



NEWSMAGAZINE North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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**With God's grace, we travel together
through Lent to the glory of Easter**

**Be merciful, O Lord,
for we have sinned.
Have mercy on me, O God
in your goodness;
in the greatness
of your compassion
wipe out my offense.
Thoroughly wash me
from my guilt
and of my sin
cleanse me.**

**Opening Responsorial Psalm
for Ash Wednesday**

Psalm 51:3-4



In This Issue...

5 FAUSTINA:

MESSENGER OF DIVINE MERCY

Rachel Ministries, which invites those involved in abortions to accept the love and mercy of God, is sponsoring three performances of *Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy*.



8

13 FR. CHANDLER'S MLK MASS

encouraged Catholics to carry out their baptismal call by being empowered by the Holy Spirit to begin God's mission, just as Jesus did after his baptism.



10

32 DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SEMINARIAN

Our reporter Susan Moses had a great idea: Why not track a day in the life of the diocese's seminarians? And here's what it looks like: a mix of prayer, study, fellowship, service, and even regular chores.



12

40 NOTICIAS EN ESPAÑOL EN ESTA EDICIÓN

En esta edición del *North Texas Catholic* usted encontrará perfiles de las Misioneras Catequistas de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María y de los Palotinos, la columna del Padre Mele para que nuestra experiencia Cuaresmal sea más positiva, y un relato del inicio de la observancia del Año de la Vida Consagrada en nuestra diócesis. La nuestra se une a todo un año de celebraciones en el mundo en honor a los sacrificios de estos santos hombres y mujeres.



28

8 YEAR OF CONSECRATED LIFE

The kickoff event for the diocese's observance of the Year of Consecrated Life, a Vespers service at St. Patrick Cathedral Feb. 6, drew more than 200 religious, diocesan priests, and seminarians and a similar number of laity to honor those who have chosen to give their lives in service to God and others in these committed ways.

10 CHERISHING THE GIFT OF LIFE

That was the common thread that united a pro-life march to the Capitol in Austin, one in Dallas to the Earle Cabell Courthouse where *Roe v. Wade* was first filed, and a Mass honoring the aborted unborn at St. Patrick Cathedral.

12 FR. KIRKHAM CELEBRATES FIRST MASS WITH ST. MARTIN DE PORRES

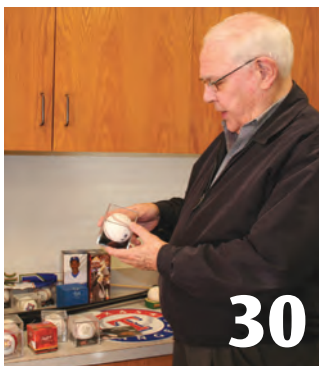
Newly named pastor Fr. Richard Kirkham celebrated his first Mass with the newly named St. Martin de Porres Parish, meeting at Frisco's Purefoy Elementary School on Feb. 8.

28 MISSIONARY CATECHISTS ARE ON CALL FOR GOD IN OUR DIOCESE

Only eight Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary are working here, but their involvement in catechesis, social ministry, and Hispanic Pastoral Ministry makes it seem like there are more.

30 MONSIGNOR JOSEPH SCANTLIN

Likes to be called, quite simply, 'Father Joe.' Our reporter, Joan Kurkowski Gillen, found his parishioners at Most Blessed Sacrament Church in Arlington used a string of adjectives in her interviews to describe the humble man: personable, funny, welcoming, engaging, gentle, and there's that word again: humble. He's also a man with a passion for baseball.



30

Cover Photo: NTC photographer Juan Guajardo captured this image of a young girl receiving ashes on Ash Wednesday, at St. Maria Goretti Church. Easter will be celebrated April 5 this year.

North Texas Catholic



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Bishop Olson is asking us to be involved in Texas government

Bishop Olson's interest in public issues isn't limited to those we often refer to as the "life issues," though he is certainly both interested in those issues and in demand as an ethicist.

Bishop Olson outlined a broad range of issues likely to come before our state Legislature in a recent letter he wrote to pastors: "Crucial issues such as protecting human life, children and families, health and human services, justice for immigrants, protecting the poor and vulnerable, and criminal justice will be before members of the Legislature."

And, he said "Through the Texas Catholic Conference, the bishops of Texas have adopted an 'Agenda for the 85th Texas Legislative Session.'"

He then referenced the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops teaching document *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, with its focus on the political responsibility of Catholics.

As part of that exercise of their responsibility to engage in civil dialogue, Bishop Olson says the Texas Catholic bishops will be active in the upcoming legislative session.

One way the bishops will seek to exercise a Catholic influence on public policy in the state is by taking part in their Advocacy Day at the Capitol in Austin on March 24 with their teams of advocates, where they will demonstrate, in visits with each member of the Legislature, that Catholics in Texas are indeed engaged in the public square.

Our bishop also urges the Catholic faithful to inform themselves by becoming members of the Texas Catholic Conference Network. As he describes it, "The network provides eNewsletter alerts, news updates, and more on policy issues affecting the Catholic faithful and of concern to the Texas Catholic bishops. I pray that as many as possible of our families ... will join the Network to support the efforts of Texas Bishops before the Legislature."

Becoming a member of the Texas Catholic Network is a simple matter. If you want to respond to his request, go to the Texas Catholic Conference website and click on the button in the upper left corner of the home page, with the words "Join the Texas Catholic Network." That will take you to a set of dialogue boxes asking for your name, address, and such. If you're willing, you can become a member of the Texas Catholic Network and stay informed on issues of importance to Catholics in our state.

Jeff Hensley

North Texas Catholic Brothers for Christ invites Catholic men to take up the 'Sword of the Spirit' for Christ

By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent

THE HURST CONFERENCE CENTER WAS FILLED NEARLY TO CAPACITY FEB. 7, WHEN 750 MEN FROM 124 AREA PARISHES GATHERED there for the North Texas Catholic Brothers for Christ Men's Conference. Its theme was based on the Battle against Evil from (*Ephesians 6:17*) — "And take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

The 2015 event marked the fourth annual gathering of Catholic men brought together by the North Texas Catholic Brothers for Christ — a non-profit lay ministry. Organized by 50 men on a leadership team, there are no formal membership requirements.

Each conference is designed to help men encounter Christ through Eucharistic Adoration, Benediction, the Rosary, Reconciliation, and celebration of Mass.

Speakers at this year's conference included, Fort Worth Bishop Michael Olson; Father Larry Richards, Catholic author and EWTN radio host; Tom Peterson, president of Catholics Come Home; and Michael Coren, Catholic columnist, author, radio personality, and television host.

Opening the daylong conference, Bishop Olson focused on the topic of discipleship, which he said involves a call, accompaniment, and listening.

To illustrate his message, the

bishop cited Mark and his writing about the transfiguration of Jesus in (*Mark 9: 2-10*). Similar to Peter, James, and John who were with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration, we are each called by name into a relationship with Christ, the bishop said. "We hear our name and his call, and its expectations gradually become clear," Bishop Olson said.

The early disciples could not yet fathom what life after death meant, but had to have faith in the Lord, as we do, for things they could not understand. Similarly for us, faith involves constantly being attentive to God's call in our lives and staying faithful as a flock of the Good Shepherd, Jesus Christ, the bishop said.

Following Bishop Olson, Fr. Larry Richards asked the multitude of men gathered to hold up their Bibles. As might be expected, not many Bibles were raised. Fr. Richards told the men to obtain a Bible and to carry it around with them. He said they should start and end each day by reading it. He reminded the men of the words of St. Jerome, who said, "Ignorance of Scripture is ignorance of Christ."

Secondly, Fr. Richards told the men that they should pray each day in order to encounter a living God and to help their own families.

Thirdly, he told the men to surrender their lives to the Holy Spirit, emphasizing that it is God's Spirit inside of us that is most important. "Our job is to surrender, so people no longer see us, they see Jesus Christ living inside of us....," the priest said.



Reciting the Rosary was one of many ways men encountered Christ during the recent conference. (Photo courtesy David Mobley)

Finally, Fr. Richards said, men must do as Jesus instructed in (*John 13:34*), "I give you a new commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another."

Tom Peterson, founder of Catholics Come Home, also spoke. His apostolate has found creative and compelling ways to bring people closer to their Catholic faith.

Referring to St. John Paul II as "the Godfather of the New Evangelization," Peterson said the pope asked us to evangelize "with new expressions, new methods, and new courage." Peterson said it is a critical time to follow the saint's call. "Only six percent of the people in United States are faithful, practicing Catholics," Peterson said. And of the 24 percent of the U.S. population that is Catholic, only one in four goes to Mass each Sunday.

"We have an epidemic in the faith and we need more than ever to evangelize the world," Peterson said.

The final speaker, Michael Coren, told those gathered to always

maintain a strong relationship with the Church, no matter what negative personal experience they might have with individuals.

He ended the conference with a story about St. Thomas More, a 16th Century English lawyer and statesman. More would not support the king's divorce and remarriage. Neither would he acknowledge the king as supreme head of the Church in England, his separation from the Catholic Church, and his denial of the pope as its head.

For standing by his Church and his faith, More was tried for treason, convicted, and beheaded. Near his death, More was ridiculed and told that he was not in the majority. To that, Coren said, More responded that if the doors, windows, and gates of paradise opened up behind him, people would see that he was, in fact, in the majority of those in heaven.

"Every time you feel alone, persecuted, betrayed, and that you've had enough, please remind yourself of the best of the world who are with God right now," Coren said.



CLERGY ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH by Most Rev. Michael F. Olson, JCD, MA



Rev. Richard Kirkham is appointed Pastor of St. Martin de Porres Parish in Prosper (new parish), effective February 2, 2015.

Rev. Matthew Sanka, SAC, upon presentation of his religious superior, is appointed Parish Administrator of St. Brendan Parish in Stephenville and associated parishes, effective February 2, 2015.

Rev. John Karanja, SAC, upon presentation of his religious superior, is appointed Parish Administrator of St. Stephen Parish, Weatherford, effective February 2, 2015.

Rachel Ministries' training in Tulsa continues its healing ministry

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

FORT WORTH — Last week, Betsy Kopor, Rachel Ministries Coordinator for the Diocese of Fort Worth, quietly packed her things and prepared to head to Oklahoma. Catholic Charities in Tulsa had invited members of the Rachel Ministries staff from the Diocese of Fort Worth to do a training day for volunteers planning an outreach to Hispanics.

Part of the Respect Life office for the Diocese of Fort Worth, Rachel Ministries refers to a range of pastoral care options offered to those seeking spiritual and emotional recovery after abortion. Each year Rachel Ministries in this diocese hosts six Rachel's Vineyard weekends: two in Spanish, two in English; and two interdenominational. Beyond the retreats, the diocese has licensed counselors, peer support, and other support groups for those who need them.

Over the years the Diocese of Fort Worth has built a reputation for providing excellent opportunities for instruction. The diocese hosted training conferences in 2009 and 2012 specifically for those who minister to people seeking recovery after abortion. A typical training session provides gen-

eral information about how abortion affects people and how to help people begin the healing process. Sessions are also designed around the needs of a broad range of people: laity, pregnancy center volunteers, clergy, and licensed counselors.

"The abortion industry tells women that having an abortion is no big deal," said Kopor. "But the truth is a lot of women are desperate to heal. Most of what's out there denies their pain. It doesn't help. What we do helps foster awareness about how abortion hurts."

Even with more than 57 million abortions performed in the United States alone since 1973, compassionate recovery programs and services for post-abortive women are still rare. For this reason, those involved in Rachel Ministries in the Diocese of Fort Worth are committed to continuing their own education.

"One of our goals is to be up-to-date because it is an up-and-coming area," says Kopor.

She and her team of ministers see themselves as simply facilitating an encounter with the ultimate Healer.

"We set the stage and allow God to do the work," she said.

Rachel Ministries to sponsor Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy

By Nicki Prevou
Correspondent

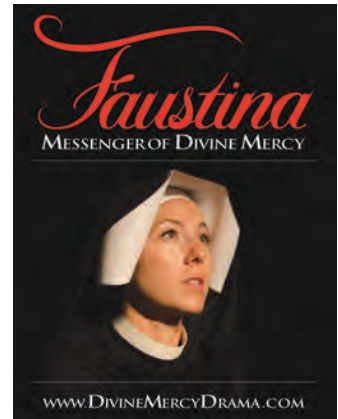
FORT WORTH — Rachel Ministries, a compassionate, faith-based abortion recovery ministry, is spreading the message of God's forgiveness to the Diocese of Fort Worth through "Faustina: Messenger of Divine Mercy," a live multimedia presentation.

Created by Saint Luke Productions, the drama depicts the spirit and life of Saint Faustina Kowalska, the Polish mystic who kept a diary of her personal encounters with Jesus, thus inspiring a worldwide devotion to Christ's Divine Mercy.

Local performances of the presentation will be held Wednesday, March 25, at 7:30 p.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Church, 861 Wildwood Lane, Grapevine; Saturday, March 28 at 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady Queen of Peace Church, 4040 York Street, Wichita Falls; and Sunday, March 29 at 7 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral Pastoral Center, 1300 Throckmorton Street, Fort Worth.

For Jared Zimmerer, who serves as director of adult catechesis and evangelization at St. Francis Church in Grapevine, the production is a contemporary way of sharing the Divine Mercy message — particularly with the youth of the diocese.

"We, as a people, are deeply in need of



Faustina will be a multimedia presentation. (Illustration courtesy of Saint Luke Productions)

mercy," said Zimmerer. "This is a creative and meaningful way to bring people into the beauty of the Divine Mercy..."

Tickets to each show are \$8 for adults and \$5 for those 17 and under. The production is suitable for adults and for youth ages 13 and up. Additional performances will be offered by St. Catherine of Siena Church in Carrollton on March 20, and at St. Philip the Apostle Church in Lewisville on March 24. For a complete schedule of performances or more information, visit www.stluke-productions.com or www.fwdioc.org, or call 817-945-9360.

Diocese names Jennifer Pelletier as new Catholic Schools superintendent

FORT WORTH — Bishop Michael F. Olson announced Jan. 23 that he has appointed Fort Worth native Jennifer R. Pelletier as the superintendent of schools for the diocese. Pelletier will assume her duties on July 1.

Pelletier currently is president of St. Joseph Catholic School in Bryan, Texas.

"It is very exciting to be able to work so closely with Bishop Olson and Father (Karl) Schillken," Pelletier said. "Their love and dedication to Catholic education is apparent and vitally important to the growth of the Catholic

Diocese of Fort Worth.

"Although I will be saddened to leave my Bryan/College Station community, the chance to work with the principals in the Fort Worth Diocese is exciting," she continued. "They have already shown themselves to possess a great love for their communities, and I cannot wait to be a resource and support for them as they lead their schools."



Jennifer Pelletier

The Fort Worth Diocese's Catholic school system consists of 5,800 students, 505 faculty, four high schools, and 17 elementary schools in the 28 North Texas counties the diocese serves.

Pelletier attended Catholic schools in our diocese through eighth grade. She is a graduate of Arlington Heights High School.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature in 1995 and a Master's

in Education in 2002, both from the University of Dallas in Irving.

Pelletier began her education career in 1999 and has taught at St. Luke Catholic School in Dallas, and St. John's College High School in Washington D.C. She left St. John's in 2011 to join the staff of St. Joseph Catholic School and became president in 2013.

Ms. Pelletier is the daughter of Chuck and Pat Pelletier, long time leaders in the diocese's pro-life community. She has an older sister, three younger brothers, and 14 nieces and nephews.

'A League of Their Own'

Catholic education celebrates its dedication

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

STUDENTS FROM WICHITA FALLS' NOTRE DAME SCHOOL, GRADES PRE-K THROUGH 12, LINED UP ON THE SCHOOL'S FOOTBALL FIELD JAN. 30 AND LAUNCHED 250 HELIUM-FILLED BALLOONS INTO A BLUSTERY SKY. Attached to each blue and gold inflatable, was a note publicizing Catholic Schools Week and a Scripture passage. Their goal: evangelization.

Two days later, a farmer from Wilson, Oklahoma called Notre Dame to say one of the balloons landed 70 miles away in his pasture. "He thanked us for the Scripture reading," said Matthew Ledesma, director of enrollment. "The mission of Catholic schools is to spread the Good News."

Fort Worth Bishop Michael Olson discussed the important role Catholic Schools play in evangelization during his keynote given at the 28th annual Celebration of Catholic Schools dinner Jan. 31 in the Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom. The fundraiser, attended by 550 people, culminated Catholic Schools Week and associated special activities organized for students in the diocese.

The bishop drew attention to pioneers in Catholic education who opened institutions in the diocese to share their faith in Jesus and his Church. He spoke particularly of the role of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur "who illustrate how the mission of evangelization and Catholic education go hand in hand." The crowd of Catholic school supporters applauded their appreciation after hearing how Nolan Catholic, Notre Dame, Bishop Dunne, and the University of Dallas were founded thanks to the commitment

and generosity of the religious order whose sisters arrived in Texas to open schools 142 years ago.

"Mission must always drive our institutions and keep them alive," the bishop added. "Our identity as Catholic schools comes from our 'yes' to Christ to accompany Him in his mission...."

"This solidarity requires that we care for each other and that we are grateful for the opportunity to sacrifice in many ways for the education that always shows us Jesus," he said.

Catholic schools are vital to a society that must understand the dignity of the human person and the value of disenfranchised and vulnerable people. "We have a call to serve God and our neighbor in love, which is Christ's mission to establish the Kingdom of God here, so we might be prepared to flourish in the Kingdom yet to come," he explained.

Held each year since 1987, the Celebration of Catholic Schools raises money for the Bishop's Scholars Fund and recognizes the achievements and dedication of individuals who support Catholic education. Retired school Superintendent Don P. Miller was presented the 2015 Diocesan Leadership Award from Bishop Olson for a career in Catholic schools that spanned nearly 50 years. The Iowa native attended Catholic schools, then returned to serve the ministry as a teacher, coach, principal, president, and superintendent.

For the past 10 years, he worked to stabilize enrollment rates and school finances as superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

"I feel terribly unworthy. There are so many people who have done so much more than me," Miller told

the *North Texas Catholic*.

All of Miller's nine children were educated in Catholic schools, and seven were present at the dinner to see their father honored.

"Since I was 14-years-old, all I ever wanted to be was a Catholic school teacher," he continued.

Also recognized during the dinner were honorees from each of the 20 schools in the diocese. Receiving an award for their dedication and unwavering support were Danny Arriaga, All Saints; Priscilla Harrier, Cassata; Ann Beckel, Holy Cross; Mary Salerno, Holy Family; Shelly Hickman, Holy Trinity; Joseph Ketchum, Immaculate Conception; Paul Combest, Nolan; Cathy McElroy, Notre Dame; Sandra Brophy Jenkins, Our Lady of Victory; Art & Cynthia Sanford, Our Mother of Mercy; Stacie Miller, Sacred Heart; Maria Gonzalez, St. Andrew; Kim Chiapetta, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton; Mary Longoria, St. George; Janie Ruppel, St. John the Apostle; Judy Gavin, St. Joseph; Chris Abbott, St. Maria Goretti; Rae Ann Gerken, St. Mary's; Diana Yandell, St. Peter the

Apostle, and Mary Burns, St. Rita.

Inspired by the evening's theme "Catholic Schools: A League of Their Own," banquet tables sported boxes of Cracker Jacks, peanuts, baseballs, and trading cards printed with the images of school honorees. Nolan theater students, who performed a baseball skit, provided entertainment.

Prior to entering the ballroom, guests watched performances by St. Joseph violin players and the fourth grade choir from St. Andrew School. Artwork from schools across the diocese was also on display.

FOX Sports anchor John Rhadigan served as master of ceremonies and captured the lighthearted mood of the occasion with a customized version of "Take Me Out to the Ballgame."

"Tonight reaffirms our schools' commitments to be communities where each member encounters the love and truth of our living God," he enthused to the audience. "In Catholic schools, God is spoken every day in every class to every kid, and that's why we're here — to celebrate Catholic education."

Pictures of the Catholic Schools banquet are available for viewing on the [NTC website](http://www.northtexascatholic.org) at: www.northtexascatholic.org. Click on the "Photo Gallery" tab at the top of the website.



Theater students from Nolan Catholic High School perform a baseball skit at the annual Celebration of Catholic Schools dinner. Pictured are Jack Diseker, Aaron Gendron, Kevin Sweeney, and Lexie Garrett. Not pictured: Ben Wagner.

Diocesan Job Openings

Safe Environment Coordinator

Diocese of Fort Worth, Catholic Center

The Diocese of Fort Worth is seeking a Director of Safe Environment to join the team at the Catholic Center. This position reports to the Director of Human Resources, and ensures that the diocese complies with the requirements of the USCCB Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People. The Director of Safe Environment will plan, implement and monitor the training and background checks of all clergy, employees, and volunteers who minister and work in the diocese. The position works collaboratively with Human Resources, Youth Ministry, Children's Catechesis

and the Office of Catholic Schools.

The successful candidate will be a practicing Roman Catholic in good standing with the Church. Bilingual English/Spanish skills are required. A bachelor's degree in theology, education, child development or related field is required. Two years of previous experience as a Safe Environment trainer or coordinator at a parish is preferred. Three years of previous experience in compliance program administration is preferred. Dynamic communication and presentation skills are required. Computer literacy, including database management, Microsoft Office and internet research skills are required. This position requires travel to

parishes and schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth, and some weekend and evening work is required. A complete list of responsibilities and qualifications can be found online at fwdioc.org.

The Diocese of Fort Worth offers an excellent compensation and benefits package to employees, including medical/dental/vision insurance, short-term and long-term disability, life insurance, and a pension plan. Qualified candidates should submit three items to hrapplications@fwdioc.org: an updated resume, a cover letter explaining interest in this position (bilingual cover letters encouraged), and a completed job application. This position will be open until filled.

Assistant Editor and Content Specialist, North Texas Catholic Newsmagazine, Catholic Center

The Diocese of Fort Worth is seeking an Assistant Editor and Content Specialist to join the team of the *North Texas Catholic Newsmagazine*. This position will work under the direction of the Editor to oversee and execute both print and digital media efforts. The Assistant Editor works collaboratively with Pastors, Parishes and other Catholic and community organizations to ensure accurate and timely reporting of news of interest to or affecting the diocese.

The successful applicant must be a practicing Catholic

in good standing who embraces the teaching of the Catholic Church. A bachelor's degree in communications, English, journalism or related field is required. A minimum of five years of experience working for a digital or print publication with editorial and layout responsibilities is required. Previous experience with Catholic media is preferred. Desired technical abilities include social media management (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, etc.), MS Office, and In-Design layout software. Ability to write, edit and proofread in English is required. Spanish language capabilities are a plus, but not required. Travel is required for this position, as well as some weekend and evening

work. A complete list of responsibilities and qualifications can be found online at fwdioc.org.

