropists, and investment specialists.

The report was a response to the 2005 pastoral statement of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops entitled "Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools in the Third Millennium."

The Notre Dame report, released in December, does not gloss over Catholic schools' difficulties, pointing out in the second paragraph how enrollment has declined from more than 5 million students 40 years ago to half that number today even as the Catholic population has grown.

SEE NOTRE DAME..., P. 13

Paulists open reconciliation office to heal hurts in church

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Jesuit Father J-Glenn Murray has seen both sides of the hurt.

In the wake of the church sex abuse scandal, Fr. Murray encountered a young man who had been abused by four priests. "How do you know what to say to this young man?" he said. "I didn't know where to begin."

On the other end of the spectrum, Fr. Murray has seen the

devastation caused when a fellow priest was falsely accused of abuse. "He was just assumed guilty," he said.

These experiences reinforced the need for reconciliation within the church in Fr. Murray's mind, and that is one of the reasons he joined 15 other religious and laypeople on the board of directors for the new Paulist Office for

SEE PAULISTS..., P. 9

Bishop Barnes lauds Bush's desire for comprehensive immigration reform

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration applauded President George W. Bush's advocacy during his Jan. 23 State of the Union address for comprehensive immigration reform.

"I welcome the remarks of President Bush," said Bishop Gerald R. Barnes of San Bernardino, California, in a Jan. 25 statement.

"Comprehensive immigration reform is clearly a high priority for our nation and should be high on the agenda of the 110th Congress," he added. "The issue of immigration reform is ripe for federal action."

Bush, in his address, asked Congress for "a serious, civil, and conclusive debate so that you can pass — and I can sign — comprehensive immigration

reform into law."

"Although immigration elicits strong views, our elected officials must work together in a bipartisan manner to repair our flawed immigration system," Bishop Barnes said.

"In part because of inaction at the federal level, states and localities are moving to adopt their own laws in this area. Americans

SEE URGENT ACTION..., P. 21



LENT PREPARATIONS — Palms are burned for ashes used to mark the start of Lent on Ash Wednesday, Feb. 21. The penitential season of Lent calls Christians to prayer, fasting, repentance, and charity. (CNS photo/Bill Wittman)

American's donation lets pope peruse oldest copy of St. Luke's Gospel

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A donation to the Vatican by a U.S. businessman enabled Pope Benedict XVI to peruse a few pages of the oldest existing copy of the Gospel of St. Luke and one of the oldest copies of the Gospel of St. John.

The Catholic businessman, Frank J. Hanna III, and his family were present in the pope's library Jan. 22 when Pope Benedict got his first look at pages from the famous Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV.

Hanna is the Atlanta-based chief executive officer of HBR Capital Ltd., an investment management company, and co-chairman of President George W. Bush's Presidential Advisory Commission on Educational Excellence for Hispanic Americans.

Cardinal Jean-Louis Tauran, the Vatican's archivist and librarian, presented both the papyrus and the Hanna family to the pope.

The Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV, handwritten in Greek around the year 200, contains "about half of each of the Gospels of Luke and John," Cardinal Tauran explained.

"With this new precious papyrus, the library of the pope possesses the most ancient witness



Pope Benedict XVI looks at pages from the Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV during an audience with U.S. businessman Frank J. Hanna III at the Vatican Jan. 22. The document, written in Greek around the year 200, is the oldest known copy of the Gospel of St. Luke and one of the oldest copies of the Gospel of St. John. The papyrus was donated to the Vatican by Hanna. Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican secretary of state, is seen at left. (CNS photo/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO)

of the Gospel of Luke and among the most ancient of the Gospel of John," he said.

For the presentation, Cardinal Tauran and his staff brought only a few pages of the papyrus to the papal apartment.

He invited the pope to "come in person to the library to meditate, if I may say so, in front of that which can be considered a true relic, given that the church has always venerated the divine Scriptures just as she venerates

the body of the Lord."

Claudio Piazzoni, vice president of the Vatican Library, told Catholic News Service Jan. 23 that the new acquisition includes the oldest existing copy of the Lord's Prayer, which is found in Luke 11:1-4.

The new acquisitions join the Bodmer Papyrus VIII, a copy of the First and Second Letters of St. Peter, which Martin Bodmer personally gave to Pope Paul VI in 1969.

Bodmer died in 1971, entrusting his vast library to a foundation he established. The Gospel texts were acquired from the Bodmer Foundation in Cologne, Switzerland.

Piazzoni said he had no idea how much money was involved in the transaction, although it must have been "significant."

The day after the papal presentation, the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, dedicated a full page to the manuscripts.

Before the Bodmer documents were discovered in Egypt in 1952, it said, biblical scholars relied on references to the Gospels in the writings of the early church theologians to assert that by the year 100 the Christian community had accepted only four Gospels as inspired texts.

The Bodmer Papyrus XIV-XV, containing the last two Gospels,

the newspaper said, provides concrete evidence that the four Gospels were circulating among Christian communities as a complete set by the year 200, although the twin papyrus containing the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark has not been found.

The Vatican took possession of the papyrus in late November and already new discoveries about it have been made, the Vatican newspaper said.

The Bodmer Foundation commissioned a transcription and facsimile of the text in 1961, and 13 years later researchers discovered that at least one fragment had not been transcribed and reproduced.

In the last few months, the Vatican Library's experts have been working to restore the rough binding, which they believe was placed as a protective covering around the papyrus in the early 300s, when the text was already too fragile to use in the liturgy.

The binding was made of layers of parchment and paste and, in restoring it, the newspaper said, new fragments from the external pages of the text itself were discovered.

"The research on an ancient manuscript can never be said to be finished," *L'Osservatore* said.

St. Vincent de Paul Society, Missouri bishops back campaign to reduce poverty

By Joseph Kenny

ST. LOUIS (CNS) — The new Campaign to Reduce Poverty in America launched by Catholic Charities USA is getting support from the public policy agency of the Missouri bishops and from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's national council.

"Any way Catholic Charities and others can bring their direct experience of working with the poor to the Capitol building both here and in Washington, D.C., that's all the better," said Mike Hoey of the Missouri Catholic Conference, based in Jefferson City.

Too often discussions of economic policy focus solely on numbers, Hoey said. The right question is how the policy will affect people and how they can be protected, he added.

"We hope it gets to the point that lawmakers themselves will ask economists and others, 'How will this affect the individual?'" Hoey noted.

When Catholic Charities and others who provide services to the needy help lawmakers be sensitive to the poor before they make a decision, "that can have a tremendous impact," Hoey told the *St. Louis Review*, newspaper of

the St. Louis Archdiocese.

"We have to see them as human beings created in the image and likeness of God," he added. "When we can have those who work directly with lower-income individuals and families tell their stories to policymakers, it brings the human dimension alive, and they have to confront the human face of the issue."

The Catholic Charities USA effort stems from a new policy paper, "Poverty in America: A Threat to the Common Good." The goal is to cut poverty in half by 2020.

Census figures show 37 million Americans living below the poverty line, about 12.6 percent of the population.

Catholic Charities and its more than 1,700 agencies and institutions plan to attack the structural roots of poverty by advocating in Washington and in state capitals for policy changes on health care, affordable housing, hunger and nutrition, and economic security for families.

In announcing the Society of St. Vincent de Paul's support for the effort, Joe Flannigan, the society's national president, said in a statement: "Our special mission is to help the poor. We help

them by providing food, clothing, and shelter, and by enabling them to provide those necessities for themselves.

"We also help by trying to remove the obstacles that stand in their way, the things that make it difficult for them to get by," he said.

Through Catholic Charities USA's campaign, "we will encourage our members of Congress and elected state government representatives to improve programs and policies," said Flannigan.


The largest lay Catholic organization in the world, the St. Louis-based society is best known for its thrift stores and food pantries, and for the personal visits of its members to the homes of the poor and needy.

Tom Mulhearn, president of Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of St. Louis, said in a statement that cutting poverty "is a challenge we in St. Louis look forward to and with the dedicated staff in each of our eight federation agencies."

Catholic Charities St. Louis helps nearly 124,000 people in the St. Louis area alone, said Elizabeth Westhoff, director of communications.

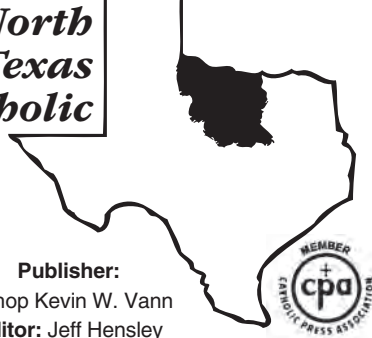
"Our agency has been coping with a steady increase in demand for emergency assistance, primarily among working families, like many agencies across the


nation," she said. "Each day our federation agencies serve families who work hard but still do not earn enough to provide for their basic needs."



15 Years in a Row

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Kielburger grows up, encourages adults to offer aid to world's poor

By Carol Zimmermann

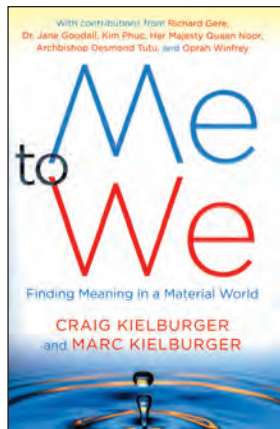
WASHINGTON (CNS) — Craig Kielburger, the longtime youth activist who has worked to improve conditions for young people around the world, is now taking his message to a broader audience: adults.

Maybe that's because Kielburger, who started the group Free the Children, an international organization to fight child labor, when he was just 12, has run into adulthood himself at age 24. But as he puts it, it has more to do with the fact that young people have a lot of ideas, but "they don't live in isolation."

He is convinced that to tackle the overwhelming problem of world poverty, young people need support, cooperation, and also a fair amount of inspiration from their parents, youth leaders, and educators. They also need to do simple things on an everyday basis to make tangible changes around them.

That's the message behind the new book written by Craig and his brother, Marc, *Me to We: Finding Meaning in a Material World*, published in 2006 by Simon & Schuster.

The book includes plenty of anecdotes, including some from famous people such as Oprah Winfrey and retired Anglican Archbishop Desmond Tutu of South Africa about what it means to make a difference in someone's life. It also is loaded with sugges-



tions on everyday actions that can make a difference for a neighbor or a stranger on the street and ultimately change the attitudes of those doing the good deeds.

The Catholic brothers, who have led Free the Children for 12 years, primarily through the support of youth volunteers and their donations, have seen their initial vision of wanting to improve child labor conditions mushroom into huge undertakings: building more than 450 schools all over the world and providing health care clinics and services in remote areas of Africa, China, Latin America, and Sri Lanka.

The organization has set up alternative income projects for those in poverty, sponsored entire villages, and provided systems for clean water and sanitation. The group also runs a youth leadership training program.

The brothers, who frequently speak at youth conferences and gatherings, have long relied on young people to help them with their work and have succeeded despite a perception that today's young people are not concerned with the global issues of poverty and social justice.

"There are a lot of factors why young people care," Kielburger told Catholic News Service in a Jan. 12 phone interview from his home in Toronto just days after returning from the site of a future water project in Kenya. He said his own generation came of age when 24-hour news and the Internet were part of everyday life.

"We are truly a global generation," he said, noting that many young people see what's wrong in the world and want to act. Over the years, young people continue to be the main force behind Free the Children, but at the same time, the group also gets plenty of calls from educators and youth leaders wondering how to inspire youths.

To get to youths who do not realize they can make a difference and should, Kielburger calls on the grown-ups.

He realizes adults can be overwhelmed by all the problems in the world and might want to protect and shelter their children from violence and hardships, but he also sees danger in that. "Young people see the problems anyway and if they close their eyes to them,

*Responding
to God's Call*

Vocation awareness— Entering a hope-filled 2007

By Fr. Kyle Walterscheid

What lies ahead for 2007 in regard to vocations? First of all Bishop Vann approved of an overall plan of the Vocation Office in the promotion of vocations for 2007 and 2008.

This plan is very aggressive. It will be build upon the past while adding in a greater awareness and interaction with priests, parishes, and parents.

The plan was developed by Father Jim Pemberton, the new associate vocations director, and myself with the helpful input of the Serrans, the priests of the diocese, and many lay leaders. Some key elements follow.

It is exciting to see that ten new seminarians joined our diocese this past year, more than doubling any previous year. In addition five men of

they might close their hearts too," he warned.

He advises adults to help young people acknowledge the troubles that exist and then give them simple ways to help, including writing letters to soldiers far from home or collecting food and volunteering at shelters.

"Yes, we live in a world with poverty, violence and fighting," he said, but in that environment parents cannot afford to raise "passive bystanders."

As an example, he points to his own mom, a teacher. He said she was always teaching, not just in the classroom. He remembers that when he was little she would

the Fort Worth Diocese joined other religious communities or dioceses. That's fifteen men in all for one year! This is a great beginning of what we hope to build upon. And yes, although delayed, we see a trend among the single women too to consider the religious life.

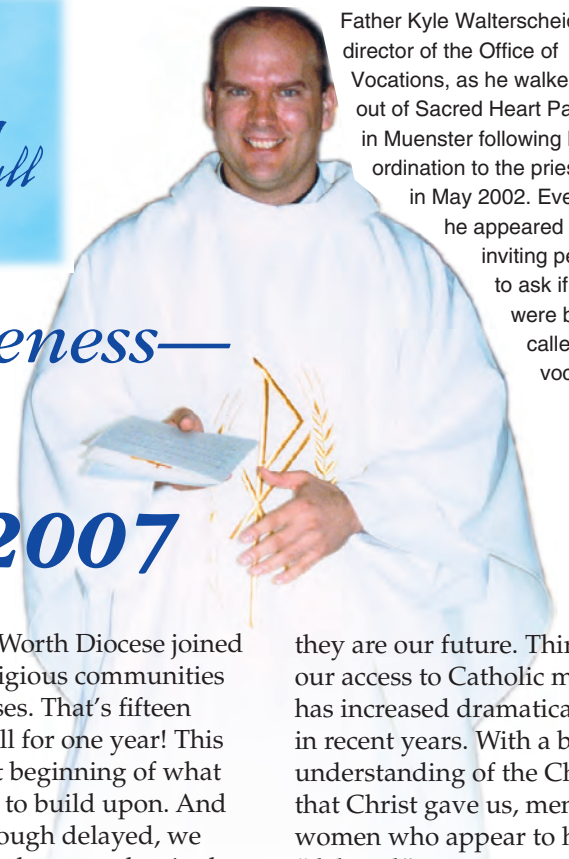
I draw your attention to several reasons for this increase. First, the chalice program that began in our diocese in 2000 and is present in over half of our parishes has created a new culture. Yes, I am certain that the chalice program has helped families and parishes build a culture of life where our children and teenagers are much more attuned to their calling from God. So, if your parish doesn't have the chalice program, get it now! Secondly, with about ten years of development through both the diocesan office and the parishes, our youth programs are stronger than ever before. When almost 7,000 teenagers came out this past summer to World Youth Day at Six Flags and celebrated being "Catholic to the Core," these teenagers were excited to be Catholic and to be faithful to Christ and his teachings. And

always stop and talk with homeless people who would ask for money.

Kielburger, who at the time wanted to move on, said he always thought she was doing this for the homeless; he realized later that she also was doing this for her sons, to show them how to treat others.

Kielburger also thinks church youth leaders have a key role in shaping youths who want to make changes because they can directly tie in their work with the church's call to social justice. He said his own faith influenced his work in "unexpected ways" because he did not initially go out to help oth-

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



they are our future. Thirdly, our access to Catholic media has increased dramatically in recent years. With a better understanding of the Church that Christ gave us, men and women who appear to have "delayed" saying yes to the religious life are now ready to say yes to their vocation from God.

Now comes the hard part. How is the Vocation Office to handle all of these vocations that are streaming in?

Last year we added to the annual summer Vocation Awareness Program at Holy Trinity Seminary in Dallas by starting up a Lenten Vocation Awareness Program, a Denton VAP, a Wichita Falls VAP, and a Spanish VAP.

Again this year, starting on Feb. 19 on Monday nights at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral, we are running a VAP for single men between the ages of 18 and 55.

As we identify men, women, and teenagers who are interested in discerning the religious life, we will add them to our database, inform their local pastor, and we will provide them with a bi-monthly newsletter to help them in their discernment. Yes we are a hope-filled Church for 2007!

Bishop Vann's first pastoral letter will be available in Vietnamese

Bishop Vann's first pastoral letter, *No One Is a Stranger in Christ*, will be printed and distributed in the Vietnamese language in the next few weeks. The English and Spanish language editions of the pastoral letter are inserted in this issue of the *North Texas Catholic*.

For details about the Vietnamese edition of the letter or to obtain additional copies, contact Dan Luby director of Christian Formation at (817) 560-3300 ext. 259.

ers based on his faith, but instead came to a deeper understanding of his faith from that experience.

When he visited the poor in other countries, he said, the Gospel stories he had grown up hearing about feeding the poor made more sense to him. "For the first time, I saw what faith meant, that it's more than going through the motions," he said.

He also has seen a lot of faith-filled people who look at problems in the world and wonder why God does not directly intervene and change things.

Kielburger said there is divine intervention. "God works through us," he said.

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 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@ccdofw.org.

'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.

Vocation discernment program for men to be offered Feb. 19

A Lenten vocational discernment program for male religious and seminary candidates will be offered Monday evening, Feb. 19. The program, which is sponsored by Bishop Kevin Vann and the Serrans of the Diocese of Fort Worth, will take place at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton Street in downtown Fort Worth.

The evening will begin at 6 p.m. with eucharistic adoration; exposition and reflection on Christ; and evening prayer. Benediction will begin at 7 p.m., followed by a presentation by priests of the Diocese of Fort Worth. An evening supper and social will be held at 8:30 p.m., with a closing prayer and blessing ending the evening at 9 p.m.

For more information, visit the diocesan Web site at www.fwdioc.org, and click on "Religious Vocations." Reservations are requested in order to plan the meal. To RSVP, contact Father Kyle Walterscheid at (817) 366-0439 or e-mail to padrekyle@gmail.com.

Relationship series for couples to be offered at Most Blessed Sacrament

The Most Blessed Sacrament Adult Formation Committee and the parish Knights of Columbus and MBS Families Group will co-sponsor a two-part series, the "MBS Lenten Relationship Series for Couples," on two consecutive Saturday evenings, March 17 and 24 from 6:45 p.m. to 8:45 p.m. Each session will be preceded by a light meal served at 6:15 p.m. for pre-registered participants and children.

