

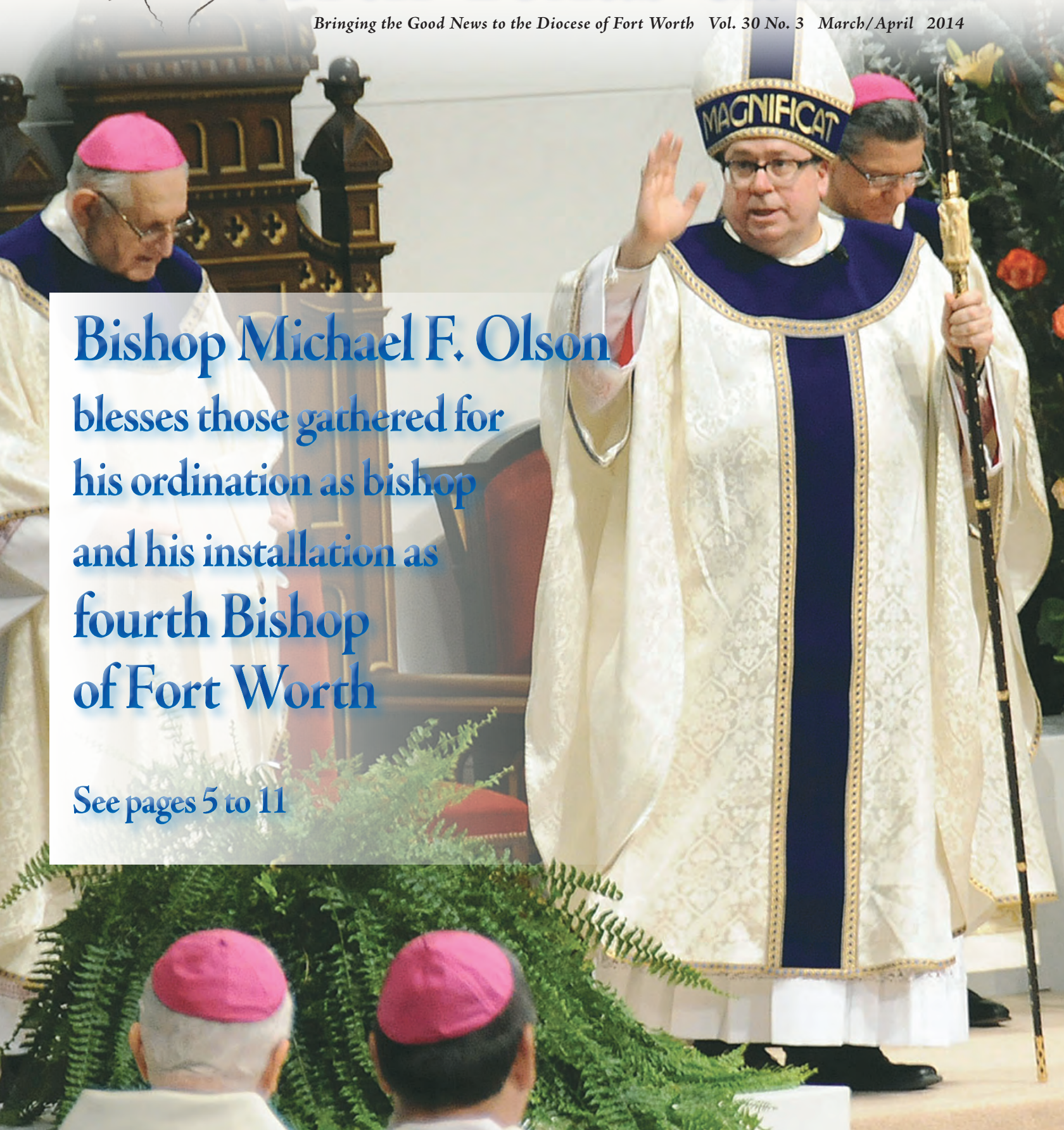


NEWSMAGAZINE North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth Vol. 30 No. 3 March/April 2014

Bishop Michael F. Olson
blesses those gathered for
his ordination as bishop
and his installation as
fourth Bishop
of Fort Worth

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OLQP BREAKS GROUND ON FAMILY LIFE CENTER 12

Before our new bishop was ordained and installed, he celebrated Mass with the parishioners of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Wichita Falls, Jan. 26.

He helped them break ground for a new Family Life Center, which then-Bishop-elect Olson said, would not only help individual families, but “the entire parish family, as well as contributing to the common good for Wichita Falls.”

LOCAL CATHOLICS MORE ACTIVELY PRO-LIFE THAN EVER 13

More than 500 gathered to observe the diocese’s Respect Life Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral, Jan. 24; our first diocesan-sponsored busloads of pro-life marchers and lobbyists traveled to the Texas Rally for Life at the Capitol in Austin, Jan. 25; and thousands packed Dallas’s Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, Jan. 18. Fort Worth and Dallas area Catholics are ever more visible in their opposition to abortion.

COVER PHOTO:

Bishop Michael Fors Olson, having just been ordained a bishop and installed as the fourth bishop of Fort Worth, stands before the *cathedra*, the bishop’s chair, and one of the symbols of the authority of his office as the chief teacher and pastor of the Catholic faithful of the diocese. For the first time as bishop of the diocese, Bishop Olson blesses the people gathered for the momentous event, Jan. 29 in the Arena of the Fort Worth Convention Center. Standing by the *cathedra* is Archbishop Emeritus Joseph Fiorenza of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, and behind Bishop Olson is Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller, archbishop of San Antonio. (Donna Ryckaert / NTC Photo)



5 A HISTORIC MOMENT FOR US

Michael Olson has become the first priest ordained for the Diocese of Fort Worth, to then be installed as the Bishop of Fort Worth. It has been a historic and memorable spiritual moment in the history of the diocese.



14 A LIFE WELL LIVED, WELL REMEMBERED: FR. DAVID

Benedictine Father David Bellinghausen was the last of his order to pastor Muenster’s Sacred Heart Church, and he is remembered for how much he loved the people, right down to putting up fresh corn with them.



17 LIGHTER AND BRIGHTER

This baptism at a Ukrainian Catholic Church in St. Louis helps illustrate why we do this page. Our Catholicism is terribly serious — and ethereally joyful. If we only get the “serious” part, we’re missing out. At least one page each issue should reflect that. (CNS photo/Lisa Johnston, St. LOUIS REVIEW)



23 ‘THY WILL BE DONE’

Bishop-elect Stephen Berg chose his episcopal motto well, expressing the way he has given his life over to God. Our former diocesan administrator will become the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Pueblo in Colorado, Feb. 27.



30 SHARON PERKINS AND JEFF HEDGLEN REFLECT ON LENT

Sharon Perkins, recently returned from her Holy Land pilgrimage, offers her poignant reflections on the Via Dolorosa. Jeff Hedglen looks at Pope Francis’ call to make our Lenten sacrifices count for something in the lives of the poor.

North Texas Catholic



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NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC Newsmagazine (USPS 751-370) (ISSN 0899-7020) is published bi-monthly plus one special issue in January by the Most Rev. Michael F. Olson, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, 800 W. Loop 820 S., Fort Worth, Texas 76108. For those who are not registered parishioners in the Diocese of Fort Worth, subscription rates are \$18 for one year, \$35 for two years, \$50 for three years. Periodical postage paid at Fort Worth, Texas. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to North Texas Catholic, 800 W. Loop 820 S., Fort Worth, Texas 76108.

Deadline for information for the *North Texas Catholic* is noon of the Wednesday two weeks before the paper is published. The NTC is published bi-monthly, the third Friday of the month, with the following two months as the date of each issue.

To access current news and information, find us at www.northtexasatholic.org

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Joyful activity accompanies welcoming our new bishop, Bishop Michael Fors Olson

When Bishop Michael F. Olson, made the circuit of the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena's floor, following his ordination as bishop and his installation as the fourth bishop of Fort Worth, we clapped vigorously, until it seemed our hands could clap no more, then we clapped some more, expressing our approval and our support. Some of us even shouted our acclaim loudly. It was one of those moments that live in our memories.

When any event of that size and complexity is carried out with as much precision and care as that gathering of 8,500 or so was, there is a great deal going on that is hidden. There is careful projecting and planning. and executing. There is tremendously complex coordination by dozens of dedicated people.

In the case of Bishop Olson's special day, those dozens included priests of the diocese, seminarians from Holy Trinity Seminary, members of fraternal groups and papal orders, volunteers from a great number of the churches of the diocese, current and former employees of the diocese. It was quite a team.

And the burden fell harder on some than others, likely causing them to sit up in beds across the diocese in the middle of many nights, as they thought of details they had previously missed.

Any member of the clergy coming to take his place as our new shepherd, our spiritual leader, would have received the best that we, in the Diocese of Fort Worth, could offer. That's the way things work in the Church of Fort Worth, as they should.

But the fact that we were able to do this for a man who had come to maturity among us, a man who had filled out his years of formation for the priesthood here; lived out the early years of that priesthood in churches across the diocese; served us in administration and in the formation of our seminarians, made it that much more special.

A friendly acquaintance of mine in San Antonio who works for the church told me he'd heard a Methodist minister compare our new bishop favorably to our new pope. Michael and Francis.

Must be something about their joy and attention to others that triggered the comparison. We are twice blessed.

Check out our website for updated news — northtexas-catholic.org.

Jeff Hensley
Editor



this Lent, make peace with your past

Come back to God, who is Love and Mercy



project rachel
Peace starts here

*For confidential help after abortion — Rachel Ministries
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model used for illustrative purposes



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Bishop Michael Olson sits in the *cathedra*, the chair of the bishop, signifying that he is the bishop of Fort Worth. He was escorted to the *cathedra* by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, Apostolic Nuncio to the U.S., (left), and Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller of San Antonio (right).

Sede Vacante no longer!

Bishop Michael Olson ordained and installed as fourth bishop of Fort Worth

By JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONDENT

“WE’RE IN GOOD HANDS.” THAT’S HOW THE CONSODINE FAMILY OF WICHITA FALLS REACTED TO THE ORDINATION MASS AND INSTALLATION OF MICHAEL FORS OLSON AS THE FOURTH BISHOP OF FORT WORTH. More than 8,500 Catholics and members of communities from across North Texas gathered inside the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena Jan. 29 to witness one of their own priests ascend to the episcopacy of the fast-growing diocese.

“He’s such a deserving priest. I wasn’t surprised at all they made him a bishop,” said Evelyn Consodine, who became acquainted with a young Michael Olson when he was a seminarian assigned to Our Lady Queen of Peace Church.

She attended his ordination to the priesthood in June 1994 and years later would see him at the annual Fr. Donlon Vocation Dinner sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 1473 at Wichita Falls’ Sacred Heart Parish. The event raises money for the education of seminarians.

Monsignor Olson was rector of Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving before Pope Francis appointed him bishop of Fort Worth on Nov. 19. The 28-county diocese has been *sede vacante* — without a leader — since Fort Worth’s third bishop, Kevin Vann, left to become the bishop of Orange, California in December 2012.

Jose and Gloria Frias arrived early at the convention center hoping to secure an unobstructed view of the Ordination Mass. Both are lectors at St. George Church in Fort Worth.

“We’re here to see the new bishop,” Jose said, sporting a tie with the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. “He’s a gift from God to all of us.”

The swell of parishioners, Catholic school children, and out-of-town visitors who turned out for the solemn, majestic ceremony shared that sentiment. Included in the congregation were more than 50 relatives and friends from the Chicago area where 47-year-old Bishop Olson was born and attended school.

The bishop’s cousin Bill Ackermann said

his cousin was destined for this day. The new bishop comes from a large extended family, and cousins often got together to bowl or enjoy each other’s company.

“From the day Michael was born, he was meant to be here,” said the visiting relative. “He never had a mean bone in his body. He’s a kind person with a great sense of humor who was always special — in a good way.”

For Ronald and Janice Olson, their son’s ordination day couldn’t arrive fast enough.

“The weather has been bad, but they still made it in,” said Ronald Olson, referring to the travel plans of their Chicago guests. “Friends and family are supporting Michael and that’s tremendous.”

Sitting with his wife, Janice, and daughters, Patty, Mitzi, and Liz, the high-spirited dad described the eldest of his four living children as a “people person” who cares about everybody.

“We’re just very, very proud of him,” added his mother Janice Olson. “It’s a wonderful feeling.”

The Ordination Mass began with a long and impressive liturgical procession led by the Knights of Columbus, the Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver, the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, and the Order of Malta. As the diocesan choir sang “St. Patrick’s Breastplate” and other inspiring hymns, more than 100 seminarians, 230 priests, 60 deacons, and 43 bishops entered the arena-turned-worship space.

Ferns, coupled with rows of blue hydrangeas, delphiniums, and coral-colored azaleas, lined the raised altar. Roses, artfully arranged in vases, symbolized the new bishop’s devotion

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Photo by Jerry Circelli / NTC

The Very Rev. Daniel Kelley shows the Apostolic Mandate appointing Bishop Olson as bishop of Fort Worth to all those present.

Sede Vacante no longer!

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5

to Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Thérèse of Lisieux, “The Little Flower.”

Hanging from a white monolith, a large crucifix, designed by architect Jim Bransford, served as an appropriate backdrop for the sacred setting. The 8-foot corpus, carved from linden wood, and a statue of the Blessed Mother placed on the altar, belong to the Discalced Carmelite Nuns in Arlington.

“The Carmelites don’t leave their enclosure, so they are participating in the liturgy by loaning the crucifix and statue of the Madonna from their chapel,” explained Father Jonathan Wallis, who served as master of ceremonies.

As the metropolitan archbishop of the San Antonio Province, Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller served as principal consecrator for the sacred Rite of Ordination. Assisting as principal co-consecrators were Bishop Vann and Archbishop Emeritus Joseph A. Fiorenza of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. The remaining bishops and archbishops seated on the altar also acted as co-consecrators.

The Rite of Ordination began with the presentation of Bishop-elect Olson and the reading

Mike, today God sends the Holy Spirit upon you, so as a bishop you will preach the Gospel to all people. Unite them under one shepherd — Jesus Christ. Sanctify them and guide them to salvation.

— Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller
Metropolitan of San Antonio Province

of the Apostolic Mandate from Pope Francis by Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, the Apostolic Nuncio to the United States.

“Today, Monsignor Michael Olson is about to be ordained to the fullness of the priesthood and solemnly installed as the fourth bishop of Fort Worth,” Archbishop Viganò said before addressing the bishop-elect. “As you faithfully teach, govern, and sanctify in the name of the one Good Shepherd, we are confident that you will bring the joy of the Gospel both to the flock entrusted to you as well as the community at large.”

Archbishop García-Siller began his homily with a heartfelt expression of hope and good fortune for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

“In you we see love, prayer, and great hope for the future. Michael, *felicidades* — congratulations!” he announced, as the congregation applauded its approval.

In public statements, Pope Francis has said the Church needs leaders today who have simple, humble hearts. Drawing his words from the pontiff’s apostolic exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium*, the archbishop reminded Bishop-elect Olson to be a pastor who is close to people.

“A bishop must be with his people in three ways — in front of them pointing the way, among them to prevent them from being scattered, and behind them ensuring no one is left behind,” he said.

Archbishop García-Siller advised the bishop-elect to follow the example of the Good Shepherd by guiding his flock with authentic teaching and preaching.

“Mike, today God sends the Holy Spirit upon you, so as a bishop you will preach the Gospel to all people,” he said. “Unite them under one shepherd — Jesus Christ. Sanctify them and guide them to salvation.”

After swearing his fidelity to the Gospel and the Church, Bishop-elect Olson lay prostrate on the altar as the “Litany of Saints” was chanted. He then knelt before Archbishop García-Siller and the other bishops to receive the gifts of the Holy Spirit through the Laying on of Hands and the Prayer of Ordination. After his head was anointed with chrism oil, the new bishop received a ring signifying his fidelity to the Church, a miter representing his resolve to pursue holiness, and a crozier. The curved staff resembles a shepherd’s crook and is conferred to remind bishops of their pastoral responsibilities and need to watch over their flocks.

At the conclusion of the Ordination Rite, applause filled the arena as Bishop Olson sat in the *cathedra* — the bishop’s chair — to mark the start of his service to the diocese.

Seated in a special section reserved for the hearing impaired, David Casanova couldn’t contain his excitement. The St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner was part of a delegation chosen to meet the new bishop during the offertory procession.

“The diocese has done so much for the deaf community with education programs and money for interpreters. I want to make sure that continues,” said Casanova, who conveyed that message to Bishop Olson using American Sign Language interpreted by Connie Martin, diocesan coordinator of the deaf ministry. “I want the bishop to know that we want to be an essential part of the diocese and will appreciate his support.”

Master Sergeant Bryan Guidry said it will be difficult to address his long-time friend as something other than “Father Michael.”

“He wasn’t just the priest at the church where I belonged,” explained Guidry, a former member of St. Michael Church in Bedford, but



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Newly-ordained Bishop Olson addresses the assembly before the final blessing at the Jan. 29 Mass.



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

More than 8,500 Catholics and community members attended the Jan. 29 ordination of Bishop Olson in the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena.

now stationed in Altus, Oklahoma. “He’d come over to the house, and we’d drink coffee and talk about things. He married me and baptized two of my kids.”

The Air Force pilot said knowing his parish priest brought him closer to God.

“If I ever have a question or someone challenges me about my faith, I have a pretty good source of information I can turn to,” he added.

Another friend, Father Timothy Heines, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Richardson, was a classmate of Bishop Olson at St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston. He said Bishop Olson not only possesses tremendous wisdom but has a deep love for the priesthood which forms the foundation for his ministry.

“Out of that love, he finds a great deal of humor and is able to bring the joy of the Gospel to so many people,” he said. “He has a living, breathing faith and genuinely loves the people he serves. The people of Fort Worth are so lucky to have a pastor like Michael.”

At the close of the three-hour ceremony, the assembly caught a glimpse of Bishop Olson’s wit and good-natured personality. Noting

the pageantry of the occasion, the throng of white-robed priests and “all of the people of God gathered here,” the new bishop said he was tempted to ask, “does this Mass count for Sunday?”

The comment generated a roar of laughter from the crowd, but the room quickly quieted as the bishop’s remarks turned serious. He thanked Archbishop García-Siller for ordaining him and his fellow priests for their fraternity.

