

North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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February 20, 2009



Pope Benedict XVI smiles as he arrives to attend a concert in Paul VI hall at the Vatican Feb. 12. The concert marked the 80th anniversary of the founding of Vatican City State. (CNS photos/Giampiero Sposito, Reuters)

Pope says fasting in Lent opens hearts to God, hands to the poor

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Fasting from food and detaching oneself from material goods during Lent help believers open their hearts to God and open their hands to the poor, Pope Benedict XVI said.

The Lenten fast helps Christians “mortify our egoism and open our hearts to love of God and neighbor,” said the pope in his message for Lent 2009.

The papal message for Lent, which begins Feb. 25 for Latinrite Catholics, was released Feb. 3 at the Vatican.

Cardinal Paul Cordes, president of the Pontifical Council Cor Unum, the Vatican’s office for promoting and coordinating charity, told reporters that Christian fasting brings together love for God and love for neighbor.

“The pope reminds us of our obligation to open our hearts and our hands to those in need,” he said at the Vatican presentation of the message.

The Vatican invited Josette Sheeran, executive director of the U.N.’s World Food Program, to help present the papal message.

“Through fasting and prayer we allow him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God.”

— Pope Benedict XVI’s
Lenten Message

“Serving the hungry is a moral call that unites people of all faiths,” said Sheeran, whose organization relies heavily on Catholic charities and other faith-based organizations to distribute food aid.

“At this time of worldwide economic challenges, let us not forget that the food and
SEE POPE P. 12

Turning 80, Vatican celebrates its growth into nationhood

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — The smallest nation in the world is celebrating a relatively young 80th birthday this year.

Although the Catholic Church has a 2,000-year history, Vatican City State was established Feb. 11,

1929, to guarantee that the Holy See and the pope could freely carry out their spiritual mission of confirming Christians in the faith and guiding the universal church.

The transition from the Papal States to nationhood was a long and bumpy road.

Starting in the eighth century, the church wielded temporal power over what was known as the Papal States, a shifting group of territories across parts of modern-day Italy.

The popes at the time were territorial sovereigns and, as such,
SEE VATICAN’S P. 13

Pure Reality rally draws nearly 1,000 to point teens toward the true freedom of chastity and abstinence

By Nicki Prevou
Editorial Assistant

Monday, Feb. 9 was a busy day for Sue Laux, director of Fort Worth Youth For Life, an organization for youth sponsored by the Catholics Respect Life ministry within the Diocese of Fort Worth. Laux spent the day fielding grateful phone calls and e-mails from parents whose teen children had attended the “Pure Reality” pro-life rally, held the day before at the Metro Center in Arlington. “Many teens attended through pressure from their parents, and not because they wanted to be there [initially],” explained Laux.

The teens went home to report a positive experience to their parents, said Laux, thus providing what she called a “catalyst”



Chris Stefanick, director of youth, young adult and campus ministry for the Archdiocese of Denver, offered a dynamic presentation on chastity to nearly 1,000 participants in the Feb. 8 “Pure Reality” rally held in Arlington. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)

for providing open communication between parents and their teens on the subject of chastity. “The Fort Worth Diocese had 25

parishes represented with 554 people, and the Diocese of Dallas also had 25 parishes represented with 336 people,” said Laux,

noting that the teens and their leaders were joined by volunteer staff members, priests, deacons, seminarians, and a Knights of Columbus Honor Guard, to create a total of nearly 1,000 enthusiastic participants at the rally.

Pro-life leaders in both the dioceses of Fort Worth and Dallas began planning nearly two years ago for the event, said Laux, with the goal of presenting a “pure reality” to today’s youth, “letting them know that chastity and abstinence are the true paths to freedom.” The event opened with a Mass, celebrated by Father Stan Fortuna, CFR, an internationally recognized musician and pro-life activist. A performance by Theater of the Word, a presentation on chastity by Chris Stefanick of the Archdiocese of Denver, and

a concert by Fr. Stan were other highlights of the rally.

Highly sexualized content in the media — combined with other factors that have weakened families in contemporary society — has resulted in disturbing statistics about adolescent sexual behavior. According to a 2007 report by The National Centers for Disease Control, 48 percent of American high school students are sexually active, and 15 percent of high school students have been physically intimate with four or more partners. Approximately 19 million new cases of sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are reported each year in this country, and almost half of these are reported by young people ages 15 to 24. And in 2002,
SEE PURE, P. 9

Pope's challenge to fast isn't just a diet, but a call to partake in the true food of the Word of God

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

In Pope Benedict XVI's Lenten Message for this year, which I invite you to read in its entirety, the Holy Father recalls the three traditional penitential practices of prayer, almsgiving, and fasting, which prepare us to better celebrate Easter; he then places a special focus on the value and meaning of fasting. I believe this beautiful message deserves some special attention, and I would like to highlight some of the Holy Father's points.

The Holy Father takes us to the moment, just before the beginning of Christ's ministry, when at the end of his 40 days in the desert He responds to the tempter with the words:

Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.

— Matthew 4:4

Here we find a deeper meaning to the concept of fasting.

Fasting is not so much being without the nutrition of this world as it is nurturing oneself, and living each day, with the Word that we receive from the mouth of God. This Word is God's loving and daily will for each one of us. His Word is his will. It is true food, it is life, abundant life, and to stray from the true food of his Word is to follow a path of isolation and death.

The death which falls on those that refuse to feed on the Word of God is ultimately a death from severe malnutrition, whatever their daily caloric intake.

So, my brothers and sisters, I ask



Bishop Kevin W. Vann

If we follow the Holy Father's recommendation for Christian fasting during this season of Lent, we will be taking advantage of an opportunity to spiritually strengthen ourselves, our parishes, and our diocese. We will do this by pushing away from our dining room table and pulling closer to Christ, our crucified Lord, who walks hand in hand with the hungry and the poor.

you, when it comes to our daily lives, are we living exclusively by whatever we pick up from the local supermarket or local restaurant? Or, is the Word that comes from the mouth of God also an important meal, and not just an occasional snack? Is the will of God, a will communicated to us through his Word, just a garnish on our plates? Do we happily bring heaping helpings of the food of our own egos and will to our tables and grudgingly and meagerly force ourselves to just nibble on the true food of the will of God?

If any of this is becoming a part of our lives, this Lent offers us a unique opportunity to reverse this spiritually weakening trend by fasting from the former and partaking of the true food of his will.

It is important to stress that Christian fasting should not be confused with the latest fad diet. To truly fast in the Christian tradition, or deprive oneself of various things that are good, is, as the Holy Father reminds us, to dedicate oneself more fully to the life-giving will of God, and this concept is as old as the book of Genesis itself.

Pope Benedict reminds us of this when he quotes *Genesis 2:16-17*:

You may freely eat of every tree of the garden; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall die.

He then goes on to list the many examples of fasting found in Sacred Scripture by those who follow his will more closely, as Jesus Christ did. It is clear through all of the examples that the Holy Father offers us in his Lenten Message that fasting is a unique tool that brings us closer to God and strengthens our spirit and our resolve to be faithful disciples of Christ.

Fasting, when done as a spiritual practice, also permits us to experience for a brief moment the physical

hunger and needs that many of our brothers and sisters live with on a daily basis. Hopefully, these moments of temporary hunger, or moments when we deprive ourselves of a daily indulgence of any kind, will motivate us to remember and lovingly reach out to those brothers and sisters who live with hunger and are deprived on a regular basis.

As we spend less time during this upcoming Lenten season eating and indulging in other entertaining and fun activities, the best use of some of this extra time would be in prayer. Especially praying and meditating with the Scriptures.

The Holy Father ends his message with these thoughts:

Dear brothers and sisters, it is good to see how the ultimate goal of fasting is to help each one of us, as the Servant of God Pope John Paul II wrote, to make the complete gift of self to God. May

every family and Christian community use well this time of Lent, therefore, in order to cast aside all that distracts the spirit and grow in whatever nourishes the soul, moving it to love of God and neighbor. I am thinking especially of a greater commitment to prayer, lectio divina, recourse to the sacrament of reconciliation and active participation in the Eucharist, especially the Holy Sunday Mass. With this interior disposition, let us enter the penitential spirit of Lent.

If we follow the Holy Father's recommendation for Christian fasting during this season of Lent, we will be taking advantage of an opportunity to spiritually strengthen ourselves, our parishes, and our diocese. We will do this by pushing away from our dining room table and pulling closer to Christ, our crucified Lord, who walks hand in hand with the hungry and the poor.

May we all make an effort during this season of Lent to fast from spending so much time and money on ourselves, and may we spend more time with Christ while we assist our brothers and sisters in need.

May we join Our Lady of Sorrows throughout this holy season and, guided by her, come closer to her Son, our crucified Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless you always.

+ Kevin W. Vann

+ Bishop Kevin W. Vann



17 Years in a Row



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Pope Benedict XVI holds a candle during a ceremony to mark the World Day of the Sick in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Feb. 11. World Day of the Sick affirms the church's duty to remember and serve the sick and the suffering. (CNS photo/Alessia Pierdomenico, Reuters)

Treasure human life, even when suffering, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Human life is a gift to be treasured with patience and love even when it appears to be marked with senseless suffering, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"Human life is not a disposable good, but a precious treasure to be guarded and cared for with every possible attention from the moment of its beginning to its final and natural completion," the pope said Feb. 11 as he marked World Day of the Sick.

Meeting and blessing sick people and their caregivers after an evening Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Benedict said, "Life is a mystery which requires responsibility, love, patience, (and) charity on the part of each and every person."

"This is not always easy," he said. "We know, however, that we have to be able to have courage and patience to face the vicissitudes of earthly existence, especially sickness and every kind of suffering."

Pope Benedict's message for World Day of the Sick, released Feb. 7 at the Vatican, focused on sick children and on the challenge to faith their situation provokes.

Meeting the sick people and their families Feb. 11, he said: "If we are left without words before an adult who suffers, what can we say when illness strikes an innocent little one? How can we see the merciful love of God who never abandons his children in times of trial even in such difficult situations as these?"

On a strictly human level, the suffering of children makes no sense, the pope said.

Even on a spiritual level, the questions are difficult, he said. But Christians believe that suffering is "mysteriously embraced by the divine plan of salvation," he said.

"Life is a mystery which requires responsibility, love, patience, (and) charity on the part of each and every person. This is not always easy. We know, however, that we have to be able to have courage and patience to face the vicissitudes of earthly existence, especially sickness and every kind of suffering."

— Pope Benedict XVI
World Day of the Sick message

"Faith helps us to affirm that human life is beautiful and worthy of being lived fully even when it is weakened by evil," Pope Benedict said.

"God created the human person for happiness and for life, while sickness and death entered the world as the consequence of sin," he said.

But Christ's death and resurrection defeated sickness and death and restores people to the fullness of life, the pope said.

"Every eucharistic celebration is the perennial memorial of Christ crucified and risen," he said, and it is at the Mass that Catholics "learn to love life always and to accept our apparent impotence in the face of sickness and death."

*Responding
to God's Call*

The season of Lent — From reconciliation to conversion

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

Ever wonder when God is going to send you a good day? Have your problems been stacking up like Mount Everest? Lent is a call to the reality of our own mortality, our own limitedness and sinfulness, and to draw near to the Lord, pouring out before him our sins, problems, concerns, anxieties, hurts, and pains.

In reflecting about Lent, our annual period of forty days of fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, I began to reflect on my life, trying to pinpoint the moments in my life where I have really been close to God, when I could clearly sense God and his grace surrounding me with compassion, mercy, and love. I also began to reflect upon the moments in my life where I was most separated from God, feeling empty, lost, and downtrodden.

In both cases I saw that it was a choice that I was making. When I was most separated from God, when things really tanked like the stock market as of late, it was due to my choice, usually a deliberate choice to do things as I wanted, brushing aside Christ and his teachings. On the other hand, the stronger my prayer life, the closer I have felt God's compassion surrounding me, even at times when struggles, hurts, or the loss of a loved one

Try to commit to a Holy Hour daily throughout Lent. What? A whole hour of prayer each day? You did not just say that! Yes, I did. Prayer is not just for priests, you know.

plagued me.

Prayer is needed to establish or strengthen our relationship with God. Prayer helps us to see reality; God is ever-present, all-knowing, and all-powerful. We are his fallen creation whom he loves forever. God is the fountain of all holiness, who has sent forth his Son and his Spirit that we might live no longer for ourselves but for him, to complete his work on earth and to bring us all the fullness of his grace (*Eucharistic Prayer IV*). We are his servants called to holiness. In prayer God helps us to see what we are doing, why we are doing it, what we ought to be doing, and to recognize his love and grace being poured out over us.

But, before we get all excited about prayer, we ought to consider the gift from Christ in the sacrament of reconciliation because we need a fresh start in our spiritual life, for our relationship with God needs to be free of all the shame and sin that has been separating us from him and his love.

So, here is a suggestion for Lent that comes from the richness of the Church as an offering to the people of God. Try to commit to a Holy Hour daily throughout Lent. What? A whole hour of prayer each day? You did not just say that! Yes, I did. Prayer is not just for priests, you know.

Oh, you say you don't have an hour? That simply is not true. Our lives get so busy we can come to the conclusion that we just don't have that kind of time for God. Truth be told, our busy

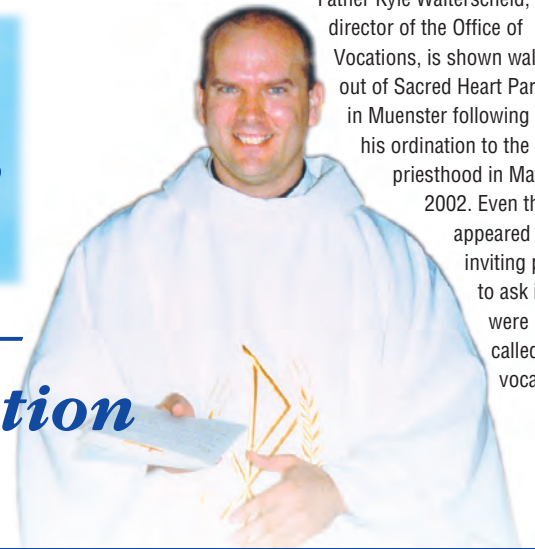
schedules come from choices we have made in the past, kind of like the bad choices I have made in the past, as I have stated earlier, that separated me from God, causing me to be overwhelmed, struggling in sin, with feelings of hopelessness, emptiness, and exhaustion.

The best moments of my life have come when I am more deeply committed to prayer. Holy Hour in the form of eucharistic adoration (or alone in a chapel) is my favorite way to pray, but when that's not available, I make my early morning a Holy Hour before the rush of the day. Forty days of a full Holy Hour of prayer may be too big a challenge for some of you, so maybe a Holy Half Hour is better, but don't sell yourself short with God, as every breath you take comes from God as, "You are dust and to dust, you shall return."

So what are we to do during that Holy Hour of prayer? Prayer comes in so many forms, as God can be reached in many different ways.

It may be best to just put everything aside altogether and to clear our mind of all things so as to simply place ourselves in the presence of the Lord and simply listen to him, or speak to him from the heart. Prayer is prayer, and God will speak to you when you open your heart to him. Peace.

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



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

Schools announce free/reduced-priced lunch and milk programs

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

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

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

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

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

UD Lenten day of reflection to be held Mar. 7

The University of Dallas School of Ministry will sponsor a Lenten day of reflection with keynote and breakout sessions given by the school's faculty from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. March 7. Sessions will be offered in English and in Spanish. There will be a Mass at 5 p.m. The event is open to the public, and the cost is \$25 per person, including lunch, for those who register before the event. Walk-in cost is \$35 per person.

For more information, call (972) 721-5105, e-mail ministryevents@udallas.edu, or visit the event's Web site at www.udallas.edu/ministry/Reflection.cfm.

IWBS Sisters host discernment weekend

The Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters are hosting a discernment weekend for single Catholic women (high school seniors through 50 years of age) from Feb. 28 to March 1 at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. For more information, visit the sisters' Web site at www.iwbsvictoria.org or call (361) 575-7111 or e-mail iwbsvoc@yahoo.com.

Carmelite Auxiliary to host Irish-themed fundraiser

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

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

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

Calix support group meets at Holy Family

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

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

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

NFP course to be offered in Decatur

The Couple to Couple League, which offers classes in the sympto-thermal method of Natural Family Planning, finds NFP to be "safe, healthy, and effective." The Couple to Couple League is introducing an updated course in the sympto-thermal method with completely revised materials and classes. The course consists of three classes spaced at monthly intervals, with individual follow-up as needed. Engaged couples are encouraged to attend a course that begins at least four months before their wedding. To register for a class starting March 8 at 1:30 p.m. at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church, 1305 Deer Park Rd. in Decatur, contact Kevin and Michele Vina at (940) 433-5664.

Knights to host Tejano Dance fundraiser

The Knights of Columbus Bishop Dunne Council 2813 will host a Tejano Dance fundraiser from 8 p.m. to 12 a.m. Saturday, Feb. 28 at its hall at 4500 Columbus Trail in Fort Worth. Doors will open at 7 p.m. Entertainment will be provided by Gary Hobbs and D.J. Charlie V. Productions. The cost per person is \$15 presale and \$20 at the door. For more information, contact Charlie Valdez at (817) 921-2576, or at (817) 247-1809.

People & Events

of Importance for the Church of Fort Worth



Holy Cross Church in The Colony celebrated Scout Sunday Feb. 8. About 24 young people involved in Scouting are pictured with their pastor, Father J. Michael Holmberg, as they mark the special day in their uniforms. Scout Sunday offers an opportunity to recognize the contributions of young people and adults to Scouting, and serves as a reminder of the "Scout Law" that "a Scout is reverent toward God and faithful in his religious duties."

Courage group affirms Church teaching on homosexuality

Courage D/FW, a ministry that affirms the Church's teaching on homosexuality, meets the second and fourth Fridays of the month, and the next meeting will be Feb. 27.