The Diocese of Fort Worth offers an excellent compensation and benefits package to employees, including medical/dental/vision insurance, short-term and long-term disability, life insurance and a pension plan. Qualified candidate should submit four items to hrapplications@fwdioc.org: an updated resume, a cover letter explaining interest in this position, a completed job application and a sample of a previously published news article written by candidate. This position will be open until filled.

Internal Auditor

Diocese of Fort Worth, Catholic Center

The Diocese of Fort Worth is currently seeking an internal auditor to join our finance team. This position will travel throughout the diocese to audit parishes, schools and other entities to ensure compliance with applicable federal, state, and local laws, as well as internal accounting and administrative policies and procedures. The Auditor will prepare reports and present audit findings to the Pastor/Principal and to the Diocesan

Audit Committee and Finance Council as appropriate.

The qualified candidate will be a practicing Catholic, in good standing and actively participating in a parish. CIA (Certified Internal Auditor) Certification is strongly preferred. Bilingual Spanish/English skills (written and spoken) strongly preferred. Other qualifications include, two to five years of previous experience in accounting, internal audit or compliance audit. Bachelor's degree in accounting, business or related field. Knowledge of Microsoft Office products, including Quickbooks,

Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

This position is based out of the Catholic Center in Fort Worth, but requires extensive travel throughout the diocese. The successful candidate must have reliable transportation, valid driver's license and auto liability insurance. Mileage is reimbursed.

For a full job description, please view the full position posting on www.fwdioc.org/job-opportunities. Interested candidates should send a cover letter, application and resume to hrapplications@fwdioc.org.

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2015, The Year of Consecrated Life Celebration honors those who serve Christ, welcomes others to be attentive to God's call

Photos by Donna Ryckaert

By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent

MORE THAN 200 MEN AND WOMEN WHO HAVE DEDICATED THEIR LIVES TO SERVING CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH FILLED THE PEWS 10 ROWS DEEP, at St. Patrick Cathedral in Fort Worth, Feb. 6, as the diocese launched its celebration of "2015, The Year of Consecrated Life." Seated behind them, an equal number of laity participated in the event, showing their support for the priests, brothers, sisters, and deacons from throughout the world who support the local Church.

Approximately 100 priests serve the Diocese of Fort Worth, about half of whom belong to religious orders. Also serving in the diocese are 87 religious order sisters, several religious order brothers, and more than 100 permanent deacons. In addition, the diocese has more than 30 seminarians preparing to serve in the diocese, which includes more than 700,000 Catholics in 28 North Texas counties.

The celebration at St. Patrick's included Solemn Vespers presided over by Bishop Michael F. Olson, with the Holy Trinity Seminary *Schola Cantorum* performing hymns and chants.

Following Solemn Vespers at the cathedral, priests, sisters, brothers, and deacons walked next door to the St. Patrick Pastoral Center. There, members from 20 religious orders assembled in designated areas around the walls to visit with the faithful. They provided insight into how their orders originated, the work they are doing around the world, and the current direction of their personal vocations in the Diocese of Fort Worth. The Pastoral Center was packed for the first-ever religious fair of its kind.

During his homily, Bishop Olson said the Diocese of Fort Worth owes much to religious order men and women who serve the local Church and model their dedication to Christ through their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The bishop said that a religious order man or woman lives out his or her vocation "as a leaven that can help us to live the life of the Church as

'The more we grow in our vocation, the more we love Christ, and the more we love Christ in people.'

— Sister Roberta Hesse, SSMN

a communion, centered around Christ, with the universal call to holiness at its heart."

In giving thanks for their service to the local faithful, the bishop said, "The Diocese of Fort Worth and I, as its bishop, are very grateful for the ministry of our religious brothers and sisters."

"Your witness, especially by how you live community, is so important for our formation as a local Church, including our clergy, our lay faithful, our catechists. Everyone involved in the life of the Church needs your vocation."

To end his homily, the bishop said, "Let's wake the world, with light and what we have received, and share it freely in joy of the call that He has given to each of us."

Bishop Olson's message underscored that of Pope Francis, who designated 2015 as the Year of Consecrated Life. The pope encouraged consecrated men and women to "Show everyone that to follow Christ and to put his Gospel into practice fills your hearts with happiness!"

That happiness and joy filled the nearby Pastoral Center as laity joined priests, brothers, sisters, and deacons during the continued celebration.

Among consecrated men and women in attendance was Sister Roberta Hesse, Sisters of St. Mary Namur (SSMN). A North Texas native, Sr. Roberta served 35 years as a missionary in Africa, including 25 years in the Congo.

She now resides at Our Lady of Victory Center in South Fort Worth. This special year, as designated by the pope, she said, "has given me time to rethink my life and where I actually grew into the understanding of the vows I made as a very young person." Now 80, Sr. Roberta took her first vows 54 years ago.

"The more we grow in our vocation," Sr. Roberta said, "the more we love Christ, and the more we love Christ in people."

Also in attendance was Brother Anthony John Mathison, Order of Preachers (OP), commonly referred to as the Dominicans. Br. Anthony is only six months into his novitiate year and recently heard God's call to become a priest.

"You can learn a lot about religious orders on the Internet," Br. Anthony said, "but when you actually meet one of the friars or meet one of the priests or sisters, it's much different. It's much better to meet face to face."

Brother Isaiah Marie Hofmann, with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR), said he viewed the Year of Consecrated Life as a time "to renew our own consecration, to be refreshed in it and to rediscover our charisms."

Father Tom Stabile, Third Order Regular of St. Francis (TOR), expressed similar sentiments. Pastor of St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth, Fr. Tom said, "Most religious orders came to be for a particular purpose or need. Times change, needs change ... but still, we have our roots." He said that the Year of Consecrated Life calls for men and women to not only learn more about their religious order origins, but also to ask, "What is it that we're called to do now?"

Sister Eva Sanchez, from the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (MCSH), said that now is the time to go out and proactively approach young men and women to be attentive to God's call. She serves as director of Religious Education at Holy Name Church in Fort Worth.

"Pope Francis says we should go out to them," Sr. Eva said, "instead of waiting for



Vice Chancellor Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, poses with St. Mary of Namur Sister Dorothy Powers in front of the order's display.



Vietnamese Dominican Sisters — Sr. Cecelia (L.); Sr. Catherine at Vespers.



Third Order Regular Franciscan Friars (L. to R.) Fr. Augustine Lieb, TOR; Fr. Benedict Jurchak, TOR; and Fr. Dave Morrier, TOR, pose before their booth at the reception following the Vespers service.



Holy Trinity Seminary's *Schola Cantorum* offered their musical talents to enhance the hymns and chants sung during the Vespers service Feb. 6.

them to come to us. We are the ones who should take the steps to go out.”

Sr. Eva said her order has several events planned to shine that light, including an open house at the MCSH convent in Fort Worth.

Two Nolan Catholic High School freshmen, Miranda Rivera and Hannah Brennan, served as ambassadors for the Year of Consecrated Life event. They handed out rosaries, opened doors, greeted those in attendance, and helped out in many ways.

Hannah said she felt honored to be of service to those who have entered into consecrated life. Miranda agreed, adding she is looking forward to more events involving men and women who have dedicated their lives to serving God. When she heard of an open house being planned by the MCSH sisters, she said, “That would be so cool! I want to do that.”

When Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, vice

chancellor for Parish Services and Women Religious, learned of the excitement of the Nolan freshmen, she looked skyward and exclaimed, “Yes, Lord!”

She told the *North Texas Catholic*, “That’s the kind of outreach we want to do!”

Sr. Yolanda, who coordinated the celebration with Director of Vocations Father James Wilcox, said many young men and women at the event expressed interest in the orders, open houses, and retreats.

She was also pleased at the turnout of more than 400 people.

“I was ecstatic when I saw all those people,” Sr. Yolanda said. “I really knew this was the work of the Lord. This was about people responding to a call from the pope to celebrate consecrated life.”

“This has just been a blessing for all of us.”



Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, Fr. Pio Maria Hoffmann, CFR, (L.) and Br. Thomas McGrinder, CFR, greeted visitors to their table at the reception.



Sr. Patricia Gonzalez, HCG, (left) and Sr. Diana Rodriguez, HCG, flank Bishop Olson at the reception, just as they did on Nov. 19, 2013, after celebrating his first Mass as the newly announced bishop-elect of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

Religious Congregations of Women in the Diocese of Fort Worth

Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (CCVI)
 Congregation of Divine Providence (CDP)
 Sister of the Holy Family of Nazareth (CSFN)
 Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupanas (HCG)
 Franciscan Sisters of the Immaculate Conception (HFIC)
 Missionary Catechists of Divine Providence (MCDP)
 Discalced Carmelite Nuns (OCD)

Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (MCSH)
 Vietnamese Dominican Sisters (OP)
 Olivetan Benedictine Sisters (OSB)
 Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate (SHSp)
 Sisters of St. Mary Namur (SSMN)
 School Sisters of Notre Dame (SSND)

Religious Congregations of Men in the Diocese of Fort Worth

Franciscan Friars of the Renewal (CFR)
 Congregation of Mother Co-Redemptrix (CMC)
 Heralds of Good News (HGN)
 Franciscan Friars (OFM)
 Capuchin Franciscan Friars (OFM Cap)
 Dominicans — Order of Preachers (OP)

Society of the Catholic Apostolate (SAC)
 Society of Jesus (SJ)
 Society of Divine Word (SVD)
 Third Order Regular of St. Francis (TOR)
 Confraternidad Sacerdotal de Operarios del Reino de Cristo (CORC)

Web Resources

For more information on religious congregations of women in the Diocese of Fort Worth, visit <http://www.fwdioc.org/religious-groups-women>

For more information on religious congregations of men in the Diocese of Fort Worth, visit: <http://www.fwdioc.org/religious-groups-men>

Video

Catch a YouTube glimpse of some of the many in the Diocese of Fort Worth dedicated to serving Christ and his Church: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkQmq0Vh4vw>

Cherishing the gift



(CNS illustration/Emily Thompson)



Pro-lifers listen to a speaker at the Roe Memorial Rally outside the Earle Cabell Federal Courthouse in Dallas, the site where *Roe v. Wade* was first filed. (Photo by Juan Guajardo / NTC)

Pro-Life Texas gains momentum at Austin rally, but work remains

By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent

Abby Johnson made a strange introduction on the Capitol steps in Austin Jan. 25, even by her own admission. Johnson, an eight-year veteran of a Planned Parenthood clinic who rose through the ranks to become its director, welcomed Claire Coldwell to the podium. Once a world apart on the issue of life for the unborn, these two have established a strong bond.

“As a former abortion clinic director, I never thought in my life that one of my closest friends would be an abortion survivor,” Johnson said.

Johnson, now a leading pro-life activist, was master of ceremonies for the 2015 Texas Rally for Life in Austin, which several thousand people, including more than 200 from the Diocese of Fort Worth, attended.

Johnson’s conversion came

after assisting in and witnessing an ultrasound-guided abortion. Coldwell, who survived an abortion more than 20 years ago has, in her own way, also come to appreciate life anew.

An adopted child, Coldwell told those gathered for the rally, “I always knew that family was a gift, but something I never realized was that life was a gift.”

Coldwell recounted the words her birth mother told her a few years ago, when Coldwell gave her a birthstone ring as a symbol of her gratitude for choosing adoption over abortion.

“When I gave her that ring, the words she said to me made me realize that my life was not a ‘given,’ it was a ‘gift,’” Coldwell said.

The reality, Coldwell discovered, was that her mother was 13 at the time of her pregnancy. A family member had taken her for an abortion, Coldwell said. After returning home and thinking that the abortion had ended her pregnancy, the mother

discovered that she had been expecting twins — Coldwell’s brother had been aborted, while she survived.

Born at only three pounds, the baby girl — now an adult addressing a crowd of thousands — endured years of body casts and harnesses to correct the ravaging effects of the abortion on her body.

Coldwell choked back tears as she turned from recounting the painful past to anticipating a joyful future she can now share with her own daughter.

“I want to thank all of you for being here to march and speak up for people like me,” Coldwell said.

“How many lives are we missing because of abortion?” Coldwell continued. “How many smiles, how many hugs, how many hearts are not filled with joy like mine has been?”

To a cheering crowd waving their pro-life signs high in the air, Coldwell predicted, “We will end abortion in Texas!”

Cecilia Abbott, wife of Texas

Gov. Greg Abbott, also addressed the crowd. She relayed a pledge from the governor that he will continue to defend life in Texas and that protecting the lives of the unborn will be his priority.

Newly-elected Texas Land Commissioner George P. Bush — son of former Florida Gov. Jeb Bush — also spoke. He was candid in his disdain for the Supreme Court decision, *Roe v. Wade*, that legalized abortion 42 years ago and cost nearly 57 million unborn lives.

“By standing here today, we show that every life matters,” he said. “By standing here today, we hope that every life will one day be protected under the law. And by standing here today, we know that every life is created in God’s own image.”

Joe Pojman, executive director of Texas Alliance for Life, outlined the accomplishments that have made Texas a leader in the fight to defend the unborn.



Pojman credited the reduced numbers of abortions to parental consent laws, defunding of Planned Parenthood, a strong sonogram bill requiring abortion facilities to inform women about their babies' stage of development, a ban on abortions after the fifth month, and unborn children being recognized as "persons" in the eyes of the law.

The fight to save lives of the unborn is far from over, Pojman cautioned, stating that the latest figures show that 68,000 abortions are still being performed in the state each year.

"And that's why we are here, to encourage our elected officials meeting in the Capitol for the next few months to do everything possible to protect innocent human life from conception to natural death," Pojman said.

The 200 Catholics from the Diocese of Fort Worth who attended the rally — which included a long march to the Capitol — traveled to Austin in buses that departed from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller.

Young Defenders: Students, young adults embracing pro-life cause

By Juan Guajardo
Correspondent

Thousands upon thousands of pro-lifers from across the Metroplex, Texas, and the nation came together to pray for an end to abortion during the 2015 North Texas March for Life, held Jan. 17 at Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center in Dallas, and the national March for Life, the largest pro-life event in the world, held Jan. 22 at the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

One of the most common sights at these marches? Youth.

Among the more than 5,000 marchers who participated in the North Texas March, were many youth, young adults, high-schoolers and college students. That young people are embracing the title of "the pro-life generation" is no surprise. At both the national march and the

Nancy Baum, who attends St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills, felt compelled to join the masses in support of the unborn.

"I wanted to contribute in some way to getting the pro-life message out, to save the babies," Baum said.

Teresa Johnson — who with her husband, Tim, organized the diocesan trip — agreed that the fight for life is what compels people of all ages to make the trip to Austin.

"This year, we had 35 youth, but the great thing is that we had more parents and whole families join us than ever," said Tim. "Incidentally, the oldest person on the bus was 72 and the youngest was 7. The Culture of Life is for everyone and that is why we feel called to organize it for the diocese."

Abby Johnson closed the rally by reminding pro-lifers that "this is not your pro-life activity for the year. This is a good start, but every day babies are aborted in this country and in the state of Texas. And as long as abortions are taking place, I am asking you to commit yourselves to do more."

North Texas March, young people were at the helm, leading the marchers. One national columnist who attended the D.C. March, which had approximately 200,000 marchers, called the "sea of millennials and younger..." in attendance a "counter-cultural force to be reckoned with."

Bishop Olson who was among the demonstrators at the D.C. march, led a delegation of more than 100 from the diocese, including a group from Nolan Catholic High School. The bishop, similarly accompanied by youth from our diocese, also attended the North Texas March in Dallas.

The Pro-Life Mavericks, a student group at the University of Texas at Arlington, were one of several young adult groups that took part in the North Texas March. The campus group is dedicated to ending abortion and supporting

'Respect human life through justice and mercy,' says bishop at pro-life Mass

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Approximately 500 worshippers turned out for the annual diocesan Respect Life Mass concelebrated Jan. 26 by Bishop Michael Olson,

Monsignor Joe Pemberton, rector of St. Patrick Cathedral, and other priests in the diocese.

Addressing one of the largest crowds to assemble for the pro-life liturgy, the bishop reminded his listeners why the Mass coincides with the anniversary of the Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion. He said it serves as a renewal of "the mission the Lord has given us to promote and respect the dignity of human life both through justice and mercy."

Abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, and other sins against life must be confronted as more than just a social problem. Like other offenses against God and our neighbor, they are a refusal of love and truth, he said.

"If we recognize that, then we can see the hope of the Gospel enter into the situation and see ourselves as the instruments by which hope enters in — not to a situation, but people's lives," the bishop said. "People who are — in the words of Pope Francis — in need of the field hospital of the Church,

which offers healing and grace."

He asked the congregation to see every person wounded by abortion not just in the abstract but as people with a name, a family, and a story — to help them find healing and truth.

"As you encounter them, recognize God in them and help them see the path more clearly of redemption, mercy, and of gratitude for God's gift of human life," he said.

After the homily, a candlelight procession down the center aisle of the cathedral commemorated the 56 million lives lost to abortion since 1973. The ceremony ended with Betsy Kopor, director of Rachel Ministries, placing the Book of Innocents at the foot of the altar. Pages in the ledger contain the names of unborn babies lost to abortion in the diocese.

"We hope this ceremony opens up eyes and hearts to all the indignities of life," Kopor said.

Michael Demma, diocesan director of the Respect Life Office, was pleased with the large turnout for the Mass and reception that followed in the parish hall.

"Awareness of life issues is beginning to grow at a rapid rate," he said. "Together we can end abortion in the next generation and refocus our efforts on other life issues like euthanasia and capital punishment."

mothers carrying unborn children.

"We're here to just help all the other pro-life people make a statement, a huge statement to Dallas, Texas, the U.S. and to the whole world, that we are very serious about standing up for unborn children," said Naomi Carlton, vice president of the club"

Her brother, Ben, who has attended the march multiple times, and Adam Fogel, the group's public relations director, have no-

ticed a larger percentage of young people attending the march than in years past. "It's our generation's problem to fix," Fogel said.

"The pro-life cause," Ben Carlton added, "...the idea of valuing and loving and supporting every human no matter what — no discrimination — is a very amazing idea that young people kind of run with. It's a very big purpose and that's something that young people like to have: a real purpose and a compassionate one."

Fr. Kirkham celebrates first Mass with new St. Martin de Porres Parish

By Mary Lou Seewoester
Correspondent

St. Martin de Porres, known for his service to the poor and outreach to the sick and marginalized, will lend his name to the newest parish in the Diocese of Fort Worth. The Very Rev. Karl Schilken, Vicar General of the diocese, announced the name of the parish which will serve eastern Denton County, during Sunday Masses celebrated Jan. 26 at Purefoy Elementary School, 11880 Teel Pkwy., Frisco. Worshipers belonging to the new parish are currently gathering at the local public elementary school.

“With this new parish being named St. Martin de Porres, you are never going to be able to forget who Christ is and what He is calling you to do,” Fr. Schilken said

Bishop Michael Olson announced erection of the new parish and the appointment of Father Richard Kirkham as its first pastor on Dec. 28. Fr. Kirkham had been pastor at St. Jude Thaddeus Parish in Burkburnett and celebrated his first Mass with the community of St. Martin de Porres on Feb. 8 at Purefoy Elementary.

“There is a lot of hard work ahead for St. Martin de Porres Parish and school, and the only way in which we can move forward and grow requires good stewards,” said Fr. Kirkham. “By St. Martin’s example, his way of life, how he responded to others, how he gave back and shared what he had,” he inspired and encouraged those who knew him, to be good stewards, said the newly appointed pastor.

Fr. Kirkham reminded parishioners that according to the example set



Fr. Richard Kirkham gives his first homily as pastor of St. Martin de Porres Parish in east Denton County Feb. 8. (Photo by Laura Bute)

by St. Martin de Porres, stewardship is not about ownership or control, but is “living by giving.” He encouraged his parishioners to “prayerfully consider” which ministries the new parish needs and asked them to pray for each other and for him.

“To be a good steward, you must first be a good disciple,” he added, “and to be a good disciple requires a disciplined prayer life. Without prayer, how will you best know how to respond when God is calling you to serve as one of his stewards?”

“St. Martin de Porres will be wonderful as an intercessor and patron because he’s a saint of the Americas,” said Bishop Olson in an interview with the *North Texas Catholic*. “This saint reflects a lot of the reality of our culture today in

that he was biracial and was raised in a single-parent home. He’s also the patron of civil rights and of social justice.”

Bishop Olson invited the new community to offer “attentiveness, outreach, and mission to the poor, to those who otherwise might fall through the cracks.” He added that St. Martin de Porres Parish “will need to be a parish of hospitality and openness because there are so many people moving there from other parts of the United States.”

In forming a new Catholic community, there is the challenge to “be open and flexible, to be generous, to live the call of solidarity, to be open to the guidance and care of their pastor, Fr. Kirkham,” Bishop Olson added. “In the communal life

of parish, avoid divisions at all costs and really work hard to be united in the Gospel and be people of prayer and generosity.”

More than 100 parishioners met with Fr. Kirkham for the first time on Jan. 15 to discuss choosing a parish name and construction of buildings for the church and school to serve Catholics in the eastern Denton County communities of Prosper, Little Elm, and west Frisco.

Jason and Alexis Campbell attended the meeting with Fr. Kirkham because they are “looking for an opportunity to help grow a parish that will serve not only our needs and our children’s needs, but also the needs of the larger community.”

According to Fr. Kirkham, the first phase of construction will be the parish school, which currently accommodates Pre-K through third grades in a remodeled building in west Frisco. Phase two will include construction of the new church building. The property for both the church and school is located north of Highway 380 between Teel Parkway and Windsong Drive.

“We’re so excited to now have a pastor, a piece of land, and a plan for moving forward,” remarked Jason Campbell.

“We want to be involved in the groundwork — to be a part of a parish that will last into the future,” he added. “And I hope to still be around here in 30 years to see how it’s grown and matured.”

Parishioner Tom McCall echoed Bishop Olson’s call for offering the gift of hospitality. “This is about getting to people when they’re young and saying ‘this is your home — come and make this your home,’” he said.

Martin Luther King Mass homilist reminds faithful of the power and obligations of Baptism

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

Saturday, Jan. 10 found St. Rita's Catholic Church in East Fort Worth ringing with strains of freedom and hope as people from around the diocese gathered to remember the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Bishop Michael Olson presided over the memorial mass which has been celebrated annually in the Diocese of Fort Worth since 1986, the year Dr. King's birthday was first observed as a national holiday. Joining Bishop Olson were Father Carmen Mele, OP; Father Eric Michael Groner, SVD, pastor of St. Rita's, and guest homilist Father Anthony Chandler, longtime friend of Bishop Olson's from their days at The Catholic University of America in Washington, DC.

Taking place on the Baptism of the Lord, gave Fr. Chandler an opportunity to speak of the call to service and conversion that everyone receives in Baptism. He drew parallels between Jesus' mission of salvation and Dr. King's call to civil leadership.

"There are four aspects of Jesus' baptism that I'd like to reflect upon tonight," he said. "First, Jesus humbles himself. Next, he is empowered by the Holy Spirit to begin God's mission. He then accepts God's mission, and in so doing expresses his solidarity with those who wanted to change the world."

