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# NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC

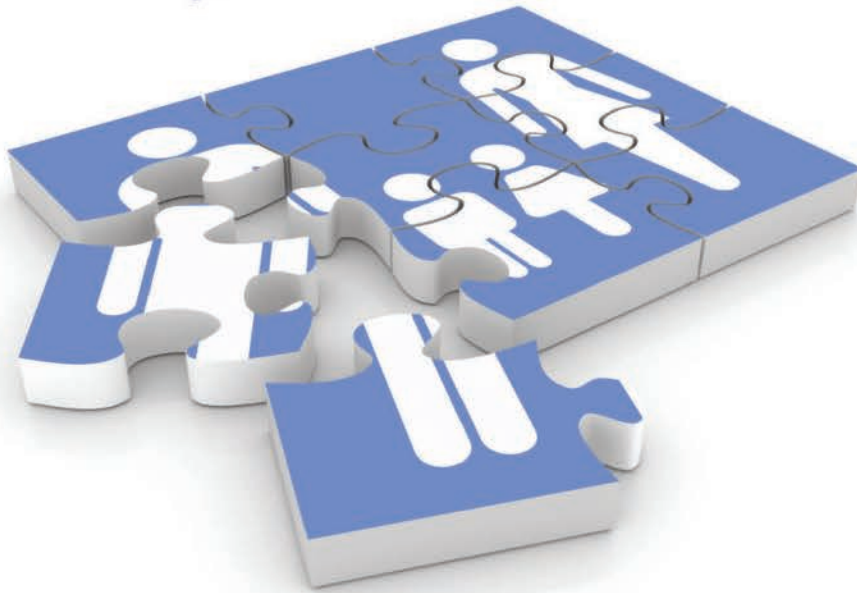


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MARCH — APRIL 2019  
VOL. 35 | NO. 2

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## OUR SHEPHERD SPEAKS

Bishop Michael F. Olson, STD, MA

### BISHOP MICHAEL OLSON

is the fourth bishop of  
the Catholic Diocese  
of Fort Worth.

 @BpOlsonFW



# THE DEATH OF INFANTS, THE DEATH OF CONSCIENCE

**O**n January 22, 2019, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law a statute that legalized abortion for the entire 40 weeks of a woman's pregnancy, including up to the moment of a full-term delivery, based upon broad and vague criteria in determining a woman's health.

The passage of the New York law has brought us further into the dark inevitabilities of what was prophesied by many people at the time of the *Roe v. Wade* decision: the legalization of abortion would lead ultimately to infanticide. The arrival at the sad fulfillment of this prophecy is manifested by the shedding of the worn out euphemisms of the pro-abortion movement including, "the fetus is a blob of tissue," "it's not a human being, it's a potential human being," "it's a sad and tragic choice that confronts women, requiring that it at least be made safe and rare." The recent legislation makes it clear that proponents of abortion on demand know full well that it is the life of a baby at stake in balance with the choice of a mother to take that life with the cooperation of clinicians.

In particular, the passage of the New York law was accompanied by anything but sadness by those responsible for its passage. It was celebrated with inebriated glee by legislators along with Governor Cuomo as a triumph of capricious autonomy. The governor has been quick to articulate that "the decisions I choose to make in my life, or in counseling my daughters, are based upon my personal moral and religious beliefs...but the oath of office is to the Constitutions of the United States and the State of New York — not to the Catholic Church. My religion cannot demand favoritism as I execute my public duties."

Governor Cuomo has failed to articulate whether he was publicly celebrating as the chief executive of the State of New York while privately grieving in accord with his own personal moral and religious beliefs that he conveniently claims to be Catholic. The governor's actions and statements lack coherence of reason and not simply inadequacy in Catholic faith. If something is inherently evil, it is evil all of the time and in every place and circumstance. It is not simply a matter of public point of view or privately held subjective values.

It is clear that Governor Cuomo is not the only person — Catholic or not — in our society to reduce the judgment of the conscience to being a mediator of the choice to comply with the norms of societal conventions or with the desires of selfish preference. Yet, he has done so not in a private way, but in a very public manner that not only affects the common good of society but also encourages others to act in a manner destructive to human life and happiness. This reduces the truth, verifiable by such empirical facts as the physiology of a pre-born baby, to a set of private values imposed in public life by the powerful dictate of the legislator, at the expense of the weaker but real members of our community. The governor offers to public discourse a distinction without a real difference, and excuses where reasons are called for.

As Catholics and as members of the human community, we do harm to others if we settle for excuses. We each have the responsibility to form our consciences well, with reason and faith, to uphold and protect the dignity of human life at all stages with consistency in both the public and private spheres. ✚

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## The Crossroads

My political science professor would often give us this advice: “Be open-minded, but not so open-minded that your brains fall out.”

While delivered in good humor, his point was serious. Respect others and their ideas, don’t dismiss them summarily. At the same time, don’t forget common sense, maintain integrity, and uphold virtue. Know *why* before accepting or rejecting something and consider the potential outcome.

Recent moves to expand abortion access in New York and elsewhere call us to remember this old adage. It seems that for the sake of “progress” we’ve replaced moderation with extremes — and that is seldom good. We’ve let our brains fall out.

In Virginia, Democratic delegate Kathy Tran was videotaped remarking about her recently introduced late-term abortion bill. Asked if her bill would extend to the point “that a woman is about to give birth,” Tran replied her bill would allow an abortion — even if a woman is in labor.

In New York, Governor Andrew Cuomo signed into law the “Reproductive Health Act” which essentially allows abortion on demand and removes protection for the infant accidentally born alive during an abortion. The legislation was greeted with delighted cheers and applause.

In New Mexico and Vermont, meanwhile, bills similar to New York’s are winding their ways through the state legislatures.

In all those cases, obfuscation, calculation, rationalization, and euphemism seemed to have been the order of the day for those pushing for the legislation. Common sense was seemingly subdued in favor of “enlightenment,” “progress,” “open-mindedness,” and “we know best.” Pride blinded truth.

Alas, we’re not the first society to succumb to this negative side of “learnedness.” Philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, in one of his great discourses, laments for ancient Rome: “Since the learned men began to appear among us, good people have slipped away.” In Eden, we committed the same mistake, preferring knowledge and the lust for being *like* God over being *with* God.

To be sure, knowledge in itself isn’t bad! It’s not necessarily good either. It’s amoral. It’s neutral. *We* decide whether it’s good or bad through our motives and actions. And this is the crossroads for us. In these times, it does us well to remember that knowledge, guided by the divine (the Holy Spirit), is what really moves us forward in this world and the next. It does us well to pray for wisdom — and the integrity, love of God, and courage to use it well.

For the Kingdom,

*Juan Guajardo, Editor*



Austin Jordan places his hands on a display case containing wood of the true cross of Our Lord. (NTC/Ben Torres)



## Hundreds of faithful experience sacred relics

**FORT WORTH** — To many, the practice no doubt seems odd at best and profane idolatry at worst — venerating body parts and personal belongings of saints. However, the function of venerating sacred relics exists solely for the sake of worshipping God, Father Carlos Martins said. The veneration of them derives from Scripture, he added.

Fr. Martins is a member of Companions of the Cross and head of Treasures of the Church, an evangelization ministry dedicated to giving people an experience of God through relics of the saints. During an exposition Jan. 14 at St. Peter the Apostle Parish in Fort Worth, he discussed sacred relics and their role in spiritual life.

Hundreds filled the church to hear Fr. Martins' talk and afterward filed through the church and gymnasium of St. Peter the Apostle Catholic School to experience 166 sacred relics firsthand.

Relics, Fr. Martins

explained, are not magic and contain no power in and of themselves. They can assist, however, in bringing one closer to God.

"Every saint lives his or her life as a giant billboard pointing to God," Fr. Martins said. "But God, in His mystery, also points to His saints as His masterpieces of creation."

St. Peter parishioner Katherine Rafferty said she prays to Jesus and the saints show up too.

"It reminds us of what we already know," Rafferty said of the exposition. "That the saints come to you. If there's something going on in your life, they literally intervene for you."

Fr. Martins said he experiences joy through seeing the crowds and their reactions to the relics. "It's very much a ministry of healing and evangelization whereby God reveals Himself to His people through the sacred remains of His saints."

— Matthew Smith

## Campus ministry a spiritual sanctuary for TCU students

**FORT WORTH** — With 400 students involved in Texas Christian University's Catholic Campus Ministry, the group is thriving, said Tom Centarri, the ministry's director for the past four years. As of Feb. 1, Centarri is working as a Knights of Columbus insurance agent, and he has handed the reins to TCU grad Ed Hopkins.



Ed Hopkins

Hopkins said he aims to continue the ministry's focus on service, along with faith education and evangelism.

"We definitely want to provide support for students, many of whom are away from their home

parish," Hopkins said.

Hopkins views his new job as "the work of the Holy Spirit in my life."

He recently stepped away from seminary to be with his family and was looking for another opportunity to serve.

Hopkins bleeds purple. He earned an undergraduate and master's degree from TCU, and both parents are TCU alum.

Hopkins said that directing the campus ministry "is a perfect fit for me."

"God has a plan for us and wants to bless us more than we know how to be blessed," he said.

— Sandra Engelland



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Seminarian Samuel Maul speaks about his vocation to the priesthood to Cassata Catholic High School students. (NTC/Jayne Donahue)

*Around the Diocese*



## Seminarians visit Cassata and leave behind big questions

**FORT WORTH** — Seminarian Sam Maul said he could pinpoint the exact moment he began thinking seriously about becoming a priest. He was the same age as many of his listeners at Cassata Catholic High School in Fort Worth.

Maul was one of five seminarians who, along with Father Maurice Moon, visited Cassata as part of Vocation Day. Seminarians visited every high school in the Diocese of Fort Worth in January and are slated to go to elementary and middle schools in May.

At Cassata, several members of the group spoke to high school boys at a breakfast and then talked briefly to students in their classrooms.

Students asked questions such as how long it takes to become a priest (nine years for most of them) and what their course load is like (they study a lot of philosophy at first, and then theology, and they have a year of pastoral service). The visiting seminarians are all engaged

in their pastoral year and are serving at various churches in the diocese.

Cassata Principal Maggie Harrison said many students in the school who are not Catholic, or have not been involved in the faith, learned seminarians are real people and are very approachable.

“I believe it’s important to have a positive male presence for our students,” Harrison said. “Many of our male and female students come from at-risk environments, and many have lost their male role models.”

The visitors told students the point of Vocation Day was to urge students to reflect on their futures.

Maul said, “Begin to think about how you can serve. The end goal in life isn’t how can I get ahead. It’s how can I help others.”

Fr. Moon said, “Everyone has a calling in life. The happiest you’re going to be is following God’s will.”

— Sandra Engelland

## Build His Kingdom Together on March 30

**KELLER** — When Jesus was asked which was the greatest commandment in *Matthew 22*, he replied, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” The second? “Love your neighbor as yourself.”

Ken Ogorek will make a special visit to the Diocese of Fort Worth and give practical, inspirational ideas that build on those commandments at the Diocesan Day of Renewal. The nationally acclaimed Catholic speaker and director of catechesis for the Archdiocese of Indianapolis will give two presentations, “How do I grow closer to God?” and “How do I collaborate with others?”

Bishop Michael Olson will celebrate Mass and give the keynote address,

“The Eucharist Makes Us the Church.”

The Diocesan Day of Reflection will be held at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller on March 30. Mass begins at 9 a.m. The day, themed “Building His Kingdom Together,” concludes at 12:30 p.m.

The \$10 registration fee includes breakfast. The calendar at [fwdioc.org](http://fwdioc.org) has a link to register.

According to Diana Liska, diocesan director of stewardship, attendance at the annual event has grown over its four years.

Past participants have found a source of fresh ideas, rejuvenation, and a chance to build community. Liska recommends the event for “anyone who wants to grow in their relationship with Christ. Quiet your life and take a few hours for God.”



Bishop Stephen Berg, of Pueblo, Colo., and Bishop Michael Olson process in during the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Mass at St. Michael Parish. (NTC/Juan Guajardo)

## Pueblo Bishop Berg returns to spur conversion at MLK Mass

**BEDFORD** — Loving people of all races and prayers for a genuine conversion of the heart, one soul at a time, was prominent in the message shared Jan. 12 at St. Michael Parish in Bedford during the 33<sup>rd</sup> Annual Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Mass.

Amid a sanctuary adorned with vivid decor, the choir swayed and clapped to the music as the saxophone, trumpet, and drums accompanied the piano during the celebration, which was a beautiful blend of African heritage and Catholic tradition.

One highlight of the evening was a special performance by the Saint Bakhita Choir of St. Joseph Parish in Arlington, which sang the offertory song in Kikongo, a language from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in central Africa.

Bishop Michael Olson, as he introduced guest homilist Stephen Berg, Bishop of the Diocese of Pueblo, Colo. and former

priest for the Diocese of Fort Worth, said the evening is both a celebration and time to remember what God has called us to do.

“We come together as God’s people, conscious and aware that there are many times when we fail to love God and to love our neighbor,” Bishop Olson said.

Bishop Berg said what we need now is a genuine conversion of heart, a conversion that will bring change and reform to our institutions and society.

“Especially if we don’t see the need for honest dialogue and collaboration with others of differing views, ethnicities, nationalities, and race as a most important part of our own conversion. And most especially if we do not see that justice is in fact another word for holiness,” Bishop Berg said. “To be just is simply to be holy. Not always the easy way, but truly, that’s what we are made for.”

— Susan McFarland

## Knights deliver first glimpses of baby with 1,000 ultrasounds

**DENTON** — Giving babies a chance at life is why the Knights of Columbus began donating ultrasound machines a decade ago to pro-life pregnancy centers across the globe.

A major milestone was met as the 1,000<sup>th</sup> machine was donated to Mother of Mercy Free Medical Clinic in Manassas, Va.

The Ultrasound Initiative, developed by the Knights of Columbus in 2009, is one of the greatest humanitarian efforts the organization has ever undertaken with more than \$49 million in machines donated to pro-life pregnancy centers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico, as well as Brazil, Canada, Jamaica, Peru, and Africa.

Of the 1,000 donations, five were placed in the Diocese of Fort Worth. Loreto House in Denton, a pro-life apostolate of the diocese, received the state’s first donation on July 29, 2009.

Randy Bollig, executive director of Loreto House, said the machine is a very powerful tool for the center, which sees about 20 women a day. He said many women think their unborn child is just a blob of tissue in the early stages.

“When we get a heartbeat at six weeks, it’s a powerful affirmation that it’s a human being,” Bollig said. “Sonograms have helped save babies. It helps the mother to bond.”

— Susan McFarland



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## Official Assignments

BY BISHOP MICHAEL F. OLSON

**REV. MARIANNA FRANCIS CHINTHAMALLA, HGN**  
Parochial Vicar at St. Francis of Assisi in Grapevine, has been appointed **Parochial Vicar** of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller, effective Feb. 1, 2019.

**REV. JONATHAN DEMMA**  
Parochial Vicar at St. John the Apostle in North Richland Hills, has been appointed **Parochial Administrator** of Sacred Heart Parish in Wichita Falls, effective Feb. 1, 2019.

**REV. JAMES FLYNN**  
Pastor at St. Francis of Assisi in Grapevine, has been appointed **Pastor** of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller, effective Feb. 1, 2019.

**REV. FEDERICO GAYOSO, TOR**  
Parochial Vicar at Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton, has been appointed **Parochial Vicar** of All Saints Parish in Fort Worth, effective Dec. 27, 2018.

**REV. JOSEPH JANISZESKI, TOR**  
Parochial Vicar of St. Andrew Parish in Fort Worth, has been **recalled** by his religious order community, effective Oct. 26, 2018.

**REV. SOJAN GEORGE PUTHIYAPARAMPIL**  
Rector of St. Patrick Cathedral, has been appointed **Pastor** of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Grapevine, effective Feb. 14, 2019.

**REV. JOHN ROBERT SKELDON**  
Parochial Vicar of St. Patrick Cathedral in Fort Worth, has been appointed **Rector** of the parish, effective Feb. 13, 2019.

**REV. ANH TRAN**  
In residence at St. Patrick Cathedral in Fort Worth, has been appointed **Parochial Vicar** of St. John the Apostle in North Richland Hills, effective Feb. 1, 2019.

## Lent — new ideas for an ancient tradition

This year, Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 6, and continues until Easter Sunday on April 21. The season of self-examination and penitence has origins dating back to the second century and is traditionally observed in three ways:

### SEEK THE LORD IN PRAYER AND SCRIPTURE

- Attend your parish's Stations of the Cross.
- Pray a family Rosary on Fridays.
- Read the seven penitential Psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143) and the Songs of the Suffering Servant (Isaiah 42, 49, 50, and 52).

### SERVE BY GIVING ALMS

- Donate your treasure to the less fortunate, and remember that almsgiving can include time and talents, too.
- Volunteer your time at a parish ministry.
- Visit a relative or neighbor who might be lonely.
- Give extra clothes, books, toys, or household items to charity.

### PRACTICE SELF CONTROL THROUGH FASTING

- Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are obligatory days of fasting and abstinence for Catholics from age 18 until age 59. When fasting, a person is permitted to eat one full meal, as well as two smaller meals that together are not equal to a full meal.
- Fridays during Lent are obligatory days of abstinence from meat from age 14.
- Consider other forms of self-discipline. Fast from social media, gossip, complaining, criticism, or television.

## In Memoriam

### REV. THOMAS JAMES CRAIG January 5, 2019



Father Thomas Craig, 66, was Director of the Propagation of the Faith and Director of the Diocesan Mission Council. Former pastor of St. Vincent de Paul and other parishes, he is remembered as a gentle, compassionate pastor and dedicated mission worker.

Full obituaries are available at [NorthTexasCatholic.org](http://NorthTexasCatholic.org).

Members of local religious communities worship during Solemn Vespers on World Day for Consecrated Life at St. Patrick Cathedral Feb. 1. (NTC/Rodger Mallison)



set apart to

# SHINE THE LIGHT

By Susan Moses

In a world that measures success in material possessions, career status, and social influence, taking vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience makes no sense.

But when this radical “yes” to God is examined with long-range vision, everything comes into focus, explained Father Jim Gigliotti, TOR, pastor of St. Andrew Parish in Fort Worth.

For those living consecrated lives, accomplishment means “for us to get to heaven, which we all want to do. We want to bring the world with us to heaven. And we do that in our soul life, in the sacrifices that we make,” Fr. Gigliotti summarized.