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

Courage is not a "change" ministry, and does not focus on any attempt to change one's "orientation." The focus is helping members, whether single or married, to live lives of interior and exterior chastity, which means living according to the

teachings of the Church regarding sexual love as outlined in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

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

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

Annual German Pork Sausage Meal in Windthorst scheduled for Mar. 1

The Windthorst Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus and the Windthorst Volunteer Fire Department will host the annual German Pork Sausage Meal Sunday, March 1, in the St. Mary Parish hall at 101 Church St. in Windthorst. Serving time will be from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The meal will include all you can eat homemade German sausage, spare ribs, sauerkraut, trimmings, ice cream, and tea. Take-out orders are available, with raw sausage at \$3 per pound. Home-baked goods are also available from the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court 296.

Tickets are \$10 per adult and \$5 for children 12 or younger.

For more information, contact Jerry Horn at (940) 423-6444.

St. Augustine Men's Purity Group meets at three locations

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

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

Rachel Ministries announces plans to expand services in Spanish

Rachel Ministries is excited to announce plans to expand its outreach to include programs and services in Spanish. Rachel Ministries, a compassionate, faith-based abortion recovery ministry offers a safe, non-judgmental, and supportive environment to those struggling with abortion's aftermath. The expanded outreach program is in the beginning stages, and is currently seeking volunteers who can read and speak Spanish to help build the Spanish program.

The ministry is also seeking Spanish-speaking licensed counselors to volunteer during the Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats. The retreat team, which includes a priest, a licensed counselor, and several helpers, provides the confidential support required to work through the spiritual, psychological, and emotional pain of abortion, and experience God's healing love and mercy.

There are also opportunities for volunteers to be included on the referral list. Training will be provided to all volunteers.

Anyone who is bilingual and has a compassionate heart to help those hurting after an abortion is asked to contact Betsy Kopor at (817) 923-4757 or by e-mail to forgiven@racheltx.org.

NTC deadlines for submission

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

Items for the March 6 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, Feb. 25. Items for the March 20 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, March 11.

Ministry with gay, lesbian Catholics to meet Feb. 26

The Fort Worth diocesan Ministry with Lesbian and Gay Catholics, other Sexual Minorities and Their Families regularly meet the fourth Thursday of the month. The next regular meeting will be Feb. 26 at 7 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center at 4503 Bridge St. in Fort Worth. For more information, contact Father Warren Murphy, TOR, at (817) 927-5383 or Doreen Rose at (817) 329-7370.

Subiaco Academy invites prospective students to visit

Subiaco Academy is a Catholic college preparatory, boarding, and day school for young men located in Arkansas with a 100 percent college acceptance rate. The academy is hosting a Discovery Weekend and an Open House Sunday for prospective students and their parents March 13-15. The weekend is open to seventh- through 10th-graders and all accommodations, including overnight stays are free of charge.

Students visiting will have an opportunity to experience dorm life and class orientation with teachers, mingle with current students, and take the placement exam. Activities for parents include classroom visits and information sessions with administration and faculty members. There will also be campus tours and a school carnival with entertainment for everyone. Families have the option of visiting for the weekend or on Sunday only.

Established in 1887 by the Benedictine priests and brothers of Subiaco Abbey, the academy offers a challenging college preparatory curriculum for young men in grades eighth through 12th, emphasizing honors and advanced placement courses.

Students are also encouraged to develop their abilities in art, music, and drama. Athletic teams in football, basketball, track and field, baseball, tennis, soccer, cross country, and golf compete with other schools statewide. Subiaco's program stresses the development of a strong mind and body as well as spiritual growth.

Subiaco Academy is located in western Arkansas approximately 45 miles east of Fort Smith.

For more information about the Discovery Weekend or to reserve a place, please contact the admission office at 1 (800) 364-7824 or email admissions@subi.edu.

Passionist priest to lead Lenten mission at St. Joseph

St. Joseph Church and Knights of Columbus Council 13470 welcome Father Richard Parks, CP, from Sacramento to lead this year's four-night Lenten mission "Compassion" from March 1-4.

Using New Testament parables, Fr. Parks will help the community prepare to celebrate "the most sacred event in Christian salvation." In addition to the four one-hour evening talks, Fr. Parks will celebrate daily Mass at 8:30 a.m. with a related mission talk following.

All Christians are invited to attend the talks at St. Joseph at 1927 SW Green Oaks Blvd. in Arlington. Parking and childcare services will be available. For more information, contact Anita Favila at (817) 472-5181 or at (817) 467-3049.

People and Events

Cartoonist to offer tips for stress-relief during Lenten program



Kotecki



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Lay Carmelites invite others to join prayer gathering

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

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

Benedictines invite high-school girls for vocations weekend

The Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana, invite all high school-aged girls to attend "Discover the Treasure of the Hills High School Visiting Weekend," a vocations weekend Feb. 27 to March 1.

"Did you ever wonder what it is like to live in a monastery? Have you ever wished you could get an inside view of a nun's life?" asks Sister Michelle Sinkhorn, OSB, director of Vocation Ministries.

During the weekend, Sr. Sinkhorn says, girls will have the opportunity to spend time with the sisters and learn about religious life, in addition to getting to know other high school-aged girls.

For more information, call Sr. Sinkhorn at (800) 734-9999, ext. 2830, or visit the sisters' Web site at www.thedome.org to register online.

Volunteers invited to sing at cathedral

Choir members from all parishes in the diocese have been invited to join the St. Patrick Cathedral Adult Choir in singing *Mozart's Requiem* at the cathedral's Palm Sunday Mass, April 5 at 7:30 p.m. The choir will sing with organ, strings, and other instruments, and with guest soloists Diana Ellis from McMurry University in Abilene and Gregory Church from Howard Payne University in Brownwood.

Volunteers must be available to attend the dress rehearsal on April 5 from 2 to 4 p.m. and are also invited to attend regular choir rehearsals each Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. Contact Cynthia Cardenas at ccards@att.net or call (682) 465-5248 for more information.

St. Patrick Cathedral is located at 1206 Throckmorton St. in downtown Fort Worth.

Catholic Charismatic Conference to be held in San Antonio

The 12th Annual Regional Catholic Charismatic Conference will be held March 6-7 at St. Mary Magdalen Church, 1710 Clower St. in San Antonio. The theme is, "In the Footsteps of St. Paul, Empowered by The Holy Spirit." There will be English and Spanish tracks.

Featured speakers include:

— Jim Murphy, a Catholic lay evangelist from Detroit, Michigan, who has served on the North American Renewal Service Committee (NARSC) — an ecumenical organization, the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services (ICCRS) in Rome, and is the former chairman of the National Service Committee (USA);

— Greg Trainor an International Catholic lay evangelist and founder of Holy Spirit Missionary Association from North Palm Beach Florida, who preaches and teaches a life-changing message from God's Word;

— Father Bob Hogan, BBD, a member of the Order of Brothers of the Beloved Disciple, and currently a member of the National Service Committee and since August 1, 2007 has been working with retired Auxiliary Bishop Thomas J. Flanagan of San Antonio, as associate liaison for the Charismatic Renewal in San Antonio;

— Sister Bernadette Beamsley, DLJC, (Disciples of the Lord Jesus Christ), who served as Superior General of the Order from 1995-2002 and currently serves on the DLJC's General Council;

— Father George T. Montague, SM, an internationally known theologian, author, and Bible scholar, who began a new religious community, the "Brothers of the Beloved Disciple" in 1995 and is also professor at St. Mary's University in San Antonio;

— Sister Luisa Rojas Elias, DLJC, originally from Mexico and now ministers with the DLJC in the Spanish communities;

— Father Will Combs, BBD, associate pastor of St. Mary Magdalen;

— Father Einer Ochoa, pastor of St. Agnes Parish;

— Jesus Ramos, a nationally known evangelist who teaches and preaches with zeal and enthusiasm; and

— Raul Chamagua, known throughout Latin America for his zeal in preaching and teaching in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Bishop Flanagan will celebrate Mass and invites everyone to come and experience renewal in the Spirit and to help renew the grace of Pentecost in the life and mission of the Church.

Registration is \$30 for adults, \$50 for couples and \$5 for the youth. Contact the Catholic Center for Charismatic Renewal (CCCR) in San Antonio (CCCR) at (210) 226-7545 for more information. To look for registration forms visit the Web site at www.cccrsa.net.

Lenten services available for Deaf Community

Ash Wednesday services at St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills will be interpreted for the Deaf Community at the 6:30 p.m. Mass. Religious education for adults and students will continue afterwards at 7 p.m. in the Formation Center.

There will be a six-week Lenten Prayer Group for Adults that will meet on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8:15 p.m. at St. John's during Lent. Everyone is invited to participate.

Members of the Deaf Community will gather at San Mateo Church for Palm Sunday services. Father Ken Robinson will celebrate the 1:45 p.m. Mass in sign and voice. Hearing family members and friends are invited to join the Deaf Community for this liturgy and social after Mass.

Fr. Robinson will also celebrate a Lenten Reconciliation Service for the Deaf Community on Sunday, March 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the chapel at St. John's. He will be available to hear individual confessions in English, American Sign Language, and Spanish. Everyone is encouraged to bring their Bible and/or rosary to this service and pray as they wait their turn for confession.

Holy Thursday Mass will be interpreted for the deaf at 7 p.m. at St. John's. Good Friday Services will be at 6:30 p.m. at St. John's.

All parishes that offer Deaf Ministry-interpreted Masses will offer interpreted Masses on Easter morning. However, the 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday evening at St. John's will not be interpreted because parishioners will be preparing for their Easter Vigil Mass instead.

Contact Mary Cinatl, director of Adult Formation at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine and is a noted author. For more information, contact Mary Cinatl, director of Deaf Ministry, at mcinatl@fw-dioc.org for more information.

Deaf Ministry program seeking court reporter for CART services

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

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

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

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

The Lenten 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."

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

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

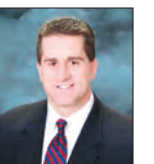
Steve Kellmeyer will present six talks during each of the Fridays of the Lenten season (except Good Friday) beginning on Feb. 27. The talks will be at 8 p.m. following the Fish Fry and Stations of the Cross.

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

Steve Kellmeyer is the director of Adult Formation at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine and is a noted author. For more information on his books, visit www.bridegroompress.com.



Kellmeyer



Staples

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

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

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



Father Carl Szura, TOR, presided at the rite of profession within the Eucharistic celebration on Sunday Feb. 8 at St. Maria Goretti Parish in Arlington. Three candidates of Immaculata Fraternity of the Secular Franciscan Order were professed as permanent members of the fraternity, pledging before the Church to live the Gospel life and following the steps of the order's founder, St. Francis of Assisi.

Pictured above with Fr. Szura, spiritual assistant of Immaculata Fraternity, are Charles Lieser, SFO, vice minister; Josh Molidor, SFO, minister; Mary Dang, from St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Arlington; Judy Bonifert; Pam Nolan from St. Maria Goretti; and Carol Lieser, SFO, master of formation. For more information about Immaculata Fraternity and the Secular Franciscan Order, visit the fraternity's Web site at www.immaculatasfo.org.

Father Theodore Bradower, TOR, 1922-2009

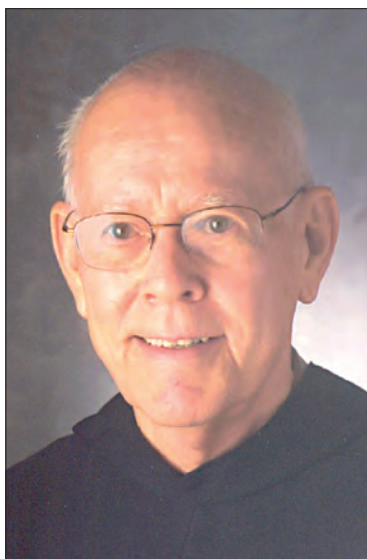
Father Theodore Bradower, a member of the Third Order Regular of St. Francis religious order who served within the Diocese of Fort Worth for 24 years, died Feb. 5 at St. Francis Friary in Loretto, Pennsylvania, at the age of 86. A vigil service was held Friday, Feb. 6, at the chapel of St. Francis Friary. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Feb. 7, also at the Friary chapel, with Father Christian Oravec, TOR, presiding. Interment was at the Franciscan Friars Cemetery on the campus of St. Francis University in Loretto.

Theodore Bradower was born Oct. 24, 1922 in Akron, Ohio, one of two children born to John Bradower and Anna Wolfensberger Bradower. He entered the Franciscan community of the Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus at Sacred Heart Novitiate in Loretto, July 7, 1942. After professing his first vows at Mount Assisi Friary in Loretto, July 8, 1943, he made his solemn profession of vows, also at Mount Assisi Friary, July 8, 1946. He was ordained to the priesthood May 20, 1950, at the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament in Altoona, Pennsylvania by Bishop Richard T. Guilfoyle, Bishop of Altoona-Johnstown.

"Father Ted," as he was lovingly known to the friars and to his many friends and colleagues, graduated from St. Francis University in 1946 and completed his theological studies at St. Francis Seminary, also in Loretto, in 1950. He earned his Ph.D. in philosophy from the Angelicum University in Rome in 1953 and a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in painting and design from Carnegie-Mellon University, Pittsburgh, in 1957.

From 1953-73, F. Ted served as a professor of art and philosophy at the Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio. He also taught music for adult enrichment courses at the university, and served as the founder and host of a weekly opera broadcast by radio, WSTV-FM's "College Concert Hall of the Air."

From 1970-74, Fr. Ted served Franciscan University as academic dean and executive vice president, then was named registrar and local prefect of studies at St. Francis Seminary, where he was assigned from 1974-80. He later was involved in long-range planning programs at both St. Francis University and the Franciscan University of Steubenville, efforts which included intensive consultation on designs for the Holy Spirit Monastery and the J.C. Williams Center at the Fran-



Fr. Theodore Bradower, TOR

ciscan University.

From 1984-2008, Fr. Ted ministered at St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth. He served for several years as chaplain in the Deaf Ministry program for the diocese and also assisted in the diocesan Marriage Tribunal office from 1997-2006.

Sandra Leighton, who served as administrator of the diocesan Marriage Tribunal from 1985-2006, called Fr. Ted's talents "a great gift" to the work of the Tribunal. "He wanted to help people in any way possible," said

Leighton. "He was very thorough in his research to assist the work of the assessors, and, because of his abilities as a writer and an educator, he excelled at proof-reading, which was of great help to the judges."

A gifted spiritual director, writer, and homilist, Fr. Ted was also an accomplished artist and sculptor, with a special interest in textiles and fabric art, said Leighton, adding that his deep interest in German music, history, food, and culture was nourished by his travels to Germany and, most especially, to Bayreuth, home of his favorite composer, Richard Wagner. "He never came back from a trip empty-handed, said Leighton. "He shared everything he had with the people in his life," she recalled. "He was so generous, so giving."

"He had such a tremendous passion for the fine arts," noted another of Fr. Ted's longtime friends, Christina Alves, director of liturgy and music at St. Andrew Church. "He said that everything beautiful in his life could be expressed through Scripture and through music. I learned so much from him because he saw everything in terms of composition, of melody,

of story."

Attending musical performances with Fr. Ted was always a special joy, said Alves, because "he knew every opera we attended inside and out. He would prepare himself for the performance a few days ahead of time, listening to a recording and studying the background of the piece and its composer. I loved to sit next to him and to see him with his eyes closed, listening deeply to the music and conducting it to himself. It was a very spiritual, very sacred experience for him, and then he would make it so for me."

Fr. Ted, though intensely private, was deeply connected to the people he served in ministry, to the friars with whom he lived in community, and to his friends in all parts of the world, said Father Warren Murphy, TOR, with whom he lived in community in Fort Worth for 19 years.

"There was something poetic about everything he said, and everything he created," said Fr. Murphy, who first met the older

priest upon entering the order in 1951. "His greatest priority, in the last months of his life, was to communicate his love of his community, with a sense of gentleness and peace. He focused so much upon total gratitude and praise for everything that was done for him. Every word that he uttered was filled with gentleness, love, and affection. I'll never forget him."

Fr. Ted was preceded in death by a sister, Elizabeth Jeanne Diehl, and is survived by his community of Franciscan friars. Cards of condolence may be sent to: Very Reverend Christian Oravec, TOR, Province of the Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, PO Box 137, Loretto, PA 15940. A memorial Mass and reception for Fr. Ted was held Feb. 23 at St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth.

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Join other Catholics and your Spiritual Director Father Melvin Bennett departing Friday, July 17, 2009. Father Bennett liked this package so much, he's going back! He hosted this same vacation departing May 30, 2008. Father Bennett is Associate Pastor at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Carmel, Indiana. This will be his tenth trip as a Roman Catholic Chaplain for 'Your Man' Tours. **Mass will be celebrated daily aboard ship and some days on tour.** Start in Seattle for one night with an included city tour. In Seattle, board your Norwegian Cruise ship, the "Norwegian Star," for your 7-day inside passage cruise to Ketchikan; Juneau; Sawyer Glacier; Skagway; and Prince Rupert, BC. Enjoy total freedom with NCL's Freestyle cruising. You pick what to wear, and where and when to dine from 10 different restaurants. Next, your Catholic group will travel to San Francisco through Washington State. See the Columbia River, Mt. St. Helens, and Mt. Rainier. Travel through Oregon; then spend two nights in the beautiful Lake Tahoe/Reno area. Explore one of the most beautiful lakes in the world. Next, take a scenic drive to San Francisco for your final two nights where you'll see the Golden Gate Bridge, Fisherman's Wharf, and lots more on your included city tour. Fly home from San Francisco. *Your price of \$2048 (per person, double occupancy) includes the 7-day cruise on NCL's "Star," 7 nights hotels, baggage handling, lots of sightseeing, taxes, government fees and port charges. Airfare is extra. Friends and family are welcome.

For information, reservations, brochure, and letter from Fr. Bennett with his phone number, call 7 days a week:

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Brother Thomas Moster, OSB, 1936-2009

Brother Thomas Robert Moster, 73, a Benedictine monk of Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas and a longtime resident of Muenster, died Feb. 7 at North Logan County Hospital, near his home in Subiaco, Arkansas. A wake service was held at Subiaco Abbey Feb. 9; the Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated Feb. 10 at St. Benedict Church at Subiaco. Interment was in the abbey cemetery.