“And in a most special way, I thank my mother and father for the gift of life and the gift of faith,” he continued.

In his first address as Bishop of Fort Worth, the prelate asked the faithful to return to the basics of discipleship and become followers — and not just admirers — of Jesus.

“I ask, as we begin this new chapter in our life, that we take as our example and intercessor, the Blessed Mother who really is the first disciple,” he said. “When Gabriel says ‘do not be afraid,’ she (Mary) simply says ‘yes’ to God. May Mary help us say yes to Christ.”



Photo by Kathy Cribari Hamer / NTC

San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller lays hands on Bishop Olson, ordaining him to the episcopacy.



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

Deacons Raúl Martínez and Jim Crites hold the Book of the Gospels over Bishop-elect Olson during the Prayer of Ordination.



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Archbishop García-Siller anoints Bishop Olson with oil, representing his distinctive share in the priesthood of Christ.



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Bishop Olson greets David Casanova representing the diocese’s Deaf Community.



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Bishop Olson receives his crozier, signifying the duty of guiding and governing the Church entrusted to him.



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Bishop Olson receives the mitre from Archbishop García-Siller, signifying his resolve to pursue holiness.



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Bishop Olson celebrates his first Eucharist as bishop. He is joined on the altar by his brother bishops.

New shepherd has always led by example

BY JERRY CIRCELLI / CORRESPONDENT

THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF THE FOURTH BISHOP IN THE 45-YEAR HISTORY OF THE DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH, CELEBRATED JAN. 29 AT THE FORT WORTH CONVENTION CENTER, SHOWED BISHOP MICHAEL F. OLSON AT HIS FINEST.

It was not his new bishop's ring, miter, or staff — outward, visible symbols of the shepherd of the Church — but his humility and respect for the miracle of life that distinguished him this day. That's the way his former professor, Dr. John McCarthy of the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., saw it.

What stood out most to McCarthy during the splendorous 3-hour ordination event was a specific moment when Bishop Olson brought about a standing ovation, not for himself, but for his parents.

In the arena, filled nearly to capacity, Bishop Olson said, "I promised my father that I would not make him stand up. So I won't. But I'd ask everybody else to do so. I thank my mother and my father, and my whole family in particular, for the gift of life and the gift of faith. Thank you very much."

With that, the entire crowd of 8,500 people in the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena rose to its feet in applause.

McCarthy, who made the trip from the nation's capital, said Bishop Olson's tribute to his parents will forever be the fondest memory

of his former student's installation that night.

"That was a beautiful moment," said McCarthy. "And a real way to honor your parents. I can't imagine a parent being honored more greatly, as they should be honored, because he recognized that his own vocation came from their fidelity and their love."

The moment was also a way for the bishop to show his new flock of Catholic faithful in North Texas the importance he places on the sanctity of life, without lecturing, but through leading by example. Such was the strength, wisdom, and grace of God's servant, Michael F. Olson, witnessed by his former professor and thousands from throughout the diocese during his ordination and installation.

Ronald and Janice Olson — seated front and center with their children at the ordination — were proud of their son this day.

"This was just so wonderful," Bishop Olson's father, Ronald, said. The elder Olson relocated his family from the Chicago area to Fort Worth in 1985, and in 1988 his son officially transferred as a seminarian to Fort Worth. "He's made so many friends here so quickly," his father said, as he looked around the packed arena after the ordination Mass. "And he's just loved the people and loved the Church."

Mitzi Rogers, one of the bishop's sisters who lives with her family in North Richland Hills, said the reality of the fact that her

brother was now bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth really didn't hit home until the evening before the ordination, during a special prayer service at St. Patrick Cathedral.

"Last night at Vespers, it just sort of became real," Rogers said after the ordination. "And just to see him up there today for the ordination and the turnout, everyone who came for him, it was just amazing."

"It seems that he's part of everybody's family from what we're hearing," she continued. "People come up and introduce themselves, and they say, 'Oh, you're the bishop's family. We feel like he's part of our family, too.'"

As far as their own family, Rogers said the bishop was always a good older brother. Another sister, Patty Tucker, also from North Richland Hills, added that their brother "always had our backs."

They both said their brother has been dedicated to the Church for as long as they can remember.

"He is just really driven," said Rogers. "He wanted to be a priest from early on, from second grade, and he's always been a good holy man. God has always been in his life."

Tucker added, "He has always been strong in his faith."

Both sisters said they were happy that their brother was named bishop here in the Diocese of Fort Worth. "We are excited that we get to keep him," Rogers said.

Also happy that Bishop Olson will remain in the area is the Sanchez family of Bedford.

Though not blood relatives, you can count



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Bishop-elect Olson is escorted into the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena by Father Karl Schilken (left) of St. Paul the Apostle Parish in Fort Worth, and Father Isaac Orozco (right) of Holy Angels Parish in Clifton and Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Morgan.

them among the many who say Bishop Olson is part of their family. They waited in a long, meandering line for their chance to greet and congratulate the new bishop during a reception in a large room near the arena where the ordination was held. Sandy Sanchez held a copy of the *North Texas Catholic Special Ordination Edition* containing a 1994 image of then-Father Olson with a group of youngsters at St. Michael Church in Bedford.

"That's Ricky in the white shirt right there," the proud mother said, pointing out her son with other youngsters gathered around the then associate pastor Father Olson in the photograph. Now a grown man with a family of his own, Ricky Sanchez explained the picture and brought it to life.

"It was a post-confirmation group we had in high school called Acts 12," Sanchez said. "We'd get together weekly. We just found a way to live our faith life together. Father Mike led us and started the group. Many of us still keep contact with one another today.

"I look back after 20 years," Sanchez continued, "and it was a blessing that he was in my life when he was. And I think a lot of the guys would say the same thing. We were young men, and he challenged us. He just lit us on fire at that age, on fire for Christ. He has a really good way of relating to youth and just pumping them up."

Right: Bishop Olson waves to all those gathered as he walks around the Fort Worth Convention Center Arena shortly after his ordination. (Photo by Jerry Circelli / NTC)

Sanchez continued, "He was somebody who was a beacon to educate you, but he did it in a way that you could hear as a teenager."

Further proof of the bishop's ability to lead new generations toward Christ, Sanchez said, is evident in the work he has done with those studying for the priesthood at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, where he served as rector since 2008.

One of those seminarians, Michael Baynham, graduated from Holy Trinity Seminary two years ago and is studying now at the Theological College at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He is in his sixth year of seminary studies for the Diocese of Dallas, with the goal of being ordained as a priest in 2017.

Baynham traveled from Washington, D.C., to Fort Worth for the ordination of the man who was his early personal formation advisor on the journey to priesthood.

The seminarian and his family were warmly greeted by the new bishop at the reception following the ordination.

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Photo by Juan Guajardo / NTC

Bishop-elect Michael Olson takes the Oath of Fidelity to God and the Church prior to assuming the Office of Bishop.



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

The bishop's symbols of office (ring, crozier, and miter) were blessed at a Vespers service the evening before Bishop Olson's ordination.



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

Former Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann, now of Orange, California, blesses the symbols of office.

On eve of ordination, Bishop-elect Olson takes Oath of Fidelity

By JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONDENT

ON THE EVENING BEFORE HE WAS ORDAINED AS THE FOURTH BISHOP OF FORT WORTH, BISHOP-ELECT MICHAEL FORS OLSON RECEIVED SOME SAGE ADVICE FROM A FRIEND AND FORMER CLASSMATE.

“Get to know your flock — their difficulties, trials, tribulations, joys, and triumphs,” counseled Bishop Oscar Cantú of Las Cruces, New Mexico during a Solemn Vespers service celebrated Jan. 28 in St. Patrick Cathedral. “And allow them to get to know you so they encounter the Good Shepherd through your love.”

Bishop Cantú, who delivered the homily, attended St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston with the bishop-elect and is the youngest prelate in the United States to lead a diocese.

The evening Vespers coincided with the feast day of St. Thomas Aquinas and the New Mexico bishop honored the doctor of the Church in his sermon.

“He (St. Thomas Aquinas) learned from the great thinkers who came before him and dialogued with the great thinkers of his day in order to solve the issues of his time,” the bishop explained.

In the same way, he asked Bishop-elect Olson to “hold dear” the traditions and heritage of the Church in dealing with the challenges of today’s society.

“Dialogue with the contemporary world to defend human dignity in every stage of life from conception to natural death,” he urged. “Stand up for the dignity of those who have no voice and those on the margins of society. Allow the splendor of God’s truth to be disclosed in today’s world.”

During the Vespers, former Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann, who now leads the Diocese of Orange, California, blessed the pastoral ring, staff, and miter Bishop-elect Olson would receive the following day. The bishop-elect also took the Oath of Fidelity, promising to faithfully execute



Photo by Juan Guajardo / NTC

Bishop Vann signs the Oath of Fidelity that had been read aloud by Bishop-elect Olson, certifying that it had been done.

the responsibilities of the Office of Bishop, and to submit to the Church.

Bishop-elect Olson then received the public congratulations of Fort Worth’s civil and ecumenical leaders including Fort Worth Mayor Betsy Price and Rabbi Andrew Bloom of the Congregation Ahavath Sholom.

Before the worship service ended, Bishop-elect Olson addressed the gathering and talked about the importance of placing the common good before the needs of the individual. Individualism creates selfishness, greed, and resentment.

“Too often, and sadly, it leads to violence and the destruction of the human person, especially the weakest members of society who are not able to exert their individu-

alism,” he said.

Rights and individualism are often linked, the bishop-elect continued. But, instead of becoming a positive force that connects people, rights are used as weapons that create distance and draw people away from the common good.

“When we speak of rights, we should think first of responsibilities. Rights with responsibility connect us and help us flourish as human beings, not simply as individuals, but for the common good.”

In addition to the cathedral choir, the congregation heard a rendition of “You Are the Shepherd” by students from Our Mother of Mercy School. The diocese closed schools Jan. 29 so students could attend the ordination.

Erin Vader, Our Mother of Mercy principal, said her students loved being included in the ordination celebration.

“I think it really shows Bishop Olson’s commitment to Catholic education,” she said, especially to those students in the inner-city.

Before departing, Baynham looked back at the bishop as he continued to greet the long line of well-wishers.

“He was a phenomenal rector,” Baynham said. “A great pastor. A great Christian.

“You could always tell that he really loved being a priest. And he loved sharing his priesthood with others, especially with us as seminarians.”

Baynham said his biggest takeaway from the day was “just seeing a close mentor of mine being ordained a bishop and being filled with hope for the Church, because I know who he is, what type of Christian he is. I know he will be a great leader and pastor for the Diocese of Fort Worth.”

David LaPointe, a first-year seminarian at Holy Trinity Seminary, said Bishop Olson had also been his formation advisor. “He was my external formator, so when I set goals for the seminary, it was with him, and we would talk on a regular basis and discuss how things are going moving forward, and maybe things we need to work on.”

Even though he has witnessed his rector and advisor being elevated to bishop, LaPointe said he has seen no difference in his relationship with the man he has come to respect. He has remained in contact with the bishop and is happy about the new papal appointment.

“It’s good because he’s a likable man; he’s a very holy man. He’s someone a lot of guys look up to, so it’s like he went from one level of [being] my boss to the next level. And it’s a beautiful thing.”

LaPointe added, “There’s no difference; he’s the same guy. It’s just I have to say ‘Bishop Olson’ instead of ‘Monsignor’ now.”

Another man who will have to keep reminding himself about the bishop’s new clerical title is Chuck Pelletier, who heads up the Mother and Unborn Baby Care Center and Catholics United For Life of North Texas. A man who has worked tirelessly for decades to protect the rights of the unborn and help mothers through crisis pregnancies, Pelletier was among the first to congratulate Bishop Olson on his installation.



Hours before his ordination, Bishop-elect Olson and diocesan seminarians go through a rehearsal of the liturgy.

Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

Pelletier said he first met Bishop Olson through pro-life activities when the new shepherd of the diocese was still a seminarian. They forged a fast friendship that continues to this day.

This was not the first time Pelletier and his wife, Pat, have witnessed one of the Church’s sacramental ceremonies conferring clerical responsibilities on Bishop Olson.

“He’s part of our life and this is our third ordination,” Pelletier said. “We’ve been to his ordination as transitional deacon, priest, and now bishop.”

To watch his friend’s progress from ordination as a deacon in 1993 to ordination as a priest in 1994 and then ordination as bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth 20 years later “is just mind-blowing,” Pelletier said.

“This has all just come together in a beautiful way. We just thank God that He has given us another great bishop,” Pelletier said. “He has such joy in his heart. You just want to be around somebody who has that kind of joy and holiness in him.

“People are going to love him once they get to know him,” Pelletier predicted. “And they are going to get to know him because he is going to be out there with them.”



Congratulations
Bishop Michael Olson

It was an honor and privilege to have served on such a sacred event. We pray that your ministry be an inspiration to all that you shepherd.

CONGRATULATIONS
BISHOP MICHAEL OLSON

O GOD, the Shepherd and Ruler of all the faithful, graciously look upon Your faithful servant, Michael, whom You have been pleased to appoint pastor over Your Church in Fort Worth: Grant, we beseech You, that by both word and example he may edify those over whom he is set, and together with the flock committed to his care, may attain to eternal life.

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Diocese celebrates Catholic schools at annual Catholic Schools Banquet

By Jacqueline Burkepile
Correspondent

FORT WORTH — Catholic school employees and supporters gathered together for the 27th Annual Celebration of Catholic Schools Saturday, Jan. 25 at the Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom, bringing together representatives from all 20 schools in the diocese.

Keynote speaker Dr. Mary C. McDonald centered her address on finding Jesus inside the Catholic school, with a particular emphasis on the power of prayer and making Christ visible to the students daily.

“What is it that makes Catholic education so different and valuable in our country and in our world?” asked McDonald, who is the CEO and founder of MCD Partners, which provides a variety of educational consulting services. “That Christ is present in our Catholic schools. Making Christ present to the children we serve is what

Catholic education is all about.

“What you do matters,” she concluded. “Most importantly, it matters to God. You are God’s arms in the world, and I’m here to thank you for the great work that you do.”

Diocesan Superintendent of Schools Don Miller presented the Diocesan Leadership Award to Lon C. Kile, stating that he is a generous contributor to the Bishop’s Scholars Fund, St. George and Our Mother of Mercy Schools, and “has invested countless hours offering his personal and professional expertise to support Catholic schools...”

Kile said the award is a great honor, but that he tends to focus primarily on the work the teachers do for the students.

“I’ve been very blessed with the things I have,” said Kile, “and I want to give back to people who are under-resourced, especially the kids, and especially those who go to Catholic schools here in the Diocese of Fort Worth.”

Like John the Baptist, MLK points us to Jesus, says guest homilist

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

ARLINGTON — St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Arlington resounded with ancient drumming, solemn spirituals, and the joyous strains of Gospel music as people from around the diocese gathered for the 28th Annual Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Mass Jan. 11.

Then Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg celebrated the liturgy, which fell on the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, with special guest homilist, Father Kenneth Hamilton, SVD. Fr. Hamilton connected the baptism of Jesus to Dr. King’s famous “Dream” and the call of the lay faithful.

“I can see Martin standing like John the Baptist. Standing on the shores of the Jordan River, pointing: pointing not to himself but to something. Someone greater than he,” he said. “How much greater? So much so that he can point



Photo by Donna Ryckaert / NTC
Fr. Kenneth Hamilton, SVD, gave the homily for the diocese’s annual MLK Memorial Mass.

to Him and say, ‘Behold the Lamb of God! I am not worthy to untie the straps of his sandals.’ How much greater? So much greater than he could imagine so that now we can truly say that Martin’s dream wasn’t nuthin’ less than the dream of Jesus, that same Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

DIOCESAN, LOCAL & STATE NEWSBRIEFS

OLQP breaks ground for new Family Life Center

By Jenara Kocks Burgess
Correspondent

WICHITA FALLS — Parishioners of Our Lady Queen of Peace Church in Wichita Falls filled the pews on Sunday, Jan. 26, to celebrate Mass and then a groundbreaking for their new Family Life Center with then Bishop-elect Michael F. Olson, who had, years earlier, served his internship year as a seminarian at their parish.

Pastor Father Sojan George, HGN, said the new addition will be 20,460 square feet. He also said the current parish hall only accommodates 300 people, but the new hall will accommodate 650. The hall will be attached on the east side of the church.

“If we have something in the church now and we have a reception or something in the parish hall, we lose people. They go out to their car and say, ‘I’m going to go home,’” said Deacon Jim Bindel. “This way they can get to it from the hallways inside, so it’s just more accessible for them.”

Fr. Sojan and Dcn. Bindel both said the new Family Life Center will also have four meeting rooms for the



Photo by Bertha Salazar / NTC
Bishop Olson blesses the ground where the parish’s Family Life Center will go.

many activities in the growing parish including religious education for children and adults, and for various groups and outreach programs.

Fr. Sojan said the construction phase will take 10 months and will cost \$3 million. “We are in the midst of a capital campaign to raise money and, thanks to the generosity of the parishioners, our pledges have reached over \$2.2 million.”

Bishop Olson, Fr. Sojan, and Dcn. Bindel joined other parish and community leaders in breaking the ground.

“It’s important to see a lot of good, dear friends of mine ...with whom I not only have personal friendships but also now have pastoral responsibility and care for,” Bishop Olson said. “And I’m so excited that they’re investing in a Family Life Center. It will help not only individual families, but also the entire parish family, as well as contribute to the common good for Wichita Falls,” he said.

Diocesan religious gather for World Day for Consecrated Life

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

FORT WORTH — Bishop Michael Olson presided at a Vespers service in St. Patrick Cathedral that brought together more than 75 sisters, brothers, and priests from across the diocese to celebrate the World Day for Consecrated Life Feb. 3.

“This was Bishop Olson’s first diocesan gathering with the religious and he expressed his deep gratitude for their presence,” said Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN who organized the event.

Each year the number of religious men and women attending has increased.

In 1997, Pope John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life and attached the celebration to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on Feb. 2 — also known as Candlemas.

“On this day (altar) candles are blessed symbolizing Christ who is the light of the world. In the same way, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all peoples,” Sr. Yolanda explained.