That’s consecrated life in a nutshell. Currently 59 sisters and 60 religious

order priests who have taken the vows of consecrated life — chastity, poverty, and obedience — are serving the Diocese of Fort Worth.

“Being consecrated means that you give yourself totally to Jesus by your vows,” said Sister Kay Jo Evelo, SHSp, who graduated from high school on Friday and entered the Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate convent on Sunday, almost 64 years ago.

Why? “My love for children, my love for God’s people, and my desire to express to the world God’s goodness. I hope I act as a witness for Christ in the world because I really feel the world needs God’s presence,” said the educator, who has taught at St. Rita Catholic School in Fort Worth for 23 years.

Sr. Kay Jo began her consecrated life at

18, but she considered it for years beforehand, dressing up as a nun as a child. Still, Sr. Kay Jo remembered, “I wanted to get married and have 12 children, but God said, ‘No, come follow me and I’ll give you thousands.’” In her 58 years of educating young Catholics, God has kept His promise.

Taking religious vows can be challenging for others to understand.

Fr. Gigliotti said, “The world is not going to entirely understand the inner dynamics of what you’re being called to. Language fails when you’re trying to describe a love relationship that is mystical and yet personal.”

The pastor, in his 51<sup>st</sup> year of vows, said, “Everything has to do with the Holy Spirit and what the Holy Spirit does with our gifts and talents. We know it isn’t until we get to





Sister Theresa Queally, SHSp, and Sister Kay Jo Evelo, SHSp, talk with a friend before Solemn Vespers on World Day for Consecrated Life at St. Patrick Cathedral Feb. 1. (NTC/Rodger Mallison)

heaven that we know what the Holy Spirit has accomplished through feeble us. That's what we do. We make ourselves available to His mystery."

Sister Diana Rodriguez, HCG, explained, "Jesus, He's the One who called me, chose me. I hope to persevere to the end in this choice of calling and be with Him at all times through my community and my service to the Church."

Her vow to follow Jesus exclusively allows her to live in community, participate in daily Mass, and have daily prayer and silent meditation.

"In work and with the people, there's conversations, communications. This moment of silence is special because it's just between me and God, and God and me. It's time to listen to Him and for Him to listen to me, too," said the sister, who is currently the delegate for women religious and director of the Diocesan Formation Center. She also has served in parishes as the director of religious education.

Sr. Diana has spent 36 years in consecrated life. "Being consecrated to God makes us special in a way because we're following Him. We want to be with Him. But we're striving to become holy like everybody else through our Baptism," she said.

## SUPPORTING CONSECRATED LIFE

**PRAY:** Sr. Diana said the primary means for the faithful to support religious sisters, brothers, and priests is "most of all through prayer, that we will persevere in this vocation, and follow through in our calling that we received from Christ through the Church."


Fr. Gigliotti said he and others in religious vocations have a hidden strength to help in their calling: the prayers of contemplative religious orders.

He said, "It's always a surprise when I remind people there are contemplative religious orders that are praying for priests and religious vocations. They are praying for the souls of deceased priests and religious, for the perseverance of present ones, and for future [ones]."

"There are communities of consecrated religious men and women all over the world, such as the Carmelites, whose specific

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apostolic work is contemplative prayer for consecrated life faithfulness, because, as the Sacred Heart said to St. Margaret Mary Alacoque, "Woe to the world when there are no more consecrated souls. They make the world go round."

**INVITE:** It may seem odd, but some people may not realize sisters, brothers, and priests are ordinary people who come from ordinary families, said Sr. Diana, who grew up in North Fort Worth. That's why adults should invite youth and young adults to consider a religious vocation.

Tell children you think they would make a wonderful priest or sister, encouraged Sr. Kay Jo. Teens and young adults should be open to the Holy Spirit and ask themselves, "Maybe God is calling me to follow Him in a different way," she continued.

**DONATE:** Many Catholics assume the Church provides financial support to orders of religious sisters, but "the Church doesn't support us, we support ourselves" by working, Sr. Kay Jo explained.

Many orders with a high proportion of elderly nuns face "dire necessity," cautioned the sister. She encourages parishioners to donate to the annual special collection for retired religious (scheduled for December 14-15, 2019).

Some parishes and schools support local orders with donations of nonperishable food and household supplies. Other individuals have stepped up to offer lawn care or other services to reduce the burden and expense of maintaining a residence. 📍

# THE SERVANT SHEPHERD

Bishop Michael Olson's episcopate at the five-year mark

By Juan Guajardo

**M**any of us know the story well by now. But Bishop Michael Olson can recall it down to the tiniest details.

Five years ago, then Monsignor Olson stepped into his office at the University of Dallas. He noticed a voicemail had been left and picked up the phone. It was a message from the apostolic nuncio to the U.S. — someone who'd never called him before.

Several minutes and prayers later, Msgr. Olson's life was changed forever. The nuncio passed along the news that Pope Francis had appointed the seminary rector as Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

In the weeks before his installation (Jan. 29, 2014), Bishop Olson did what he continues to do today when faced with big decisions, challenges, or opportunities: Pray, seeking the will of Our Blessed Lord.

"I took a lot of time going to churches — mostly churches in this diocese — and praying. Just that the Lord give me wisdom and patience and understanding and fortitude to do what He asked of me for the good of the people of God here."

Now, five years have flown by — years that have seen Bishop Olson

visit every parish and school (often more than once), meet with leaders, laypeople, committees, and experts, giving priority to being close to his flock — a shepherd "living with the smell of [his] sheep," as Pope Francis exhorted.

But these have been years of transition and renewal, with the bishop spearheading and overseeing the impetus, growth, and changes needed to serve a rapidly growing and ever-diverse Catholic population cast over 28 counties, 90 parishes, and one mission.

At a distance of five years, we felt it proper to highlight the many developments that have taken place over this time.

## VOCATIONS & DISCERNMENT

An approach of intentionality and concerted effort on fostering a culture of vocations has been the hallmark of the diocesan vocations program.

To make that a reality, in 2017 Bishop Olson appointed a team of vocations liaisons to the task of vocations — rather than one single vocation director, as in many other dioceses. Father Jonathan Wallis, director of seminarian formation for the diocese, called it revolutionary.

The approach allowed the priest liaisons more time to accompany

and guide discerning men, so that by the time a discerner is ready to enter seminary, he has built a network of support and friendships. It's helpful in a diocese covering 23,950 square miles.

Five priests are currently appointed to that task, including Fr. Wallis, who helps oversee and guide the formation of seminarians while serving as Dean of Students at St. Joseph Seminary College in Covington, La.

The approach placed greater emphasis on formation, prayer, and catechetical teaching.

If the recent "Come and See" visits to St. Joseph Seminary are any indication, it's been quite the success.

"We consistently have had the most — by far — men participating," Fr. Wallis said. "Sometimes we've had upwards of 50 discerners come for that, so that's been a huge success."

The past two years, the team has kept busy, hosting various discernment opportunities like St. Andrew's Breakfasts and Dinners, where young men interested in learning about the priesthood attend Mass and afterward share a meal and discuss discernment; seminarian visits to Catholic schools; and twice-a-year "Come and See" visits to the Louisiana seminary. This spring,

Continued on Page 14





“It is hard to believe that five years have passed since the day of my ordination as your bishop, and each day of that period I have spent in gratitude for the service that Christ has entrusted me to offer you with leadership in teaching, overseeing, and sanctifying.”



## From Page 12

Father Maurice Moon, chaplain of Nolan Catholic High School, will kick off a weekend retreat at St. Joseph Seminary, giving junior-level boys the chance to see life in the seminary.

Fr. Wallis explained he and Bishop Olson emphasize to discerners early that “a vocation is really a call to service. It’s a call to prioritize our lives by Christ, others, and then ourselves.”

The last five years have also seen 12 men ordained as diocesan priests and the reopening of the permanent diaconate formation program. Two classes of future deacons (2020 and 2022) are currently in formation. Once ordained, they will bolster the ranks of 85 current permanent deacons in the diocese.

## GROWTH & DEVELOPMENT

From 2014 to this year, the diocese has seen a boom in self-identified Catholics from 720,000 to more than 1.1 million. Director of Real Estate and Construction Steve Becht points to an urbanization trend and a shifting job market as key factors. Growth has been especially heavy in the north and northeast regions of the diocese.

“It’s a real opportunity to evangelize them and get them going to church on a regular basis,” Becht said.

The diocese, under Bishop Olson’s guidance, has taken the bull by the horns.

“Basically, [Bishop Olson] said ‘We’re going for it.’ We’re going to build this thing and we’re going to serve the population and serve our mission which is the salvation of souls,” Becht explained. “He recognizes that to accommodate the growth and population, we’re going to have a lot of construction by necessity.”

Already footprints of that growth can be seen across the landscape. In Denton, St. John Paul II Parish has broken ground on a 300-seat church that will serve a growing Catholic student population at University of North Texas and Texas Woman’s University.

The past five years have seen 12 diocesan priests ordained and 38 men begin the five-year formation process for the permanent diaconate.

Farther south in Denton, St. Mark Parish is nearly done paying off the construction of its parish hall and will begin construction of its formal church.

St. Andrew Parish in Fort Worth and Holy Cross in The Colony are both expanding. St. Philip the Apostle Parish has acquired property in Flower Mound to build a church that will eventually seat 1,800. St. Thomas the Apostle in north Fort Worth finished building its new church — with capacity for more than 1,000 — in December 2016. One of two new parishes established during Bishop Olson’s episcopate, St. Martin de Porres in Prosper has a new 18,000 square-foot worship space for its parishioners to call home. The other new parish, St. Benedict in north Fort Worth, celebrates the extraordinary [Latin] form of the Mass.

It’s fast growth, but growth with strategy and purpose. To that end the diocese has consulted growth and planning experts like the Buxton Group and Meitler Consultants to guide the process of when and where a parish should be established.

“We want to make sure we don’t exclude any group by the placement of a parish, most especially the economically disadvantaged,” Bishop Olson said in a 2014 *NTC* interview.

## STEWARDSHIP

The past few years have seen an uptick of five percent in weekly financial contributions, said Renée Underwood, associate director of the Advancement Foundation. Additionally, “there’s hardly a week

## A WALK DOWN MEMORY LANE

### 2014

Permanent Diaconate Program reopened  
+Diocese of Fort Worth Advancement Foundation formed as fundraising and management arm of diocese  
+Young Catholic Professionals launches Fort Worth Chapter  
+Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) opens offices in Colleyville and Wichita Falls  
+CCFW welcomes more International Foster Care youth.

### 2015

St. Martin de Porres Parish and St. Benedict Parish (Latin Mass) established  
+CCFW launches innovative Padua Pilot  
+Diocese joins fight against payday lending abuses with Catholic Charities spearheading efforts  
+CCFW develops “Create-Eradicate-Transform” strategy map to end poverty.

### 2016

Diocesan Formation Center renovated  
+TCU Catholic Community receives new home  
+Diocese reinstates *Nihil Obstat* for marriage  
+Diocesan stewardship program launched  
+Marriage tribunal begins streamlining processes, doubling capacity of cases.

### 2017

St. Junipero Serra Institute established  
+Congregation of Lovers of the Holy Cross invited to serve Vietnamese communities in diocese  
+Vocations team expanded to five  
+Diocese continues V Encuentro preparations  
+CCFW serves Harvey survivors.

### 2018

New Safe Environment Program trains 34,000 volunteers  
+Catholic Schools move toward classical education  
+Cristo Rey High School opens its doors  
+National V Encuentro hosted in Grapevine with heavy lay participation by diocese faithful.





NTC/Joyne Donahue

**A SHEPHERD ACCOMPANYING HIS FLOCK** ✝

goes by that I'm not working with one or more new individuals who are making provisions for a parish, school, or the diocese, in their estate plans." Annual Diocesan Appeal efforts continue strong, she added.

Underwood has noticed a growth in generosity diocese-wide. How much of that can be attributed to the many innovations made by the Advancement Foundation is impossible to know. But she likens their efforts to "little stones" being thrown in a body of water "and creating a ripple effect...in the end only God can measure the immense ripple effects we're having."

One of those "little stones" has been the creation of a stewardship program (directed by Diana Liska), which helps parishes create a culture of discipleship, gratefulness, and generosity of time and treasure.

Another has been the revamping of the Bishop's Guild, which became the St. John Paul II Shepherd's Guild in August 2018. Guild members help cover the costs seminarians incur during their seven-to-nine years of formation at an average annual cost of \$52,000. But the change in title also brought with it a greater priority on education and prayer.

"Because [Bishop] wants people to understand the journey of discernment that these men are going through, and we

accompany them on that walk in prayer and in knowledge," Underwood explained.

To keep up with digital trends, the Foundation has also developed Text to Give, increased its presence on social media and through email, while, of course, providing a lot of face-to-face interaction. It's an embrace of best practices.

"He's been a real champion of new ideas," Underwood said. "I think he realizes while we have a common faith, technology allows us to better serve our diverse people. He's been a real champion of that."

**CATHOLIC SCHOOLS**

The past five years have seen numerous triumphs across the diocese's Catholic schools.

A priority on making schools accessible to everybody, whether that's financially, socially, or academically, has guided many of the changes, like the diocese's hiring of two full-time learning specialists that reach out and provide support to students across the diocese.

Cristo Rey Fort Worth High School at Our Mother of Mercy opened its doors to its inaugural freshman class August 2018, providing a quality, college-preparatory education to many disadvantaged youth in

✝ Within the first 15 months of his episcopate, Bishop Olson visited all the diocese's parishes.

the area. On Fort Worth's North Side, All Saints Catholic School expanded its dual language program and now more than half of the school's 141 students are learning English and Spanish. In near south Fort Worth, Cassata Catholic High School is serving disadvantaged youth at a higher rate and now has a waiting list. Toward the east side of Fort Worth, Nolan is in the midst of a \$40-million renovation that includes improved security, a new front entrance, two outdoor learning areas, upgrades to the auditorium, and a new chapel with seating for 2,000. Enrollment has increased at many schools.

**Continued on Page 16**

## From Page 15

Since assuming the diocesan school superintendent post in April 2015, Jennifer Pelletier has made Catholic identity a greater priority in the academic environment.

“Conversations happening in the classrooms are happening with that understanding of the Catholic faith,” she said. “They’re not talking about history and then going to English and then going to math and then going to theology class. Religion is infused in all the things they’re doing and why they’re doing them. The teachers are actively and intentionally making that happen.”

As part of Bishop Olson’s impetus that Catholic educators teach students to cherish the “transcendental goods of truth, beauty, and goodness,” Pelletier has overseen a diocese-wide push toward classical Catholic education — an approach that heralds back to basics: reading, thinking, and speaking — skills referred to as the classical trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric.

Part and parcel of that is a two-week New Teacher Formation Institute familiarizing teachers with the philosophy of classical education, its five essential marks, and teaching methods. And so is a new catechesis program developed specifically for faculty by the St. Junipero Serra Institute. Currently in its first year, the weekend classes and certification are a requirement for “everybody from the janitor to the [school] president,” Pelletier said.

The culture of vocations extends to schools as well, Pelletier said. Students in diocesan Catholic schools have enjoyed visits and talks by seminarians — and Bishop Olson.

“The whole point is to make vocations a part of the conversation,” Pelletier said.

### SAFE ENVIRONMENT

By the time Bishop Olson’s tenure began, a safe environment program had been established in the diocese for more than 10 years.

The safe environment program requires clergy, staff, choir members, catechists, teachers, seminarians, extraordinary ministers of Holy Communion, lectors, cantors,



NTC/Juan Guajardo

## BISHOP OLSON ON CATHOLIC EDUCATION



✝ “Catholic education is very dear to me. Catholic education has to be the formation and integration of the whole person, body and soul. It also has to be accessible.”

after a period of transition.

The first two years of Bishop Olson’s episcopate saw youth ministry revamped “with more of a focus on teaching, evangelization, and catechesis,” said Marlon De La Torre, department director of Catechesis and Evangelization.

In 2017, the St. Junipero Institute was

ushers, principals, school teachers, coaches, parents, and volunteers, as well as the bishop, are trained to protect our children by learning the signs to identify child sexual abuse.

On annual safe environment audits, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops noted the diocese’s excellent compliance.

However, the bishop was concerned that familiarity breeds complacency, so he charged the Safe Environment Office to enhance the program.

In July 2018, the Safe Environment Office implemented Protecting God’s Children®, a more robust training program with a three-hour, face-to-face training that is renewed every two years. Criminal background checks became even more intensive, checking national databases of individuals who have been removed from youth-serving organizations and those who have had professional licenses suspended or revoked.

The Diocese of Fort Worth has trained almost 175 facilitators who hold training sessions at every parish and school in the diocese. To date, more than 34,000 adults are current in their safe environment training.

### CATECHESIS AND LAY MINISTRY

Lay ministry and catechesis is thriving



created to respond to the many faithful in the diocese wanting to learn more about their faith. With its various tracks and faith topics, the institute brings to adults a comprehensive understanding of Catholic doctrine and history.

The St. Francis de Sales Institute remains a resource for training catechists to be effective witnesses of the Gospel by familiarizing them with catechetical concepts, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, lesson planning, and more.

In-services for directors of religious education and RCIA directors have seen increased attendance across the board, De La Torre said, and a partnership with Franciscan University in Steubenville has “been a blessing.” Through the collaboration, the diocese receives additional online courses for catechists, hosts presenters throughout the year, and brings in events like the upcoming Family Encounter Conference and Steubenville Lone Star

Conference for youth.

De La Torre said Bishop Olson also “stressed the need of bringing communion and covenant to everybody” — therefore catechesis is available in English and Spanish.

De La Torre said Bishop Olson’s emphasis on nurturing the family has resulted in a “family model” approach to children’s catechesis. Multiple parishes, large and small, have adopted the model, which encourages parental involvement in handing on the faith. Typically, parents or guardians are invited into the classroom setting to assist in teaching their child the faith lesson for that month. Results have been positive so far, and he predicts within the next five years the majority of parishes will have integrated the model.

In September, the diocese hosted the National V Encuentro on Hispanic/Latino Ministry, which brought more than 3,000 Hispanic Catholics to Grapevine. More

than 50 local delegates and 800 lay volunteers took part in the four-day event that drew participants from 159 dioceses.

In the wake of Encuentro, De La Torre said the diocese is drafting a revamped pastoral plan for Hispanic ministry, to replace one that is more than 20 years old.