Thomas Moster was born Feb. 5, 1936 in Wichita Falls, one of six children born to Leo and Theresa Streng Moster. The family moved to Muenster shortly after his birth, and young Thomas grew up in the Muenster community. He began his secondary education at Subiaco Academy and became a Benedictine Oblate in 1953 before graduating from Sacred Heart High School in Muenster in 1954 and becoming a sacristan at Sacred Heart Church, where he served for 22 years. As an oblate, he was committed to living a single lifestyle according to the rule of St. Benedict. He later went on, in 1977, to enter the



Br. Thomas Moster, OSB

novitiate at Subiaco Abbey and to profess his first vows there on Feb. 10, 1979.

During his years as an oblate, "Brother Thomas," as he was fondly known, earned an undergraduate degree in science at Cooke County Junior College and a graduate degree in speech and drama at North Texas State University in Denton. In 1961, he began his teaching career at

Sacred Heart School. He was deeply admired for his talents as an English, speech, and drama instructor, and made a profound impact upon the Sacred Heart students and faculty members through his assistance with the yearbook and school newspaper, through his beautifully staged musicals and plays, and his commitment to teaching young altar servers in the parish.

Muenster resident Peggy Hodebeck Grewing, a 1974 graduate of Sacred Heart High School, is also the wife of Br. Thomas's nephew, Wayne Grewing, a 1972 graduate of the school. Br. Thomas was "incredibly special" to his entire family and to the entire Muenster community, she said.

"He touched so many lives," she recalled, noting that hundreds of young people were impacted by his example through the years. More than 200 of his former students "returned to honor him at his 50th jubilee in Muenster two years ago," said Grewing. "He took these hard-laboring German farm kids and

groomed them to be doctors, nurses, lawyers, actors, editors, engineers, technicians, teachers, but most importantly, he taught them to be encouraging people and fair parents."

Letters written to Br. Thomas at the time of his golden jubilee celebration affirmed the self-effacing monk's gifts as a nurturing educator who brought out the best in his young students, said Grewing. "Thank you for teaching us to do and be our best, for preparing us to succeed after leaving those hallowed halls," wrote Linda Rohmer Sepanski, a 1968 graduate of the school. "Thank you not only for teaching us to work hard, to love beauty and quality in all things, but to do all for God." Phil Endress, a 1974 graduate, extended this written compliment: "Dear Brother, I have the bad habit of correcting others' poor grammar. I blame that on your good teaching."

After returning to Subiaco in 1977, Br. Thomas became head of the drama department at Subiaco Academy. He served in the abbey library and, in 1988, went

to the Santa Familia Monastery in Belize, in Central America, to volunteer in the community there.

He returned to Subiaco in 1990 and was known for his talents as a cook, director of oblates, volunteer barber, and behind-the-scenes helper in all aspects of community life and prayer.

He meticulously researched the lives of deceased monks in order to provide the abbey with complete necrology accounts.

Br. Thomas loved literature, musicals, and had a special fondness for puns, which he faithfully included each year in his Christmas cards to family members and friends.

Approximately one year prior to his death, Br. Thomas moved into the Abbey Health Center, due to his failing health, and died one day after suffering a stroke at the center. He was predeceased by his parents and by his four brothers and his sister. "He was a great man," said Peggy Grewing. "He will be very much missed. He left a tremendous legacy here in Muenster."



Father Jerome LeDoux, SVD, parochial administrator of Our Mother of Mercy Parish in Fort Worth, visited with eighth graders at Our Lady of Victory School on Feb. 13 to talk about the role black saints and popes have played in Catholic Church history. The program was part of the school's celebration of Black History Month. (Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

Launching Workshops (in English)

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

Why Catholic? launching workshops, in English, begin March 6

In January, Father Carmen Mele, OP, coordinator of the Why Catholic? program in the diocese reminded parish leaders of the steps left before its implementation in their parishes: "From now until the 'Launching Workshops,' parishes should focus on the first 24 pages of the book. The pastor and staff have to read the introductory material (pages 1-12) and then name members of the Why Catholic? Planning Team and choose a team coordinator (pages 13-18). Although we hope that pastors attend the Launching Workshop and [later] the Evangelization Workshop, their basic tasks are finished at this point. Once team members are in place, they should conduct an initial meeting (pages 19-24) and plan on attending the one of the Launching Workshops (see schedule above).

"Participating in a Launching Workshop as a team will enable members to

strategize its next steps in implementing a successful program in their parishes," added Fr. Mele.

According to information provided by RENEW, the workshop "provides the approach and assists in creating a tailored plan to implement Why Catholic? as a total parish experience." The workshop also covers "responsibilities of the Why Catholic? Parish Team, tools for involving maximum parish participation, invitation strategies, and how to plan and execute a successful Why Catholic? night."

The target audience for the workshop includes the pastor, pastoral staff, Why Catholic? Team, and catechetical leaders."

For more information, contact Father Carmen Mele, OP, coordinator of the Why Catholic? program for the diocese at (817) 560-3300, ext. 262 or by e-mail at cmele@fwdioc.org.

TRIDENTINE MASS

LATIN INDULT MASS

5:30 P.M. SUNDAYS

ST. MARY OF THE ASSUMPTION CHURCH

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HIGH MASS SECOND AND FOURTH SUNDAYS

LOW MASS FIRST AND THIRD SUNDAYS



Sister Emmanuela Le professes perpetual vows as Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth

Story by Nicki Prevou

Photos by Long Nguyen

Sister Emmanuela Le's soft voice is filled with joy when she speaks about January 31, 2009, "the most wonderful day of my life." Memories of the day that the 29-year-old woman professed her perpetual vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience will remain in her heart always as proof of God's "tremendous mercy, love, and grace," she said.

Bishop Kevin Vann presided at the Mass, celebrated Saturday, Jan. 31 at the chapel of Jesus the Good Shepherd Convent in Grand Prairie. Bishop Vann accepted Sr. Emmanuela's vows on behalf of the church, while Sister Sally Marie Kieपुरа CSFN, provincial superior of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, accepted her profession on behalf of the province and the entire international congregation of the Holy Family of Nazareth sisters.

A native of Nhatrang, Vietnam, Sr. Emmanuela came to the United States at the age of seven, and grew up in New Jersey. The youngest of nine children born to her parents, Can Le and Mai Le, Sr. Emmanuela was taught by Franciscans and Sisters of Charity in the Catholic elementary and high schools she attended. She met the CSFNs in 1999 while on a Marian Day Pilgrimage in Carthage, Missouri, and came to visit the Grand Prairie convent as a high school senior.

"I entered the formation program right after high school," Sr. Emmanuela explained. "This community of wonderful women nurtured me with their wisdom and their love. When I came to live with them, I encountered Christ."

During her nine years of formation with the community, Sr. Emmanuela completed her undergraduate degree in



Sr. Emmanuela Le reads her vows before the congregation. Standing is Provincial Superior Sr. Sally Marie Kieपुरа, CSFN; Initial Formation Director Sr. Edyta Krawczyk, CSFN, is pictured kneeling beside Sr. Emmanuela.

interdisciplinary studies at the University of Texas at Arlington, while working part-time at Holy Family of Nazareth Church in Grand Prairie and volunteering in youth ministry at St. Joseph Church, also in Grand Prairie. She has spent the past five years as a temporarily professed sister, making her vows on an annual basis.

It was an "honor, and a great joy" to have Bishop Vann preside at the Mass on her special day, said Sr. Emmanuela. She recalled first meeting the bishop at a teen Scripture study program sponsored by the Fort Worth diocesan Office of Youth Ministry three years ago. "I took our group of Vietnamese youth from St. Joseph's to attend the program, and I was so impressed with the bishop and the way that he spent time with the young people, personally sharing with them about the importance of Scripture study," she said. "The way that he walks among the people, like a humble servant of the Lord, has made me admire him so much. I am so grateful that he came for the Mass."

Now back at work at Holy Family Church, Sr. Emmanuela also expressed her gratitude for the support she has received in discerning her vocation to religious life. "I am so thankful to be here today through the support of my family and my community," she said. "I truly feel so blessed."

Right: Sr. Emmanuela prostrates herself before the altar as part of the Rite of Perpetual Vows, promising poverty, chastity, and obedience to her congregation and the Church.



Right: During the vows ceremony, Bishop Vann presents Sr. Emmanuela with a candle as a reminder to serve as a source of light in the world. Standing next to the bishop is Father John Collet, O.M.I., who was one of six concelebrants at the Mass. (Photo by Sr. Maryann McKeogh)



Right: Sr. Emmanuela's father, Can Le, reads the traditional Vietnamese family blessing with her mother, Mai Le, at his side. The Le family now lives in Yukon, Oklahoma; their home parish is Immaculate Conception in Oklahoma City.



Below: Newly professed, Sr. Emmanuela gathers with her family and with Bishop Kevin Vann, along with Fr. Benedict Monostori, O. Cist., one of six concelebrants at the Jan. 31 Mass.



Diocesan

Rally encourages dialogue between teens and parents, charges participants to live a

Pure Reality



ABOVE: Suzette Chaires, a Fort Worth-based pro-life activist, youth leader, and Catholic radio host, served as emcee for the rally. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)



ABOVE: Fr. Stan Fortuna, CFR, served as main celebrant of the rally's opening Mass. (Photo by John Shaffer)



RIGHT: Chris Stefanick makes a point during his "True Love" presentation at the event. (Photo by John Shaffer)

BELOW: Tania Dominguez and Alicia Mendoza, parishioners of St. Paul the Apostle Church in Fort Worth, proudly display the pledge cards they signed at the rally as a sign of their commitment to chastity. Rally organizers provided the cards for teen participants to sign and to carry with them. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)

FROM PAGE 1
12 percent of all pregnancies in the United States — 757,000 — occurred among adolescent mothers ages 15-19.

Today's teens deserve to live without the responsibility and stress of raising children before they are prepared to do so, say organizers of the Pure Reality rally, and teens also deserve to know that abstinence is the only healthy, safe, and 100 percent proven method of preventing pregnancy and STDs. Above all, young people must remember that God has a "beautiful and pure" plan for their lives, said Fr. Stan, in his homily during the rally's opening Mass.

Chris Stefanick, a speaker with Catholic Answers, the national apostolate of Catholic apologetics and evangelization, reinforced that message with his dynamic, humorous, and interactive, "True Love" presentation. "If you don't use sex according to the plan of the One who invented it, the consequences are truly hurtful," he said, noting that so-called "safe" sex is causing "an epidemic of problems" for young people — including disease and future infertility. Stefanick urged his young listeners to accept the invitation, extended by Christ, to "the real deal, a life of pure reality."

"Stay out of the wrong situations, where you might be tempted to get lost in the feelings," he warned. "Trust your heavenly Father, and go to confession, so God can pick you up and free you of your shame and sin when you do fall. And just say to yourselves, 'I am made for something noble, beautiful, and true,'" said Stefanick. "Always remember that God invented sex as a way to unite couples in their love, in marriage. That's definitely the

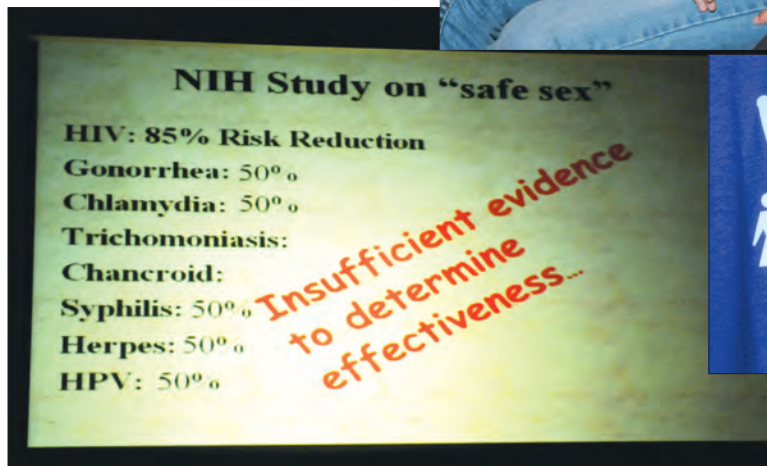
real deal."

A 17-year-old Catholic, one of 66 teens and 14 adult chaperones who attended the rally from St. Paul the Apostle Church in Fort Worth, said that the presentation by Stefanick "was really great. My boyfriend went with me to the rally, and it actually opened up his eyes about what I've been telling him about my feelings. I feel like the rally helped me to personally commit to chastity before marriage."

One of the most valuable aspects of the rally was the opportunity that teen participants had to sign cards promising chastity prior to marriage, said Cheryl West, a volunteer for St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller. "I really liked the fact that the teens were given the cards as something tangible, to keep with them as a reminder of their commitment to staying chaste. Chris and Fr. Stan were both excellent. They complemented each other with that theme of keeping it pure in your relationships and pure with Christ. As a parent, I really appreciated the entire day."

It was no accident that St. Paul Church had the largest group of participants at the rally, said Jane Sandoval, who serves as coordinator of ministry to children and youth at the parish. "Our pastor supported our involvement tremendously as soon as we heard about it," she said. "I started receiving checks from parishioners who wanted to pay for us to come. We processed the experience at church on Wednesday night during our weekly youth gathering, and the kids were extremely impressed and felt that the rally gave them a great deal of information. We went for information and for inspiration, and that's what we received."

BELOW: Actress Erica Sharpe plays "Maggie" in the pro-life play, "Sara's Secret." The two-person drama was performed at the rally by members of Theater of the Word Inc., a company based in St. Louis, Missouri. (Photo by John Shaffer)



Statistics displayed on large video screens at the rally reinforced the message that so-called "safe sex" has not been proven to be effective in preventing a wide variety of deadly sexually transmitted diseases. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)

A graphic from one of many pro-life T-shirts offered at the rally is pictured. Exhibit booths at the event offered a wide variety of pro-life information and educational resources. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)



Father Tom Kennedy (third from right) and Deacon Len Sanchez (far left with back to the camera), along with several seminarians of the Diocese of Fort Worth, joined Fr. Stan Fortuna, CFR, (fourth from right) as well as priests and deacons from the Diocese of Dallas at the rally's opening Mass. (Photo by John Shaffer)

Viewpoints

Catholic Social Teaching has its roots in the dignity of the human person, created in the image of God

By Lucas Pollice

Editor's note: This is the second in a series of five columns until Easter addressing the Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

The first and most important theme in Catholic Social Teaching is the Life and Dignity of the Human Person.

At the very heart and center of Catholic Social Teaching is the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God. These teachings exist wholly and primarily to protect the dignity of the human person and the basic human rights of each and every human being. Of all the basic human rights, the first and most foundational is the right to life. All other rights flow from and are dependent upon this first and basic right. As Pope John Paul II powerfully states:

Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights — for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture — is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition for all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination.

— *The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World (Christifideles Laici)*, 38

LIFE MUST BE DEFENDED!

Thus, Catholic Social Teaching condemns any direct attacks on innocent human life, as these corrode the very foundation of all human rights and subvert and directly undermine the common good. Abortion and other attacks on innocent human life such as euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, and cloning must always and everywhere be opposed. These are all intrinsically evil and undercut human life at its most innocent and most vulnerable state and result in the death of over a million innocent lives each year in our nation alone. There are no issues that are of graver concern in our society today. If a society cannot uphold the basic human right to life, then all of the other basic rights will always be endangered and subverted as well. The right to life and the protection of all human life from the moment of conception to natural death is at the very heart and essence of Catholic Social Teaching and is the first condition for upholding and promoting the common good.

Catholic Social Teaching also addresses other important issues that involve human life such as the death penalty and war. The morality of these issues is much different from that of abortion or euthanasia. Abortion and euthanasia are objectively

At the very heart and center of Catholic Social Teaching is the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God.

evil since they involve the direct killing of an innocent and defenseless human being and are therefore always and everywhere wrong and can never be justified. On the other hand, and on a completely different moral plane, the death penalty and the just use of war is not necessarily objectively evil. The Church recognizes the right of society and the state to protect its citizens from an unjust aggressor, and that the death penalty, and even war in certain situations, can be morally justified, if it is the last and only means of protecting society. The issue with the death penalty and war is, from the Church's perspective, that it must be only used as a means of last resort and under strict conditions.

THE DEATH PENALTY IN THE MODERN WORLD

In *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II uses the story of Cain in the book of Genesis to show that even those who have committed serious crime still have the opportunity for redemption and reconciliation (*Genesis 4:8-16*). Cain committed the first murder by killing his brother, and God severely punished Cain by exiling him and sending him out to live like a wild beast, however, in the end God spared his life. This revelation in Scripture provides the foundation for the Church's teaching on the death penalty in the modern world. John Paul explains:

And yet God, who is always merciful even when he punishes, "put a mark on Cain, lest any who came upon him should kill him" (Genesis 4:15). He thus gave him a distinctive sign, not to condemn him to the hatred of others, but to protect and defend him from those wishing to kill him, even out of a desire to avenge Abel's death. Not even a murderer loses his personal dignity, and God himself pledges to guarantee this. And it is precisely here that the paradoxical mystery of the merciful justice of God is shown forth ... God drove Cain out of his presence and sent him into exile far away from his native land, so that he passed from a life of human kindness to one which was more akin to the rude existence of a wild beast. God, who preferred the correction rather than the death of a sinner, did not desire that a homicide be punished by the exaction of another act of homicide.

— *The Gospel of Life (Evangelium Vitae)*, 9

Thus, even the worst criminals, though losing many of the rights of citizenship and the rights of their freedom, still have the right to life and the promise of reconciliation and conversion.

In our modern society the means and capabilities of protecting society through incarceration are readily available. The death penalty should not be used as an ordinary means of punishment, but should be reserved as the last means of protecting society from further harm.