In being baptized by John, Fr. Chandler explained, Jesus, though he was sinless, shows his humility. Dr. King's humility allowed him to see the inherent dignity of each human person and to receive the power of the Holy Spirit, which

in turn, enabled him to accept his role in the public arena, in spite of the grave personal consequences it could and did have on him. In this way, Fr. Chandler continued, Dr. King was united to Christ at the moment of his agony in the garden. Both our Lord and Dr. King knew the cost of their acceptance of the mission God had for each of them.

The power of the Holy Spirit made manifest at Jesus' baptism, that flowed out of Dr. King's baptism, and that all the faithful are called to receive, gives each Christian the courage to express their solidarity with those who wish to change the world, Fr. Chandler said.

"Those who stood before John to be baptized were sick of persecution, cruelty, and war — as are we." Fr. Chandler said. "So what did they do? They repented of *their* sins because they knew that to change the world they had to change *themselves*."

Fr. Chandler expanded his thoughts on the role of personal conversion in an e-mail.

"Many have become complacent in their prayer life. No prayer and no service ultimately leads to no God and no faith," he said. "This is the opposite of our being connected to Christ and his Church. We have been called, washed, redeemed, and saved!! The 'me only' mentality is not representative of Christ."

Fr. Chandler summed up his thoughts by reminding the congregation of the beloved song, "Let There Be Peace on Earth." In the lyric we ask that peace begin within our own hearts.

"It's easy to sing but hard to live," Fr. Chandler said. "But a

servant of God is one who sees his life directed by the will of God. If this were true of each of us, how different our world would be."

Bishop Olson blesses the congregation with Holy Water at St. Rita's Parish in Fort Worth during the 30th Annual Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Mass celebrated by Bishop Olson. (NTC / Juan Guajardo)



Brooklyn Masters listens to instructions before the Mass on Jan. 11 at St. Rita Parish in Fort Worth. (NTC / Juan Guajardo)



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Father Anh Tran, new Judicial Vicar outlines Marriage Tribunal annulment process, points to how it allows people to return to the sacraments

Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Pope Francis generated widespread media attention last fall when he voiced concerns about the annulment process in the Catholic Church. During meetings with canon lawyers and Vatican officials, he suggested procedures that declare a marriage invalid could be more efficient and possibly free of charge.

"The Diocese of Fort Worth is doing that already," says Father Anh Tran who was appointed Judicial Vicar by Bishop Michael Olson on Jan. 1. "We're very accessible to people and try our very best to make it expedient for them."

As the bishop's representative, Fr. Tran will oversee the diocese's Marriage Tribunal which adjudicates whether a marriage, presumed to be valid according to Church law, actually fell short of at least one of the essential elements required for a valid consent.

Under the leadership of Bishop Joseph Delaney, the fee for petitioning for an annulment was eliminated. However, in recent years it has become necessary to charge a very nominal fee of \$100 which covers the Appellate Court cost. In some cases a Court Appointed Expert may be called upon to examine a case, and that fee is covered by the petitioner.

The oldest of eight children, Fr. Tran came to the U.S. as a refugee from Vietnam in 1975. His family settled in East Fort Worth where he graduated from St. Rita Catholic School and Eastern Hills High School.

After earning a bachelor's degree in philosophy from Conception College Seminary in Missouri, he attended Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving for theology



Fr. Anh Tran, new Judicial Vicar for the diocese says God's grace draws people back to the sacraments. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

and completed his studies in 1990 at Houston's St. Mary Seminary. The late Bishop Joseph Delaney ordained him to the priesthood in May 1990 at St. Matthew Church in Arlington. Fr. Tran went on to receive his Licentiate in Canon Law (JCL) from The Catholic University of America in 1996.

"I feel it's a blessing from the Lord, and I thank God and Bishop Olson for allowing me to serve God's people in this position I was trained for," explained the new judicial vicar. In addition to various parish assignments, Fr. Tran also served the diocese as Director of Vocations from 1999 to 2007.

According to the experienced Marriage Tribunal adjudicator, there are several misconceptions about the Catholic Church's annulment process.

"I think one of the biggest misconceptions that the public may have is that an annulment makes children illegitimate. That's not true," Fr. Tran stated emphatically.

The Catholic Church acknowledges there was a valid civil contract, and the spouses were lawfully married in the eyes of

the state. Therefore, children born of this union are legitimate according to the Church and Canon 1137.

"What God has made no one can divide." Canon 1060 states: "Marriage possesses the favor of the law; therefore, in a case of doubt, the validity of marriage must be upheld until the contrary is proven." Annulments are granted only when there is proof of invalid consent.

The Tribunal investigates grounds that might overturn the presumed validity of marriage. "That might mean one or both of the parties didn't know what they were getting into. There may have been a misconception about marriage itself," he explains. "They might have been too young or might have been forced into it due to pregnancy or some other situation in their lives. They did not fully give free consent."

Other grounds for annulment could be psychological problems that were present prior to the marriage or entering the marriage with an intention not to have children or to remain faithful.

A goal of the annulment process is to help people clarify their

status in the Church, to return to the sacraments, to marry in the Church, and become closer to the Lord. "People want to receive the sacraments and have a better relationship to God," says Fr. Tran, who worked in the Appellate Court for the Dioceses of Texas in San Antonio since 1996 as a Defender of the Bond of marriage. "That's why they are willing to go through this process."

The skilled Canon Law specialist says Marriage Tribunals exist to help people.

"God doesn't want people to suffer. God does not want people to be separated from his love and grace, so he uses the Church to help bring them back," the soft-spoken priest explains. "The process for some can be healing and very cathartic."

The most difficult part for some applicants is reopening the wounds of a failed marriage. The gathering of documents and choosing knowledgeable witnesses can be time consuming. A former spouse can choose not to participate in the process, but the Tribunal gives him or her the opportunity to be heard.

With Pope Francis' welcoming words and actions drawing more lapsed Catholics back to the fold, Fr. Tran expects the number of petitions to increase. Last year the Marriage Tribunal judged 153 cases. Another 20 cases were accepted but later withdrawn by the applicants.

"Challenges are there for us, but grace from God is available to all people," he adds. "We have a good team and support from parish advocates."

His advice to Catholics contemplating an annulment is: "Don't be afraid."

"God will give you the grace to come back."

Jason Spoolstra named director of Youth Ministry for diocese

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Eager to get young Catholics involved in parish life? According to Jason Spoolstra, the motivating factor could be something as simple as a heartfelt invitation.

“Look them in the eye and ask, ‘Have you thought about coming to our Wednesday night meeting? We’d love to have you,’” advises the 29-year-old who became Director of Youth Ministry for the Diocese of Fort Worth Dec. 15.

“You have to make a connection with them,” says the energetic youth leader. “Every young person in the community is a potential member of the youth group whether they’re Catholic or not. What matters are the questions: Are we bringing Christ to them? Are we inviting them?”

It was the welcoming, Spirit-filled program at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller that brought Spoolstra closer to his faith as a teen. He credits former youth minister, Matt Gill, for inspiring him and helping him grow spiritually.

“My youth minister had a profound effect on me,” says the cradle Catholic, who learned how to pray at those meetings. “The way he brought Christ to us made me want to learn more. He was always there to answer our questions.”

The Richland High School student became a regular at youth group activities, participated in all the service projects, and volunteered for special events. By his junior year in high school, he was discerning a call to the priesthood.

“I knew God was calling me toward Him, but I didn’t know how,” Spoolstra admits. “I thought I would probably end up



Jason Spoolstra, new director of Youth Ministry, comes to the position with broad experience and great enthusiasm for building youth programs that present authentic Catholicism. (NTC Photo / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

in the seminary.”

The public high school senior was so serious about a potential vocation, he did a classroom project on the religious life.

“There were a lot of blank stares,” he says, remembering the reaction from classmates. “Most of the kids at my high school didn’t care about God or religion, but I was always one of those kids not afraid to speak about my faith and evangelize.”

After graduation, Spoolstra took that enthusiasm with him to the University of North Texas where he studied history and discussed Catholicism with other students. One conversation remains particularly vivid. A girl who lived in his dorm noticed the John Paul II T-shirt he was wearing and asked if he was Catholic. She was Lutheran.

“We hit it off as friends, and one evening we spent several hours talking about the differences and similarities of our faiths,” he recalls. “There was no bickering or arguing — just a conversation.

I had answers and she was very open to what I was saying.”

Several years later, after deciding not to enter the seminary, Spoolstra began dating the young woman. Friendship blossomed into romance and Becky Mahn became his wife Becky Spoolstra in 2008. The couple now has a baby daughter, Clare.

Before joining the diocesan staff, the experienced youth minister used his engaging personality and easy smile to build youth programs at several parishes. During college, he worked as a part-time youth leader at St. Maria Goretti Parish in Arlington and eventually became the parish’s Confirmation coordinator. In 2009, after college graduation, the youth leader and his new wife moved to Springfield, Virginia where he began a full-time ministry job at St. Bernadette Church. Two years later, when a youth ministry position opened up at St. Thomas Aquinas Church in Pilot Point, the Spoolstras moved back to North Texas.

“I loved working with the kids at St. Thomas, so applying for the diocesan job was a big decision for me. I spent a lot of time in prayer about it,” he says.

In addition to planning a successful diocesan pilgrimage for 200 teens and their chaperones to World Youth Day in Poland next year, the new diocesan director has other short-term goals he’d like to accomplish. The Diocese of Fort Worth is large, with diverse demographics, so no one type of youth program suits all parishes.

“But some things are universal,” Spoolstra acknowledges. “In today’s culture, there’s a pervasive view that the Catholic Church is ‘outdated’ and ‘behind’ the times, so we need strong families, volunteers, youth ministers, and catechists to counter that indifference and ignorance and really teach the faith.”

And he wants to encourage youth ministers to be exciting and joyful.

“That’s what drew me in,” he says, recalling his teenage years in youth ministry. “It wasn’t someone up there being boring and giving a list of facts or fluff. It was someone saying, ‘Here’s the truth. This is exciting. It will bring you joy. All are welcome.’”

Youth ministry competes with a society fraught with relativism and an “anything goes” mentality. An effective youth program will lead kids to Christ in an environment that’s authentically Catholic and presents the truth.

“If we’re going to raise the next generation of Catholics and the next generation of priests, we have to give young people something that challenges them,” Spoolstra asserts. “Kids want to hear the truth. They may not always like it, but we still have to give them the fullness of truth.”

Sr. Marie Anthony Hunter, SSMN, (1917-2015) taught and administered in Catholic schools, inspiring others

By Jenara Kocks Burgess
Correspondent

Sister Marie Anthony Hunter (Sister Alice Hunter,) SSMN, 97-year-old retired educator who taught at Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur Schools in the Fort Worth and Dallas dioceses, died at Our Lady of Victory Center on Jan. 23. Mass of Christian Burial was at 10 a.m. Tuesday, Jan. 27 at Our Lady of Victory Center. Interment followed at Mount Olivet. Her wake was observed at 6:30 p.m. Monday, Jan. 26, at OLV Center.

Alice Fay Hunter was born in Fort Worth in 1917. She was a graduate of Our Lady of Victory Academy and, inspired by the example and teaching of Sister Gertrude Moore and Sister Elizabeth Williams, she entered the Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur on Aug. 15, 1936, taking the religious name of Sister Marie Anthony. She made her final vows on Aug. 15, 1945.

Sr. Marie Anthony earned a Bachelor of Arts from Our Lady of Victory College in 1946 and a Masters in Education from The Catholic University of America in 1954.

She served as administrator and teacher in Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur schools in Fort Worth, Beaumont, Dallas, and Sherman.

Sister Bernice Knapke, SSMN, said that Sr. Marie Anthony was one of the first sisters she came in contact with at St. James School in Dallas, and she was also her eighth grade teacher.

"The other day when I was reflecting on Sister Alice's life, I thought to myself, unknowingly, she had a great influence on me in the world of education. And I stayed in it myself for over 40 years," said Sr. Bernice, a retired teacher and



Sr. Marie Anthony Hunter, SSMN

principal.

"She not only taught us the basic subjects of religion, math, literature, and science, Sr. Marie Anthony gave us a great appreciation for music and art. We had the privilege of singing during school programs, Mass, May processions, funerals, and whenever needed. In art, we studied the masters. When Sister left St. James School and Parish in Dallas after 12 years, there was a sadness among the families whose children had had her as a teacher and principal. She had touched so many lives in the parish," said Sr. Bernice.

One of the things Sr. Bernice remembered about Sr. Marie Anthony was her excitement and enthusiasm for education and her students, as well as her creativity and artistic abilities.

"There was that enthusiasm that was passed onto the students and came to the parents," Sr. Bernice said. "The parents knew that she loved the children and that she wanted the best for them. There was that beautiful spirit of 'How can I help these young children and families become who they are supposed to become?'"

Sr. Marie Anthony's peak years were those in which she was

involved with *Learning Math with the Cuisenaire Rods*, according to the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur. When this method was introduced to the Diocese of Dallas in the 1960s, Sister Mary Charles Payne and Sr. Marie Anthony became "apostles" of the method. Sr. Marie Anthony became the resident expert in the instructional system, which uses relationships of colored "rods" to teach math. Sr. Mary Charles used the method to teach *Words in Color*, a phonetic system of teaching reading using color to show the relationship between oral and written language. Sr. Marie Anthony was on the faculty of the University of Dallas during this time, teaching elementary school administration and serving as the assistant superintendent of schools for the Diocese of Dallas.

Sr. Alice was principal at St. Mary's Parish School in Sherman from 1972 to 1991. She retired from formal teaching in 1991. The "Sherman Sisters" community of Sister Mary Charles, Sister Alice, Sister Marion Celeste, and Sister Regina taught at St. Mary's for 25 years, retiring together from formal teaching in 1991. They continued to serve the parish until 1996 when the community relocated to Our Lady of Victory in Fort Worth.

Father Jeremy Myers, pastor of

St. Mary's Parish in Sherman, said in his homily at Sr. Alice's Mass of Christian Burial, that he met Sr. Alice after she had retired from being principal for 20 years at St. Mary's and while she continued to serve the parish as the director of religious education.

Fr. Myers also said in the homily that though she was short in stature, she was a woman who stood her ground, and she made a great impact on St. Mary's School and Parish.

Fr. Myers said Sr. Alice also had a soft side. He said she loved children, would never turn a child away because their parents couldn't afford tuition, and she and the other sisters were known for going without food themselves so that they could buy food for the hungry.

"She would say her happiest years were in Sherman. They also were some of our happiest," Fr. Myers said.

Although her health declined in recent years, Sr. Alice was committed to a life of prayer and community concerns until the end.

Sr. Alice is survived by nieces and nephews, and the sisters of her religious community.

Memorials may be made to Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, 909 W. Shaw, Fort Worth, Texas 76110.

To Report Misconduct

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

- Call Judy Locke, victim assistance coordinator, (817) 945-9340 or e-mail her at jlocke@fwdioc.org
- Or call the Sexual Abuse Hot-line (817) 945-9345 and leave a message.

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CATHOLIC CHARITIES

Catholic Charities' Urban Manor provides safe housing for low income residents



Catholic Charities' Urban Manor provides safe, low-income housing for up to 194 families and clients. (NTC / Juan Guajardo)

Each day, as Yvette “Tay” Robson makes her daily rounds through the Urban Manor apartment complex, her purposeful stride is halted every few minutes by the enthusiastic greetings of residents of all ages.

Robson, the complex’s service coordinator, welcomes the interruptions. She happily dispenses high-fives and hugs, gathers health updates, and trades jokes with members of the community, which became part of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW)’s housing program in 2012. The mission of Urban Manor, said Robson, is to help low-income individuals and families to achieve long-term self-sufficiency. Access to safe, clean, and affordable housing is a critical need for those with limited financial resources, she explained.

“We have residents from a wide variety of challenging life situations,” said Robson. “Many of them are refugees, coming from experiences of conflict and loss. Others have experienced homelessness, or they are currently in addiction recovery. Each resident, no matter what their challenge, deserves their dignity — to feel respected — and our staff works hard to meet that need.”

Robson noted that staff

members also work hard to foster the connections that make the complex feel like a true home to the 284 families who were served there during the past year. Residents can take part in a community garden, tutoring and ESL classes, health clinics, and job fairs. A monthly food pantry offered by the Tarrant Area Food Bank, as well as legal and immigration services offered through CCFW, are just a few of the ways that residents can find needed assistance, said Robson.

CCFW Executive Director of Housing Monica Quiroz explained that applicants to Urban Manor must undergo background checks, and individuals with a history of violent or sexual crimes cannot be accepted. “We provide after-hours security on the property to help make this a safe environment,” said Quiroz. “We keep the rental rates low and offer the on-site services so that [residents] can move out of poverty.”

Resident Abubakar Nyelenkeh, a refugee from the West African country of Sierra Leone, called Urban Manor a place where he feels “successful” in his efforts to become a productive member of society. “This is a place of encouragement, of hope,” he mused. “It is a blessing place. It is truly my home.”

LIGHTER & BRIGHTER



Pope Francis embraces Jun Chura, 14, and Glyzelle Palomar, 12, two former street children who spoke during a meeting with young people at the University of St. Thomas in Manila, Philippines, Jan. 18. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)



Bishop Salvatore R. Matano of Rochester, N.Y., reaches out to bless 4-year-old Lauren Hayes during the diocesan Mass for Life Jan. 18 at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Rochester. (CNS photo/Mike Crupi, CATHOLIC COURIER)



Bishop Oscar Cantu of Las Cruces, N.M., chats with a Palestinian woman at St. Anthony Home for the Elderly in Bethlehem, West Bank, Jan. 14. Bishop Cantu is part of the Holy Land Coordination visit for bishops from Europe and North America. (CNS photo/Debbie Hill)



Catholic and Orthodox priests join other ministers for an inaugural ceremony for a church made entirely from ice at Balea Lac resort of Romania. (CNS photo/Radu Sigheti, Reuters)



Jeanette Clark, dances during a birthday party for centenarians Jan. 20 at the Little Sisters of the Poor's Queen of Peace Residence in the Queens borough of New York. Clark is one of eight residents celebrating 100 or more years in 2015. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

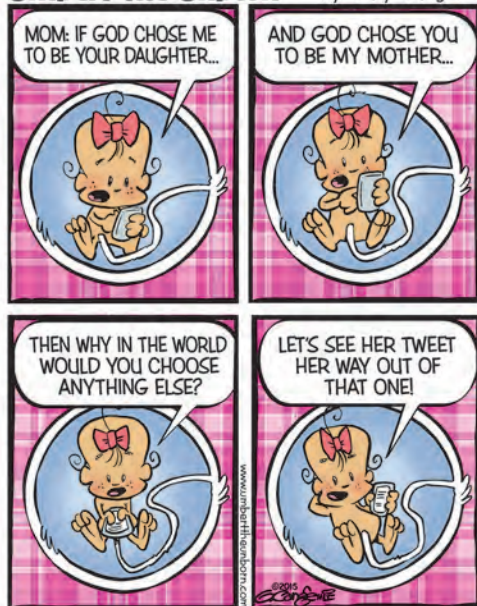


A woman wears a Nigerian ceremonial head scarf for an annual Black History Month Mass Feb. 1 at New York's St. Patrick Cathedral. (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Comic Retreat By: Brian & Juli Montfort



Umbert the Unborn by Gary Cangemi



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'Go Beyond All You Know' and believe the Gospel

BY JEFF HEDGLEN

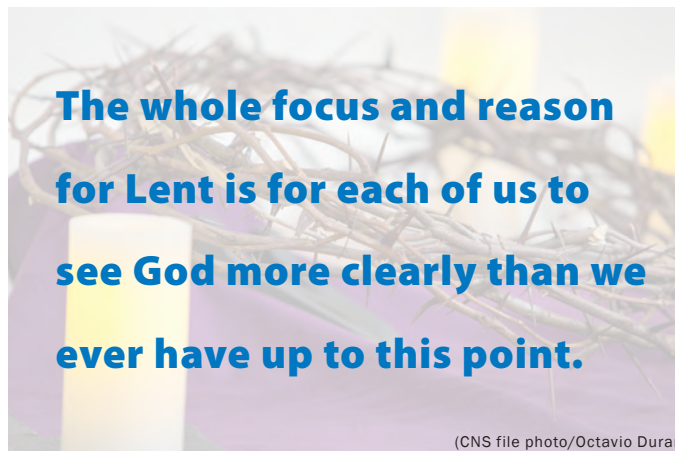


Jeff Hedglen is director of Young Adult Ministry and Campus Ministry for the diocese. He is also the founder and primary convener of Camp Fort Worth's many editions. His column received second place honors for best spiritual life columns by CPA of the United States and Canada in 2014.

AT ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICES, WHEN WE COME FORWARD TO RECEIVE ASHES ON OUR FOREHEADS, ONE OF THE PHRASES WE HEAR IS: "REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL." This phrase comes from the beginning of the Gospel of Mark. Jesus has just come out of his 40 day fast in the desert, and his cousin John has just been arrested. Jesus is beginning his ministry and calling his first disciples, and He leads with this rather shocking and challenging proclamation.

He does not start his Kingdom-bringing ministry with: "Come have some food and a good time," nor does He say: "Hey there, friend, would you like to know how to have everything and more in life?" He also does not say, "So, in three years I am going to lay down my life for the forgiveness of your sins, then I am going to be raised from the dead conquering the power of sin and death forever." No, He leads with "Repent and believe the Good News."

I recently heard a homily given by Father John Robert Skeldon where he expounded on this phrase. He said that in the original Greek, the word repent is the command form of the word *metanoia*, which he says is literally translated as "to go beyond your mind" or "to go beyond all you know." In essence he says this



(CNS file photo/Octavio Duran)

phrase is not a gentle nudge or suggestion, but a command to total, constant, and continual conversion and transformation. This word is packed with way more than our general understanding of the word repent.

It is no accident that the Church uses this phrase to begin the season of Lent, our own personal 40-day journey in the desert. The challenge to "go beyond all we know and believe the Gospel" is a pretty daunting task. This is a call to get out of our comfort zone and dive deeper than ever before into what we believe about Jesus and his saving work.

This is especially challenging because even though the Church liturgical calendar changes, our daily schedule remains pretty much the same. We still have to

go to work or school. We still have to make time to eat and sleep. Parents still have to take care of their children, and we all still have to invest time and energy into the relationships in our lives.

We do not have the luxury to take a 40-day retreat and devote our entire being to total transformation. Yet, it is to this that we are called this Lent. So how do we do this? To be honest there is no one answer that will work with every person. Each of us has to decide for ourselves how best to "go beyond our mind."

For some it will be going to Mass more; for others taking time before the Blessed Sacrament; for others it will be all they can do to fit an extra 15 minutes a day for quiet and prayer. For others their Lenten sacrifice might take the form of giving up some food or

activity they love to daily remind them of their need for Jesus. Another idea is to look at the coming weeks and find a weekend, day, or half a day that you can take just for yourself or your family and have your own retreat. It might take some organizing and sacrifice to pull this off, but the return on this effort could be life changing.