The series will be presented by Everett and Trudy Costa, longtime parish directors of family and adult ministry in the Diocese of Dallas. Program materials note that the Costas "have been using story-telling and humor to teach effective strategies and skills to create happy marriages for 25 years." Trudy Costa is the author of *128 Powerful Tips for Couples*.

Participants are asked to donate \$15 per couple per session, or \$25 per couple for both sessions. Arrangements may be made for those who are unable to donate the full suggested amount. Childcare is available by reservation; pre-registration for the program is required. For more information about the series, call Trudy Costa at (817) 652-0041.

People & Events

of Importance for the Church of Fort Worth

DCCW deanery meeting to be held Feb. 15 at Holy Family

The next meeting of the Central and East Deaneries Council of the Fort Worth Diocesan Council of Catholic Women (DCCW) will be held Thursday, Feb. 15, at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Avenue in West Fort Worth. Father Antony Mathew, TOR, parochial vicar at St. Patrick Cathedral, will be the guest speaker.

Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m., with coffee and a light breakfast being served. The meeting will start at 10 a.m. Mass will be celebrated at noon, followed by lunch.

The council's annual fundraiser auction will take place after lunch. Participants are asked to bring a nicely wrapped gift (minimum value of \$10), which will be auctioned off to the highest bidder.

"Plan now to join us and bring your friends," encourages a written statement from the council. The cost of lunch is \$10. Reservations should be made no later than Monday, Feb. 12, by calling Connie Soto at (817) 838-8302 or Pat Coffey at (817) 657-2823.

Hispanic Ministry Workshop to be offered at Montserrat

A Hispanic Ministry Workshop, designed especially for pastors and parish and diocesan staff, will be presented at Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House, 600 N. Shady Shores, Lake Dallas. The workshop will be held Monday evening, May 7, though lunch on Thursday, May 10, and will be presented primarily in the English language by a wide variety of presenters representing several universities, Catholic Relief Services, parishes, and other social service agencies.

According to Father Nathan Stone, SJ, coordinator of the workshop, "The objective is to promote growth in cultural awareness among people responsible for the Hispanic ministry in the church. Using the criteria of compassion, participants will consider the history of the migrant experience and work toward discernment of our call to respond and serve. Come to think, pray, and share your experience."

The cost for the workshop is \$360 for a single room, or \$300 for those sharing a double room. The cost includes all conference materials, lodging at Montserrat, and all meals. To register or for more information, visit the retreat house's Web site at www.montserratretreat.org, or call (940) 321-6020.

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.

Applications being accepted for Ad Altare Dei Tour for Catholic Scouts

The Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Diocese of Fort Worth has announced that a unique opportunity will be made available for Catholic Scouts within the Diocese of Fort Worth. The 2007 Ad Altare Dei Tour, to begin July 26 and concluding Aug. 1, will combine the opportunity to work on Catholic Scouting religious awards with a pilgrimage to religious shrines in northwest Texas and in New Mexico.

Tour highlights will include a farewell Mass celebrated July 26 by Bishop Kevin Vann at St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth; visits to sites within the state of New Mexico, including Loretto Chapel, San Miguel Mission, and St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe; the Capulin Volcano National Monument; Indian cliff dwellings at Bandelier National Monument; and time spent at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico.

To participate, Scouts must be Catholic, must have completed sixth grade, and must have been an active member of a troop for at least six months prior to beginning work on the Ad Altare Dei religious award.

The cost for the trip is \$200; limited scholarship opportunities are available. For more information about the tour, contact John Ryan via e-mail to tetexaswebguy@yahoo.com. Further information is available online at www.bsaccs.org. Scholarship sponsorship is sought from interested individuals, businesses, or groups.

Most Blessed Sacrament Parish announces Lenten video series

The Adult Formation Committee of Most Blessed Sacrament Parish has announced that a four-session video series, "I Believe — We Believe" from the "Echoes of Faith" modular program, will be offered for viewing at the church, located at 2100 N. Davis Drive in Arlington, on consecutive Monday evenings: Feb. 26 and March 5, 19, and 26. All sessions will be held from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. and will include small group discussion following the video presentation.

For more information about the series, contact the parish office at (817) 460-2751.

First annual Stephen Breen Youth Day scheduled

The first annual Stephen Breen Youth Day will be held Saturday, March 31, at Nolan Catholic High School, 4501 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth. The event, created in honor of Stephen Breen, a 15-year-old Catholic school student who died of cancer in October 2005, is open to all Catholic youth, grades K-12, within the Diocese of Fort Worth.

The event will begin with registration at 10:30 a.m. and will conclude at 7:30 p.m. The day will include an 11:30 a.m. Mass, celebrated by Bishop Kevin Vann, with music provided by the Remnant Catholic Apostolate Band throughout the festive day of evangelization, athletic and academic competition, food, and fun.

Stephen Breen was 14 years old when he was diagnosed with Ewing's Sarcoma, a rare form of bone cancer. At the time of his diagnosis, he was a freshman at Nolan Catholic High School and had just graduated from St. Andrew School in 2002. Proceeds from the event will benefit the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation, which offers scholarship assistance for Catholic education.

Tickets are \$10 per person; families with five or more students will pay a maximum of \$50 per family. All participants will receive a Youth Day T-shirt and lunch. For more information, visit the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation Web site at www.stephenbreenmemorialfoundation.org, or call the foundation at (817) 846-6887.

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.

Liturgist Christopher Walker to lead workshop, retreat in Aledo

Holy Redeemer Church in Aledo will sponsor a workshop and retreat for liturgical ministers. Both events will be led by internationally recognized lecturer, composer, and liturgical musician Christopher Walker the weekend of Feb. 17-18. All who are involved in music ministry are welcome to attend the programs.

Walker, who currently serves as director of music for St. Paul Church in Westwood, California, has composed for all types of liturgical celebrations, especially children's music for liturgy. His most recent work, a music resource for RCIA, is entitled *Christ We Proclaim*.

The music workshop will be offered from 1:30 p.m. until 4:30 p.m. Saturday, Feb. 17, at St. Francis Episcopal Church, 117 Ranch House Road in Willow Park.

The retreat will be offered at The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South in West Fort Worth, from 7 p.m. until 9 p.m. Feb. 17 and from 10:15 a.m. until 5 p.m. on Sunday, Feb. 18. The retreat will conclude with Mass at 4 p.m.

To register or for more information, contact Holy Redeemer Church at (817) 441-3500.

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 and 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.

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 March 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.

NTC announces change in schedule for March

The *North Texas Catholic* is published twice monthly, except during the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly. However, due to an upcoming renovation of the NTC offices, the issue scheduled for March 9 has been canceled. There will be only one issue in the month of March, which will be published on March 23.

The rest of the production schedule is expected to remain the same. Therefore, items to be considered for publication in the Feb. 23 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Feb. 14. Items for the March 23 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, March 14.

We apologize for any inconvenience this change in the production schedule may cause.

People and Events

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 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. Space is limited.

'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@stfrancisgrapevine.org.

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; or visit the Web site at www.texasmissioncouncil.org.

Henrietta parish will hold Bohemian Sausage Dinner Feb. 25

A Bohemian Sausage Dinner will be served Sunday, Feb. 25, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. in the parish hall of St. Mary Church, 105 S. Barrett Street in Henrietta.

The meal will include homemade sausage, sauerkraut, German potatoes, coleslaw, green beans, coffee or tea, and dessert.

A silent auction will take place during the sausage dinner, with proceeds helping the youth of the parish to attend summer camp.

Tickets for adults are \$7; tickets for children ages five to 10 are \$4; children under four years of age may eat for no charge.

Uncooked and cooked sausage will be available for sale by the pound. For carryout orders, enter the alley on the north side of the church.

For more information, contact the parish at (940) 538-4214.

Fr. Victor Karls to lead Lenten mission at Holy Family Church

"The Symbols of our Salvation," a Lenten mission offered by Redemptorist missionary Father Victor Karls, will be offered Feb. 25-28 at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Avenue in West Fort Worth. Fr. Karls will preach at all parish Masses during the weekend of Feb. 24-25. All are invited to attend.

The mission's evening sessions will be held in the church from 7 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 25, through Wednesday, Feb. 28. Week-day morning sessions will be held daily from 10 a.m. to 11 a.m. following 9 a.m. Mass and a 9:30 a.m. coffee social, beginning Monday, Feb. 26, through Wednesday, Feb. 28, in Rooms ABC in the parish Family Life Center. Mission Mass times will replace the usual Monday through Wednesday Mass schedule.

Sunday evening's session is entitled "The Bible, Living Word of God"; Monday's sessions, "The Cross of Jesus: God's Statement of Love for Us"; Tuesday, "The Easter Candle, Sign of the Light of Christ"; Wednesday, "The Altar, Gathering Place for Eucharist." Wednesday evening's session will conclude with the celebration of Mass and a reception.

Fr. Karls, originally from Wisconsin, has served as a missionary and as an educator. He is presently at Liguori Mission House in Liguori, Missouri, where he serves as the local superior.

For more information about the mission, contact Holy Family Church at (817) 737-6768.

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.

The cost is \$184, which includes lodging, vegetarian meals, and classes. 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.

Courage group meets twice monthly

Courage D/FW, a spiritual support group for Catholics striving to live chaste lives according to Catholic Church's teachings on homosexuality, meets the second and fourth Friday evenings of each month.

For more information, e-mail to CourageDFW@Catholic.org or call (972) 938-5433.



SHOOTING FREE THROWS — Young people ages 10 through 14 line up to take part in the Knights of Columbus Basketball Free Throw Competition sponsored by KC Council #9884 of Lewisville. The Jan. 27 competition, which was held at Forestwood Middle School in Flower Mound, yielded several winners in the following categories: Boys' Division — age 10, Michaelo Mayhew; age 11, Nelson "Trey" Cox; age 12, Jared Stowers; age 13, Philip Forte; age 14, Chris Shelton; Girls' Division — age 10, Makenna Johnson; age 11, Janel Madayag; age 13, Alyssa Keller; age 14, Amy Freet. These young competitors were scheduled to compete in a district-level competition Feb. 3 in Grapevine.

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.

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.

'Infant Baptism Ministry Swap Shop' for parish ministers set for Feb. 26

An "Infant Baptism Ministry Swap Shop" will be held for parish ministers Monday, Feb. 26, at 1 p.m. at The Catholic Center, located at 800 West Loop 820 South in West Fort Worth. For those who assist parents and godparents in preparing for infant baptism, the event is an opportunity to share ideas, ask questions, and learn new approaches in this welcoming ministry.

For more information, contact Deacon Dick Stojak at (817) 560-2452 ext. 304 or via e-mail to rstojak@fwdioc.org.

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 gperales@allsaintscatholicschool.org.

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.

NFP class to be offered in Keller

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."

A new NFP class will be starting Sunday, Feb. 11, at 7 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 2016 Willis Lane in Keller. To register for the class, contact Scott and Amy Rustand at (817) 581-6266. Because 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 on Natural Family Planning, contact the diocesan Family Life Office at (817) 560-3300 ext. 304.



ASH WEDNESDAY — A woman prays during Ash Wednesday Mass last year at Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary Cathedral in Biloxi, Mississippi. Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of the liturgical season of Lent, will fall on Wednesday, Feb. 21. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

Diocesan

Despite growing challenges faced by Catholic schools across the United States, Catholic Schools Banquet keynote Dr. John Staud sees . . .



Above: Ruth and Bill Vogel (*foreground*), surrounded by five of their children, were honored as the 2007 Diocesan Leadership Award recipients.

Story and Photos by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

The more than 600 people who attended the 20th annual Catholic Schools Banquet Jan. 27 at the Fort Worth Convention Center heard several speakers extol the benefits of a Christ-centered education. But it was a series of heart-warming anecdotes, illustrating the faith-based lessons taught in local Catholic classrooms, that captured the crowd's attention.

A hushed audience listened attentively as Fox Sports anchor John Rhadigan, the evening's emcee, talked about a letter mailed to the teachers of Holy Rosary School in Arlington from the grieving mother of a slain soldier. When the military sent her son's personal effects home, one of the items found in his shirt pocket was a note from a Holy Rosary second grader.

"The mother wanted the students and teachers at Holy Rosary to know how much she appreciated that in her son's last days, he knew that somebody in Arlington, Texas, cared about him and was praying for him each and every day," Rhadigan said.

The school's second graders correspond regularly with troops in battle, and they often get letters back thanking them for their thoughts and prayers.

Another story lauded the behavior of students at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Keller. The emcee told the gathering how the school's youngsters interrupted outdoor recess and knelt quietly on the playground as a funeral procession exited the church. The thoughtful gesture so impressed one mourner, he contacted the school's principal, Kay Burrell.

"It was an amazingly touching sign of respect to the family and was absolutely refreshing in today's world," the local businessman wrote in an e-mail. "Please accept my congratulations for taking the time to teach your children the value of respect."

Teaching youngsters the value of prayer, compassion, and respect sets Catholic schools apart from public education, Rhadigan observed. Quality public schools exist, but their students are never encouraged to pray for soldiers or kneel down as a casket passes.

"I don't doubt [prayer] would never happen at a public school because it can't happen at a public school. But it can and does happen at Catholic schools every day," he said passionately as the roomful of educators and benefactors erupted in applause. "This is Catholic education alive. God is spoken here."

Held each year in the Diocese of Fort Worth since 1988, the Catholic Schools Banquet raises money for the Bishop's Scholars Fund — a tuition assistance program — and recognizes the individual accomplishments of 19 honorees selected by each school for their dedication, leadership, and service.

Praised for their commitment to Catholic education were Hope Lancarte, All Saints School, Fort Worth; Cserdis Anderson, Cassata High School, Fort Worth; Father Joseph Pemberton, Holy Family School, Fort Worth; Jan Patterson, Holy Rosary School, Arlington; Elizabeth Cohen, Holy Trinity School, Grapevine; Brian and Melissa Rush, Immaculate Conception School, Denton; Arlene Anderson-Jones, Nolan Catholic High School, Fort Worth; Father Ivor Koch, Notre Dame School, Wichita Falls; Katheryn Shaw, Our Lady of Victory School, Fort Worth; Raymond Egana, Our Mother of Mercy School, Fort Worth; Alvin Hartman, Sacred Heart School, Muenster; Linda Loughry, St. Andrew School, Fort Worth; Linda Corso, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, Keller; Maria Guadalupe Villanueva, St. George School, Fort Worth; Mary Moody, St. John the Apostle School, North Richland



Left: This year's Diocesan Leadership Award honorees, Bill and Ruth Vogel (*back, left*), and Catholic school honorees, representing 19 Catholic schools within the diocese, gather for a group picture at the Jan. 27 banquet.

Hills; Nancy Watson, St. Maria Goretti School, Arlington; John and Maureen Anselmi, St. Mary's School, Gainesville; Christina Mendez, St. Peter the Apostle School, White Settlement; and Valerie Gavia, St. Rita School, Fort Worth.

The 2007 Diocesan Leadership Award was presented by Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann to Bill and Ruth Vogel. Members of Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton, the couple was honored for providing scholarship money to needy Catholic school students via three endowments funds.

Thanks to money generated from endowments and contributions to the Bishop's Scholars Fund, the Diocese of Fort Worth will increase its financial aid support of families from slightly over \$100,000 to almost \$400,000 this year.

"These generous donors to the Bishop's Scholars Fund confirm the value of Catholic school education to our church, our families, and our communities," said Catholic Schools Superintendent Don Miller. "Catholic schools remain a vital part of the teaching mission of the church. The challenges ahead are many, but the spirit and will to succeed are strong."

Those sentiments were echoed by the banquet's keynote speaker, Dr. John J. Staud, director of the Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) at the University of Notre Dame. Started in 1994, the program recruits, supports, and places talented graduates of Notre Dame and other universities

who are working on their master's degrees in needy Catholic schools in the southern region of the country. In 1996, Fort Worth was the first diocese in Texas and in the Southwest to host ACE teachers.

Since then, youngsters who were taught by ACE participants at All Saints School have gone on to earn college degrees and are now first year ACE teachers themselves.

"The impact ACE teachers had on them and the way these two All Saints grads are giving back to Catholic schools is part of the miracle of the enterprise we're celebrating tonight," Dr. Staud said.

The program's director went on to tell the crowd how U.S. Secretary of Education Margaret Spellings called Catholic schools "national treasures" during a July 2006 commencement address to ACE graduates. The cabinet member cited the private school system's dedication to serving the underprivileged and its ability to produce good citizens who succeed professionally and are generous and loving people. In addition to those attributes, the Notre Dame professor presented two other traits unique to Catholic schools.

"They spread the Gospel and evangelize better than any system we have right now," he explained. "And they form the whole person. It's this weighing of faith and reason that makes them so special. The products of these schools, and how they witness to the Gospel, are the best evidence of their value."

But despite its many successes, the U.S. Catholic school system faces growing challenges. Although the country's Catholic population is soaring, Catholic schools serve half as many students as they did in the 1960s.

With rising tuition rates, low teachers' salaries, and the presence of vowed religious almost gone from the classroom, "some think the glory days of Catholic school are over," Dr. Staud said, before pointing out the flaws in that assumption. According to the speaker, the immigrant church faced greater obstacles when it began educating youngsters in the 19th and 20th century with no institutions, no advanced degrees, and no money. By comparison, today's Catholic population boasts several hundred Catholic colleges, 8,000 elementary and secondary schools, and increased wealth produced largely by that education.

"The odds are in favor for a renewal of the Catholic school system, and we see many signs of hope," he asserted.

Dr. Staud asked the audience to remember that there is no substitute for spending 35 hours a week in an educational environment permeated by faith and Gospel values. To people who consider a Catholic school education a costly investment, the speaker responded with a rhetorical question.

"How can we afford not to make this investment?" he asked "Our future depends on [Catholic schools] more than we suspect."

Many Signs of Hope

Right: Fox Sports anchor John Rhadigan serves as the evening's emcee.

Above: Catholic Schools Superintendent Don Miller (*left*) shares a laugh with Bishop Kevin Vann (*center*) and keynote speaker Dr. John Staud.