This moral principle is, of course, dependent upon a fair and reasonable criminal justice system; a system that is capable of putting serious criminals away from society for life, and/or bringing about their adequate and permanent correction. This should be a vital and essential part of any modern society. Thus, the death penalty is a grave and serious matter, which should be used only as a last resort in protecting society. Given our modern capabilities that allow the state to effectively protect society through other means, the moral and justified use of the death penalty in the modern world is basically non-existent.

THE JUST WAR DOCTRINE

War should be avoided as much as humanly possible. However, because evil and the powers of darkness are still present and working in the world, war is sometimes the only means through which a nation or a community of nations can protect freedom, goodness, and the basic human rights of civilizations and societies.

Thus, while war is unbelievably tragic, it is not in itself always objectively evil. It can be the means by which goodness and peace are achieved and established, and regimes and ideals of hatred are abolished.

The Church has established a just war doctrine which lays out the strict conditions through which legitimate military defense can take place. These conditions must be interpreted and applied to any specific situation that arises, and great care must be taken by leaders of nations to insure that any military action is done reasonably within these guidelines. They have the absolute grave responsibility to see that war is only used as a last resort and only as a legitimate military response to a real and certain threat. From the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, paragraph 2309, the guidelines are as follows:

1 The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain. In other words, the decision to go to war must be in response to a threat that is very serious and poses a lasting, immediate, and certain danger.

2 All other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective. In today's world this is the equivalent to exhausting all reasonable diplomatic or economic solutions.

3 There must be serious prospects of success. Before initiating military action, there must be a reasonable thought that the action proposed will be successful and will not bring about a situation that is worse than the threat.

4 The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition. The military action cannot bring about a situation or an evil that is worse than the threat or evil that is being confronted. This would particularly apply to the use or possible use of weapons of mass destruction. Another important point that should also be considered is the ability to limit civilian casualties as much as humanly possible. One of the benefits of modern warfare technology is the use of "smart" weapons that can often take out military or other priority targets with little or no collateral damage. The direct attacks upon non-combatants and innocent human life even in war can never be justified.

In conclusion, the threats to human life and dignity in our modern world are very grave and are of the most serious concern to the Church and her social teaching. As followers of Christ, we must make our voices known in the protection and defense of human life, especially the most innocent and defenseless, in all stages and in all circumstances.



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

They want to coerce

Conscience Rights

By Susan E. Wills

A hallmark of free nations is the recognition of the individual's freedom of conscience. Tyrant states do not protect conscience; they strangle it.

The right of conscience is as old as Western civilization. Over 2,400 years ago, Sophocles' fictional Antigone was esteemed for following her conscience in burying her brother in defiance of the king's edict.

The first recorded claim of conscience rights for medical personnel is the fourth Century B.C. Hippocratic Oath: "I will follow that system of regimen which, according to my ability and judgment, I consider for the benefit of my patients. ... I will give no deadly medicine to any one if asked, nor suggest any such counsel; and in like manner I will not give to a woman a pessary to produce abortion."

The right of conscience is recognized in the U.S. Constitution, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the World Medical Association's Code of Medical Ethics, and in 47 states, laws protect the conscience rights of healthcare providers.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* calls conscience "man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths" (CCC, 1776).

Given the universality and history of the right of conscience among free peoples, it is shocking that the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) and others have sued to overturn regulations implementing long-standing federal laws enacted to protect the conscience rights of healthcare professionals and institutions.

In attacking the recent regulations, the ACLU is taking aim at three federal laws. Congress enacted the "Church Amendment" immediately after the *Roe vs. Wade* decision to ensure that health care professionals

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and hospitals would not be coerced into involvement in abortions or sterilizations. The Coats Amendment was enacted over a decade ago to nullify the attempt by the medical accreditation council to coerce medical schools into training ob-gyn residents in abortion procedures. Since 2004 the Weldon Amendment has prevented governmental discrimination against healthcare entities on account of the entity's refusal to "provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or refer for abortions."

Despite all their talk of "choice," the abortion industry and its supporters are determined to eliminate the choice of medical professionals and entities to not become accomplices in killing unborn boys and girls. Despite all their talk about "privacy," the abortion industry and its supporters are determined to trample on healthcare professionals' innermost zone of privacy, that "secret core and sanctuary" known as conscience. It is no longer enough, in their eyes, that women and girls can obtain potentially abortifacient drugs in virtually every pharmacy in the U.S. or that women and girls can have abortions on request in every city where there's a profit to be had.

They will not rest until every pharmacy, hospital, healthcare provider, and taxpayer collaborates in the culture of death.

In the coming weeks, we may see an unprecedented assault on conscience rights: taxpayers could be forced to fund organizations that promote and perform abortion overseas, including UNFPA, the enabler of China's abusive population control policy [President Obama reversed the Mexico City Policy in force since 1984, allowing funding of UNFPA, in late January, after this article was written]; taxpayers may be required to fund contraceptives and abortifacient drugs at ever-higher levels; taxpayers may be required to fund abortions for the low-income and uninsured; and healthcare professionals and institutions may be forced to violate their consciences or quit providing services.

We must pray and act to stop the assault on conscience.



Susan Wills is assistant director for education and outreach, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities.

Go to www.usccb.org/prolife to learn more about the bishops' pro-life activities.

Moving, broken bones, grief, all provide opportunities for acts of corporal mercy and the necessity of

Gracious Giving and Receiving

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

Ever been to a party where you show up for food and drinks and everybody hangs around and talks, and — oh yeah — packs up your house?

We did that on the last day we lived in the home our family had shared for a decade. We had a party... sort of. Everybody we knew dropped by to help us move.

"I remember the night before moving day," my now long-grown-up daughter Meredith said, "I looked at our walls and the pictures were still up!

"We must have been in some time warp, or just in denial," Meredith described, still incredulous after 12 years. "You don't usually plan on moving the next day and still have stuff on your walls!

"Julie's friends were supposed to come and help," Meredith said, "and I thought, 'Wow. I sure hope Julie has some strong friends, and that they all have trucks.'" She did, but they didn't.

Myself, I barely remember moving, but my friend Betty took pictures to commemorate the event. Chronologically they show a completely furnished and arranged home in the morning, morphing into a jangled mess of indiscriminately stacked boxes in another home that evening.

"When we finished, the new house looked like the garbage scene from Star Wars," Meredith recalled wryly, "where they're trapped in a space with trash and water and filth and an octopus, and the walls and ceiling start closing in on them."

"That can't be true," I corrected her. "We had two cats and a recently deceased rabbit, but never an octopus."

Looking back, it is fascinating how little I planned, and how my lack of rationality affected other people. Friends emptied everything from the children's rooms in the old house; some replaced closet rods in the new one.

My friends Dede and Julie enjoyed clearing my laundry/sewing room — "That big box is stuff you don't need," they announced too gleefully. "It's going to the trash." (It was perfectly good yarn, I still contend. The fabric remnants would have made a fine quilt, if I knew how to quilt.)

My friends were thinking more clearly than I was, I know now. They showed up to help when we needed help so badly, we didn't realize we needed it.

The good deeds we do for others are like borrowed

SEE HAMER, P. 22

Pope says fasting for the poor says we are not strangers to each other

FROM PAGE 1

financial crises hit the world's most vulnerable the hardest," she said. "Since 2007, 115 million were added to the ranks of the hungry to create a total of nearly 1 billion people without adequate food."

Sheeran said that at a time when the U.S. and other governments are announcing multitrillion-dollar packages to bailout banks, car companies and other industries, the World Food Program is asking that 0.7 percent of all stimulus plans be dedicated to hunger relief.

"Financial rescue packages must serve not only Wall Street and Main Street, but also the places with no streets," she said.

Cardinal Cordes and Sheeran agreed that the financial bailout plans are necessary not just for helping the world's richest nations, but also for preventing a worsening situation in poor countries dependent on exports, on development aid and on the money their citizens working abroad send home to support their families.

"If the financial system fails completely, it will hurt the poor first," Cardinal Cordes said.

Sheeran said the 2007-2008 food crisis — when the price of basic staples soared — combined with more recent job losses because of the financial crisis involved "two separate problems, but the result is the same: malnutrition and death."

In his message, Pope Benedict said the Lenten practices of prayer, fasting and almsgiving are meant to help Christians focus on God and prepare for the Easter celebration of Jesus' victory over sin and death.

Focusing his message specifically on the practice of fasting, the pope said it is a way for believers to submit themselves "humbly to God, trusting in his goodness and mercy."

"Denying material food, which nourishes our body, nurtures an interior disposition to listen to Christ and be fed by his saving word," the pope wrote.

"Through fasting and prayer we allow him to come and satisfy the deepest hunger that we experience in the depths of our being: the hunger and thirst for God," he said.

While some people fast to cleanse their body or to lose weight, Christians fast during Lent in order "to heal all that prevents them from conformity to the will of God," he said.

"Freely chosen detachment from the pleasure of food and other material goods helps the disciple of Christ to control the



appetites of nature, weakened by original sin," the pope wrote.

At the same time, he said, "fasting is an aid to open our eyes to the situation in which so many of our brothers and sisters live."

By fasting in solidarity with the poor, "freely embracing an act of self-denial for the sake of another, we make a statement that our brother or sister in need is not a stranger," the pope said.



One way to make fasting work for the poor is to take part in Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl, donating the savings from meatless meals weekly. The Angelotti family prays before a meal of baked potatoes and salad at home in Centreville, Virginia. CRS encourages participants to learn about hunger and poverty around the globe and make donations to help those most in need. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

An Operation Rice Bowl box-style bowl sits in the center of the table. (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)

UN statistics reveal extent of world hunger

By Nicole Coia
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In his 2009 Lenten message Pope Benedict XVI said the spiritual practice of fasting also should lead to concrete action on behalf of the hungry.

"Fasting is an aid to open our eyes to the situation in which so many of our brothers and sisters live," the pope said in the message released at the Vatican Feb. 3.

The Vatican invited Josette Sheeran, executive director of the World Food Program, to its press conference presenting the message.

The following are statistics on world hunger from the World Food Program and the Office of the U.N. Secretary-General:

— In 2008, the number of undernourished people in the world rose to 963 million (more than the combined populations of the United States, Canada and the European Union), up 40 million from 2007.

— The majority of undernourished people live in developing countries, with about 65 percent of the total living in India, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan and Ethiopia.

— Hunger and malnutrition are the No. 1 risk to health worldwide, greater than AIDS, malaria, and tuberculosis combined.

— Hunger does not affect just the individual. Economists estimate that every child

whose physical and mental development is stunted by hunger and malnutrition stands to lose 5 percent to 10 percent in lifetime earnings.

— The total food surplus of the United States alone could satisfy every empty stomach in Africa; France's leftovers could feed the hungry in Democratic Republic of Congo and Italy's could feed Ethiopia's undernourished.

— Today 25,000 people will die from hunger. A child dies every six seconds of malnutrition or starvation.

— A number of factors, including high energy and fertilizer costs, sent global food prices soaring to all-time highs in 2008. In March the price of rice hit a 19-year high while wheat climbed to

its highest level in 28 years. However the price of staple foods throughout the world has declined over the last few months.

— Food riots erupted in the spring of 2008 in Haiti, Mexico, and Senegal. The World Bank estimated that social unrest, as a consequence of the world food crisis, could spread to 33 countries. Although riots have eased in recent months, at a meeting in Madrid, Spain, Jan. 26, Ban Ki-moon, U.N. secretary-general, urged wealthy nations not to ignore the shocking problem of world hunger.

— There is enough food in the world today for everyone to have the nourishment necessary for a healthy and productive life.

Vatican's tiny size meant it had to plan carefully for its 109 acres

FROM PAGE 1

had to deal with the unpleasant risks and worries of foreign powers bent on invasion, rival Roman emperors, and powerful Roman families vying for control of the papacy.

In the 19th century, revolutionaries fought against papal control in their struggle to unify Italy, and the Papal States dissolved in 1870 after Rome and the surrounding territories were annexed to a unified country covering the entire peninsula.

A dispute with the Italian government over the sovereignty of the Holy See kept popes confined inside the walls of the Vatican from 1870 to 1929.

The dispute, which became known as the Roman Question, did not seem to have a quick and easy answer.

On the one hand, Italy had legitimate aspirations "to finally achieve its own state unity and, among other things, to designate as its capital Rome, which had been its point of reference for millennia," said a front-page article in the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, Feb. 11.

But on the other hand, it said,

A dispute with the Italian government over the sovereignty of the Holy See kept popes confined inside the walls of the Vatican from 1870 to 1929.

Rome was the see of Peter and his successors. The Holy See legitimately needed a formal and effective guarantee of its independence and freedom, "which are absolutely necessary for the pontiff in order to carry out his spiritual mission on a universal level," the paper said.

No pope wanted to compromise his task as shepherd of the universal church by being under the control and authority of a sovereign leader.

Years of negotiations under Pope Pius XI finally resulted in a resolution. Vatican officials and Italy's Prime Minister Benito Mussolini signed the Lateran Pacts of 1929 in which the Vatican

and the Italian state recognized each other as sovereign nations.

Pope Pius, who is considered the founder of the new nation, now had an enormous, non-spiritual task before him: planning and building all the infrastructure that would be needed for the smooth functioning of an independent state on 109 acres of land.

How Vatican City State was built up nearly from scratch is at the center of a new exhibit open in the Braccio di Carlo Magno hall in St. Peter's Square until May 10.

With wall-sized photographic displays and original artifacts from that period, the exhibit aims to send the visitor back in time to witness the birth of a unique nation.

Old maps show how, behind St. Peter's Basilica, acres of vineyards and vegetable gardens that had supplied homegrown goods to the pope and Vatican seminaries were razed to make way for the building of a governor's office.

The administrative office would come to coordinate the functions of some 20 agencies today, including the Vatican Museums and the offices responsible for security, personnel, and building maintenance

throughout the territory.

The governor's office continues to oversee all the new buildings that were erected under Pope Pius' direction, including the Vatican's railway station, electrical generating plant, and radio.

While building a nation out of hilly fields and gardens may have seemed daunting, the Vatican did receive some technical and material help from Italy and even the United States.

The U.S. Western Electric Company and Bell Telephone Laboratories built and supplied the shortwave radio receiver that was used by the newly founded Vatican Radio.

The receiver still works and is turned on so visitors to the exhibition can hear, amid a lot of static, Vatican Radio programming.

Pope Pius had invited the inventor of the radio, Guglielmo Marconi, to build the radio broadcasting station, which was inaugurated Feb. 12, 1931. The exhibit shows a medium wave antenna, a carbon microphone, and other instruments Marconi designed for Vatican Radio.

The U.S. International Telephone and Telegraph Corp.,

known as ITT, published the Vatican's first telephone book in 1930, and the church in the United States provided the Vatican with state-of-the-art equipment and technology for setting up its first central telephone exchange that same year.

The church in the United States also provided a gold and silver papal telephone, which is also on display. Made by ITT, the phone was used for decades, from the time of Pope Pius until the end of Pope John XXIII's pontificate.

A 1931 census report in the exhibit shows 711 people held Vatican citizenship, and another 283 noncitizens were resident within its walls, for a total population of 994. The vast majority of citizens and residents were Italians. The second largest group was formed by the Swiss, almost all of whom were members of the Swiss Guard protecting the pope.

The residents included 23 women, many of whom were married to members of the Swiss Guard. The census that year registered the births of five boys and six girls, who, by virtue of being born on Vatican territory, automatically became Vatican citizens.

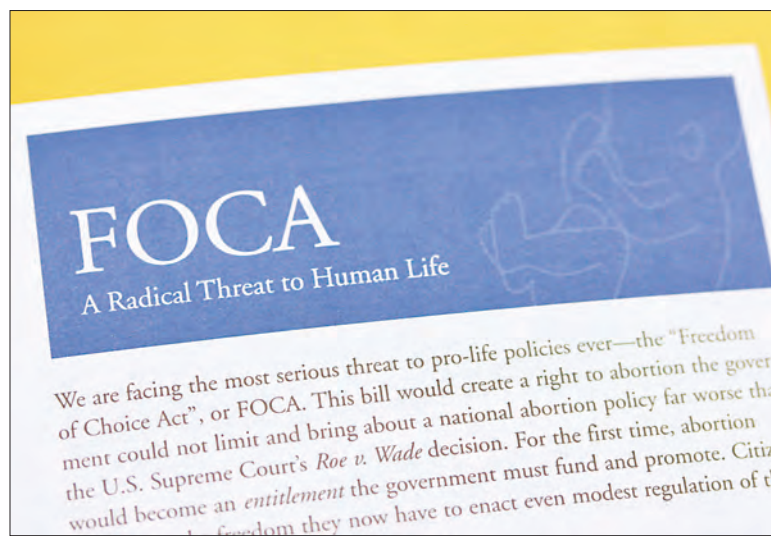
National pro-life postcard campaign called more important than ever

WASHINGTON (CNS) — With tens of millions of postcards already distributed to Catholic parishes and schools, non-Catholic churches and civic organizations, the campaign to convince Congress not to reverse current pro-life policies or make abortion a right is more important than ever, according to a pro-life official.

"To guard against the erosion of current pro-life measures — and to keep abortion from becoming a federal entitlement — our voice is needed now more than ever," said Deirdre A. McQuade, assistant director for policy and communications at the U.S. bishops' Office of Pro-Life Activities, in a Feb. 4 statement.

"The massive campaign under way shows clearly that, regardless of how they voted, Catholics want to send a strong message to Congress to protect existing pro-life policies and to oppose the radical promotion of abortion," she added. "As the cards start flooding in, the new Congress will see that they should not divide our nation with policies that offend the pro-life values of the majority of Americans."

The national postcard campaign, launched Jan. 24-25 and expected to continue until mid-February, asks members of



A close-up view shows literature used in a campaign against the Freedom of Choice Act at the office of the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment in Washington. Office staff were shipping boxes of postcards to dioceses and others as part of a national campaign against FOCA. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Congress to oppose any measures similar to the Freedom of Choice Act, which "would overturn many existing widely supported policies, including laws protecting parental involvement and conscience rights and those preventing partial-birth abortion and taxpayer funding of abortion."