In the five years that Bishop Olson has been the shepherd of the Diocese of Fort Worth, the flock has witnessed multifaceted growth. But while balancing the many concerns of a diocese nearly the geographic size of West Virginia, he has maintained the importance of unity.

Bishop Olson expressed his hope and prayer for the diocese: that local Catholics will see their identity in Christ “as the whole diocese and not just our individual parish. . . . That we will be as Christ desires us to be — one. That’s my hope.” 🇺🇸

Susan Moses contributed to this story.

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# Out of the Darkness

Other Texas dioceses  
join Fort Worth  
by releasing names  
of clergy credibly  
accused of sexual  
abuse of minors

By **Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**

**F**ollowing the example set by the Diocese of Fort Worth in 2005, the names of clergy members credibly accused of sexually abusing a minor were released January 31 by the other 14 Catholic dioceses in Texas and the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter. The move is an effort by Texas bishops to restore public trust.

Compiled independently but released on the same day, the overall list names 278 individual clerics from all 15 dioceses who had credible allegations made against them in Texas beginning in 1950. A “credible allegation” is one a diocese believes is true after reviewing reasonable and relevant information and consulting diocesan lay conduct review boards and/or other professionals. Such an allegation requires removal of the accused from ministry.

In the statewide disclosure, duplicate names appearing on multiple diocesan lists and the names of non-clergy were removed.

The first Texas diocese to publicly identify priests accused of abuse within its

jurisdiction, the Diocese of Fort Worth has 17 clergymen with credible allegations of abusing a minor. Updated on the diocesan website since 2007, the list includes eight diocesan priests, one permanent deacon, one religious brother, and seven priests from other dioceses or religious orders. Eleven are dead and several served jail sentences. None are in active ministry.

Publishing the list is part of the diocese’s ongoing efforts to ensure the safety of children and vulnerable adults and its commitment to transparency, accountability, and healing for victims.

“I support the other Texas bishops for taking like action,” Fort Worth Bishop Michael Olson said in a statement. “This step is taken to assist victims in healing and for the sake of transparency and accountability.”

Calling the protection of children a “seriously grave moral obligation,” the bishop pledged affirmative steps to ensure the safety of children will continue in the diocese.

Since 2002, the Diocese of Fort Worth



has required all clergy, church employees, lay ministers, catechists, school teachers, and all volunteers to take a safe environment training course. Under new guidelines implemented last year, the course must be repeated every two years. Information shared during the session encourages and reinforces a culture of awareness, knowledge, and vigilance in protecting all persons within the parishes, schools, and diocese. To date, 34,000 adults have received current training to identify the signs of child sex abuse and misconduct.

As part of the diocese's zero tolerance policy, any actual or suspected report of abuse is reported to law enforcement for investigation.

Prior to serving in ministry or other volunteer service, applicants must pass a complete background check involving a National Criminal and Sex Offender search. A signed Code of Conduct Agreement is also mandatory.

"It is the responsibility of the Catholic Church to be at the forefront of these efforts at eradicating the evil of sexual misconduct with minors in our society through both our words and actions," Bishop Olson emphasized.

The bishop offered his sincere apologies to anyone who suffered abuse perpetrated against them by clergy in the diocese or others who worked for the Church.

"I pray that healing and reconciliation is achieved for every victim of sexual abuse and that perpetrators are brought to justice," he added. "As your bishop, I will make every effort to prevent anyone from ever again suffering such an indignity."

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, expressed his "deepest regret for the harm that has

been done.

"In multiple incidents over the years, the Church and her ministers failed to protect the most vulnerable souls entrusted to our care," he said. "There is no excuse for the actions of those credibly accused of such sins against the human person."

Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller of San Antonio called releasing the names of credibly accused clergy the "right thing to do" and a "move forward"

in building a healthier community and society. He said each diocese remains committed to supporting and working with survivors and others affected by clergy abuse by offering psychological and pastoral services through a victim assistance coordinator.

The Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, which was founded in 2012 and is based in Houston, had

not received any allegations of clergy abuse of a minor. In a statement, the ordinariate said it will publicly disclose any credible allegation should one occur in the future.

Bishop Olson urged the faithful to "please join me in praying for all who are victims and survivors of sexual abuse especially as perpetrated against minors. Let us work together in our society in eradicating this grave evil." 🇺🇸

"I pray that healing and reconciliation is achieved for every victim of sexual abuse and that perpetrators are brought to justice."

Bishop Michael Olson



Bishop Olson's pastoral letter and video regarding the release of names by other Texas dioceses can be found at [fwdioc.org](http://fwdioc.org).

## SAFE ENVIRONMENT

### To Report Misconduct:

If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct by anyone who serves the Church, including clergy:

- ▶ Call the Victim Assistance Hotline at 817-602-5119.
- ▶ Call the Director of Safe Environment at 817-945-9334 and leave a message.
- ▶ Call the Chancellor of the diocese at 817-945-9315.

### To Report Abuse or Suspected Abuse:

If you suspect abuse of a child, elder, or vulnerable adult, or abuse has been disclosed to you,

- ▶ Call the Texas Department of Family and Protective Services (CPS) at 800-252-5400.
- ▶ Immediately report the alleged abuse to your supervisor, priest, or principal and submit the Confidential Notice of Concern with CPS report information, contact information on all concerned, description of abuse, dates if known, and how you learned of the abuse.

**For More Information:** To learn more about our abuse prevention policies and programs, please visit [fwdioc.org/safe-environment](http://fwdioc.org/safe-environment)



Ray and Karen Cartier with their dog, Ginger, display maps and collectibles from their travels at their home in Arlington. In 54 years of marriage, the couple has served in many ministries, including St. Vincent de Paul Society and religious education. (NTC/Ben Torres)

# Keys to a Lasting Marriage

A chance encounter leads to 54 years of marriage. But a successful marriage leaves nothing to chance, they say.

By Marty Sabota

When “beanpole” Ray Cartier first saw wife-to-be Karen in a room of 300 women at a freshman dormitory dance at Texas Woman’s University in Denton, the young man dressed in Air Force blue was inexplicably drawn to the brunette with glasses.

In the first few moments of meeting her, his immediate attraction deepened to “the honeybee with the dark hair.”

“I became very attracted to her because when we danced, she was the only girl there to ask me the favor of dancing with a shy friend of hers,” Cartier recalled. “Karen’s demonstrable caring about someone else set her apart from every other girl I’d ever met. I also found Karen to be very attractive, and

she became even more attractive the more I eventually learned about her. Even now, with both of us in our 70s, I still do.”

Although shy, the young college girl told him a few jokes.

“That started it,” said the 78-year-old retiree. “She had me hooked from the start.”

That led to 54 years of “happy marriage,” he said, highlighted by three children — Michael, Jon, and Collette — and three grandchildren — Hines, Austin, and Brittany.

In 1979, the Cartiers’ pastor at St. Maria Goretti Parish in Arlington asked the couple to become a Marriage Preparation Team. The request, Cartier said, led to their involvement in “this fabulous ministry” for the past 39 years, continuing to do so today





at St. Joseph Parish in south Arlington.

Recently, Cartier decided to write a brief letter to provide parting instructions “to our future couples at the end of their six weeks of preparing for their own lifetimes together.”

His wife laughed at the thought of her husband saying anything briefly.

“Get to the point,” Karen Cartier, 74, interjected more than once with a laugh when her husband strayed from the topic at hand or got too wordy during the interview with the *North Texas Catholic*.

What resulted from his “brief” letter was a 19-part guide of approximately 6,000 words entitled “How to Make a Marriage Last,” covering topics from

affection to support.

It seems simple, but Cartier has found special ways of channeling the obvious.

When outlining the need for humor, he said, “My marriage lifetime goal has been to make Karen laugh at least once every day of our marriage. I don’t care whether she laughs with me or at me. But I want her to enjoy something that I do or say every day that she lives. Doing this has been a success!”

The journey began in 1960 when they met at the Denton dance. Only 38 men showed up, including Cartier and two friends who had driven the approximately 100 miles from his military assignment at Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls after flipping a nickel to decide which direction to spend their days off.

Karen Cartier said his sense of humor caught her attention when they first spoke.

Cartier was soon transferred to Hawaii and over the next few years the couple’s devotion grew through correspondence — a clever and romantic “competition” that garnered the attention of all their friends.

It wasn’t just the messages, but the way they were presented.

“I had a girlfriend majoring in journalism who gave me a 37-foot roll of teletype paper,” Karen Cartier said. “I wrote his letter down one entire side.”

Letters came on a beach towel, inside the paper wrappers for straws, inside paper towel tubes, on movie posters — he was a theater manager at his overseas post — in invisible ink, on backs of postage stamps, on bubblegum wrappers, and even cut up into confetti that had to be pieced back together.

She wrote 44 pages in shorthand and later sent him a way to decode it.

“It was the talk of the campus,” Karen Cartier said of the young co-eds waiting anxiously for the mail to arrive.

They married on Nov. 26, 1964 — Thanksgiving Day — in the Chicago area where Cartier was raised.

“We had actually only seen each other 37 days over four years,” Cartier

**Continued on Page 22**

## NOT JUST A WEDDING



Couples marrying in the Diocese of Fort Worth must complete three steps before the big day.

Amid the bustle of wedding planning, these requirements are “teaching opportunities on what’s important” and help solidify the marriage foundation, according to Susan Sandles, the director of formation at St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Lewisville.

In **Fully Engaged**, sponsor couples such as the Cartiers meet several times with the prospective bride and groom after each has completed a premarital inventory that assesses their beliefs and attitudes on a variety of topics. Not only does the engaged couple learn more about each other, they learn Church teaching on many subjects and see how their sponsor couple has worked through disagreements.

Engaged couples also attend **Pre-Cana** class to learn the theological foundation for the sacrament and complete a course in **Natural Family Planning**.

Sandles explained marriage preparation helps couples realize during the difficult times that arise in a marriage, “God and the Church and His people are behind you. The Church is a strong support for you.” She encourages them to get involved in their parish.

By learning Church teaching on Matrimony, the couples see, “It’s not just their day, but their day with God,” she said. “The grace we will get in the sacrament of Matrimony will make the marriage stronger.”



## From Page 21

said. “It was a paper romance.”

They made their permanent home in Tarrant County where she had grown up, eventually moving to a home in Arlington where they have lived the past 45 years — the last nine with their rescue dog, Ginger.

In 1976, the couple experienced a Worldwide Marriage Encounter and became more deeply involved in that program for eight years in various leadership roles, as well as in their Catholic faith because of that experience.

In their “Cartier News” Christmas newsletter that year, Cartier made a bold statement about their Marriage Encounter Weekend.

“The event, which will no doubt have the greatest bearing on our future lives together, occurred over the April 23 weekend,” he wrote. “We experienced a Marriage Encounter Weekend in which we found a totally new way to share our thoughts, feelings, and love with each other. Incidental to that we shared a spiritual growth that was an unexpected but most welcome addition to the beauty of that experience. Now we have once again become young lovers as our marriage and lives have taken on an entire new dimension.”

Wanting to share their success, the couple has spent nearly four decades as a volunteer Marriage Preparation Team.

“We are doing our best to assist couples who are about to make the commitment to love each other faithfully for the rest of their lives through the sacrament of marriage,” Cartier said. “The question we are asked most often is, ‘How do you make a marriage last that long?’”

The couple said there are a myriad of ways the question is asked, but the intent is always: “What have you done that we can do to have a long and successful marriage?”

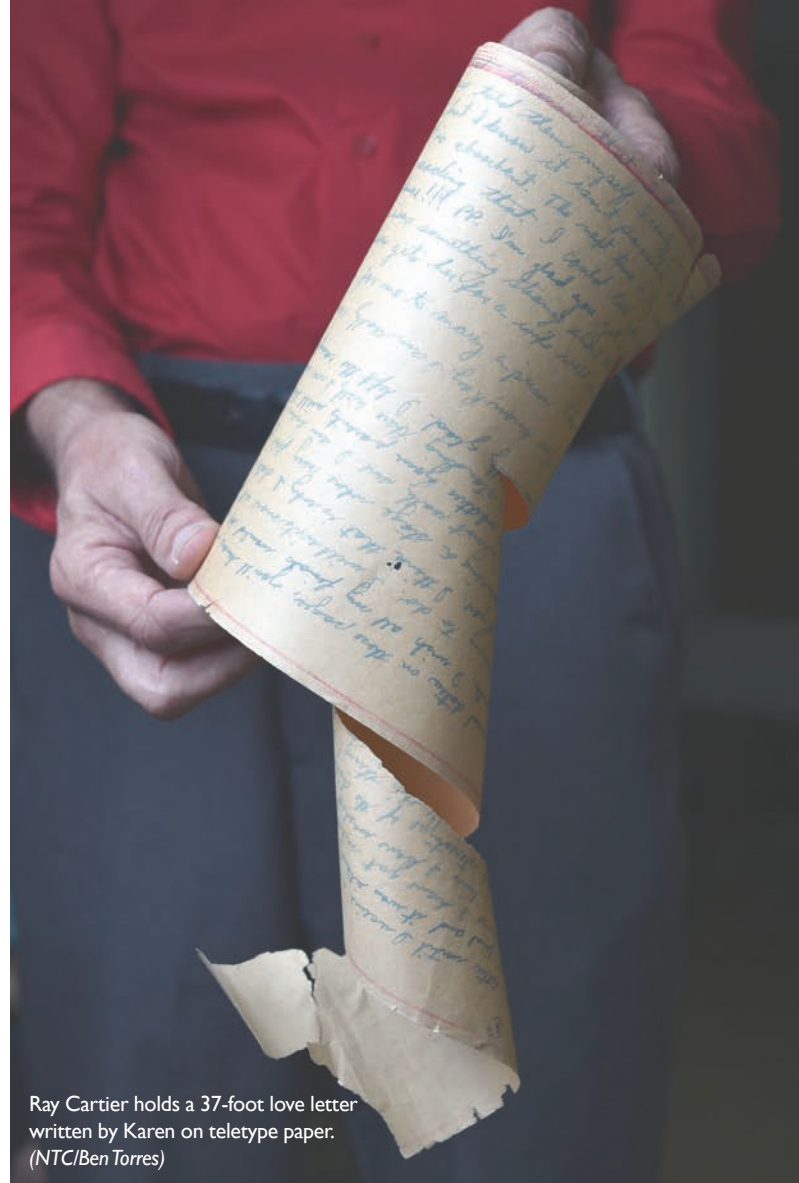
Cartier wrote, “We wish that we could give that a simple answer but it is not simple. We don’t like to say that it takes a lot of work. Rather we point out that it takes a lot of effort, in many different ways, spread out over years. We advise them that there will be adjustments to their way of living, just as there is in starting their careers in life. The preparation of a good marriage is like the creation of a special meal that requires a multitude of ingredients tied in with the cook’s patience, caring, and love so that it can be shared with others who are close.”

Special tips, the instructional letter says, “include complimenting your spouse daily, whether it be fixing that ‘whatchamacallit’ that you asked him to do, or for something around the house that he did on his own, or for the surprise kiss or hug. And don’t forget commitment, the most basic of all ingredients of a happy marriage: commitment.”

And yes, don’t forget to have fun. The couple share hobbies. Cartier and Karen have a social stamp-collecting life that includes his serving as president of the Mid-Cities Stamp Club, which covers Arlington, Euless, and Granbury.

He is recognized worldwide as an expert in the field of philately, specifically in the area of postage stamps dealing with NASA, space, and related ventures.

They have visited 69 countries together.



Ray Cartier holds a 37-foot love letter written by Karen on teletype paper. (NTC/Ben Torres)

Both have authored books, his stemming from his stamp expertise and hers on fairy tales, folk tales, island mythology, and legends.

He has a penchant for bowling; she for sewing and embroidery.

“We are on opposite sides of the spectrum, but it works,” Karen Cartier said.

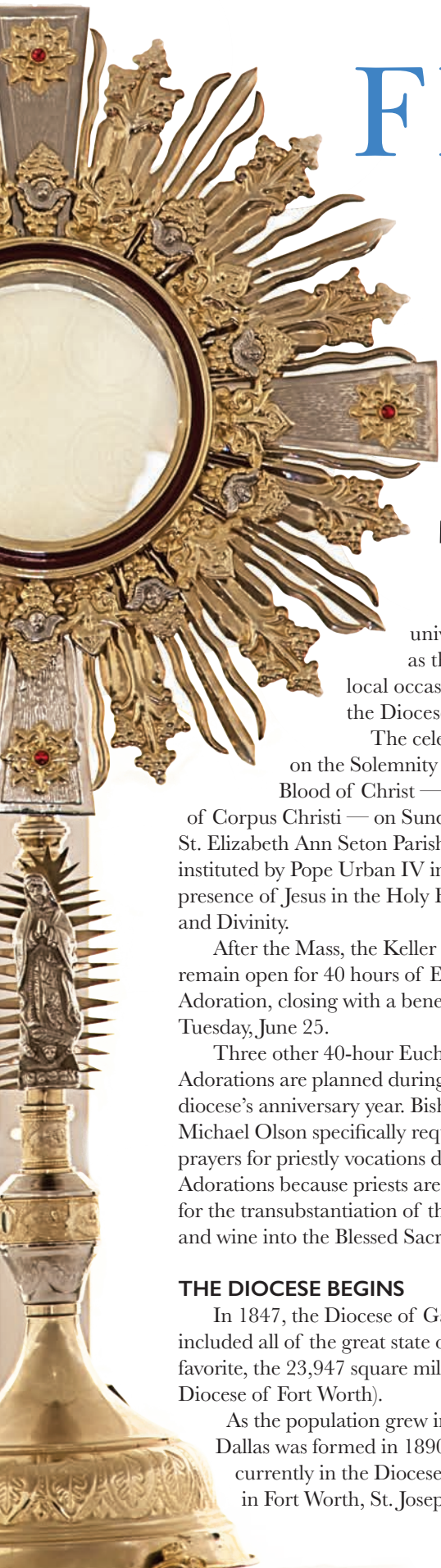
Although the Cartiers — who have ministered to about 175 couples — have made a listing of many of the ingredients that lead to a long and happy marriage, both note that no two marriages are exactly alike. There are other ingredients each couple may need to add to their marriage.

Cartier said each of the key ingredients is an essential. The quantity of each one of these, which has to be combined with the others, is unlimited.