Diocese's annual Respect Life Mass draws 500

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

FORT WORTH — More than 500 worshippers gathered at St. Patrick Cathedral Jan. 24 for the annual diocesan Respect Life Mass.

"This is an opportunity to stand up for what is right," said Fourteen-year-old Melissa Northcutt. "The subject of abortion comes up occasionally with my friends. I give my opinion and back it up with facts."

The pro-life movement continues to gain momentum — a fact supported by the record-breaking crowd that turned out on a chilly Friday night for the liturgy, said Michael Demma, director of the diocesan Respect Life Office.

Then-Diocesan Administrator Monsignor Stephen Berg celebrated the Mass. "Our cause tonight — respect for life from the moment of conception to natural death — is not something particular to our religion. It's fundamental to the Gospel," he said.

Referencing Pope Francis' recent apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gadium* ("The Joy of the Gospel"), Msgr. Berg said defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of every other human right. You can't solve problems by eliminating human life.

"Life is given and meant for God. We are made to be loved, to love, and to do the work of love," he explained. "That is what we celebrate this evening."



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC
A mother guides her young daughter in carrying a votive candle to the altar.

DIOCESAN, LOCAL & STATE NEWSBRIEFS



Photo by Jerry Circelli / NTC

Members of the Diocese of Fort Worth delegation join thousands of other pro-life Texans marching toward the state Capitol Jan. 25 for the Texas Rally for Life.

Diocese sponsors delegation joining Texas Rally for Life at State Capitol

By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent

AUSTIN — More than 100 Catholics from the Diocese of Fort Worth joined their voices with several thousand pro-life supporters at the Texas Rally for Life on the steps of the State Capitol in Austin Jan. 25. They traveled to Austin on buses chartered by the diocese's Respect Life Office.

That office's director, Mike Demma, said this was the first Texas Rally for Life bus trip to Austin that the diocese has organized. Past trips were undertaken by parishes and church-related organizations.

Demma said people are becoming more aware of the [alarming] numbers of unborn lives destroyed through abortion.

Diocese of Austin Bishop Joe Vásquez led the opening prayer for the ecumenical rally.

"As we gather to remember the anniversary of the Supreme Court decision in *Roe v. Wade*, which legalized abortion, we recommit ourselves in our efforts to change the law and provide protection for the most vulnerable in our society — the unborn," he said. "We pray for

all those who have been victimized by abortion. Bring about healing for those who suffer and help them recognize you as a God of mercy and compassion."

Delia Yzaguirre of St. Patrick Cathedral, an active pro-life supporter who has served through Project Gabriel, 40 Days for Life, and other counseling programs, said she welcomed the fellowship among people who shared her outlook about the beginning of life.

"The secular media is so biased and uninterested in the pro-life movement, they disregard it," Yzaguirre said. "Really, you tend to think that you're all alone out there."

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner Cameron Walton was also proud to participate in the event, and although he is only 17 years old, it was not his first rally. He attended the March for Life in Washington, D.C., two years ago and liked the feeling of being surrounded by thousands of other pro-life supporters.

"You don't feel alone. You feel you can carry on," Walton said. "I think it's extremely important just to show yourself and the world that you have the strength to step out of your shell and to show everyone what you believe."

Pro-life movement about compassion, says priest at Dallas Roe Mass

By Juan Guajardo
Correspondent

DALLAS — Thousands of pro-lifers from across North Texas packed the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas for the *Roe* Memorial Mass prior to taking to the streets of downtown for the 41st Dallas March for Life, Saturday, Jan. 18.

Speaking to the more than 6,500 people gathered, Father Alfonse Nazzaro of All Saints Parish in Dallas, said he's heard people complain that Pope Francis doesn't speak enough about abortion.

"No, he speaks about life — all the time," Fr. Nazzaro explained, recalling how the pope embraced a disfigured man, which strengthened and encouraged the man to come out of hiding and reveal his story to the world.

"What does the Holy Father say?" Fr. Nazzaro continued. "That every life is worthy. Every human being has a dignity. That's what he said. Wanted or not wanted, 'beautiful' or disfigured, every human life is beautiful and needs to be embraced."

He encouraged his audience to continue making the pro-life movement one of compassion and one that helps people "to come out of their hiding place, to be willing to reveal their humanity, to forgive themselves, to allow the Lord to forgive them, and to reveal our Christ."

Afterward, the assembly joined thousands of other pro-lifers of different Christian denominations, who attended a separate praise and worship service in the convention center, for the start of the march. They ended their procession through downtown at the Earle Cabell Federal Building — the site where the *Roe v. Wade* case was first filed in 1970.

Opening the series of rally speakers, Bishop Farrell reminded the audience of the danger of becoming indifferent to suffering and urged them to not become apathetic to "the fact that so many children can die each day by abortion."

IN MEMORY

Fr. David Bellinghausen, OSB, last Benedictine pastor of Muenster's Sacred Heart dies at 74

**By Jenara Kocks Burgess
Correspondent**

Father David Bellinghausen, OSB, age 74, a monk of Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas and the last Benedictine priest to serve as pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Muenster, died Dec. 31, 2013.

"He was a kind-hearted person, and he cared about his parishioners, that's for sure," said Werner Becker, who, along with his wife Linda, are longtime members of Sacred Heart.

Mass of Christian Burial for Fr. David was celebrated Jan. 4 at St. Benedict Church at Subiaco. He was interred in the Abbey Cemetery.

Fr. David was born Gerald Raymond Bellinghausen on Aug. 31, 1939, to Hubert and Rosa (Duesterhaus) Bellinghausen in Rhineland, where he was the ninth of 10 children. He attended St. Joseph Parochial School under the direction of the Olivetan Benedictine Sisters, and Rhineland High School, where he graduated as valedictorian of the class of 1957, according to an obituary written by Abbot Jerome Kodell, OSB, of Subiaco Abbey. He attended North Texas State University in Denton for a year before going to Subiaco as a candidate for the Benedictines on Jan. 17, 1960.

Jerry Bellinghausen professed his vows as a monk on Aug. 15, 1961, receiving the name David. For nearly two decades Brother David worked primarily as a linotype operator, printer, and manager of the Abbey's print shop until it closed in 1981. He was also a Christian doctrine instructor at nearby Scranton, Arkansas, and worked on SEARCH Retreats, Marriage Encounters, and in various other retreat programs.

Br. David studied for the priesthood at St. Joseph Seminary College near Covington, Louisiana, and Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans. After graduating with a bachelor's degree in religious studies and philosophy in 1983, he entered the Pontifical College Beda in Rome, while living at Collegio Sant' Anselmo, the international Benedictine center in Rome. Br. David had the unique privilege of serving as deacon of the Ash Wednesday Mass celebrated by Pope John Paul II on Feb. 22, 1986, at Santa Sabina Church in Rome, receiving the blessed ashes from the hands of the Holy Father. Abbot Kodell wrote in the obituary. After completing his theological studies in June 1986, Br. David returned to Subiaco, where, on the Solemnity of All Saints, Nov. 1, 1986, he was ordained to



Photo courtesy of Subiaco Abbey
Father David Bellinghausen, OSB

the priesthood by Bishop Andrew J. McDonald of Little Rock.

Phyllis Barker of Fort Worth, Fr. David's youngest sister, said that she and her family felt it was a blessing that her brother became a priest.

"My mother and daddy couldn't


have wanted for a better thing," she said.

As a priest, he served on Subiaco Academy's faculty from his ordination to 1989, and as pastor of Holy Redeemer Church in Clarkesville, Arkansas, and its mission, Sacred Heart Church in Hartman from 1989-1994. In 1994, he was sent to Texas where he was made pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster, at the time the largest parish staffed by Subiaco Abbey's Benedictines.


Several Sacred Heart parishioners said that Fr. David became their friend as well as their pastor during the time he was at Muenster. Even after returning to Subiaco in 1997, the priest continued to visit his former parishioners when he came to Texas to visit his siblings during his vacations.

"Several of the people (in

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Muenster) were talking, and all of us couldn't believe how lucky we were that Fr. (David) wanted to be our friend," said Betty Miller, longtime Sacred Heart parishioner. "One of the men at the funeral said he couldn't believe how many times that was said — that everyone felt so lucky that Father wanted to be their friend. We sure enjoyed him," Miller said.

Fifteen Sacred Heart parishioners traveled to Arkansas to attend Fr. David's funeral, including Miller and her husband Robert, she said. Miller recalled how one Fourth of July, Fr. David called her to see what she and Robert were doing. She told him that they had just picked 200 ears of corn so they would be spending the morning shucking the corn and putting it away for future use. "I can be there by 10 a.m. to help," he told me. Then he helped us for a couple of hours putting away the corn," Miller said.

Many parishioners remembered their former pastor visiting them at home. Lifelong Sacred Heart parishioner Joan Hartman recalled how Fr. David would visit her and her husband Alvin on the farm on some evenings.

"We took him to the farm many, many evenings, and we'd take a lunch out there or sit out there and just visit in the evenings," she said. "It was kind of his relaxation time. And he really, really enjoyed that."

Fr. David was Sacred Heart's last Benedictine pastor before the parish was returned to the pastoral care of the diocese in 1997. The Benedictines of Subiaco had served the parish for 104 years. Barbara Rohmer, who has been the director of religious education at Sacred Heart for 27 years,

said she worked with many of the Benedictine priests who served at Sacred Heart, including Fr. David.

"He was wonderful to work with, very approachable, outgoing and fun," she said.

When he returned to Subiaco, Fr. David was appointed prior of the monastery by Abbot Kodell. Serving in this capacity for 15 years, he also assisted with the abbey's Black Angus cattle farm. In August 2012, he was appointed pastor of St. Mary Church in Altus, Arkansas, where he served until his death.

His sister, Catherine Pavlicer of Colleyville, said that Fr. David really enjoyed people and parish life and wanted to be in a parish again after serving as prior of the monastery.

"He loved every minute of it. He loved the people and the people loved him," Pavlicer said about the parish in Altus.

Fr. Bellinghausen is survived by his two sisters, Catherine Pavlicer and Phyllis Barker, and three brothers, Urban of Munday, Alvin of Amarillo, and Charles of Justin. He was preceded in death by his parents, his sister, Ilene Redder, and brothers, Wilfred, Herbert, and William "Bill" Bellinghausen.

Memorials may be made in Fr. David Bellinghausen's name for Subiaco's ongoing Monk Education Campaign and sent to Subiaco Abbey, 405 N. Subiaco Ave., Subiaco, AR 72865.

To Report Misconduct

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- Or call the Sexual Abuse Hotline (817) 560-2452 ext. 900 and leave a message.

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Grace Wang reads over the program for the Chinese lunar new year celebration at St. Therese Chinese Church in Chicago's Chinatown Feb. 2 prior to Mass kicking off the celebration. (CNS photo/Karen Callaway/CATHOLIC NEW WORLD)



Pope Francis greets Sri Lankan dancers after a Mass for Sri Lankan pilgrims in St. Peter's Basilica at the Vatican Feb. 8. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



Godmother Oksana Vydash holds Veronika Victoria Shalai during her baptism at St. Mary's Assumption Ukrainian Catholic Church in St. Louis Jan. 12. (CNS photo/Lisa Johnston, St. LOUIS REVIEW)



Bp. David O'Connell joins students at St. Jerome School in West Long Branch, N.J., as they sing an alphabet song, during his Catholic Schools Week visit. (CNS photo/Craig Pittelli, courtesy THE MONITOR)



Ashley Jarvis performs a liturgical dance during a Mass celebrated in observance of Black History Month at St. Agnes Cathedral in Rockville Centre, N.Y., Feb. 8. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)



Msgr. Kieran Harrington, rector of the Co-Cathedral of St. Joseph in Brooklyn, looks at a recently installed mural of American saints and sainthood candidates at the co-cathedral Jan. 28. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Cross-Words

By Mark Simeroth
Across & Down:

- 1. Father of King David
- 2. Oust
- 3. Devote
- 4. Intelligence
- 5. Senior

1	2	3	4	5
2				
3				
4				
5				



GROWING AS A CHRISTIAN

Enforced lack of mobility gave my Lent a 'kick start'

THIS IS ONE OF THOSE YEARS WHEN LENT STARTS LATER THAN USUAL.

Ash Wednesday is typically in February, but this year it is March 5. So for pretty much everyone else the self-sacrifice, and giving up of things, and extra prayer, fasting, and almsgiving starts a few weeks later on the calendar. But in a particular way, for me Lent began Jan. 9, for that is the day I gave up walking for 56 days (give or take).

For the past 10 years or so I have had foot pain. I recently discovered that my heel is misaligned, and this caused my foot to be angled to the outside when I walk. The result of this crooked heel was that all the bones in my foot, instead of coming down with the weight equally distributed, would all crush to the outside. Step after step my foot would get inflamed. Every day there was pain, but on days with a lot of time on my feet, the pain was almost unbearable. To make a long story short, the surgeon cut a wedge out of my heel and screwed it back together and thus initiating my early Lent.

What makes the aftermath of the surgery extra Lent-like is that the foot in question is my right foot, and not only can I not walk for 8 to 12 weeks, I can also not drive for the same amount of time. This has been an exercise in patience and humility for me, and in some ways, even more for my amazing wife who has been living the vow "in sickness and in health" in stellar fashion.

Like most people, I like to be self-sufficient and set my own

schedule. My job as a Campus Minister at UTA is pretty demanding on my time and is 40 minutes away from my house. Add to this other meetings I need to attend as well as social gatherings, and you have a recipe for frustration, at the least, and worse on the bad days.

For the first four weeks of the recovery I was pretty much relegated to sitting around. I had one of those new-fangled knee scooters to help me get around, but still my movements were very limited. I could get from room to room, but I could not do much once I got there.

Not being able to get my own food and drink, having to "shower" at a sink, precariously perched on said scooter, and having to watch

as others did what I used to do, was much harder than I thought it would be. One of the biggest areas of frustration has been the not being able to drive. On many occasions I would think "On my way to work I can stop by..." But of course there was no stopping by, because my way to work comes via very kind students who live close to me and are racing to class.

All of this time sitting around has led me to realize that for me, this time will be a mere eight to 12 weeks but for people in nursing homes, or who are bedridden, or who have other physical or mental illnesses, their plight is surely far more frustrating than I can ever imagine.

Lent is a time of sacrifice and doing without, while my "early

All of this sitting around has led me to realize that for me, this time will be a mere eight to 12 weeks but for people in nursing homes, or who are bedridden, or who have other physical or mental illnesses, their plight is surely far more frustrating than I can ever imagine.



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

Lent" was a result of surgery; we all are about to embark on the Church's season of Lent. Prayer and fasting seem to be the "stars" of Lent, but almsgiving is equally important. *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* equates Almsgiving with Works of Mercy (CCC, 2447). So this year, maybe your Lenten observance could include visiting a nursing home, or running errands for someone who cannot get around as easily as you. Maybe your sacrifice could come in the form of giving someone who is a primary caregiver a day off from being in the home with his or her loved one.

When we think of all the Lord God has sacrificed for us, it is fitting that we sacrifice for others. This time of being the recipient of others' sacrifice has renewed in me the desire to return this offering. I just might be walking on my own by Ash Wednesday. This year I plan to give up being the served and start doing the serving.

Bishop Olson's installation

brings to mind decades of visuals of our bishops

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

I DREAMED LAST NIGHT THERE WAS A NEW BOOK ON OUR COFFEE TABLE.

It was partially covered by stacks of other books, and it could have been anything—a text book, a cookbook, a yearbook?

Partially hidden, the book's title read, simply, *All By My View*.

I have been thinking of events recently—the kind that fill our lives. There are always events shaping us, ornamenting our memories. Like the cookbooks of our lives, “events” are what we put together to make the delicious feast we consume portions of, every single day.

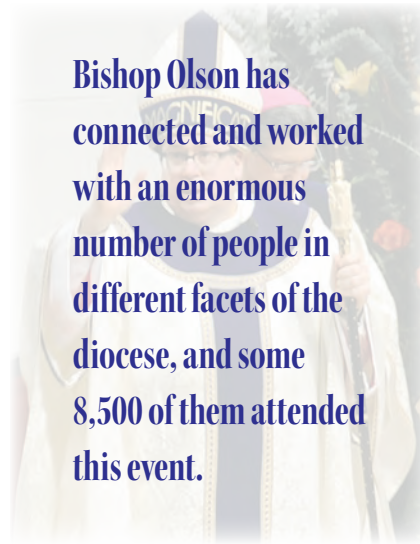
Our diocese provides us with huge events, so I frequently spend time in the Fort Worth Convention Center, photographing or writing about them. Whenever I am there, I remember a years-old image of the second bishop of Fort Worth.

The stop-motion in my mind is Bishop Joseph Delaney, in an upper floor window, gazing down into the convention center at the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The bishop was ill at that time, but stood, holding his crosier, watching his flock. He could see native dance, hear rhythmic drumming and great joy, and his quiet countenance was contented and proud.

In January, our convention center witnessed the ordination of the diocese's fourth bishop, Michael Olson.

Bishop Olson has connected and worked with an enormous number of people in different facets of the diocese, and some 8,500 of them attended this event. There were those he knew during his years of study, friends from all parts of the country, and a massive number of clergymen. The remarks and greetings were stunning. People praised his similarity to Pope Francis; his personal attraction to young people. One couple who knew him from a previous assignment referred to him as a “teddy bear.”

Present were his father, of whom our new bishop seems a digital image, his moth-



Bishop Olson has connected and worked with an enormous number of people in different facets of the diocese, and some 8,500 of them attended this event.

er, proud sisters — who alternated between smiling and dabbing their eyes with tissues — and his extended family.

The most precious members of his family, I believe, may be his “dear, dear seminarians,” the treasures of his years as rector of Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving.

In his post-liturgical remarks, Bishop Olson alternately entertained and touched the hearts of the community assembled to rejoice with him.

The new bishop showed his tender nature, as well as his perfect comedic timing, first thanking Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller of San Antonio, “For your very great kindness in ordaining me today, and for your warm service as our metropolitan archbishop. You reminded me of the words of Pope Francis, that I am to ‘smell like the sheep.’ And thanks to you I do,” he said, referring to his generous anointing with oil. “Particularly after confirmation.”