The majority of U.S. dioceses are participating in the postcard campaign, according to a Feb. 4 news release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

"The current campaign is unprecedented and is expected

to exceed any sponsored by the Catholic bishops in the past," the release said.

Through its partner organization, the National Committee for a Human Life Amendment, the USCCB has been sponsoring national postcard campaigns related to various pro-life causes since 1993.

The original campaign, held at the start of President Bill Clinton's first term in office, also targeted the Freedom of Choice Act.

"While FOCA would accomplish the abortion promotion agenda all at once, other bills could

realize the same agenda in a piecemeal fashion," McQuade said.

"For example, widely supported pro-life measures in appropriations bills are already at risk, including the long-standing Hyde amendment, which has prohibited the use of taxpayer funds for most abortions, and the Hyde/Weldon amendment preventing government discrimination against health care providers who do not perform or refer for abortions," she added.

Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities, expressed similar concerns in a Feb. 5 letter urging members of Congress to retain pro-life provisions in the appropriations bills they must approve to keep the government funded past March 5.

"While an extreme proposal like FOCA would overturn hundreds of pro-life laws at once, we are equally concerned that such laws may be overturned one at a time during Congress' appropriations process," he wrote.

Among the specific provisions he cited were:

— The Hyde amendment to the bill funding the departments of Labor and Health and Human Services, as well as parallel provisions barring taxpayer funding of abortions in military hospi-

tals, federal employees' health benefits, foreign assistance, and other circumstances.

— The Dickey/Wicker amendment to the Labor/HHS appropriations bill, which bars federal funding of research involving the creation or destruction of human embryos or harm to them.

— The Hyde/Weldon amendment guaranteeing the conscience rights of physicians and nurses who choose not to participate in abortions and hospitals that do not offer them.

— The Kemp/Kasten amendment to the State/Foreign Operations appropriations bill, which prohibits U.S. funding of organizations that promote coercive abortion or involuntary sterilization overseas.

"At a time when more Americans than ever may require life-affirming assistance from the government for their basic needs, efforts to force Americans to subsidize the denial and destruction of life would be especially tragic," Cardinal Rigali wrote.

"Such efforts would radically divide our nation and increase distrust of Congress among millions of Americans, at a time when we need to unite in solidarity to serve the urgent needs of all," he added.

FOCA has not yet been introduced in the 111th Congress.

NATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

Report: Even before immigration reform, why not try these changes?

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Whether a comprehensive immigration reform bill makes it to the front of Congress' agenda any time soon, there are plenty of things the three federal immigration-related agencies can do in the meantime to deal with some problems, according to a new study. Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano asked Jan. 30 for a review of often-criticized elements of immigration policies and procedures. But, the Migration Policy Institute already has prepared its own analysis of some of those areas and other problems. It's available online at: www.migrationpolicy.org. Among the recommendations included in the institute's report are: halting construction of the multibillion-dollar wall along sections of the Mexican border pending a review of its effectiveness and of electronic security systems; continuing an employer-verification program of immigrants' eligibility to work; focusing immigration enforcement on major criminal enterprises and terrorism, including developing guidelines for whether to conduct work-site raids; and redesigning the system of fees for various applications. The report released Feb. 11 was written by Migration Policy Institute senior fellow Doris Meissner, former commissioner of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, and the institute's vice president for programs, Don Kerwin, former director of the Catholic Legal Immigration Network.

Obama orders faith-based office be reworked, its scope expanded

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Barack Obama created by executive order Feb. 5 a White House Office of Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, which will expand upon and rework the Bush administration's Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives. The office's top priority, according to the White House release, will be "making community groups an integral part of our economic recovery and poverty a burden fewer have to bear when recovery is complete." It also will focus on reducing demand for abortions, encouraging fathers to stand by their families and working with the National Security Council to "foster interfaith dialogue with leaders and scholars around the world." In the same order, Obama created a new President's Advisory Council on Faith-Based and Neighborhood Partnerships, comprised of 25 leaders of religious and community organizations, including Father Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA, and Arturo Chavez, president of the Mexican American Catholic College in San Antonio, formerly known as the Mexican American Cultural Center.

Crash claims 9/11 widow heading to Jesuit school's scholarship event

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Beverly Eckert, a victim of the Feb. 12 plane crash near Buffalo, New York, was en route to present a scholarship award in honor of her late husband at Jesuit-run Canisius High School in Buffalo. Eckert, a Sept. 11 widow, also had planned to take part in a weekend celebration in Buffalo of what would have been her husband's 58th birthday. Her husband, Sean Rooney, died in the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center. That day he spoke to his wife by cell phone up until the second tower — where he was trapped — collapsed. A vice president for risk management services at the Aon Corp., he worked on the 98th floor. Eckert, a resident of Stamford, Conn., was aboard Continental Flight 3407 from Newark, New Jersey, to Buffalo when it crashed into a home seven miles from the Buffalo Niagara International Airport, killing all 49 passengers and crew onboard and one person on the ground. According to initial reports, the plane was coming in for a landing through light snow and fog. Witnesses said they heard the plane's engines sputtering before it struck the house in a fiery explosion.

Delaware bishop says beatitudes give 'a window' on Lincoln presidency

WILMINGTON, Del. (CNS) — The presidency of Abraham Lincoln can be placed in the context of the Eight Beatitudes, according to Bishop W. Francis Malooly of Wilmington.

"The beatitudes ... give us a window on Lincoln because they were expressed in so many ways in his life," Bishop Malooly said in a pastoral letter published in *The Dialog*, Wilmington's diocesan newspaper, on Feb. 12, the 200th anniversary of Lincoln's birth.

Lincoln's presidency was forged by his living the first two beatitudes, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" and "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."

"When asked by his campaign biographer in the 1860 election to describe his early life, Lincoln replied that it could be found in a single sentence from Thomas Gray's poetry: 'The short and simple annals of the poor,'" Bishop Malooly said.

"Lincoln's experience of poverty as well as the loss of his mother and sister while he was young forged wellsprings of strength and compassion that would be vital to his presidency," he continued. "His simplicity, generous intentions, and focus on the common good often helped him to discern effectively what was needed in a given crisis or historical crossroads."

The deaths of his mother and sister — and that of young son Willie while Lincoln was in the White House — made Lincoln a living example of the beatitude "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted," Bishop Malooly said.

"Somehow the memory of President Lincoln's countenance showing us his goodness, his strength, and his sadness moves us, strengthens us, and inspires us right in the midst of our ongoing grief to serve those around us beset by similar tragedies," he said.

What Bishop Malooly called "the power of Lincoln's gentleness, kindness, and innate understanding of people" is embodied in these beatitudes: "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth"; "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy"; and "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."

"Although Lincoln presided over a bloody Civil War, he insisted at its conclusion that the next step was reconciliation and not punishment or triumphalism," he said.



ABOVE:

A statue of Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, is seen at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington Feb. 11. The United States celebrated the 200th anniversary of the birth of the Civil War president Feb. 12. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

RIGHT:

Abraham Lincoln, the 16th president of the United States, is pictured in an undated photo. (CNS photo/Library of Congress)



"One of his well-known gestures of reconciliation and mercy which signaled what would have been his approach to Reconstruction was his instruction, upon hearing the news of Gen. [Robert E.] Lee's surrender to Gen. [Ulysses S.] Grant at Appomattox Court House, that the Union band play 'Dixie,'" the bishop said.

"We, like Lincoln, are called to be instruments of the mercy of Christ's heart and in moments of conflict in our lives to inspire people to follow paths of forgiveness and peace," he said.

Lincoln's friendship with black abolitionist Frederick Douglass, according to Bishop Malooly, is highlighted in the beatitudes "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied" and "Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"I cannot help but think of the story of the White House reception the night after Lincoln's celebrated second inaugural address," the bishop said.

"Frederick Douglass arrives and is barred by Union soldiers from entering the reception. He is certain that the president wants him to enter and eventually he is ushered in through the crowd," the bishop wrote. "Lincoln sees him and moves toward him,

beaming with affection and respect, eager to discuss Douglass' evaluation of his second inaugural address."

Bishop Malooly added, "America has not completed its journey of providing justice to African-Americans, but it was Abraham Lincoln who ensured that the journey would at least begin."

Because Lincoln was "pilloried ... ridiculed, and caricatured" during his presidency, Bishop Malooly said, he knew well the beatitude "Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you and utter all kind of evil against you falsely on my account. Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in heaven."

"Lincoln resisted the temptation to respond in kind. He knew the practical wisdom of returning good for evil. Nowhere was his generosity of spirit more in evidence than in the way he treated his adversaries," he added.

"It was Lincoln who, when accused of not being aggressive enough in the destruction of his enemies, said sagely, 'Am I not destroying my enemy when I make him my friend?' Lincoln's eloquence in both the written and spoken word, his moral force, political courage, and direct action were critical to the dismantling of the institution of slavery. And he paid the price," Bishop Malooly said.

Remembering the Holocaust: A scientific fact, a religious obligation

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Acknowledging and remembering the Holocaust is not only a matter of historical honesty; it is a religious obligation, especially for bishops, several Vatican officials said.

When Pope Benedict XVI publicly distanced himself from the Holocaust-denying views of traditionalist Bishop Richard Williamson and the Vatican Secretariat of State called on the bishop Feb. 4 to publicly disavow his views, they were not simply responding to a public uproar.

“Denial of the Holocaust by a person who should know better is indistinguishable from an anti-Semitic prejudice,” said Bishop Brian Farrell, vice president of the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

“Anti-Semitism has been condemned by the Second Vatican Council in the clearest terms,” he said.

Bishop Williamson is one of the four bishops whose excommunications were lifted in late January by Pope Benedict. The bishops had been excommunicated in 1988 after being ordained against papal orders by the late Archbishop Marcel Lefebvre.

Just a few days before the Vatican made public the fact that the pope had lifted the excommunications, a television interview with Bishop Williamson aired; in the interview he claimed that the Holocaust was exaggerated and that no Jews died in Nazi gas chambers.

At his weekly general audience Jan. 28, Pope Benedict affirmed the obligation to remember the Holocaust as a concrete example of “the unpredictable power of evil when it conquers the heart of man.”

“May the Shoah be a warning for all against forgetfulness, denial, or reductionism because violence committed against one single human being is violence against all,” the pope said.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the papal spokesman, said that to deny the Holocaust is to deny “the most obvious manifestation” of the presence of evil in the world.

“A religious person, a Christian must face the challenge to faith represented by this fact, by evil in the world,” he told Catholic News Service Feb. 5.

Unless a person recognizes the reality and enormity of evil in the world, he or she cannot understand why Jesus had to die in order to ransom humanity, Fr. Lombardi said.



Pope Benedict XVI greets Rabbi Arthur Schneier of New York's Park East Synagogue during an audience with the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations at the Vatican Feb. 12. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters)

Denying the Holocaust is a sign of not understanding the reality of evil and, “therefore, of not living the faith,” he said. “For this reason, it seems right to me that a bishop who denies the Shoah is better off growing potatoes or doing anything else, but not being a bishop.”

Fr. Lombardi said denying the Holocaust “is an obvious error,” but whether or not it is a sin depends on whether the person is conscious that it is erroneous and affirms it anyway.

“In that case, it is a serious sin of lying mixed, in addition, with components of racism and anti-Semitism,” the papal spokesman said.

Bishop Farrell told CNS Feb. 5 that there are several reasons why “the Shoah is a religious concern.”

First, he said, “every destruction of human dignity, every murder of a human being is an evil that goes against God’s plan. In that sense, it is an issue for religion.”

“There is a second reason that is much more specific to the Shoah, and it is that the Shoah took place in the heart of what was supposedly the Christian continent, Europe,” he said.

Rabbi David Rosen, chairman of the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee, said there is a well-documented connection between centuries of Christian teaching of contempt for the Jews — blaming them for the death of Christ — and the atmosphere that allowed the Nazis’ attempts to destroy European Jewry to nearly succeed.

“When the church declares anti-Semitism a sin against God and man, it is demonstrating a fundamental sea change in pre-

vailing Catholic attitudes toward Jews,” the rabbi told CNS. “Arguably nothing raises a question mark over that change as much as expressing or tolerating Holocaust denial.”

In an article for the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the Italian historian Anna Foa wrote that Holocaust denial is a lie cloaked in scientific jargon “to cover its true origins, its true motive: anti-Semitism.”

Bishop Farrell said the testimony of the survivors of the Nazi death camps, the remains of the camps themselves, and the meticulous documentation kept by the Nazis, prove that the Holocaust and the death of 6 million Jews is a historical fact that can be denied “only through ignorance or prejudice.”

“That is why it becomes an issue when a bishop, who should be a teacher of truth and of goodness, denies the Holocaust,” he said.

“The fact that the pope asked the bishop to reject these opinions and to apologize for them results from the fact that a denial of the Holocaust by a person who should know better is indistinguishable from an anti-Semitic prejudice,” Bishop Farrell said.

After visiting a Nazi death camp in Poland in 2006, Pope Benedict said, “May contemporary humanity never forget Auschwitz or the other ‘death factories’ where the Nazi regime attempted to eliminate God in order to replace him. May it not succumb to the temptation of racial hatred, which is at the root of the worst forms of anti-Semitism. May people recognize once again that God is the Father of all and calls us all, in Christ, to build a world of justice, truth, and peace together.”

INTERNATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

Pope asks religious to let St. Paul be their model

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Catholic men and women who have consecrated their entire lives to serving God and the church must live like St. Paul, “for, with, and in Christ,” Pope Benedict XVI said. The pope greeted men and women religious Feb. 2, joining them in St. Peter’s Basilica after a special Mass marking the feast of the Presentation of the Lord and World Day for Consecrated Life. Pope Benedict said St. Paul is a model of living for all Christians, but especially for those who have taken vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. “In the life of poverty he saw the guarantee of a proclamation of the Gospel conducted with total gratuity, while expressing at the same time concrete solidarity with his brothers and sisters in need,” the pope said. “Accepting God’s call to chastity, he gave his heart to the Lord in an undivided way in order to serve his brothers and sisters with greater freedom and dedication,” the pope said. “As for obedience, it is enough to note that the fulfillment of God’s will and the daily pressure and concern for all the churches animated, molded, and consumed his existence, making it a sacrifice pleasing to God,” he said.

Letters, other writings of Cardinal Thuan sought for sainthood cause

ROME (CNS) — In preparation for opening the sainthood cause of the late Vietnamese Cardinal Francois Nguyen Van Thuan, the Diocese of Rome is looking for letters, manuscripts, diaries, and anything else written by him. In the Feb. 12 edition of the Vatican newspaper, *L'Osservatore Romano*, the diocese published a notice asking anyone who has something written by the cardinal or has information “favorable or contrary to the reputation of holiness” of the cardinal to contact the diocesan tribunal. Silvia Monica Correale, the official promoter of Cardinal Thuan’s cause, told Catholic News Service that she was not certain when the diocese formally would open the process for his beatification and canonization, but collecting and analyzing his writings was an important preparatory step. The Diocese of Rome is handling the sainthood cause because it is the last diocese in which the cardinal lived and is where he died Sept. 16, 2002, at the age of 74 after an extended battle with cancer.

Authorities release Chinese bishop after 30-month detention

XIWANZI, China (CNS) — Auxiliary Bishop Leo Yao Liang of Xiwanzi was released after being detained since July 2006, but Chinese authorities warned him not to exercise his episcopal authority or preside at large-scale church activities. Bishop Yao was detained in part for consecrating a large new church in Guyuan county in 2006, the Asian church news agency UCA News reported Feb. 13. Sources who visited the 85-year-old bishop upon hearing of his release Jan. 25 told UCA News that his health and physical condition seemed “quite good.” Public security officers sent the bishop back to his church in Xiwanzi, in northern Hebei province. A source said officers informed a few parish workers in advance about Bishop Yao’s release but forbade them to hold any welcome gathering. The source quoted Bishop Yao as saying officers treated him well during his 30-month detention in different locations, although he was forbidden to contact anybody. Bishop Yao, who is not registered with the government and whom the government recognizes only as a priest, said laypeople are free to visit him, although he thinks public security officers will keep an eye on him. He is not allowed to travel outside his parish area, UCA News reported.



March 1, First Sunday of Lent.
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Genesis 9:8-15
Psalm 25:4-9
- 2) 1 Peter 3:18-22
Gospel) Mark 1:12-15

By Jean Denton

Yes, it's the season of Lent, but for many college students it is more famously the season of spring break — the annual week away from academic labors to rest, vacation, or party. But an increasingly popular activity on the college scene is "alternative spring break." The "alternative" these students choose is to use their week off for community service.

Theresa Eugenio, a Catholic campus minister who graduated from Virginia Tech last spring, will take a dozen students from her school on an alternative spring break trip next week to Flint, Michigan.

Virginia Tech, remember, is where a troubled student killed 32 students and faculty members in a mass shooting two years ago. Theresa was a junior at the time. The effects of the tragedy are still palpable in the university community. But when I visited with Theresa on the campus recently, she explained that the entire community's

"Beloved, Christ suffered for sins once ... that he might lead you to God."
— 1 Peter 3:18

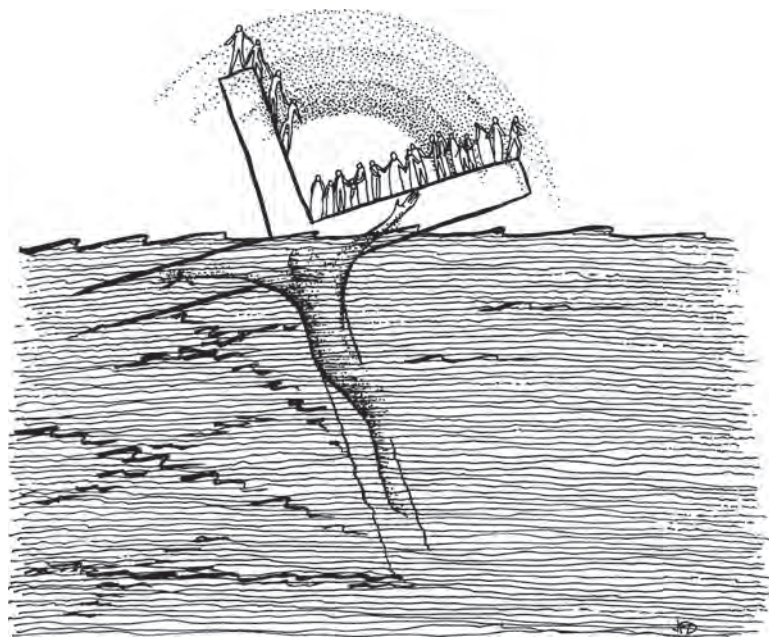
chosen response to its shared pain was a commitment to serve others.