“But couples can’t get away with using only a pinch or a teaspoonful of this or of that,” Cartier said. “The more that each gives each of these factors to their marriage cake of life, the better will be the outcome.” 🍌



Read Ray Cartier’s keys to a lasting marriage at [NorthTexasCatholic.org/features](https://NorthTexasCatholic.org/features)



# FIFTY years

Diocese begins golden anniversary celebration with 40 hours of Adoration

By Susan Moses

**T**he Eucharist makes us the Church. This truth is timeless and universal, but it's been selected as the theme for a specific and local occasion — the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

The celebration will begin with Mass on the Solemnity of the Most Holy Body and Blood of Christ — also known as the Feast of Corpus Christi — on Sunday, June 23 at 5 p.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish. The feast day, which was instituted by Pope Urban IV in 1264, celebrates the real presence of Jesus in the Holy Eucharist: Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity.

After the Mass, the Keller church will remain open for 40 hours of Eucharistic Adoration, closing with a benediction on Tuesday, June 25.

Three other 40-hour Eucharistic Adorations are planned during the diocese's anniversary year. Bishop Michael Olson specifically requests prayers for priestly vocations during the Adorations because priests are necessary for the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Blessed Sacrament.

## THE DIOCESE BEGINS

In 1847, the Diocese of Galveston was founded, which included all of the great state of Texas (and our hometown favorite, the 23,947 square miles that form the current Diocese of Fort Worth).

As the population grew in North Texas, the Diocese of Dallas was formed in 1890. It contained seven parishes currently in the Diocese of Fort Worth — St. Patrick in Fort Worth, St. Joseph in Cleburne, St. Mary in

Gainesville, St. Mary in Henrietta, Our Lady of Mercy in Hillsboro, Sacred Heart in Muenster, and St. Stephen in Weatherford. In 1953, with a new designation as the Diocese of Dallas-Fort Worth, Fort Worth's significance was acknowledged.

Pope Paul VI divided the diocese into two, and the Diocese of Fort Worth was announced on August 27, 1969. Bishop John Cassata was chosen to lead the 28-county diocese, which had 66 parishes and 75,000 Catholics at the time.

Currently, the Diocese of Fort Worth is home to an estimated 1.1 million Catholics in 90 parishes.

## THE CELEBRATION CONTINUES

To mark the anniversary of the diocese's creation, all faithful in the diocese are invited to a Mass at the Fort Worth Convention Center on Wednesday, August 21 at 7 p.m. A reception will follow.

Although special guests are not confirmed at this early date, dozens of bishops from across the country and Archbishop Christophe Pierre, the apostolic nuncio to the U.S., are expected to attend.

Near the conclusion of the diocese's 50<sup>th</sup> year, Bishop Michael Olson will accompany other pilgrims on a visit to the Marian shrines of France beginning June 2, 2020. Highlights will include daily

Mass, the grotto of Lourdes, Notre Dame Cathedral, and the home of St. Therese of Lisieux.

More information about the pilgrimage can be found at [fwdioc.org/young-adult-ministry-pilgrimage](http://fwdioc.org/young-adult-ministry-pilgrimage).

The year-long celebration of the anniversary is scheduled to conclude as it began, with the celebration of Mass followed by 40 hours of Eucharistic Adoration. St. Peter Parish in Lindsay will host the Mass and prayer on June 14, 2020.

As the anniversary events are finalized, details can be found at [fwdioc.org](http://fwdioc.org) and in subsequent issues of the *North Texas Catholic*, as well as our Facebook and Twitter pages. ✚





# SPECIAL *Opportunities*

How local faithful are making sure Catholics with disabilities are included in the life of the Church

**By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**  
**Photos by Rodger Mallison**

**W**hen Jason Whitehead worked as an autism therapist with children, a common concern voiced by parents involved church attendance. It was an “across the board issue” affecting both Protestants and Catholics.

“You’re expected to have your ‘stuff’ together when you’re going into church,” said the diocesan director of faith formation, referring to the unspoken demand for quiet, motionless children. “If your child has a particular developmental delay, church can be quite troublesome.”

Feeling unwelcome and conspicuous, families with a disabled child often stay home from Mass. That’s not what the Catholic Church and its American bishops want.

In the “Guidelines for the Celebration of the Sacraments with Persons with Disabilities,” the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) acknowledges the gifts and needs of the disabled while also advocating for their active participation in the sacramental life of the Church.

“It is essential that all forms of the liturgy be completely accessible to persons with disabilities,

since these forms are the essence of the spiritual tie that binds the Christian community together,” states the revised 2017 document. “To exclude members of the parish from these celebrations of the life of the Church, even by passive omission, is to deny the reality of that community.”

The issue of accessibility, addressed by the bishops, goes beyond installing ramps and removing barriers for the physically handicapped. It also advances the case for catechetical and religious programs needed to prepare the mentally disabled for the sacraments.

The document lays down a number of general principles for all dioceses and parishes and goes into detail regarding the different sacraments. An immediate goal in the Diocese of Fort Worth is to ensure everyone is on the same page regarding the guidelines, explained Whitehead, who also serves as the special religious education coordinator.

“There has been a misconception that because a person has special needs, there’s no possible way they can understand, therefore, they can’t have the sacraments,” he continued. “The bishops made it clear that is an unacceptable response.

**Continued on Page 26**







Seven-year-old David Garcia, who is autistic, sings during a Mass for special needs Catholics at Holy Family Parish Jan. 12. Garcia was also assigned one of the readings during the liturgy.





Faith mentor Skip Rawley shares with other members of Faces and Hearts of Christ, an apostolate for special needs Catholics, during a faith sharing meeting at The Smokehouse BBQ Restaurant in Denton.

### From Page 24

People with disabilities of all ages have the right to be formed and receive the sacraments.”

Working towards that end, the diocese will offer quarterly workshop opportunities organized as hands-on training sessions, in addition to a central diocesan special needs conference hosted each year. Whitehead believes the diocese is ready to recruit mental health professionals to train intervention teams who will work with parish catechists assigned specifically to the disabled.

Educating people about the types and degrees of autism, Down syndrome, or other impairments and training them to effectively minister to parishioners is a targeted objective.

“Those who are called to be catechists to people with special needs must be trained on the different techniques that will make their ministry effective,” Whitehead said. “That’s the major move we’re taking right now.”

A special needs liaison between the diocese and parishes, the director provides continual oversight, resources, and materials, as well as advice whenever a

situation arises.

“My mission is to make sure special needs ministry is no longer peripheral and receives the same attention as classical catechesis,” he said.

He cites Faces and Hearts of Christ — an apostolate serving adults with intellectual impairment — and the recently announced Our Mother of Perpetual Help educational program for disabled youngsters, as evidence of the strides the diocese is making.

“We’re hoping and praying for increased awareness and growth of both programs,” he said. “They provide a needed ministry.”

## FACES AND HEARTS OF CHRIST

What’s the best part about being Catholic? Skip Rawley’s answer reveals a heart for ministry.

“I like sharing my faith with people,” said the longtime St. Mark parishioner. “It’s a precious gift and every person who is Catholic should appreciate that every day.”

Rawley was born with Mosaic Down syndrome — a genetic disorder affecting

the way a person learns and reasons — but that hasn’t stopped him from studying his faith and becoming involved in parish activities.

Employed at St. Mark where he works in data entry, the 4<sup>th</sup> Degree Knight of Columbus admits reading “slowly, one paragraph at a time” the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, and with good reason. The burgeoning catechist shares what he learns with other members of Faces and Hearts of Christ — a new ministry designed specifically for adults with cognitive impairment. Launched in 2017 by Marjorie Looney and Nada Boerner at Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton, the ministry offers biannual retreats, ongoing fellowship through monthly Bible study/dinner club gatherings, and sacramental preparation guidance.

The one-day retreats are geared for adults who don’t have the physical or mental stamina for a three-day ACTS retreat but could still benefit from experiencing God in a personal and communal way.

“We cater to the moderately mentally challenged,” said Boerner, a retired special education teacher. “Some of our special needs adults have Down syndrome



Members of Faces and Hearts of Christ finish up their faith sharing meeting with group prayer at The Smokehouse BBQ Restaurant in Denton.

or autism. We also have people whose mental capacity was affected by strokes or Alzheimer's."

### HOW GOD SEES US

With approval from the diocese and Immaculate Conception Pastor Father Tim Thompson, the founders crafted an experience that focuses on prayer in the morning and a thought-provoking theme in the afternoon. More than two dozen faith mentors, who work with the disabled or have a family member with special needs, are part of the ministry and come from St. Mark and St. John Paul II parishes, as well as Immaculate Conception.

"In the morning we talk about how God sees us and why He made us in

### MINISTRY MOMENT



To learn more about the Faces and Hearts of Christ retreat and monthly Scripture study, visit [FHCretreat.org](http://FHCretreat.org).

His image," Boerner explained, adding that the retreat also ministers to attendees of other Christian denominations.

During each retreat, attendees learn about Blessed Margaret of Castello, the ministry's spiritual patron. Born blind, crippled, and abandoned by her family, the 14<sup>th</sup> century lay Dominican is considered the patron saint of the disabled. She died at age 33 after living her life in service to others.

Similarly, the ministry reaches out to the cognitively challenged who may feel isolated and forgotten.

"We wanted to offer something to that population," Boerner said. "First

**Continued on Page 28**

### DID YOU KNOW?



39.8 million, or 12.6 percent of the population in the U.S. has a disability.



In Texas, about 3 million people report having a disability — about 11.6 percent of the population.



In Tarrant County, 10.4 percent of the county's residents report having a disability.

\* United States 2017 American Community Survey and U.S. Census Bureau.



Debbie Luenser talks with Brigid Conders, 22, during a religion class at Our Mother of Perpetual Help Educational Program.



### From Page 27

of all, we want them to be able to go to a retreat, talk about God and what God means to them. And, if they want, to receive the sacraments.”

While planning the first retreat, organizers realized most of the disabled adults they met were baptized but received no further religious formation.

### RECEIVING THE SACRAMENTS

David Nawaoba, a cognitively impaired 21-year-old, never made his first Communion because, “he was never registered for classes,” explained his father, Cyril Nawaoba. “There’s no way he could answer questions the regular way to receive the sacraments.”

The native of Nigeria and his wife are devout Catholics who attend Sunday Mass at Immaculate Conception. That’s where fellow parishioners Looney and Boerner first noticed David never received the Eucharist during Communion.

“They asked if our son could join them at Faces and Hearts of Christ,” the dad remembered. “Now, every time they have a retreat, I bring him. He likes the

community and has made friends.”

At the 4 p.m. Mass that concluded the first retreat in September 2017, David received the sacraments of Confirmation and holy Communion in the company of other disabled adults.

“What an amazing blessing it gave our church that day,” recalled Looney, a seasoned counselor and advocate for the disabled. “It is so beautiful to see people embrace this amazing community within our parish.”

### AN OFFICIAL MINISTRY

Although preparing disabled adults for the sacraments is not the primary purpose of the retreats, organizers offer parents information and guidance with help from the diocese. Faces and Hearts of Christ wants adults with special needs to have their needs met.

“We’re now an official ministry of the diocese. I think that tells us where [Bishop Olson’s] heart is and where the diocese stands when it comes to the disabled,” Looney assured. “Even if a person can only communicate with the blink of an eye, but has an understanding of the Body and Blood of Christ, it is the responsibility of

the community to meet those needs.”

The 20 disabled adults who come to each retreat from as far away as Carrollton, Plano, and Dallas are given a t-shirt with the motto: *I am special. I am important. Because I am His.*

Skip Rawley, now a faith mentor, prepares meditations based on that message for his fellow retreatants. When the group met February 16, he asked listeners to think about the heart and “what’s precious to a person at any given moment.”

“I can relate to them because, like me, they have a disability,” he said encouragingly. “This ministry helps me shine a light into other people’s lives. It helps me be a better Catholic.”

### OUR MOTHER OF PERPETUAL HELP

At first glance, the light-filled, cheerful space resembles a typical classroom. Brightly colored paper flowers border the walls, and art supplies fill a large worktable. There’s a well-used whiteboard, shelves crowded with books, and motivational posters with inspiring messages.

But something is very non-traditional



Natalie Lewis, with the help of her dog Chesney (a seven-year-old Yorkie mix), leads a class at Our Mother of Perpetual Help

**PHOTO GALLERY**  
 To view more photos, visit [NorthTexasCatholic.org](http://NorthTexasCatholic.org) and click on the Photo Gallery tab.

inadequate and continued to explore other options. The idea to invite more youngsters into Brigid’s classroom came after McGehee hired Natalie Lewis, a Texas State University graduate with a degree in special education.

“She has such a gift teaching children with special needs,” the founder said, praising the skilled educator. “I could not have started this school without her.”

Originally lodged in a two-story home, the program moved to a classroom adjacent to St. Thomas on Azle Avenue to accommodate more students. After the parish built a new church and relocated in 2016, Our Mother of Perpetual Help was given use of a larger building by the religious order that now resides at the site and operates St. Benedict Church.

**WELL-ROUNDED PROGRAM SERVES STUDENTS**

Offering a specialized curriculum for pupils of all faiths from age six to 23, the program is year-round with short breaks of vacation time. Tuition is \$12,000 a year.

“The schedule helps students retain information,” McGehee explained. A catechist teaches religion once a week and a therapy dog, who looks like Toto from *The Wizard of Oz*, brings an added measure of comfort to the school day.

Although the program serves students with Down syndrome and autism, it welcomes children with other diagnoses as long as they do not have behavioral problems or are medically fragile.

“We’re not equipped to handle

**Continued on Page 30**

about this setting. It’s the students. Our Mother of Perpetual Help educational program provides a Catholic-based learning environment for children and adolescents with special needs.

Housed in a building near St. Benedict Parish in north Fort Worth, the nonprofit venture is endorsed by the diocese and hopes to expand in the near future.

“We’re solvent, stable, and legitimate,” affirmed Pamela Mooney McGehee, who started the program in

2015 after looking for an effective, faith-based school for her daughter, Brigid, who has Down syndrome.

Realizing the youngster was not receiving the education she deserved at specialized learning centers, the Catholic convert and her husband, Frank, wanted Brigid to attend a Catholic school. Finding no program in the diocese for youngsters with special needs, the devoted mom decided to start one.

McGehee, a property investor, began home schooling her daughter but felt



## DID YOU KNOW?



The Catholic special needs community gathers for a Mass and social every second Saturday of the month at Holy Family Parish in Fort Worth. Mass begins at 6:30 p.m. in the chapel. To learn more, visit [fwdioc.org/persons-with-disabilities](http://fwdioc.org/persons-with-disabilities).



Nick Unkefer, 17, greets another parishioner prior to the monthly Mass for the special needs community at Holy Family Parish Jan. 12.

### From Page 29

feeding tubes although I'd love to serve every child," McGehee added.

A grant from Neiman Marcus funds an arts program and a soccer coach leads students through outdoor drills once a week. Visits to Casa Mañana and Cliburn recitals expose youngsters to live performance, and life skills — like cooking and baking — are taught each Friday.

"It's a very well-rounded program with the goal of forming people who are holy and morally virtuous," McGehee added. "We're here for children with learning differences that Catholic schools can't accommodate."

Bolstered by a successful pilot program, she's ready to publicize the venture and is applying for grant money from private foundations.

### A GAME CHANGER

Attending Our Mother of Perpetual Help was a game changer for 16-year-old Jacob Myers. The St. Patrick parishioner

was born with apraxia of speech — a motor speech disorder that makes it difficult for a person to talk. A computer tablet, with special software, helps him communicate.

"He's learning and has matured so much," said Mary Myers, Jacob's mother. "The teachers are wonderful and just love these children."

The program provides religious education and fosters a sense of camaraderie for parents and special needs youngsters who often feel isolated.

"There aren't a lot of support groups

out there," pointed out Myers, a member of the board of directors who witnessed the program's development from the start. "I'm glad to have found this community. Jacob gets individual attention but also has classmates. When we're on vacation or after a long weekend, he's ready to go back to school because he misses his friends."

The owner of St. Anthony's Church Supplies finds comfort in knowing her son is in a place where he can grow academically and learn about his faith.

"I want Jacob to live a good life

and love the Lord," Myers emphasized. "There are a lot of children out there who could benefit from this program."

### PREPARING FOR THE FUTURE

Special needs youngsters can thrive if given proper guidance and one-on-one support, according to Natalie Lewis, the program's lead educator and executive director. Having childhood playmates with Down syndrome sparked her lifelong desire to teach God's special children.

"These kids want to be contributing members of society," insisted the cradle Catholic who earned a master's degree in special education from Texas Christian University. "They want to do things — not just grow up to fold pizza boxes."

Vocational training, job placement, and workplace support are introduced as a student approaches adulthood. One graduate of the program has begun the transition process.

The program is ready to connect with families who want a Christ-centered education for their special needs youngsters. The program's holistic approach encourages children to reach their potential in an environment that nurtures both body and soul.

"We can exceed whatever goals they have at home," Lewis said. "Miracles are happening here." 🇹🇽

### MINISTRY MOMENT



To learn more about the Our Mother of Perpetual Help Educational Program visit [OurMotherProgram.org](http://OurMotherProgram.org).



# Catholicism in the WILD WEST

How a hard-driving frontier priest  
from France rode for Christ into  
North Texas

By Jerry Circelli



**A** man as tough as the post-Civil-War, Wild-West times in which he lived, Father Peter Anthony Levy was resolutely determined to carry out his mission to evangelize pioneers in the Lone Star State.

A missionary priest from France, Fr. Levy was assigned by the Diocese of Galveston — essentially the entire eastern half of the state of Texas after 1874 — to minister to the faithful and bring the Word of God to all people, many in dire need of hearing it.

Most Texans who knew Fr. Levy saw him as a priest full of compassion and understanding. They could count on him as a person who kept his promises. Others, like a band of nefarious outlaws in southeast Texas, learned the hard way that this man on a mission allowed no one to stand between Christ and His people.

A dramatic case in point was relayed by Father E.A. Kelly, pastor of St. Anthony Parish in Beaumont, who described Fr.

Levy's encounter with the desperados for the Jan. 6, 1924 *Beaumont Enterprise*.

While the missionary priest was riding his circuit there around 1875, he unknowingly crossed into the outlaws' hideout. The bad men yanked the priest from his mount, which they promptly added to their own string of horses. They mocked the priest and led him to a hanging tree, forcing him to take a close look at several notches in the trunk, representing each of their other victims who had crossed their path.