Diocesan

Respect Life Mass

Bishop Vann reassures the faithful that God has the last word in struggle over evil

Story and Photos by
Kathy Cribari Hamer
Correspondent

It was cold and damp the evening of the Diocese of Fort Worth's 26th annual Respect Life Mass, but the weather did not prove daunting for those gathering at St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth, where some 250 worshippers let their voices be heard in prayer — their chosen challenge to the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion.

Even the music carried a positive, driving beat as the assembly sang and clapped with the choir from Our Mother of Mercy Parish in Fort Worth — a new and lively sound accompanying the somber yet hopeful traditional worship.

"Who has the last word?" Bishop Kevin Vann asked the community, noting that 34 years after the pivotal *Roe v. Wade* case, some may feel, "We do not have the last word, [so] what's the use?" Bishop Vann, a visible supporter of pro-life issues, travels yearly to Washington, D.C., for the March for Life rally each Jan. 22 on the Capitol Mall.

"The power of evil can never have the last word," Bishop Vann told the community. "Many times during the last year, through [respect life] programs, the life of an unborn infant was saved, and we can see the power of God at work. The last word comes from the power of God," he asserted.

Above: Bishop Vann, surrounded by priests of the diocese, presides at the 26th annual diocesan Respect Life Mass. The long-stemmed roses placed before the altar symbolize the 34 years that abortion has been legal in the United States.

Above: Bishop Vann accepts a vase of roses during the offertory procession. Each of the roses — 34 in all — represented one year since the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision.

"Let us remember the last word is not the power of darkness, but the very light of Jesus Christ."

The Respect Life Mass was offered by the diocesan Office of Family Life, directed by Deacon Richard Stojak. Deacon Stojak commended the participation of Catholics Respect Life, a pro-life apostolate working within the Diocese of Fort Worth. CRL

members carried the offertory gifts, which included vases containing 34 long-stemmed roses, one rose symbolizing each of the years since *Roe v. Wade*.

A highlight of the liturgy, according to Deacon Stojak, came when Rachel's Vineyard members brought up the Book of Innocents, which contains a symbolic listing of the approximately 46,000,000 babies who

Above: Choir members of Our Mother of Mercy Parish in Fort Worth provided an air of energetic hopefulness to the diocesan Respect Life Mass.

have been aborted in the U.S. since 1973. That organization, directed locally by Betsy Kopor, provides Rachel's Vineyard weekends, retreat opportunities for people who have been affected by abortions and are seeking healing.

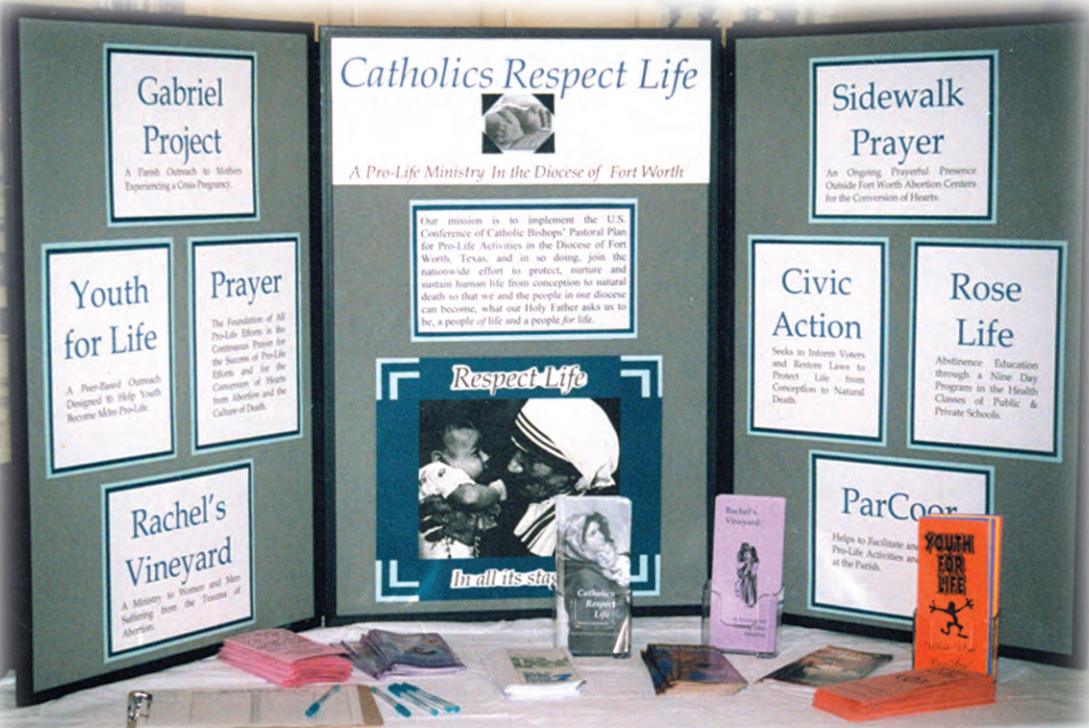
In his homily, Bishop Vann spoke to the assembly about his "other life," serving in the healthcare field, when the *Roe v. Wade* decision was handed down in 1973.

"No one could see how it would impact the value of human life," he said. Speaking of time he spent working with the mentally handicapped, the bishop said, "They taught me more about the value of human life. They taught me the value of human life is the last word."

Concluding his homily, Bishop Vann quoted from the U.S. bishops' statement "Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholics." He read: "God, the Father of all nations, has blessed the American people with a tremendous reservoir of goodness. He has also graced our founders

with the wisdom to establish political structures enabling all citizens to participate in promoting the inalienable rights of all. As Americans, as Catholics, and as pastors of our people, we write therefore today to call our fellow citizens back to our country's founding principles, and most especially to renew our national respect for the rights of those who are unborn, weak, disabled, and terminally ill. Real freedom rests on the inviolability of every person as a child of God. The inherent value of human life, at every stage and in every circumstance, is not a sectarian issue any more than the Declaration of Independence is a sectarian creed."

At the recession, with the choir singing, "Be strong, do not be afraid, our God will come," the cathedral bells rang out, and after Mass, most of the assembly remained seated, singing and praying the words of the poignant Divine Mercy Chaplet, "Forgive and have mercy on us, for the sake of his powerful passion."



Above: Catholics Respect Life, a pro-life ministry in the Diocese of Fort Worth, displayed materials at the Respect Life Mass describing the organization's many various ministries promoting the dignity of the human person.

Diocesan



NEW PASTOR WELCOMED — (L. to R.) Father Ken Robinson, the new pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster, shares a meal and conversation with Bishop Kevin Vann and Deacon Don Warner at a covered-dish supper at the parish Jan. 6. Preceding the dinner, Fr. Robinson was formally installed as the pastor of the Catholic faith community during a Mass celebrated in the church by Bishop Vann.

Ash Wednesday, which marks the beginning of Lent, will be observed Feb. 21

The Law of Fast and Abstinence in the Diocese of Fort Worth

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has determined that the following practices shall prevail in the United States: Fast and abstinence are to be observed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday by all those who have celebrated their 18th birthday until the occasion of their 59th birthday. Abstinence from meat is to be observed on the Fridays of Lent by all who have celebrated their 14th birthday.

The church recognizes that there are chronically or seriously ill individuals who cannot fast or abstain. The church still calls for these

individuals to participate in acts of penance and works of charity. These can be performed throughout the week; however, it is especially appropriate that these acts be performed on Fridays in place of the Friday fast.

No one can be dispensed from the necessity of doing penance. Catholics are strongly urged to practice voluntary acts of mortification and works of charity. The bishops of the United States have urged Catholics to consider abstaining from meat on Fridays "as a tangible sign of our need and desire to do penance for the cause of peace."

Sister Benita Francis Curley, SSMN, former educator, dies at age 94

Sister Benita Francis Curley, 94, a Sister of St. Mary of Namur, died Thursday, Jan. 18, at Our Lady of Victory Center in Fort Worth. The funeral Mass was celebrated Monday, Jan. 22, at OLV Center with concelebrants Father John Libone, pastor of St. Thomas Aquinas Church, Dallas; Father J. Carl Vogel, a retired priest of the Diocese of Dallas; and Msgr. Frank Miller, sacramental minister of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Abbott and Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Penelope. Burial was at Mount Olivet Cemetery in Fort Worth.

"Sr. Benita" was a respected and beloved educator for many years in several schools in Texas and California. Remembered fondly by the sisters of her community and by her former students as an excellent teacher and administrator, Sr. Benita was the last of the congregation's "Irish missionaries" who left their native Ireland in order to enter the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur in Texas.

Sr. Benita was born Eileen Curley on May 22, 1913, in the farming community of Glasson, Athlone, County Westmeath, Ireland, the 10th of 12 children. She and six of her sisters entered religious life, in part because of the example of two of their aunts, who were members of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur. At age 17, Eileen left Ireland to accompany her 16-year-old sister Kathleen to Fort Worth, where they entered the sisters' community Oct. 30, 1930. Kathleen took the religious name "Sister Agnes Marie" and Eileen became "Sr. Benita Francis."



Sister Benita Francis Curley, SSMN

The young nun earned her undergraduate degree from OLV College in 1938. She later earned a graduate degree in religious studies from Dominican College in San Rafael, California, and pursued advanced studies at Catholic University in Washington, D.C.

Sr. Benita Francis served at St. Mary of the Assumption School and Our Lady of Victory Academy in Fort Worth; Sacred Heart Academy in Waco; St. Cecilia School in Dallas; St. Mary's School in Sherman; and St. Xavier Academy in Denison. She was also assigned to her congregation's schools in Hollister, Norco, and Porterville, California. Having served at St. Anne's School in Porterville until 1994, Sr. Benita returned to Texas that year, joining the sisters of the Angelina Community in Dickinson, Texas. She came to the OLV Center in 1999 and spent the past seven years quietly praying and

visiting with her many friends from all parts of the world.

Tom McKee of Rockwall, vividly recalled Sr. Benita's calm strength and spiritual leadership at the time of President John F. Kennedy's assassination in Dallas in 1963.

"I was an eighth grade student at St. Cecilia's that year, and she was the principal at the school," said McKee. "She was the one who gathered the students and told us the news. She stressed to us that there would be tragic events like this in our lives, and that we needed to be prepared to cope with these kinds of events not only as individuals, but as members of a community of faith. As devastating as this event was for everyone, she was a source of tremendous strength for all of us."

McKee noted that Sr. Benita was "truly an amazing educator, far ahead of her time, who had the students of St. Cecilia's studying the Spanish language and culture back in the 1950s and 1960s. She, and all of the sisters of the community, exemplified total charity, warmth, and comfort."

Sr. Benita Francis is survived by one sister, Angela; several cousins, nieces, and nephews; and the members of her religious community.

Memorial gifts in her honor may be made to the Sisters of St. Mary, 909 W. Shaw Street, Fort Worth 76110.

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Daniel P. McDonald, M.D., FACOG **Steven G. Pilkington, M.D.**

Paulists establish reconciliation office to promote healing in the church

FROM PAGE 1
Reconciliation.

The office was recently established by the Paulist Fathers at the North American Paulist Center in Washington, where the first board meeting took place Jan. 23.

Reconciliation involves healing people's wounds—whether it be caused by abuse, disagreement with the church's stand on an issue, or anything that led someone to feel alienated or rejected—and welcoming people back to the church.

The Paulists are devoting \$1.2 million over the next five years to reconciliation awareness, training, and programming, according to Paulist Father John E. Hurley, director of the reconciliation office.

"People's lives depend on what we do as disciples of Jesus Christ," Fr. Hurley said in his welcome address to the board

members. "It begins with recognizing that those experiencing alienation and hurt in the church are our brothers and sisters.

"It begins with our baptism.... Can we remain complacent with the reality that some of our brothers and sisters are not at the [eucharistic] table and are starving to death spiritually? The eucharistic table is a place for sinners, not recognition for a job well done," he said.

The office's goal is to develop a wide pastoral process to address the need for dialogue and reconciliation in the church today by not only supporting Paulist reconciliation initiatives, but to engage theologians on the social and personal dimensions behind reconciliation issues; provide a multimedia presentation and processes for dialogue/listening sessions between individuals within local parishes and dio-

ceses; to dialogue with the U.S. and Canadian bishops conferences, laity, and church leaders to implement reconciliation within the church; and more.

Susan Timoney, who is on the faculty of Trinity University in Washington and teaches Christian spirituality in the permanent diaconate program of the Archdiocese of Washington, said reconciliation is a faith concept that rarely gets mentioned.

"Yet it is deeply rooted in the Gospel," she said. "We need to think creatively [to] bring alive the good news."

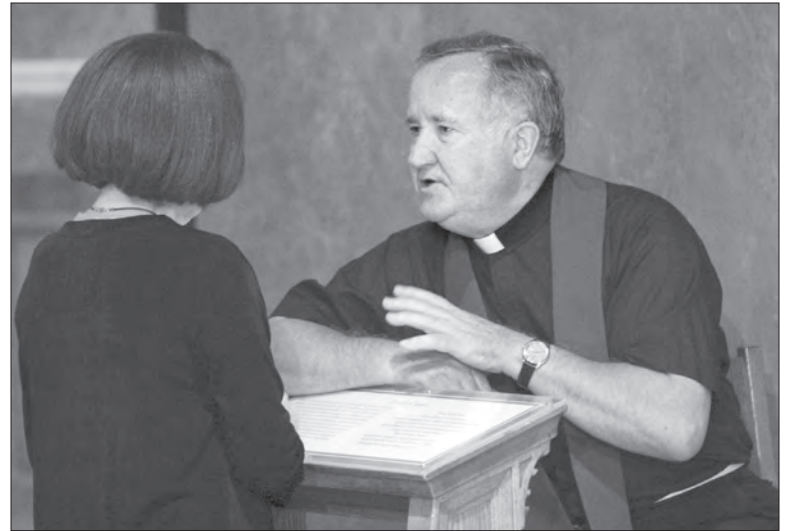
Bob Bowers, an ex-officio board member, has already seen the fruits of Paulist initiatives at the Paulist Center in Boston, the epicenter of the sex abuse scandal in the United States.

"There is now hope and healing where there was distrust and pain," he said.

Fr. Hurley told the board members that what they were taking on was nothing less than a divine initiative.

"Are we willing," he asked, "to leave the 99 and seek out the one that is lost?"

Editor's Note: More information on the work of the Paulist Office for Reconciliation is available online at www.paulist.org/reconciliation.



SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION — Msgr. Pablo Rodriguez administers the sacrament of reconciliation at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington Sept. 23. Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl, in his first pastoral letter as Washington's archbishop, encouraged local Catholics to participate in confession, especially during this Lent. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz, LONG ISLAND CATHOLIC)

Archbishop Wuerl calls confession 'great gift' that offers new life in Christ

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Use of the sacrament of penance makes each Catholic "an evangelist for the forgiveness of Christ and a witness to God's wondrous mercy," said Archbishop Donald W. Wuerl in his first pastoral letter as head of the Washington Archdiocese.

Archbishop Wuerl called confession "a great gift" that offers new life in Christ. "When we face daily frustrations and struggle to be good, we need to recall the teaching of the church that we have the power to triumph over sin because we have God's grace within us," he said in the letter, dated Jan. 8 and made public Jan. 25.

The letter was issued for the season of Lent and was entitled "God's Mercy and the Sacrament of Penance."

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, which this year is Feb. 21. Easter is April 8.

The grace of the sacrament allows people "to get back up after each fall ... and allows us to continue our journey to God," wrote Archbishop Wuerl.

Coinciding with the pastoral letter is a pastoral initiative encouraging local Catholics to receive the sacrament of reconciliation during Lent. Every parish in the archdiocese will make confession available every Wednesday evening of Lent, starting Feb. 28.

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Gathering of Catholic family life ministers to be held in Oklahoma City March 19-21

The National Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers (NACFLM) Region X (Texas and Oklahoma) spring gathering will be held March 19-21 at the Catholic Pastoral Center of the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City, located at 6501 N.W. Expressway in Oklahoma City.

"Christian Marriage and Family Life in The Real World" is the theme for the meeting, which is designed for all who minister to families, including priests, deacons, directors of religious education, family life ministers, and youth ministers.

Program materials note that "This is an opportunity to look at some new approaches in theology and spirituality, and connect them with the general tenor and direction of marriage and family life today."

The event's featured presenter will be Dr. David Thomas, a sociologist, theologian, and author with a humorous presentation style. Dr. Thomas is the author of two books on marriage and family spirituality, including the recently published *Christian Marriage: The New Challenge*. Currently the co-director of the Bethany Family Institute, he served as a professor of systematic theology, religion, and family life at St. Louis University in Missouri, St. Meinrad School of Theology in Indiana, and Regis University in Denver. Thomas also served as a theological consultant to the U.S. bishops' Committee on Marriage and Family Life.

For more information, call (817) 451-9395, or call the Archdiocese of Oklahoma City Family Life Office at (405) 721-8944.

Viewpoints

Sometimes the best 'fix' is the cross

By Dan Luby

On a sunny morning, the church glows with the brilliant blues and reds and yellows and greens of its stained-glass windows. They contrast pleasingly with the warmer color of brick walls and dark wooden pews, gleaming with furniture polish and elbow grease.

The room is shaped like an amphitheater, a three-quarter circle of seating that concentrates the attention of the worshipping assembly on the raised area at the center. The ambo on one side, and the baptismal pool on the other, flank the altar. The tightly focused ceiling lamps create a rich texture of light and shadow that further focuses the eye to see, and cues the ear to listen.

I have loved the look of my parish church since I first saw it as a visitor, years before we became parishioners. It seems smaller than its seating capacity, conveying an atmosphere of intimacy. The sight lines are good; the acoustics are lively. The aesthetic richness of the environment always helps me to pray as a part of a deeply connected community

By far the most dramatic improvement, however, came in the innovative, perhaps inspired fix for the badly cracked wall. For where the crack had been, new brickwork had been devised in the shape of a cross, with a huge round widow integrated into the design.

of faith.

For many years though, there was a major flaw marring the architectural integrity of the building and distracting many of us from what happened in this Spirit-filled space.

The problem was an immense crack in the back wall of the church. The size of it, having grown over time, was unsettling, even scary. Through the bricks and mortar, the jagged separation snaked ominously from floor to ceiling. Toward the end, it was so pronounced that, when lighting conditions were just

right, if you stood in precisely the right place, up near the altar and the ambo, aside the organ console, you could see daylight through the crack as it neared the roof.