"I wouldn't say (the event) defines us, but it changed who we are because of our response," she said. In the immediate aftermath of the shootings, students realized the meaning of supporting and caring for one another, Theresa explained. The intense experience brought them new appreciation of the value of life.

Theresa said that a year after the shootings, their campus ministry took a new theme: "going from victim to witness."

This week's Scriptures emphasize God's promise to save his people, made in his covenant with Noah. The promise, Peter says, is relived in our baptism as we are joined to Jesus in his resurrection.

Knowing their baptismal promise, the student ministers at Virginia Tech chose a positive



response to the campus tragedy "because we understand the Resurrection story," Theresa said.

Their alternative spring break will include working with students at a high school beset by gang violence. "We'll talk with them about how you can respond to violence. We have some experience with that," she said. "We've learned that you can make a choice to honor others — those who have lost their lives and others you are close to — by making your life mean something."

QUESTIONS:

What event(s) in your life have helped you understand the Resurrection story? How have you made a life-giving response to personal suffering?

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Controlling passions harnesses energy for doing good, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — When people control their passions and desires, they can direct their energy toward total love of God and serving others, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"Passions are not bad in themselves" but can lead to bad behavior, if they are not controlled, the pope said Feb. 11 during his weekly general audience.

The pope's talk focused on St. John Climacus, the sixth-century author of *Scala Paradisi* (*Ladder of Paradise*), a step-by-step explanation of how to grow and mature in the spiritual life.

The audience talk marked a return to the pope's audience series on the great Christian writers of early Christianity. Once the year of St. Paul began last June, Pope Benedict interrupted the series to dedicate 20 audience talks to the life and writings of the apostle.

Pope Benedict said St. John Climacus' work divides the Christian spiritual journey into three phases: cultivating "spiritual infancy," or the attitude of a child totally dependent on God; "spiritual combat" against human passions through the cul-



Pope Benedict XVI delivers his final blessing as he leads his weekly general audience in the Paul VI audience hall at the Vatican Feb. 11. (CNS photo/Giampiero Sposito, Reuters)

heroes. They are virtues that are gifts of God and in which our life grows."

Faith obviously comes first because it is through faith that people renounce their arrogance and self-centeredness, recognizing that God is the creator and ruler of all, he said.

"St. John Climacus rightly says that only hope makes us able to love. Hope helps us transcend the things of daily life and not expect success from one day to the next," he said.

With hope "we can support the delusions of each day, we can be good to others without reward," the pope said, and with hope we take small steps forward each day "and in that way we learn love."

Pope Benedict ended his talk by telling the crowd, "Let us climb this ladder of faith, hope, and love, and in that way we will arrive at true life."

The stage in the Vatican's Paul VI audience hall was set up to host a performance of Handel's "Messiah" Feb. 12 by the Choral Society of the Archdiocese of Dublin and the RTE Orchestra to mark the 80th anniversary of Vatican City State.

tivation of spiritual virtues; and obtaining "Christian perfection" through faith, hope, and love.

For St. John Climacus, he said, spiritual combat is not a negative exercise in the sense of ridding one's life of desires, but rather takes the positive approach of cultivating virtues so that passion becomes a source of energy and of true longing for union with God.

"According to St. John, passions are not bad in themselves. They only become so because of

the negative way people with their freedom use them. If they are purified, passions set people energetically on the path toward God," the pope said.

Pope Benedict said it was legitimate to ask, "Can the writing of a hermit and monk who lived 1,500 years ago say something to us today?"

"At first, it would seem that the answer must be 'no, he is too far removed from us.' But if we look more closely, we see that his monastic life is simply

a great sign for the baptismal life of every Christian written in capital letters while we write each day with lowercase letters," the pope said.

The pope told the estimated 8,000 people at his audience that, in reading the work of St. John, "For me it is particularly important that the highest point of the ladder, the top rungs, are at the same time the basic, initial, most simple virtues: faith, hope, and love. They aren't virtues that are accessible only to moral

Scripture Readings



March 8, Second Sunday of Lent.
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18
Psalm 116:10, 15-19
- 2) Romans 8:31b-34
Gospel) Mark 9:2-10

By Jean Denton

The boy — we'll call him Jon — was 12, the second son in a large, impoverished family trying to survive in a war-torn city. The family seemed to have only a pinpoint of possibility for a better life, and that would be to escape the situation. Get to the United States where there was at least a glimmer of hope.

Jon didn't know how, but his father managed to scrape together documents and enough money to get one family member out of the country. And Jon was it. His older brother was needed to help provide for the rest of the family at home, while Jon, then on the brink of manhood, was smart, strong, and had much promise.

A group of families from their village planned the trek across the ocean, and Jon would travel

with them, his father told him.

"I didn't want to go. I didn't want to leave my family, and I didn't know any of the people in the group," Jon recalled later. On the day of departure he hung back, sad and afraid. "But my father said, 'You have to go. You are our only hope for a better life.'"

Jon went. The trip was long, hard, and lonely, and when he arrived in the U.S., he was met by distant relatives with whom he would live. He went to school and worked with great industriousness and managed to grow up, mostly on his own. As he became self-sufficient, he sent money to his family and after many years was able to bring most of his siblings to this country. Now, two short generations later, the family is increasing and thriving as a significant contributor to its American community.

Jon's father's hope was indeed realized.

Like Abraham in this Lenten weekend's first reading, Jon's father put complete trust in God, even giving up his own son, believing God would provide something greater for generations to come. For a loving father to sacrifice a child calls for such infinite trust.

In the transfiguration of the Gospel our loving God offers us that glimmer of "a better life" and calls us to trust him.

"I believed even when I said, 'I am greatly afflicted.' ... To you will I offer sacrifice of thanksgiving, and I will call on the name of the Lord."

— Psalm
116:10, 17



QUESTIONS:

When have you needed to search for a glimmer of hope? What "transfiguration moments" of clarity have reminded you of God's promise of his better, lasting life?

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Lent gives us a chance get in tune with the Lord

By Jeff Hedglen

I love the television show *American Idol*. I am constantly amazed at the amount of talent going unheard across America.

After the first few seasons I began to wonder if all the good talent had been found, but each season brings a fresh crop of amazing voices whose records continue to hit the top of the charts. Along with the amazing voices are a host of other folks who mistakenly believe they can sing.

I don't particularly like the audition rounds of *American Idol* because it is so painful to watch these people who have been told all their lives that they are awesome singers, but the truth is, they are mediocre at best, and sometimes seem to be tone deaf. I wonder if the people who have sung their praises are tone deaf, too, or are they blind to the truth, or maybe they are too afraid to tell the truth. Either way, for me, it is excruciating to watch them wail and howl, thinking they

I think on some level we all miss various notes of the music of creation. I am quite sure there are whole symphonies yet to be heard. With Lent approaching, it is a perfect time to turn down the voice of the world around us and turn up the music of faith.

have conquered the world, only to hear from the judges that they are not very good.

This season while watching all of this, I received an e-mail from a friend that included an excerpt from the book *Not the Way It's Supposed To Be: A Breviary of Sin* by Cornelius Plantinga, Jr. The quote she included in the e-mail was eerily similar to what I was watching on TV: "When we lack an ear for wrong notes in our lives, we cannot play right ones or even recognize them in the performances of others. Eventually we make ourselves religiously

so unmusical that we miss the main themes God plays in human life."

I was stunned at the timing of this message. The wrong notes I was hearing on *American Idol* became a launching point for spiritual reflection. It also reminded me of my ninth grade year in choir. I was asked to stay after choir one day. The director said he was going to play a note on the piano, and I was supposed to sing that note. He played and I sang, and then he said, "Son, that is not the note I am playing."

So, as a ninth grader I could

not match a pitch by ear. I had no idea I wasn't singing what everyone else around me was singing. I, like the quote above, lacked an ear for wrong notes. Amazingly enough I now regularly sing in front of people.

Once I found out I couldn't match pitch, I began working on singing better. I took some lessons, continued in choir at school and at church, and eventually got to a place where I could at least sing the notes on the page. I wouldn't say that I have an *American Idol* quality voice, but it is good enough to lead worship in a church setting.

We need to be like my choir director who honestly told me something I didn't want to hear, to be people who will emulate the words of *Proverbs* 27:17: "As iron sharpens iron, so man sharpens his fellow man." It might be tough to call someone out on an area of their life that needs change, but if we do not, they might continue to live a life where, in the words of Mr. Plantinga, "the music of creation and the still greater

music of grace whistle right through their skull, causing no catch of breath and leaving no residue. Moral beauty becomes boring, and the idea that the human race needs a Savior sounds quaint."

I think on some level we all miss various notes of the music of creation. I am quite sure there are whole symphonies yet to be heard. With Lent approaching, it is a perfect time to turn down the voice of the world around us and turn up the music of faith.

Lenten practices like an extra Mass a week, more time in prayer and Scripture reading, reaching out in service, or denying ourselves a beloved snack, can hone our ears to the tones of grace singing in our hearts. And that is a song I don't want to miss!

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.

El significado más profundo del ayuno

Una reflexión cuaresmal

Estimados hermanos y hermanas en el Señor,

En el mensaje cuaresmal del Papa Benedicto XVI para este año, el cual les invito a leer en su totalidad, el Santo Padre nos recuerda las tres prácticas penitenciales tradicionales de la oración, la limosna y el ayuno, que nos preparan para celebrar mejor la Pascua; de seguido el Papa se enfoca de manera especial en el valor y el significado del ayuno.

Creo que este mensaje hermoso merece una atención especial, y quisiera destacar algunos de los puntos del mensaje del Santo Padre.

El Santo Padre nos lleva al momento, antes de que Cristo comience su ministerio público, cuando al final de sus 40 días en el desierto el Señor le responde al tentador con las palabras:

No solo de pan vive el hombre, sino de toda palabra que sale de la boca de Dios (Mateo 4: 4).

Aquí encontramos el significado más profundo al concepto del ayuno.

El ayuno no es tanto el estar sin la nutrición de este mundo sino es nutrirnos, y vivir cada día, con la palabra que recibimos de la boca de Dios. Esta palabra es la amorosa voluntad de Dios que Él nos ofrece diariamente. Su palabra es su voluntad. Es alimento verdadero, es vida, vida abundante, y perderse del verdadero alimento de su Palabra es seguir un camino de aislamiento y muerte.

La muerte que cae sobre aquellos



Monseñor Kevin W. Vann

La Navidad, un ejemplo hermoso de la gracia, es un regalo de un Padre de amor, y el Padre nos invita a todos a confiar y aceptar este maravilloso regalo que Él nos da libremente y con mucha generosidad.

que rehúsan alimentarse con la Palabra de Dios es en última instancia una muerte por desnutrición severa, sin importar cuantas calorías se ingieran diariamente.

Así pues, mis hermanos y hermanas, yo les pregunto, en cuanto a nuestras vidas diarias, ¿vivimos exclusivamente por lo que compramos en el supermercado o del restaurante local? ¿O, es la palabra que sale de la boca de Dios también una comida importante para nosotros, y no solo un bocadillo ocasional? ¿Es la voluntad de Dios, una voluntad comunicada por su palabra, solo un adorno en nuestros platos? ¿Traemos felizmente enormes porciones del alimento de nuestro ego y nuestra propia voluntad a nuestras mesas de comer y a regañadientes, y miserablemente, nos obligamos a un pequeño bocado del alimento verdadero que es la voluntad de Dios?

Si algo de esto se está haciendo parte de nuestras vidas, esta cuaresma nos ofrece una oportunidad única de cambiar esta tendencia de debilitamiento espiritual ayunando de lo anterior y nutriéndonos del alimento de la voluntad divina.

Es importante enfatizar que el ayuno cristiano no se debe confundir con una dieta que esté de moda. Para ayunar de verdad, según la tradición cristiana, o privarse de aquellas cosas que son buenas, es dedicarse más completamente a la vivificante voluntad de Dios. Este concepto de ayunar es tan viejo como

el mismo libro del Génesis.

El Papa Benedicto nos recuerda esto cuando cita Génesis 2:16 - 17:

De cualquier árbol del jardín puedes comer, mas del árbol de la ciencia del bien y del mal no comerás, porque el día que comieres de él, morirás sin remedio.

Entonces enumera los muchos ejemplos de ayuno encontrados en las Sagradas Escrituras de parte de aquellos que siguen más de cerca la voluntad del Padre, como lo hizo Jesucristo. Está claro con todos los ejemplos, que el Santo Padre nos ofrece en su mensaje cuaresmal, que el ayuno es una herramienta única que nos acerca más a Dios y que fortalece nuestro espíritu y nuestra resolución por ser fieles discípulos de Cristo.

El ayuno, cuando está hecho como práctica espiritual, también nos permite, por un breve momento, darnos cuenta del hambre de muchos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas y de cuántas necesidades carecen diariamente. Sería bueno que estos momentos de hambre temporera, o momentos en que nos privamos de algún gusto, nos motivara a recordar con amor y hacer un esfuerzo por ayudar a estos hermanos y hermanas que viven con hambre y están privados de necesidades de forma regular.

Al pasar menos tiempo durante esta próxima época cuaresmal comiendo y complaciéndonos en otras actividades de entretenimiento y de diversión, el mejor uso de este tiempo adicional sería en la oración. Especialmente oración y meditación con las Escrituras.

El Santo Padre termina su mensaje con estos pensamientos:

Queridos hermanos y hermanas, bien mirado el ayuno tiene como último fin ayudarnos a cada uno de nosotros, como escribía el Siervo de Dios — el Papa Juan Pablo II — el hacer un don total de sí mismo a Dios. Por lo tanto, que en cada familia y comunidad cristiana se valore la Cuaresma para alejar todo lo que distrae el espíritu y para intensificar lo que alimenta el alma y la abre al amor de Dios y del prójimo. Pienso, especialmente, en un mayor empeño en la oración, en la LECTIO DIVINA, en el sacramento de la Reconciliación y en la activa participación en la Eucaristía, sobre todo en la Santa Misa dominical. Con esta disposición interior entremos en el clima penitencial de la Cuaresma.

Si seguimos la recomendación del Santo Padre para el ayuno cristiano durante esta época de cuaresma, nos estaremos aprovechando de una oportunidad para fortalecernos espiritualmente y también fortalecer nuestras parroquias y nuestra diócesis. Haremos esto al alejarnos un poco de nuestra mesa del comedor y el acercarnos más a Cristo, nuestro Señor Crucificado, que camina mano a mano con los pobres y hambrientos.

Hagamos todos un esfuerzo durante esta cuaresma de ayunar, de no gastar tanto tiempo y dinero en nosotros mismos, y pasemos más tiempo con Cristo mientras asistimos a nuestros hermanos y hermanas más necesitados.

Unámonos a nuestra Señora de los Dolores en esta época santa y, dirigidos por ella, vayamos acercándonos más a su hijo, Jesucristo, nuestro Señor Crucificado.

Dios los bendiga siempre.

+ Kevin W. Vann

+Monseñor Kevin W. Vann
Obispo de Fort Worth

El Papa dice que la confesión purifica pecadores, restaura relaciones

Por Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO — Mediante el sacramento de penitencia, Cristo purifica a los pecadores y restaura su relación con Dios y con la comunidad de creyentes, dijo el Papa Benedicto XVI.

Usando su discurso del Ángelus del 15 de febrero para comentar sobre la historia del evangelio del día sobre la curación de un leproso, el Papa dijo que en tiempos bíblicos la lepra

traía consigo “un tipo de muerte religiosa y civil” porque sus víctimas eran obligadas a vivir fuera de la comunidad.

Las historias de la Biblia usan la lepra como “símbolo de pecado, que es la verdadera impureza del corazón que nos separa de Dios”, dijo.

“Los pecados que cometemos nos separan de Dios y, si no son confesados humildemente confiando en la misericordia divina, estos hasta producen la muerte del alma”, dijo el Papa

“En el sacramento de penitencia el Cristo crucificado y resucitado, mediante sus ministros, nos purifica con su misericordia infinita, nos restaura a la comunión con el Padre celestial y con nuestros hermanos y hermanas y nos da el regalo de su amor, alegría y paz”

—el Papa Benedicto XVI

Benedicto.

Curando al leproso y a todos los que estaban enfermos, Jesús cumplió las profecías del Antiguo Testamento sobre el Mesías, que tomaría las enfermedades y el sufrimiento de todo el pueblo de Dios, dijo.

“En su pasión, él será como un leproso, hecho impuro por nuestros pecados, separados de Dios. Todo esto él lo hará por amor, para obtener la reconciliación, el perdón y la salvación para nosotros”, dijo el Papa.

El Papa Benedicto dijo ante el publica reunido en la plaza de San Pedro que los cristianos pueden siempre tomar del amor curativo de Jesús en el sacramento de penitencia.

“En el sacramento de penitencia el Cristo crucificado y resucitado, mediante sus ministros, nos purifica con su misericordia infinita, nos restaura a la comunión con el Padre celestial y con nuestros hermanos y hermanas, y nos da el regalo de su amor, alegría y paz”, dijo.

El Papa dice que ayunar en Cuaresma abre corazones a Dios, manos a los pobres

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Ayunar alimento y desprenderse de los bienes materiales durante la Cuaresma ayuda a los creyentes a abrir sus corazones a Dios y abrir sus manos a los pobres, dijo el Papa Benedicto XVI.