They told Fr. Levy to hit the road on foot and never to return, lest he die by the same fate.

It is exactly here, at this dusty, desolate Texas crossroads, where we find a determined priest with a hard decision to make. Does he abandon his normal route, delaying or in some cases denying the sacraments for local Catholics? Does he let evil stand in his way?

Fr. Kelly passed along more details of the brush between the priest and the

outlaws. According to the newspaper account, Fr. Levy told them:

“Boys, you have the drop on me now. I'll do as you say. But remember this, I'll be back and I'll make you line up together and recite the Lord's Prayer.”

Deprived of his horse, Fr. Levy set out on foot, leaving the ne'er-do-wells more amused than angry at the priest's bold comments.

Their amusement turned to bewilderment a few days later when the outlaws saw Fr. Levy riding purposefully back into their camp. He had returned for his horse and to make true on his earlier promise.

“I can knock the eye out of a fly with this rifle,” Fr. Levy said, as he slid a long gun from the leather scabbard attached to his saddle. He then proceeded to prove it, putting on a shooting display that quite humbled his astonished audience.

They had not realized that the man of

**Continued on Page 32**



**From Page 31**

the cloth before them had been a sharpshooter in the French Army before joining the priesthood and coming to Texas.

After the dust settled from the shooting exhibition, the outlaws did as the priest had earlier instructed them and lined up to recite the Lord's Prayer. It was a most unconventional but highly effective catechesis for the ruffians, who not only prayed, but also promptly returned the priest's horse to him.

This was the man who came to North Texas in the 1870s to ride a circuit from Gainesville to Amarillo and the borders of the territory of New Mexico and Indian Territory, present-day Oklahoma. The meandering route branched off in a multitude of directions. Altogether, including the return, it was nothing short of a 1,000-mile faith journey, taking months to complete.

Fr. Levy's preferred mode of transportation in what would one day become the

Diocese of Fort Worth was a horse and wagon. In the bed of the rig, Fr. Levy kept a hand-carved walnut chair, part of his trademark "roaming confessional."

In 1879, Fr. Levy helped a growing group of Catholics in the Clay County community of Cambridge build a small wooden church. The arrival of a railroad line could make a town in those days and the lack

of one could break it. The latter was the case for Cambridge in 1882 when the Fort Worth and Denver Railway bypassed the town in favor of nearby Henrietta. The population soon left the once-thriving Cambridge in favor of the new railroad stop and county seat of Henrietta.

That same year, under Fr. Levy's direction, parishioners fashioned a rolling

## Souls, Sacraments, and Saddles

A band of Wild West outlaws once learned the hard way that they could not stop Fr. Peter Anthony Levy from making his appointed rounds as a missionary priest. After an encounter with a band of thieves in southeast Texas, French-born Fr. Levy went on to build churches in what is now the Diocese of Fort Worth, including:

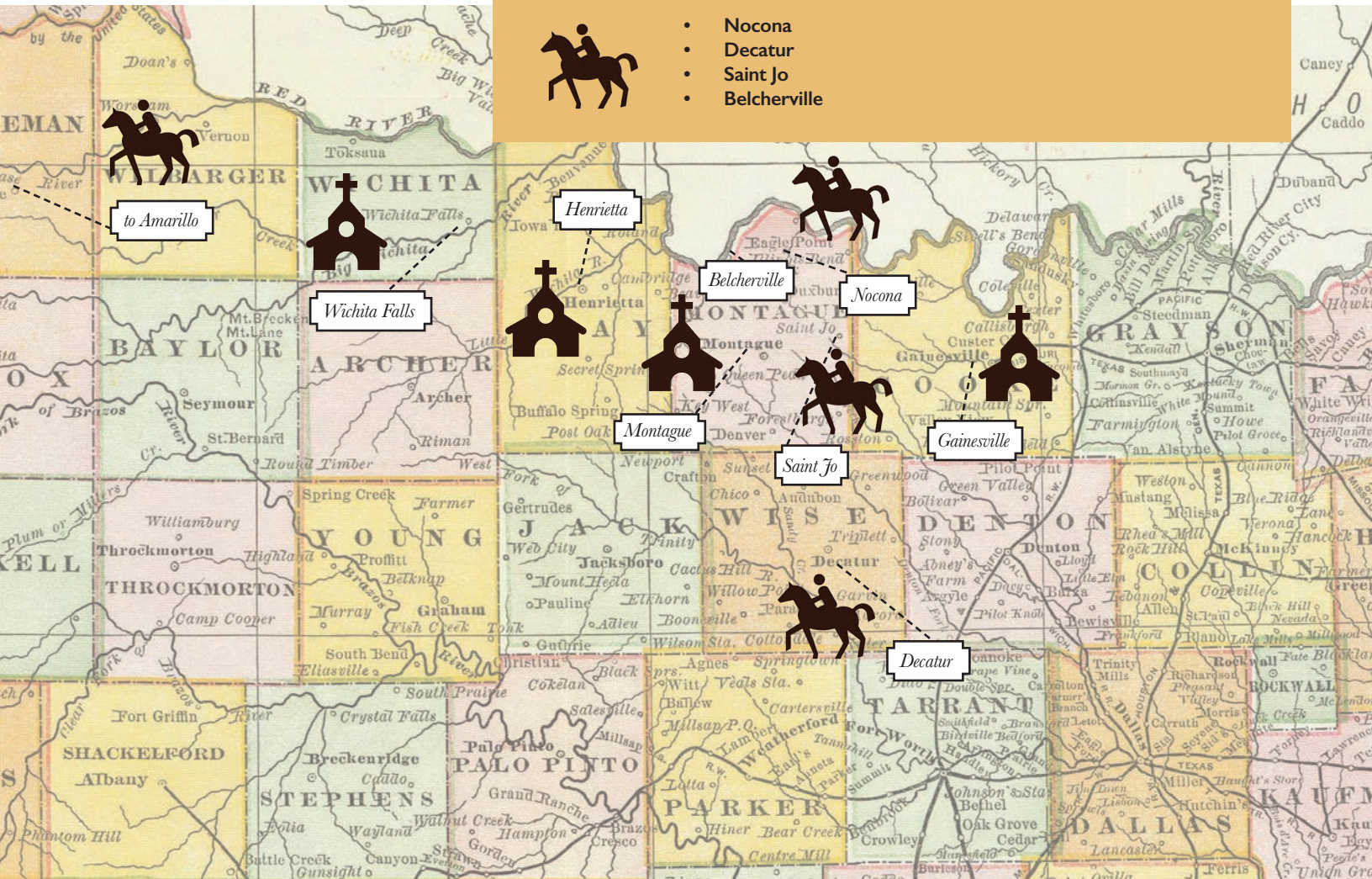


- St. Mary Parish in Gainesville, est. 1879
- St. Mary Parish in Henrietta, est. 1879 and churches completed posthumously
- Sacred Heart Parish in Wichita Falls, est. 1891
- St. William Parish in Montague, est. 1899

His circuit from Gainesville to Amarillo included regular stops in towns:



- Nocona
- Decatur
- Saint Jo
- Belcherville





platform under the church, hooked it up to 18 pair of oxen and hauled it about three miles from Cambridge to Henrietta.

During the span of building the church in Cambridge and later carting the oversized load to Henrietta, Fr. Levy was multitasking, building a house of God for Catholics in Gainesville, about 65 miles east.

Fr. Levy helped parishioners construct the first St. Mary Church in Gainesville in 1881. It was a two-room cabin. One room was used for worship services and the other served as the priest's living quarters.

The modest, but welcome, rectory in Gainesville afforded the circuit-riding priest the opportunity to launch off from a strategic location on his travels through North Texas and points northwest.

By 1884, Fr. Levy was frequently serving several Catholic families in Wichita Falls, celebrating Mass in the homes of the faithful. His work would later give rise to a Catholic community that would one day become Sacred Heart Parish.

Around 1886, the industrious priest was supervising construction of a church for Catholics in Montague. Also around that time, Fr. Levy was helping firm up a strong Catholic community in Nocona.

Among the many towns he served from 1879 to 1886 were Cambridge, Gainesville, Henrietta, Decatur, Wichita Falls, St. Jo, Nocona, Belcherville, and Montague — all inside the boundaries of the present-day Diocese of Fort Worth.

At a time that seemed to be at the apex of his ministry in North Texas — building churches from the ground up, moving them to population centers when needed, raising funding for construction projects, making plans for future worship facilities, and riding a 1,000-mile circuit — Fr. Levy died tragically on December 17, 1886.

His death came in service to the Lord.

According to church records at St. Mary Parish in Gainesville, Fr. Levy was traveling in his horse-drawn rig along the new railroad line near the town. He likely had been visiting with hard-working Catholic immigrants laboring to extend the Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railway from Fort Worth to Gainesville that year. The major project linked North Texas to one of the longest rail systems in

the country.

As equines are sometimes prone to do, especially around unfamiliar sights, one of Fr. Levy's horses spooked and darted wildly, sending the priest's cart out of control.

Fr. Levy reportedly died of a fractured skull. News of the calamitous accident shocked the faithful who knew and depended on him. Inspired by the way their priest had served the Lord, many Catholic communities throughout North Texas carried on with much of Fr. Levy's unfinished work, funding and building new churches and schools he had planned.

This pioneering priest now lies in eternal rest inside the Diocese of Fort Worth, within the walls of St. Mary Church in Gainesville. A simple marker outside the church, along the base of the wall, marks the spot of his interment. A stained glass window in the church commemorates the life of the selfless French missionary priest who served Catholics in the Lone Star State.

This resolute, 19<sup>th</sup> century disciple of Christ did not let any person or any thing stand in the way of bringing Christ to the people of North Texas. Although Fr. Levy's life remains relatively unknown, his shining legacy reflects brilliantly in rural churches in the area.

Fr. Peter Anthony Levy's tireless work would be a critical first step in the eventual creation of one of the nation's largest and fastest-growing Catholic ecclesiastical districts — the Diocese of Fort Worth. 🇺🇸



## Father Peter Anthony Levy at Rest

*alternatively spelled Pierre Antoine Levy*



Fr. Levy died tragically in 1886, after a runaway horse-and-buggy accident while carrying out his mission. He was buried on the grounds of St. Mary Church in Gainesville, and later re-interred in the southeast corner of the church, where a marker at the base of the outside wall designates his resting spot. A stained-glass window inside the church (*above*) honors the man with the pioneering spirit who traveled far and wide to bring the Catholic Church to North Texas and beyond.

# The CASE for LIFE



## PART 2

### Personhood and the rebuttal evidence

By Juan Guajardo

**W**ords have power. They can lift us up. They can express deep emotions like love, gratefulness, and joy. But they can also hurt and be misused. As Niccolo Machiavelli makes clear, language can be twisted in order to achieve an end. It can be used as illusion and there's agenda behind illusion. George Orwell's book *1984* also reminds us of this.

In fact, the origins of the term “doublespeak” — deliberately ambiguous speech — is traced back to that book. Although the term isn't used in the novel *per se*, it's closely related to the language of the book's totalitarian regime, Newspeak, which was used to push their political agenda.

More than ever we can find traces of intentionally deceptive language in our society's vocabulary. Consider the euphemism “downsizing” for “layoffs” and the now well-accepted use of manipulative language by the advertising industry and in politics. Consider too, the well-publicized term “alternative facts” used by Kellyanne Conway to defend the Trump Administration in 2017. As of Dec. 2018, the Global

Language Monitor (GLM), based in Austin, pegged the number of words in the English language at more than 1 million, stating that about 15 new words are created per day. Combine that with the multiple definitions some words have and it can get messy.

Having been introduced to Machiavellian philosophy in my political science classes, for the next phase of the Case for Life, I considered it critical to ask: Is a certain phrase, term, or label being used manipulatively, or honestly and objectively? Is it a euphemism covering up an ugly reality? In particular, I honed in on the meaning of one word: Personhood. Scientifically, I had come to the unequivocal conclusion that human life begins at conception. But before I could grant the verdict that the unborn human is morally equivalent to the newborn (and therefore it should be protected from conception onward), I would need to face the claim that abounded amongst my peers: “The fetus isn't a person.”

For this, I relied on the rebuttal evidence — any evidence that's offered to explain, counteract, or disprove a witness account or

testimony. If that evidence countered the above claim, I would be one step closer to a verdict.

#### THE REBUTTAL EVIDENCE

Critical to the “fetus isn't a person” claim is the concept of personhood. Of course to understand why a fetus is or isn't a person, we must first define *person* and find out who sets the definition. A good rebuttal gets to the bottom of that.

While pro-choice at that time, I admit I hadn't thought that “person” meant anything other than human. Boy was I wrong. Poring over dozens of essays on “personhood” from a variety of disciplines, I found that it's a tough definition to pin down.

As a sociological term, its definition varies across time, cultural context, and space. In theology, it got its start in Christological debates in order to describe the three persons of the Holy Trinity. In philosophy, it replaced the term “rational soul” back in the Enlightenment era. It meant different things to different ancient societies, such as the Greeks and Romans. Aristotle, Hippocrates, Plato, Tertullian, St. Augustine,





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## ◀ AM I A PERSON?

Throughout history, ethicists, philosophers, and legal experts have failed to come to a consensus on what defines a human person. The legal premise of *Roe v. Wade* states “personhood” is not inherent but rather something to be attained.

and St. Thomas Aquinas all had different understandings of it. (Augustine and Aquinas both agreed that personhood involved ensoulment, but they disagreed on when ensoulment occurred.) In common law and ecclesiastical courts, personhood extended to the child *in utero* and abortion was generally prosecuted in Western society.

The issue did not clear up with the passage of time, unfortunately. The current personhood movement muddied the waters even more, to the point where even pro-abortion advocates can't agree on why the fetus isn't a person or even when personhood begins.<sup>1</sup> Some activist groups go so far as to ascribe personhood to animals.<sup>2</sup>

As it relates to the unborn human and the legal perspective (and this is also where the definition impacts our society most profoundly), the 1973 Supreme Court case, *Roe v. Wade*, gives some insight. (To be clear, in this article I omit juridical personhood, i.e., sovereign states or corporations. We focus solely on *natural personhood*.)

The case got its start here, in North Texas, after Norma McCorvey (Roe) and a pair of attorneys who filed suit on her behalf sought to overturn Texas' criminal abortion statutes. At the time, most states criminally prosecuted abortion except in cases of rape, incest, or to save the mother's life. Finding out she was pregnant, McCorvey was advised to lie that she was raped in order to procure a legal abortion. The schemes failed however, leading to the suit being filed in 1970. (McCorvey wound up giving birth and placing her child for adoption; in a twist of events, she later became a prominent pro-life advocate.)

The case revolves heavily around the 14<sup>th</sup>

**Continued on Page 36**

## LOOKING CLOSER

The court's decision in *Roe v. Wade* led to a sea change in states' application of abortion law. No longer could states attempt to curtail abortion before 28 weeks gestation. Once a felony in many states, the law had now opened a Pandora's box of definitions and protections regarding fetal life. Nineteen years later, another Supreme Court case, *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, reworked the trimester framework, moving the point of viability forward to around 22-23 weeks gestation.

**10 WEEKS:** Currently, no state protects the right to life of a fetus 10 weeks of age or younger. Even if they wanted to, such a provision would be ruled unconstitutional because it would undermine *Roe v. Wade*.



**20 WEEKS:** Currently, 19 states protect fetal life at 20 weeks, with exception to cases of rape, incest, or threat to the mother's health.



### From Page 35

Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, which states: “No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law...”

Of course, when the passage was written (Reconstruction era, 1868), the term “person” was equivalent and interchangeable with “human.” The landmark Jan. 22, 1973 decision, however, created a paradigm shift in the legal definition of natural personhood, and this was a red flag.

In what the legal community at the time saw as an extreme judicial overreach,<sup>3</sup> the court ruled that the right to privacy granted under the Due Process Clause of the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment extended to a woman's right to have an abortion.

As I read on, I noticed the court faced a dilemma.

Justice Harry Blackmun wrote: “*The appellee [Wade] and certain amici [friends of the court] argue that the fetus is a “person” within the language and meaning of the Fourteenth Amendment. In support of this, they outline at length and in detail the well known facts of fetal development. If this suggestion of personhood is established, the appellant's case, of course, collapses, for the fetus' right to life is then guaranteed specifically by the [14<sup>th</sup>] amendment.*”

Not finding a definition for person in the Constitution, the justice willfully relied on old tort law, clumsy penumbra, and self-serving misinformation (“There has always been strong support for the view that life does not begin until live birth”) to contrive his own,

concluding that personhood is not inherent; rather it's something to be developed. Unfortunately for the fetus, that meant he or she wasn't a “person” until the age of viability. No personhood, no right to life.<sup>4</sup>

How did the justice determine the point at which personhood starts? In an internal memo to the other justices, Blackmun admitted that the trimester framework was “arbitrary.”<sup>5</sup>

With that, the court struck down what Texas defended — that “life begins at conception and is present throughout pregnancy, and that, therefore, the State has a compelling interest in protecting that life from and after conception.” In the greater scheme, the court had crafted a new long-lasting definition of person — one which excluded the embryo (outright) and the fetus (until the third trimester or 28 weeks) Eventually, the court's opinion in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* reworked the trimester framework, moving the point of viability (around 22-23 weeks) in light of medical advances.

John T. Noonan, a former U.S. circuit court judge and university professor, criticized the court's *Roe* decision.<sup>6</sup> He saw it as narrowing the definition of humanity and thus our protections under the Constitution. Instead of the state protecting a human being for the sake of being human, it was now a compelling interest to the state only if the human being had the “capability of meaningful life.”

“Human life is defined in terms of this capability,” Noonan explained. “Qualitative standards of the life worthy of protecting are to prevail... Our old way of looking on all human existence as sacred is to be replaced by a new ethic more

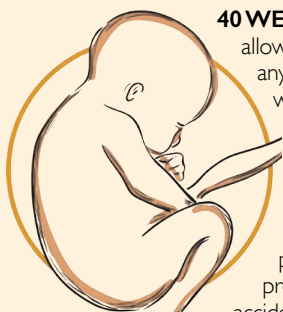
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**28 WEEKS:** By now the fetus has entered the third trimester and is viable. Forty-three states protect fetal life at this point, with varying exceptions in cases of rape, incest, or threat to the mother's health.



**40 WEEKS:** Eight states allow for abortion at any point in pregnancy without restriction, including New York with their recent "Reproductive Health Act." That policy also removed protections for infants accidentally born alive during an abortion.