In truth God will honor any effort you make with a pure heart for "The pure of heart shall see God" (*Matthew 5:8*). The whole focus and reason for Lent is for each of us to see God more clearly than we ever have up to this point. Further, the beauty of the Christian faith is that we are never done growing, seeking, and deepening our love for Jesus.

This Lent let us embrace the urging of our Savior to go beyond our mind and be totally transformed by his love, so that, come Easter, we are more ready than ever to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus.

God's installation

A magnificent masterpiece

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

WHEN PLANS FOR OUR BLANKETY-BLANK-YEAR CLASS REUNION BEGAN, THE CONVERSATIONS WERE ENTHUSIASTIC, CREATIVE, INCLUSIVE, FLEXIBLE. Our behavior was, in short, exactly like we learned at Pueblo Catholic High School whose blankety-blank-year graduation we were acknowledging.

We were, notably, the “class of blankety-blank,” about whom there was a television series produced in 1977. The name of the series was “Whatever Happened to the Class of ‘Blank’”

I never watched it because I already knew what happened to us. Nothing much. This is probably why the series lasted for only one season.

Still we are planning for the reunion of our class, and suddenly the ruckus is louder than a pep rally in the PCH gymnasium, or a rooster in my daughter Abby’s chicken coop; the disagreements are worse than our nouns and verbs ever were, even when we studied Latin. If there had been this much conflict in the TV series about our class, it would have lasted longer.

But we did learn a lot in high school, and the reunion meetings have been a reenactment of some of it. For every idea presented, there has been a separate and very much unequal idea competing with it.

Okay, I got that wrong, but I did not take physics in high school.

What I am saying is that a lot of arguing has taken place in this otherwise holy Catholic high school graduating class.

The other day my friend Jon asked me what the reunion process reminded me of. I said, attempting humor, that it reminded me of the Steven King book, *IT*. In that book, later made into a movie, a group of children, grown up now, returned to their hometown. Their quest was to recapture a monster spider that lived in the sewer when they were kids.



“IT’s back,” the movie trailer might have said.

“They eliminated it once before — now they have to do it again.”

We never had a giant spider living under Pueblo, Colorado, but I liked the idea of coming together again. There would be an onslaught of old football players, old pep squad presidents, old student journalists, maybe even old nuns. After all, some of those sisters were barely older than we were back then, and they might still be around and active now.

This blessed event would be the reincarnation of the class of blankety-blank, and we intended to make the most of it.

There were so many people I wanted to see again. I hoped they’d show up at the reunion, if not the planning meetings, because those were as frightening as a giant spider.

My friend Jon replied that my reunion analogy was an interesting concept, but instead, the reunion planning reminded him of a huge art project, titled *Over The River*, proposed to be installed in Southern Colorado.

Created by Bulgarian artist Christo and his late wife, Jeanne-Claude, the installation is to be a suspension of 5.9 miles of silvery, luminous fabric panels high above the Arkansas River along a 42-mile stretch of the river between Salida and Cañon City.

Christo and his wife began scouting for

a location for the temporary installation in the 1990s, after visiting 89 rivers in seven states.

But there were many objections and even some lawsuits. The installation was contested in court by an organization which opposed it on the grounds that the art would endanger animals in and along the river. They sued the Bureau of Land Management in 2012, and on Jan. 2, 2015, the Federal District Court upheld the Bureau of Land Management’s approval.

Their artwork, from the beginning, is always a process, the artists have said. From public hearings, where local residents voice their concerns, to the point where they gradually came to understand what the artists are trying to do, and that it will not have an adverse affect on the land or the people — all of it is part of the art.

Because the artists’ sincerity and joy are contagious, the art becomes a shared joy for the artists, the participants, and the viewers.

That was a good viewpoint too, I told my friend Jon.

So, we are all in this together, we two realized. Not just the reunion planning, but our previous school career, and the actual reunion to come. We are the reunion.

And that seems profound to me.

In high school we learned to live in a Christlike way; living it, we hopefully taught it to our children. All our lives are the artwork; all those around us part of the art and part of the viewing public.

We are God’s installation.



Kathy Cribari Hamer and her husband are members of St. Andrew Parish. Her column has been recognized repeatedly by the Catholic Press Association. For information about her book, ME

AND THE CHICKENS, go to somethingelseagain.com

Believing in Unbelief

The twist in the story

By David Mills

HE HAD BEEN ONE OF THE FEW MAJOR WRITERS IN ENGLAND WHO WAS AN OPEN CHRISTIAN. HE EVEN WROTE A SHORT BOOK ARGUING FOR THE CHRISTIAN FAITH, REJECTING THE SECULAR ALTERNATIVES MOST OF HIS PEERS IN THE INTELLECTUAL WORLD BELIEVED TO BE OBVIOUSLY TRUE.

When a newspaper wanted an article giving a religious point of view, its editor called him. And then, after writing a biography of C. S. Lewis, A. N. Wilson lost his faith.

It's a story with a twist, and losing his faith after writing a biography of the most famous Christian writer of the twentieth century isn't it.

"At last!" writes Wilson in the English magazine the *New Statesman*. "I could join in the creed shared by so many (most?) of my intelligent contemporaries in the western world — that men and women are purely material beings (whatever that is supposed to mean), that 'this is all there is' (ditto), that God, Jesus and religion are a load of baloney; and worse than that, the cause of . . . all the trouble in the world, from Jerusalem to Belfast, from Washington to Islamabad."

He had finally (he thought) seen that Christianity was very wrong. Its belief in "a loving God in a suffering universe" is "nonsense." Because Jesus thought the world was going to end soon, the idea that he founded a Church that would last is "preposterous." He had lost a "sense of God's presence in life."

It's a version of the usual ex-believer's list. Christianity's foundational ideas can't be believed, and its Scriptures and traditions can be proved to be wrong, and on top of that, it doesn't feel right anymore. The third reason may often be the strongest. You never really know why people lose their faith, but personal reasons must have a lot more to do

The kind of things he admired in Gandhi, for example, were the kind of things you have to deny when "you embrace the bleak, muddled creed of a materialist atheist."

A statue of Mohandas Gandhi
(CNS file photo/Babu, Reuters)

with it than most of them admit. Wilson himself describes his conversion to atheism as "a bit of middle-aged madness."

The twist in the story is that he became more certain about his lost faith than he had been about it when he believed it. He became very religious about his atheism.

For the first time in his life Wilson felt the pleasures of pure, flat-out, undoubted belief, even though it was belief in unbelief. He had been a questioning Christian, but he became a convinced atheist. At last, as he said above, he fit in. He saw what's what.

The feeling didn't last. After a while, he began to see that "so very many of the people I had most admired and loved, either in life or in books, had been believers." Gandhi was one. He was moved by the Christian opposition to the Nazis and by the Lutheran pastor Dietrich Bonhoeffer's serenity before the Nazis executed him.

He hints but doesn't really say that he

began to see the problems with atheism. The kind of things he admired in Gandhi, for example, were the kind of things you have to deny when "you embrace the bleak, muddled creed of a materialist atheist." The existence of language, love, and music, "suggest that human beings are very much more than collections of meat."

His atheism couldn't explain any of these things. He became convinced — as he had been years before — "that we are spiritual beings, and that the religion of the incarnation, asserting that God made humanity in His image, and continually restores humanity in His image, is simply true. As a working blueprint for life, as a template against which to measure experience, it fits."

Leaving Christianity can feel like a liberation. You're no longer the odd man out. You don't have to explain hard beliefs, like the claim that God is perfectly loving even though so many people suffer so much. You're not embarrassed by what other Christians do. And you don't have to do anything to be a good atheist.

But for some people, like A. N. Wilson, it still doesn't satisfy. "My departure from the Faith was like a conversion on the road to Damascus," he writes at the end of his article. "My return was slow, hesitant, doubting. So it will always be; but I know I shall never make the same mistake again."

SOURCE: www.newstatesman.com/religion/2009/04/onversion-experience-atheism

David Mills is the author of *DISCOVERING MARY* and his column, "Catholic Sense" runs in multiple diocesan publications. He and his family attend St. Joseph Church in Coraopolis, Pennsylvania. He blogs at www.patheos.com/blogs/davidmills.

SEEKING GOD'S PATH VOCATIONS

Be still and hear the voice of God

BY FATHER JAMES WILCOX



Father James Wilcox was ordained to the priesthood in 2013 and serves as the Vocations Director for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

RECENTLY, I HAD THE PLEASURE OF VISITING A FRIEND. DAVID WAS IN SEMINARY WITH ME AND HAS REMAINED FRIENDS WITH MANY OF US FROM SEMINARY, HOWEVER, AT THAT TIME, WITH PRAYER HE DISCERNED HE WAS NOT CALLED TO PRIESTHOOD. Since David just bought a new home, two other priest friends and I decided to go for a visit. During a conversation with David on our trip, he reminded me that discipline fosters the spiritual life. Or better yet, the rhythm of prayer, meditation, and conversation with God are essential for growth in the spiritual life.

For all of us who are seeking God's will for our lives, discipline in the spiritual life is necessary to reap a bountiful harvest. This is especially true for those discerning their call to priesthood and religious life. God speaks through the rhythmic discipline of prayer.

Many analogies spring to mind concerning the disciplined life:

- The farmer's routine of tilling, sowing, weeding, and reaping.
- The rancher tending the herd and scheduled milking of the cows.
- The athlete maintaining the required regimen for achieving the goals.
- The musician's habitual practice to perfect their pitch, tone, rhythm, all in accord with their fellow orchestra musicians.

The spiritual life requires the same consistency. However, spiritual progress requires not only a disciplined prayer life, but also a docility of life that is vulnerable and accepting of the Holy Spirit's movements in the heart. This docility allows the beauty of the Lord to come into our lives and impassion our hearts with his desire.

Many of my male friends joke about the "honey-do lists" that their wives prepare for them.

The husbands, for the most part, approach the list and begin the tasks of repairing the fence, fixing a piece of broken furniture, and replacing lightbulbs.

It can be a temptation to approach our prayer life as solely a "honey-do list" for God. After all, in his Scripture God told us "Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you" (Matthew 7:7). Rightly, we come before God with requests to have certain things happen in our lives. Still, beyond lifting our petitions, prayer must be a regular moment when we silence ourselves

to hear the voice of God in the stillness of our hearts. The hush that comes over us when we are docile to the movements of the Holy Spirit allows the whisper of God to travel on the breath of love deep into our hearts, minds, and souls. The grace of his voice, heard with a demeanor of docility, explodes within us and ignites us to answer his call for our lives.

In this Year of Consecrated Life, we have only to look at men and women religious who have felt the breath of God in their hearts and with his grace have committed their lives to the service of God's love in service of his people. These men and women are dynamic examples of discipline and docility, participating in and being open to the movements of the Holy Spirit working in their lives.

Last year, Pope Francis spoke about the docility of one of the apostles, St. Philip. The Pope stated, "this makes us see that without this docility or meekness before the voice of God, nobody can evangelize, nobody can announce Jesus Christ: at the very most he will be announcing himself. It's God who calls us, it's God who starts Philip on that road. And Philip goes forth. He's docile." Philip accepts the call from God, leaves everything behind, and sets off to evangelize.

The Lenten season is a great time to return to or begin a new disciplined prayer life. Please consider holding the seminarians and those considering priesthood or religious life in your prayers. Cut the calendar of seminarian names out, put it in your Bible, prayer book, or breviary, and offer a prayer by name for the seminarian listed on that day of the month.

May this Lent be a turning of your heart through a disciplined prayer life and a docile demeanor to hearing the will of God and have the grace of courage to act.



DAILY PRAYER LIST FORT WORTH SEMINARIANS 2014-2015

Day of the Month	Please pray for the following seminarians:
1	Jason Allan
2	Jeffrey Ambreit-Quepons
3	Justin Conover
4	Jonathan Denma
5	Ricky Diaz
6	Tyler Dubek
7	Deacon Michael Greco
8	Brandon Hall
9	Deacon Keith Hatliaway
10	Kevin Hathaway
11	Stephen Htauck
12	William Hayes
13	Austin Hoodempyle
14	Ed Hopkins
15	Thomas Jones
16	Joseph Keating
17	David LaPointe
18	John Martin
19	Pedro Martinez
20	Samuel Maul
21	Deacon Ronaldo Mercado
22	Brett Metzler
23	Maurice Moon
24	Joseph Moreno
25	Linh Nguyen
26	Nghia Nguyen
27	Rijo Philip
28	Michael Sumcizk
29	Matthew Tatyrek
30	Anthony Vecchio
31	for those discerning vocations

In your daily prayers, please include the following seminarians on your list of people to pray for.

Thank you for your support and generosity.

How to deal with temptation

BY MARLON DE LA TORRE

WHEN WE TALK ABOUT TEMPTATION, IT OFTEN CARRIES A NEGATIVE CONNOTATION BECAUSE IT IS ASSUMED TO BE SOMETHING WE SHOULD NOT BE SUBJECT TO. But there's a certain beauty in temptation in that a person is faced with a decision to either act out the temptation or not. Whether the decision takes a split-second or is drawn out, the person experiences a battle between an attraction that is contrary to right reason and judgment and against God's commandments.

St. Paul sheds light on this interior conflict when he shares his own struggles with doing the very things he should avoid:

Did that which is good then bring death to me? By no means! It was sin, working death in me through what is good, in order that sin might be shown to be sin, and through the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. We know that the law is spiritual; but I am carnal, sold under sin. I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate... (Romans 7:13-15)

When faced with temptation to do something we know we shouldn't, we often do it anyway. Our immediate rationalization is the satisfaction of our human appetite regardless of how we feel afterwards.

THE NATURE OF TEMPTATION

The nature of temptation rests in man's desire to seek an alternative to God's love. This

proposition can only appear to last so long; eventually the alternatives to God's love do not adequately fulfill the appetite of temptation.

THE FIRST ORDER OF TEMPTATION

Satan tells Adam and Eve "You will be like God" (*Genesis 3:5*).

The *Catechism* reminds us:

Tempting God consists in putting his goodness and almighty power to the test by word and deed. [See: Luke 4:9; Deuteronomy 6:16] The challenge contained in such temptations toward God wounds the respect and trust we owe our Creator and Lord. It always harbors doubt about his love, his providence, and his power (CCC 2119).

We have become a self-centered society. Our understanding of the world often shuns the truth, beauty, and, goodness of who God is and of the created order of things. In other words, I am no longer a child of God but a child of myself. When we convince ourselves that our own self-fulfillment is more important than our relationship with Jesus Christ our appetite for self-fulfillment will never end and never be satisfied. Only in Christ can man fill the void in himself.

ENDURING THE TRIAL OF TEMPTATION

Sacred Scripture tells us that Jesus was tempted three times (*Luke 4:1-13*) while in the desert for 40 days and nights.

- Turn stone into bread.
- Authority over all the kingdoms will be given for complete worship of the Devil i.e. renounces God the Father.
- Throw himself from the highest point of the temple, questioning the faith and the power of God.

An important point to remember as Jesus began his journey into the desert was that He was filled with the power of the Holy Spirit. This reflects Jesus' awareness of the evil forces around Him aimed to thwart his mission. We would do well to follow Christ's example of preparedness through faithful prayer, adherence to the law (Ten Commandments), and faithfully living a sacramental life. A good starting point is immersing ourselves in God's mercy by making an examination of conscience, shunning those elements of our lifestyle that lead us into temptation and making a concerted effort to receive the Sacrament of Penance. There is no reason why we should allow ourselves to succumb to the lure of temptation. St. James provides sound advice on "enduring trials":

Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him. Let no one say when he is tempted. 'I am tempted by God'; for God cannot be tempted with evil and he himself tempts no one; but each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. (James 1:12-14)



Marlon De La Torre is the director of Catechesis for the Diocese of Fort Worth, and author of SCREWTAPE TEACHES THE FAITH: A GUIDE FOR CATECHISTS. He blogs at www.knowingisdoing.org.

'... AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL'

The second to last petition of the Our Father reflects our desire to not concede to temptation due to our trespasses. What this means is we must foster genuine desire to combat evil and not fall prey to the emptiness of false gods. There is a two-fold approach to this petition. **One:** not to yield to temptation; **Two:** not to be allowed to enter into temptation (*See: Matthew 26:41*). We must remember, God does not tempt anyone (*CCC 2846*).

As a final point, St. Paul provides comforting words on the issue of temptation and how we can understand the power of God's love regardless of the trials we face:

No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your strength, but with the temptation will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it (1 Corinthians 10:13).

Society of Catholic Apostolate (SAC) priests follow in footsteps of engaging founder, St. Vincent Pallotti

Every Catholic of the Church of Jesus Christ must rejoice because, as a priest, religious or layman, he can utilize his talents, knowledge, learning, studies, power, status, profession, words, earthly goods, or at least prayers, to do whatever is possible to revive the faith of Jesus Christ, to rekindle charity among Catholics and to propagate it all over the world.

— St. Vincent Pallotti, Founder of Society of Catholic Apostolate

**By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent**

TO TRULY UNDERSTAND THE SOCIETY OF THE CATHOLIC APOSTOLATE (SAC) “PALLOTTINE” PRIESTS WHO SERVE IN THE DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH, local faithful should take a glance back to the oppressed early 19th century Catholic Church in Rome and a discerning teenager named Vincent Pallotti.

In 1811, at the age of 16, Pallotti felt called by God to enter religious life — not a politically correct decision at the time. Two years earlier, Pope Pius VII had been taken prisoner by France and Napoleon Bonaparte was holding the pontiff in exile.

Ten years before Pope Pius VII’s imprisonment by France, his predecessor, Pope Pius VI, died in French captivity after the occupation of Rome.

A witness to the persecution of Christ’s Church during his formative years, an undeterred Pallotti followed through on his calling and was ordained in 1818.

Pallotti’s experiences gave him the resolve to stand strong for Christ, as the Lord’s earliest followers did, as he boldly proclaimed, “Every Catholic an Apostle!”

His formation of the Society of the Catholic Apostolate flowed from a desire to unite clergy with laity to proclaim the Word of God.

Today, this international community of priests and brothers includes 2,300 members living in more than 300 communities in 40 countries located on every continent.

Fr. Balaji Boyalla (SAC) (**left**), current pastor of Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Mineral Wells, and Fr. John Casey (SAC), recently retired pastor of St. Stephen Church in Weatherford, stride down the main exhibit hallway of the Dallas Convention Center as they attend the University of Dallas Ministry Conference in 2009. (NTC file photo / Juan Guajardo)



Pallottine priests from the provinces of Dublin, Ireland and Karnataka, India, have served the Diocese of Fort Worth for several decades and solid proof of their local impact can be found at Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church in Mineral Wells. Last December, the church completed a new 3,000-square-foot fellowship center — St. Vincent Pallotti Hall. The name honors the man who established the SAC in 1835 and inspired a long line of Pallottine priests to serve the faithful at Our Lady of Lourdes dating back to 1953.

The most recent of those priests is Our Lady of Lourdes pastor, Fr. Balaji Boyalla (SAC). Ordained in India, Fr. Boyalla came to Our Lady of Lourdes in 2010, after serving two years at Holy Family Parish in Fort Worth. He said the name of the St. Vincent Pallotti Hall is a good fit for the parish.

“For many years, Pallottine priests have served here,” said Fr. Boyalla, “but people really didn’t hear the name of Vincent Pallotti or know about him.

“Now, hopefully, people will begin to know who Vincent Pallotti was and know about his contribution to the Church.

“He is a modern-day Saint who touches people through his charisma,” Fr. Boyalla said.

“People should know that Vincent Pallotti is a special saint because he is a saint for laity. He is the forerunner of the idea of bringing laity into a more active role in the Church.”

Fr. John Casey (SAC), retired pastor of St. Stephen Catholic Church in Weatherford, agrees with Fr. Boyalla’s assessment of the saint who established the Society of the Catholic Apostolate.

“Vincent Pallotti was 100 years ahead of

Bishop Olson recently consecrated Pallotti Hall at Our Lady of Lourdes Church in Mineral Wells. The Hall is named for St. Vincent Pallotti, founder of the Society of Catholic Apostolate. Priests from that society first started serving Our Lady of Lourdes in 1953. (Courtesy of Our Lady of Lourdes Church)



his time,” Fr. Casey said. “He had the vision that not only the priests and bishops should be part of the apostolate, but all the baptized should be involved.”

The Second Vatican Council, which opened in 1962, 112 years after St. Vincent Pallotti’s death, addressed relationships between the Church and the modern world, including an emphasis on involvement of laity. “All the baptized should have the opportunity to work in God’s vineyard,” Fr. Casey said.

A Pallottine priest from a province in Ireland, Fr. Casey served the Church in Argentina and England before arriving in the Diocese of Amarillo in 1977.

As a missionary priest who had immersed himself in Spanish during his six years in South America, the priest became fluent in the language.

Fr. Casey laughed as he recalled a moment, more than 30 years ago, when Bishop Lawrence Michael De Falco — shepherd of the Diocese of Amarillo at the time — overheard him in a long conversation in Spanish with a parishioner.

“He was surprised that this guy from Ireland could understand and speak Spanish,” Fr. Casey said. “I remember he put his hand on my shoulder and he said, ‘There will always be work for you in Texas.’”

The bishop’s words were prophetic, as the Irish Pallottine priest has been in the Lone Star State ever since, serving 24 years in the Dioceses of Amarillo and Lubbock, and 14 years in the Diocese of Fort Worth at St. Stephen. He is the 11th consecutive SAC priest to serve as pastor of St. Stephen in a continuous line of Pallottines extending back to 1953.

Fr. Casey credits his missionary society for giving him the opportunity to learn the Spanish language and serve the people of God in multiple tongues.

It is a gift that comes with being a missionary priest, Fr. Casey said.

Fr. Thomas D’Souza, SAC, the pastor of the Catholic Community of Jack and Wise Counties — including St. John the Baptizer in Bridgeport, St. Mary in Jacksboro, and Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Decatur — is also thankful for his formation as a Pallottine missionary priest.

“All my formation and who I am today, I owe to them completely,” Fr. D’Souza said of the apostolic society.

From a Pallottine province in India, Fr. D’Souza said his work as a school principal and service as a parish priest in an impoverished area of northern India were among his greatest blessings. Learning the language of the people there and serving the poorest of the poor was challenging, the priest said, but rewarding.

“I came out very strong in my vocation and mission,” Fr. D’Souza said.

Also strong in his vocation and mission from extensive missionary work is Fr. Matthew Sanka (SAC), who serves at St. Brendan Church in Stephenville and its associated parishes. Ordained in the East African nation of Tanzania in 2002, Fr. Sanka was greatly influenced by the Pallottine priests from Ireland who served at his diocese. A member now of the same Irish province as those priests, Fr. Sanka served the Church in Tanzania, Kenya, and Ireland. He also furthered his studies in Rome before arriving in the Diocese of Fort



Fr. John Casey (SAC), recently retired, was the 11th consecutive Pallottine priest to serve as pastor of St. Stephen Catholic Church in Weatherford in a continuous line of Pallottines extending back to 1953 in that parish.