After much collective worry, after a number of false starts, the damage to the foundation was diagnosed and a comprehensive plan was undertaken to repair it. During the many months given over to repairs and renovations, the cracked wall was covered with tarps, as masons and cement contractors and structural engineers gutted the interior and rebuilt the foundation.

When the work was completed, and the community returned from its Sunday morning gymnasium exile to celebrate the Eucharist once again in our beautiful parish home, the essential beauty of the space remained, as I hoped it would. Happily, there were improvements I hadn't foreseen.

Carpet was replaced by ceramic tile, which beautified the space and made good acoustics even better. There was new statuary, and a new baptismal font and pool with flowing water.

By far the most dramatic improvement, however, came in the innovative, perhaps inspired fix for the badly cracked wall. For where the crack had been, new brickwork had been devised in the shape of a cross, with a huge round widow integrated into the design.

Eastern light illuminates the church in the mornings now, enhancing its beauty and giving the people gathered for praise and thanks a powerful symbol of its connection to the world out-

side its physical boundaries. It reminds us of the transparency with which we are called to live our faith and share our love. It urges us to remember that even the unsettling and dangerous ruptures that sometimes break apart our communities and our lives can be transformed into opportunities for greater strength, for richer beauty, for brighter light.

Elsewhere in this edition of *The North Texas Catholic* you will find a pastoral letter from Bishop Vann on the importance, in the life and mission of the Church, of repairing whatever breaches may have grown among us, and committing ourselves to deeper unity. It calls us to cultivate a spirit of hospitality and reconciliation, of mutual respect and generosity, a spirit of love.

As we stand between the Christmas season, with its stories of divine humility and sacred hospitality, and the season of Lent, with its call to penance and renewal, I urge everyone to read Bishop Vann's letter and take to heart its insights and challenges. May this call to communion prompt us all to restore broken relationships and open our hearts to the Light of Christ in our lives.



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.

God's whispers come through in prayer

By Mary Morrell

But whoever enters through the gate is the shepherd of the sheep. The gatekeeper opens it for him, and the sheep hear his voice, as he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out.

— John 10:2-3

One of the lessons life inevitably teaches us is that you just never know when you are going to need a knight in shining armor.

My need came last week when I got stuck in the elevator at work.

I was on my way to lunch and took the elevator down from the second floor as usual. Suddenly I heard a strange whooshing sound I had never heard before.

"That's not good," I thought to myself. Still, I prepared to exit on the first floor as I heard the familiar bell that signaled the doors would be opening.

I waited, but the doors did not open.

"This is really not good," I now thought.

I pressed all the floor buttons, the

"door open" and "door close" buttons and when nothing happened I pressed the alarm button and waited for help.

After coming to grips with the reality that I was stranded behind four walls in a small, hot space with no escape route, the next few seconds were heavy breathers.

It would have been easy to get upset. A number of my acquaintances won't even use an elevator because they are claustrophobic. In a moment of nervousness I remembered Steve McQueen in *The Great Escape* bouncing his baseball off the walls in solitary confinement.

It made me chuckle. I didn't even have a baseball to pass the time.

Instead, I opened the little door to the elevator phone and called whoever was at the end of the line. A woman's voice answered, "Where are you?"

"I'm stuck in an elevator," I replied, thinking that must be pretty obvious. Why else would I be calling?

She directed me to try this and try that, and I gathered from her tone of voice that she had experience calming over-wrought elevator prisoners.

She asked me how I was doing, and I assured her I was fine. And I was relatively calm about the whole thing, even if I wasn't completely at peace – that is until I heard the familiar voice of Tom, my co-worker, outside the doors.

I don't remember what he said but I knew he was working on trying to get me out and, knowing him, I also knew he wouldn't stop trying until he did.

From that point, any nervousness or apprehension I may have had were completely gone. The voice of a friend, someone I knew and trusted, had taken it away.

Later that evening, as I reflected again on the experience, I thought of how often hearing the comforting voice of a trusted friend is similar to the experience of those in prayer who are comforted by God's whispers.

Scripture is full of stories of those who heard the voice of God — Samuel, Moses, Jesus, Paul. For them the experience was direct and clear and included God calling them by name.

For us, the experience is more likely to

be reminiscent of Elijah's experience in the desert where he hears the still, small voice of God.

In a Christmas pastoral letter the Ukrainian bishops write beautifully of the power of prayer to make audible the whispers of God: "It is a challenge for us to hear God's presence among us today. We need to cultivate within us a golden silence so as to hear God's whispers to us." They tell us also, "Being silent, listening and following God's whispers in our life also offers a special invitation for us to enjoy God's peace, a peace that the world around us cannot offer in its busyness and clamor."

Back at the elevator, where I will admit to a dozen or so Hail Marys, it wasn't long before Tom got the thing moving, and when I reported to the wonderful lady on the telephone that the doors were opening slowly on the second floor, she advised, "Step out."

Now that was one piece of advice I didn't need!

Mary Regina Morrell is the associate director of religious education for the Diocese of Metuchen in New Jersey.

Anybody you know?

the bioethics of 'Body Worlds'

By Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk

An exhibit called "Body Worlds" is currently touring the United States and generating some animated discussion in its wake. (*Editor's note: The exhibit is currently appearing at the Dallas Museum of Nature and Science at Fair Park, through May 28.*) It puts the human body on public display in various poses after the body has been filled with a kind of plastic preservative.

The bodies are posed, for example, as a rider on a horse, where the body of the horse is also plasticized. By removing skin and various layers of musculature to expose internal organs, it is possible to literally look inside the body and see its inner structure.

In one exhibit, an expectant mother has been cross-sectioned to reveal her unborn child, while in another, a man has been peeled down to his musculature, and he carries his skin on his arm like an old raincoat. The exhibit is billed as an educational exhibit, teaching people about the internal structure and organization of their own bodies. As the director of the exhibit phrased it, "My aim is to illuminate and educate through the beautiful arrangement" of bodies.

Yet some people find the exhibit "edgy", causing more than a tinge of discomfort, and they wonder whether there aren't ethical concerns associated with putting the human body on display in this way.

Informed consent seems to be a recurrent theme in regards to this exhibition, since some of the bodies which have been on display in the past may not have had convincing documentation of informed consent.

One potential problem associated with such a display involves consent. In general, consent is very important, and should be sought for organ or bodily donation. Informed consent seems to be a recurrent theme in regards to this exhibition, since some of the bodies which have been on display in the past may not have had convincing documentation of informed consent.

Several of the bodies may have originated from natural disasters in which the victims could not be identified. Hence, one can inquire whether all of the subjects really approved of their new "show business careers", or as one commentator, half tongue-in-cheek, mused about the matter: "Dear World: Please don't let them pump plastic into me and exhibit me naked, without half my skin, playing tennis. I hate tennis."

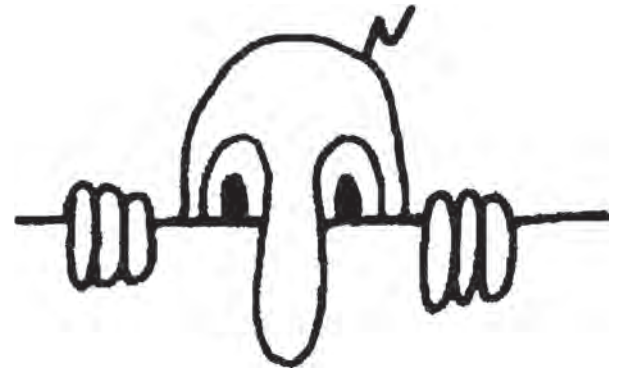
Other issues regarding consent are worthy of consideration as well. Obtaining valid informed consent may not really be possible when children or infants in utero are put on display, even though it is true that medical schools and museums have a rather long history of preserving human fetuses and embryos in formaldehyde for teaching and educational purposes.

Obtaining consent from adults, on the other hand, is not necessarily a difficult proposition. The organizer of the Body Worlds exhibit claims that more than 6000 people have already signed the dotted line for their own future "plastination."

Many individuals are happy to donate their bodies to science. I recall doing dissections as an undergraduate student in an anatomy and physiology class, using a cadaver from an elderly lady who had donated her body to science. Such donations are not morally problematic, and in fact are similar to organ donation. Such organ donation is not only permissible, but can be seen as a very generous act. As Pope John Paul II once put it: "A particularly praiseworthy example ... is the donation of organs, performed in an ethically acceptable manner, with a view to offering a chance of health and even of life itself to the sick who sometimes have no other hope."

But what about the display of bodies where consent cannot be obtained? When dealing with situations like museums displaying ancient Egyptian mummies, or tourists observing the remains of believers in the catacombs under Rome,

See *BODIES*, p. 22



There's just no gettin' ahold of some folks

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

So, it turns out there is no such word as "ahold." This fact surprised me, and reaffirmed my respect for spell-check.

The first time my computer's spell-checker highlighted "ahold" as a misspelling, I thought my Mac had made a mistake. An iError. An iGoof.

"Ahold," according to Washington State University's list of common errors in English, is incorrect. "In standard English," the Web site states, "you just 'get hold' of something or somebody."

"Get hold of" — like the way you would reach for someone if you wanted to stop them, or if they were about to step off the curb in front of a bus.

(Mothers qualify to double the use of "get hold" 1: <get hold of the child's hand just before he gets hold of the last cookie in the cookie jar>, or 2: <get hold of the hymnal just before it careens off the top of the pew>.)

From now on, whenever you are "playing phone tag," with someone, you should avoid the improper, "I've been trying to get ahold of you," and instead use, "I've been trying to get in touch with you," or "I've been trying to get hold of you."

(Actually I think the phrase "phone tag" should be illegal. Anyone playing phone tag about when they are going to do lunch, might consider thinking outside the box, getting on the same page, realizing that there has been a paradigm shift, and, at the end of the day, finding a solution that will turn out to be a win-win — or they might consider using fewer catch phrases.)

I hesitate to admit, with respect to my fourth grade teacher, Sister Aniceta, that I always thought of ahold as a kind of preposition. You know: about, above, across, after, against, ahold, among, at, before, beside, between, beyond. Well, beyond that, I can only say that, as assigned, I did memorize the list of prepositions. Now I realize that ahold was not on it.

It didn't matter. At St. Therese School the only people you ever had to get hold of were on the playground, and they were playing tag — without phones. Wireless tag, if you will.

Sadly, the greatness of personal contact has changed now, and in our grown-up ways, we have become less appreciative of each other, and of the ways we can interact. E-mail forwards now substitute for conversation, and phone-call surprises are introduced by caller ID. We screen our calls. We prioritize our voice mail. And, inundated with e-mail messages, we find programs to sort and discard the unnecessary ones.

Really there is only one name that is essential to our contact list, and ironically, it is the name we sometimes forget. Jesus.

The other day I asked my comedian son Andrew what

See *HAMER*, p. 22



GAZING AT SAINT'S TOMB — Pope Benedict XVI looks at the crypt which church officials believe to be the tomb of St. Paul the Apostle during an ecumenical prayer service in the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls in Rome Jan. 25. The pope was accompanied by Cardinal Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, the archpriest of the basilica, seen pointing toward the crypt, and Benedictine Abbot Edmund Power of the Abbey of St. Paul's (right). (CNS photo/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO)

Pope encourages all Christians to proclaim word of God

FROM PAGE 1

He said the first ecumenical task was to listen to the word of God, which is something all Christians can do together in prayer and reflection on Scripture.

The second task, he said, was to communicate the word of God to others, including those who have never heard the Gospel and those who have "forgotten it and

buried it under the worries and deceptions of the world."

"We have to ask ourselves: Have we Christians perhaps become too mute? Don't we perhaps lack the courage to speak and to witness?" he said.

The pope said ecumenical dialogue must also be a process of listening and communicating with an attitude that is open to "fraternal correction."

Pope to lead full slate of Holy Week, Easter liturgies

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI will lead a full slate of Holy Week and Easter liturgies in Rome and at the Vatican, highlighting a busy papal schedule this spring.

The Vatican announced Feb. 1 that the pope would preside over eight major events in the week leading up to Easter. The liturgies include a Mass April 2 commemorating the second anniversary of Pope John Paul II's death.

The pope's Holy Week activities will begin with a procession and Mass in St. Peter's Square on Palm Sunday, April 1.

As he did last year, Pope

Benedict will celebrate a chrisem Mass in St. Peter's Basilica on Holy Thursday and that evening will preside over the Mass of the Lord's Supper in the Basilica of St. John Lateran in central Rome.

On Good Friday he will celebrate the liturgy of the Lord's Passion in St. Peter's Basilica in the late afternoon, then will lead a nighttime Way of the Cross at the Rome Colosseum.

On Holy Saturday, the pope will preside over the Easter Vigil in St. Peter's Basilica. On Easter, April 8, he will celebrate Mass in St. Peter's Square and give his blessing "urbi et orbi" (to the city of Rome and the world).

Education in Christian basics is needed for Christian unity, says Cardinal Kasper

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — While the search for Christian unity may need some creative ideas for overcoming long-standing denominational differences, it definitely needs education aimed at shoring up the basics of Christian faith, said Cardinal Walter Kasper.

If ecumenism is based on unity in faith, then Christians must know and believe the faith they claim to share, said the cardinal, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

"How can you speak, for example, of justification by faith if there is no longer an awareness of God and of sin, an awareness that there is a need for forgiveness and redemption," the cardinal said at a Jan. 23 Vatican press conference.

The cardinal was presenting his "Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism" during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity. The handbook includes dozens of concrete suggestions for how Catholics individually and in groups can prepare spiritually for the gift of Christian unity.

Cardinal Kasper said "spiritual ecumenism," including prayer for the fulfillment of

"... We must speak not only about what divides us, but especially about that which we should hold in common, to reinforce the foundations of our faith ... and give a common witness to the faith that unites us and that the world needs."

— Cardinal Walter Kasper

Christ's will that his disciples be one, must be accompanied by "fundamental ecumenism," a common Christian focus on the basics of faith.

Over the past half-century, he said, ecumenism has been based on a conviction that Christians who share the same faith in the triune God and in Jesus Christ as savior can and must build on their shared beliefs to find a way

to overcome their divisions and unite fully in one faith.

Ecumenism assumed that "all Christians have this in common," he said. "Do they still? The question is important."

Cardinal Kasper said teaching the basics of the Christian faith is an essential part of ecumenism today, especially in the increasingly secularized countries of the West.

"We are in a situation where we must speak not only about what divides us, but especially about that which we should hold in common, to reinforce the foundations of our faith, concentrate on the essentials, and give a common witness to the faith that unites us and that the world needs," he said.

Cardinal Kasper also told reporters that relations between the Catholic Church and the Russian Orthodox Church "have improved" and there is "closer cooperation" between the Moscow Patriarchate and several Vatican offices.

But, he said, "at the moment nothing concrete is being planned" for "the possible and, for us, hoped-for meeting" of Pope Benedict XVI and Russian Orthodox Patriarch Alexy II of Moscow.

Cardinal Keeler of Baltimore is honored for ecumenical, interreligious efforts

By Jerry Filteau

ARLINGTON, Virginia (CNS) — The Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers honored Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore Jan. 30 for his extensive contributions to ecumenical and interreligious relations.

No living bishop has done more for the ecumenical movement, said Msgr. Dennis L. Mikulanic, association vice president, in presenting the cardinal with the association's James Fitzgerald Award.

"He has served on numerous dialogues, 12 (three-year) terms on the bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and on the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity. He has been a leader in promoting ecumenical relations as a significant aspect of his ministry as bishop," Msgr. Mikulanic said.

"Our honoree leaves a deep personal imprint on and an unmatched legacy for Catholic involvement in ecumenism as well as in relations with Jews and in interreligious relations in the

United States," he added.

He noted that the first recipient of the Fitzgerald award had been one of Cardinal Keeler's predecessors in Baltimore, Cardinal Lawrence E. Shehan, who was a leading pioneer in ecumenical and Catholic-Jewish relations in the 1960s and '70s.

He said Cardinal Keeler's in-depth involvement in ecumenical affairs goes back to the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s when, as a young priest, he assisted the staff of what was then the Vatican's Secretariat (now Pontifical Council) for Promoting Christian Unity in translating the four documents it ushered through the council and explaining to media the progress of those documents and the meaning of their contents.

When then-Bishop Keeler was chairman of the bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs in 1983-86, he began attending the National Christian Unity Workshops and initiated the practice of briefing the Catholic ecumenical officers there every year on activities of his committee and on trends and

developments in ecumenical and interreligious affairs nationally and internationally, Msgr. Mikulanic said.

Through those and other ecumenical and interreligious activities and his speaking and writing over the years, Cardinal Keeler "has kept this work at center stage of American Catholic life," he said.

The association presented the award to Cardinal Keeler at its annual luncheon during the National Christian Unity Workshop, held in Arlington Jan. 29-Feb. 1. The workshop drew nearly 400 ecumenists from across the country.

The award, instituted in the late 1970s, is the highest given by the association. It is named after Msgr. James Fitzgerald, an ecumenical pioneer from the Diocese of Amarillo, who died in 1975.

Shortly after Vatican II, when he got the Catholic bishops of Texas to join the Texas Council of Churches — which was then renamed the Texas Conference of Churches — it was the first such state council in the country with full Catholic participation.

U.S. House unanimously approves resolution honoring Catholic schools

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The House of Representatives unanimously passed a resolution Jan. 23 praising Catholic schools “for their ongoing contributions to education and for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for this nation.”

The vote was 428-0 in favor of H.R. 51, sponsored by Rep. Daniel Lipinski, D-Illinois, and co-sponsored by 73 other members of the House.

“I understand how important Catholic schools are in providing a spiritual, moral, and intellectual foundation for students,” Lipinski said in a statement. “My 12 years of Catholic education in the Chicago Archdiocese provided me with the knowledge, discipline, desire to serve, and love of learning that enabled me to become a teacher before I was elected to Congress.”

“As a complement to our public schools and private institutions, Catholic schools provide top-quality, values-added educations for millions across this country.”

— Rep. Daniel Lipinski
D-Illinois

The resolution was approved less than a week before the start of Catholic Schools Week, Jan. 28-Feb. 3 this year.

It said U.S. Catholic schools

“are internationally acclaimed for their academic excellence, but provide students more than a superior scholastic education.”

“Catholic schools ensure a broad values-added education emphasizing the lifelong development of moral, intellectual, physical, and social values in America’s young people,” the resolution added.