## EDITOR'S NOTE:

Look for the conclusion of the *Case of Life — The Eyewitness Evidence* in your next issue of the *NTC*, due in homes April 17-20. Part I is available at **NorthTexasCatholic.org**.

discriminating in who shall live and who shall die. The concept of 'meaningful life' is at the core of these decisions."

He added, somewhat prophetically, "Who shall make the judgment that life has meaning or the capability of meaning?"

Through the reading of *Roe* and related documents, the "fetus is not a person" claim was falling apart as the definition it depended on was steeped heavily in subjectivism rather than science and objectivity. The rebuttal evidence was, so far, winning out.

## FROM OTHER VIEWPOINTS

Within ethics, I again found no clear consensus for personhood.

One extreme example I encountered was courtesy of a pair of ethicists writing for the *Journal of Medical Ethics*.<sup>7</sup> In their now infamous 2012 essay, they arrived at the conclusion that "aborting newborns" should be allowed in all cases where abortion is because they're not persons. The authors admitted both the fetus and newborn are "certainly human beings and potential persons" but neither is a person worthy of a right to life *yet*. Not until they're able to develop aims and have an appreciation for their lives.

Then there were those who would take a scientific question and turn it into a theological one. Of course, we know that once it's relegated there, it's oftentimes dismissed as irrelevant to the discussion.

Surprisingly, I found that trying to twist personhood into a theological debate was unnecessary to determining sanctity of life. The Church states the human embryo and fetus must be *unconditionally* protected as sacred, yes. But this "yes" is more nuanced.

It stipulates that the embryo (or fetus) must be treated *as if it were* a person, *as if it were* ensouled, despite not knowing for sure when that happens.<sup>8</sup>

Father Tad Pacholczyk, director of education for the National Catholic Bioethics Center, provided a clue as to why the question of the "precise timing of ensoulment/personhood" is irrelevant to our defense of life. First, because sacred tradition has never given the Church a unanimous answer as to when ensoulment (and therefore personhood) begins. Secondly and most importantly, a fundamental truth we *already* know trumps what we don't know:

*"We do not need an answer to this fascinating and speculative question... Rather, we only need to grasp the key insight that every person on the planet is, so to speak, an 'overgrown embryo.' Hence, it is not necessary to know exactly when God ensouls the embryo, because, as I sometimes point out in half-jest, even if it were true that an embryo did not receive her soul until she graduated from law school, that would not make it OK to kill her by forcibly extracting tissues or organs prior to graduation."*

So while I had found the point of "personhood" is speculative for almost every discipline, Fr. Tad's argument made a lot of sense — whether one was Roman Catholic or not. Even if we don't know when the embryo or fetus becomes a person or "ensouled," we *do* know this is a human being — from the moment of conception — and that should be enough for us to treat him or her with immense dignity and respect. Plus, if the definition of personhood begins there, at ground

zero, it would be not only objective, but scientific. Even logically that starting point makes sense because it defines personhood through the lens of *what* or *who* one is — rather than falling into a functionalist mindset of "what one does."

So, I was ready to admit that the claim "a fetus isn't a person" was wrong, and that changing that "isn't" to an "is" would be in everyone's best interest.

The alternative — severing humanity from personhood and defining it ourselves — should give us pause. We're pretty bad at it as our historical record shows; we too easily dehumanize (i.e., the Rwandan Genocide or the Holocaust).

What's more, if personhood is not inherent, we water down the Golden Rule, the tenets of our faith (and those of many other religions), and our beloved country's "self-evident" truths that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Colleen Carroll Campbell puts this more bluntly, "If being human is not enough to entitle one to human rights, then the very concept of human rights loses meaning. And all of us — born and unborn, strong and weak, young and old — someday will find ourselves on the wrong end of that measuring stick."

Better for us to say: All that's required to be a person is to be a member of the genus and species *homo sapiens*. Best to take Machiavelli's advice and test what's behind the dialect of euphemism, for the manipulators and seducers "have a feeling and instinct for it, [and] try their best to keep it hidden."<sup>9</sup> 🇺🇸





## A Family Fortune

**FAMILY WITNESS:** Brandi said, “When we are out in public, we get the ‘Wow, you have your hands full!’ quite a lot. My goal is for people to see that there’s joy in having a big family even though it’s challenging, so my response is usually something like, ‘Yes! And I couldn’t be more blessed!’ This is especially unexpected when one of my children is crying!


“I think it’s really important for people to see others making children a priority and not treating them like a burden in a society where children are so often marginalized in so many ways.”

Ted added, “People like to joke about it. We see it as an opportunity to witness to what we believe about the beauty of life and saying ‘Yes’ to God. We have been very fortunate to have the opportunity to have a large family.”

**INVESTMENT ADVICE:** Brandi said their marriage “takes a commitment to invest time in one another. Ted and I try to get out together at least once a month, even if it’s just a shopping trip to Walmart. We often spend time cooking by ourselves in the kitchen so we have time to talk and joke and plan.”

**PASSING ON THE FAITH:** Ted is the director of music for St. Rita, and Brandi is the director of religious education for the four-parish cluster, but Ted explained, “We pray and sing together and make sure the faith is a part of what we do all the time, not just once a week.

“When those teachable moments crop up, like when we hear something on the news or when something has happened at school, we use that to relate back to what we’ve experienced through prayer, at Mass, or in religious education. We’re constantly referring and relating all of our life events back to what it means to be Catholic.” 🇹🇽



**THEY ARE:** Ted and Brandi Brauker, with daughters Aemelia, Cecilia, Olivia, Sharon Rose, and another blessing due in April. Married 11 years, they are parishioners at St. Rita in Ranger. (NTC/Rodger Mallison)



# Bridging Language Barriers

**D**arlene Irey believes she made a great decision five years ago, when she left corporate America with the goal of finding more meaningful work. “I wanted to make a difference,” she mused. “And what could be more important than helping people to bridge gaps of language and culture, so that they can fully communicate with others?”

Irey serves as a sales executive with the Translation and Interpretation Network (TIN), the premier full-service language provider in North Texas. TIN, which was established in 1999, is an innovative social enterprise of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW). It works with hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, home health providers, schools, immigration offices, the court system, and social service agencies, connecting them with trained and certified interpreters and translators.

TIN currently offers the services of approximately 400 trained contractors representing fluency in 75 languages, including Spanish, Vietnamese, Burmese, Arabic, Farsi, and French, among many others.

“I try to imagine myself as someone who cannot understand English,” Irey said. “How alone and scared I would feel, but then to have someone who knows your language speaking for you, connecting with you — that is a powerful gift.”

Susan Avila, TIN’s director of operations, also serves as a Spanish language interpreter. “I have worked in children’s hospitals, in courtrooms, places where it is



From left, Darlene Irey, sales executive; Meti Dibra, director; and Deqo Hassan, interpreter and translator, from the Translation and Interpretation Network. (NTC/Ben Torres)

very satisfying to see how this work makes such a positive impact,” she said. TIN linguists also serve in larger settings, offering simultaneous interpretation at conferences, some of which involve services in multiple languages for thousands of participants from all over the world. Glowing praise from clients for the courtesy, professionalism, and excellence of TIN translators is a consistent source of satisfaction to the entire TIN network, she added.

That network is constantly growing, explained TIN’s senior director, Meti Dibra. “Since day one, our focus is upon excellence, and we see the positive results of that commitment. We are proud to say that our linguists are rigorously assessed and trained, and we offer continual

training to both our team members and our clients,” he said.

Dibra points out that TIN profits are all given back in support of CCFW and its mission to eradicate poverty. “Many of our interpreters were refugees who were resettled through Catholic Charities and have now achieved self-sufficiency and a sense of great pride through their important work with TIN,” he said. “Our role is multi-dimensional, as we work to support that self-sufficiency, and to continue to give back to our community.”

For more information about TIN and CCFW’s social enterprise initiatives, visit [CatholicCharitiesFortWorth.org/our-initiatives](https://www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org/our-initiatives) or contact TIN at 817-289-0050. 📍





# Cradle CATHOLIC

In Gregory Brown's hands, woodworking tools build community and shape hearts

By Susan Moses

First, a safety talk. A pro-life discussion follows. Next, a teaching on *ora et labora* — St. Benedict's viewpoint of partnering prayer and work. Finally, Gregory Brown is prepared to put power tools in the hands of teenagers.

For almost 20 years, Brown has worked with youth at Camp Fort Worth to build baby beds. Under Brown's careful guidance, more than 300 cribs have been infused with prayers for the mother and baby through the measuring, cutting, sanding, constructing, and painting phases.

He explains to the campers that working with their hands provides the opportunity to pray without ceasing. "While the physical crib is very important and everybody should have one, the prayers that go along with that are very powerful," he said.

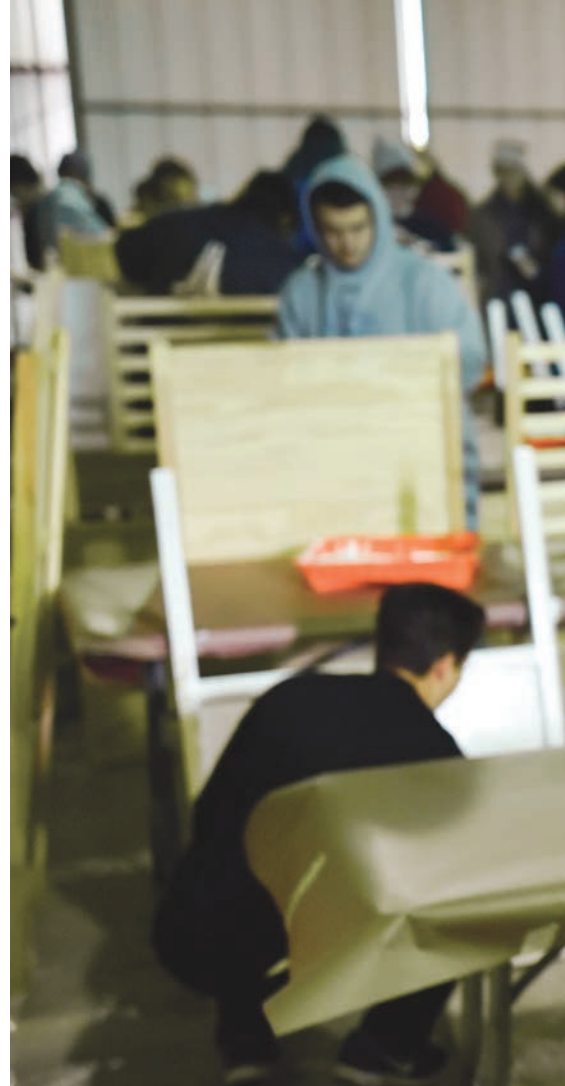
The hand-crafted cribs are donated

to Catholic Charities Fort Worth for expectant mothers in need. He has also contributed more than 50 he made independently.

But he isn't just building baby furniture with the Camp Fort Worth teens. He's building an understanding that some people have less. He's building community. The youth see that "coming together to accomplish a goal, they can make a difference," he said.

He's also teaching that "being pro-life is walking with that mother — not just in the decision to give birth to her child, but helping her after her baby is born. To assist her with the needs she will have."

The 34-year-old has personally delivered some of the cribs to mothers through the Gabriel Project, which provides practical help to women in crisis pregnancies. Receiving the baby bed "gives them an air of hope that 'I can do this.' Usually they don't say very much, it's just a lot of 'thank you's' and a lot of tears," he recalled.



## HIGHER ASPIRATIONS

Brown credits Mary for his big dream, which came to him as he prayed the Rosary in front of a crucifix one day.

In the future, he'd like to start a non-profit vocational school to teach carpentry to veterans, refugees, and individuals experiencing homelessness.

The job training would allow the students to learn a skill that could provide for their families. Plus, the endeavor would generate a steady supply of cribs and furniture for impoverished families moving into housing.

Brown enthused, "It would be so beautiful to take [building baby beds at Camp Fort Worth] a step further and do more good with the gifts we've been given. Carpentry is a meaningful, task-oriented job." He learned woodworking as a child by observing his grandfather use hand tools in the garage.

Brown is content to patiently wait and see if the opportunity to open a carpentry





At a Camp Fort Worth 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller, Gregory Brown and former campers painted baby cribs constructed last summer. (NTC /Ben Torres)

school arises, because “it’s not my idea. It’s straight-up Mary’s idea. It all comes back to prayer,” he said.

Prayer is what made faith come alive for Brown. As a high school sophomore, he “sat in the back and just didn’t pay attention” during confirmation classes at St. Bartholomew Parish in Fort Worth. He was challenged to pray five minutes a day but told his small group leader “I don’t have time for that.”

After many weeks, the stubborn teen opened himself up to God and began to pray and read Scripture. He remembered, “The Word of God is truly how God revealed Himself to me. . . . Within six months, to sit down and pray for 45 minutes was nothing.”

Since then, he describes himself as “hooked. The Word of God is alive and revealing to us this great opportunity, this great faith. It pretty much has become the only thing I want to learn about, and I want to share and teach.”

Brown went on to spend a year with NET Ministries and serve as a youth minister for 12 years, mostly at St. Catherine of Siena Parish in Carrollton and Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Wichita Falls. In 2018, he became a Knights of Columbus field agent based in Cooke County.

### “INNATE DESIRE TO SERVE”

Brown has “noticed in my life I just go places. I get invited somewhere. I just show up, and God provides me the opportunity to serve. That’s been one of the biggest blessings in my life, to just show up wherever God sends me, wherever He leads me, and to be able to use my gifts and talents as needed.”

For example, he dropped off a baby bed at a nonprofit gala and noticed the set-up committee struggling to build the backdrop. His offer to help was accepted, and he soon found himself in charge of the construction, resulting in an invitation

to the gala and a couple of friendships.

“It’s beautiful, to be able to go along in your daily life and go wherever God sends you and be able to put your faith into action without trying,” said the parishioner of St. Peter Parish in Lindsay.

A fourth-degree Knight of Columbus, Brown joined the Catholic fraternal service organization in 2006 and embraces their ideals of charity, unity, and fraternity.

He explained, “We are devoted to the Holy Mother Church, to the great deposit of faith we hold true, and to her true treasures — the poor and most vulnerable.”

It’s those poor and most vulnerable who are sleeping in beds that Brown built with Camp Fort Worth students.

According to Brown, giving up two, sometimes three, weeks each summer to build cribs has been a gain, not a sacrifice. “What draws us closer to holiness is ordinary — doing good for others, and seeking after something greater than ourselves.” 🇺🇸





Let us Lectio

NTC Juan Guajardo

# WHEN YOU FAST

Ash Wednesday  
March 6, 2019

Start by using the steps below to reflect on the Scripture verse. Then read Callie's meditation, reflecting on it slowly.

## LECTIO



First you deliberately read the passage, noting phrases that move your heart.

## MEDITATIO



Secondly, ponder these words and ask God in prayer, "What do you desire that I hear in this?"

## ORATIO



Third, speak back to the Lord as your heart is moved.

## CONTEMPLATIO



Finally, be still, trusting in His presence. Simply rest in the Word of God.

### THE SCRIPTURE

GOSPEL FOR MARCH 6, 2019 — ASH WEDNESDAY

Jesus said to his disciples: "Take care not to perform righteous deeds in order that people may see them; otherwise, you will have no recompense from your heavenly Father.

"When you give alms, do not blow a trumpet before you, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and in the streets to win the praise of others.

"Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.

"But when you give alms, do not let your left hand know what your right is doing, so that your almsgiving may be secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

"When you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, who love to stand and pray in the synagogues and on street corners so that

others may see them.

"Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.

"But when you pray, go to your inner room, close the door, and pray to your Father in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will repay you.

"When you fast, do not look gloomy like the hypocrites. They neglect their appearance, so that they may appear to others to be fasting.

"Amen, I say to you, they have received their reward.

"But when you fast, anoint your head and wash your face, so that you may not appear to be fasting, except to your Father who is hidden. And your Father who sees what is hidden will repay you."

— Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

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**WANT MORE LECTIO DIVINA?**



Read more of Callie's columns at [NorthTexasCatholic.org/inspiration-news](http://NorthTexasCatholic.org/inspiration-news)

**THE REFLECTION**

Lent is not the "time that we fast," as if we should not or do not fast any other time of the year. But rather, as our Orthodox brothers and sisters remind us, this is the time of our "Great Fast."

Lent is a time to examine our fidelity as disciples and to more closely cling to and imitate Jesus.

What is a disciple? A disciple is one who seeks the Creator above the creation (fasting), participates in His work of mercy and grace (alms), and most especially, a disciple is a person of prayer. Through living our life rightly ordered, full of prayer, and in imitation of Christ, we come to know, love, and serve Him who loved us so much He died on a cross for us.

In order to imitate and to follow Him, we make it a priority in our schedule to sit with Him and pray. In order to imitate Him who gave all He had — even His mother and His very breath — we do

not withhold from others the grace and gifts given to us. In order to imitate Him who fasted, we learn to live in the world and not of it, for we know that all creation belongs to God and that we are merely stewards.

These are essential to live well in Christ: To give generously, to pray in silence, and to fast regularly. Not only are these normative to the Christian life, but we as Catholics take these actions even more seriously during

Lent. These are not merely seasonal activities, or even an opportunity for competition among Catholics, but rather an outpouring of who we are in Christ.

We are to give generously because it was God who first was generous with us, time and time again. We fast not to diet from sweets, but to remember intimately that He is God and that we are not. We pray, and in doing so, we remember that we are frail in our humanity and dependent on Him. ✝

**Lent is a time to examine our fidelity as disciples and to more closely cling to and imitate Jesus.**

Callie Nowlin, MTS, is a convert turned Director of Religious Education, catechist, and blogger with a passion for Scripture and helping others on their journey toward Christ.



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# Life with Faith

**HE IS:** Father Tim Thompson, pastor of Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton and judicial vicar.

**GROWING UP:** The family owns a funeral home, which kept Tim and his five siblings busy behind the scenes, vacuuming, moving flowers, and running errands.

**LOCALLY SOURCED:** Fr. Tim was educated at St. Mary, St. Andrew, Holy Family, and Nolan Catholic Schools.

**THE CALL:** Fr. Tim began considering a religious vocation as a teen, feeling a call while serving at a Stations of the Cross service on Good Friday. After attending a priestly ordination before his senior year of high school, he began to make plans for seminary.

**ORDAINED:** Where he was an altar server in his youth — Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, on July 16, 1982.