Worth in 2013.

Like the six other Pallottine priests serving the Diocese of Fort Worth, Fr. Sanka is thankful for the spirit and mission that characterize the SAC.

“We Pallottines, our charism and mission is to work together with the laity,” said Fr. Sanka. “This Year of Consecrated Life is an opportunity to renew our commitment and to re-affirm it in prayer.”

Society of the Catholic Apostolate, Pallottines (SAC), serving in the Diocese of Fort Worth

Fr. Reehan Soosai Antony

Parochial Vicar: St. John the Baptizer in Bridgeport, St. Mary in Jacksboro, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Decatur
SAC Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province; Karnataka, India

Fr. Balaji Boyalla

Pastor: Our Lady of Lourdes in Mineral Wells; St. Francis of Assisi in Graford; Dean of the Southwest Deanery
SAC Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province; Karnataka, India

Fr. John Casey

Pastor, retired: St. Stephen in Weatherford
SAC Irish Province; Dublin, Ireland

Fr. Thomas D’Souza

Pastor: St. John the Baptizer in Bridgeport, St. Mary in Jacksboro, Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Decatur
SAC Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Province; Karnataka, India

Fr. John Karanja

Parochial Administrator: St. Stephen in Weatherford
SAC Irish Province; Dublin, Ireland

Fr. Philip McNamara

Parochial Administrator, retired: Our Lady of Guadalupe in De Leon, Sacred Heart in Comanche, St. Brendan in Stephenville, St. Mary in Dublin
SAC Irish Province; Dublin, Ireland

Fr. Matthew Sanka

Parochial Administrator: St. Brendan in Stephenville and associated parishes
SAC Irish Province; Dublin, Ireland

More information on the Society of the Catholic Apostolate

<http://www.sacapostles.org/>

A long-time steward

‘Fr. Mac’ retiring after nearly 30 years of service to various parishes

By **Brian Smith**
Correspondent

“The first time you see [Father Phil McNamara], he’s like a priest you would see in the movies,” said Julie Lyssy, a parishioner at St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Granbury, where Fr. McNamara was pastor for a number of years before moving on to St. Brendan’s in Stephenville and St. Mary’s in Dublin.

Fr. McNamara, SAC, who has served in the diocese since 1985 will be retiring from active ministry and returning to Ireland in the upcoming weeks.

“He’s a very kind man, and you feel very calm when you’re with him. But he holds his ground,” Lyssy said.

A number of his current and former parishioners spoke about the humble man, saying he is very kind, with a commanding manner and excellent sense of stewardship.

Lyssy remembered how Fr. McNamara once stayed in a room at the church while construction was going on, so money wouldn’t have to be spent on a rectory while the church was being built. The church’s 25th anniversary was this February.

Jerry Austin, Jr. has been a member of St. Frances for about 40 years and has known “Fr. Mac” for more than 30. He said Fr. McNamara was instrumental in funding and overseeing construction of the new church. But what has always impressed Austin about his former priest is his intellect.

Austin said that when Fr. McNamara gave a homily, “you would feel like you were being spoken to by a college professor.”

“He makes you think.”

Austin also spoke of Fr. McNamara being the Friar of the Knights of Columbus One Nation Under God Assembly 2958, with

which he is heavily involved.

Jean Cate, a long-time member of the church, said once you got to know Fr. Mac, he would wow you with his dry but wonderful sense of humor.

Cate recalled how once she was asked to bring a guest speaker to a meeting of senior citizens. She asked Fr. Mac — who appeared a bit befuddled at the request — and asked what he would talk about. He wound up giving a talk detailing how the Baptists, Church of Christ, and Methodists, broke off from the Catholic Church and formed their own denominations.

“His talk was so good, I had members of the club asking if he would come back and give another talk,” Cate said. “He was able to speak so intelligently and not offend members of those other religions. He is always so willing to pitch in and help and I am going to miss him.”

Jeannette Seifert has known Fr. Mac for nearly 40 years, since his first stint in Stephenville. Seifert said he first came to town in the mid 1970s, before he went to Granbury to help build that church, then come back to Stephenville.

Seifert said Fr. Mac is a humble, frugal man who places others before himself.

“If you give him something, he’ll simply give it away,” Seifert said. “Everywhere he’s been, he has spearheaded the building of new churches.”

The priest is also generous with his time. When Fr. McNamara returned from missionary work in Africa, he embraced the challenge of learning Spanish so he could tend to the large number of Hispanics at his Stephenville parish.

Seifert told the story of an impromptu baptism that happened during Fr. McNamara’s first stint

at St. Mary’s in Dublin. A couple were heading on a long trip and they wanted the baby to be baptized beforehand.

“The mother went in and spoke to Fr. Mac,” Seifert said. “Within three or four minutes Fr. Mac came out with everything needed for the baptism. The baby was baptized in the car and he sent them on their way.”

To those who know him, such a rapid, hospitable response doesn’t come as a surprise.

Seifert recounted how St. Mary’s built a new church building in 2001 and 2002. Fr. McNamara and parishioners hosted truck raffles as a means to raise money for the new building. The new church, now debt free, seats three times the people the old church did and draws Catholics from Hico,



Fr. Phil McNamara

Hamilton, DeLeon, and surrounding areas.

Fr. Mac was also instrumental in helping raise funds for St. Mary’s Family Life Center, which houses classrooms, a large kitchen and gym. That facility is debt free as well, thanks to the concerted efforts of Fr. Mac, Seifert said.

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A friendly shepherd

After leaving legacy at St. Stephen, Fr. Casey retiring

By Brian Smith
Correspondent

Father John Casey has been pastor at St. Stephen Parish in Weatherford for 13 years, some not remembering a time before he came to the parish.

St. Stephen parishioner Sophia Dederichs reminisced about the support Fr. Casey has given to activities at the parish.

Dederichs, who has coordinated the blood drives the church has sponsored for the last eight years, said in an e-mail that Fr. Casey was a backer of the blood drives, from the first.

“He has been supportive, thorough, devoted,” Dederichs said. “He was one of the first to roll up his sleeves,” and he made wise suggestions for the recruitment of donors.

Many know Fr. Casey for his soft spoken, thoughtful nature, but those who have known him for a while like Dederichs, or even a short time, like new parishioner David Cunniwell and his wife, Sandra, say they will always remember his thick Irish brogue.

“When you first hear him speak, you notice that Irish accent of his,” David Cunniwell said with a laugh. Speaking of his homilies, Cunniwell said, “he always has such a wonderful message that hits close to home.”

Dederichs echoed Cunniwell’s comments about his homilies, praising the topics Fr. Casey chooses.

“He has a sense of humor,” Dederichs said. “His homilies are short and sweet and include such germane topics as service, family, gratitude, forgiveness, and praying for our youth to stay close to Holy Mother Church.” She noted that he often opens the Bible to quote from Scripture on the pulpit. “He is a very godly man,” she said.

Brian Kechnie, a lector and eucharistic minister team leader at the church, has other fond memories of the man.

“Fr. Casey is truly a holy priest, who always presented the Eucharist in a sincere holy manner. His sermons constantly reminded us of our heritage and the importance of passing it on,” Kechnie said. “When I approached him on introducing the Dynamic Catholic program he was very supportive, and the results have been outstanding. I personally will miss him and will always be praying for him.”

Deacon Carlos Frias has known and worked alongside Fr. Casey for years at St. Stephen. The deacon said that the priest holds an intense humility and desire to treat others as friends — not as laity or strangers.

The deacon recalled how throughout the years, Fr. Casey has invited him to dinners, retreats, talks, and workshops and has always been a source of support for him. But Fr. Casey’s ability to relate extends to the rest of his flock, the deacon added, explaining how the priest was instrumental in helping Hispanic parishioners start a *grupo de oracion* that has been together for two years now. Fr. Casey didn’t stop there. As soon as the meetings started, organizers found him sitting with group members, listening attentively and offering input when appropriate; the teacher as student. He’s been a regular since.

“He joins us to listen, not to judge,” said Dcn. Frias, “He’s always ready to learn something new. What humility he has...”

In the 11 years that the deacon has known Fr. Casey, he has seen him continually help those seeking his aid — especially when it comes to the spiritual. Even minutes be-



Fr. Casey (center) walks with parishioners at St. Stephen's first Hike for Life in 2010. (Photo by Juan Guajardo /NTC)

fore Mass, Fr. Casey can be found donning his stole and offering confession to parishioners.

“I’ve never seen Fr. Casey say ‘no’ to the people,” Dcn. Frias said.

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Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary are always on call for God

By Susan Moses
Correspondent

EACH WEEK IN OUR DIOCESE, GOD WORKS THROUGH EIGHT RELIGIOUS SISTERS TO PERFORM A MODERN DAY LOAVES AND FISHES MIRACLE. Instead of feeding thousands of hungry bodies, these eight women feed the minds, spirits, and souls of thousands of Hispanic Catholics.

The Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary serving our diocese strive to take the mercy and love of the heart of Jesus to families. Their mission usually begins with religious instruction.

For example, take Sister Eva Sanchez, MCSH, who serves as Director of Religious Education at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in Fort Worth.

“Everything derives from catechesis,” Sr. Eva explained. “You’ve got to understand the love of Jesus, understand the Gospel, and understand that Church teachings are from the Bible.”

Holy Name accommodates its 1,500 students by offering nine sessions of CCD: four on Saturday and five on Sunday. At 8:30 Saturday morning, you can find Sr. Eva greeting the students and their parents as they enter. When each session begins, she visits every classroom. She flips rapidly between English and Spanish, wanting students to know their prayers and discuss their faith in both languages. In some classes, she gathers students for prayer;



Back row, from left: Sr. Adela Benoit and Sr. Eva Sanchez

Front row, from left: Sr. Rafaela Landeros, Sr. Edid Torres, Sr. Midory Wu, Sr. Aracely Lobatón, and Sr. Rosa María Rodriguez.

Not Pictured:

Sr. Yolanda Piñeda
(Photo by Sr. Yolanda Piñeda)

others get a lesson on reading God’s Word or the sacraments. She gives each catechist thanks and encouragement, then she moves on like a whirlwind to the next class.

Although Sr. Eva focuses primarily on the parish youth, she also teaches parents whose children are undergoing sacramental preparation, and she instructs more than 100 catechists and assistants who teach CCD at Holy Name.

Education is the primary focus of the Missionary Catechists, but they support their parish in other ways, too. “The Missionary Catechists are huge collaborators, and they work with each parish priest to determine how best to provide pastoral support,” said Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, Vice Chancellor for Parish Services and Women Religious and

Associate Director of Vocations for Women. “Many serve as directors of religious education or directors of Hispanic pastoral ministries. In the past, two served as pastoral administrators in a predominantly Hispanic, economically challenged mission parish and managed a building campaign.”

As the Coordinator of Hispanic Ministries at St. Bartholomew Church in Fort Worth, Sister Yolanda Piñeda, MCSH, divides her time between teaching, social ministry, and pastoral care.

Sr. Yolanda literally has the last word at the parish’s St. Vincent de Paul Food Pantry. As guests leave with their groceries, she offers them bread and any fresh produce available. Then she prays with them, gives them a warm smile, and exhorts them to “Take your family to church” or “Pray with your children.”

Since she came to the parish in 2011, she’s been making home visits to assess families’ needs and offer special assistance. She teaches a Spanish Bible study and attends many more classes and meetings, both in English and Spanish. She also holds communion services at nursing homes.

“We are here for everyone. We are all one, all children of God, united and seeking to live out God’s Word,” said Sr. Yolanda.

Father Jack McKone, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls, recognizes that unity can be difficult. “A real challenge in serving Latinos is that they are not one homogenous culture. Many have Spanish surnames



Sister Eva Sanchez shares God’s love with a class preparing for first holy Communion at Holy Name of Jesus Parish in South Fort Worth. (NTC / Susan Moses)



Sr. Yolanda Piñeda says sharing the Gospel with those in need is her source of joy. (NTC / Susan Moses)

but don't speak Spanish at all; others speak very little English, and the great majority live somewhere between."

Missionary Catechists see themselves as a bridge to help immigrants adapt to this country. "The Hispanic families need to keep their faith, keep their family values, and continue their education so they can enrich the American culture. We want to bring people together, not divide the communities," said Sr. Eva.

To foster unity within the Hispanic community in Wichita Falls, Sister Adela Benoit, MCSH, and Sister Rafaela Landeros, MCSH, developed a liturgy that highlighted the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The sisters began with a script about the Virgin of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego. Parishioners responded with tremendous enthusiasm. With the sisters' help, they found young people to play the roles

of the actors in the play, created a simple set, and made costumes. The sisters helped plan rehearsals and the reception that followed the Mass, which featured a mariachi band and dancing by the *matachines* from the neighboring Our Lady of Guadalupe Church.

"We quickly saw that the entire process of producing a liturgy, with the play as the principal part of the homily, became a catechetical vehicle for the youth," said Fr. McKone. "The children really entered into the story of the Virgin and a poor Indian and the building of the church dedicated to our Blessed Mother that became a focal point for evangelizing an entire country. The sisters brought the parish together to accomplish this," said Fr. McKone.

The sisters also worked with Father Richard Kirkham to produce the same play at St. Jude Thaddeus in Burkburnett. Although they only arrived in Wichita Falls in the fall of 2014, they have made an impact throughout the Northwest Deanery with catechesis and pastoral counseling, visiting people in their homes from Wichita Falls to Chillicothe.

Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary first came to the diocese on Oct. 8, 1960, when three sisters arrived to serve at Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Patrick Cathedral, and San Mateo, the mission church associated with St. Patrick's. Currently, the sisters serve at eight parishes: Sacred Heart and Our Lady of Guadalupe in Wichita Falls; Holy Name of Jesus, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Paul the Apostle, and St. Bartholomew in Fort Worth; St. Francis of Assisi in Grapevine; and St. John the Apostle in North Richland Hills.

Mother Sofia Garduño, a teacher, founded



Missionary Catechists wear a medallion with Jesus depicted on one side and Mary on the other. (NTC / Susan Moses)

the order in Mexico City in 1918, a time of religious persecution. Currently, 140 sisters serve in Mexico, Spain, Africa, and the U.S.

Although eight sisters have greatly increased the scope of religious education and pastoral care to Latinos in our diocese, Sr. Yolanda lamented, "We are limited in time and in number, and our community has great needs. We cannot serve every person who needs help."

Despite their small number, Missionary Catechists have a large influence on 350,000 Hispanic Catholics in the diocese. One parishioner from Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish spoke tearfully of the joy he felt when he saw sisters once more in his parish. Father Manuel Holguin of St. John's echoed the sentiments of each pastor when he "recognizes and respects the great contribution that Sister Aracely Lobatón offers to the Hispanic community."

Sr. Eva said, "You'll find us in the middle of the people. We'll be at CCD and at Mass, and we're also visiting the sick, attending funerals, going to nursing homes. We are always on call for God."

Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary serving in the Diocese of Fort Worth

Sr. Adela Benoit, MCSH,
Hispanic Ministry Formation; Sacred Heart
Parish, Wichita Falls

Sr. Rosa María Rodríguez, MCSH,
Director of Hispanic Pastoral Ministry;
St. Francis of Assisi Parish, Grapevine

Sr. Rafaela Landeros, MCSH,
Director of Hispanic Ministry; Our Lady of
Guadalupe Parish, Wichita Falls

Sr. Aracely Lobatón, MCSH,
Director of Hispanic Ministry; St. John the
Apostle Parish, North Richland Hills

Sr. Yolanda Piñeda MCSH,
Pastoral Ministry; St. Bartholomew Parish,
Fort Worth

Sr. Eva Sanchez, MCSH,
Director of Religious Education; Holy Name of
Jesus Parish, Fort Worth

Sr. Edid Torres, MCSH,
Hispanic Pastoral Ministry; St. Paul the
Apostle, Fort Worth

Sr. Midory Wu, MCSH,
Youth Formation; Immaculate Heart of Mary
Parish, Fort Worth

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Msgr. Joe Scantlin, with 55 years as a priest says, quite simply: 'I've just been happy as a priest'

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

WHEN YOU ASK LONGTIME MOST BLESSED SACRAMENT PARISHIONER BECKY LUCAS TO DESCRIBE HER PASTOR'S APPROACH WHEN IT COMES TO TENDING HIS FLOCK, she recalls the death of a young Marine who was buried from the Arlington church.

A suicide bomber killed Corporal Phillip McGeath, 25, in Afghanistan during Operation Enduring Freedom. His body lay in state in Most Blessed Sacrament's chapel the night before his January 2012 funeral.

"Fr. Joe was a healing presence in the midst of great tragedy," she said, remembering how he reached out to the slain soldier's parents who had two other sons in the Marine Corps. "He was so encouraging to them and couldn't do enough to help them heal. His great strength is an ability to bring the love and compassion of Jesus to people."

Personable. Funny. A listener. Welcoming. Engaging. A gentle soul. Humble. Those words, offered by friends, define Monsignor Joseph Scantlin — a man who has spent 55 years serving God and his Church.

Why did he want to become a priest? It's a question the Fort Worth native gets asked a lot. When he was a boy playing baseball with classmates near Holy Name Church and St. Ignatius Academy, only five percent of the city's population was Catholic. His mother, Nona, was a convert, and his father, Clarence, belonged to no particular denomination before embracing the faith later in life.

"I didn't come from a very religious family," explains the monsignor, who prefers being



Msgr. Joseph Scantlin, who prefers to be called Father Joe, poses with some of his baseball memorabilia. (NTC / Joan Kurkowski-Gillen)

called "Father Joe." "I don't really have any Catholic relatives on either side of my family."

But both parents were supportive when he decided to enter the seminary after graduating from Laneri — the all boys high school on Fort Worth's South Side operated by the Benedictines.

"I thought I could serve God's people, and that was one of the ways it was done," Fr. Joe says simply. "I got into seminary life which was very structured in those days."

After spending summers at home, the young seminarian reaffirmed his vocation each fall and returned to his theology, philosophy, and Latin studies in San Antonio. "I recommitted every year," Fr. Joe remembers. "That's discerning. And you had a long time to discern because we were in the seminary for at least eight years."

Since his seminary years, the 82-year-old monsignor has worked for six bishops and received seven different church assignments. Moves around North Texas were infrequent but diverse.

"I've been all over the dio-

cese, in rural areas and the city — big parishes and small ones," he says.

Meeting people is the most rewarding part of his ministry.

"My life is here and the people I serve are my family," the soft-spoken priest says from his light-filled office at Most Blessed Sacrament — a parish with 1,800 families. "In many ways, I'm doing the same thing I did 50 years ago — ministering to people needs. You celebrate the milestones in people's lives along with the deaths. Some you expect. Some you don't."

Being present for the grief-stricken, listening to them talk, and letting them cry is a familiar duty for the longtime pastor.

MBS parishioner and fellow baseball aficionado Bill Quinn and his wife Doreen witnessed the priest's compassionate nature when their twin grandsons were born prematurely in 1998. One baby was stillborn and the other in critical condition when they called the church.

"Fr. Joe was there a short time later to counsel us," Quinn says. "He's a great listener who

makes time for his parishioners. You couldn't ask for a better priest."

The transplanted New Yorker is also familiar with his pastor's lighter side. Both diehard Texas Rangers fans, the pair traveled to Wrigley Field in Chicago, Boston's Fenway Park, and Yankee Stadium for games.

At the Chicago game, "People started texting Fr. Joe to say they saw him on TV," says Quinn, remembering his companion's witty response. "I'm glad I didn't tell people I was on a retreat somewhere," the priest quipped.

"In many ways, Fr. Joe is very much like Pope Francis," says Father John Robert Skeldon, who spent his pastoral year in seminary shadowing the experienced pastor. "There's a real emphasis on mercy, gentleness, and wanting to help people discover the presence of God at work in their lives," the young pastor suggests.

"I learned how important the ministry of presence is in people's lives," he explains. "In the midst of difficult times, there really aren't any words to say. It's just being present to hear people's stories and what they've struggled through."

Fr. Joe keeps a reminder of one of those difficult times on a shelf in his office. Perched near some memorabilia given to him by baseball legends Nolan Ryan and Steve Buechele, is a photograph of fallen soldier Cpl. Phillip McGeath with his brothers and fellow Marines, Kenneth and Allen.

Helping parish families deal with the sorrows and joys of life has kept him working beyond the age of retirement.

"Being a servant to God's people is very rewarding," he says, humbly. "I've just been happy as a priest."



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Books, chores, camera

A glimpse of what it's like to walk

Story and photos by Susan Moses
Correspondent

6 A.M.

THE LOVE OF GOD IS MORE POWERFUL THAN THE LURE OF SLEEP FOR THE 72 YOUNG MEN AT HOLY TRINITY SEMINARY IN IRVING. By 6:20 a.m., it's quiet indoors and out, but the joy in the chapel is palpable as silent seminarians sit ready to begin the morning Liturgy of the Hours, followed by daily Mass.

"Once God starts tugging at your heart, He will not stop until you follow his plan. Now that I am following God's plan, I could not be any happier. There is a joy in following God's will and spreading the Gospel," said Brian Cundall of Little Rock, Arkansas.

At breakfast, the atmosphere turns radically different, as if a switch has been flipped. Quiet reverence suddenly transforms to laughter. Two seminarians from the Fort Worth Diocese, David LaPointe and Austin Hoodenpyle, join a table with other young men and banter about college sports, speculate about the difficulty of an upcoming literature exam, and share family stories.

Although the cafeteria trays and breakfast buffet would belong in any college setting, some things are remarkable in their absence. Sarcasm. Cheap humor. And cell phones, usually omnipresent in this age group, are strangely missing.

"You can't have a good conversation if you are also attending to your cell phone," explained LaPointe, from St. Andrew Parish in Fort Worth. Upon graduating from Nolan Catholic High School in 2012, LaPointe had planned to attend St. Mary's University in San Antonio and pursue a career in campus ministry. However, the day before graduation, he decided to take a year to discern whether God was calling him to the priesthood. His year of lifeguarding and teaching CPR classes could potentially save lives, but it convinced LaPointe of a greater calling: to save souls.

LaPointe said, "When I first began to consider the priesthood, I thought I'd become a Franciscan or a Marianist, because I was

familiar with them from St. Andrew and Nolan. Then I started thinking about my friends and family, and how we've been strengthened by the Church and the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Plus, I have a real love for Fort Worth and its people. Then I knew I wanted to support the faith of families by being a priest here in our diocese."

8:50 A.M.

LaPointe, Hoodenpyle and most other seminarians have begun the walk up the hill to attend classes at University of Dallas. As sophomores, they are tackling Shakespeare, church history, political science, and other liberal arts courses. Junior and senior year will focus on classes to earn their B.A. in philosophy with a minor in theology.

"Knowing that you are studying for God and for the people you will serve adds extra motivation to do well in your classes," explained LaPointe.