Noting that more than a quarter of the students in Catholic schools are from minority backgrounds and 14 percent are non-Catholics, the resolution said the schools “produce students strongly dedicated to their faith, values, families, and communities by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in spiritual, character, and moral development.”

The theme of Catholic Schools Week in 2007 is “Catholic Schools: The Good News in Education.”



CATHOLIC SCHOOLS WEEK VISIT — Mike Harney, a legislative assistant in the office of Rep. Patrick Kennedy, D-Rhode Island, talks with teacher Cindy Schafer and students Andy Nguyen, Alessa Garcia, and Andrea Portillo during a Catholic Schools Week visit to congressional offices Jan. 31 in Washington. The teacher and students, from Corpus Christi School in Falls Church, Virginia, talked with Harney about issues affecting Catholic schools. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

“As a complement to our public schools and private institutions, Catholic schools provide top-quality, values-added educations for millions across this country,” Lipinski said. “As we recognize Catholic Schools

Week this year, we must pay special tribute to the thousands of dedicated teachers, parents, students, and countless others that continue to support and promote strong Catholic values and educational excellence.”

Notre Dame study challenges Catholic schools to find ways to better serve Hispanic population

FROM PAGE 1

It also notes low salaries for teachers at Catholic schools along with rising costs and tuition, demographic shifts, the changing role of religion in the lives of American Catholics, and increasing options for educational choices.

But “Catholic schools matter more now than ever, and they work, as study after study demonstrates,” it said.

The report is the result of a yearlong study, commissioned by the Indiana university’s president, Holy Cross Father John I. Jenkins, and chaired by Holy Cross Father Timothy Scully, director of Notre Dame’s Institute for Educational Initiatives.

It does not just focus on the difficulties today’s schools face but instead states at the outset that “Catholic schools can and must be strong in our nation’s third century.” Its authors also stipulate that “extraordinary chapters lie ahead” if the Catholic community at large is willing to pitch in and help.

To demonstrate how higher education can play a part in assisting Catholic elementary and secondary schools, the report highlights Notre Dame’s Alliance for Catholic Education program, founded in 1994, which annually supports about 200 teachers in more than 100 Catholic schools across the country.

The program also includes leadership for Catholic school principals and is developing a

consulting initiative to provide administrators and Catholic school advocates with help in marketing, strategic planning, and investing.

Other examples of the university’s efforts to help the Catholic school system include the recently launched Magnificat School project, which provides principals, pastors, parents, and school board members with professional support and development training to strengthen schools in danger of closing.

Notre Dame also has been convening regular National Parish School Leadership Team Workshops for pastors, principals, and school board presidents to discuss Catholic identity, marketing, leadership, strategic planning, and financial management.

The report notes the impact that declining numbers of priests and religious have had on Catholic schools but points out that Catholics should not just bemoan “bygone eras,” and instead use “entrepreneurial energy” to come up with other means to train and develop new school leaders.

It also challenges Catholic schools to find ways to welcome Hispanic students, noting that only 3 percent of Latino families send their children to Catholic schools even though the number of Hispanic Catholics is increasing.

“The church and its schools must find ways to serve and be engaged by the growing Latino population,” the report states,

acknowledging that several obstacles must be overcome, including the perception that Catholic schools are for the elite, financial concerns for families, and linguistic and language barriers for students.

The report labels the traditional parish school as both the “dominant model” and the “type of Catholic school most under duress, most vulnerable to demographic shifts and eventual closure.”

Conversely, it credits a variety of Catholic school initiatives for being part of a “new era of innovation,” such as school consortiums in dioceses where urban schools share resources; Cristo Rey schools, where inner-city students take part in work-study programs; and the tuition-free schools in the Diocese of Wichita, Kansas, where the stewardship policy in the diocese eliminates tuition fees.

The authors of the report praised the successful initiatives that are already under way, saying they prove that when bishops, pastors, and lay leaders collaborate “Catholic schools can flourish where they once struggled.”

“Our challenge is to raise awareness” of school initiatives that work, they said, while stressing the importance of “selecting and enhancing the best model for a particular school or diocesan context.”

“One size does not fit all,” the authors concluded.



Joe Melendrez prays during a faith-based lunch discussion at a restaurant near the Ohio school’s campus. Melendrez is using his winnings in a local Chipotle restaurant contest — three burritos a day for a year plus four 20-burrito parties — to spread his school’s Catholic mission of leading through service. (CNS photo/Larry Burgess, University of Dayton)

Burritos for the soul: Student turns contest winnings into ministry

DAYTON, Ohio (CNS) — Some college students barely know how they’ll feed themselves let alone 800 others during the year. University of Dayton student Joe Melendrez is using meals he won in a local Chipotle contest to spread his school’s Catholic mission of leading through service.

Melendrez recently won three burritos a day for a year plus four 20-burrito parties.

The aspiring Christian rapper unveiled his ode to the Chipotle restaurant and then issued an open dinner invitation to talk about faith, life, service work, solidarity with the poor, and equality, all of which are backbones of the Marianist-run university’s mission.

“I have a responsibility to

share this,” said Melendrez, who held one of the burrito parties for homeless in the area. “You live the Marianist mission by focusing your efforts on the well-being of others and working to fix problems in the community.”

Danielle Desmond met with Melendrez, co-director of Marianist involvement for the University of Dayton’s student government association, because she “wanted a free burrito and to meet someone new.”

“But, more importantly, I learned about the reasons he wanted to win [the contest], which I think are beautiful,” she added. “He is very devoted. He is going beyond what most people would do with the burritos. He is sharing it with the rest of us, just as Jesus taught us to do.”

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace plans spring seminar on climate change

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is planning a spring seminar to look at climate change from the point of view of the Catholic Church's social teaching.

Officials at the council confirmed the meeting was being planned for late April or early May, although the dates, agenda, and participants had not been confirmed as of late January.

The council regularly holds seminars, inviting Catholic leaders in specific fields to share their experiences and discuss ways to put church teaching into practice.

Bishop Marcelo Sanchez Sorondo, chancellor of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, told Catholic News Service Jan. 30 that he did not know if the council would invite the academy to co-sponsor the seminar, but he also said the academy has convoked several high-level scientific meetings



SEMINAR ON CLIMATE CHANGE

— A cathedral is seen silhouetted against the sunset in St. Petersburg, Russia, as smoke rises in this Feb. 20, 2005, photo. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is planning a spring seminar to look at climate change from the point of view of the Catholic Church's social teaching. (CNS photo/Alexander Demianchuk, Reuters)

on climate change and related topics.

"It is a constant theme of our discussions," he said. For example, in 2005 academy members held a meeting to discuss access

to water; in 2004 they explored the topic of climate change and human health; and in 2000 global warming was part of the discussion about science and the future of humanity.

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NATIONAL & INTERNATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

Congress starting from scratch on making new national media policy

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The previous Congress never got to vote on a full-scale rewrite of the 1996 Telecommunications Act. Some in the Republican-run House had hoped for a vote during the post-election lame-duck session, but the shift of power to the Democrats scuttled that possibility. Now, with Democrats in charge, what could a new telecommunications bill look like? There is the possibility of including language guaranteeing equal access to the Internet by content providers, a concept known as "net neutrality." Net neutrality — short for network neutrality — is the policy of keeping the Internet open to all lawful traffic by requiring that cable and telephone companies operate their Internet networks in a nondiscriminatory manner. It bars those companies from prioritizing Internet traffic to benefit their own content. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops came out last year in support of net neutrality. So did an estimated 1.5 million others who feared Internet service providers would charge Web sites extra to guarantee speedy access for users. With no safeguards for net neutrality, the USCCB and other church and community groups fear noncommercial religious and other speech on the Internet is threatened.

Religious leaders seek more vigorous U.S. role in Mideast peace

WASHINGTON (CNS) — After meeting with U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice Jan. 29, a delegation of U.S. Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders said they think the United States should take a more vigorous leadership role in promoting a comprehensive peace in the Middle East. Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, said the group met with Rice "to reiterate our strong commitment to a two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict" and to discuss "the urgent need for United States leadership to restart and successfully conclude negotiations for a lasting and just peace between Israel and the Palestinian people." Cardinal McCarrick, who led off a press briefing afterward outside the Department of State, said the meeting was "substantive and excellent. But the real measure of the success of our meeting can only be taken in the coming weeks and months as actions and events unfold." The religious leaders belong to the National Interreligious Leadership Initiative for Peace in the Middle East, a coalition of 35 leaders of national religious bodies or organizations that was formed in 2003 to press for a more constructive and comprehensive U.S. approach to Arab-Israeli-Palestinian peace.

Father Drinan, ex-congressman, Jesuit and law professor, dead at 86

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Jesuit Father Robert F. Drinan, the first Catholic priest to vote in the U.S. Congress, received praise and censure during his lifetime for his active involvement in politics. Fr. Drinan, 86, died Jan. 28 at Sibley Memorial Hospital in Washington, where he had been treated for pneumonia and congestive heart failure for the past 10 days. Before his funeral Mass Feb. 3 at the Campion Center in Weston, Massachusetts, another Mass was celebrated Feb. 1 at St. Aloysius Church in Washington. "Few have accomplished as much as Fr. Drinan and fewer still have done so much to make the world a better place," said T. Alex Aleinikoff, dean of the Georgetown University Law Center, where Fr. Drinan had taught since 1981. But others saw Fr. Drinan as less praiseworthy. In his Web log, or blog, for *First Things* magazine Jan. 19, Father Richard John Neuhaus called him "a Jesuit who, more than any other single figure, has been influential in tutoring Catholic politicians on the acceptability of rejecting the church's teaching on the defense of innocent human life."

Chinese government, Catholics welcome outcome of Vatican meeting

HONG KONG (CNS) — The Chinese government said it appreciates the Vatican's willingness to have "constructive dialogue" with China, as expressed in a statement issued after a Vatican meeting to discuss the status of the Catholic community in mainland China. Catholics in China also welcomed the idea of a Vatican commission to monitor the church on the mainland. Responding to reporters' questions on the Jan. 19-20 Vatican meeting and subsequent statement, China's Foreign Ministry spokesman Liu Jianchao said China always has regarded improvement of ties with the Vatican as important and has made unremitting efforts in this regard. In a regular press conference Jan. 23, he said China appreciates the Vatican's willingness to dialogue so as to normalize bilateral relations, reported UCA News, an Asian church news agency.

Catholic groups well-represented at big anti-war rally at Capitol

By Mark Pattison

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic groups were well-represented at a Jan. 27 rally against the Iraq War that drew tens of thousands to the nation's capital to protest the current war policy and President George W. Bush's plan to send 21,500 additional soldiers to Iraq.

Retired Bishop Walter F. Sullivan of Richmond, Virginia, a former bishop-president of Pax Christi USA, was one of the speakers at the rally, which preceded a march past the Capitol. Some rally participants stayed in Washington to lobby members of Congress Jan. 29.

The rally was organized by United for Peace and Justice, a coalition of more than 1,300 organizations that have declared their opposition to the war.

"Pax Christi from the very beginning has condemned the invasion of Iraq as unlawful and immoral, as well as [condemned] the four-year war that has devastated this country and led to the deaths of thousands and thousands of innocent people," Bishop Sullivan told Catholic News Service Jan. 29. "Our fundamental belief is that violence only begets more violence and that war is not the solution to any human problem."

Bishop Sullivan added, "My concern is on behalf of the 3,000

American service personnel who have lost their lives and the 25,000 who have been maimed for life.... Then, our concern [is] for ... the families who have borne the brunt of the conflict, and of course the Iraqi people.

"An estimated 200,000 of them have died," and there are "2 million refugees," he said, lamenting the "lives displaced and homes plundered and destroyed."

"The question for me is why are we there in the first place and what do we hope to accomplish?" he asked. "Our only answer is 20,000 more troops."

Franciscan Father Kevin M. Queally, assistant vice president of mission effectiveness and ministry at St. Francis University in Loretto, Pennsylvania, responded to a faculty member's e-mail asking if anyone from the campus was going to the rally, and reserved a van from the Dorothy Day Center there. A group of six from the school went, and while at the rally, met a Pax Christi group that had taken a separate car to Washington.

"It was a wonderful day," Fr. Queally told CNS Jan. 30. "I've been to lots of marches. There were no talks from the podium, at least what I heard, that [were] embarrassing; maybe there were a couple of words that shouldn't have been said."

On the St. Francis campus, he

said, "there are a lot of people who are, shall we say, very unhappy with the way things are progressing" with the war. Fr. Queally, 56, said he found the situation "eerily reminiscent of Vietnam. Them telling us we need more troops. In Vietnam, it (the troop level) went to the nth degree — 500,000 troops.... Do they think we're dumb? It feels like we've been down this road before."

Judy Coode, chair of the national council of Pax Christi USA, said she ran into Pax Christi groups from Pennsylvania, Delaware, Virginia, and Georgia, as well as from Detroit and Buffalo, New York.

"And those are just the ones that I saw.... We had folks who got on a plane Saturday morning in Georgia and went straight to the rally," said Coode, who is also communications manager of the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns.

Franciscan Sister Marie Lucey, associate director for social mission of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious, said she and LCWR national director Sister Carole Shinnick, a School Sister of Notre Dame, marched with a Pax Christi group after the rally.

The Sisters of St. Francis of Penance and Christian Charity, with provinces in California, Colorado, and New York, bought an ad Jan. 26, the day before the rally, in *The*



PEACE RALLY —

Demonstrators on the National Mall in Washington listen to speakers during a rally against the Iraq War Jan. 27. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiebec)

Washington Post. It bore only the community's name, its Web site, the locations of its three provincial headquarters, and a picture of a dove flying over the earth with the message "Peace Now."

Not everyone who is against the war descended on Washington. A Jan. 27 rally, which organizers said drew 10,000 people, was held in San Francisco.

In Washington, where the U.S. Park Police years ago stopped making crowd estimates, rally numbers varied widely, from some police officers' private estimates of under 100,000 to organizers' claims of 500,000.

Bishop Sullivan put the figure at 200,000. Fr. Queally said the size was "awesome, just a huge crowd.... I've been to stadiums that seat 100,000 — Penn State's stadium seats 100,000 — we maybe could have filled it twice."

Maryknoll Father Jim Kosski, who was at the rally, said published estimates in *The Washington Post* and *The New York Times* citing the under-100,000 figure for the crowd size were "not too accurate, not too fair. They should know that if you fill the Mall between the Capitol and the Washington Monument, you've got X-thousand number of folks."

Teen honored for commitment to pro-life program despite obstacles

By Scott Alessi

METUCHEN, New Jersey (CNS) — At a young age, Theresa Hanntz has already battled opposition to her pro-life activities, yet she remains undaunted.

Hanntz was honored by the Diocese of Metuchen with a Pro-Vita Award for fighting for her beliefs when the Girl Scouts initially rejected a chastity program she organized at her high school as a project to earn her the Scouts' Gold Award. A compromise was eventually reached, and she received the Scouting honor.

She and three others were given Pro-Vita Awards during a presentation at St. Francis of Assisi Cathedral Jan. 21.

Last year, as a senior Girl Scout at Immaculata High School in Somerville and president of the Pro-Life Club, Hanntz wanted to earn her Gold Award by organizing a five-week True Love Waits program at her school.

The program, aimed at freshmen and sophomores, educates students on issues such as chastity, abortion, and understanding God's plan for sexuality. The Girl Scouts organization, however,



PRO-VITA AWARD — Theresa Hanntz receives her 2007 Pro-Vita Award from Diocese of Metuchen, New Jersey, pro-life director Jennifer Ruggiero (far left) as Bishop Paul G. Bootkoski of Metuchen and Msgr. Richard A. Behl look on. Hanntz was honored by the diocese for fighting for her beliefs when the Girl Scouts initially rejected a chastity program she organized at her high school as a project to earn her the Scouts' Gold Award. (CNS photo/John Batkowski, CATHOLIC SPIRIT)

did not feel that such a program was appropriate and denied Hanntz the Gold Award.

But Hanntz, now a freshman at the University of Scranton in Pennsylvania, remained committed to the project.

"I just became so involved in that issue, and it became such a passionate topic for me," Hanntz told *The Catholic Spirit*, newspaper of the Metuchen Diocese. "I really wanted to spread the word."

She appealed the Girl Scouts'

decision, arguing that the program was voluntary and required parental consent, but the Girl Scouts still felt the topic itself was too controversial.

Eventually, a compromise was reached when Hanntz agreed to rename the project "Implementing a Long-Term Program." She restructured her proposal to focus on organizing a program rather than promoting pro-life issues and finally received the Gold Award.

The True Love Waits program

was a success at Immaculata, with 30 students participating. Hanntz said that she received strong feedback from her classmates who took part. Everyone who participated then signed a purity pledge saying they would wait for marriage before engaging in intercourse.

Hanntz first became involved in pro-life work as a freshman at Immaculata. She accepted an invitation to join the school's Pro-Life Club from teacher Kathleen Reid, a 2006 Pro-Vita recipient.

"I'd always been pro-life, but I'd never really known much about it," said Hanntz. "Once I started, everything kind of snowballed."

At the University of Scranton, Hanntz has already become the secretary of Students for Life and hopes to help the organization grow during her time at the school. She is also seeking opportunities to work outside the university, for example, speaking to teenagers at local high schools.

Although Hanntz has found the student population on a college campus to include a wider

range of beliefs than her high school, she sees this as a welcome challenge. "It gives you a really interesting environment to work in," she said.

Hanntz has learned that fighting for one's beliefs can be difficult, but she still believes it is a worthy cause.

"It's hard to bring out what you believe when the politically correct thing to do is not to share that," she said.

"A lot of the time you are in the minority, but to know that you are standing up for what's true and what's right is so much more rewarding," she added.

Hanntz is the youngest recipient of a Pro-Vita award. Past winners have been primarily individuals or groups who have made a contribution to the pro-life cause on a state or national level.

The diocese selected Hanntz as an example for other young people that, regardless of age, anyone can make a contribution.

The Pro-Vita Awards were started in 1998 by the late Bishop Vincent DePaul Breen to recognize people who had shown great dedication to the pro-life cause.

Scripture Readings



February 18, Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) 1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23
Psalm 103:1-4, 8, 10, 12-13
- 2) 1 Corinthians 15:45-49
Gospel) Luke 6:27-38

By Dan Luby

"It won't fit," I whined to my mother. The five-pound bag of flour on the kitchen counter was simply too big for the canister I'd been instructed to fill. Busy as she was with the thousand and one steps required for baking, she looked at me patiently.