With reference to the third bishop of Fort Worth, Kevin Vann, Bishop Olson said God had sent him to the diocese “when we were very much in need of a loving pastor and a very good priest.”

He also thanked Msgr. Stephen Berg, “a dear friend and a brother priest,” recently

chosen by Pope Francis to be the fifth bishop of the Diocese of Pueblo, Colorado.

Later, Bishop Olson and his co-consecrators walked the arena amid huge cheers from a community delighted with its new leader. I was especially moved by Bishop Vann, striding with Bishop Olson, raising his own arms in a motion reminiscent of football players gesturing for crowds to, “make noise!”

Indeed, everyone made noise that day. With tears, shouts, and laughter, they showed their love for both the third and fourth bishops of Fort Worth, Texas.

I left the ordination with warm visual images: the diocese's second bishop, and tender shepherd, Joseph Delaney; the third bishop, Kevin Vann, whose energy and spirit led the cheers for his successor; the fourth bishop Michael Olson, whose quick sense of humor connected with all his people; and the fifth bishop — of Pueblo, Colorado — Stephen Berg, who, the previous year had steered the Diocese of Fort Worth with excellence.

Last night I dreamed of a new coffee-table book entitled *All By My View*.

It was only a dream!

But, when I awoke and pondered it, I knew who the author would have been. It wasn't a photographer, seeing events through a viewfinder, as I have for many years.

Instead it would have been authored by the person who made those things happen.

The events we have experienced these past few months — all our lives — happened IN the Lord's view to be sure. But mostly, they happened BY his view. BY his vision.

And by the love of his Sacred Heart.

I praise and thank Him.



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

Lent's 'giving up' can lead to

appreciating the Giver and his gifts anew

By David Mills

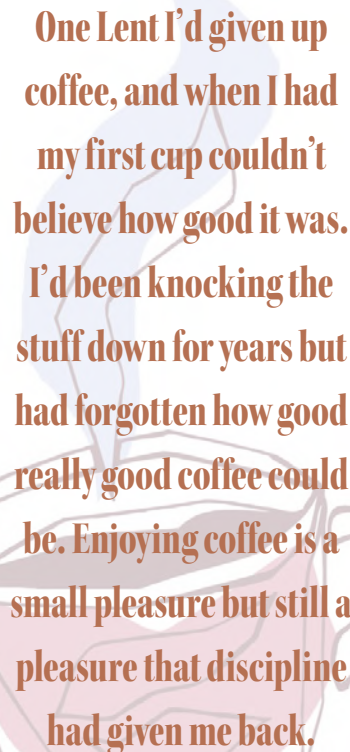
ON HER WAY HOME FROM WORK MY THEN-FIANCÉ WOULD COME BY THE HOUSE I SHARED WITH SEVERAL GUYS. Sometimes she would just say hello and sometimes we'd have dinner together, along with a changing selection of my housemates, their friends, their friends' friends, as well as a dog named Brodie and a cat named (he belonged to someone with an odd sense of humor) Judas.

We lived in the middle of a small city and when she left, I would stand on the porch and watch her car till she crossed the main street a couple of blocks down and turned out of sight. Traffic being heavy on the main street, this sometimes took two or three minutes. I lived on the coast north of Boston, and if it was a winter's day and I'd come out without a coat, as I usually did (who thinks ahead at that age?), I could get really cold really fast. But I would not go in till the car was out of sight.

I did it because . . . I can't explain it rationally. It just seemed the right thing to do. In the middle of a romance, even sober adults commit themselves to small and meaningless rituals of which the loved one may never know. It never occurred to me to tell her and I didn't for years afterward.

When in love, we give our loved one gifts with no real practical use. We give flowers, not plumbers' helpers or motor oil. The man who suddenly wants to give his wife a present, if he's sane, gives her flowers that will wilt in a few days and not a new blender that costs the same amount but will last for years. Rational cost-benefit analysis argues for the blender, normal human instinct for the flowers.

I think this helps explain the traditional Lenten disciplines, especially giving up something we like. A Christian's love for the Lord isn't a romance, of course, but the impulse to give sacrificially and to practical



One Lent I'd given up coffee, and when I had my first cup couldn't believe how good it was. I'd been knocking the stuff down for years but had forgotten how good really good coffee could be. Enjoying coffee is a small pleasure but still a pleasure that discipline had given me back.

thinking pointlessly is the same. It's a gesture love encourages.

This may sound much sappier than I intend. But as we look forward to Ash Wednesday, less than two weeks away, it's something to remember. I've met people who said they used to give something up but didn't any more because they felt they were trying to bribe God, and others who accused me of trying to bribe God.

I'd never thought of trying. Coming to Church from outside, this one discipline just felt right to me. You watch your fiance till she's out of sight, even if you're freezing. You give God your coffee during Lent. Same thing.

You benefit too, of course. As I wrote a few years ago in an article called "Just give it up," giving something up teaches us how much hold the world has on us. We like to think that we'd give up anything for God with a snap of our fingers — anything at all, even our lives — but most of us find it hard to give up something that really doesn't matter. You dream of standing up to the lions in the coliseum, and find yourself ticked off at your children because they ate all the pie.

Giving up something also teaches you how good are all these things, all these gifts of the Lord. Whether you relax the discipline on Sundays or go hardcore and don't relax it till Easter, the things you've given up come to you afresh, almost as if you'd never enjoyed them before.

One Lent I'd given up coffee, and when I had my first cup couldn't believe how good it was. I'd been knocking the stuff down for years but had forgotten how good really good coffee could be. Enjoying coffee is a small pleasure but still a pleasure that discipline had given me back.

We should be doing other things in Lent as well, like praying more, reading more Scripture, and giving to the needy. These things have their costs and their benefits as well. The disciplines together can make Lent a great season, and all of us better people than we were, which by itself is a great thing.

David Mills is a writer living in New York City. His "Just give it up" can be found at <http://www.firstthings.com/web-exclusives/2009/02/just-give-it-up>.

Forgiveness is a discipline

even more than it is an attitude

By Denise Bossert

NEVER UNDERESTIMATE THE HOLY SPIRIT IN REVEALING THOSE THINGS ONE NEEDS TO JETTISON. RECENTLY, THE HOLY SPIRIT SAT ME DOWN AND HAD A COME-TO-JESUS CHAT WITH ME.

I was replaying someone's offense over and over in my mind. Every time I remembered the offense, I would feel the betrayal anew, which led to another act of forgiveness. My memory was hijacking me.

I needed some help from the gifts of the Holy Spirit. A little wisdom. Some understanding. A helping of right judgment.

It would be so much easier to get amnesia. Forgiveness may be an act of the will, but what can a person do with an active memory? How could I stop remembering? Would I ever get out of the spin cycle I had fallen into?

With a little help from the Holy Spirit, I realized that the problem was arrogance and pride — which meant the antidote was meekness and humility.

So, each time I remembered, I would hit my knees.

If I did that the very second in which my memory took me back to the offense, my hurt evaporated and peace took its place. And I mean *in the very second* — like when stepping out of the shower and I'm shivering cold or when snuggled down under the covers for the night. I immediately began to pray, on my knees.

Within a few weeks, I stumbled across this quote by Blessed Teresa of Calcutta: "Forgiving requires love; forgetting requires humility." The Holy Spirit was nodding.

Humility was the key. I knew I loved the offender. I truly did. That's why I was able to forgive again and again — every time the memory took me back. Humility enabled me to let the memory go.

I didn't have to be a spiritual giant to take down the memory monster. I just had

I must be conformed to the image of my Lord Jesus Christ — the One who forgives even the worst sinner — even me. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead transforms us. And the spin cycle of sin loses its hold on our lives.

to appeal to the Holy Spirit.

When we fall into the trap of labeling other people solely in light of their sin, we stop seeing the good in that person. That's what my confessor says, and then he adds, "Who wants to be defined by his or her worst moments?"

I certainly don't. And it is a pretty awful existence to see others and immediately think of just one thing, *that thing*.

Within weeks, I began remembering the good in the one who had hurt me in the past. That's some kind of spiritual miracle. That's the power of God active in the life of a believer. I stopped remembering *the thing*, and I remembered how to love.

This is not a self-improvement program. It's not about working on one's bad habits. Jesus Christ changes us.

We talk about the good news and saint-making, but what does that mean?

Are we really just the same people, doing the same things in all the same ways? Is the only notable difference between us and everybody else a mere label? What does it

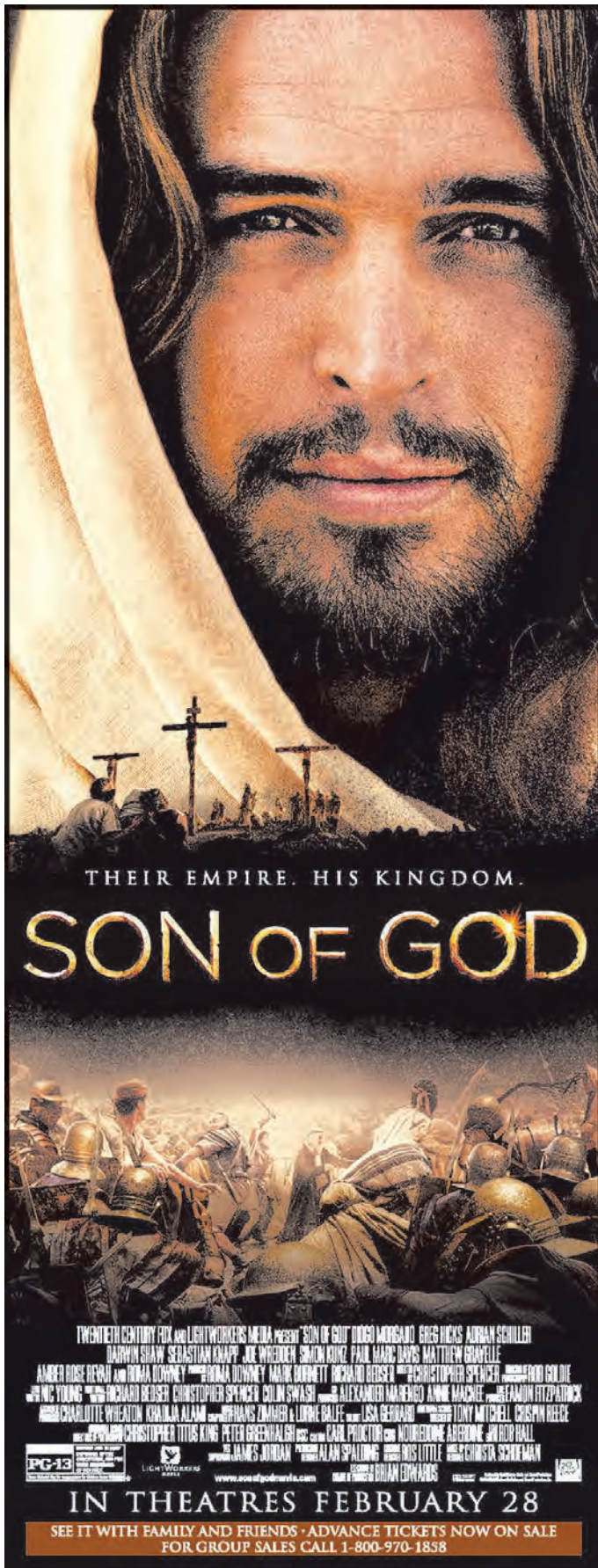
mean to be a follower of Christ? What does it mean to be Catholic?

It means that even the most ingrained habits can change. In fact, the things in us that don't look like Christ *must change!*

I must be conformed to the image of my Lord Jesus Christ — the One who forgives even the worst sinner — even me. The same power that raised Jesus from the dead transforms us. And the spin cycle of sin loses its hold on our lives.

Go ahead. Hit your knees. There is power there. You were meant for far greater things than relentless bitterness. You have been called to the abundant life in Christ. It's kind of amazing that one can discover joy and freedom in the simple act of kneeling before God.

Denise Bossert has four children and is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary in New Melle, Missouri. Her column Catholic by Grace has run in 46 diocesan newspapers. Check out her blog at catholicbygrace.blogspot.com.



CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Need YPO informs and involves



Need YPO members (l to r) Nick Cirbo, Melissa Harris, and Katie Hanners are joined by local businesswoman Barbara Clark-Galupi (far right) at the Need YPO “Lunch and Learn” event, held in October. (Photo courtesy of CCFW)

Nick Cirbo, 31, an investment management professional, is a busy man. He and his wife, Julia, are the parents of a young daughter, and his time is limited. “Like most young professionals, I have many obligations, and I want to feel like my volunteer service is time well spent,” he says. “I was glad to learn about Catholic Charities and to get involved with their work to end poverty.”

Cirbo serves as a founding co-chair of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW)’s Need YPO, the agency’s organization for young professionals. Need YPO has the goal of creating advocates who will work to end poverty in North Texas, says Cirbo. “We created Need around the concept that everyone needs something, and we know that those in poverty need our help,” he notes. “This organization is for the young professionals in Tarrant County who feel the need to get involved and want to make a difference.”

Cirbo explains that the organization offers opportunities for its members to have fun while participating in informative and meaningful events. “One of the unique aspects of the organization is that we don’t fundraise, but we do raise awareness,” he adds. “Need YPO sponsors quarterly lunches, featuring speakers

who share their expertise in areas such as immigration policy, the importance of a living wage, and access to healthcare. It’s a great way to educate young professionals about critical issues.”

In addition to the regular lunches, Need YPO also offers numerous service opportunities, says Katelin Cortney, CCFW director of public relations.

“This innovative way of reaching out to young professionals was the culmination of months of planning,” Cortney explains. “Now that Need has completed its first full year of life, we see so much interest, and so many exciting opportunities for continued growth.”

Cirbo, a parishioner at Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville, says that the time he has invested in Need YPO has helped make him feel at home in Fort Worth after he and his wife moved to Texas in 2011 from Miami.

“I’ve made some great friendships, and learned a lot about issues that are important in this community,” he says. “Catholic Charities is really an excellent organization. They do amazing work each and every day to effectively combat poverty in this community. It’s very fulfilling to be a part of that effort.

For more information, visit www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org or call (817) 534-0814.

SEEKING GOD'S PATH VOCATIONS

We should be asking God, not ourselves, what we're supposed to do with our lives

How many times have you been asked, "What do you want to be when you grow up?" This is a very common question from our days in school. Yet, how often have we been asked, "What does God want you to be when you grow up?" This question changes things considerably.

The first question focuses us on ourselves. We might put together a personal inventory of strengths and weaknesses, likes and dislikes, talents and foibles. From these, we might narrow down career paths and jobs; find a school where we might learn a trade; then go to work.

However, when we ask what God wants us to do, this puts the question in his hands. There is no single type of person that God calls to follow him. We may not feel especially worthy to follow him as a priest, nun, or religious brother or sister, but He is the one who calls. Our task is to be open to his call.

It is also important to remember that all of us have a responsibility in encouraging each other to hear the call of Jesus Christ. Please encourage young people to ask God, "What

do you wish me to do?" If you happen to see a young man who might make a good priest, ask him to consider a vocation to the priesthood. If you see a young woman who might make a good nun, please encourage her to prayerfully consider this vocation.

There are many competing voices in the world. There are some which desire to drown out the voice of Jesus Christ in our lives. Simply asking someone to listen to what Jesus Christ desires for them is a powerful way to make God's voice heard.

We all have a part to play in encouraging vocations. Please be courageous in listening to



Father Jonathan Wallis, STL, was ordained to the priesthood in 2007 and has served as the Vocations Director for the Diocese of Fort Worth since June 2013.

the voice of God and following what He tells you to do. If you have found your vocation, please encourage and assist others to do the same.

The first disciples heard and followed the voice of Jesus Christ. May we both listen for and follow his voice in our lives.



Seminarians from Holy Trinity Seminary, where Bishop Michael Olson has been rector in recent years, played a major role in organizing his ordination. Father Wallis, (with hand to chin) served as master of ceremonies for the event. (Donna Ryckaert / NTC)

Pope Francis: Vocations are calls to build up God's kingdom

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A vocation to the priesthood, consecrated life, or marriage is a call to center one's life on Christ and build up his kingdom, Pope Francis said.

"The more we unite ourselves to Jesus through prayer, sacred Scripture, the Eucharist, the sacraments celebrated and lived in the church and in fraternity, the more there will grow in us the joy of cooperating with God in the service of the kingdom of mercy and truth, of justice and peace," the pope said in his message for the 2014 World Day of Prayer for Vocations.

All Christians are called to adore the Lord and allow the seed of his word to grow in their lives and be transformed into service of others, the pope said in the message for the day, which will be celebrated May 11 at

the Vatican and in many dioceses around the world.

In his message, released at the Vatican Jan. 16, Pope Francis said that while God calls each person individually by name, "no vocation is born of itself or lives for itself."

"A vocation is a fruit that ripens in a well-cultivated field of mutual love that becomes mutual service," the pope said, and that takes place in the context of an authentic Christian community.

"A vocation flows from the heart of God and blossoms in the good soil of faithful people in the experience of fraternal love," he said. "Did not Jesus say: 'By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another?'"

Following Christ, the pope said, means

that sometimes a believer will have to go "against the tide" of the predominant culture, as well as overcome personal doubts and fears.

While some may be tempted to take the easy way out, Pope Francis said, "the true joy of those who are called consists in believing and experiencing that he, the Lord, is faithful and that with him we can walk, be disciples and witnesses of God's love, open our hearts to great ideals, to great things."

When in the Bible Jesus urges his followers to pray that God will send out laborers for the harvest — a passage seen as a key support for praying for vocations — Jesus also tells his disciples that "the harvest is plenty."

"Who did the work to bring about these results?" the pope asked. "There is only one answer: God."

'Thy Will Be Done'

Always trusting the will of God in his life, longtime diocesan priest

Monsignor Stephen Berg will be ordained and installed as bishop of Pueblo, Colorado, Feb. 27

BY KATHY CRIBARI HAMER / CORRESPONDENT

THOSE WHO WITNESSED THE PRIESTLY ORDINATION OF STEPHEN BERG, MAY 15, 1999, MAY RECALL THE TENDER FAMILIAL ATMOSPHERE THAT WAS PRESENT IN THE CHURCH.

The new priest at that time recalled the ceremony as having been “solemn, elegant, and graceful,” yet, for most observers, the liturgy’s warm spirit surpassed the majestic nature that is a signature quality of ordinations.