Established in 1965, Holy Trinity Seminary follows the model for priestly formation developed in the Second Vatican Council, in which priests are formed in relationship with the people they will serve. By earning their undergraduate degrees at the University of Dallas, the seminarians interact with laypeople on a daily basis.

Students from 15 dioceses attend Holy Trinity Seminary. The five students from the Fort Worth Diocese have bonded, in part through their assignment last summer to parishes in Cisco, Eastland, Ranger, and Strawn, where they conducted Bible studies, youth



retreats, and VBS. Rumors that they subsisted on ketchup sandwiches are unsubstantiated.

11 A.M.

Students trickle back into the cafeteria for lunch, a buffet served from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. to meet varying class schedules. Some choose to sit at the Spanish table to practice their language skills.

It's not quite accurate to say that seminarians are free in the afternoon. While LaPointe and Hoodenpyle may be done with classes for



Austin Hoodenpyle and David LaPointe bless themselves after leaving the evening Benediction.



camaraderie, and God

walk in the shoes of seminarians

Background photo: A view of the *Codex Sinaiticus*, the world's oldest known Bible containing the complete New Testament.
(CNS photo/Kieran Doherty, Reuters)



From the Fort Worth diocese, **L-R**, Jason Allan, Tyler Dubek, Austin Hoodenpyle, Anthony Vecchio, and David LaPointe, prepare for the priesthood at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving.

usually every three weeks to make certain all four pillars are coming together. These are crucial years to grow in maturity, self-knowledge, compassion, and leadership,” said Rev. Jonathan Wallis, a Fort Worth diocesan priest.

“When I was a freshman, I wondered if I had the abilities to be a priest. But I’ve learned to trust the process, and the Holy Spirit will make it possible,” said Hoodenpyle.

Hoodenpyle attended a Methodist church growing up, but felt like something was lacking in his life. He joined a confirmation class at St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Granbury and converted to Catholicism during high school. His family was surprised by his decision to enter the seminary. “Initially, most of them would have preferred that I follow my original plan to attend Texas A&M, but they’ve seen how happy I am here and their support has grown.”

During the afternoon, some students may do their pastoral practicum, attend a weekly class in human formation, or meet with their formation advisor or spiritual director. Others use the time to study, exercise or pray. Students are also assigned chores — LaPointe cleans bathrooms and Hoodenpyle staffs the canteen this semester. Others wipe tables and vacuum the cafeteria.

“Time management is crucial to staying on top of your classes and other responsibilities,” said Hoodenpyle.

the day, the emphasis shifts from the intellectual to the remaining three pillars of priestly formation: pastoral, spiritual, and human.

Each semester, students determine goals and a plan of action specific to each pillar. For example, for the pastoral pillar, students are assigned a weekly pastoral practicum, which may include hospital or prison ministry, nursing home visits or RCIA, or youth education at a local parish.

“As the formation advisor for sophomores and juniors, I meet with my students individ-

5:15 P.M.

Students gather in the chapel for Evening Prayer, followed by Eucharistic adoration, and a Benediction.

Afterwards, intense veneration once again shifts rapidly to a lively, convivial atmosphere at 6 p.m. dinner. Served family style, two students at each table bring dishes to and from the kitchen. Seating is assigned and rotates, so that each student has the opportunity to converse with every other student over the course of the semester.

Announcements follow dinner, ranging from an ear-splitting rendition of “Happy Birthday” to students offering to share snacks, recruiting for an intramural team, or arranging a study group.

8:15 P.M.

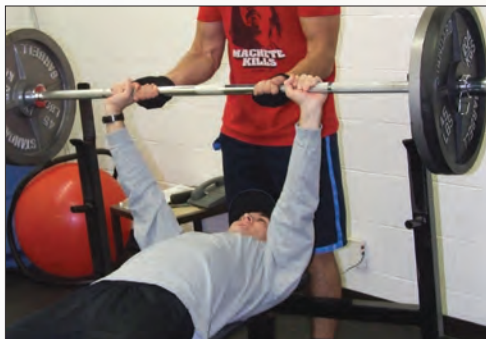
In the evening, preparing for the next day’s classes may take precedence. If not, the intramural sports fields, the television room, and a game room with pool, ping pong, and chess provide opportunities for relaxation and camaraderie.

“Other than shutting down at 10:30, life in the seminary is very normal,” said Hoodenpyle.

“Priestly formation is a beautiful work, cooperating with the grace of God as He turns young adult males into spiritual fathers,” said Father James Swift, the rector of Holy Trinity Seminary. “Living in community provides a joyful, supportive and respectful environment for seminarians to continue to discern their call and develop in humanity and priestly formation.”



Like any college, learning to do laundry is part of the seminary experience.



Left: Living in community can include spotting weights for a fellow student.

Right: After classes at University of Dallas, seminarians return down the hill to their community.



Local Serra Clubs help young men and women to be attentive to God's call for religious vocations

By JERRY CIRCELLI / CORRESPONDENT

THE THREE-PART MISSION OF THE SERRA CLUB IS SIMPLE AND CLOSELY ALIGNED WITH THE WORK OF ITS NAMESAKE, Blessed Father Junípero Serra. The Catholic lay organization's goals are to:

- foster vocations to the priesthood and support priests;
- encourage vocations to consecrated life;
- help its own members respond to God's call.

Ordained into the Franciscan Order of Friars Minor in 1737, Blessed Fr. Serra was widely regarded for his brilliant mind. He used it to teach philosophy and theology to seminary students in Spain.

In 1750, he combined his wisdom with missionary zeal to spread the Word of God to the New World in Mexico and Northern California. Fr. Serra encouraged others to join him in his ministry that led to the establishment of



Blessed Junípero Serra, a Spanish Franciscan who ministered in what is now the U.S. and Mexico, is pictured in an undated painting. (CNS Photo)

21 missions along a 700-mile stretch of California's Camino Real, or Royal Road, from San Diego to Sonoma. For his perseverance in the face of great personal sacrifice, Fr. Serra was beatified by St. John Paul II in 1988.

According to Catholic News Service, Pope Francis announced Jan. 15 that in September, he hopes to canonize Blessed Serra, among great evangelists whom he planned to canonize in an effort to celebrate the practice of evangelization.

"Now in September, God willing, I will canonize Junípero Serra in the United States. He was the evangelizer of the West in the United States," the pope was quoted as saying in the article. He did not specify when or where the canonization might take place.

In the spirit of carrying on Blessed Fr. Serra's work, four men at a luncheon in Seattle started the international association that bears his name. Today, it has grown to include more than 20,000 members participating in 800 clubs in 37 countries. More than 9,000 of those Serrans are in 255 Serra Clubs in the United States. In the Diocese of Fort Worth, the membership total is about 80 Serrans and growing, at two clubs — The Serra Club of Fort Worth and the Serra Club of Arlington-Metro.

Locally, Serrans carry out their mission by hosting and participating in several activities throughout the year. Among the most notable is the Vocation Awareness Program (VAP).

Sponsored by the Serra Clubs in the Diocese of Fort Worth and the Diocese of Dallas, the VAP is a weekend retreat to help single Catholic men and women learn more about the lives of priests, sisters, and brothers. It includes workshops, panel discussions, a Q&A forum, and one-on-one talks with those who have entered religious vocations. The Serra Club helps sponsor, facilitate, and promote this program, which includes private rooms, furnished meals, and no fees for those attending. The VAP is held annually in the summer



Diocesan Vocations Director Father James Wilcox addresses the Fort Worth Serrans at a dinner Nov. 19. (NTC / Jerry Circelli)

at the University of Dallas, adjacent to Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving.

"One of the most important things that the Serra Clubs in Fort Worth and Arlington have done over the years," said Fort Worth Bishop Michael Olson, "has been to initiate the Vocation Awareness Program along with their Serran brothers and sisters in Dallas."

Himself a Serran, Bishop Olson said Serra Clubs help promote a culture of vocations. It is Christ Himself, he said, who actually initiates the call to the priesthood.

"It's not something we promote ourselves. We promote an *awareness* of it and an attentiveness to listen to the voice of God," the bishop emphasized. "Serrans encourage young men and young women to consider a vocation. They promote the attentiveness to listen to a vocation."

Ron Thompson, president of the Fort Worth Serra Club, explained that Serra Clubs in the dioceses of Fort Worth and Dallas work together in a variety of ways to help that happen.

In the months leading up to the VAP, Serrans give talks at local churches and make presentations to youth groups, encouraging young men and women considering vocations to attend. Serrans also raise funds to help cover food and expenses, offer guidance, and facilitate at the program. "Basically," said Thompson, "we're there to help in any way that we can."

The Serra Clubs from the dioceses of Fort Worth and Dallas have hosted the VAP every year since 1990 to help 1,000 young people in

the process of discerning their vocations in the Church.

In addition to the VAP, Thompson said Serrans are also driven to show their appreciation to those who follow God's call to religious life. Serrans, he said, host appreciation dinners for priests, seminarians, and religious sisters at various times during the year.

Serra Club of Arlington-Metro President Tim Moloney said his group expresses the same kind of appreciation several times each year. They also host luncheons for Catholic students at the University of Texas at Arlington. "We like to connect with them and stay engaged," said Moloney.

Other times, Moloney said, club members bring donuts to Holy Trinity seminarians and show appreciation for their response to God's call.

"I think it's important for our young people and seminarians to know there are strong Catholics committed to helping them through their journey and connecting with them so that they know they are not alone," Moloney said.

"We want to build relationships that will last a lifetime. We want people to say, 'I remember those Serrans, they fed me at their dinners, or they supported me in some way.'"

Those were the words straight off the tongue of seminarian John Martin when he was asked about the Serra Club. "The Serrans always fed us. That's probably what kept me coming back so much," he joked.

On a serious note, Martin said attending a VAP "Come and See" event helped him focus on a voice that he had been hearing for a long time. "I've heard the call all my life," Martin said, "but that strengthened it and brought it to light. And that let me know that, yes, this can happen."

Martin, a seminarian studying for the Diocese of Fort Worth, is currently serving his pastoral year at Sacred Heart Church in Hales Corners, Wisconsin.

Thompson and Moloney said their clubs are also committed to praying for seminarians, like Martin, and others considering entering religious life.

Their clubs host monthly Holy Hours around the diocese for Eucharistic Adoration, quiet reflection, and prayer — all for vocations.

Each group also hosts a "31 Club," which involves members being assigned one day each month to pray for vocations at Mass or by praying the Rosary.

In addition to organizing poster contests



ABOVE: Fr. Wilcox poses with members of the Fort Worth Serra Club at the Nov. 19 dinner. (Photo by Jerry Circelli) • **BELOW:** Members of the Arlington Serra Club pose for a picture at St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Arlington Nov. 12. (Photo courtesy of Arlington Serra Club)



and other activities to engage youth, local Serra Clubs are also taking the initiative to increase membership.

Those initiatives include assisting more Serra Clubs to get started in the diocese and finding new ways to involve more young adults to participate in the VAP. New plans are also being implemented that involve facilitating discussions between seminarians and youth groups around the diocese. Also in the planning are annual spiritual retreats to rekindle the flame of the Serran mission for club members.

"We're not about just getting together for fellowship, although that's a key part of it," Thompson said. "We really have a mission in mind, and that mission is to bring in young men and women to consider their vocations."

RESOURCES

Serra Club of Fort Worth
Ron Thompson, president
rnt76133@aol.com

Serra Club of Arlington-Metro
Tim Moloney, president
tmoloney@sbcglobal.net

Serra in the United States
www.Serraus.org

Serra International
www.Serrainternational.org

March 1, Second Sunday of Lent.

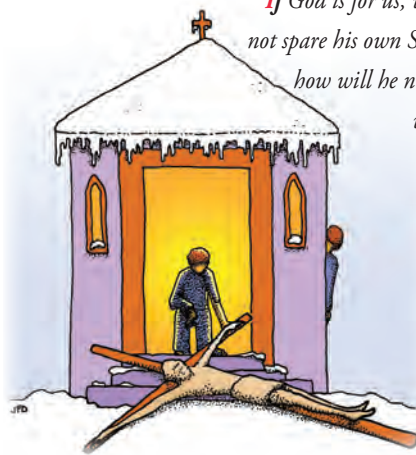
Cycle B Readings:

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

By Jeff Hensley

I have long understood that what God asks of Abraham, the sacrifice of his own son, born long after any child was expected — or even thought possible — was a foreshadowing of God offering his only Son Jesus for us all.

What God is asking in *Genesis 22* seems insane and impossible — but only if He were not both willing and planning to do the same. When Abraham is on the verge of killing his long-awaited son, God intervenes and



“If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son but handed him over for us all, how will he not also give us everything else along with him?” — Romans 8:31b-32a

provides a ram caught in the bushes nearby.

All of this, of course, anticipates the perfect sacrifice the Father would offer in Jesus.

In the last few days, I have connected with an Indonesian priest serving the faithful in Russia. He left his tropical home

where he received his formation as a Society of the Divine Word priest to minister in the sub-Arctic cold of Russia. The photos he shared on Facebook showed the bright blue Russian church where he serves covered with deep snow.

For a missionary priest from Indonesia to serve in such a place is an act of sacrifice reminiscent of that asked of our father in faith, Abraham.

QUESTIONS:

Have you sought God’s direction for your life — in great and small things?

It may seem to Father Milto Seran like a bit part in the long road of salvation history, but to those of us who have been asked so much less, it seems a major role.

The central role in this drama of salvation is that of our Lord Jesus who is revealed to his disciples Peter, James, and John in the passage from today’s Gospel in *Mark 9*. Jesus’ relation to the Father is revealed as He is transfigured on a high mountain where He shines brighter than anything on earth could shine, and God gives his followers the ultimate message demanding our attention and obedience: “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him.” No exclamation points needed, but imagine the majesty of the voice.

March 8, Third Sunday of Lent.

Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Exodus 20:1-17
Psalm: 19:8-11
- 2) 1 Corinthians 1:22-25
Gospel) John 2:13-25

By Jean Denton

We were new to town and registering at our local parish. The Christian formation director welcomed us. “You’ll find this is a Jesus-centered parish,” he said.

My husband gave him a quiz-zical look. Later, he said, “Doesn’t that go without saying? Isn’t every Christian church Jesus-centered?”

That was many years ago. Since then we’ve been in a few parishes that somehow, occasionally seemed to lose that center.

For instance, I remember

“You shall not have other gods besides me.” — Exodus 20:3



once standing in a church foyer just before Mass. People entering the building had to pass through a gamut of greeters in the 30-foot distance between the front door and the doors to the sanctuary.

Youth were having a car wash, the Knights of Columbus were selling tickets to a pancake breakfast, and the women’s club offered baked goods for sale.

A family walking through the area seemed annoyed by the commotion. I heard a teenager

remark, “Gosh, it’s like that story when Jesus got mad at all the merchants in the temple.”

That story is today’s Gospel. Jesus, annoyed by the commotion, told the temple moneychangers, “Stop making my Father’s house a marketplace.”

A marketplace scene indeed has become familiar in churches today. Maybe we’ve developed a bad habit in how we support our church and its ministry, forgetting that if we value and revere God, we don’t need any fundraising exchanges for investing in the life of Christ’s community.

In this week’s Old Testament reading, God’s commandments call us to have no other gods, to respect our one and only God and

QUESTIONS:

How have you been distracted, recently, from having Jesus at the center of your life? How can you maintain a proper dwelling place for God in your own heart?

keep Him at the center of our lives.

When Jesus drives the moneychangers out of the temple, He’s accusing them of distracting people from God as their center.

Then He adds, “Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.” Scripture explains that He was referring to his own body and his resurrection. But it’s a warning that our worldly distractions can destroy the place where God comes to dwell — whether it is our faith community or our own hearts.

He will rise, though. He explained that. God will forever triumph.

However, don’t we want to maintain a dwelling place for God at the center in our own lives?

March 15, Fourth Sunday of Lent.

Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) 2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23
- Psalm 137:1-6
- 2) Ephesians 2:4-10
- Gospel) John 3:14-21

By Jeff Hedglen

Years ago, a student in a confirmation class I was teaching said to me, “I’m doing just fine, why do I need a Savior?” His question took me by surprise. It had never occurred to me that these teenagers would have no idea of their need for a Savior and, furthermore, I was not sure how to convince them of this need.

After some conversation, the other leaders and I decided that the reason for this lack of understanding was that the young

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son.” — John 3:16



people did not know anything about the nature of sin — that we all sin and that the consequence of

sin is eternal death.

So in the next class I gave a talk on sin. I purposely painted a dark, foreboding picture of the reality of sin and how it affects each of our lives. I offered no hope and no glimmer of light at the end of the darkness of sin in our lives. After the lesson, I gave everyone a piece of paper that simply said, “I sin.” I asked them to take the paper home and put it someplace where they would see it every day, and when they saw it, to think about the

sins they had committed.

The next week I told the rest of the story of salvation and how, as we read in this week’s Gospel, “God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish but might have eternal life.” At the end of the class, I gave them another sheet of paper that said, “I sin, Jesus loves.”

These four words hold the nucleus of the Gospel message. It is a simple truth that is not always easy to grasp. In a world where we like to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps, it is hard to admit that we stand in need of anything or anyone. In the case of sin, our need has never been greater, but the love of God has never been stronger.

QUESTIONS:

When did you come to know you need a Savior? In what ways have you experienced the love of God?

March 22, Fifth Sunday of Lent.

Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Jeremiah 31:31-34
- Psalm 51:3-4, 12-15
- 2) Hebrews 5:7-9
- Gospel) John 12:20-33

By Sharon K. Perkins

As I write this, the fields near my mother’s home are lush and green with winter wheat. I’m the daughter of a farmer so the life cycle of wheat was an important part of my growing up; our family’s economy depended upon how those tiny grains fared when they hit the dirt.

Long before the seedlings made their appearance, my dad would walk out to the fields and gently dig down to check whether the seeds were undergoing the changes necessary to produce



“Sir, we would like to see Jesus.”

— John 12:21

young plants.

After the seed’s tough outer husk had been broken down and the inner food store used up, the baby plant would emerge: a root to be embedded in the soil and a barely recognizable shoot that would eventually break through the crusty surface to reach for the sun.

Still, it would be months before that bare patch of ground would be recognized for what it was: a wheat field.

Jesus picks up the metaphor in today’s Gospel to remind us of the process that is required not only to become our truest selves but to be fruitful in such a way that when people see us, they also see Jesus.

Jeremiah first reminds us that the same hand of creation that designed the seedling wrote his law in our hearts, drawing us out of ourselves to reach for his light.

The psalmist sings of the Father’s immense and tender compassion that softens the tough shell of sin and self-centeredness encasing our being and preventing our becoming what we are created to be.

But sprouting is not a passive exercise. Obedience to God’s call and service of others — or in two

words, “losing oneself” — are required for maturity, growth, and fruitfulness. Most often, this takes the form of fulfilling those mundane, thankless or repetitive tasks of diaper-changing, commuting to work, washing dirty clothes, forgiving offenses, feeding the hungry, submitting to those in authority without grumbling, grieving our losses, and apologizing to our spouses.

When we open our eyes to see Jesus in other people and in trying situations, and respond accordingly, we become those grains of wheat dying to be reborn. We don’t have to speculate about our life’s purpose, nor will others wonder who we really are. We will be the image of Jesus in the world.

QUESTIONS:

In what circumstance or aspect of my life am I still hardened by sin and selfishness? What one thing can I do today to die to self?

April 5, The Resurrection of the Lord.

Cycle B. 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

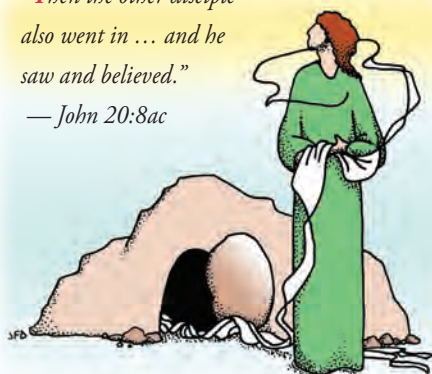
By Jeff Hensley

We forget how little Jesus' disciples understood of what happened when Jesus rose from the dead, proving God is the God of life. But when Mary of Magdala announced the empty tomb to the disciples, who were gathered in prayer after Jesus' crucifixion, they didn't understand much at all. When Peter and John raced to the tomb and saw his burial clothes lying there, their eyes began to be opened — but not all the way.

John, the author of the

"Then the other disciple also went in ... and he saw and believed."

— John 20:8ac



Gospel, says, "And he saw and believed. For they did not yet understand the Scripture that he (Jesus) had to rise from the dead."

Matthew's Gospel recounts that the disciples failed to understand even on the day of Jesus' ascension, even after having spent 40 days with Him after his resurrection, even only moments before they were to receive their

commission to go and make disciples of all nations. Matthew writes of the disciples, after seeing Jesus where He had told them to meet Him in Galilee, "They saw Him, they worshiped, but they doubted."

However, in the reading from Acts that opens this Sunday's Scriptures, Peter has full understanding and boldly proclaims the Gospel.

After being fully empowered by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, he proclaims the good news of Jesus to a gathering of gentiles: "He

commissioned us to preach to the people and testify that he is the one appointed by God as judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness, that everyone who believes in him will receive forgiveness of sins through his name."

Though I could offer witness to God's miracles in my own life and those around me, nothing in my experience can come close to matching Jesus' rising from the dead. And only the Holy Spirit, leading us to wisdom and understanding, can cause us to fully understand the significance of Jesus' triumph over the grave.

Alleluia, He is risen indeed.

QUESTIONS:

Have you fully understood the power of the Gospel brought to us by Jesus' resurrection, his victory over death?

April 12, Second Sunday of Easter.

Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 4:32-35
Psalm 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24
- 2) 1 John 5:1-6
Gospel) John 20:19-31

By Jean Denton

This week's Gospel is the one in which the apostle Thomas famously doubts Jesus' resurrection even though the latter suddenly appeared before him within a locked room. Thomas can't quite believe his eyes. He needs to touch the wounds that would identify his master.

Jesus is happy to oblige and doesn't belittle Thomas' doubt. But He extols the faith of those who believe in his presence even without seeing Him.

The faithful today believe without seeing, and for many of us it isn't difficult as we recognize evidence of Christ working in the



"Jesus came, although the doors were locked, and stood in their midst and said, 'Peace be with you.'" — John 20:26

prisons every week. Those facilities were built in remote places in the Appalachian Mountains, far from the state's population centers.

"What forever amazes me," Father Tim says, "is how Christ always wants to be with us wherever we are — even locked in a prison."

The authorities allow very little time for inmates to leave their usual confines for spiritual help, so Father Tim rarely meets them one-on-one for counsel or Confession.

But he celebrates Mass with them, and that, he explains, is what they most desire.

QUESTIONS:

When have you had a difficult time believing Jesus is present? What can you do to bolster your faith in times of unbelief?

"The inmates really believe that Christ comes to be with them," Father Tim says, "They know that Christ loves the poor, and they've read the Scriptures that say, 'I was in prison and you visited me.' They really believe that and it means so much to them."