"Yes, it will," she said. "That canister holds five pounds of flour and a little more, if you know what you're doing."

Clearly, I didn't, so she coached me.

Following her directions, I poured in flour about half way to the top, closed the canister and shook it vigorously, then lifted it slightly and let it drop a few times. Grudgingly, I saw that there was now more room but remained skeptical. When, eventually, all five pounds had been transferred safely to the canister, I was amazed despite myself.

That image of measuring ingredients for baking comes to mind when I hear Sunday's Gospel

story where Jesus urges us to, "Give, and gifts will be given to you; a good measure, packed together, shaken down and overflowing, will be poured into your lap."

The command he gives just before this is perhaps the most daunting in the Christian Gospel: to love our enemies, to forgive our persecutors, to leave the mysterious work of judging hearts — ours and the hearts of others — to God.

Could any challenge be more sobering? Could any command be more counterintuitive, any standard of behavior more crucifying to embrace?

For we have looked into our own capacity for forgiveness, for mercy to those who have injured us, and we are all too aware of its limits.

We shudder to think of all we have to let go of before we can be filled up: resentment, grudges, entitlement, moral superiority.

The good news is that God pledges to find room in our hearts and lives and spirits for the mercy and grace we need, to become so generous, so filled with love. And God is not stingy when it comes to grace.

**"Give and it shall be given to you.
Good measure, pressed down, shaken
together, running over..."**

— Luke 6:38ab

QUESTIONS:

Who has been an example of unstinting forgiveness in your life? What's one way you can practice the discipline of suspending judgment of others?



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Pope says he's consoled by stories of apostles, disciples arguing

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI said he finds consolation in the New Testament stories of the apostles and first disciples arguing with each other.

Continuing his series of audience talks about the leaders of the early church, Pope Benedict spoke Jan. 31 about St. Paul and St. Barnabas arguing over whether they should take another person with them on a mission.

"So, even among saints there are contrasts, disagreements, controversies," the pope said.

"This appears very consoling to me, because we see that the saints did not drop as saints from heaven. They were men like us with problems and even with sins," the pope said before he was interrupted by applause.

"Holiness consists not in never having made a mistake or sinned," he said, but rather it grows with "conversion, repentance, with a willingness to start over and, especially, with the ability to reconcile and forgive."

"We can all learn this path to holiness," he said.



Pope Benedict XVI prays from the window of his private apartment overlooking St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Jan. 21. (CNS photo/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters)

Citing a long list of men and women described in the New Testament as co-workers with St. Paul, the pope focused specifically on three of the apostle's closest collaborators — Barnabas, Silas, and Apollos — and on the fact that they never acted

alone, but always as part of the community.

Pope Benedict told the estimated 6,000 people gathered for the audience, "It also seems important to me that Paul does not act as a 'soloist,' simply as an individual, but together with

these collaborators."

Citing a passage from the First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, the pope said that today, as in the early Christian community, those who preach the Gospel are simply God's messengers; it is God who makes faith grow.

"This word is valid today as well. All of us — pope, cardinals, bishops, priests, and laity — we are all humble ministers of Jesus," the pope said. "We serve the Gospel as best we can in accordance with our gifts, and we pray to God that he, today, would make his Gospel, his church grow."

At the end of the audience, the pope greeted more than 500 pilgrims from seven dioceses in Italy's Liguria region who were accompanying their bishops on their "ad limina" visits to the Vatican.

The pope asked the laypeople to be increasingly conscientious about their role in the church.

"The flame of the faith, which you have received in baptism, must be kept burning with prayer and reception of the sacraments; it must shine through your words and your example to allow everyone to draw light and spiritual warmth from it," he said.

Pope Benedict told them they need a "renewed apostolic boldness" to face the challenges of the modern world and to bring to others "the saving message of Christ in its entirety."

Scripture Readings



February 25, First Sunday of Lent.

Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Psalm 91:1-2, 10-15
- 2) Romans 10:8-13
Gospel) Luke 4:1-13

By Sharon K. Perkins

I was sitting in the waiting room of the intensive care unit a few weeks ago, seeing about my father who had been in a farming accident that easily could have killed him. As he remembers it, he called out to Jesus to save him while waiting for help, and when the emergency vehicles pulled up to prepare him for transport to the hospital, he knew that he had been heard. He also realized that God still has a purpose for his life, and so he looks forward to his recovery with great expectation.

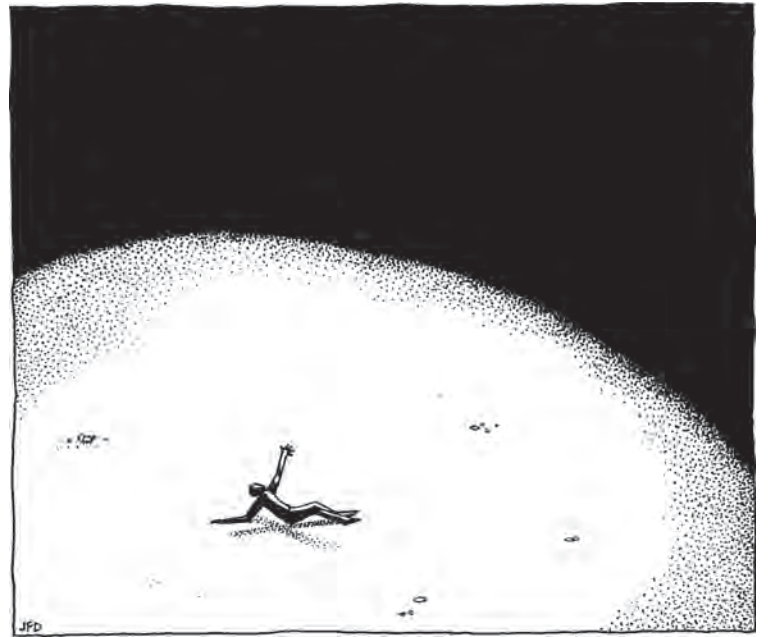
As concerned friends and relatives trickled in and out of ICU throughout the weekend, my mother and my siblings told my dad's tale repeatedly, each time refining the details as the story took shape, always ending with thanks to the Lord for sparing his life. It has become our family story of salvation (one of many) by a God whose angels must surely have been present to protect him from serious harm. And although I took digital photographs, it is the verbal retell-

ing of the story that truly sparks the imagination and causes its hearers to marvel at God's goodness.

Another salvation story is featured in today's first reading from Deuteronomy. It's not a long narrative, but it features concrete historical details — a place, a time, and a people — which make the event of God's salvation more than simply wishful thinking or a tall tale. In its retelling to each new generation, it becomes their own profession of faith and a motivation to again give thanks to God.

The psalm and the epistle to the Romans, each pick up the theme of calling upon the Lord and being answered — a subsequent retelling of the story of salvation for future generations of believers. In the Gospel, Jesus himself drew from this collective memory by responding to the devil's seductive claims with the Scriptures he had learned from childhood. Armed with the sure knowledge of his Father's ability to save, Jesus was able to withstand temptation and proceed to his earthly ministry in power and single-mindedness.

Each of us probably has a story of deliverance, perhaps against the odds, which convinced us that we, too, have been preserved for a larger



“Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

— Romans 10:13

purpose. Remembering that story — and retelling it — gives glory to God and strengthens the faith of its hearers.

QUESTIONS:

What is your story of deliverance in all its rich detail? When did you last inspire another person to faith with the telling of your story?

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The perfect Valentine, the gift of oneself

By Jeff Hedglen

It is the time of year when we see the “miracle of the roses.” Sadly, this is no St. Therese of Lisieu, miracle of the roses, where they appear in various forms for those she is interceding for. Rather, this miracle is of a much more human origin.

As the calendar turns to the shortest month of the year, the delicate folds of soft silky petals atop a thorny stem mysteriously double in price for sets of twelve. I have long thought this is some kind of Machiavelian marvel. Actually, it is the age-old rule we all learn about in Economics 101 — supply and demand — come to feast on the best intentions of lovers.

The upcoming celebration of Valentine's Day seems to send the world into waves of chaos: People running all over to find the perfect gift that will say the perfect thing to the perfect person; people frantic to simply have a valentine to say “be mine” too; jewelry companies inexplicably feeling the need to

The nuptial meaning of the body comes alive in the union of man and woman in the sacrament of matrimony. Only in this sacramental union can we even attempt to give ourselves this completely.

remind us that every time you spell the word kiss it begins with “K”; card and flower companies pushing their goods like the old-time swindlers driving a horse and buggy promising healing from one bottle of their magic elixir.

The unfortunate part of all of this hype and conjured-up

pressure to express our love for each other is that it is not even needed. The truest, most genuine, and completely perfect way to say “I love you” has been ours since conception.

Hallmark and FTD have nothing on what John Paul II calls the “nuptial meaning of the human body.” In his book *Theology of the Body* he describes this as the body's “capacity of expressing love: that love precisely in which the person becomes a gift and by means of this gift fulfills the very meaning of our being and existence.”

The most perfect gift we can give is ourselves in the form of love. When we experience love the way God planned it, the fullest expression of love is actually us giving ourselves completely to the other freely. When we accomplish this, John Paul says, we “fulfill the very meaning of our being and existence.”

John Paul is saying that when we live the way God intended us to live, and when we love the way he intended us to love, our bodies are a means

for us to fulfill the meaning of our life.

This might seem crazy, but he explains: when Jesus says, “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you” (*John 15:12*), he reveals the reality of the nuptial meaning of the body, for “How did Jesus love us? — “This is my body which is given for you” (*Luke 22:19*).

Jesus' most complete expression of love for us was when he gave his body for us. The nuptial meaning of the body comes alive in the union of man and woman in the sacrament of matrimony. Only in this sacramental union can we even attempt to give ourselves this completely.

Attempts to experience this type of self-giving outside of the sacrament are about as successful as me trying to lose weight on a diet of Chicken Express, sweet tea, and Little Debbie's. Sure it will be fun, but I will never come close to my goal.

The goal of romantic love is to become the likeness of God's love: Complete self-giving love

that is free, total, faithful, and fruitful. We are called to shoot for all four of these, not just one or two.

I have been married for almost 13 years, and when I meditate on these ideas from John Paul, I am humbled and challenged beyond my imagination. Yet at the same time I am inspired, like Sir Edmond Hillary, the first man to climb Mt. Everest, who saw before him a seemingly impossible task in the form of something so beautiful he knew he had to at least attempt to experience it for himself.

The expression of love can be so much more than a dozen roses or a diamond, not that these are meaningless. Just remember, the next time you are giving a present to the one you love, don't forget the most important part — you.

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.

Oración, nueva visión de sociedad necesarias para luchar contra aborto, dice arzobispo Wuerl



Un manifestante sujeta un rótulo que lee "El aborto mata niños" durante la tercera Caminata por la Vida anual en San Francisco el 20 de enero. Aproximadamente 20.000 personas asistieron al evento antiaborto en la costa oeste, que es reflejo de la más grande Marcha por la Vida en Washington. Han pasado 34 años desde el decreto en el caso Roe v. Wade de la Corte Suprema que legalizó el aborto en todo el país. (Foto CNS/Greg Tarczynski)

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Llamando el silencio y la ignorancia los "aliados gemelos de las atrocidades", el arzobispo Donald W. Wuerl, de Washington, le pidió a los participantes en una Misa precediendo la Marcha por la Vida del 22 de enero "repudiar todas las formas de violencia" y orar por la terminación del aborto.

"Si el espiral de violencia y muerte que asedia nuestras calles, escuelas, familias y comunidades ha de ser quebrado, necesitamos una nueva visión", dijo él. "Tenemos que darnos cuenta y proclamar que hay algo mal con nuestra sociedad si todo lo que podemos ofrecerle a una mujer atrapada en el drama de un embarazo inesperado es el aborto".

El arzobispo fue el celebrante principal y ofreció la homilía

en una Misa temprano en la mañana en el Basílica del Santuario Nacional Immaculate Conception.

La Misa de 7:30 a.m. cerró una vigilia de toda la noche — patrocinada por la basílica, la Secretaría Para Actividades Pro Vida de los obispos estadounidenses y la Universidad Católica de América — que también incluyó un rosario por la vida, oración nocturna, Horas Santas, oración matutina y la oportunidad para la confesión.

"La actual cultura de la violencia cederá solamente a esa fuerza espiritual que primero toca y luego cambia los corazones individuales", dijo el arzobispo Wuerl.

Al mirar atrocidades tales como los campos de concentración de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, la esclavitud en los

tiempos de la Guerra Civil y el aborto hoy día "uno se pregunta cómo tales actividades pueden ser aceptadas por cualquier pueblo en cualquier lugar en cualquier momento", añadió él.

El arzobispo Wuerl recordó visitar un hospital de maternidad en Chimbote, Perú, hace años como obispo de Pittsburg y sostener allí a un infante de un día de nacido. "El bebé se agarró de mi dedo con toda su fuerza y se sostuvo firmemente", dijo él.

"Ese infante puede ser una figura de parábola para nosotros", añadió él. "Incontables infantes no nacidos están extendiéndose para aferrarse a nosotros con toda su fuerza, ya que somos la única voz que ellos tienen en la lucha por encontrar un lugar, un hogar, una vida en este mundo".

Obispo alaba deseo de Bush de reforma abarcadora de inmigración

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El director del Comité Sobre Emigración de los obispos estadounidenses aplaudió el apoyo a la reforma abarcadora de inmigración del presidente George W. Bush durante su discurso Estado de la Unión del 23 de enero.

"Acojo los comentarios del presidente Bush", dijo el obispo Gerald R. Barnes de San Bernardino, California, en una declaración del 25 de enero. "La reforma abarcadora de inmigración es claramente una alta prioridad para nuestra nación y debe ser alta en la agenda del 110mo Congreso", añadió él. "El asunto de la reforma de inmigración está maduro para acción federal".

Bush, en su discurso, le pidió al Congreso "un debate serio, civil y concluso para que ustedes puedan aprobar - y yo pueda firmar - como ley la reforma abarcadora de inmigración".

"Aunque la inmigración suscita opiniones fuertes, nuestros funcionarios elegidos deben trabajar juntos de manera bipartidista para reparar nuestro defectuoso sistema de inmigración", dijo el obispo Barnes.

"En parte debido a la inacción en el nivel federal, los estados y las localidades se están moviendo a aprobar sus propias leyes en este asunto. Los americanos de todo el país desean fuertemente que el Congreso solucione el problema de la inmigración ilegal", dijo él.

El obispo Barnes añadió: "Des-

de una perspectiva humanitaria, hay aún más urgencia para la acción. Los emigrantes continúan estando sujetos a la explotación por los patronos inescrupulosos, al abuso de los contrabandistas y a la muerte en el desierto americano.

"Según demuestran las redadas recientes en las plantas empacadoras de carne, las familias están sujetas a la separación y a la dislocación. Como cuestión moral, nuestra nación ya no puede aceptar el trabajo y los impuestos de los trabajadores migratorios sin ofrecerles la protección legal", dijo él.

El obispo Barnes esbozó cinco elementos que los obispos estadounidenses quisieran ver en un nuevo proyecto de ley de inmigración:

— Un programa permitiendo que la gente indocumentada se gane la residencia permanente.

— Un programa que proteja a los trabajadores extranjeros y salvaguarde contra el desplazo de los trabajadores estadounidenses.

— Una reducción en el tiempo de espera para la reunificación de familias inmigrantes.

— La restauración de las protecciones del debido proceso legal para los inmigrantes.

— Políticas tratando las causas radicales de la migración.

Hasta el 29 de enero, 53 proyectos de ley habían sido presentados en el Congreso tratando de alguna forma la inmigración.

El Papa presidirá el horario completo de las liturgias de Semana Santa y Pascua

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El papa Benedicto XVI presidirá el horario completo de las celebraciones litúrgicas de Semana Santa y Pascua de Resurrección en Roma y el Vaticano, con lo que se realza el horario ocupado del papa esta primavera.

El Vaticano anunció el 1º de febrero que el Papa presidirá ocho eventos principales en la semana anterior a la Pascua de Resurrección. En las celebraciones litúrgicas se incluye una Misa el 2 de abril para conmemorar el se-

gundo aniversario de la muerte del papa Juan Pablo II.

Las actividades de Semana Santa del Papa empezarán con una procesión y una Misa en la Plaza de San Pedro el Domingo de Ramos, que cae el 1º de abril.

Como hizo el año pasado, el papa Benedicto celebrará una Misa de crisma en la Basílica de San Pedro el Jueves Santo y esa misma noche presidirá la Misa de la Cena del Señor en la Basílica de San Juan Lateranense en el centro de Roma.

El Viernes Santo, el Papa celebrará la liturgia de la Pasión del Señor en la Basílica de San Pedro antes del anochecer; y después dirigirá un "Via Crucis" (o Camino del Calvario), de noche, en el Coliseo de Roma.

El Sábado Santo, el Papa presidirá la Vigilia de Pascua en la Basílica de San Pedro. El domingo de Pascua de Resurrección, que cae el 8 de abril, el Papa celebrará Misa en la Plaza de San Pedro y dará la bendición "urbi et orbi" (a la ciudad de Roma y al mundo entero).

Consejo pontificio planifica seminario de primavera sobre cambio de clima

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El Pontificio Consejo Para Justicia y Paz está planificando un seminario de primavera para examinar el cambio de clima desde el punto de vista de la enseñanza social de la iglesia católica.

Funcionarios del consejo confirmaron que la reunión estaba siendo planificada para finales de abril o principios de mayo, aunque las fechas, la agenda ni los participantes habían sido confirmados hasta fines de enero.

El consejo lleva a cabo regularmente seminarios, invitando

a líderes católicos en campos específicos a que compartan sus experiencias y discutan las maneras de poner en práctica la enseñanza eclesial. Entre otros tópicos, seminarios pasados han examinado las prácticas comerciales justas, la prevención del contrabando humano, los alimentos modificados genéticamente y educar a miembros de órdenes religiosas en la enseñanza social de la iglesia.

El obispo Marcelo Sánchez Sorondo, canciller de la Pontificia Academia de las Ciencias, dijo a Catholic News Service el

30 de enero que él no sabía si el consejo invitaría a la academia a copatrocinar el seminario, pero él también dijo que la academia ha convocado a varias reuniones científicas de alto nivel sobre el cambio de clima y tópicos relacionados.