**BEST PARTS OF BEING A PRIEST:**

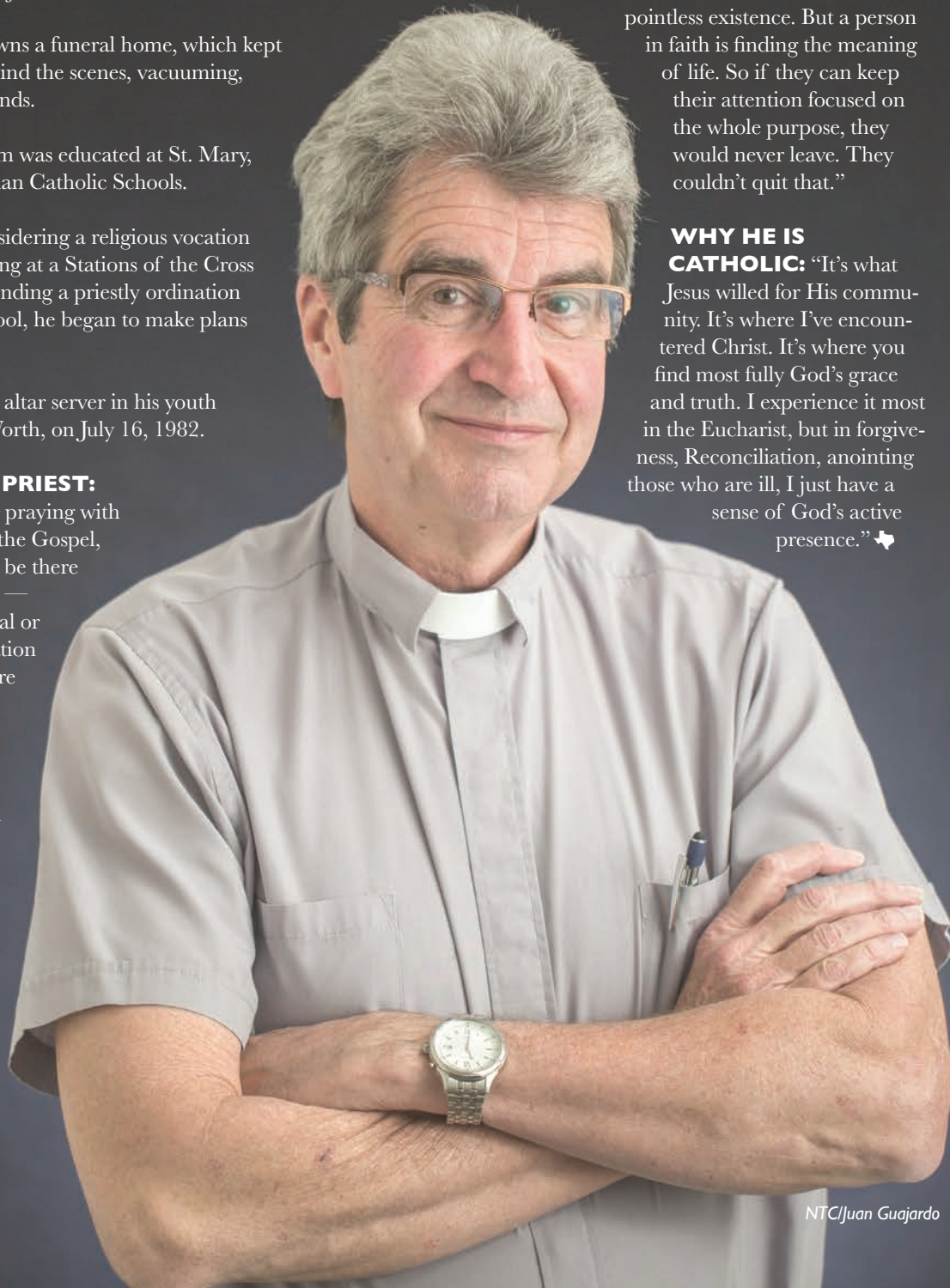
“Participating in Sunday Mass — praying with the community and reflecting on the Gospel, preaching. But also when you can be there for a person in a difficult moment — whether that’s sickness in a hospital or somebody’s struggle in Reconciliation — can be satisfying, to know you’re helping someone . . . hopefully a moment of grace for them.”

**SEEING THE BIGGER**

**PICTURE:** “Mass can be a pain sometimes. It’s hard to hear and the kids are crying. But some of those things are a wonderful part of Mass. It’s a really human, communal experience. We can focus so much on those annoying things, we miss out on the bigger picture there — the real experience of people of faith and prayer.”

**ON FAITH:** “Life without faith is a meaningless endeavor. Life without faith is a pointless existence. But a person in faith is finding the meaning of life. So if they can keep their attention focused on the whole purpose, they would never leave. They couldn’t quit that.”

**WHY HE IS CATHOLIC:** “It’s what Jesus willed for His community. It’s where I’ve encountered Christ. It’s where you find most fully God’s grace and truth. I experience it most in the Eucharist, but in forgiveness, Reconciliation, anointing those who are ill, I just have a sense of God’s active presence.” 



NTC/Juan Guajardo



# Remove your Sandals...

**T**he time of Lent is approaching. This is a wonderful time for listening to the voice of God in our lives, especially as a time of discernment of His holy will in our lives and for our lives.

This sacred time evokes entering the desert, that is, allowing God to speak to us and listen to Him without the distraction of other voices. Listening only to His voice.

Moses, in his escape to the desert, encounters that fundamental moment of his life in which God manifests His liberating plan. God, who hears the cry of His people, calls Moses to collaborate with Him in His plan of freedom for His people.

In that meeting at Horeb, God invites Moses to renounce himself and be guided by His grace, and to be an instrument of His salvation for His people. "Remove your sandals from your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." (*Ex 3:5*)

In order to be an instrument of God, the young man who discerns his vocation needs to enter an intimate dialogue with God in the desert through prayer, taking time to listen to His voice that is always clear, penetrates the heart, and reveals His will. There in that sacred space of intimacy with the One who calls, with Him who seduces the heart and who fills

with His grace the deepest depths of the human being, is God Himself.

In that encounter, he who is being called must renounce himself, allow himself to be guided and molded by God, and surrender to His will. Filled with humility and simplicity of heart, he responds with generosity to His will, that is, with courage, not being afraid to give up his life and totally abandon himself to the will of God.



Fr. Manuel Holguin

It is important to leave the sandals aside, recognize that the **PRIESTHOOD** is not a human, but divine plan, and on behalf of the people of God. This call comes from God, who is holy and invites those He wants to collaborate with Him in this blessed plan of salvation.

Today, God hears the cry of His people who need messengers of hope, emissaries who listen to the voice of God, who let themselves be transformed by Him, who are brave and who trust in His word, who risk their lives to serve God and the Church.

Young man, I say to you that are being called by God, to enter the desert, listen to His voice, let yourself be shaped by Him, leave your sandals, renounce yourself, and respond with generosity. The Church of the present time needs men of prayer, in love with God, generous in their response to the service of His people, and

committed to doing the will of God in their lives.

The Lenten season is a favorable time to speak heart-to-heart with God, who is always new, who continues to call real men to make them instruments of His love and grace on behalf of His people. The priesthood is a blessed call that requires prayer and abandonment in Him.

We invite you, young man in the Diocese of Fort Worth, to enter the desert of your heart, as Moses did, to listen to His voice, abandon yourself to His will, discover His plan for you, and to be generous in your response to His divine call.

Son, come to us, we want to accompany you on your path of discernment. Your Bishop Michael Olson and the four vocations liaisons pray for you and entrust your vocation to the Immaculate Heart of Mary, Mother of the High Priest, so that she may always guide your journey.

*Servus meus es Tu, in quo Gloriabor!*

"You are My Servant, In Whom I will show My glory." *Is 49:3* 🇺🇸

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Ordained to the priesthood in 2012, Father Manuel Holguin is the pastor at Saint Peter the Apostle Parish in Fort Worth and serves as a liaison with the Vocations Office.



# Special Needs are the Most Vulnerable

Some children are more likely to be abused than other children. Certain factors may increase the vulnerability of a child to sexual abuse.

Factors include having disabilities, emotional or behavioral disturbances, having been previously abused (physically, mentally, or emotionally), or being isolated from friends and family members. According to the Vera Institute of Justice, special needs students are 4.6 times more susceptible to be victims of sexual abuse due to isolated settings with adults who may take advantage of them.

Children with disabilities or special needs are the most vulnerable people because they are especially dependent on others for help. Research has shown that 60 percent of child sexual abuse is committed by persons known and trusted by the child and parents. Also 97 to 99 percent of abuse victims with developmental disabilities knew and trusted their abusers.

Why are children with disabilities more vulnerable to abuse and neglect?

**Lack of awareness.** Some methods of managing behavior might be seen by some people as acceptable when they are actually abusive. Negative community attitudes about disability can also contribute to abuse or neglect not being recognized, or not being believed.

**Isolation.** Children with disabilities and

their families may be more socially isolated, reducing their support networks. Also, there are often additional emotional, physical, and financial demands on families raising a child with a disability.

## Increased vulnerability.

Children with disabilities might lack a good understanding of social relationships, personal boundaries, protective behaviors, sexual awareness, and/or what abuse is. Children with a physical disability may be more vulnerable to rough and intrusive personal care and may be physically unable to resist or avoid abuse. They may have increased difficulty in communicating and may even accept abusive treatment due to low understanding or self-esteem.

While the Diocese of Fort Worth's Safe Environment program is primarily directed at the protection of children and youth from sexual abuse, the *Protecting God's Children*® program is comprehensive in nature and includes the protection of all God's children, including those who are the most vulnerable.

To better protect these youth, it's important to know some factors involved. People with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to crimes involving violence, such as physical or sexual assault because — regardless of age or gender — they are often the least able to recognize danger; to protect themselves, and/or to communicate or obtain assistance.

A disability can directly affect the capacity

of individuals to protect themselves. People with developmental or psychiatric disabilities often struggle with determining when to be compliant and when to assert themselves. Consequently, they are at risk to be victimized both when they comply too easily and when they refuse to comply and suffer retaliation.

Perceived vulnerability factors in the selection of an individual with a developmental disability as a victim. Often offenders — particularly sexual offenders — are particularly drawn to individuals they consider vulnerable. One study found 44 percent of perpetrators made initial contact with their victims through special services provided to people with disabilities. In addition, some offenders are themselves afflicted with a developmental disability.

Victims who have disabilities may allow themselves to be in risky situations or be victimized because life offers them few alternatives; for example, retaining an abusive caretaker because no other caretaker can be found.

We are called to protect and defend the dignity of every human person, and especially those with special challenges, special needs, or disabilities. ✚



Richard Mathews

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Richard Mathews is Director of Safe Environment for the Diocese of Fort Worth. A former prosecuting attorney, he also served as the General Counsel for the Boy Scouts of America and for Trail Life USA.





# Be You. Be Holy.

**M**any years ago, on a silent retreat at Montserrat, I heard an interesting thing from the priest leading the prayer talks. He was expounding on the idea of imitating Jesus. This notion is not about us trying to be Jesus. We cannot be Jesus. There was only one Jesus, Son of God, Son of Mary. He went on to say it is even hard to be like Jesus because though He is fully human, He is also fully divine. If we are judging our spirituality on how closely our lives resemble Jesus, the miracle worker, we will probably always be disappointed.

Rather, he said we can strive to be like Jesus in that He was the perfect realization of what the Father imagined Jesus would be when He implanted Him in Mary's womb. Thus, we are to strive to be the person God created us to be. Only one Jeffrey David Hedglen was born in Simi Valley, Calif. on Jan. 8, 1965. God has a particular image in His mind of whom He knows I can be. It is my job to strive to develop into that person.

Last month at SEEK, a Catholic collegiate conference sponsored by the Fellowship of Catholic University Students, Jason Evert, one of the keynote speakers, said something that brought to mind the message from that silent retreat. He said, "Sin dulls our individuality

but striving for sainthood helps our true self bloom to fullness." What Jason said gives us a clue about how to achieve the Father's plan for whom we can become.



Jeff Hedglen

The idea that sin dulls our individuality really resonates with me. When we sin, we become like everyone else. We bow to the lowest common denominator. Oftentimes, it doesn't feel that way. Sin is so deceptive. It can make us feel special and, at least momentarily, like we are living our best life. But the reality is that we all sin. There are only so many commandments we can break and vices we can succumb to, so sooner or later we are all swimming in the same cesspool of sin.

Yet, when we strive for holiness we rise out of the homogenous pool and into the realm of our individuality. The more we grow in holiness, the more our true giftedness can shine. God made each of us purposefully. Sure, we have many of the same gifts, talents, and characteristics, but each of us also shines in a particular way that sets us apart.

Armed with this new information about how sin dulls my true self, I am gearing up for Lent as a time to grow in holiness and become stronger so as to avoid temptation more. I am doing this with two of the classic Lenten practices. I am fasting from things I really like to do

and I am going to pray more.

But I plan to take it up a notch from my usual efforts. I am considering giving up one or more of these things: all television, all social media, music that doesn't lift my heart to God, warm showers, sugar, snacking between meals, staying up late at night, alcohol, and sweetened drinks. Whatever I decide to fast from, I want it to impact my typical day to the point that I notice it and that it even hurts a little bit. I also want it to free up some time because the other part of my plan is to pray every day for an hour, with at least 20 minutes of that in silence.

Striving for sainthood means acting like the saints, and they are known for doing some pretty radical penitential practices and spending a lot of time in prayer. This Lent let's stop letting sin dull our individuality and strive to shine as the person God has made us to be. The world needs us to shine the light of God's love. But before we can reflect the light, we have to dust ourselves off and bask in the glory of His presence. ✚

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Jeff Hedglen is the Campus Minister at University of Texas at Arlington and the primary founder of Camp Fort Worth.



# CHURCH ARCHITECTURE

Draws us toward Christ



Marlon De La Torre is the Department Director of Catechesis and Evangelization for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

**W**e often hear the phrase: “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Beyond the premise of this phrase, natural beauty owes its existence from the author of beauty, God the Father. When the fall of Adam and Eve resulted in a fracture of this beauty, God provided the ways and means for man to resuscitate himself and eventually rediscover his identity through His Son Jesus Christ.

When Christ offered Himself in sacrifice for the sins of humanity, He left us an indelible (permanent) mark that would forever remind us of His Sacrifice — i.e., the institution of the Holy Eucharist. The significance of this

sacrifice is that it is perpetually expressed through the beauty of church architecture. One may ask the question, “Why all the fuss over statues, altars, candles, and sanctuaries?” The main reason for this “fuss” is that all points of church architecture aim to draw us into the mystery of Christ and initiate a conversion of heart in order to faithfully participate in the holy sacrifice of the Mass that Christ instituted.

The moment one enters through the doors of a Catholic church, the physical structure of the church would typically be in a cruciform (cross position) to reflect the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. The second significant element would be the crucifix above the altar signifying the crucifixion of Christ and reminding us of His ultimate

sacrifice for all humanity. The third element would be the position of the holy water font at the entrance of the church signifying a renewal of our Baptism and baptismal promises. The fourth element would be the position of the altar of sacrifice that stands significant and stationary where the celebration of the Mass occurs. The fifth and most important element is the tabernacle where our Lord is located in the Eucharistic species (host).

Church architecture, if properly ordered, directs us toward Christ. In doing so, it provides the opportunity to have an intimate relationship with Him by way of our active participation in reception of the Holy Eucharist, which is the source and summit of our Christian life.





### What key architectural elements of the Catholic church set an atmosphere of reverence?

“We have a beautiful nave, altar, and sanctuary. So when you walk into any Catholic church, you’re going to be walking east which signifies the entrance into the glory of God, and immediately you’re awestruck by the beauty of an altar, a tabernacle, steps, and also pillars that direct them toward the beauty of the church. You have beautiful statues of the saints typically, and also stained glass windows. All aim at helping the person develop a reverence for Christ and a reverence for what they’re about to walk into, which is the liturgy itself.”



### Why do Catholic churches have a crucifix with an image of the suffering Christ?

“One thing that’s significant about the Church is that it is of Christ. It comes from Christ. It is from the perspective of what Christ did as the Incarnate Word. One of the beautiful things that Christ did was He offered Himself up, body, soul, and divinity for our salvation. The representation of what He did is shown in the form of a crucifix. That’s why you see a crucifix in every Catholic church all over the world because it’s a representation of what Christ did on the cross, His salvation, and His crucifixion tied to our humanity and for our opportunity to grow with Him through the liturgy.”



### Why is holy water at the entrance to the main body of the church?

“One thing that is significant about Catholics is that we are baptized

into one life of Christ. Water signifies a purity, a cleansing, but it’s also an initiation into the Kingdom of God. Every time you walk into the Catholic church you’re going to notice a holy water font, and that beautiful font is aimed for us to place our fingers and make the sign of the cross on our foreheads with holy water, renewing our baptismal call and telling the whole world that we’re walking into a heavenly liturgy on Earth. Our Baptism prepares us to see Christ more clearly in what we’re about to hear in the Liturgy of the Word and receive in the Liturgy of the Eucharist.”



### What is the significance of the red candle?

“Typically, when you walk into a Catholic church, or you’re going to Adoration, you see a red candle near the tabernacle. That signifies that Christ is present here. This is taken from the old Jewish ritual of signifying that God is here, present in our midst. The light



### How did the design and idea of the tabernacle come about?

“There are several elements involved in the development of the liturgy and the structure or the architecture of a church. From a biblical perspective, you have to look and go back to *Exodus 20*, where you see first the introduction of the Ten Commandments. There had to be a place to house those commandments. That was significant to the people of Israel. This is where we see from *Exodus 24* on, the development of the sanctuary, a structure where they would hold the Ten Commandments, a construction of that altar, or the arc of the covenant. These became elements associated with the early structure of the Church.

Now jumping centuries forward to the advent of the early Church, especially after Constantine, he took elements of the old pagan temples and really re-conformed them to be houses of prayer. Taking the element of the old Jewish ritual and the tabernacle itself and placing it at the heart of Christian worship. This becomes a longstanding development of how we see our current church architecture as it is.” 🇺🇸



#### WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Watch the full video and find out more about this and other faith topics through the following:

- ▶ [northtexascatholic.org/video-gallery](http://northtexascatholic.org/video-gallery)
- ▶ [fwdioc.org/adult-faith-formation](http://fwdioc.org/adult-faith-formation)
- ▶ [fwdioc.org/st-junipero-serra-institute](http://fwdioc.org/st-junipero-serra-institute)



# TIEMPO PARA *Celebrar*

La Diócesis comienza la celebración de su aniversario de oro con la Adoración Eucarística

**L**a Eucaristía nos hace Iglesia. Esta verdad eterna y universal, pero ha sido seleccionada como el tema para una ocasión específica y local: el 50<sup>mo</sup> Aniversario de la Diócesis de Fort Worth.