Notably, an eclectic crowd of ordinary people filled the pews at Fort Worth’s St. Patrick Cathedral; one of them, distinctively garbed in overalls, would later line up to embrace the young priest, and then kneel before him, requesting a blessing.

Rows of three brothers, seven sisters and spouses, dabbed their eyes as they knelt during the liturgy, and a full procession of nieces and nephews brought forward offertory gifts past the altar rails, all the way to the bishop’s chair. They presented them to the celebrant, who, not coincidentally, was their uncle, Bishop Joseph Charron.

“It was sort of heart-stopping,” Father Berg said, afterward.

This year that priest becomes the fifth bishop of Pueblo, Colorado, and the retrospection of his first ordination foresees the sort of person he is and the caring shepherd he promises to be for the Diocese of Pueblo.

Ordaining Bishop-elect Berg Feb. 27 will be Archbishop Samuel Aquila, metropolitan of the Denver Province; principal co-consecrators will be Bishop Michael Sheridan of Colorado Springs, and Msgr. Berg’s uncle — Bishop Joseph Charron, bishop emeritus of Des Moines.

The announcement of Bishop-elect Berg’s appointment came Jan. 15, and “My family was elated,” he said. “I hadn’t been able to tell



Bishop-elect Stephen Berg’s formal portrait. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)

them, of course, until, pretty much the moment of the announcement. All my siblings have been my supporters, going through a lot of things, preparing for the move, finding the letters of support that we shared with each other over the years. They’re very happy.

“We were all surprised,” the bishop-elect said. “I did tell my uncle, Bishop Charron. He’s my spiritual director, so I shared the news with him. He did not seem surprised, and said I would make a good bishop, that I had done a good job for Fort Worth.

“My mom is quietly happy about it. We miss Dad — he died five years ago. Of course Dad is well aware of this, but we’d like for him to be here with us right now. Mom is doing really well. At 89 she is very much connected

to all her children and grandchildren. My 27 nieces and nephews are very happy. I’ve done seven of their weddings — Catholic weddings — and of course, now I’m a bishop!” he grinned.

“My mom’s youngest brother was a bishop and now her oldest child is a bishop,” he added. “She knows not only the joy of the office but also that it can be at times a difficult road. Mom is realistic about it, but she’s quite thrilled.”

Bishop-elect Berg was appointed vicar general for the Diocese of Fort Worth in 2008, moderator of the curia in 2010, and diocesan administrator in 2012, when Bishop Kevin Vann was appointed bishop of the Diocese of Orange, California.

So, last year, “When I was notified Michael Olson would be bishop here, I was so happy about that! I knew Michael, and I knew that he knew our diocese, and I know something about his capacity, his generosity, competence, and leadership on a real level.

“When I was home at Thanksgiving with my mother and my family members, I was really relieved from the previous 12 months,” he explained. “I was elated, and connected.”

It was a few weeks later, on a Monday morning, when Msgr. Berg got “the phone call.”

“The Papal Nuncio said, ‘I have an important communication to share with you from the Holy See. Our Holy Father, Pope Francis, has appointed you Bishop of Pueblo.’”

“Well, I’m still getting my mind around it, thinking, ‘Does he really know who he’s talking to?’ I didn’t know how this connected,” he said. “But I think you have to start, in a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 25



Then Monsignor Berg gives the homily during the closing Mass at the Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference at the Hyatt Regency DFW in this July 14, 2013 photo.

(Juan Guajardo / NTC Archives)

Diocesan faithful will miss Bishop-elect Berg, but rejoice with him in his appointment

By JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONDENT

MARGARITA LUNA GREETED THE NEWS WITH MIXED EMOTIONS. ON JAN. 15, POPE FRANCIS NAMED HER FRIEND, MONSIGNOR STEPHEN BERG, THE NEW BISHOP OF PUEBLO, COLORADO.

"I'm happy for him but sad for me," said Luna, who assisted the newly appointed bishop-elect when he was pastor of St. Mary Church in Henrietta. "I think he will be a wonderful bishop, but our diocese will miss him."

The pastoral associate worked closely with then-Father Berg when he was in charge of four parishes in the Northwest Deanery of the Diocese of Fort Worth from 2002-08: St. Mary in Henrietta; St. Jerome in Bowie; St. William in Montague; and St. Joseph in Nocola. She remembers him as a caring, concerned pastor — qualities that became even more evident when large wildfires raced through the rural North Texas area in January 2006. Forty homes were destroyed in Montague County alone as a 17-mile long fire burned between Ringgold and Nocona.

"He worried about his flock," Luna said, recalling how every Mass announcement after the tragedy asked if any family was in need. "The area was affected badly, and the community came together to help. He was there physically, spiritually, and emotionally for the people."

Bishop-elect Berg, 62, who has served as diocesan administrator since December 2012, is the second priest from the Diocese of Fort

Worth to be appointed a bishop — both in the last two months and in the diocese's 45-year history. On Nov. 19, Monsignor Michael Olson was named the fourth bishop of Fort Worth — he was ordained Jan. 29.

With unusual speed, Bishop-elect Berg's ordination will take place Feb. 27 with Denver Archbishop Samuel J. Aquila serving as consecrating bishop. He succeeds Bishop Fernando Isern, a Cuban exile who grew up in Miami and was granted early retirement last June because of health reasons. Covering the southern and western parts of Colorado (nearly half of the state), the Diocese of Pueblo is geographically huge, covering 48,100 square miles but sparsely populated. Parishes are separated by distance, with some quite isolated. Approximately 63,714 Catholics live in the area and comprise about 10 percent the population.

During a Jan. 15 press conference introducing him to the Diocese of Pueblo, Bishop-elect Berg told the faithful in his new diocese, "You will have all I can give."

Growing up in the "wide open spaces" of Miles City, Montana, his six years as a rural pastor in North Texas, and time spent at the University of Colorado in Boulder while earning a bachelor's degree in music, are factors that bring together the best times of his life and "all fit together," he said.

"When Pope Francis appointed me Bishop of Pueblo, I knew my life had changed. In one sense, the consolation was the word Pueblo,"

Bishop-elect Berg said, referring to the area's geography. "I don't know why this happened. I can only put it in the hands of God."

The soon-to-be-ordained bishop is looking forward to traveling and learning about his new diocese.

"I will learn and ... listen," he promised. "I ask you to be patient with me, to pray for me, and to laugh with me."

The priesthood is a joyful ministry, and Pueblo is beautiful country with beautiful people, Bishop-elect Berg continued, adding "for some reason, mysteriously, God has prepared me for you and you for me."

Ordained for the Diocese of Fort Worth on May 15, 1999 by his maternal uncle Des Moines Bishop Emeritus Joseph L. Charron, Bishop-elect Berg served in several parishes, including St. Michael in Bedford (1999-2001), St. John the Apostle (2001-2002), and St. Peter the Apostle (2008-2010).

Contacted by the *North Texas Catholic*, Bishop Charron said he is confident his nephew will shepherd his people with love.

"He is by nature a people person and a humble person," he said. "After 25 years of episcopacy, I know what this awesome office demands of a person. I pray he will receive the strength and courage he will need throughout the years."

Retired since 2007, the prelate will serve as one of his nephew's principal co-consecrators in Pueblo.

"Today uncle-Bishop Charron is so proud of his nephew," he gushed. "This is a proud day for our family and a gifted day for the Diocese of Pueblo!"

Byanka Peffers, business manager at St. John the Apostle, was the bookkeeper when Bishop-elect Berg served as the parish's parochial vicar. She remembers the pastor, the late



Donna Ryckaert / NTC Archives

Then Monsignor Berg poses with Diaz and Laura Murray at an Oct. 26 reception following their investiture into the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem.

Monsignor Charles King, relying on the assistant pastor's past work history in horticulture to help with the rectory's rose garden.

"I think it's wonderful he was named bishop, but I'm sorry he's leaving us," she said. "He is a very kind and humble person who was inspirational to me. I liked the way he treated people."

Parishioners were told of the appointment during morning Mass.

"I was surprised — but not that he didn't deserve it," Peffers clarified. "I just thought once our bishop was named, this diocese was off the radar for a while. We've had two priests become bishops now. We must be doing something right."

In 2008, former Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann appointed then-Father Berg diocesan vicar general, and in 2010, he expanded the priest's duties to include diocesan moderator of the curia. At the recommendation of Bishop Vann, Pope Benedict XVI named him a Prelate of Honor, granting Fr. Berg the title of "monsignor" in March 2012. When Bishop Vann was named Bishop of the Diocese of Orange, California, the 10-member Diocesan College of Consultors selected Msgr. Berg as diocesan administrator, a position he held until Bishop Olson was ordained Jan. 29.

"I personally am happy for Msgr. Berg and the Diocese of Pueblo. His ministry as pastor, vicar general, and administrator of the Diocese of Fort Worth during the time of *sede vacante* (absence of a bishop in the diocese) has prepared him for his new assignment," Bishop Olson said. "At heart, Bishop-elect Berg is a good priest, a kind man, a true Christian, and a wise leader."

Still groggy with sleep, Sylvia Mendez looked down at her phone at 5 a.m. and saw a surprising post from a Vatican blogger. The St. Peter the Apostle business manager started following his Twitter messages when the diocese was waiting for a new bishop.

"It said that Fr. Steve Berg was appointed bishop in Colorado, but I wasn't sure that was true," she said. "The name wasn't spelled right."

Thirty minutes later, the information was confirmed, and Mendez recited her morning Rosary for him.

"I think it's a loss for the diocese but God is placing him in a spot that's perfect for him," says the business manager, who was a member of Msgr. Berg's formation team at St. Peter's when he was a seminarian working at the parish. "I know this is a big change, but when God calls, we must do his will."

'Thy Will Be Done'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 23

certain sense, to accept it — and of course I did accept it."

The new bishop-elect said he felt immediately at peace.

"It was, 'God is behind this, and of course, Pope Francis, somehow, picked me out. This is the Holy Spirit.' One has to learn a different methodology, in a certain sense, but one has to remain who he is, and just allow the Spirit to grow, inside. So that's been the process of my reaction."

Another immediate reaction he had when the nuncio called him was that, somehow, he was going into a place that fit — he had lived in Colorado before, as an undergraduate student at the University of Colorado, and he has experience in rural ministry which helped prepare him for leading a rural diocese.

From 2002 to 2008, then Father Berg was pastor of four rural North Texas parishes: St. Mary in Henrietta, St. Jerome in Bowie, St. William in Montague, and St. Joseph in Nocona. After the announcement of his appointment, he revisited all those parishes, to say goodbye. "It was very meaningful for me to see them again," he said, "because that was one of the happiest times in my life. I did respond to and learn from rural ministry. So that part of all of this seems to fit."

Bishop-elect Berg said that the hardest part about accepting the new assignment is leaving the people of Texas.

"I did choose to live here, 30 years ago, and I came back to be a priest here, because of the people," he said. "There is something unique about Texans."



Juan Guajardo / NTC Archives

In this photo from the 2013 DCYC, Msgr. Berg chats with teens from St. William Parish in Montague where he had earlier served as pastor.



Donna Ryckaert / NTC Archives

Msgr. Berg blesses the Catholic Charities Fort Worth Arlington campus at a dedication of the agency's new satellite Feb. 4, 2013.

But, he does love the flavor of Southern Colorado, says the bishop-elect.

"I love the extra altitude," the new bishop-to-be said. "You can see the stars at night. I think it's a beautiful land with beautiful people."

Regarding the appointments of bishops for both Fort Worth and Pueblo, Bishop-elect Berg said, "We've got somebody here in Fort Worth, Michael Olson, who knows the diocese, and is an exceptionally fine man. He has the energy you need to run a diocese this size.

"In the same way that Fort Worth fits him, I think, and pray, that Pueblo fits me. Fort Worth got a wonderful bishop — the best one that was available — and I got a great place too."

With humility, Bishop-elect Berg said, "People are very kind in the complimentary things they are saying about me right now, and I really appreciate that. I listen, and I know I have to hear it — it's part of the transformation that God has in store for me, and there's some growth, you know.

"I think the only thing I can say is, I accept this, but it's not something I've accomplished. It was the Holy Spirit — that's the only way it makes sense."

For his episcopal motto, Bishop-elect Berg picked "Thy Will Be Done," from Mary's response to God in the Gospel of Luke, and from the Lord's Prayer.

"I think on a very basic level that motto says for me what I hope for my episcopacy, and for my people in the Diocese of Pueblo," Bishop-elect Berg concluded.

March 2, Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 49:14-15
Psalm 62:2-3, 6-9
- 2) 1 Corinthians 4:1-5
(Gospel) Matthew 6:24-34

By Sharon K. Perkins

It's been awhile since I've had a newborn at home, but there is one thing I remember about infants: When they're wet, they cry. When they're hungry, they cry. When they're sleepy, they cry. They don't wonder about how those needs will be met, because their parents' quick responses assure them that they are cared for.

Not so as we get older. Our entire process of maturation is directed toward becoming less dependent upon our parents and gradually becoming self-sufficient. While this is ostensibly a good thing, we also can become fixated on fulfilling our trivial



“So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’”
— Matthew 6:31

needs and wants.

I was reminded of this recently when I visited one of the world's most revered Christian places, the Church of the Agony in Jerusalem, site of Jesus' anguished prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane.

Even as I prayed before the ancient stone where his sweat had fallen as drops of blood, my restless mind started wandering: “Did I pack the umbrella in case of rain? Wonder what the hotel is preparing for dinner this evening? Where will I find an electric outlet to charge my cellphone?”

The irony of this self-centered train of thought in such sublime surroundings was not lost on me.

I was ready to react in my usual way, berating myself for getting distracted during prayer. But then Isaiah's words countered: “Can a mother forget her infant, be without tenderness for the child of her womb?”

I thought, would I rebuke my newborn for crying when she is hungry? Would I take personal offense at my sleepy toddler's “selfishness”?

The Lord knows “the mo-

tives of my heart” as well as my tendency to be easily distracted. He's probably less offended by my human weakness than he is concerned about the toll that excessive worry takes on my spirit and my capacity to seek first his kingship and righteousness.

Worry and anxiety are not sinful in themselves. More harmful is our tendency to indulge them or, at the other extreme, to condemn ourselves for being human.

St. Paul reminds me not to make any judgment “before the appointed time,” and that even then it's the Lord's place to judge — not mine. Till then, I'll gently poke fun at my distracted self and pick up that Hail Mary where I left off.

QUESTIONS:

Do you find yourself easily distracted by worry about trivial things? How can you put your needs in proper perspective and depend upon the Lord's loving care?

March 9, First Sunday of Lent.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7
Psalm: 51:3-6, 12-13, 17
- 2) Romans 5: 12-19
(Gospel) Matthew 4:1-11

By Jeff Hensley

My daughter, at a very young age, began to ask questions about how people could fool themselves into believing that abortion was OK. The inverse ratio between people's acceptance of abortion and the number of years of their education was a puzzling part of this questioning.

Adam and Eve were just bright enough to allow themselves to question what God had commanded — just smart enough to talk themselves into disobedience, and so sin was introduced into the world.

So it is with many who receive just enough education to allow



“For just as through the disobedience of the one man the many were made sinners, so, through the obedience of one, the many will be made righteous.”
— Romans 5:19

themselves to question the evidence of their senses and deny that an unborn child is indeed a living, separate being. Those with less education are often less susceptible to verbal arguments that a child in the womb is less than a child.

The Genesis reading makes clear what God offered the first man and his mate: “Out of the ground the Lord God made various trees grow that were delightful to look at and good for food.” They had everything they needed, but that wasn't enough.

The serpent convinced them that God was keeping from them the ability to be like him. Encouraging them to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he said, “No, God knows well that the moment you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like gods.”

And all of us have fallen prey

to the evil that began with that act.

Many have repented from following their own ways and have sought God's mercy for their rebellion. The psalmist says, “Have mercy on me, O God in your goodness; in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.”

I'm reminded of Bernard Nathanson, the abortion doctor who presided over so many deaths but came to repentance and belief in the One who came to bring relief from the burden of sin and guilt.

Only the blood of the One who redeems us could take away a guilt so great. Only the God who offered a way out of the sin and death that come from going our own way could redeem the infamous abortionist — and each of us.

QUESTIONS:

Do you sometimes ponder the ways people deceive themselves into acting against God's will? How can we make God's mercy more apparent and more available to others?

March 16, Second Sunday of Lent.

Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) Genesis 12:1-4a
Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
- 2) 2 Timothy 1:8b-10
Gospel) Matthew 17:1-9

By Jean Denton

My husband tells a story about his first job as a teenager when the construction crew boss told him, “I can give you a job, but I can’t keep it for you.”

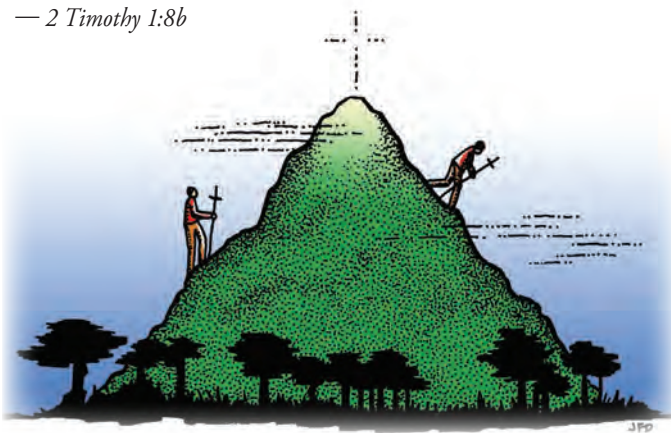
Of course, the unspoken message was, “That depends on your doing it well.”

I think of the brief transfiguration of Jesus in this weekend’s Gospel as being similar: It’s as though God is telling the disciples, “I can show you the divine Jesus, but I can’t keep him for you.” (That’s up to you.)

Succeeding at a job is one of many goals we may set for ourselves as important steps in our life journey. We usually come to understand that a fruitful journey

“Bear your share of hardship for the gospel with the strength that comes from God.”

— 2 Timothy 1:8b



itself is our main goal.

But for followers of Jesus there’s more.