"Es un tema constante de nuestras discusiones", dijo él.

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Animaladas humanas que demuestran nuestra indecencia...

Estas nos convierten en...

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

Peores que un cáncer y más horribles que cualquier muerte física. Estas canalladas manifiestan nuestra bajeza y mezquindad, destruye nuestra humanidad y todos somos culpables de ser esto con diversa intensidad. Da náuseas y vergüenza el ser humano que escoge y se obsesiona por ser esto. Preferir ser esto y seguir a medias el otro camino y caminante principal es una actitud miserable.

Egoísmo es el motor que mueve estas personas y sus actividades nefastas que nuestro mundo ha dejado de percibir con claridad e incluso se refiere a ellas como algo bueno. Los que escogen este camino de egoísmo viven sin pensar en las últimas consecuencias, como animales que viven solo de sus instintos.

Corazones endurecidos por la falta de un amor supremo y donde el exagerado amor propio suplanta cualquier sentimiento por los demás es parte de esta nefasta realidad que escogemos tantas veces en la vida. Solo los que sufren de estupidez o ignorancia toman esta desgracia como juego, chiste o broma.

Acciones u omisiones voluntarias contra la ley divina es un modo de resumir las actividades tan bajas y viles de estas personas. Actividades que exigen pleno entendimiento y plena voluntad en el rechazo de la ley divina. Actividades que nos desfiguran y que destruyen nuestra sociedad. Actividades que destruyen o debilitan la relación con aquel que deberá ser nuestro amigo principal.

Desobedientes a las leyes recibidas señalan la ausencia del amor a nuestro Divino Creador. Viven una desobediencia que surge de corazones cobardes que no confían en la ley ni en el autor de esas leyes. Desobediencias que surgen de actitudes arrogantes que cierra el corazón a las influencias divinas del Espíritu, y de ofenderlo así, no tendrán perdón.

Ofensores que en sus raíces manifiestan una conciencia deformada, ignorada por completo, o que ya esta muerta por haber sido ignorada en tantas ocasiones anteriores. Ofensores que por desgracia siguen un corazón enfermo que no le importa nada ni nadie que no sea su propio camino y no el camino del Nazareno. Ofensores que injurian a Dios, al prójimo y a si mismo.

Rechazadores desleales a la voluntad divina conjuntamente con un ciego seguimiento de la suya propia. Cada vez que pronuncian las palabras "... hágase tu voluntad..." son clara manifestación de un fingimiento pues los seguidores de este camino solo les interesa hacer su propia voluntad.

Endurecimiento del corazón es su enfermedad. Surge de una progresiva aceptación de las invitaciones deshonestas, obscenas e impúdicas del mundo, el demonio y la carne. Atacan y ofenden directamente al Corazón de corazones que nos dio la vida.

Siete son sus manifestaciones más dañinas. Soberbia, avaricia, lujuria, ira, gula, envidia y pereza aseguran una muerte ciertamente horrorosa que nunca terminará. Aquellos que no saben de quienes estoy hablando no ven porque no quieren. Todos somos estos ciegos que en ocasiones hemos cometidos las animaladas humanas que demostraron nuestra indecencia.



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 Maria Mirta y sus tres hijas Maria, Patricia y Mirangela. Pedro es Laico Dominicano.

Hay que hacerse evangelizador para buscar el perdón, dice arzobispo Wuerl

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El uso del sacramento de la penitencia convierte a cada católico "en evangelizador para buscar el perdón de Cristo y ser testigo de la prodigiosa misericordia de Dios", dijo el arzobispo Donald W. Wuerl en su primera carta pastoral como jefe de la arquidiócesis de Washington.

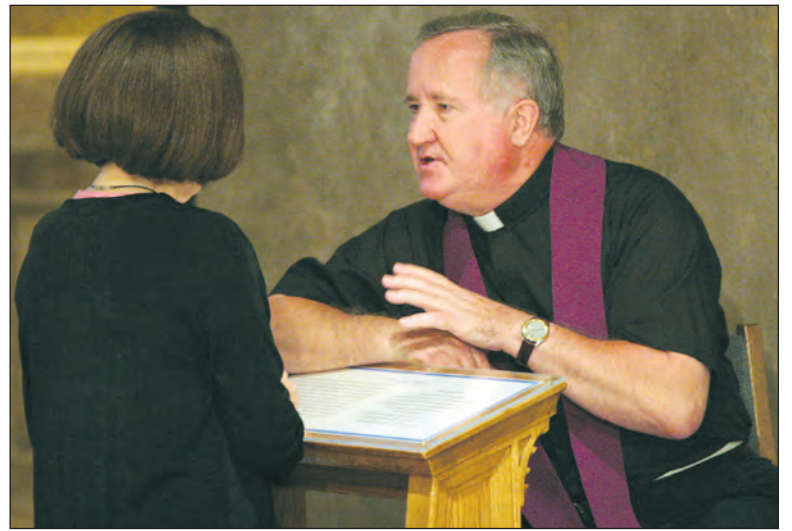
El arzobispo Wuerl le llamó a la confesión "un gran don" que ofrece nueva vida en Cristo.

"Cuando nos enfrentamos a las diarias frustraciones y nos esforzamos por ser buenos, necesitamos recordar las enseñanzas de la iglesia de que tenemos el poder de triunfar sobre el pecado pues tenemos la gracia de Dios dentro de nosotros", decía en su carta, fechada el 8 de enero, y hecha pública el 25 del mismo mes.

La carta se publicó en ocasión de la temporada de Cuaresma con el título de "La Misericordia de Dios y el Sacramento de la Penitencia". La Cuaresma se inicia con el Miércoles de Ceniza, que este año cae el 21 de febrero. La Pascua de Resurrección es el 8 de abril.

La gracia del sacramento de la penitencia le permite a la gente "que se levante de nuevo después de cada caída ... y nos permite que continuemos nuestra jornada hacia Dios", escribió el arzobispo Wuerl.

Coincidiendo con la carta pastoral, ha aparecido una iniciativa pastoral mediante la cual se estimula a los católicos de la arquidiócesis a que reciban el sacramento de reconciliación durante la Cuaresma. Cada parroquia está responsabilizada de ofrecer confesiones todos los miércoles de Cuaresma, empezando el 28 de febrero, de las 7 de la noche a las



Monseñor Pablo Rodríguez administra el sacramento de la reconciliación en la Basílica del Santuario Nacional de la Inmaculada Concepción en Washington, el 23 de septiembre 2006. El arzobispo Donald W. Wuerl, en su primera carta pastoral como arzobispo de Washington, estimula a los católicos de la localidad a que acudan a la confesión, especialmente durante esta Cuaresma. (Foto CNS/ Gregory A. Shemitz, "Long Island Catholic")

8:30 de la noche.

Se han programado servicios de penitencia en cada territorio eclesiástico, conocido como deanato, en toda la arquidiócesis. Empezando el 29 de enero, el arzobispo Wuerl ha hecho planes de colaborar con sacerdotes locales para escuchar confesiones durante las celebraciones de culto en una docena de templos.

En la iniciativa pastoral, llamada "La Luz Está Puesta para Ti", se incluye la distribución de un folleto con redacción amable en el que se ofrece una guía para presentarse a la confesión y una estampa tamaño cartera con el Acto de Contrición. La arquidiócesis tiene planes de promover la iniciativa en anuncios que se colocarán en autobuses y carros del tren subterráneo.

El sacramento de la reconciliación, dijo el arzobispo Wuerl en su carta pastoral "es la historia

del amor de Dios que nunca se retira de nosotros. El amor de Dios perdura incluso a pesar de nuestra visión corta y egoísmo. Como en la parábola del hijo pródigo, Dios espera, observa y espera nuestro retorno cada vez que nos alejamos".

En una entrevista concedida al periódico de la arquidiócesis, el "Catholic Standard", en su edición del 18 de enero, el arzobispo Wuerl dijo que escogió el tópico de "La Misericordia de Dios y el Sacramento de la Penitencia" para su carta pastoral debido a que "la Cuaresma es el tiempo natural para que la iglesia enfoque su atención en la misericordia de Dios".

"En cierto modo, la confesión ha llegado a ser un sacramento olvidado. Hay muchas personas que no están familiarizadas con este sacramento como deben de estarlo o como les gustaría estar", dijo.

Retiro de Cuaresma para adultos, marzo 18

Todos son invitados a un retiro de Cuaresma para adultos en español en el Centro de Cursillos de Fort Worth, 2221 NW 26th St., Fort Worth, domingo, marzo 18, de 8 a.m. a 5 p.m. Para todos los adultos (18 años y más) de cualquier clase y condicion. El retiro nos ayudara a caminar en la Cuaresma hacia la Pascua. Líderes hispanos, compartiran con ustedes reflexiones sobre "Tradiciones Hispanas durante la Cuaresma, la Oración en la Cuaresma, el Triduo Pascual, etc. etc." Habra tiempo de silencio y de diálogo. Tambien habra Misa y tiempo para la reconciliacion individual. Para más informacion, favor de llamar al

Centro de Cursillos (817) 624-9411, o a Moises Minero (817) 834-0536. El Señor y nosotros le esperamos.

Cursillo de hombres, marzo 29 a abril 1

Cursillo de hombres en español en el Centro de Cursillos de Fort Worth, 2221 NW 26th St., Fort Worth, marzo 29 a abril 1. Los Cursillos son unos retiros especiales para adultos, que deseen ser líderes en las comunidades eclesiales. Todos los hombres cordialmente invitados a profundizar su vida de fe, a la luz del Movimiento de Cursillos. Para más informacion, favor de llamar a Aureliano Reyes (817) 446-1077, o directamente al Centro de Cursillos (187) 64-9411, El Señor y nuestra Iglesia le esperan.

Cursillos de jóvenes: muchachas, feb.23-25; muchachos, marzo 2-4

Todos los jóvenes de habla español, entre los 16 y los 35 años, estan cordialmente invitados a un retiro, de un fin de semana, en español, que tendra lugar en el Centro de Cursillos de Fort Worth, 2221 NW 26th St., Fort Worth. Para muchachas, febrero 23, viernes, comenzando a las 7 p.m. a febrero 25; para muchachos, marzo 2, viernes, comenzando a las 7 p.m. a marzo 4. Para más informacion, favor de llamar al Centro (817) 624-9411. Les esperamos, jóvenes. Vengan a pasar un alegre fin de semana en comania de otros jóvenes, en un ambiente de oración y alegría.

Al sur de México, sacerdote trabaja para proteger a emigrantes que se dirigen al Norte

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (CNS) — Siempre que el tren de carga llega a la población, el padre Alejandro Solalinde y su equipo de ayudantes saben que les espera una larga noche.

El tren de carga, en el que viajan cientos de centroamericanos emigrantes que se dirigen al Norte para ingresar a los Estados Unidos, hace parada en el poblado en donde vive el padre Solalinde, Ixtepec, punto importante de convergencia ferroviaria al sur de México. Los emigrantes que esperan el siguiente tren que los lleve a Veracruz están expuestos a ser blanco de bandas criminales, que los mantienen secuestrados hasta que los familiares pueden enviar giros por miles de dólares para su rescate.

Así, el padre Solalinde y su equipo de 18 voluntarios los cuidan y tratan de que eviten las bandas criminales que, según se informa, operan con la protección, e incluso con la participación activa, de las autoridades locales. Las acciones del padre,

en meses recientes, han aparecido en titulares de periódicos y han ayudado a sacar a luz información sobre esas organizaciones que victimizan a los emigrantes que se dirigen para el Norte.

“Es una enorme mafia”, dijo el padre Solalinde en una entrevista por teléfono con el Catholic News Service (CNS, por sus siglas en inglés, Servicio Católico de Noticias). “Y el presidente municipal de Ixtepec los protege”.

El padre añadió que los secuestradores atacan con frecuencia en dos lugares diferentes a la vez, lo que complica la tarea ya de por sí difícil de vigilar a los cientos de emigrantes que llegan al lugar después de haberse encerrado en el tren desde Chiapas, cerca de la frontera con Guatemala.

Por sus esfuerzos de proteger a los vulnerables centroamericanos, que en su mayoría atraviesan México sin la documentación adecuada y están a merced de las autoridades mexicanas, el padre Solalinde ha recibido amenazas

e incluso fue golpeado y encarcelado por breve tiempo.

El padre Solalinde dijo que tiene la determinación de ir más allá de vigilar a los emigrantes y de darles comida y agua. Con el apoyo financiero y manejo de detalles de la operación por parte del padre Bill Barman, misionero católico del condado de Orange, Calif., el padre Solalinde y su equipo de voluntarios han comprado un terreno en Ixtepec en donde piensan edificar un refugio para emigrantes.

El padre Barman, que ha estado involucrado en el ministerio de justicia desde el año 1981, dijo que él y varios de sus compañeros sacerdotes y parroquias le enviaron al padre Solalinde aproximadamente \$9,000 para ayudarlo a que compre el terreno. Añadió que la meta es la de construir refugios temporales que se pueden desmantelar rápidamente y transportar a otro lugar si la ola de migración cambia o si los criminales que victimizan a los emigrantes se informan del lugar y los atacan.



Miles de campesinos y sindicalistas agremiados protestan en la Ciudad de México, el 31 de enero, en contra del aumento en el precio de la tortilla, uno de los alimentos básicos en la dieta de muchos mexicanos. Los analistas dicen que el aumento de precio se debe a la escasez mundial de maíz a causa de una mayor demanda del grano para la producción de etanol, que se usa como combustible o como aditivo de combustible. (Foto CNS/Henry Romero, Reuters)

Relaciones extrañas: en América Latina la iglesia todavía influencia el estado

LIMA, Perú (CNS) — Cuando el presidente venezolano Hugo Chávez le dijo al arzobispo Roberto Luckert León que él “lo vería en infierno”, él estaba avivando los carbones de una continua guerra de palabras con los líderes católicos.

Y cuando el gobierno del presidente boliviano Evo Morales buscó pelea con los obispos de ese país poco después su inauguración, él parecía morder la mano que había ayudado al movimiento de base del país a poner un presidente en el poder.

Pero mientras algunos de los líderes políticos de la región aparentan estar intentando distanciarse de la institución que ha sido una fuerza tanto política como religiosa desde que llegaron los conquistadores españoles, la Iglesia Católica continúa influenciando la vida y los eventos en América Latina.

Las relaciones a veces extrañas han sido particularmente evidentes durante los últimos 15 meses, mientras las elecciones presidenciales fueron celebradas en docenas de países, algunas con sorprendentes resultados. En Bolivia, Morales barrió hacia el poder en la primera votación — algo nunca escuchado en un

país donde durante décadas recientes la presidencia había sido decidida en negociaciones tras bastidores entre los principales partidos tradicionales.

Pero aunque los cimientos de apoyo de Morales están en los grupos de base, muchos de los cuales también tienen una relación estrecha con la Iglesia Católica, su gobierno se enfrentó a los líderes de la iglesia temprano en su presidencia en cuanto a la enseñanza de religión en las escuelas públicas. Eventualmente el gobierno desistió en lo que algunos observadores dicen que fue un reconocimiento tácito por Morales de que a él no le conviene antagonizar a los obispos del país.

En un discurso después de su reelección en diciembre, Chávez, quien ha tenido una relación tempestuosa con los obispos de Venezuela, comparó su visión del futuro de la nación con “el reino de Cristo”, al cual él llamó “el reino del amor, de la paz, de la justicia, de la solidaridad ... el reino del socialismo”.

En Nicaragua el ex líder del gobierno revolucionario sandinista, Daniel Ortega, fue elegido presidente en noviembre y se ganó palabras amistosas del cardenal Miguel Obando y Bravo,

de Managua, aunque la relación de Ortega con la iglesia había sido tempestuosa en la década de 1980. El partido de Ortega respaldó recientemente una estricta legislación sobre el aborto apoyada por los líderes de la iglesia.

En Chile un servicio eclesialístico ecuménico marcó la inauguración de la presidenta Michelle Bachelet, quien se autodescribe como agnóstica, mientras que el presidente peruano Alan García asistió a ambas, una Misa del día de inauguración celebrada por el cardenal Juan Cipriani Thorne, de Lima, y un servicio evangélico.

¿Señalan estos eventos una tendencia hacia un mayor secularismo en lo que tradicionalmente ha sido visto como el continente más católico del mundo?

En 1995 el 80 por ciento de los latinoamericanos se autoidentificó como católico, pero para el 2004 la figura había caído al 71 por ciento, según la empresa de encuestas Latinobarómetro, basada en Chile. Sólo el 42 por ciento de los católicos se consideraba practicante, sin embargo, comparado con más del 74 por ciento de evangélicos.

“Es bastante evidente que la iglesia está pasando por un largo período sin participación” com-

parado con la estrecha relación iglesia-estado que existió en tiempos coloniales, dijo padre Jeffrey Klaiber, historiador jesuita en la Pontificia Universidad Católica de Lima.

En Argentina, donde la separación de la iglesia y el estado data de la década de 1850, sólo el 34 por ciento de la gente se autoidentifica como católico, según Latinobarómetro. En Chile, que legalizó el divorcio en diciembre del 2004 por encima de las protestas de los obispos católicos, la cifra es del 31 por ciento.

Pero aunque puede ser que la gente esté menos dispuesta a seguir el liderato de sus obispos en asuntos como el divorcio o el control de la natalidad, la iglesia todavía “tiene el poder de reunir a la gente en una crisis. Y la gente todavía recurre a la iglesia para tener una voz” en los asuntos de justicia social, dijo padre Klaiber.

Aunque muchos de los obispos que se manifestaron más fuertemente sobre esos asuntos en décadas recientes se han jubilado, la defensa de los derechos humanos y de la justicia social por la iglesia continúa dándole gran credibilidad en la región, según el padre dominico Edward Cleary, quien dirige el departamento de

Estudios Latinoamericanos en el Colegio Providence de Rhode Island.

El compromiso con los derechos humanos y la justicia social es evidente mediante un vistazo a los mensajes publicados en años recientes en las páginas de Internet de las conferencias episcopales de la región, dijo padre Cleary.