The inmates speak directly to Jesus during Mass — and He responds. Father Tim explains this usually happens during the prayers of the faithful. "They like to share and they often minister to each other as it becomes more of a conversation. Their issues mostly deal with guilt and seeking forgiveness. I think they want to know that Christ forgives them."

They can only know that if they first believe. Then, as Jesus promises in the Gospel, they are blessed.

April 19, Third Sunday of Easter.

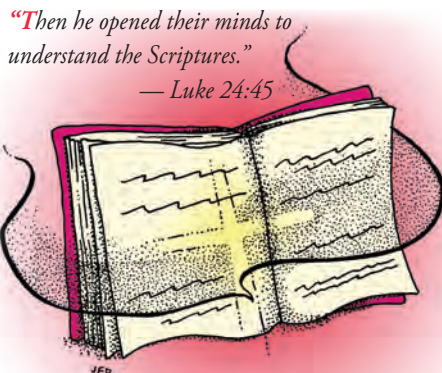
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 3:13-15, 17-19
Psalm 4:2, 4, 7-9
- 2) 1 John 2:1-5a
Gospel) Luke 24:35-48

By Jeff Hedglen

When I was a teen my family moved from Michigan to Texas. Before we left, my father shared with me what he called “the three-step method to solving any problem: Tell God your problem; forget about it; when you see Him start to work, jump in and help Him.”

At the time I did not think much of it because I was 16 years old and he was my dad. I didn’t think he had any real information of value.



When we got to Texas, my father said we had to go to at least one of every activity at our new parish. We did not have to go back (except for Mass), but we had to go at least once. At the first Bible study I attended, we were studying *Psalm 37*. Verse 5 says: “Commit to the Lord your way, trust in him and he will act.” I immediately thought: Hey, that’s

the three-step method to solving any problem. This was the first time anything from the Bible had ever spoken directly to me.

This week’s Gospel has this line: “Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.” I really believe this is exactly what happened to me during that Bible study years ago.

The Bible can be a confusing book. A lot of it is best understood with help from a good teacher or a good commentary. But what is even more necessary to seeing

what is being revealed is the grace of God. This is what the Gospel is talking about when it tells us that Jesus opened the minds of the disciples to understand the Scriptures.

With grace, the seemingly ordinary words on a page teem with life and have the power to penetrate the soul. This is but one fruit that flows from the resurrection of Jesus. The Christ in glory desires for us to not only read the revelation of God found in Scripture, but to understand it, embrace it, and live it.

Come Lord Jesus, open our minds so we, too, may understand your word.

QUESTIONS:

Has a passage from the Bible ever spoken to you directly? What is your favorite Bible verse?

April 26, Fourth Sunday of Easter.

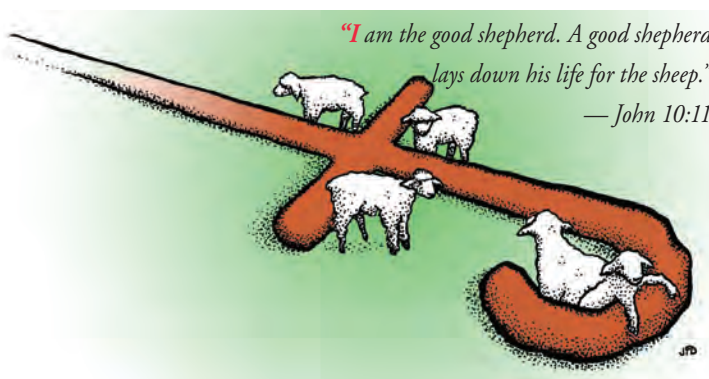
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 4:8-12
Psalm 118:1, 8-9, 21-23, 26, 28-29
- 2) 1 John 3:1-2
Gospel) John 10:11-18

By Sharon K. Perkins

I’ve heard people voice some common misconceptions about small-business owners: They don’t have to work hard because they have employees to do the work for them; they can take time off whenever they want; they can work fewer hours than their hirelings; they can command a larger salary with impunity. Talk to the business owner, however, and you get a different story.

While the owner has the most to gain, he or she also has the most to lose. If an employee doesn’t show up for work, it’s the owner who takes up the slack.



The owner works long hours with no overtime pay so that the business will turn a profit, and if income isn’t sufficient to meet payroll, the owner depletes his own savings or takes a cut in pay to cover the shortfall.

The owner, having the most “skin in the game,” goes to incredible lengths to protect his or her investment. The employee works for a paycheck — the owner works for the company.

Jesus makes this contrast in

today’s Gospel when he compares the good shepherd to a hired man who doesn’t own the sheep. The shepherd/owner has the most to gain and the most to lose, whereas the hired hand can choose to save his own skin by leaving the sheep

vulnerable to attack.

Jesus the Good Shepherd, views us not simply as mindless sheep to be rescued but as beloved children of God to be treasured and protected. He has invested his total self in our welfare and as a pledge toward our eternal destiny.

During the Easter season, we celebrate a Lord and Savior who doesn’t work for Himself but for his Father, and who has quite literally demonstrated the Father’s extraordinary love and mercy by putting his own skin — body, blood, soul, and divinity — into the game with the highest stakes of all. Having willingly laid down his life for his sheep at Calvary, He continues to do so until all his scattered sheep are safe under his care.

QUESTIONS:

This Easter season, how are you celebrating the Father’s extraordinary gift of love and mercy given in Jesus? How can you more deeply invest your own life in the welfare and destiny of Jesus’ flock?

2015, Año de la Vida Consagrada

La celebración honra a los que sirven a Cristo, da la bienvenida a otros a estar atentos al llamado de Dios

Fotos de Donna Ryckaert

Por Jerry Circelli
Corresponsal

MÁS DE 200 HOMBRES Y MUJERES QUE HAN DEDICADO SUS VIDAS A SERVIR A CRISTO Y SU IGLESIA LLENARON LAS BANCAS DE DIEZ EN FONDO, en la Catedral de San Patricio en Fort Worth, el 6 de febrero, cuando la diócesis inició su celebración del “2015, Año de la Vida Consagrada”. Sentados detrás de ellos, un número igual de laicos participaron en el evento, mostrando su apoyo por los sacerdotes, hermanos, hermanas y diáconos quienes, viniendo de varias partes del mundo, sirven a la Iglesia local.

Aproximadamente 100 sacerdotes sirven en la Diócesis de Fort Worth, de los cuales cerca de la mitad pertenecen a órdenes religiosas. También sirven en la diócesis 87 hermanas religiosas, varios hermanos religiosos, y más de 100 diáconos permanentes. Además, la diócesis cuenta con más de 30 seminaristas que están preparándose para servir en la diócesis, cuyo número de católicos asciende a más de 700,000, en 28 condados del norte de Texas.

La celebración en San Patricio incluyó Solemnas Vísperas presididas por el Obispo Michael F. Olson, seguidas de la primera *feria* religiosa en el Centro Pastoral de la Catedral. Ahí, los laicos se reunieron con los sacerdotes, hermanos, hermanas y diáconos, y tuvieron la oportunidad de conocer a los miembros de más de 20 órdenes religiosas que sirven en la diócesis.

Durante su homilía, el Obispo Olson dijo que la Diócesis de Fort Worth debe mucho a los hombres y mujeres de las congregaciones que sirven a la Iglesia local y manifiestan su dedicación a Cristo por medio de sus votos de pobreza, castidad y obediencia. El Obispo dijo que una mujer o un hombre religioso vive su vocación “de forma que nos inspire a vivir la vida de la Iglesia como una comunión, centrada en Cristo, y con el llamado universal a la santidad en el corazón”.

Al agradecer su servicio a los feligreses de la localidad, el obispo dijo, “La Diócesis de Fort Worth y yo, como su obispo, estamos muy agra-

‘Cuanto más
crecemos en
nuestra vocación tanto
más amamos a Cristo,
y a Cristo en la gente”.

—Hna. Roberta Hesse, SSMN

decidos por el ministerio de nuestras hermanas y hermanos religiosos”.

“Su testimonio, especialmente el de su vida en comunidad, es muy importante para nuestra formación como Iglesia local, incluyendo al clero, los fieles laicos, nuestras catequistas. Todos los involucrados en la vida de la Iglesia necesitamos de su vocación”.

Para terminar su homilía, el obispo dijo, “¡Despertemos al mundo! Y con el gozo del llamado que Él ha dado a cada uno de nosotros, compartamos libremente la luz y todo lo que hemos recibido.

El mensaje del Obispo Olson destacó el del Papa Francisco, quien designó 2015 como el Año de la Vida Consagrada. El Papa animó a las mujeres y hombres consagrados diciendo, “¡Muestran que seguir a Cristo y practicar su Evangelio llena de alegría sus corazones!”

Entre los religiosos y religiosas que asistieron, estaba la Hermana Roberta Hesse, de las Hermanas de Santa María de Namur (SSMN). Nativa del Norte de Texas, la Hna. Roberta sirvió 35 años como misionera en África. Ahora reside en el Centro de Nuestra Señora de la Victoria, al Sur de Fort Worth. Ella dijo, “este año especial, designado por el Papa, me ha dado tiempo para reflexionar sobre mi vida y en qué momento verdaderamente entendí los votos que hice cuando era muy joven”. La Hna. Roberta, ahora 80, hizo sus primeros votos hace 54 años.

La Hna. Roberta dijo, “Cuanto más crecemos en nuestra vocación tanto más amamos a Cristo, y a Cristo en la gente”.

También entre los asistentes estaba el Hermano Anthony John Mathison, de la Orden de Predicadores (OP), conocidos comúnmente como Dominicos. El Hno. Anthony apenas tiene seis meses en el año del noviciado y recientemente oyó el llamado de Dios a ser sacerdote.

“Uno puede aprender mucho sobre las órdenes religiosas en el Internet”, dijo el Hno. Anthony, “pero cuando uno conoce a uno de los frailes o sacerdotes o hermanas, es muy diferente. Es mucho mejor en persona”.

El Hermano Isaiah Marie Hoffman, de los Frailes Franciscanos de la Renovación (CFR), dijo que él ve el Año de la Vida Consagrada como un tiempo para “renovar nuestra propia consagración, fortalecernos en ella, y para redescubrir nuestros carismas”.

El Padre Tom Stabile, de la Franciscano de la Tercera Orden Regular (TOR) expresó sentimientos similares. Párroco de la Iglesia de San Andrés en Fort Worth, el Padre Tom dijo, “La mayoría de las órdenes religiosas nacieron por un propósito o necesidad particular. Cambian los tiempos, cambian las necesidades...pero aún así, conservamos nuestras raíces”. Él dijo que el Año de la Vida Consagrada llama a los hombres y mujeres no sólo a saber más de los orígenes de sus congregaciones, sino también a preguntarse, “¿Qué estamos llamados a hacer ahora?”

La Hermana Eva Sánchez, de las Misioneras Catequistas de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María (MCSH) dijo que ahora es el tiempo de salir y activamente inspirar a la juventud a estar atentos al llamado de Dios. Ella sirve como directora de Educación Religiosa en la Iglesia del Santo Nombre en Fort Worth.

La Hna. Eva dijo, “El Papa Francisco dice que debemos ir a ellos en lugar de esperar que ellos vengan a nosotros. Nosotros somos quienes debemos dar los pasos para salir”.

Dos estudiantes principiantes en *Nolan High School*, Miranda Rivera y Hannah Brennan,



La Hna. Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, Vicecanciller, posa con la Hna. Dorothy Powers, frente al cartel de su congregación, Hermanas de Santa María de Namur.



Las Hermanas Dominicanas Vietnamitas en las Vísperas — Hna. Cecelia (Izq.) y Hna. Catherine



Los Frailes Franciscanos de la Tercera Orden Regular (Izq. a Der.) P. Augustine Lieb, TOR; P. Benedict Jurchak, TOR; y P. Dave Morrier, TOR, posan frente su cubículo durante la recepción.



La Schola Cantorum del Seminario de la Santísima Trinidad ofreció su talento musical para dar realce a los himnos y cantos durante las Vísperas el 6 de Feb.

fueron las embajadoras del evento del Año de la Vida Consagrada. Regalaron rosarios, abrieron puertas, dieron la bienvenida a los asistentes, y ayudaron de muchas otras maneras.

Hannah dijo que se sintió honrada de servir a aquellos que han entrado a la vida consagrada. Miranda asintió, añadiendo que espera que haya más eventos que incluyan a los hombres y mujeres que han dedicado su vida a servir a Dios. Cuando supo que las hermanas MCSH estaban planeando una “sesión a puerta abierta”, ella dijo, “¡Eso va a ser cool; quiero participar!”

Cuando la Hermana Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, vicecanciller para Servicios Parroquiales y para Religiosas, supo de la emoción de las estudiantes de Nolan miró hacia el cielo y exclamó “¡Sí,

Señor!” Ella dijo al *North Texas Catholic* “¡Esa es la clase de acercamiento que queremos tener!”

La Hna. Yolanda, quien coordinó la celebración junto con el padre James Wilcox, Director de Vocaciones, dijo que muchos hombres y mujeres jóvenes expresaron interés en las órdenes, retiros y “sesiones a puerta abierta”.

También estaba complacida por la asistencia de más de 400 personas.

“Estaba extasiada al ver a toda esa gente”, dijo la Hna. Yolanda. “Supe que en esto estaba verdaderamente la mano de Dios. La gente estaba respondiendo al llamado del Papa a celebrar la vida consagrada”.

“Esto ha sido una bendición para todos nosotros”.



Los Frailes Franciscanos de la Renovación, P. Pio Maria Hoffmann, CFR (Izq) y Hno. Thomas McGrinder, CFR, saludan a sus visitantes durante la recepción.



La Hna. Patricia González, HCG (Izq.) y la Hna. Diana Rodríguez, HCG, a cada lado del Obispo Olson en la recepción, tal como estuvieron en 19 de Nov. 2013 después de que celebró su primera Misa como, recientemente anunciado, obispo electo de la Diócesis de Fort Worth.

Congregaciones religiosas femeninas en la Diócesis de Fort Worth

Hermanas de la Caridad del Verbo Encarnado (CCVI)

Congregación de la Divina Providencia (CDP)

Hermanas de la Sagrada Familia de Nazaret (CSFN)

Hermanas Catequistas Guadalupeñas (HCG)

Hermanas Franciscanas de la Inmaculada Concepción (HFIC)

Misioneras Catequistas de la Divina Providencia (MCDP)

Orden de las Carmelitas Descalzas (OCD)

Misioneras Catequistas de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María (MCSH)

Hermanas Dominicanas Vietnamitas (OP)

Hermanas Benedictinas Olivetananas (OSB)

Hermanas del Espíritu Santo y María Inmaculada (SHSp)

Hermanas de Santa María de Namur (SSMN)

Hermanas Educadoras de *Notre Dame* (SSND)

Congregaciones religiosas masculinas en la Diócesis de Fort Worth

Frailes Franciscanos de la Renovación (CFR)

Congregación de la Madre Corredentora (CMC)

Heraldos de la Buena Nueva (HGN)

Orden de Frailes Menores / Franciscanos (OFM)

Orden de Frailes Menores Capuchinos / Franciscanos (OFM Cap.)

Orden de Predicadores / Dominicanos (OP)

Sociedad del Apostolado Católico (SAC)

Sociedad de Jesús (SJ)

Sociedad del Verbo Divino (SVD)

Tercera Orden de San Francisco (TOR)

Confraternidad Sacerdotal de Operarios del Reino de Cristo (CORC)

Recursos en Internet

Para más información sobre las congregaciones religiosas femeninas en la Diócesis de Fort Worth, visite <http://www.fwdioc.org/religious-groups-women>

Para más información sobre las congregaciones religiosas masculinas, visite <http://www.fwdioc.org/religious-groups-men>

Video

Vea en YouTube a pocos de los muchos en la Diócesis de Fort Worth dedicados a servir a Cristo y su Iglesia: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkQmq0Vh4vw>

Las Misioneras Catequistas de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María están siempre disponibles para Dios

Por Susan Moses
Corresponsal

Cada semana en nuestra diócesis, Dios trabaja por medio de ocho hermanas religiosas que realizan un moderno milagro de los panes y pescados. En lugar de alimentar miles de cuerpos hambrientos, estas ocho mujeres nutren las mentes, espíritus y almas de miles de católicos Hispanos.

Las Misioneras Catequistas de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María se esmeran por llevar la misericordia y el amor de Jesús a las familias. Su misión usualmente empieza con la instrucción religiosa.

Por ejemplo, veamos a la Hna. Eva Sánchez, MCSH, quien es la directora de educación religiosa en la Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús en Fort Worth.

“Todo se deriva de la catequesis”, explica la Hna. Eva. Uno tiene que entender el amor de Jesús, entender el Evangelio, y entender que las enseñanzas de la Iglesia son de la Biblia”.

La parroquia del Santo Nombre acomoda 1,500 estudiantes al ofrecer nueve sesiones de CCD los fines de semana. Los sábados en la mañana, uno puede encontrar a la Hna. Eva saludando a los estudiantes y a sus padres cuando entran. Cuando empieza cada sesión, ella visita cada salón, cambiando constantemente del Inglés al Español, queriendo que sus estudiantes sepan sus oraciones y hablen de su fe en ambos idiomas. En algunas clases, ella reúne a los estudiantes para orar; otros, oyen una lección sobre la Palabra de Dios o sobre



Atrás, de Izq. a Der.:

Hna. Adela Benoit y Hna. Eva Sanchez

Al frente, de Izq. a Der.:

Hna. Rafaela Landeros, Hna. Edid Torres, Hna. Midory Wu, Hna. Aracely Lobatón y Hna. Rosa María Rodríguez

No está en la foto:

Hna. Yolanda Piñeda
(foto por la Hna. Yolanda Piñeda)

los sacramentos. Ella da las gracias y estimula a cada catequista y, como torbellino, va a la siguiente clase.

Aunque la Hna. Eva se enfoca primordialmente en la juventud de la parroquia, también enseña a los padres de los niños que están preparándose para los sacramentos, e instruye a más de 100 catequistas y asistentes que enseñan CCD en el Santo Nombre.

La educación es la meta principal de las Misioneras Catequistas, pero ellas apoyan a la parroquia en otras formas también.

“Las Misioneras Catequistas son grandes colaboradoras, y trabajan con los sacerdotes de la parroquia para determinar cómo se puede prestar mejor apoyo pastoral”, dijo la Hna. Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, Vicecanciller para

Servicios Parroquiales y para Religiosas, y Directora asociada de vocaciones femeninas. “Muchas sirven como directoras de educación religiosa o directoras de ministerios pastorales Hispanos. En el pasado, dos de ellas sirvieron como administradoras pastorales en una misión parroquial predominantemente Hispana y económicamente limitada, y condujeron la campaña para construir el nuevo edificio”.

Como Coordinadora del Ministerio Hispano en la Iglesia de San Bartolomé en Fort Worth, la Hermana Yolanda Piñeda, MCSH divide su tiempo entre la enseñanza, el ministerio social y el cuidado pastoral.



La Hna. Eva Sánchez comparte el amor de Dios con un clase que se prepara para la Primera Comunión en la Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús en el Sur de Fort Worth (foto NTC / Susan Moses)

Mecanismos para reportar 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) 945-9340 o, mandarle un correo electrónico a jlocke@fwdioc.org
- llamar al número de emergencia para el abuso sexual: (817) 817-945-9345

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

Llamar al *Departamento de servicios para la familia y de protección* del estado de Texas (*Servicios de protección al menor*) al número: (800) 252-5400.



La Hna. Yolanda Piñeda dice que compartir el Evangelio con los necesitados es su fuente de alegría. (foto NTC / Susan Moses)

La Hna. Yolanda literalmente tiene la última palabra acerca de la despensa parroquial de San Vicente de Paul. Cuando las personas se van con sus víveres, ella les ofrece pan y verdura o fruta fresca si la hay. Después reza con ellas, les sonrío amablemente y las exhorta a “llevar a su familia a la Iglesia” o a “Orar con sus niños”.

Desde que llegó a la parroquia en 2011, ella ha estado visitando los hogares de las familias para evaluar sus necesidades y ofrecer ayuda adecuada. Conduce un estudio de Biblia en Español y asiste a muchas otras clases y reuniones, tanto en Inglés como en Español. Ella también celebra servicios de Comunión en los hogares para ancianos.

“Estamos aquí para todos. Todos somos uno, todos somos criaturas de Dios unidas y tratando de vivir la Palabra de Dios”, dijo la Hna. Yolanda.

El Padre Jack McKone, párroco de la

Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón en Wichita Falls, reconoce que la unidad puede ser difícil. “Un reto palpable al servir a los Latinos es que ellos no tienen una cultura homogénea. Muchos tienen apellidos Hispánicos, pero no hablan Español, otros hablan muy poco Inglés y, la gran mayoría está en la mitad”.

Las Misioneras Catequistas se ven a sí mismas como un puente para ayudar a los inmigrantes a adaptarse a este país. “Las familias Hispánicas necesitan mantener su fe, sus valores familiares, y continuar educándose para que puedan enriquecer la cultura americana. Queremos unir a la gente, no dividir las comunidades”, dijo la Hna. Eva.

Para promover la unidad dentro de la comunidad Hispánica en Wichita Falls, la hermana Adela Benoit, MCSH y la hermana Rafaela Landeros, MCSH, prepararon una liturgia que dio relieve a la Fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe. Las hermanas empezaron con un guión acerca de la Virgen de Guadalupe y San Juan Diego. Los feligreses y los jóvenes aprovecharon la oportunidad de ayudar a las hermanas a escenificar la obra.

“Pronto vimos que todo el proceso de producir la liturgia, con la obra como parte de la homilía, fue un medio catequético para los jóvenes”, dijo el Padre McKone. “Los niños verdaderamente entendieron la historia de la Virgen y el indio pobre y la construcción de la iglesia dedicada a nuestra Santísima Madre que se volvió el centro de atención para evangelizar a todo un país. Las hermanas unieron a la parroquia para lograr esto”.

Las hermanas también trabajaron con el Padre Richard Kirkham para producir la misma obra en San Judas Tadeo en Burkburnett. Aunque apenas llegaron a Wichita Falls en el otoño de 2014, ellas han impactado al

deanato del Noroeste con catequesis, consejería pastoral y visitas a la gente en sus hogares desde Wichita Falls hasta Chillicothe.

Las MCSH vinieron primero a la diócesis el 8 de octubre de 1960, cuando tres hermanas llegaron a servir al Inmaculado Corazón de María, la Catedral de San Patricio y San Mateo—misión asociada a San Patricio. Actualmente las hermanas sirven en ocho parroquias: Sagrado Corazón y Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Wichita Falls; Santo Nombre de Jesús, Inmaculado Corazón de María, el Apóstol San Pablo y San Bartolomé en Fort Worth; San Francisco de Asís en Grapevine, y el Apóstol San Juan en North Richland Hills.