My friend’s daughter, Kristie, landed her “dream job” shortly after graduate school. It wasn’t quick or easy, though. She earned it by first working at low-paying, part-time jobs in order to volunteer at the international nonprofit organization where she ultimately got the hoped-for professional position.

Kristie is a faithful young woman who is guided by Jesus in daily prayer. Because she felt called to the work of improving the health of poor people, she was willing to do it even without pay.

On achieving her dream job, she began pursuing efforts to serve

more effectively. Now, after a few years in that administrative position, Kristie feels called to work with the poor on a closer personal level. So she’s job hunting again.

As it was with the disciples, so it is with Kristie, and so it must be with us. Continuously on our journey, we go up the mountain with Jesus and we go down the mountain with Jesus.

The operative term is “with Jesus.”

We begin a career, then struggle to do it in Jesus’ way of compassion and goodness. We marry the love of our life, then work through the joys and trials of family. We retire, then search for new ways to serve others.

At mountaintop places along the way, the Father reveals, momentarily, the exhilarating reality of Jesus and reminds us we can keep him on a greater journey forever.

QUESTIONS:

What have been some mountaintop moments that encouraged you to continue following Jesus? What happened when you went back “down the mountain” with him?

March 23, Third Sunday of Lent.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Exodus 17:3-7
Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9
- 2) Romans 5:1-2, 5-8
Gospel) John 4:5-42

By Jeff Hedglen

For more than 20 years I taught a confirmation class of high schoolers. Every year we would begin with a conversation about truth, belief, and faith. We would explore how these concepts were alike and different.

Along the course of the conversation I would ask the group if Africa existed. They, of course, would reply that it did. I would then ask how they knew this to be true and their responses would range from “I saw it on TV” to “it is on the map.”

To these responses I would

“We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world.”

— John 4:42



say, “How do you know what you saw on the TV is not special effects?” or, “How do you know the maps are real?”

This conversation about believing the truth of something unseen was always a great way to begin discussing the unseen God

who loves and cares for us.

Many of the youth came into these classes having never thought deeply about God and their Catholic faith. On some level, they believed and they came from families that believed, at least enough to sign them up for this sacrament.

Through weeks of teachings on faith and Catholic theology, a spiritual retreat and a lot of small group discussion, these teens found themselves in the same situation as the Samaritan townspeople in this week’s Gospel.

The people in this Samaritan town had heard a marvelous tale from one of their women about

a man named Jesus who claimed to give living water. The story she told gave them a small spark of faith, but after they encountered Jesus for themselves, things changed and they exclaimed: “We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world.”

This is the typical way that people come to faith. We hear about Jesus from family, friends or in some other way, and we begin our life of faith based on their words. But somewhere along the way, we meet the living Jesus and a new disciple is born.

Jesus continues to offer living water to those who believe and those whose thirst is yet to be quenched.

QUESTIONS:

Who are some of the people who have told you about Jesus? When was it that you began to believe because you had an encounter with Jesus?

April 6, Fifth Sunday of Lent.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalm 130:1-8
- 2) Romans 8:8-11
Gospel) John 11:1-45

By Sharon K. Perkins

I have a large family and I've also been on several parish staffs, so I've attended more than my share of funerals. Most of the families of the deceased espoused a belief in an afterlife, which gave them a great deal of comfort in their loss.

If you talk to an atheist about the death of a loved one, he likely would write off religious belief in an afterlife as an emotional crutch to alleviate one's grief. Or she might claim that the dead person lives on in the descendants' genetic material and in the energy of the deceased's subatomic particles transferred to some other form of existence.

If I thought faith in God were only an "insurance policy"

"Whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die."
— John 11:25-26



against my eternal mortality — or if I believed in a God who didn't care about my losses or share my grief — I might take the same approach.

But as a believer and follower of Jesus, I can't go there.

In the Gospel, Jesus weeps

at the loss of his friend Lazarus. Martha takes comfort in the belief that her brother will rise "on the last day." However, Jesus counters that there is even more to it than that, saying that those who believe in him will never die, and even if they die, they will live. Martha "gets it." She professes that

Jesus is "the Christ, the Son of God."

But how does one make sense

of Jesus' cryptic statement? And why doesn't everyone "get it"?

From my view, it boils down to the way one defines "life." One can be physically alive and still live as though dead; one can be dying and yet never more fully alive.

If our lives are merely a biological state that begins and ends with the transfer of genetic material, I'm not content with that. I want more. Not because I fear my own mortality, but because I want to live fully in the here and now. Both Ezekiel and Paul affirm that it is the promised Spirit of God, alive in us, that makes this possible.

This is what Jesus, the Christ, has promised to give. This is what faith convinces me has been already accomplished in Him. And this is the abundant life that I choose. May the mourners who attend my funeral rejoice!

QUESTIONS:

What gives you comfort when you experience the death of a loved one? What would the fullness of abundant life look like in your situation?

April 13, Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion.

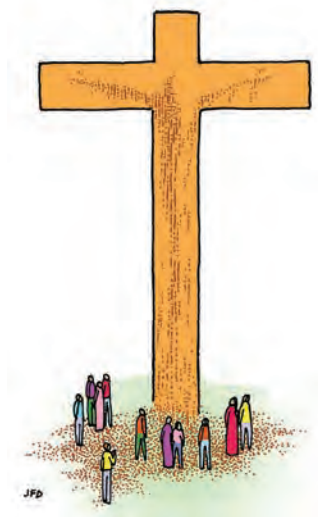
Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Matthew 21:1-11
Psalm: 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24
- 2) Philippians 2: 6-11
Gospel: Matthew 26:14 to 27:66

By Jeff Hensley

I have been daunted by the task of writing about this week's readings. Jesus' Passion moves me deeply and convinces me just as deeply that nothing I write can add to the impact of the words of the Scriptures here.

But perhaps that is just what qualifies any of us to speak sorrowfully and with awe of how Jesus, offered Himself for us. After asking the Father if there was any way this sacrifice might not be necessary to accomplish the Father's goal of redeeming humanity, Jesus accepts the answer and



squarely faces his accusers.

And we are left to identify with his sleepy followers who could not remain awake as Jesus prayed, sweating blood, there in the olive grove.

We are left to identify with Peter who promised much and delivered little, denying Jesus three times before the rooster crowed

"We no longer believe because of your word; for we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this is truly the savior of the world."
— John 4:42

out the dawn of that long night of agony as Jesus faced his accusers.

And therein lies our hope and our redemption. Just as Jesus did what He did, willingly, for these weak followers, we need not abandon hope in what we may ultimately do in service to God and others, simply because our feet have slipped on the path; or we have fallen; or have fallen repeatedly.

As Paul speaks of Jesus in the Philippians passage here, saying of Jesus, "Who, though he was in

the form of God, did not regard equality with God something to be grasped.

"Rather, he emptied himself, taking the form of a slave, coming in human likeness; and found human in appearance, he humbled himself, becoming obedient to death, even death on a cross.

"Because of this, God greatly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend, of those in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

And so we ultimately only fail if we fix our eyes on our own shortcomings instead of on the One who gave his all for us.

QUESTIONS:

Who are some of the people who have told you about Jesus? When was it that you began to believe because you had an encounter with Jesus?

April 20, The Resurrection of the Lord.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Acts 10:34a, 37-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23
- 2) Colossians 3:1-4
Gospel) John 20:1-9

By Jean Denton

When my friend Nita's husband died unexpectedly a year ago, she felt what Mary of Magdala must've felt when she first entered Jesus' empty tomb.

"I realized that everything I had believed in in this world was no longer going to work for me," Nita recalled.

Nita and I met recently during a spiritual retreat. On the first morning, the two of us had a chance to talk about why we were seeking renewal.

Nita's story was intense and, in fact, still freshly unfolding as we spoke. It had been only months since she'd lost her husband — who also was her soul mate and business partner — of more than 30 years.

"Think of what is above, not of what is on earth. ... When Christ your life appears, then you too will appear with him in glory."

— Colossians 3:2, 4



Nita had grown up in a Catholic family that hardly practiced the faith beyond the children's baptism and first Communion. Indeed, many family members had been vocally critical of the Church, so it was easy for her to fall away.

Now, with her world suddenly shaken apart, Nita began grasping for some meaning in her life. I could hardly believe her urgency, obviously searching desperately for a defined path.

After a few months of "dating churches," she decided to go to the Catholic church nearby. She'd been away for 40 years, so it was with trepidation that she went into Mass.

But she fell in love right away.

Our retreat took place only a few weeks after that experience.

When we first talked together she said she wasn't ready to go so far as to receive the Eucharist. But the next evening at Mass as I went forward to receive the body of Christ, Nita was right in front of me.

In the Easter Gospel, Mary searches desperately for Jesus in the tomb. "They have taken the Lord from the tomb, and we don't know where they put him," she cries.

But how swiftly Jesus comes to those who leave the tomb to seek him with such desire.

Like Mary, Nita was scarcely past her grief when she experienced the elation of her new life with Christ.

Soon afterward, Nita came and sat beside me at Mass. I felt the "electricity" as the physical nearness of her excitement enlivened my own experience of the Eucharist.

Joy in the risen Christ is real. It's palpable.

QUESTIONS:

When have you most intensely sought — and found — new life with Jesus? How have you shared the joy with others?

April 27, Second Sunday of Easter.

Sunday of Divine Mercy.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Acts 2:42-47
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
- 2) 1 Peter 1:3-9
Gospel) John 20:19-31

By Jeff Hedglen

The room is awash in candlelight. Jesus is exposed in the splendor of eucharistic form. Songs of praise come and go with silence in between. The sacrament of reconciliation is occurring in a side room with a steady stream of college-age penitents. It is a holy night, a blessed night, a night filled with the sweet mercy of God.

In the silent, darkened room I am beckoned by one of the young men on retreat. When I get over to him I lean down and he whis-

"And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.'"

— John 20:22-23



pers to me, with tears in his eyes, "I'm free." He gestures with his hands like a huge weight has been lifted and repeats, "I'm free!" We hug and cry and then turn back to Jesus with feelings too deep for words.

Praise God that this is not a rare occurrence in the life of the Church, yet there are still far too

many who have yet to encounter Jesus in such a profound way. Scripture reminds us we have a God who is rich in mercy — so rich that the offering of his son for the expiation of our sins, though costly, did not deplete his wealth.

This week's Gospel is a paramount example of this mercy.

First, Jesus appears to the apostles after his resurrection, gives them a gift of peace, then gives them the Holy Spirit and the power to forgive sins. Later, when the previously absent Thomas

doubts that this happened, Jesus shows him mercy and gives him the proof he seeks. Finally, in one of my favorite moments in the Gospels, Jesus — in a sense praying for us — says, "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed."

My former pastor, Father Richard Beaumont, once noted he often heard people say, "God is not fair." His response: "You are right. If God was fair I would be dead; instead, he is merciful!"

We encounter God's mercy in many ways, but none more profound than in the forgiveness of sin, whose wages are death.

On this Divine Mercy Sunday let us join in the ancient Eastern Christian prayer: "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner."

QUESTIONS:

How have you encountered the mercy of God? How would you explain the mercy of God to a friend?

Lent is a journey we share

Back from a recent Holy Land pilgrimage Sharon Perkins experienced unexpected insights, moments of grace



By Sharon K. Perkins

In the summer of 2013, I learned that I would be traveling to Israel in January 2014 — a major item on my “bucket list” and a lifetime dream come true. Needless to say, I was excited. Besides the anticipation of experiencing a new place and new cultures, I knew that I could expect some spiritual and emotional changes. After all, this was no ordinary place and no ordinary travel — it was a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

I would be in good company since 10 fellow parishioners would be on the same trip, and since recorded history mentions 16 centuries of Christian pilgrimages to the same destination.

As the ensuing months flew by, I was too busy to do much more than reserve my domestic flights, renew my passport and hurriedly scan the e-mailed itinerary. In the immediate weeks before departure, I also made hurried Christmas preparations for family holiday gatherings, suffered through a debilitating case of the flu, and was stunned by my normally healthy son’s emergency hospitalization on New Year’s Eve for acute appendicitis. I boarded the plane a week later, exhausted and relieved to have made my flight in one piece with luggage intact.

Maybe that’s why my brain didn’t fully register for several days what I had anticipated for years — that I was actually in the place where Jesus had taught and

performed miracles. My first experience of the Holy Land consisted of an airport in modern Tel Aviv. My first two days of pilgrimage were swallowed up by jet lag, luggage transfers, and tour bus etiquette. I clearly remember thinking that Israel outside the bus window looked an awful lot like the Texas Hill Country from whence I came.

Spiritual writers and pilgrims had described this pilgrimage as a “living encounter with Jesus.” Three days in, I certainly wasn’t feeling it. In fact, I found myself resentful of the relentless pace of trying to cram as many sites as possible into each day (no one had told me about this part of organized touring!). Daily Mass was wonderful, but there was little time for the private reflection that I so desperately needed to get my spiritual bearings. When would my “living encounter” begin?

Gradually, as I entered into the daily rhythm of tour life and we arrived at the

Sea of Galilee, the longed-for encounter began to take shape. One powerful “Jesus moment” occurred at Capernaum, a town where Jesus had spent a great deal of his time — teaching in the synagogue, healing the paralytic and Peter’s mother-in-law, and calling several of his disciples. During morning Mass in the church built over the ruins of Simon Peter’s house, I was intently praying for the healing of several dear friends. The consecration of the bread and wine on the altar drew my attention, and in the depths of my soul I clearly “heard” Jesus say to me, “The One who healed and taught in this place 2,000 years ago — that’s ME on the altar! I’m the same person!”

My head said, “Duh — I’ve studied theology; of course I know that.” But in my heart I was blown away, as if I had never heard that truth before. The immediacy of Jesus’ presence in that place was as if 2,000 years had vanished. The experience was fleeting but incredibly real — I had not simply imagined it.

What happened in Capernaum that day set the tone for the rest of the pilgrimage. The pace was still too rushed for much reflection or journaling, but I initiated a pre-dinner ritual with my friends in the hotel bar each evening, sharing our “Jesus moments” of the day over a glass of Galilean red wine. He had been present to all of us at different sites and in different ways, some subtle and others more dramatic, but all compelling. Our eventual arrival in Jerusalem and the first view of the Holy City from across the Kidron Valley was filled with excitement.



Sharon carries the cross along a portion of the Via Dolorosa in January, sharing the burden with two pilgrims from her church in Lakeway, near Austin (Photo courtesy, Ray Bearden)

Then came the day we would divide into groups to walk the famed “Via Dolorosa,” or “Way of Suffering,” inside the Old Jerusalem city walls. While the route itself has had many iterations and the number of and location of the stations has varied in both the city and in Christian imagination, it has been a popular pilgrimage site since the Byzantine period. As we trudged up the steep hill to the ancient Lion’s Gate, questions and expectations filled my mind. Would I encounter Jesus again as I had at Capernaum?

Inside a monastery courtyard, each group was given a simple wooden cross about eight feet long and four feet across, made of two-by-fours, and we began the

walk from station to station, the prayers and meditations of our chaplain barely audible over our wireless headsets for the large number of pilgrims chanting responses out of sync. It wasn’t the quiet, reflective, transcendent experience I had imagined; in fact, it was noisy, crowded, and somewhat confusing. All around us the daily activities of the city’s residents continued as if this cross-carrying group of tourists was nothing unusual (indeed, for them it was not). Fellow pilgrims took turns carrying the cross in groups of three or four, and by the eighth station, I had not yet had my turn. Then, suddenly, I was given the middle portion of the cross to carry, and I placed it on my shoulder. For a while my thoughts

wandered: “This cross is lighter than I imagined it would be.” “What’s for sale in that shop just ahead?” “I’d better watch my step on these cobblestones — I don’t want to sprain an ankle!” And underneath it all, a desperate realization that I just wasn’t “feeling it.”

Curious and a bit bored, I looked up to see who was carrying the cross with me — startled to find two friends who just the night before had consoled and counseled me (in the hotel bar, that other place of “holy encounter”) about a weighty burden that I’ve struggled with for a long time. And then the words of Jesus came, again deep in my spirit: “You thought that you were simply here to carry my cross — but I’m also here to help you carry yours. Let me help you.” Overcome with emotion and a sudden, extraordinary realization of Jesus’ love for me personally, I wept openly all the way to our destination, the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

In the weeks since the pilgrimage, many graces have become apparent. I simply can’t read the Gospels in the same way as before; the sites, the terrain and the people spring too readily to my imagination. I cherish my relationship with Jesus’ mother Mary more closely and personally than ever, having climbed the same Judean hills that she did. I’m more ready to share my burdens with others and to help them to bear their crosses, for even when I feel helpless to change their situation, I am walking by their side in the Body of Christ. Jesus’ presence in the Eucharist continues to become ever more “real” to me as it moves from the theoretical to the experiential. But I’m most eager for Holy Week and Good Friday, blessed with the sure knowledge that when Jesus carried his Cross to Calvary, he had me on his mind and in his heart.

Sharon Perkins grew up on a working farm south of Dallas with her parents and three siblings. She and her husband Mike have been married more than 34 years and are the parents of four adult children. She is the director of adult catechesis at Emmaus Catholic Church in Lakeway, near Austin. She was the director of the first diocesan synod in the our diocese. She is a regular writer for “Word to Life” which originates in the NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC and is offered by Catholic News Service to English language Catholic media around the world.

Lent is a journey we share

Pope Francis invites us to have our Lenten sacrifices make a difference in the lives of the poor

By Jeff Hedglen

A war wages daily, on one side of the battle is the materialistic world that lures, romances and entices our baser, self-focused instincts for pleasure, comfort, luxury and wealth. On the other side is the call to discipleship to Jesus Christ which, in contrast, invites us to seek a simpler life ruled by love of God and neighbor, requires self-sacrifice for the common good, and calls forth desires for peace, justice, worship, and communion with others.

I don't know about you, but the battle rages strong in my soul. I want so much to be a disciple and live for Jesus, but the trappings of the world and the incessant secular marketing machine tugs at me, and, more often than I want to admit, I fall for the lies of the world instead of the love of the Lord.

Praise be to God, the Church gives us a "reset button," an opportunity to refocus our lives on the person of Jesus. Our yearly Lenten journey is that chance. Ash Wednesday ushers in a season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving all aimed at helping us center our lives on Jesus, taking the focus off of ourselves, and offering sacrifices.