El ayuno de Cuaresma ayuda a los cristianos a “mortificar nuestro egoísmo y abrir nuestros corazones al amor a Dios y al prójimo”, dijo el Papa en su mensaje de Cuaresma del 2009.

El mensaje papal de la Cuaresma, la cual comienza el 25 de febrero, fue emitido el 3 de febrero en el Vaticano.

El Vaticano invitó a Josette Sheeran, directora ejecutiva del Programa mundial de alimentos, de la ONU, a que ayudara a presentar el mensaje papal.

“Servir al hambriento es un llamado moral que une a gente de todos los credos”, dijo Sheeran, cuya organización depende



El ayuno puede funcionar para ayudar a los más necesitados. Se pueden hacer donaciones semanalmente de los ahorros conseguidos al comer sin carne, y así tomar parte en la Operación plato de arroz, de Catholic Relief Services (un miembro de Caritas internationalis). La familia Angelotti reza antes de compartir una cena de papas horneadas y ensalada en su hogar, en Centreville, Virginia. Catholic Relief Services anima a los participantes a comprender más sobre el hambre y la pobreza a través del mundo y a la vez hacer donaciones para auxiliar a los más necesitados. (CNS Foto/Nancy Wiechec)

fuertemente de las caridades católicas y de otras organizaciones basadas en la fe para distri-

buir ayuda alimenticia.

“No nos olvidemos que la crisis alimenticia y financiera

azotan más fuertemente los más vulnerables del mundo”, dijo. “Desde el 2007, 115 millones fueron añadidos a las filas de los hambrientos para crear un total de casi mil millones de personas que no tienen alimento adecuado”.

Sheeran dijo que en tiempos en que los gobiernos están anunciando paquetes de múltiples millares de millones de dólares para rescatar bancos, compañías automovilísticas y otras industrias, el Programa mundial de alimento está pidiendo que el 0.7 por ciento de todos los planes de estímulo sean dedicados al alivio del hambre.

“Los paquetes de rescate financiero deben servir no sólo a Wall Street y a Main Street, sino también a los lugares que no tienen calles”, dijo.

Sheeran dijo que la crisis alimenticia de 2007-2008, cuando el precio de los alimentos básicos se

elevó, combinada con más recientes pérdidas de empleo debido a la crisis financiera, involucra “dos problemas separados, pero el resultado es el mismo: desnutrición y muerte”.

En su mensaje de Cuaresma el Papa Benedicto dijo que las prácticas de oración, ayuno y caridad tienen la intención de ayudar a los cristianos a enfocarse en Dios y a prepararse para la celebración de Pascua de la victoria de Jesús sobre el pecado y la muerte.

Aunque algunas personas ayunan para limpiar su cuerpo o para perder peso, los cristianos ayunan durante la Cuaresma para poder “sanar todo lo que les previene la conformidad con la voluntad de Dios”, dijo.

Al mismo tiempo, dijo, “ayunar es una ayuda para abrir nuestros ojos a la situación en la cual tantos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas viven”.

Informe: Aún antes de que se lleve a cabo la reforma de inmigración, ¿por qué no tratar de ejercer estos cambios?

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Sea que un proyecto de ley de reforma completa de las leyes de inmigración se coloque pronto al frente de la agenda del Congreso, o no, hay muchas cosas que las tres agencias federales relacionadas con la inmigración pueden hacer mientras tanto para tratar de resolver algunos de los problemas, de acuerdo a un estudio sobre la materia.

La secretaria de Homeland Security, Janet Napolitano, bajo cuya jurisdicción se encuentran las tres agencias, pidió una revisión, el 30 de enero, de un variado cuadro de elementos que frecuentemente se critican con respecto a la política de acción y procedimientos de inmigración. Éstos varían desde cómo se maneja el asunto de criminales extranjeros hasta prácticas de detención y embotellamiento

burocrático de manejo de solicitudes de prestaciones legales.

Pero antes de que esos informes se presenten, el Instituto de política de acción migratoria ha preparado su propio análisis de algunos de esos aspectos y otros problemas que presenta la actual política de acción y su aplicación práctica. Se puede consultar en la red electrónica en el sitio web www.migrationpolicy.org.

Entre las recomendaciones que aparecen en el denso informe del instituto, que tiene 110 páginas, se encuentran las siguientes:

— Interrupción de la construcción del muro, que pide un costo de miles de cientos de millones de dólares, en algunas secciones de la frontera con México, para esperar los resultados de una revisión de la efectividad del muro y de los sistemas de seguridad electrónicos.

— Continuación del programa de verificación por parte de patrones de la elegibilidad de trabajo de cada inmigrante en cuestión.

— Enfocar la aplicación de las leyes de inmigración (actuales) en acciones de crímenes mayores y terrorismo, incluyendo el desarrollo de lineamientos generales por si se llevan a cabo redadas en los sitios de trabajo. Con esos lineamientos generales se debe calcular el daño potencial a las comunidades locales y a las familias de

los Estados Unidos.

El informe, dado a conocer el 11 de febrero, fue escrito por un miembro de la directiva de más alto rango del Instituto de política de acción migratoria, Doris Meissner, excomisionada del Servicio de inmigración y naturalización; y por el vicepresidente de programas del instituto, Don Kerwin, exdirector de la Red católica de inmigración legal.

En el informe se aprovecharon las conclusiones de cuatro mesas redondas que se llevaron a cabo en el otoño pasado, y que se refieren a una amplia gama de “interesados” sobre materia de inmigración.

Entre los grupos de expertos se incluían representantes de facilitadores de servicios de inmigración, vigilantes de la ley, personal del Congreso, organizaciones de ayuda legal y el departamento de Homeland Security, que ampara las tres agencias de inmigración: Aduanas y protección fronteriza, Aplicación de la observancia de inmigración y aduana (ICE por sus siglas en inglés) y Servicios de ciudadanía e inmigración (CIS por sus siglas en inglés).

Meissner explicó que el informe “no representa un inventario exhaustivo” de asuntos de interés relacionados con la inmigración. En lugar de eso, describió el informe como un análisis de

oportunidades. El foco está “en lo que pueden lograr los dirigentes del poder ejecutivo con la autoridad presente que condervan”, en contraposición a lo que puede ser cambiado mediante la acción del Congreso, dijo.

En el informe se alababan algunos esfuerzos de las agencias en años recientes; tales como el mejoramiento de servicios de algunas solicitudes y el fortalecimiento de la seguridad en los procesos de visas e inmigración. Algunas de las más duras críticas iban dirigidas a la agencia de ICE.

En el informe se decía que objetivos tales como la planta empacadora de carnes Agriprocessors de Postville, Iowa, que experimentó una redada el año pasado, son “parte del tipo correcto de objetivos contra empresas”, debido a su historia de violaciones de las leyes de trabajo e inmigración, incluyendo trabajo de menores,

obtención de documentos falsos, retención ilegal de salarios, abuso verbal y físico, fraude contra el fisco y uso de equipo de alto riesgo.

Sin embargo, esa redada “tuvo un inmenso y nocivo efecto contra la comunidad local de inmigrantes”, se decía. En lugar de simplemente deportar a trabajadores que no contaban con estado legal migratorio, el fiscal local de Estados Unidos persiguió cargos criminales que llevan de sentencia dos años de prisión. También se elevaron preguntas sobre si los derechos legales de los trabajadores se habían protegido o no.

En el informe se dice que la redada resultó en 389 personas arrestadas, y que le costó \$5 millones a ICE, cerca de \$13,000 por persona. En esta cifra no se incluyen los gastos de las otras agencias que colaboraron.

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Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada

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

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

jlocke@fwdioc.org

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

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

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

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

En la conmemoración de su 80° aniversario, el Vaticano celebra su fundación de estado

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — La más pequeña nación del mundo celebra este año su relativamente joven nacimiento a nación; cumple 80 años.

Aunque la Iglesia Católica tiene una historia de 2,000 años, el estado ciudad del Vaticano fue establecido el 11 de febrero del año 1929, para garantizar que la Santa Sede y el papa pudieran libremente llevar a cabo su misión espiritual de confirmar a los cristianos en la fe y guiar a la iglesia universal.

La transición de estados papales a nación fue un camino largo y pedregoso.

Empezando en el siglo VIII, la iglesia ejerció poder temporal sobre lo que se conocía como estados papales, grupo cambiante de territorios a lo largo de zonas de lo que hoy es Italia moderna.

Los Papas de aquella época eran soberanos territoriales y, como tales, tenían que vérselas con riesgos desagradables y preocupaciones con potencias extranjeras inclinadas a la invasión, emperadores romanos rivales y poderosas familias romanas contendientes por el control del papado.

En el siglo XIX, grupos revolucionarios lucharon en contra del control papal en su afán de unificar a Italia, y los estados papales se disolvieron en 1870, después de que Roma y los territorios aledaños fueron incorporados a un país unificado, que abarcaba la península itálica entera.

Una disputa con el gobierno



El Papa Benedicto XVI sonríe al llegar a un concierto en el salón Pablo VI en el Vaticano, el 12 de febrero. El concierto marcaba el ochenta aniversario de la fundación del estado de la ciudad del Vaticano. (CNS Foto/Giampiero Sposito, Reuters)

italiano sobre la soberanía de la Santa Sede obligó a los papas a quedar confinados dentro de los muros del Vaticano desde el año 1870 hasta 1929.

La disputa, que se llegó a conocer como la "cuestión romana", no parecía tener una respuesta rápida ni fácil.

Por un lado, Italia tenía aspiraciones legítimas "de lograr finalmente su propio estado unido y, entre otras cosas, designar como su capital a Roma, que había sido su punto de referencia durante milenios", se decía en un artículo de primera plana en el periódico del Vaticano, *L'Osservatore Romano*, el 11 de febrero.

Pero por otro lado, se decía, Roma era el asiento de San Pedro y sus sucesores. La Santa Sede legítimamente necesitaba una garantía formal y efectiva de su

independencia y libertad.

Ningún papa quería comprometer su tarea de pastor de la iglesia universal, colocándose bajo el control y la autoridad de un soberano temporal.

Después de años de negociaciones, en el pontificado del Papa Pío XI, se alcanzó una resolución. Funcionarios del Vaticano y del primer ministro italiano, Benito Mussolini, firmaron los *Acuerdos lateranos* de 1929 en los cuales el Vaticano y el estado italiano se reconocían mutuamente, el uno al otro, como naciones soberanas.

La manera en la que el estado ciudad del Vaticano fue edificado casi de la nada es el centro de una nueva exhibición abierta en la sala conocida como Braccio di Carlo Magno, en la plaza de San Pedro, que durará hasta el 10 de mayo.

Hospitales no cumplirán leyes injustas y no cerrarán, dice obispo

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (CNS) — La junta de fideicomisarios de la *Asociación católica de la salud* (CHA) reafirmó recientemente su oposición a cualquier intento del Congreso o del presidente Barack Obama de ampliar el acceso al aborto y su compromiso de mantener los hospitales católicos abiertos, dijo el obispo Robert Lynch, de St. Petersburg, en un inciso de bitácora el 6 de febrero.

"Las amenazas vacías sobre el certero cierre de hospitales católicos si ciertas cosas suceden son simplemente eso, vacías", dijo el obispo y miembro de la junta de la CHA, escribiendo sobre el retiro de la junta realizado del 4 al 6 de febrero en la zona de St. Petersburg.

"Estamos aquí hoy y estaremos aquí mañana para proveer a otros la mano curativa de Cristo mientras podamos sobrevivir financieramente en una situación retardadora y cumpliremos completamente con nuestras directrices éticas y religiosas", añadió a su bitácora en la sede de Internet de la diócesis.

Las "Directrices éticas y religiosas para los servicios médicos católicos" de los obispos estadounidenses guían las instalaciones católicas de servicios médicos en su trato de cuestiones éticas tales como el aborto, la eutanasia, el cuidado para los pobres, la investigación médica y otros asuntos.

La CHA "se unirá con la iglesia y con todas las demás partes pro vida para oponer vigorosamente cualquier y todo intento por parte

Hospitales católicos "no cumplirán" leyes que violen la conciencia, "pero no cerraremos".

—el obispo Robert Lynch

de este Congreso o administración de ampliar el acceso al aborto", dijo.

"Los hospitales católicos no permitirán que abortos sean realizados en sus instalaciones" y no cumplirán ninguna ley que ordene el aborto ni otros procedimientos que violen las directrices éticas y religiosas, "aun si nuestras acciones constituyen desobediencia civil", añadió.

Dijo que los hospitales católicos "no cumplirán" leyes que violen la conciencia, "pero no cerraremos".

Entre las razones citadas estaban que:

— Los hospitales católicos son a veces el único proveedor de servicios médicos en una zona geográfica grande, especialmente en zonas rurales.

— Los hospitales tienen una obligación con sus médicos, enfermeras y otros empleados; con los dueños de sus bonos; y "con los pobres, con los desprotegidos y con nuestras comunidades, que se benefician con nuestra presencia".

Migración: fuerza social, económica en Américas para años venideros

ANTIGUA, Guatemala (CNS) — Para escaparse de la guerra y la pobreza los latinoamericanos continuarán moviéndose hacia los países vecinos y hacia los Estados Unidos para trabajo y seguridad, haciendo de la migración una fuerza económica y social predominante en las Américas durante años venideros, dijeron expertos de migración.

Aunque las reformas al sistema de inmigración estadounidense son improbables este año, funcionarios eclesiásticos dijeron que los líderes latinoamericanos deben continuar impulsando las protecciones de los derechos humanos y los cambios para políticas que sean más tolerantes con la migración.

"Hoy día los derechos de los migrantes están siendo castigados por políticas contra la inmigración", dijo el obispo Pablo

Vizcaíno Prado, presidente de la conferencia episcopal guatemalteca. "Nos gustaría que el migrante guatemalteco fuera visto como una riqueza, la mayor riqueza que Guatemala exporta".

El obispo Vizcaíno, quien dirige la diócesis de Suchitepequez-Retalhuleu, habló a finales de enero durante una conferencia internacional sobre migración y paz. La conferencia de dos días reunió políticos, expertos de migración, líderes eclesiásticos y ganadores del *Premio Nobel de la paz* para discutir la migración.

"Debemos unir los directores gubernamentales y tratar (la migración) como un frente unido", dijo Gloria Oqueli, presidenta del *Parlamento centroamericano* y ex congresista hondureña. "Necesitamos hacer un llamado a la Unión Europea y a los Es-

tados Unidos para detener la deportación y cambiar las leyes de retorno y para devolver migrantes humanamente".

La conferencia fue establecida en un contexto de deportaciones en aumento y esfuerzos estancados de reformar las leyes de inmigración en los Estados Unidos. Los Estados Unidos deportó 345,000 inmigrantes durante el año fiscal 2008, más que los 288,000 del año anterior.

Como otros países centroamericanos, Guatemala vio un número récord de deportaciones desde lo Estados Unidos en el 2008, casi 28,000. María Rosanna Mejía fue una de ellos.

Salió de Guatemala, donde ganaba unos \$105 mensuales trabajando seis días por semana como criada, en el 2005. Entró ilegalmente a los Estados Unidos y encontró trabajo en Postville,

Iowa, en la planta empacadora de carne *Agriprocessors*, con cientos de otros guatemaltecos indocumentados.

Su salario de \$6.50 por hora era suficiente para el sustento de ella y su hija y podía enviar dinero a su familia en Guatemala. En mayo pasado el *Servicio de inmigración y control de aduanas* de los Estados Unidos hizo una redada en la planta y arrestó a 389 personas, incluyendo a Mejía.

"Todos comenzaron a llorar y a gritar y comenzaron a correr", Mejía dijo durante la conferencia. "Intenté esconderme, pero fue imposible. ... Me encontraron, me apuntaron con un arma y me dijeron que no me moviera. Me sentí como un animal en manos de un cazador".

Aunque cientos de otros atrapados en la redada fueron convictos por delito mayor — fraude de

identificación — y sentenciados a cumplir tiempo de cárcel, Mejía fue enviada a casa a cuidar de su hija de 2 años de edad. Llevó en su tobillo una pulsera de supervisión electrónica durante tres meses mientras aguardaba la deportación. Ella no podía trabajar ni salir de su casa.

"Les pregunté cómo se suponía que viviéramos. Ellos dijeron que eso no era su problema", Mejía dijo.

Unos 2 millones de personas en América Latina y el Caribe fueron levantados de la pobreza en el 2008, según la *Comisión económica de la ONU para América Latina y el Caribe*. Pero 182 millones de personas todavía están viviendo en la pobreza y el número de personas que viven en la pobreza extrema aumentó de 68 millones a 71 millones en el 2008, dijo la comisión.

Measures promoting human dignity top concern for Catholic advocates addressing Congress

By Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Promoting Catholic Social Teaching to politicians at the White House and in Congress is like riding a teeter-totter: first up and then down. The direction depends on the issue being debated and the party in power.

But no matter the direction, as John Carr, executive director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development, points out, the underlying principle guiding the Catholic legislative agenda in the 111th Congress remains unchanged: promoting human life and dignity.

"We've got a new administration and new Congress and the same principles," Carr told Catholic News Service a few days after the inauguration of President Barack Obama. "We have new opportunities in some areas and new challenges in others.

"The key issue is not which party it helps or what the president's approval rating is. It's whether the poor gain," he said.

Advocates such as Candy Hill, senior vice president for public policy and government affairs at Catholic Charities USA, are poised to take advantage of opportunities to discuss a broader social agenda, an area that took a back seat to the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and homeland security concerns under President George W. Bush.

At the same time, explained Richard M. Doerflinger, associate director of the U.S. bishops' Office of Pro-Life Activities, pro-life advocates face more significant challenges. Despite Obama's offer to seek common ground on abortion, these advocates realize he is not going to call for an end to abortion altogether.

The changing political landscape in Washington has forced Doerflinger to adopt a defensive posture to preserve existing laws that protect unborn children. Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, chairman of the bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in a Feb. 5 letter urged Congress to maintain all pro-life provisions in the appropriations bills that must be approved to keep government programs funded past March 5.