La Madre Sofía Garduño, una maestra, fundó la orden en la ciudad de México en 1918, época de persecución religiosa. Actualmente 140 hermanas sirven en México, España, África y los E. U.

Aunque ocho hermanas han incrementado grandemente el ámbito de la educación religiosa y el cuidado pastoral a los Latinos en nuestra diócesis, la Hna. Yolanda dijo que con su tiempo y número limitados, no pueden ellas servir a cada una de las personas que necesitan ayuda.

Aún así, las Misioneras Catequistas tienen una gran influencia en los 350,000 católicos Hispánicos en la diócesis. Los párrocos respetan las contribuciones que ellas hacen a la comunidad Hispánica, y un feligrés de la parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe habló entre lágrimas del gozo que sintió cuando vio a las hermanas de nuevo en su parroquia.

La Hna. Eva dijo, “Nos encuentran en medio de la gente. Estamos en CCD y en Misa, también asistiendo a los funerales, yendo a los hogares para ancianos. Para Dios siempre estamos disponibles.”

Misioneras Catequistas de los Sagrados Corazones de Jesús y María que sirven en la Diócesis de Fort Worth

Hna. Adela Benoit, MCSH

Formación para el Ministerio Hispánico; Parroquia del Sagrado Corazón, Wichita Falls

Hna. Rosa María Rodríguez, MCSH

Directora del Ministerio Pastoral Hispánico; Parroquia de San Francisco de Asís, Grapevine

Hna. Rafaela Landeros, MCSH

Directora del Ministerio Hispánico; Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe, Wichita Falls

Hna. Araceli Lobatón, MCSH

Directora del Ministerio Hispánico; Parroquia del Apóstol San Juan, North Richland Hills

Hna. Yolanda Piñeda, MCSH

Ministerio Pastoral; Parroquia de San Bartolomé, Fort Worth

Hna. Eva Sánchez, MCSH

Directora de Educación Religiosa; Parroquia del Santo Nombre de Jesús, Fort Worth

Hna. Edid Torres, MCSH

Ministerio Pastoral Hispánico; Parroquia de San Pablo, Fort Worth

Hna. Midory Wu, MCSH

Formación Juvenil; Parroquia del Inmaculado Corazón de María, Fort Worth

Para saber más acerca de las Misioneras Catequistas, visite www.missionarycsh.org

Los sacerdotes de la Sociedad del Apostolado Católico (SAC) siguen los pasos de su fascinante fundador, San Vicente Pallotti

Cada católico de la Iglesia de Jesucristo debe regocijarse porque, como sacerdote, religioso o laico, puede utilizar su talento, conocimiento, aprendizaje, poder, posición, profesión, palabras, bienes terrenales o, por lo menos, sus oraciones, para hacer lo que sea posible para reafirmar la fe de Jesucristo, reavivar la caridad entre los católicos y propagarla en el mundo entero.

— San Vicente Pallotti, Fundador de la Sociedad del Apostolado Católico

**Por Jerry Circelli
Corresponsal**

PARA ENTENDER VERDADERAMENTE A LOS SACERDOTES “PALOTINOS” DE LA SOCIEDAD DEL APOSTOLADO CATÓLICO (SAC) QUE SIRVEN EN LA DIÓCESIS DE FORT WORTH, los fieles de la Iglesia local deberían volver la vista hacia la primera parte del siglo XIX cuando la Iglesia Católica era perseguida en Roma, y a un joven-cito llamado Vicente Pallotti que discernía su vocación.

En 1811, a los 16 años, Pallotti sintió el llamado de Dios a entrar en la vida religiosa—decision políticamente incorrecta en ese entonces. Dos años antes, Francia había hecho prisionero al Papa Pío VII y Napoleón Bonaparte lo mantenía en el exilio.

Diez años antes el Papa Pío V murió cautivo de los Franceses después de la ocupación de Roma.

Sin inmutarse, Pallotti siguió su llamado y fue ordenado en 1818.

El ser testigo de la persecución de la Iglesia de Cristo le dio a Pallotti la determinación para permanecer firme con Cristo, y proclamar valientemente, “¡Cada católico es un apóstol!”

Su deseo de unir el clero con los laicos para proclamar la Palabra de Dios, lo impulsó a formar la Sociedad del Apostolado Católico.

Hoy, esta comunidad internacional de sacerdotes y hermanos cuenta con 2,300 miembros viviendo en más de 300 comunidades en 40 países. Las provincias que sirven en la diócesis tienen su base en Dublin, Irlanda y en Karnataka, India.

El Padre Balaji Boyalla (SAC) (Izq.) actual párroco de la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes en Mineral Wells y el Padre John Casey (SAC) párroco retirado de la Iglesia de San Esteban en Weatherford caminan por el pasillo que va a la sala de exhibiciones del Centro de Convenciones de Dallas cuando asistieron a la Conferencia de Ministerios de la Universidad de Dallas en 2009. (foto de NTC/Juan Guajardo)



Prueba de las décadas de servicio de los sacerdotes Palotinos en la Diócesis de Fort Worth, la podemos encontrar en la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes en Mineral Wells. En diciembre último, la iglesia terminó un nuevo centro comunitario de 3,000 pies cuadrados llamada “Sala San Vicente Pallotti”. Este nombre honra al hombre que estableció la SAC en 1835 e inspiró una larga línea de sacerdotes Palotinos a servir a los fieles de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes desde 1953.

El más reciente, el Padre Balaji Boyalla (SAC), fue nombrado párroco de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes en 2010, después de haber servido dos años en la parroquia de la Sagrada Familia en Fort Worth. “Sala San Vicente Pallotti es un nombre muy apropiado a esta parroquia”, dijo el sacerdote que viene de la provincia SAC en Karnataka, India.

“Los sacerdotes Palotinos han servido aquí por muchos años”, dijo el Padre Boyalla, pero la gente realmente nunca oyó el nombre de San Vicente Pallotti ni sabía nada de él. Ahora, ojalá, la gente empezará a saber quién fue Vicente Pallotti y cuál fue su contribución a la Iglesia. “Él es un santo de esta época que por su carisma le llega a la gente.

“La gente debería saber que Vicente Pallotti es un santo especial porque es el santo de los laicos. Él es el precursor de la idea de que los laicos participen más activamente en la Iglesia”.

El Padre John Casey (SAC), párroco de la Iglesia de San Esteban en Weatherford, está de acuerdo con la apreciación del Padre Boyalla.

“Vicente Pallotti se adelantó 100 años a su tiempo”, dijo el Padre Casey. “Él tenía la visión de que en el apostolado deberían participar no sólo los sacerdotes y obispos, sino

El Obispo Olson recientemente consagró la Sala Pallotti en la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes en Mineral Wells. Acertadamente la sala lleva el nombre del fundador de la Sociedad del Apostolado Católico. (foto cortesía de la Iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes)



también todos los bautizados”.

El Segundo Concilio Vaticano, que se ocupó de la relación entre la Iglesia y el mundo moderno con énfasis en la inclusión del laicado, tuvo lugar 112 años después de la muerte de San Vicente Pallotti.

“Todos los bautizados deberían tener la oportunidad de trabajar en la viña del Señor”, dijo el Padre Casey.

Sacerdote Palotino de la provincia Irlandesa de la Orden, el Padre Casey sirvió a la Iglesia en Argentina y en Inglaterra antes de llegar a la Diócesis de Amarillo en 1977.

Dedicándose de lleno al Español durante sus seis años en Sudamérica, el sacerdote misionero habla el idioma con fluidez.

El Padre Casey ríe al recordar el momento, hace más de 30 años, cuando el Obispo Lawrence Michael De Falco—pastor de la Diócesis de Amarillo en ese entonces—lo oyó conversando un largo tiempo en Español con un feligrés.

“Él se quedó sorprendido que este Irlandés pudiera entender y hablar Español”, dijo el Padre Casey. “recuerdo que puso su mano en mi hombro y dijo, ‘en Texas siempre habrá trabajo para ti’”.

Las palabras del Obispo fueron proféticas, ya que el sacerdote Palotino Irlandés permanece desde entonces en el Estado de la Estrella Solitaria, sirviendo por 24 años en las Diócesis de Amarillo y Lubbock, y 14 años en la Diócesis de Fort Worth en San Esteban. Él es el onceavo sacerdote, que sirve como párroco en San Esteban, en una larga e ininterrumpida línea de Palotinos que, en esa parroquia, se remonta a 1953.

El Padre Casey da crédito a su sociedad misionera por haberle dado la oportunidad de servir al pueblo de Dios en diferentes idiomas.

El Padre Thomas D’Souza (SAC), párroco de la comunidad católica de los condados Jack y Wise, que incluyen las parroquias de San Juan Bautista en Bridgeport, Santa María en Jacksboro, y Asunción de la Bienaventurada Virgen María en Decatur, también está agradecido por su formación como sacerdote misionero Palotino.

“Toda mi formación y quién soy actualmente, se lo debe totalmente a ellos, a la Sociedad Apostólica”, dijo el Padre D’Souza

Proveniente de la provincia Palotina de Karnataka en India, el Padre D’Souza dijo que su trabajo como director de escuela y como sacerdote en una parroquia, sirviendo a los más pobres entre los pobres en el Norte de la India, fue desafiante pero satisfactorio.

“Salí de ahí muy fortalecido en mi vocación y en mi misión”, dijo el Padre D’Souza.

Fuerte también en su vocación y misión por el extenso trabajo misionero está el Padre Matthew Sanka (SAC), quien sirve en las Iglesias de San Brendan en Stephenville y San Esteban en Weatherford. Ordenado en 2002 en Tanzania, nació al Este de África, el Padre Sanka fue influenciado grandemente por los sacerdotes Palotinos que servían en su diócesis. Miembro ahora de la misma provincia Irlandesa que aquellos sacerdotes, el Padre Sanka sirvió a la Iglesia en Tanzania, Kenya, e Irlanda, y cursó estudios avanzados en Roma antes de venir a la Diócesis de Fort Worth en 2013.



El Padre John Casey (SAC), retirado, fue el onceavo sacerdote que sirve como párroco en San Esteban, en una larga e ininterrumpida línea de Palotinos que, en esa parroquia, se remonta a 1953. (foto de Jerry Circelli)

Al igual que los otros seis Palotinos que sirven la diócesis, el Padre Sanka agradece el espíritu y la misión que caracteriza a la SAC.

“El carisma y misión de nosotros los Palotinos es trabajar junto con los laicos”, dijo el Padre Sanka. “Este Año de la Vida Consagrada nos da la oportunidad de renovar nuestro compromiso y reafirmarlo en la oración”.

Sociedad del Apostolado Católico, Palotinos (SAC), que sirven en la Diócesis de Fort Worth

Padre Reehan Soosai Antony

Vicario parroquial: San Juan Bautista en Bridgeport, Santa María en Jacksboro, Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María en Decatur

SAC Provincia de la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María; Karnataka, India

Padre Balaji Boyalla

Párroco: Nuestra Señora de Lourdes in Mineral Wells; San Francisco de Asís en Graford

SAC Provincia de la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María; Karnataka, India

Padre John Casey

Párroco, retirado: San Esteban en Weatherford
SAC Provincia Irlandesa; Dublin, Irlanda

Padre Thomas D’Souza

Párroco: San Juan Bautista en Bridgeport, Santa María en Jacksboro, Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María en Decatur
SAC Provincia de la Asunción de la Santísima Virgen María; Karnataka, India

Padre John Karanja

Administrador: San Esteban en Weatherford
SAC Provincia Irlandesa; Dublin, Irlanda

Padre Philip McNamara

Administrador parroquial, retirado: Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en De Leon, Sagrado Corazón en Comanche, San Brendan en Stephenville, Santa María en Dublin
SAC Provincia Irlandesa; Dublin, Ireland

Padre Matthew Sanka

Administrador parroquial: San Brendan en Stephenville
SAC Provincia Irlandesa; Dublin, Ireland

Más información sobre la Sociedad del Apostolado Católico:
<http://www.sacpostles.org/>

El ayuno Cuaresmal: Actos de la solidaridad con Jesús

Por el Carmelo Mele, O.P.



El Padre Carmelo Mele, de la ORDEN DE PREDICADORES (LOS DOMINICOS), ordenado como sacerdote en 1980, es el director del INSTITUTO JUAN PABLO II y de la CATEQUESIS PARA ADULTOS HISPANOS de la DIÓCESIS DE FORT WORTH.

UNA PAREJA QUE PARTICIPÓ EN NUESTRO PROGRAMA DE FORMACIÓN DE MINISTROS LAICOS EXPERIMENTABA UNA CRISIS.

La esposa enfermó con cáncer. Ella tuvo que soportar la quimioterapia con la pérdida de pelo como resultado secundario. Durante el transcurso de sus tratamientos se vio a su marido con su cabeza completamente afeitada. Evidentemente él quería sufrir junto con su querida las miradas de temor y condescendencia de otras personas. Fue un acto de la solidaridad de amor más elocuente que el regalo de dos docenas de rosas.

RESOLVIENDO UN DILEMA

Con la prosperidad de este país a veces no sabemos cómo expresar nuestro aprecio por los demás. ¿Qué podemos hacer por aquellos que parecen tener todo? Esto es semejante al dilema de mostrar nuestro amor para Jesús. ¿Cómo podríamos expresar nuestro agradecimiento a él, ya resucitado de la muerte? Sí, siempre podemos decirle “gracias” en la oración, y deberíamos honrar su instrucción de que hagamos obras de caridad por los más pequeños porque representan a él. No obstante, conscientes que dio su vida para salvar a cada uno de nosotros, queremos hacerle algo más personal. Como el hombre que escogió sufrir en solidaridad con su esposa, nosotros podríamos hacer un sacrificio por Jesús. Realmente esto es el motivo detrás de la penitencia cuaresmal. Hacemos sacrificios para decirle a nuestro salvador divino, “Te amo”.

Las palabras ayuno y abstinencia ahora

significan en el entendimiento común la misma cosa: el privarse de satisfacer apetitos. La Iglesia habla de la abstinencia como dejar de comer un tipo específico de comestible como la carne de animales terrenales en los viernes de la Cuaresma. Igualmente, ella se refiere al ayuno como no comer nada por un tiempo definido, por ejemplo las horas entre las tres comidas en el Miércoles de Ceniza y el Viernes Santo. ¿Por qué queremos mostrar nuestro afecto a Jesús con sacrificios de abstinencia y ayuno particularmente durante la Cuaresma? Se puede tomar la respuesta directamente del evangelio: porque él pasó cuarenta días en ayuno y, aún más severo, sufrió seis horas, según la narrativa de San Marcos, colgado en la cruz. Dejar de tomar alguna cosa que apetece muestra nuestro deseo de corazón a acompañar a él en el sacrificio.

¿QUÉ COMPRENDE UN SACRIFICIO SIGNIFICATIVO?

Una persona declaraba que iba a dejar de beber vino blanco durante la Cuaresma. Aunque puede ser para él un ofrecimiento duro, no parecerá a muchos como un sacrificio significativo. En nuestra cultura, donde existen tantas alternativas a cualquier placer que hay, dejar de tomar un género de vino o un tipo de postre no representa gran sacrificio. En lugar de abstenerse de vino blanco, parece más demostrativo del amor dejar de tomar todas las bebidas alcohólicas. Asimismo, en lugar de dejar de comer pasteles, que nos refrenemos de comer todos los dulces.

A veces cuando hacemos sacrificios como el ayuno cuaresmal, nos preguntamos si nues-

tros motivos son puros. Pues, a lo mejor dejar de consumir alcohol y tomar dulces mejorarán la salud, por decir nada de la apariencia. Para probar si ayunamos por amor propio y no por amor al Señor, podemos interrogarnos: “¿Haría yo el ayuno si no estuviéramos en este tiempo sagrado?” Si nuestra respuesta es “no”, estamos bien. Si es “sí”, tal vez querríamos hacer algo por añadidura particularmente por Jesús. Queremos recordar también cómo casi siempre los actos humanos tienen efectos secundarios. Si el acto no es malo en sí y si los efectos secundarios son buenos o, al menos, no son proporcionalmente peores que el efecto bueno intencionado, ellos no destruyen la bondad del acto. Al contrario, si nuestro ayuno cuaresmal resulta también en el mejor cuidado de nuestros cuerpos, se aumenta su valor.

DOS PENSAMIENTOS CONCLUYENTES

Una vez, los catequistas de una parroquia tenían una reunión después de la misa del Miércoles de Ceniza. Con intenciones buenas la directora del grupo llevó capirota a la junta. El párroco sólo podía sacudir su cabeza. De todos los fieles, la directora debería haber conocido las directivas de la Iglesia sobre el ayuno cuaresmal. De verdad, a veces parece difícil tener este conocimiento con cada persona contribuyendo su opinión sobre lo que las reglas deberían ser. Se debe decir dos cosas. En primer lugar, los sacrificios comunes determinados por la Iglesia son mínimos y deben ser cumplidos. En segundo lugar, son dignos otros actos de solidaridad para mostrarle a Jesús el amor.

Network (EWTN), based in Iron-
dale, Alabama.

The station's inaugural broadcast took place Dec. 8, on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The Mass that evening was carried live on KYRE – FM 104.1, including a dedication and consecration of the station by Bishop Michael Olson.

At the start of Mass, the bishop walked directly through a door to the side of the altar and back to the sacristy. The station office — consisting of a small radio, computer, and a few other pieces of electronic equipment — is located there.

The bishop stepped up to the microphone, announced the KYRE call letters and welcomed listeners to the inaugural broadcast. He asked God to “look with favor on your servants who use the technology discovered by long research, enable them to communicate truth, to foster love, to uphold justice and right, and to provide enjoyment. Let them promote and support that peace between people that Christ the Lord brought from heaven.”

During the dedication, Bishop Olson said that technological advancements, if used properly, can spread and build up the Kingdom of God.



ABOVE: Bishop Michael Olson gave the inaugural broadcast of St. Jude Church's new radio station KYRE –104.1 FM. The bishop consecrated the station before a Mass on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary on Dec. 8. (Photo by Jerry Circelli)

Fr. Foley said he was thankful for the support of Bishop Olson for St. Jude's new radio station and for taking the time to dedicate it. He also said it was significant that the launch of the station took place on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception.

“We hope that Our Lady, through her intercession and through her goodness to the children of God, will bring about the conversion of many people,” Fr. Foley said.

The priest also said it is his desire that everyone in the station's listening area — including those struggling with depression, loneliness, and sickness — finds comfort in the Catholic broadcasts. “God's graces will be there all the time, bringing people the messages He wants them to receive at the right time,” Fr. Foley said.

LEFT: Fr. George Foley atop St. Jude Church during the completion of construction in early 2014. The cross would later serve as the broadcast tower spreading the Gospel to the masses in the listening area. (Photo courtesy of St. Jude Church)

“We hope and pray that FM 104.1, St. Jude Catholic Radio, will be a blessing to the Parish of St. Jude, to our community, and to others bordering our community who are able to receive our signal,” Fr. Foley said.

Those involved with KYRE – 104.1 FM at St. Jude's said they are energized to be a part of the new radio ministry.

Bill Tillotson, an aerospace engineer, served on the church's building committee and is now involved with the radio station. He said Fr. Foley has constantly offered innovative ideas, and the radio station is among the latest. “He's very forward thinking,” Tillotson said.

“When I heard he got the church's radio license approved through the FCC, I was amazed. It was the first I'd heard of it and I got involved right away.”

Joe Kowalski, a student at Tarrant County College with a strong interest in radio, also stepped forward quickly. He had heard, accurately, that Fr. Foley started a radio station at Sacred Heart of Jesus Parish in Brecken-

ridge several years ago. “When I learned of that,” Kowalski said, “I asked him, ‘Are we going to get one here?’ And I remember he said, ‘That's the plan.’”

“Now, here we are up and running,” said Kowalski while assisting at the inaugural broadcast. “Being able to start something like this at our church in Mansfield is pretty awesome.”

Steven Bartolotta, an engineer who sets up remote broadcasts of football and basketball games for the University of North Texas, also assisted on the live broadcast with Kowalski and Tillotson.

Bartolotta said, “Fr. Foley is very creative in getting people more involved, and the station is another way to do that. It's a way to get people more involved in the parish, to get people more involved in the community, and ultimately to get them more involved in the outreach of the Church.”

Bishop Olson offered his own assessment of the innovative parish priest, stating, “He's an evangelizer.”

For more on this story, visit <http://tinyurl.com/ntc-StJudeRadio>.

GOOD NEWSMAKER

On the Air

Fr. George Foley launches St. Jude Catholic Radio in Mansfield and the surrounding area

JERRY CIRCELLI / CORRESPONDENT



Fr. George Foley, already with a track record of success establishing a radio station at Sacred Heart of Jesus Church in Breckenridge several years ago, established KYRE – 104.1 FM at St. Jude Church in Mansfield on Dec. 8.
Photo by Jerry Circelli

AS THEY CONSTRUCTED THE PINNACLE OF THE NEW ST. JUDE PARISH IN MANSFIELD, workmen carefully tethered Father George Foley to a wooden cross rising more than 85 feet atop the structure's highest point.

The 80-year-old priest, possessing boundless energy and endless ideas, rose to the occasion not so much for a bird's-eye view from the roof over the church, but with a future project in mind. Fr. Foley was quietly contemplating using the cross to support a radio antenna that could bring the Gospel to 90,000 people in a 25-mile radius of the church.

In early 2014, with one monumental challenge nearly complete — construction of a

2,700-square-foot church to accommodate 2,000 people — Fr. Foley turned his attention to building a radio station. The priest had already submitted an application to the Federal Communications Commission (FCC), and asked God to guide the paperwork through the highly competitive process of obtaining a license from the bureaucratic body.

By April 2014, God answered Fr. Foley's prayers, and St. Jude Catholic Church was licensed to broadcast as KYRE – 104.1 FM. The priest chose the call letters for the low-power (LP) FM station as an abbreviated version of "Kyrie eleison" — meaning "God have mercy."

Days after receiving the license, Fr. Foley announced from the pulpit that the church now had a station and asked for help. In short order, 10 people stepped forward, and a radio ministry was formed at St. Jude.

"I have 800 volunteers in this parish," Fr. Foley said. "We have no shortage of volunteers here. When I announced the project, these people told me they were ready and willing to put their time, talent, energy, and intelligence to work on it. Some of them work in the radio business."

With their help, the antenna Fr. Foley had imagined became a reality.

"We're preaching from the sign of Christianity," Fr. Foley said. "This antenna cable is wrapped around the cross on the top of the

church. The signal is going out and doing what Jesus asked us to do — to go out and preach the Gospel to every creature, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and Holy Spirit."

Fr. Foley continued, "So, you know, Christ has his arms enfolded around the church, and the antenna cable is wrapped around the cross on top of it."

The priest said much of the local programming is still being planned, and when the church itself is not generating a broadcast, it is relaying programming 24 hours a day, seven days a week, from the Eternal Word Television

CONTINUED ON PAGE 47



A copy of the certificate indicating St. Jude's membership in the Catholic Radio Association.
NTC / Jerry Circelli