Pope Francis' first Lenten message gives some great food for thought and an impetus for action. The basis for his message is the Scripture, "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). He sees this as an invitation to a life of "evangelical poverty."

Pope Francis goes on to explain that God did not reveal himself through worldly power and wealth but rather "in weakness and poverty." The God who is rich in eternity emptied himself to become a mortal being to show his love. This is a special kind of poverty. It is a poverty of place. God knows that in his divinity he is the highest form of being, yet he sends his divine Son to grab hold of a lower rung on the level

of being. In doing so, he at the same time, impoverished himself and lifted us up to connect with divinity in a new way. Or as St. Paul says it: "by his poverty you might become rich".

The Pope reflects on this in saying "God did not let our salvation drop down from heaven, like someone who gives alms from their abundance out of a sense of altruism and piety." He goes on to say that Christ's love is different because He became one with the ones He came to save.

This is the model for us to follow. We are not going to conquer poverty with our wealth. Rather Francis says, "God's wealth passes not through our wealth, but invariably and exclusively through our personal and communal poverty, enlivened by the Spirit of Christ." So it is when we answer the call to embrace the poverty of Jesus that we open the door to God's power working through us.

But, true to form, Pope Francis takes it beyond the theological theory and puts hands and feet to the challenge: "In imitation of our Master, we Christians are called to confront the poverty of our brothers and sisters, to touch it, to make it our own and to take practical steps to alleviate it." It is not enough to merely meditate on Christ emptying himself into humanity fully, unto his death on the cross. Yes we should meditate on these great mysteries, but our meditations must carry us off our knees in prayer and onto our knees in service.

St. Francis is often quoted as having said: "Preach the Gospel at all times and when necessary use words." While this is a great sentiment about living the Gospel with our lives, our pope, who has taken this Francis' name takes this idea a step further when he says in his Lenten message: "Wherever we go, we are called as Christians to proclaim the liberating news that forgiveness for sins we have committed is possible, that God is greater than our sinfulness, that he freely loves us at all times, and that we were made for communion and eternal life."

Many a Catholic (including myself) has taken refuge in St. Francis' words saying that we only have to speak when neces-

sary, for in some ways it is easier to serve a stranger than to talk about Jesus with our friends.

Francis' Lenten message pushes the envelope of what it means to observe Lent. He says: "Lent is a fitting time for self-denial; we would do well to ask ourselves what we can give up in order to help and enrich others by our own poverty. Let us not forget that real poverty hurts: no self-denial is real without this dimension of penance. I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt."

What a challenge! First we are called to self-denial. This is nothing new. We usually give something up for lent. But, again, true to form, we are thrust beyond our normal offering. What we sacrifice in some way should "enrich others." To do this we have to go beyond giving up sweets or not eating meat on Friday and instead going to Red Lobster. Francis is calling us to take it up a few notches.

That last line "I distrust a charity that costs nothing and does not hurt" is a tough one to hear, but there is a raw truth to it that inspires me to go beyond my typical effort. Pope Francis has chosen Lent as the time to push us out of the comfortable nest we live in and force us to fly on our own into the world to make a difference, share the love of God, and proclaim the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus.

We Catholics are historically shy about speaking and acting with others about our faith and this is a shame, for there is such good news in Jesus and such bad news in the world. If we are to gain any ground in this battle that is waged in our world, on our streets, our television screens, and in our hearts we have to take Pope Francis' Lenten message to heart and give until it helps someone in need.

Jeff Hedglen is Campus Minister at UTA and associate director of Young Adult Ministry for the diocese. He is a regular contributor to Word To Life, which originates with the NTC and is offered by Catholic News Service. WTL appears in the newspapers of the archdioceses of New York and New Orleans, among many others.

Ir a Misa debe ser evento que cambie vidas, dice el Papa

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Ir a Misa y recibir la Eucaristía debe hacer una diferencia en la vida de los católicos, dijo el Papa Francisco el 12 de febrero; deben aceptar más de los demás y estar más conscientes de su pecaminosidad.

¿Vas a Misa porque es hábito o tiempo para ver a tus amigos?, preguntó el Papa. ¿O es algo más?

“Cuando vamos a Misa, nos encontramos con todo tipo de personas”, dijo el Papa. “¿La Eucaristía que celebramos nos hace considerarlos a todos hermanos y hermanas? ¿Aumenta esta mi capacidad de alegrarme cuando otros lo hacen o llorar con los que lloran?”

El Papa Francisco dijo que no es suficiente decir que uno ama a Jesús; debe demostrarse en el amor por aquellos que él amó.

Pregúntate, dijo, si ir a Misa te ayuda a identificarte con los que sufren o “soy indiferente o estoy chismeando: ¿viste cómo se vistió ese?” A veces la gente hace eso después de la Misa. Pero esto no debería suceder”.

La asistencia a Misa también debe llevar a “la gracia de sentirse perdonado y capacitado para perdonar a los demás”, dijo.

El Papa Francisco dijo que sabe que algunas personas se preguntan por qué deben preocuparse de ir a la iglesia cuando la iglesia está llena de personas que pecan como todos los demás.

“En realidad aquellos que participan en la Misa no lo hacen porque piensan o quieren creer que son superiores a los demás, sino precisamente porque saben que necesitan” de la misericordia de Dios, dijo.

Los Legionarios piden disculpas a los que fueron víctimas de su fundador

ROMA (CNS) — Representantes de los *Legionarios de Cristo*, reunidos en un retiro para reformar la congregación que se encontraba en problemas hace cerca de cuatro años — después que el Vaticano se hizo cargo directo de ella — anunciaron un nuevo cuerpo de superiores y les presentaron disculpas formales a las víctimas de su fundador extraviado.

En la declaración hecha por la congregación reunida en capítulo general extraordinario, dada a conocer el 6 de febrero, se expresaba “profundo pesar” por el ya finado padre Marcial Maciel Degollado debido a “su conducta reprobable y objetivamente inmoral”, incluyendo “abusos contra seminaristas menores de edad”, “actos inmorales con hombres y mujeres adultas”, “abuso de autoridad y bienes materiales”, “consumo indiscriminado de sustancias adictivas” y plagio.

Los miembros del capítulo, diciendo que estaban “apenados” por haber dejado pasar tanto tiempo antes de disculparse con “las muchas víctimas” del padre Maciel, aceptaron haber guardado “un largo silencio institucional” en respuesta

a las acusaciones contra el padre Maciel, y ofrecieron un informe de progreso en un esfuerzo por despejar el legado desmoralizador de su fundador.

En 2010, el Vaticano anunció que el padre Maciel había sido culpable “de una conducta objetivamente grave e inmoral” y “de verdaderos delitos”, habiendo llevado una vida “privada sin escrúpulos y vacía de genuino significado religioso”. Ese mismo año, el entonces papa Benedicto XVI nombró al cardenal Velasio De Paolis como supervisor de la reforma de los *Legionarios*.

Los *Legionarios* cambiarán a sus superiores con mayor frecuencia y designarán consejos consultivos para “prevenir posibles conductas arbitrarias y abuso de autoridad”, se decía en la declaración.

Los miembros del capítulo dijeron que el padre Maciel había sido tratado con “excesiva exaltación” por parte de sus seguidores, pero que, desde la abolición en el 2006 del voto privado que prohibía críticas teniendo como objeto a los superiores, los *Legionarios* han aprendido a conducir “debate libre” en cuanto a la forma como se gobierna la congregación.

NOTICIAS

Candidato a santidad puertorriqueño conocido por su piedad y empeño para educar pobres



Foto cortesía de Wikimedia Commons

“La escuela del maestro Cordero” (1890-92), por Francisco Oller.

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (CNS) — El Papa Francisco firmó en diciembre un decreto reconociendo que Rafael Cordero Molina, conocido como el “padre de la educación pública puertorriqueña”, vivió las virtudes cristianas de manera heroica y es venerable.

“El Maestro Rafael”, como es ampliamente conocido en su isla hogar, se une al beato Carlos Manuel Rodríguez Santiago como el segundo puertorriqueño siendo considerado para la canonización.

Cordero, quien era de ascendencia africana, nació en San Juan en 1790 y murió allí en 1868. Él fundó y operó una escuela gratuita para niños pobres de todas las razas.

Los actos de caridad y piedad de Cordero eran tan bien conocidos en su tiempo que hay mucho escrito sobre él en los archivos de la *Arquidiócesis de San Juan* y en los registros históricos seculares.

Viviendo en una colonia española,

donde las leyes prohibían la educación de los esclavos, él abrió su casa a niños de todas las razas y posiciones sociales para una educación gratuita. Teniendo entonces 20 años de edad, dijo que su intención era doble: pasarle a sus compañeros negros la educación que recibió de sus padres y dedicar su trabajo a sus profundos valores cristianos.

La escuela de Cordero era un taller tabaquero. Sus estudiantes compartían un área pequeña mientras él enseñaba, dictaba lecciones y los examinaba verbalmente. Cuando ellos necesitaban su ayuda, él paraba de cortar, torcer y enrollar cigarros.

Durante un día escolar promedio él cubría el catecismo, la fe, la moralidad y oraciones específicas. El ambiente era reforzado por imágenes en la pared de Nuestra Señora del Carmen y San Antonio de Padua, a quienes había aceptado como sus santos patronos personales, así como un gran crucifijo.

Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada

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

- Llamar a Judy Locke, Coordinadora de asistencia para víctimas, al número (817) 560-2452, Ext. 201, o, mandarle correo electrónico a jllocke@fwdioc.org
- Llamar al número de emergencia para el abuso sexual: (817) 560-2452, Ext. 900

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

Llamar los Servicios de Protección a Familias del estado de Texas (Servicios de protección de niños) al número: (800) 252-5400.



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Regresa a Dios, él es Amor y Misericordia



proyecto raquel
Aquí comienza la paz

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Por qué ayunamos durante la cuaresma

POR EL PADRE CARMELO MELE, OP

UNA VEZ UN MUCHACHO LE CONTÓ A SU NOVIA QUE HARÍA CUALQUIER COSA POR ELLA. DIJO QUE TREPARÍA UNA MONTAÑA SI SE LO PIDIERA O NADARÍA POR EL OCÉANO PARA DEMOSTRAR SU AMOR. La novia respondió que tales hechos no eran necesarios. Sólo quería que le acompañara a la biblioteca el viernes en la noche porque tenía un examen muy importante. El muchacho le contestó que lo haría pero que él ya había hecho planes para ese día.

Ciertamente se muestra el amor al sacrificar el cumplimiento de sus deseos por el bien del otro. Por eso, nos impresionan las madres que abandonan el sueño para vigilar a sus hijos internados toda la noche. Particularmente durante la Cuaresma estamos llamados a mostrar nuestro amor por Dios sacrificando la satisfacción de nuestros antojos con el ayuno. Oficialmente la Iglesia prescribe dos formas de ayuno: la abstención de la carne de los animales de la tierra y de las aves el *Miércoles de Ceniza* y todos los siete viernes cuaresmales; y el ayuno propiamente dicho no comer fuera de las tres comidas principales el *Miércoles de Ceniza* y el Viernes Santo. Sin embargo, ha sido práctica de los santos a través de los siglos privarse de comidas y recreos más intensamente en este tiempo sagrado.

Se pueden hacer sacrificios de diez mil maneras, aunque siempre deben costar placeres. Durante la *Edad Media* los cristianos regularmente dejaban de comer carne por los cuarenta días enteros. Hace 50 años todos los adultos eran obligados a ayunar todos los días de la Cuaresma. Más recientemente algunos han dejado de comer dulces o tomar café. Percibiéndose adictos a la televisión, varios apagan el aparato en este intervalo.

Existen críticos del ayuno. Citando el versículo del profeta Isaías, donde el Señor mismo dice que el ayuno que quiere es traer justicia para los pobres, algunos afirman que es más beneficioso ayudar al necesitado que negarse a sí mismo. Otros preguntan cínicamente: “¿No es el ayuno que practicamos para sacrificarse por amor a Dios sólo un pretexto y el motivo verdadero es la búsqueda vana de bajar peso?” Estos reparos nos ayudan a puri-



Raymond Medina recibe cenizas en la frente durante la misa de mediodía para el *Miércoles de Ceniza* de 2013 en la *Parroquia de Santa María de la Asunción* en Fort Worth.

(FOTO POR DONNA RYCKAERT / NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC)

ficar las intenciones.

En primer lugar, hacemos sacrificios para solidarizarnos con el Jesús sufriente. Él no sólo pasó cuarenta días sin comer en su lucha contra el diablo, sino que se entregó a la ordalía de la crucifixión para ganar para nosotros la victoria sobre el pecado. Hay un hombre en la diócesis se que afeitó la cabeza cuando su esposa, enferma de cáncer, recibía la quimioterapia. Su motivo era compartir con ella al menos una pequeña parte del sufrimiento que ella soportaba. Así nosotros sufrimos un poco del hambre que Jesús aguantó por nuestra salvación.

En segundo lugar, debemos reconocer el vínculo entre el ayuno y los otros tipos de piedad humana que complacen a Dios. Nuestro ayuno se haría una afrenta a Dios si no estuviera acompañado por buenas obras y oración. Eso sólo mostraría a nuestro Creador y Sustentador nuestro poco agradecimiento. La Biblia no sólo exige el socorro a los pobres, sino también la oración junto con el ayuno, para mostrar nuestra fe y amor a Dios.

En tercer lugar, tenemos que seguir revisando nuestros motivos. En el evangelio del *Miércoles de Ceniza*, Jesús advierte a sus discípulos que sus acciones piadosas no deben culminar en elogios de la gente. Por eso, no

queremos hablar de nuestro ayuno o llamar atención de nuestros donativos a las organizaciones caritativas. Pero, ¿es pecaminoso desear bajar el de peso durante el ayuno cuaresmal? No lo creo. Pues ser delgado nos permite vivir más sanamente, más entregados al Señor. La oración por la sabiduría en todos nuestros actos nos ayudará a superar la vanidad.

En el primer prefacio cuaresmal (el himno de alabanza a Dios comenzando la oración eucarística), el sacerdote curiosamente recita a la gente: “Por (Jesús) concedes a tus hijos anhelar, año tras año, con el gozo de habernos purificado, la solemnidad de la Pascua”. Nuestro sacrificio entonces no debe ser causa de tristeza sino de alegría, pues estamos superando con la gracia de Cristo los impedimentos que nos separan de Dios: el apego a cosas materiales, el distanciamiento de los pobres y necesitados, y la falta de la comunicación directa con Dios.



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

'Hágase tu voluntad'

Siempre confiando en la voluntad de Dios en su vida, el Monseñor Stephen Berg — que ha sido sacerdote diocesano toda su vida — será ordenado e instalado como obispo de Pueblo, Colorado, el 27 de febrero

POR KATHY CRIBARI HAMER / CORRESPONSAL

AQUELLOS QUE FUERON TESTIGOS DE LA ORDENACIÓN SACERDOTAL DE STEPHEN BERG, EL 15 DE MAYO DEL 1999, RECUERDAN LA TIERNA ATMÓSFERA FAMILIAR QUE SE HIZO PRESENTE EN LA IGLESIA.

El nuevo sacerdote en ese momento recordó la ceremonia como habiendo sido “solemne, elegante y llena de gracia”; sin embargo, para la mayoría de los observadores, el cálido espíritu de la liturgia superó la majestuosidad característica de las ordenaciones.

Notablemente, un grupo ecléctico de personas comunes y corrientes llenaron las bancas de la *Catedral de San Patricio* en Fort Worth; uno de ellos, claramente ataviado con mahones, más tarde se puso en fila para abrazar al joven sacerdote y, a continuación, se arrodilló ante él, pidiéndole su bendición.

Un grupo de tres hermanos, y siete hermanas con sus cónyuges, se limpiaban las lágrimas de sus ojos al arrodillarse durante la liturgia, y una procesión de sobrinas y sobrinos trajo las ofrendas más allá del altar, hasta la silla del obispo. Se las presentaron al celebrante que, no por casualidad, era su tío materno, el Obispo Joseph Charron.

“Fue como si se me hubiera detenido el corazón por un momento”, dijo el Padre Berg después.

Este año, ese mismo sacerdote se convierte en el quinto obispo de Pueblo, Colorado, y la retrospectiva de su primera ordenación prevé la clase de persona que es y el cuidadoso pastor que promete ser para la *Diócesis de Pueblo*.

El Arzobispo Samuel Aquila, metropolitano de la *Provincia de Denver*, estará presidiendo la ordenación del Obispo electo Berg el próximo



Bishop-elect Stephen Berg's formal portrait. (Photo by Donna Ryckaert)

27 de febrero; consagrando con él estarán el Obispo de Colorado Springs, Michael Sheridan, y el tío de Berg — el Obispo Joseph Charron, Obispo Emérito de Des Moines.

El anuncio del nombramiento del Obispo electo Berg llegó el pasado 15 de enero. “Mi familia estaba eufórica”, dijo: “Yo no había sido capaz de decirle a ellos, por supuesto, hasta que llegara el anuncio oficial. Todos mis hermanos han sido mis partidarios, pasando por un montón de cosas: la preparación para el cambio,

la búsqueda de las cartas de apoyo que compartimos con los demás en los últimos años — están muy felices.

“A todos nos sorprendió”, dijo el obispo electo. “Yo se lo dije a mi tío, el Obispo Charron. Él es mi director espiritual, así que compartí la noticia con él. No pareció sorprendido, y dijo que yo sería un buen obispo, que había hecho un buen trabajo para Fort Worth.”

“Mi mamá está silenciosamente feliz por esto. Echamos de menos a papá — que murió hace cinco años. Por supuesto papá está muy consciente de esto, pero nos gustaría que él estuviera aquí con nosotros en este momento. Mamá está muy bien. Con 89 años ella está muy conectada a todos sus hijos y nietos. Mis 27 sobrinos y sobrinas están muy contentos. He oficiado siete de sus bodas — bodas católicas — y, por supuesto, ahora soy un obispo”, se sonrió.

“El hermano menor de mi madre fue un obispo y ahora su hijo mayor es un obispo”, agregó. “Ella conoce no sólo la alegría del oficio, sino también que puede ser a veces un camino difícil. Mamá es realista acerca de esto, pero ella está muy emocionada.