Doerflinger said the bishops also want to maintain the conscience rights of health care workers so they are not forced to participate in or refer women for abortion. Ensuring the survival of the Hyde amendment, which has

banned the use of federal funds for abortion since 1976, is vital, he added.

In a step to help reduce abortions, the U.S. bishops are continuing their support of the Pregnant Women Support Act, which has been reintroduced in both houses of Congress. The act would fund health care services for pregnant women, decreasing the likelihood that they would choose abortion.

Meanwhile, looming ahead is the Freedom of Choice Act. Although not yet introduced, the act's sponsors are waiting for the right moment to do so, Doerflinger said. The USCCB is spearheading a nationwide postcard campaign urging parishioners to ask their legislators to block the bill.

Beyond abortion, underlying the social agenda of Catholic agencies is the belief that the country's budget is a moral issue and serves to emphasize where society's values and priorities rest.

Given that understanding, long-standing issues such as health care reform to improve access to health services for all, funding of the National Housing Trust Fund to increase the inventory of affordable housing for families, climate change and the creation of "green" jobs are high on the priority list of the bishops, Catholic Charities and Network, a Catholic social justice lobby.

Carr warned, however, that getting the economy growing again remains a sticking point to passage of a broader social agenda.

Catholic advocates are hoping the economic stimulus package that was still being debated Feb. 6 in the Senate [since passed] will address some of the church's concerns, especially for the poor and vulnerable and the rising tide of unemployed people trying to cope in a recessionary economy.

In addition, Hill (at Catholic Charities) and her counterparts are calling for a boost in funding for the school nutrition and Women, Infants, and Children programs, passage of the Healthy Families Act so companies provide paid sick leave for workers, and additional support for Medicaid and social service block grants.

"We have to admit as a nation that while safety-net programs are absolutely essential, merely expanding safety-net programs is not a solution to cutting or eliminating poverty," Hill told CNS. "Only when we look at the needs of human beings — education, access to jobs that pay well,

the opportunity to have assets — can we talk about a country where people are able to reach their full potential."

Obama's Feb. 4 signing of the State Children's Health Insurance Program is seen by advocates as a positive first step on the road toward greater attention to social needs. Of particular note in the new law are provisions extending health care coverage to legal immigrant children and legal immigrant pregnant women.

Such provisions signal to Kevin Appleby, director of immigration and refugee policy for the USCCB, that comprehensive immigration reform may be on the horizon. An immigration reform package that has been debated since the 9/11 disaster but never acted upon could be offered sooner rather than later if the economy shakes its doldrums, he said.

"Our overarching goal is to create momentum toward an immigration reform bill," Appleby told CNS. "Now there is debate as to how that process will look, whether Congress will pass a few more modest measures first and try to pass a larger bill. Or whether they will try to put everything in one bill and get it passed."

Not to take a back seat, education concerns also appear on the USCCB legislative agenda. Working with the National Catholic Educational Association and the Council for American Private Education, the bishops' Office of Catholic Education has made parental choice its guiding principle.

Marie Powell, executive director of the Office of Catholic Education, is promoting the reauthorization of the No Child Left Behind Act, particularly its provisions for the equitable participation of students and teachers in private schools in a variety of federally funded programs. Reauthorization has been delayed in Congress to deal with the economic recovery, but will have to be addressed before the mid-term congressional elections in 2010, she said.

On international issues, religious advocates have already had one victory from the Obama administration: presidential executive orders banning torture and closing the military prison at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, within a year.

Victory aside, the USCCB is looking at how U.S. foreign aid can be a tool to relieve world poverty, according to Stephen Colecchi, director of the bishops' Office of International Justice and Peace.

Hospitals won't comply with unjust laws and won't close, says Bishop Robert Lynch

ST. PETERSBURG, Fla. (CNS) — The Catholic Health Association's board of trustees recently reaffirmed its opposition to any attempts by Congress or President Barack Obama to broaden abortion access and its commitment to keep Catholic hospitals open, Bishop Robert N. Lynch of St. Petersburg said in a Feb. 6 blog entry.

"Idle threats about the certain closing of Catholic hospitals if certain things happen are simply that — idle," said the bishop and CHA board member, writing about the board's Feb. 4-6 retreat in the St. Petersburg area.

"We are here today and will be here tomorrow to provide the healing hand of Christ to others as long as we can financially survive in a challenging situation and comply fully with our ethical and religious directives," he added in his blog on the diocese's Web site.

The U.S. bishops' "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services" guide Catholic health care facilities in addressing ethical questions such as abortion, euthanasia, care for the poor, medical research, and other issues.

Although the CHA gathering "was essentially a planning retreat," the board re-emphasized "some actions taken at previous board meetings," Bishop Lynch said.

CHA "will join with the church and all other pro-life parties to vigorously oppose any and all attempts by this Congress or administration to broaden abortion access," he said.

"Catholic hospitals will not allow abortions to be performed in their facilities" and will not comply with any laws mandating abortion or other procedures that violate

"The particular piece that we'll look at is: Does it focus on human development? Does it focus on the poor? Do people have a say in how aid is distributed?" he said.

The conference also will continue to press the new administration to support religious freedom around the world, especially in countries where Christians are facing persecution, and pursue a viable two-state solution to the 60-year Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

In addition, Colecchi expects legislation allowing Americans to travel directly from the U.S. to Cuba to be introduced, a measure the bishops support.

"We see it only as a first step,"

"Catholic hospitals will not allow abortions to be performed in their facilities" and will not comply with any laws mandating abortion or other procedures that violate the ethical and religious directives, "even if our actions constitute civil disobedience."

— **Bishop Robert Lynch**
CHA board member

the ethical and religious directives, "even if our actions constitute civil disobedience," he added.

"No Catholic institution or employee of an institution can or will be made to violate the dictates of their conscience resulting from federal or state legislative action," Bishop Lynch said.

He said Catholic hospitals "won't comply" with laws that violate conscience "but we will not close."

Among the reasons he cited were that:

— Catholic hospitals are sometimes the sole provider of health care in a large geographical area, especially in rural areas.

— The hospitals have an obligation to their physicians, nurses, and other employees; to their bondholders; and "to the poor, unprotected, and to our communities which benefit from our presence."

he said. "We believe more engagement with Cuba is the way to improve human rights both within Cuba and to improve the situation of the people and the freedom of the church."

As for the war in Iraq, Colecchi said, the bishops stand by their 2006 statement calling for a responsible transition to a stable government in the Middle Eastern country before the full withdrawal of U.S. troops. And while Obama has said he would relocate more troops to Afghanistan to fight the resurgent Taliban, Colecchi said the bishops have not taken a stand on the plan, preferring to watch how the redeployment evolves.

Diocese will do all it can to help Catholic schools remain accessible to all

FROM PAGE 24
without distinction as to class, ethnicity, even religion."

Each classroom is a place where children and adults experience the Gospel and know what it means to live out the teachings of Jesus. In a culture that celebrates individualism, Catholic schools create a community of faith and shared values.

"Our mission in Catholic schools is to get kids into heaven, not Harvard," she stated simply, as the audience responded with enthusiastic applause. "We understand that every day."

"Celebrate Service," the theme of this year's Catholic Schools Week, highlights another characteristic of Catholic education. Along with strong academics and faith formation, students learn to touch the lives of others through acts of charity and kindness.

"We are called to service because that's who we are," the

speaker explained. "We serve because that is the model Jesus gave us."

Sr. Cimino told the audience that Catholic schools do exactly what the song says. They act with justice, serve others, and love tenderly.

"Why?" she asked. "So every single day, all of us can walk humbly with our God."

Held each year since 1988, the Catholic Schools Banquet recognizes the achievements and dedication of individuals who support the mission of Catholic schools in the diocese.

School Superintendent Don Miller spoke with gratitude of this support in his remarks at the banquet, and also reported that the \$1 million donated to the Bishop's Scholars Fund during the past two years has provided 1,400 students with tuition assistance. Despite challenging economic times, Miller noted, a modest seven percent gain in contributions was achieved for the 2009-



Annette Kearns, Nolan Catholic High School's director of communications, pins a corsage on Nolan's 2009 honoree, Sr. Rosemary Stanton, SSMN (left).

Immaculate Conception; Sister Rosemary Stanton, SSMN, Nolan; Suzanne Prosser, Notre Dame; Debra Austin, Our Lady of Grace; Nancy Edwards, Our Lady of Victory; Eileen Yanaras, Our Mother of Mercy; Leonard and Christel Vogel, Sacred Heart; Kim Morrow, St. Andrew; Steve Groppi, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton; Eileen Shapiro, St. George; Cindy Cummins, St. John the Apostle; Maureen Wetmore, St. Maria Goretti; Florence Prescher, St. Mary's; Philip and Roseanna Hernandez, St. Peter the Apostle, and Anne Fernandez, St. Rita.

Addressing the crowd of supporters, Bishop Vann recounted a story that captured the impact Catholic schools have on their students. He told the crowd how youngsters who spied a funeral procession leaving the church during recess, immediately dropped to their knees in prayer.

"Nobody told them to do it. It was part of who they are," he explained. "It was a spontaneous reaction of their faith, what they've been taught and what they learned from teachers, parents, and the community."

The bishop thanked the audience for their love and sacrifice that provides the gift of faith in Catholic schools.

"We provide our students and young people with the gift of faith that it may grow and help them find the light and love of Christ in all circumstances and moments in life," he said in closing. "So like the children who prayed for the deceased person, it becomes part of who they are."

Hamer...

FROM PAGE 11
dishes of spaghetti that go back filled with barbecued brisket. It's a fair exchange, not the same ingredients, but still, we return things full, like they were when we received them.

That's why, when my friend Mary broke both wrists, she spent her first night at my house — and she lay on my couch — in the house she had helped us move into five years earlier.

The fractures were difficult from the beginning, in the emergency room, where Mary fully realized her injury, and where they struggled to remove her wedding ring from a rapidly swelling finger. The ring was a sad reminder of another catastrophe — the all-too-recent death of her husband, Dick.

Mary broke her wrists when she fell backward off an elevated porch while cleaning up the church on the Monday after Easter. In an ironic postlude to the year's most important liturgies, Mary had taken one step backward, lost her balance, and caught her fall from behind, using both hands.

That year Mary endured a painful Lent, suffering the loss of the man she loved; then with the joy of Easter, she received this additional jab.

Breaking both wrists is more than physically painful, because suddenly you are immobilized, and not in a fun

way. There's no relaxing with your legs up, working Sudoku puzzles, because you can't use your hands! Suddenly everything must be done for you, from shampooing to eating.

Mary suffered through that ordeal for weeks, most of it in the care of friends who loved her. I was by no means her primary caregiver, but in the few days she stayed with me, something curious, and valuable, took root in my mind.

When you care for a person in a situation of powerlessness, you take the servant's position, a spot that teaches us, as Jesus did, how important it is to wash each others' feet. (Or move each others' furniture.)

But the recipient, the person who is powerless, is ironically in a position of power, because that person allows others to serve.

Thinking back on the day we moved, when most of our friends showed up, I am overwhelmed and embarrassed at how much they helped us.

Meredith said, "I drove down the street to buy some more boxes, and I was really worried about what we were going to do. We had barely started packing.

"When I drove back home, I was astonished to see there were dozens of cars lining both sides of our street.

"I couldn't believe how many people were there for us."

My friend Mary faced her injuries with graciousness and humility. It was much more

difficult for her to be served — hand and foot — than it was for those who cared for her.

As Lent begins this year, I realize Jesus wants two things from us. I think he wants us to serve others, to look for needs in pew-mates, friends, and strangers, and give to them, like Simon of Cyrene did: He looked in Jesus's eyes and carried his cross to the top of the hill.

But I think Jesus also wants us to practice humility, like my friend Mary did, when she was powerless and gave others the privilege to serve.

Doing and being done for, are actions that pass themselves around, like gifts of food, compassion, and muscle! One helps another, and another, and so on. You never know when the gift of being a giver will present itself, you just have to be there willing to give.

And when necessary you must be willing to humbly receive.

It's wholly a trade-off. And it's a holy trade-off.



Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. Andrew Parish, has five children, Meredith, John, Julie, Andrew, and Abby. In May 2008 her column received the second place award for best family life column by the Catholic Press Association of the U.S. and Canada at the Catholic Media Convention in Toronto. In 2005, Kathy's column was recognized with the first place award in the same category.

2010 school year. Grants to qualifying families will total \$647,000. "This diocese is committed to honoring the Holy Father's plea to do all that we can to ensure that our Catholic schools remain accessible to all," Miller told the audience. "In this diocese, that means not only the sacrifices of our local parishes and schools to

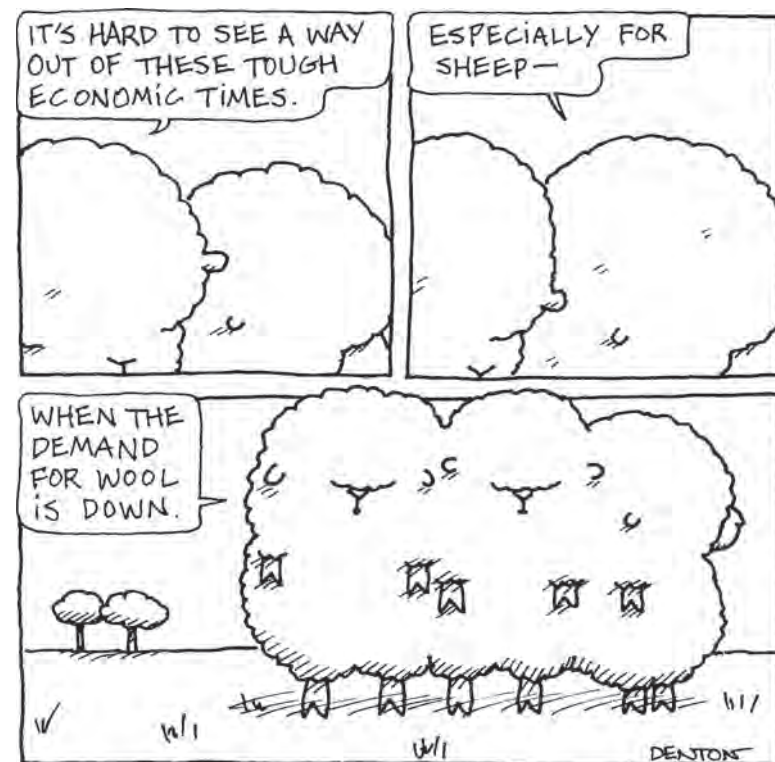
support them, but also the Bishop's Scholars Fund." Recognized for its support of Catholic education, the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation was presented with the 2009 Diocesan Leadership Award. The organization, which honors the memory of a 15-year-old Nolan High School sophomore who died from cancer, has provided more than \$200,000 in scholarships to needy families. His parents, Jim and Kathy Breen, accepted the award from Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann on behalf of the foundation.

Volunteers, teachers, and administrators from 20 schools in the diocese were also honored for their contributions of time and talent to individual campuses. The list of honorees includes Armand and Martha Hernandez, All Saints; Joe Dulle, Cassata; Tracy Head, Holy Family; Kathy Rhadigan, Holy Rosary; Marla Kietzman, Holy Trinity; Janell Trachta,

The FLOCK

By Jean Denton

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Good Newsmakers

Catholic Schools Banquet speaker Sr. Carol Cimino explains why Catholic schools continue to thrive:
It's not about money

It's about

Ministry

Story and Photos by
 by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

*We are called to act with justice.
 We are called to love tenderly.
 We are called to serve one another.
 To walk humbly with God.*
 —David Haas

Those lyrics from a popular Catholic hymn helped Sr. Carol Cimino, SSJ, describe why Catholic schools in 2009 continue to succeed despite a secular culture that exalts money, accepts mediocrity, and promotes rugged individualism.

"For anybody involved in Catholic education, it's not about money, it's about ministry," she told the gathering of educators, administrators, and benefactors who attended the 22nd annual Catholic Schools Banquet Jan. 31 in the Fort Worth Convention Center ballroom. "All of you in this room have been called. You can't do this thing called Catholic education unless you're called."
 During her keynote address, the national consultant for textbook publisher William H. Sadlier Co. praised teachers and parents for serving as role models to youngsters and explained the even greater influence Catholic schools have on the church and society. Since their inception, parochial schools in the U.S. have educated eight generations of students.
 "Catholic schools in this



Clockwise from above left:

- Kathy and Jim Breen (left), with daughter Cortni, accepted this year's Diocesan Leadership Award on behalf of the Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation.
- Honorees representing each of the 20 Catholic schools in the diocese are pictured with Bishop Kevin Vann (far left) at this year's banquet.
- Chad Riley, principal of Sacred Heart School in Muenster, accepts the annual Spirit award for the school's outstanding support of this year's banquet from Superintendent Don Miller.
- Students from St. Peter the Apostle and All Saints schools in Fort Worth performed Mexican folk dances during the social hour that was held prior to the banquet.
- Kindergarten students from Holy Rosary School in Arlington sing and sign to the prayer "Worthy is the Lamb" as part of the evening's program.

Center above left:

Steve Groppi, this year's banquet honoree from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School in Keller, accepts his award from Bishop Vann.



country save taxpayers \$23 billion annually," she said. "They are the most visible ministry in the church and have fostered

thousands of vocations to the priesthood and religious life." And Catholic schools respond to the command "to act

with justice" by providing an education — based on excellence — to anyone who wants it. "In Catholic schools, medi-

ocrity is not in the vocabulary. It's excellence," Sr. Cimino pointed out. "We teach children
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Sr. Carol Cimino, SSJ, praised teachers and parents at the Catholic schools banquet for their commitment to Catholic education.



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Inside... This issue of the NTC

Pope Benedict XVI addresses the mystery of illness and physical affliction and the value of all human life, even in suffering, in his World Day of the Sick Message.

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Sister Emannuela Le professed her final vows as a Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth in Grand Prairie, Jan. 31, and much of her family was there to witness and celebrate with her.

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Wilmington, Delaware Bishop J. Francis Malooly says the beatitudes give us 'a window' on Lincoln's presidency. His analysis makes for interesting reading about our 16th president.

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