En cartas pastorales muchas conferencias han hecho llamados a elecciones limpias, a un final a la corrupción y a mayor atención gubernamental a asuntos tales como los servicios médicos y la educación. En países como Bolivia, Perú y República Dominicana, líderes eclesiales han mediado en crisis políticas. Y mientras sólo el 27 por ciento de los latinoamericanos dicen que confían en las legislaturas de sus países y el 36 por ciento confía en los tribunales, el 71 por ciento confía en la iglesia, según Latinobarómetro.

En América Central “la influencia residual de (el arzobispo Oscar) Romero y otros en El Salvador es todavía evidente”, dijo padre Cleary. De hecho, América Central tiene la mayor proporción de católicos — el 48 por ciento — que dicen que practican su fe, según Latinobarómetro.

Diocesan / National / International

Special Collection: Catholic Campaign for Human Development

Parish Name	Parish Location	CCHD Nov 2005	CCHD Nov 2006
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Abbott	122.00	392.00
Jesus of Nazareth	Albany	83.75	116.00
Holy Redeemer	Aledo	839.87	1,001.03
Most Blessed Sacrament	Arlington	3,083.17	2,829.42
St. Joseph	Arlington	2,245.97	3,173.33
St. Maria Goretti	Arlington	2,577.75	0.00
St. Mary the Virgin	Arlington	347.00	0.00
St. Matthew	Arlington	410.00	1,207.25
St. Vincent de Paul	Arlington	881.00	1,228.00
Vietnamese Martyrs	Arlington	1,889.00	1,868.00
Holy Trinity	Azle	671.00	767.00
St. Michael	Bedford	2,685.00	2,965.00
St. Jerome	Bowie	75.00	165.00
Sacred Heart of Jesus	Breckenridge	370.37	269.34
St. John the Baptist	Bridgeport	404.50	359.75
St. Jude Thaddeus	Burkburnett	353.00	341.00
St. Ann	Burleson	865.50	1,050.00
St. Catherine of Siena	Carrollton	2,969.00	1,828.00
Holy Rosary	Cisco	201.00	100.00
St. Joseph	Cleburne	103.00	634.20
Holy Angels	Clifton	288.00	338.85
Good Shepherd	Colleyville	1,932.00	1,631.00
Holy Cross	The Colony	280.00	238.00
Sacred Heart	Comanche	216.00	148.00
St. Joseph	Crowell	40.00	0.00
Assumption/Blessed Virgin Mary	Decatur	661.50	693.97
Our Lady of Guadalupe	De Leon	81.24	64.96
Immaculate Conception	Denton	1,393.00	815.00
St. Mark	Denton	3,204.88	3,531.80
St. Mary	Dublin	500.00	395.00
St. Francis Xavier	Eastland	87.00	10.00
St. Paul	Electra	27.00	32.00
All Saints	Fort Worth	1,302.10	1,321.92
Christ the King	Fort Worth	0.00	666.00
Holy Family	Fort Worth	1,877.00	2,067.00
Holy Name of Jesus	Fort Worth	500.00	163.00
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Fort Worth	1,875.91	2,593.00
Our Lady of Fatima	Fort Worth	1,497.00	707.10
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Fort Worth	2,044.50	2,555.18
Our Mother of Mercy	Fort Worth	361.00	403.00
San Mateo	Fort Worth	515.00	376.00
St. Andrew	Fort Worth	3,944.35	5,121.71
St. Bartholomew	Fort Worth	4,890.89	5,615.69
St. George	Fort Worth	0.00	488.00
St. John the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,219.00	0.00
St. Mary of the Assumption	Fort Worth	343.00	275.00
St. Patrick Cathedral	Fort Worth	2,567.50	3,904.50
St. Paul	Fort Worth	820.20	780.60
St. Peter the Apostle	Fort Worth	872.20	595.00
St. Rita	Fort Worth	215.36	223.00
St. Thomas the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,420.00	1,822.52
St. Mary	Gainesville	288.00	313.00
St. Rose of Lima	Glen Rose	133.25	182.79
St. Francis of Assisi	Graford	0.00	0.00
St. Mary	Graham	0.00	0.00
St. Frances Cabrini	Granbury	1,283.00	2,005.00
St. Francis of Assisi	Grapevine	1,875.00	2,531.25
St. Mary	Hennetta	155.00	110.00
Our Lady of Mercy	Hillsboro	463.98	402.33
Korean Catholic Community	Hurst	0.00	0.00
Christ the King	Iowa Park	20.00	27.00
St. Mary	Jacksboro	28.00	64.00
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	Keller	3,893.20	3,512.50
Santa Rosa	Knox City	250.00	0.00
St. Philip the Apostle	Lewisville	3,425.35	2,459.96
St. Peter	Lindsay	881.62	1,806.00
St. Jude	Mansfield	239.00	1,009.54
St. Mary of the Assumption	Megargel	20.00	0.00
Our Lady of Lourdes	Mineral Wells	0.00	326.67
St. William	Montague	0.00	0.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Morgan	118.23	92.55
Sacred Heart	Muenster	1,601.76	1,867.50
St. Joseph	Nocona	25.00	65.00
St. Theresa	Olney	0.00	0.00
Nativity/Blessed Virgin Mary	Penelope	186.00	94.00
St. Thomas Aquinas	Pilot Point	463.00	552.00
St. Mary	Quanah	56.00	180.00
St. Rita	Ranger	65.00	84.00
St. Joseph	Rhineland	0.00	273.75
St. Boniface	Scotland	52.00	63.00
Sacred Heart	Seymour	115.00	0.00
St. Brendan	Stephenville	181.82	267.00
St. John	Strawn	153.00	98.00
St. John	Valley View	48.00	0.00
Holy Family of Nazareth	Vernon	453.00	371.00
St. Stephen	Weatherford	1,815.00	1,924.00
Immaculate Conception of Mary	Wichita Falls	493.00	507.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Wichita Falls	203.00	715.25
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Wichita Falls	1,197.00	776.00
Sacred Heart	Wichita Falls	733.35	811.00
St. Mary	Windthorst	676.00	666.75

77,543.07 82,028.96

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



VIETNAMESE CHURCH — Catholics receive Communion during morning Mass at Ham Long Church, also known as St. Anthony's, in Hanoi, Vietnam, Dec. 7. Signaling continued improvement in Vatican-Vietnamese relations, Pope Benedict XVI hosted the first-ever visit of a prime minister from Vietnam's communist government Jan. 25. (CNS photo)

Urgent action for comprehensive immigrant reform is needed, says Bishop Barnes

FROM PAGE 1
throughout the country strongly desire that Congress solve the problem of illegal immigration," he said.

Bishop Barnes added, "From a humanitarian perspective, there

is even more urgency for action. Migrants continue to be subject to exploitation by unscrupulous employers, abuse by smugglers, and death in the American desert.

"As the recent raids on meat-

packing plants demonstrate, families are subject to separation and dislocation. As a moral matter, our nation can no longer accept the work and taxes of migrant laborers without offering them legal protection," he said.

Bishop Barnes outlined five elements the U.S. bishops would like to see in a new immigration bill:

— A program allowing undocumented people to earn permanent residency.

— A worker program that protects foreign-born workers and safeguards against the displacement of U.S. workers.

— A reduction in the waiting time for the reunification of immigrant families.

— The restoration of due process protections for immigrants.

— Policies addressing the root causes of migration.

As of Jan. 29, 53 bills had been introduced in Congress that deal with immigration in some form.

Six Democratic senators introduced the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Act of 2007, which seeks "to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for more effective border and employment enforcement, to prevent illegal immigration, and to reform and rationalize avenues for legal immigration."

Rep. Edolphus Towns, D-New York, introduced the Comprehensive Immigration Reform Commission Act of 2007, which would create an eight-member bipartisan commission with a \$1.5 million budget that would produce a report to Congress of its findings and recommendations six months after its two co-chairs are appointed.

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DEPART JULY 15, 2007 WITH FATHER WALTER

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For brochure, information, reservations and letter from Father Grabowski with his phone number, call 7 days a week:
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Bodies plasticized and on display raise interesting questions

From page 11

or archaeologists examining skeletal remains exhumed from digs, such consent can probably be presumed, assuming that certain conditions are met:

1. Their remains are not being used in a disrespectful manner;
2. There is an educational, spiritual, or inspirational end being realized by the use of the remains;
3. There was no indication left by the individuals or their relatives explicitly stating that they did not want the remains to be used in this public service;
4. The death of the individual was not intentionally caused in order to procure the body or the tissues.

Whether the use of human bodies in "Body Worlds" will be acceptable will largely depend on intense discussion surrounding the first and second conditions. Are the bodies being posed provocatively or being made to engage in immoral activities while on display, or are they set up in respectable, fundamentally decent poses? Since it is a public display, are the actions represented appropriate for public viewing, including children? These are some of the further questions we may need to consider when trying to decide about the moral acceptability of such an exhibition. There may also need to be assurance that the bodies on display, or parts from those bodies that were removed

during their preparation, will ultimately be properly disposed of either through burial or through cremation, as a sign of our respect for the remains of the dead.

The fact that the traveling cadaver exhibit has already drawn more than 18 million visitors worldwide indicates a deep-seated fascination with understanding our own bodies. One might even argue that such an exhibit could prompt some soul searching and further discussion of human frailty and the meaning of our own mortality.

Along the same lines, an exhibit which reveals the human child in utero by a simple cutaway can serve to powerfully remind visitors

about the reality of the pro-life message, namely that children in the womb are not "blobs of protoplasm" but are rather our brothers and sisters at an earlier developmental stage. In the words of one astute observer: "If young women had windows on their stomachs, so they could see into their own wombs, the number of abortions would decline drastically."

The "Body Worlds" exhibit does seem to afford a unique

opportunity to open a window onto the inner workings of the human body in a way that straddles the line between enlightening and edgy.

Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Massachusetts, and serves as the director of education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org.

Hamer...

From page 11

he thought Jesus' e-mail address might be, if he had one. "It would have to be the most esoteric ISP of all time," Andrew replied, "like j.christ@earthlink.com. But I wonder if he would get the same customer service that we get?"

I have my best conversations with Jesus at daily Mass. I know this like I know my own e-mail address. I know with certainty that when I receive the Eucharist, I am a more solid person, grounded in peace, and able to face the day with serenity.

But, in the early morning, I mistakenly decide 15 more minutes of sleep may be as beneficial as the restfulness of God. About that, I am wrong. As wrong as my children were when, in slumber, they rationalized that more rest would improve the quality of their morning. It didn't. It just made them late for school. With bad hair.

"Why can't I be disciplined enough to spend one hour each morning with the Lord?" I ask myself, in the disappointed, judgmental way we reserve for

personal critiques. "He wakes me up 15 minutes before my alarm, and do I get up? No. I know I will feel better and do better with him, but I choose the sleep instead.

"Yet you forgive me, Lord. You are always present for me the next day, the next week, or whenever I wake up and show up. You continue to fill me with grace."

God never blames our lack of communication on "phone tag." He never says, "Did you get my message?" or "I've been trying to get 'ahold' of you."

God doesn't care how long it is between contacts. He doesn't qualify what we have to say. He doesn't punish us when we are late arriving. And he doesn't care how much or how little we talk.

My son John lives in California, and leads a busy life, with a full-time job and class schedule. We may not talk to each other for weeks at a time.

But he called home last week, and I was busy. On my lap was a computer keyboard, my feet were up on the coffee table, and by the time I got to the phone it had become silent. I looked at the caller ID and saw John's name. "I'll call him back later," I decided.

Before I had a chance to do

that, however, John called me back. "Uh-oh. There must be a reason for the call," I thought. "John is usually busy. He doesn't call all the time. Maybe he needs me."

"Hello," I said. "Hey," he replied. "What's going on?" He told a joke, asked about the latest '24' episode, and was relatively silent — while I talked and talked.

Funny, I thought. John never calls. But he called me today — twice. I was happy to hear his voice. I laughed at his jokes. He did not have much to say — I did all the talking.

Strange. He had tried hard to get hold of me. And when he finally did, he was quiet.

Then, with a shiver, I realized. Maybe he just wanted to listen to me. Maybe that's what God wants us to do, too.



Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. Andrew Parish, 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.

Denning saw what needed to be done, and she did it

From page 24

Start program.

"I saw hundreds of kids who really wanted to go to school and, for what I thought was a nominal amount of money, couldn't. As an educator, it angered me," she said in 2004.

"The children we serve are very at-risk in the sense that they are growing up in one of the worst areas of Guatemala City," she said. "The area is plagued by gang activity, drug abuse, and crime.

"A lot of the kids never had any formal structure or experience in school, so some of them had behaviors that were difficult for even the most hardened teachers to imagine," she said.

Writer and producer Glad said that Denning once told

him of the life-changing impact that her first visit to the garbage dump had.

"She said: 'You don't see it coming and all of a sudden you know what you have to do for the rest of your life,'" said Glad.

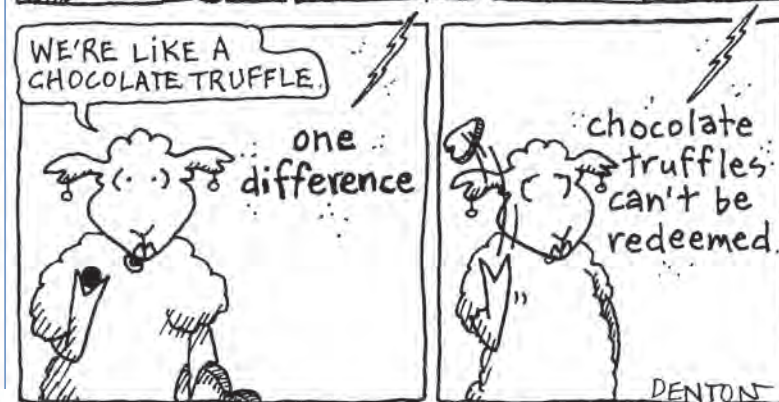
After Denning's death, her body was taken Jan. 19 to a funeral home in Guatemala City, which mourners visited through the night, and then was taken to the school the next day. Her body was returned to Maine Jan. 22 and funeral services were held Jan. 23.

She is survived by her parents, Michael and Marina Denning of Yarmouth, and three brothers, Seth of Washington D.C., Jordan of New York City, and Lucas of Yarmouth.

The FLOCK

By Jean Denton

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Umbert the Unborn



by Gary Cangemi

Good Newsmaker

Five days before a documentary featuring Hanley Denning was nominated for an Oscar,

Guatemala's 'angel of the garbage dump' dies in car crash

By Agostino Bono
Catholic News Service
Washington

Hanley Denning, known in Guatemala as "the angel of the garbage dump" because she helped poor children escape garbage picking as a livelihood, died in a car crash in Guatemala.



Hanley Denning, a native of Maine and founder and executive director of Safe Passage, talks with children during the first day of school in 2005 in Guatemala City. Hanley, 36, died in a Jan. 18 car crash in Guatemala. She was known in that country as "the angel of the garbage dump" because she helped poor children escape garbage picking as a livelihood. Safe Passage provides free tutoring to poor children, who often grow up searching the garbage dumps for items to be sold to support their families. (CNS photo/Joseph J. Delconzo)

Five days after her Jan. 18 death at age 36, a documentary featuring Denning was nominated for an Oscar.

Denning died from injuries suffered when the car she was in collided with a bus on a mountain road outside of Guatemala City. She was a native of Yarmouth, Maine.

With help from a \$10,000 grant from the Sisters of the Precious Blood in Dayton, Ohio, Denning founded Safe Passage in 1999, an educational reinforcement program for children whose parents take them daily to Guatemala City's garbage dump to look for recyclable articles that could be sold.

Denning, a teacher, had originally gone to Guatemala to learn Spanish so that she could better work with Hispanic students in the U.S.

On Jan. 23, "Recycled Life," a documentary in which Denning commented on the lives of garbage pickers was nominated

A priest let her use an abandoned church next to the dump, said Glad. "She swept it clean, chased out the rats, and the next day she had 40 kids show up."

for an Oscar in the category for best documentary short by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences.

"She did so much in so little time. She was 100 miles ahead of the next person," said Mike Glad, writer and producer of "Recycled Life."

Glad interviewed Denning several times from 2001 to 2004. He told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview Jan. 24 that he plans to edit the interviews and include them in future DVDs of "Recycled Life."

Finding Denning was easy for a filmmaker looking for someone who interacted with garbage pickers, said Glad.

"It was like two expatriates coming together in a bar in Afghanistan," he said.

Glad said that after a nun took Denning to the dump, Denning decided that helping the children who pick through the garbage would be her life's work.

A priest let her use an abandoned church next to the dump, said Glad. "She swept it clean, chased out the rats, and

the next day she had 40 kids show up."

Convincing parents that education is a better path for their children than garbage picking was difficult for Denning, he said.

Parents were used to taking their children to the dump because the extra hands meant finding more recyclable things to be sold, he said.

Her program involved giving free meals to the children, tutoring them, encouraging them to go to school, and providing

gift packages of foods and medicines to the parents, he said.

"The gift packs were the reward to parents for giving up their children to education," said Glad.

"She was a young, attractive girl. I was amazed how she could be such an entrepreneur," he said of Denning's fundraising and organizational skills.

From the initial start in the abandoned church, Safe Passage has grown to where it now has an annual budget of \$1.6 million and a full-time and part-time staff of 100 employees, mostly in Guatemala.

To support Safe Passage, Denning developed a fundraising organization in the United States and relied on volunteers, many from U.S. Catholic parishes, to work in Guatemala for brief periods of time.

"Through her dedication and those working beside her, 550 children are in school, destined to become productive, working adults with a hopeful future," said Paul Sutherland, chairman of the Safe Passage board of directors, in a statement on Denning's death.

"Hanley's life was an inspiring example of what one individual can accomplish in the cause of humanity if they dedicate themselves, work hard, and stay the course through headwinds and setbacks," said Sutherland, a portfolio manager in Travis City, Michigan.

In a 2004 interview with CNS, Denning said she listened to people describe their needs and then drew up plans for a program based on her teaching and working experience with the U.S. government's Head

See DENNING p. 22

Inside... This issue of the NTC

Father Kyle Walterscheid introduces a new vocations column in the NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC, bringing us up to date on our growing numbers of seminarians and plans for the future. **3**

The 20th annual Catholic Schools Banquet recognized contributions by donors and outstanding schools volunteers, employees, and advocates while looking to the future with hope. **6**

The OMM Gospel choir added new liveliness to the 26th annual Respect Life Mass, as homilist Bishop Kevin Vann called those gathered to remember that God does indeed have the last word. **7**

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