El obispo electo Berg fue nombrado vicario general de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* en el 2008, moderador de la curia en 2010, y administrador diocesano en 2012, cuando el Obispo Kevin Vann fue nombrado obispo de la *Diócesis de Orange, California*.

Así, el año pasado, “Cuando me notificaron que Michael Olson sería Obispo aquí, ¡yo estaba tan feliz por eso! Sabía que Michael conocía nuestra diócesis, y también de su capacidad, su generosidad, competencia y liderazgo en el plano real.



El Monseñor Berg dio la homilía durante la misa de clausura en la DIOCESAN CATHOLIC YOUTH CONFERENCE en el HYATT REGENCY DFW, en esta foto de archivo tomada el 14 de julio de 2013.

(Juan Guajardo / NTC Archives)

“Cuando regresé a casa para celebrar la *Acción de Gracias* con mi madre y mi familia, yo estaba realmente aliviado de los 12 meses anteriores”, explicó. “Estaba eufórico, y conectado.”

Fue un par de semanas más tarde, el lunes por la mañana, cuando Monseñor Berg recibió la llamada telefónica. Dijo el Nuncio Apostólico: “Tengo una comunicación importante para compartir con usted de la *Santa Sede*. Nuestro Santo Padre, el Papa Francisco, lo ha nombrado Obispo de Pueblo”.

“Bueno, todavía estoy tratando de comprender todo esto, pensando: ¿De verdad sabe él con quién está hablando? Yo no sabía cómo conectar esto”, dijo. “Pero yo creo que hay que empezar, en cierto sentido, a aceptarlo — ¡y por supuesto que acepté!”

El nuevo obispo electo dijo que inmediatamente sintió una paz.

“Dios estaba detrás de esto, y por supuesto el Papa Francisco, quien de alguna manera me escogió. Este es el Espíritu Santo. Uno tiene que aprender una metodología diferente, en cierto

sentido, pero a la vez tiene que seguir siendo quien es, y simplemente dejar que el Espíritu crezca, en el interior. Así ha sido el proceso de mi reacción”.

Otra reacción inmediata que tuvo a la llamada del nuncio fue que, de alguna manera, iba a un lugar que se ajustaba a su persona — había vivido en Colorado antes, como estudiante en la *Universidad de Colorado*, y tenía experiencia en el ministerio rural, que lo ayudó a prepararse para dirigir una diócesis rural.

Desde el 2002 al 2008, el entonces Padre Berg era pastor de cuatro parroquias rurales del Norte de Texas: *Santa María* en Henrietta, *San Jerónimo* en Bowie, *San Guillermo* en Montague, y *San José* en Nocona. Tras el anuncio de su nombramiento, volvió a visitar todas las parroquias, para despedirse. “Fue muy significativo para mí verlas de nuevo”, dijo, “porque ese fue uno de los momentos más felices de mi vida. Yo respondí y aprendí del ministerio rural. Así que parte de todo esto parece encajar”.

El Obispo electo Berg dijo que la parte más difícil de aceptar del nuevo nombramiento es

que se aleja de la gente de Texas.

“Yo elegí vivir aquí, hace 30 años, y volví a ser sacerdote aquí, debido a la gente”, dijo. “Hay algo único acerca de los tejanos”.

“Pero me encanta el sur de Colorado”, dice el hombre de 62 años de edad, obispo electo.

“Me encanta la altitud”, dijo el futuro obispo. “Usted puede ver las estrellas por la noche. Creo que es una tierra hermosa, con gente hermosa”.

Respecto a los nombramientos de obispos, tanto para Fort Worth y Pueblo, dijo el Obispo electo de Berg, “Tenemos a alguien aquí en Fort Worth, Michael Olson, que conoce la diócesis, y es un hombre excepcionalmente bueno. Él tiene la energía que necesita para guiar una diócesis de este tamaño.”

“De la misma manera que Fort Worth le queda bien, creo, más bien ruego, que Pueblo me quede bien. Fort Worth tiene un obispo maravilloso — el mejor — y me dieron un gran lugar también.”

Con humildad, dijo el obispo electo Berg, “La gente es muy amable, con lo que están diciendo de mí en este momento, y yo realmente aprecio eso. Escucho, y sé que tengo que oír — es parte de la transformación que Dios tiene reservada para mí; y hay algo de crecimiento, ya sabes.”

“Creo que la única cosa que puedo decir es que yo acepto esto, pero no es algo que yo he logrado. Fue el Espíritu Santo — es la única manera que tiene sentido.”

“El lema episcopal que he elegido para mi ordenación es: “Hágase tu voluntad.” Es una lección que se repite en el evangelio: la narración de Lucas, la respuesta de María a Dios, y luego, por supuesto, Jesús nos lo enseña en la oración del Señor”, concluyó el obispo electo Berg.

“Creo que, en un nivel muy básico, el lema dice para mí lo que yo espero de mi episcopado, y lo que deseo para mi futura grey de la *Diócesis de Pueblo*.”



Donna Ryckaert / NTC Archives

El entonces Monseñor Berg posa con Díaz y Laura Murray en una recepción el 26 de octubre después de su investidura en la *Orden de Caballería del Santo Sepulcro de Jerusalén*.



Juan Guajardo / NTC Archives

El Monseñor Berg charla con los adolescentes de la *Parroquia San Guillermo* en Montague, donde solía servir como pastor, en esta foto de archivo tomada en el 2013.



Donna Ryckaert / NTC Archives

El Monseñor Berg bendice las *Caridades Católicas de Fort Worth* en sus instalaciones de Arlington el 4 de febrero de 2013.



Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC

El Obispo Michael Olson se encuentra sentado en la cátedra —la silla del obispo— significando que es el obispo de Fort Worth. Fue escoltado a la cátedra por el arzobispo Carlo Maria Viganò, nuncio apostólico para los Estados Unidos (a la izquierda), y el arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller de San Antonio (a la derecha).

CONTINUADO DE LA PÁGINA 40

primos se reunían a menudo para jugar boliche o disfrutar de la compañía de todos.

“Desde el día en que Michael nació, estaba destinado para estar aquí”, dijo un familiar que estaba de visita. “Él nunca tuvo una pizca de maldad en su cuerpo. Es una buena persona con un gran sentido del humor que siempre fue especial — una buena manera”.

Para Ronald y Janice Olson, el día de la ordenación de su hijo no pudo llegar lo suficientemente rápido.

“El tiempo ha estado malo, pero aun así llegaron”, dijo Ronald Olson, en referencia a los planes de viaje de sus invitados de Chicago. “Amigos y familiares están apoyando a Michael, y eso es tremendo”.

Sentado junto a su esposa, Janice, y sus hijas Patty, Mitzi y Liz, el dinámico papá describe al mayor de sus cuatro hijos que aún viven como una “persona del pueblo” que se preocupa por todo el mundo.

“Estamos muy, muy orgullosos de él”, agregó su madre Janice Olson. “Es una sensación maravillosa”.

La Misa de Ordenación comenzó con una larga e impresionante procesión litúrgica dirigida por los *Caballeros de Colón*, los *Caballeros y Damas de San Pedro Claver*, la *Orden Ecuestre del Santo Sepulcro de Jerusalén*, y la *Orden de Malta*. Mientras el coro diocesano cantaba *St. Patrick's Breastplate* y otros himnos inspiradores, más de 100 seminaristas, 230 sacerdotes,

60 diáconos y 43 obispos entraron al centro de la arena, que fue convertido en lugar sagrado para la ceremonia diocesana.

Helechos, filas de hortensias azules, espuelas de caballero y azaleas de color coral, además de otras flores, se alinearon junto al elevado altar. Rosas, ingeniosamente arregladas en diversos floreros, simbolizaban la devoción del nuevo obispo hacia la Virgen de Guadalupe y a Santa Teresita de Lisieux, *la Florecita*.

Colgando de un monolito blanco, un gran crucifijo — obra del arquitecto Jim Bransford — sirvió como telón de fondo apropiado para el entorno sagrado. El corpus de ocho pies, tallado en madera de tilo, y una estatua de la Virgen colocada en el altar, le pertenecen a las *Carmelitas descalzas* de Arlington.

“Las Carmelitas no abandonan su clausura, por lo que están participando en la liturgia prestando el crucifijo y la estatua de la Virgen de su capilla”, explicó el Padre Jonathan Wallis, quien sirvió como maestro de ceremonias.

El arzobispo metropolitano de la *Provincia de San Antonio*, Gustavo García-Siller sirvió como consagrante principal para el Rito sagrado de la Ordenación. Los principales co-consagrantes fueron el anterior obispo de Fort Worth, el Monseñor Kevin Vann y el Arzobispo Emérito Joseph A. Fiorenza de la *Arquidiócesis de Galveston-Houston*. Los obispos y arzobispos que quedaron sentados en el altar también actuaron como co-consagrantes.

El Rito de Ordenación comenzó con la presentación del Obispo electo Olson y la lectu-

ra del *Mandato Apostólico del Papa Francisco* por el Arzobispo Carlo Maria Viganò, el *Nuncio Apostólico para los Estados Unidos*.

“Hoy, el Monseñor Michael Olson está a punto de ser ordenado a la plenitud del sacerdocio y solemnemente instalado como el cuarto obispo de Fort Worth”, dijo el Arzobispo Viganò antes de dirigirse al obispo electo. “A medida que fielmente enseñes, gobiernes y santifiques en nombre del único Buen Pastor, estamos seguros que vas a llevar la alegría del Evangelio, tanto a la grey confiada a tí como a la comunidad en general”.

El Monseñor García-Siller comenzó su homilía con una expresión sincera de la esperanza y la buena fortuna para la *Diócesis de Fort Worth*.

“En ti vemos el amor, la oración y una gran esperanza para el futuro. Michael, ¡*Felicitades y congratulations!*”, anunció el arzobispo, y la congregación aplaudió, manifestando su aprobación.

En declaraciones públicas, el Papa Francisco ha dicho que la Iglesia necesita líderes con corazones simples y humildes. Tomando sus palabras de la exhortación apostólica del Papa, *Evangelii Gaudium*, el arzobispo le recordó al obispo electo Olson que debe ser un pastor que esté cerca de su pueblo.

“Un obispo debe estar con su pueblo en tres formas: al frente de ellos, señalando el camino; entre ellos, para evitar que sean esparcidos; y detrás de ellos, asegurándose que nadie se quede atrás”, dijo.

El Monseñor García-Siller aconsejó al obispo electo a seguir el ejemplo del Buen Pastor, guiando a su rebaño con auténtica enseñanza y predicación.

“Mike, hoy Dios te envía el Espíritu Santo, para que como un obispo le prediques el Evangelio a todas las personas”, dijo. “Unidos bajo un solo pastor — Jesucristo. Santifícalos y guíalos a la salvación”.

Después de jurar su fidelidad al Evange-



Foto por Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

Los símbolos de obispo (el anillo, el báculo y el mitre) fueron bendecidos en un servicio de *Vísperas* la tarde antes de la ordenación del obispo Olson.



Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC

Más de 8.500 católicos y miembros de la comunidad asistieron a la ordenación del obispo Olson el 29 de enero en el Fort Worth Convention Center Arena.

lio y a la Iglesia, el obispo electo Olson yacía postrado ante el altar mientras se cantaba la Letanía de los Santos. Luego se arrodilló ante el Arzobispo García-Siller y los otros obispos para recibir los dones del Espíritu Santo a través de la imposición de manos y la oración de ordenación. Después de ser ungido con el santo crisma, el nuevo obispo recibió un anillo significando su fidelidad a la Iglesia, una mitra simbolizando su determinación de buscar la santidad, y un báculo. El báculo personal se asemeja a un cayado de pastor y se confiere para recordarles a los obispos de sus responsabilidades pastorales y la necesidad de velar por sus rebaños.

Al concluir el Rito de Ordenación, aplausos llenaron la arena, mientras el Obispo Olson se sentaba en la cátedra — la silla del obispo — para marcar el inicio de su servicio a la diócesis.

Sentado en una sección especial reservada para personas con deficiencias auditivas, David Casanova no pudo contener su emoción. El feligrés de la Parroquia de Santa Elizabeth Ann Seton fue parte de una delegación elegida para conocer al nuevo obispo durante la procesión de las ofrendas.

“La diócesis ha hecho tanto por la comunidad sorda con los programas de educación y el dinero para los intérpretes. Quiero asegurarme que continúe”, dijo Casanova, que transmitió ese mensaje al obispo Olson, usando el lenguaje de señas americano interpretado por Connie Martin, coordinadora diocesana del ministerio para personas con pérdidas auditivas. “Quiero que el obispo sepa que queremos ser una parte esencial de la diócesis y apreciaremos su apoyo”.

El Sargento Bryan Guidry dijo que será difícil dirigirse a su viejo amigo de otra manera que como “Padre Michael”.

“No sólo era el sacerdote en mi iglesia”, explicó Guidry, un ex miembro de la *Iglesia de San Miguel* en Bedford, pero ahora participan-

do en Altus, Oklahoma. “Visitaba nuestra casa, y tomábamos café y hablábamos de diferentes cosas. Él me casó y bautizó a dos de mis hijos”.

El piloto de la Fuerza Aérea comentó que su párroco lo acercó a Dios.

“Si alguna vez tengo una pregunta cuando alguien cuestiona mi fe, tengo una muy buena fuente de información a la que poder recurrir”, añadió.

Otro amigo, el Padre Timothy Heines, pastor de la *Iglesia de San José* en Richardson, fue un compañero de clase del obispo Olson en el *Seminario de Santa María* en Houston. Dijo que el Obispo Olson no sólo posee una tremenda sabiduría, sino que también tiene un profundo amor por el sacerdocio que es la base de su ministerio.

“Fuera de ese amor, tiene una gran dosis de humor y es capaz de llevar la alegría del Evangelio a tantas personas”, dijo. “Tiene una gran fe, y genuinamente ama a los feligreses a quienes sirve. Los habitantes de Fort Worth son muy afortunados de tener un pastor como Michael”.

Al terminar la ceremonia de tres horas, todos los presentes alcanzaron a ver el ingenio del Obispo Olson y su bondadosa personalidad. Tomando nota de la pompa de la ocasión, la multitud de sacerdotes vestidos de blanco y “todo el pueblo de Dios reunidos aquí”, el nuevo obispo se sintió tentado a preguntar: “¿Cuenta esta misa para el domingo?”

El comentario generó un estallido de risa de la multitud, seguido por un silencio súbito, cuando el obispo ofreció unas palabras en serio. Dio las gracias al Arzobispo Monseñor García-Siller por ordenarlo y a sus compañeros sacerdotes por su fraternidad.

“Y de una manera más especial, agradezco a mis padres por el don de la vida y el don de la fe”, continuó.



Foto por Kathy Cribari Hamer / NTC

El Arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller de San Antonio impone las manos sobre el Obispo Olson, ordenándolo al episcopado.

En su primer discurso como Obispo de Fort Worth, el prelado pidió a los fieles volver a los fundamentos del discipulado y ser seguidores — no sólo admiradores — de Jesús.

“Les pido, al comenzar este nuevo capítulo en nuestra vida, que tomemos como ejemplo, a la Santísima Madre, que realmente es la primera discípula, y que pidamos su intercesión”, dijo. “Cuando Gabriel dice, ‘no tengas miedo’, María solamente le responde ‘sí’ a Dios. Que María nos ayude a decirle sí a Cristo”.



Foto por Jerry Circoelli / NTC

ARRIBA: El canciller diocesano, el padre Daniel Kelley, muestra el anuncio del nombramiento del Obispo Olson como obispo de Fort Worth a todos los presentes. **ABAJO:** El Obispo Olson saluda al decano Popo González y a su esposa Lupe, de Immaculate Conception Church en Denton.

Foto por Donna Ryckaert / NTC



El Obispo Michael Olson es ordenado e instalado como el cuarto obispo de Fort Worth

POR JOAN KURKOWSKI-GILLEN / CORRESPONSAL

“ESTAMOS EN BUENAS MANOS”. ASÍ ES COMO LA FAMILIA CONSODINE DE WICHITA FALLS REACCIONÓ A LA MISA DE ORDENACIÓN E INSTALACIÓN DE MICHAEL FORS OLSON COMO EL CUARTO OBISPO DE FORT WORTH. Más de 8,500 católicos y miembros de las comunidades de todo el Norte de Texas se reunieron dentro del *Fort Worth Convention Center Arena* el pasado 29 de enero para presenciar uno de sus propios sacerdotes ascender al episcopado de la diócesis que está en rápido crecimiento.

“Es un sacerdote tan merecedor. No me sorprendió en absoluto que lo hicieran obispo”, dijo Evelyn Consodine, quien conoció a un joven Michael Olson cuando era seminarista asignado a la *Iglesia Nuestra Señora Reina de la Paz*.

Ella asistió a su ordenación sacerdotal, en junio de 1994, y años más tarde se le ve en la cena patrocinada por el *Consejo 1473* de los *Caballeros de Colón* en la *Parroquia Sagrado Corazón* de Wichita Falls, al fallecido Padre Donlon a favor de las vocaciones en la Iglesia. El evento recauda fondos para la educación de los seminaristas.

El Monseñor Olson fue rector del *Seminario Santísima Trinidad* en Irving antes de que

el Papa Francisco lo nombrara obispo de Fort Worth el pasado 19 de noviembre. La diócesis de 28 condados ha estado “sede vacante” — sin un líder — desde que el tercer obispo de Fort Worth, Kevin Vann, se convirtiera en obispo de Orange, California, en diciembre de 2012.

José y Gloria Frías llegaron temprano al centro de convenciones con la esperanza de conseguir una vista sin obstáculos de la Misa de Ordenación. Ambos son lectores en la *Iglesia de San Jorge* en Fort Worth.

“Estamos aquí para ver al nuevo obispo”, dijo José, luciendo una corbata con la imagen de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. “Es un regalo de Dios para todos nosotros”.

El oleaje de feligreses, niños de las escuelas católicas, y visitantes de fuera de la ciudad que asistieron a la solemne y majestuosa ceremonia compartían ese sentimiento. Incluidos en la congregación había más de 50 familiares y amigos de la zona de Chicago, donde el obispo Olson, de 47 años, nació y asistió a la escuela.

El primo del obispo, Bill Ackermann, dijo que su primo estaba destinado para este día. El nuevo obispo viene de una gran familia, y los

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