La celebración comenzará con una Misa de la Solemnidad del Santísimo Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo, también conocida como la Fiesta de Corpus Christi, el domingo 23 de junio a las 5 p.m. en la Parroquia de St. Elizabeth Ann Seton en Keller. La fiesta, que fue instituida por el Papa Urbano IV en el 1264, celebra la presencia real de Jesús en la Sagrada Eucaristía: Cuerpo, Sangre, Alma y Divinidad.

Después de la Misa, la iglesia de Keller permanecerá abierta durante 40 horas de Adoración Eucarística y se concluirá con una bendición el martes 25 de junio.

Se han planeado otras tres Adoraciones Eucarísticas de 40 horas durante el año de aniversario de la Diócesis. El Obispo Michael Olson solicita específicamente que oremos por las vocaciones sacerdotales durante las Adoraciones, ya que los sacerdotes son necesarios para la transustanciación del pan y el vino en el Santísimo Sacramento.

## EL COMIENZO DE LA DIÓCESIS

En el 1847 se fundó la Diócesis de Galveston, que incluía a todo el gran

estado de Texas (y nuestro favorito territorio de 23,947 millas cuadradas que forma la actual Diócesis de Fort Worth).

A medida que la población creció en el Norte de Texas, la Diócesis de Dallas se formó en el 1890. En aquel entonces contenía siete parroquias que actualmente están en la Diócesis de Fort Worth – St. Patrick Cathedral en Fort Worth, St. Joseph en Cleburne, St. Mary en Gainesville, St. Mary en Henrietta, Our Lady of Mercy en Hillsboro, Sacred Heart en Muenster y St. Stephen en Weatherford. En el 1953, con una nueva designación como la Diócesis de Dallas-Fort Worth, se reconoció la importancia de Fort Worth.

El Papa Pablo VI dividió la Diócesis en dos y así nace la Diócesis de Fort Worth, que se anunció el 27 de agosto del 1969. El Obispo John Cassata fue elegido para dirigir la nueva diócesis de 28 condados, que tenía 66 parroquias y 75,000 católicos en ese momento.

Actualmente, la Diócesis de Fort Worth alberga aproximadamente a 1.1 millones de católicos en 90 parroquias.

## LA CELEBRACIÓN CONTINÚA

Para conmemorar el aniversario de la creación de la Diócesis, se invita a todos los fieles de la Diócesis a una Misa en el Centro de Convenciones de Fort Worth el miércoles 21 de agosto a las 7 p.m. Habrá una recepción después de la Misa.

Aunque los invitados especiales no han sido confirmados todavía, se espera contar con la asistencia de docenas de obispos de todo el país y el Arzobispo Christophe Pierre, el Nuncio Apostólico de los Estados Unidos.

Cerca de la conclusión del año del 50<sup>mo</sup> Aniversario de la Diócesis, el Obispo Olson acompañará a otros peregrinos en una visita a los santuarios marianos de Francia a partir del 2 de junio del 2020. Entre los eventos y lugares destacados se incluirán una Misa diaria, la Gruta de Lourdes, la Catedral de Notre Dame y el Hogar de Santa Teresa de Lisieux.

Puede encontrar más información acerca de la peregrinación en [fwdioc.org/young-adult-ministry-pilgrimage](http://fwdioc.org/young-adult-ministry-pilgrimage).

La celebración del Aniversario de Oro, que durará un año, está programada para ser concluida de la misma manera que comienza, con la celebración de la Misa seguida de 40 horas de Adoración Eucarística. La clausura del año de aniversario se celebrará el 14 de junio del 2020 en la Parroquia de St. Peter en Lindsay.

A medida que se sigan planificando los eventos del Aniversario de Oro de nuestra Diócesis, se podrá encontrar información adicional en [fwdioc.org](http://fwdioc.org) y en las publicaciones posteriores de *North Texas Catholic*, así como en nuestras páginas de Facebook y Twitter. 🇺🇸



# El Pastor *Siervo*

*“Tomé mucho tiempo visitando diferentes iglesias, en su mayoría iglesias de esta diócesis, y oré mucho. Pedí que el Señor me diera la sabiduría, paciencia, comprensión y fortaleza para hacer lo que Él me pedía por el bien del pueblo de Dios aquí”.*

CONTINÚA EN LA PÁGINA 52

El Obispo Michael Olson bendice los óleos durante la Misa Crismal en la Catedral de San Patricio en el 2018. (NTC/Jayme Donahue)



Por Juan Guajardo

**M**uchos de nosotros ya conocemos bien la historia. Pero el Obispo Michael Olson recuerda hasta el más mínimo detalle.

Hace cinco años, el entonces Monseñor Olson entró en su oficina de la Universidad de Dallas. Notó que habían dejado un mensaje de voz y descolgó el teléfono para escucharlo. Era un mensaje del Nuncio Apostólico en los EE. UU., alguien que jamás lo había llamado antes.

Al cabo de varios minutos y profunda oración, la vida de Monseñor Olson cambió para siempre. El Nuncio le había comunicado la noticia de que el Papa Francisco había designado al Rector del Seminario como el nuevo Obispo de la Diócesis de Fort Worth.

En las semanas previas a su instalación, celebrada el 29 de enero del 2014, el Obispo Olson hizo lo que sigue haciendo hoy día cuando se enfrenta a las grandes decisiones, los desafíos u oportunidades: orar para buscar la voluntad de Nuestro Santísimo Señor.

“Tomé mucho tiempo visitando diferentes iglesias, en su mayoría iglesias de esta diócesis, y oré mucho. Pedí que el Señor me diera la sabiduría, paciencia, comprensión y fortaleza para hacer lo que Él me pedía por el bien del pueblo de Dios aquí”.

Han pasado cinco años muy rápido, tiempo durante el cual el Obispo Olson ha visitado a cada parroquia y escuela (a menudo, más de una vez). Se ha reunido con los líderes, comités y expertos, dando prioridad a estar cerca de su rebaño. Como pastor y siguiendo la exhortación del Papa Francisco, ha querido “vivir con el olor de sus ovejas”.

Sin duda, éstos han sido años de transición y renovación en la Diócesis. El Obispo ha encabezado y supervisado el ímpetu, el crecimiento y los cambios necesarios para servir a una población católica en constante crecimiento, y que cada día es más diversa, en más de 28

condados, 90 parroquias y una misión.

Al celebrarse los cinco años de episcopado del Obispo Olson, deseamos resaltar el gran y variado desarrollo que ha ocurrido durante este tiempo.

### LAS VOCACIONES

El sello distintivo del programa de vocaciones diocesanas ha sido un enfoque concertado y determinado para fomentar una cultura de vocaciones.

Para hacer esto realidad, el Obispo Olson nombró en el 2017 un equipo de enlaces vocacionales dedicados a la tarea de fomentar vocaciones, en lugar de un solo director de vocaciones, como en muchas otras diócesis del país. El Padre Jonathan Wallis, Director de Formación de los seminaristas de la Diócesis, llamó esta decisión revolucionaria.

Este acercamiento ha dado a los sacerdotes enlaces más tiempo para acompañar y guiar a los hombres que están discerniendo su vocación, de modo que, para el momento en que cada hombre esté listo para ingresar al seminario, cuente con una red de apoyo y amistades. Esto es muy útil en una diócesis que cubre 23,950 millas cuadradas.

Se han designado actualmente cinco sacerdotes para realizar esa tarea, incluido el Padre Wallis, quien ayuda a supervisar y guiar la formación de los seminaristas, al mismo tiempo que sirve como el Decano de Estudiantes de St. Joseph Seminary College en Covington, Louisiana.

El enfoque ha puesto mayor énfasis en la formación, la oración y la enseñanza catequética de los hombres que discernen su vocación.

Las recientes visitas de “Ven y ve” al Seminario de St. Joseph indican que el enfoque ha sido todo un éxito.

“Hemos tenido constantemente un gran número de hombres participantes”, comentó el Padre

Wallis. “Hemos tenido a veces hasta más de 50 hombres discerniendo en estos eventos, lo que ha sido sin duda un gran éxito”.

Durante los últimos dos años, el equipo ha estado muy ocupado y han auspiciado diversas oportunidades de discernimiento, como los Desayunos y Cenas de San Andrés (St. Andrew’s Breakfasts and Dinners), en los que jóvenes interesados en conocer sobre el sacerdocio asisten a Misa y luego comparten una comida y discusión acerca del discernimiento; visitas de seminaristas a las escuelas católicas; y las visitas “Ven y ve” dos veces al año al Seminario de Louisiana. El Padre Maurice Moon,



El Obispo Michael Olson en la ordenación sacerdotal del Padre John Martin y el Padre Stephen Hauck en la Catedral de San Patricio. (NTC/Juan Guajardo)





capellán de Nolan Catholic High School, dará inicio en esta primavera a un retiro de fin de semana en el Seminario de St. Joseph, que le dará a los chicos de escuela intermedia la oportunidad de ver la vida en el seminario.

El Padre Wallis explicó que él y el Obispo Olson hacen hincapié a los hombres que discernen desde el principio del proceso que “una vocación es realmente una llamada a servir. Es un llamado a priorizar nuestras vidas por Cristo, para servir a los demás y, por último, a nosotros mismos”.

En los pasados cinco años se han ordenado 12 hombres como sacerdotes diocesanos y se restableció el Programa de Formación del Diaconado Permanente. Dos clases de futuros diáconos se encuentran en formación, la primera clase se ordenará en el 2020 y la segunda, en el 2022. Una vez ordenados, estos nuevos diáconos serán un gran refuerzo para los 85 diáconos permanentes existentes en la Diócesis.

### EL CRECIMIENTO Y DESARROLLO

Desde el 2014 hasta este año, la Diócesis ha visto un auge en el número de las personas autoidentificadas como católicos, de 720,000 a más de 1.1 millones. El Director de Bienes Raíces y Construcción, Steve Becht, señala como factores claves de este crecimiento una tendencia a la urbanización y a un mercado laboral cambiante. El crecimiento ha sido especialmente intenso en las regiones del norte y el noreste de la Diócesis.

“Es una verdadera oportunidad para evangelizarlos y hacer que vayan a la iglesia con

regularidad”, dijo Becht.

La Diócesis, bajo la dirección del Obispo Olson, no ha vacilado en atender este crecimiento de manera rápida y eficiente.

“Básicamente, el obispo Olson expresó: “Vamos a hacerlo”. “Vamos a construir lo necesario y vamos a servir a la población y a nuestra misión, que es la salvación de las almas”, explicó Becht. Él reconoce que, para acomodar el crecimiento y la población, “hay una gran necesidad de seguir construyendo en la Diócesis”.

Se pueden ver señales de este crecimiento por toda la Diócesis. En Denton, la Parroquia de San Juan Pablo II ha comenzado la construcción de una iglesia de 300 asientos que prestará servicios a una creciente población de estudiantes católicos en la Universidad de North Texas y Texas Woman’s University.

La Parroquia de San Marcos en el sur de Denton está casi terminando de pagar la construcción de su salón parroquial y comenzará la construcción de su iglesia formal.

Las parroquias de San Andrés en Fort Worth y de la Santa Cruz en The Colony se están expandiendo. La Parroquia de San Felipe el Apóstol ha adquirido propiedades para construir una iglesia que eventualmente tendrá capacidad para 1,800 personas. La Parroquia de Santo Tomás el Apóstol en el norte de Fort Worth terminó de construir su nueva iglesia en diciembre del 2016, con capacidad para más de 1,000 personas. Una de las dos parroquias nuevas establecidas durante el episcopado del Obispo Olson, la Parroquia de San Martín de Porres de Prosper, tiene una nueva área de 18,000 pies cuadrados de espacio en la que los feligreses se reunirán para celebrar la liturgia. La otra nueva parroquia, San Benito, celebra la forma extraordinaria de la Misa (en latín).

Ha habido rápido crecimiento, pero un crecimiento con estrategia y propósito. Con ese fin, la Diócesis ha consultado con expertos para la planificación y

el crecimiento, como las empresas de Buxton Group y Meitler Consultants, para que le asistan en el proceso de determinar cuándo y dónde debería establecerse una nueva parroquia.

“Queremos asegurarnos de que no se excluya a ningún grupo debido a la ubicación de una parroquia, especialmente a los desfavorecidos económicamente”, dijo el Obispo Olson en una entrevista con *North Texas Catholic* en el 2014.

### LA CORRESPONSABILIDAD

Durante los últimos años se ha visto un aumento de un cinco por ciento en las contribuciones financieras semanales, dijo Renée Underwood, Directora Asociada de la Fundación de Avance de la Diócesis. Además, “apenas pasa una semana sin que yo trabaje con una o más personas nuevas que están haciendo provisiones para una escuela parroquial o la Diócesis en sus planes de sucesión”. Los esfuerzos de la Campaña Diocesana Anual continúan firmes, agregó.

Underwood ha notado un aumento en la generosidad de toda la Diócesis. Es imposible saber cuánto de eso se puede atribuir a las muchas innovaciones hechas por la Fundación de Avance. Sin embargo, ella compara sus esfuerzos con las “piedras pequeñas” que se lanzan en un cuerpo de agua “y crean un efecto de onda ... en fin, sólo Dios puede medir los efectos de onda inmensos que estamos teniendo”.

Una de esas “pequeñas piedras” ha sido la creación de un programa de Corresponsabilidad, dirigido por Diana Liska, que ayuda a las parroquias a crear una cultura de discipulado, agradecimiento y generosidad de talento, tiempo y tesoro.

Otro factor ha sido la renovación de Bishop’s Guild, que se convirtió en St. John Paul II Shepherd’s Guild a partir de agosto del 2018. Los miembros del gremio

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ayudan a cubrir los costos de educación en que incurren los seminaristas durante sus siete a nueve años de formación a un costo promedio anual de \$52,000. El cambio de nombre también trajo consigo un mayor énfasis y prioridad a la educación y la oración.

“El Obispo quiere que la gente entienda el camino de discernimiento que estos hombres están atravesando y que los acompañen en ese caminar con la oración y el conocimiento”, explicó Underwood.

Para mantenerse al día con las tendencias digitales actuales, la Fundación también ha desarrollado Text to Give, ha aumentado su presencia a través de las redes sociales y el correo electrónico, mientras que, por supuesto, sigue proporcionando apoyo e interacción cara a cara. Es una incorporación de las mejores prácticas.

“El Obispo Olson ha sido un verdadero campeón de nuevas ideas”, dijo Underwood. “Creo que se da cuenta de que, si bien tenemos una fe común, la tecnología nos permite servir mejor a la diversidad de personas en la Diócesis. Él ha sido un verdadero campeón al respecto”.

### LAS ESCUELAS CATÓLICAS

Se han logrado numerosos triunfos en las escuelas católicas de la Diócesis en los pasados cinco años.

Una de las principales prioridades es que las escuelas sean accesibles para todos, con respecto a los aspectos financieros, sociales y académicos, y esto ha impulsado muchos de los cambios, como la contratación de dos especialistas de aprendizaje a tiempo completo que brindan apoyo a los estudiantes de toda la Diócesis.

La escuela preparatoria Cristo Rey Fort Worth en Our Mother of Mercy abrió sus puertas a su primera clase de noveno grado en agosto del 2018, brindando una educación de excelencia que prepara para la universidad a muchos jóvenes desfavorecidos del área. En el lado norte de Fort Worth, la escuela católica

de Todos los Santos ha ampliado su programa de lenguaje dual y más de la mitad de los 141 estudiantes de la escuela están aprendiendo en inglés y español. En el sur de Fort Worth, la escuela secundaria católica Cassata atiende a una tasa mayor de jóvenes desfavorecidos y hasta tiene actualmente una lista de espera. Hacia el lado este de Fort Worth, Nolan Catholic se encuentra en medio de una renovación de \$40 millones que incluye seguridad mejorada para el plantel, una nueva entrada frontal, dos áreas de aprendizaje al aire libre, mejoras al auditorio y una nueva capilla con capacidad para 2,000 personas. La inscripción de estudiantes ha aumentado en muchas de las escuelas.

Desde que asumió su cargo como Superintendente de las Escuelas Católicas de la Diócesis en abril del 2015, Jennifer Pelletier ha hecho de la identidad católica una alta prioridad en el ámbito académico.

“La enseñanza y las discusiones dentro del aula están sucediendo con ese entendimiento del catolicismo”, dijo Pelletier. “No se trata meramente de hablar de historia, enseñar el inglés y las matemáticas, y luego ir a la clase de teología. La religión está infundida en toda la enseñanza y las cosas que se están haciendo en las escuelas. Los maestros están haciendo que esto suceda activa e intencionalmente”.

Como parte del ímpetu del Obispo Olson, que comprende que los educadores católicos enseñen a los estudiantes a apreciar los “bienes trascendentales de la verdad, la belleza y la bondad”, Pelletier ha supervisado el impulso hacia la educación católica clásica, un enfoque que enfatiza lo básico: leer, pensar y hablar — habilidades a las que se le conoce como el Trivium Clásico que comprende la gramática, la lógica y la retórica.

Un elemento esencial de esta iniciativa es el Instituto de Formación de Maestros Nuevos de dos semanas que familiariza a los maestros con la filosofía de la educación clásica, sus marcas esenciales y los métodos

de enseñanza. Asimismo, lo es un nuevo programa de catequesis desarrollado específicamente para los maestros por el Instituto St. Junipero Serra. Actualmente en su primer año, las clases ofrecidas los fines de semana y la certificación son un requisito para “todos, desde el conserje hasta el presidente de la escuela”, agregó Pelletier.

La cultura de las vocaciones también se extiende a las escuelas, señaló Pelletier. Los estudiantes de las escuelas católicas diocesanas han disfrutado de las visitas y charlas de los seminaristas y del Obispo Olson.

“El objetivo es integrar la conversación sobre las vocaciones religiosas en nuestras escuelas católicas”, dijo Pelletier.

### EL PROGRAMA DE AMBIENTE SEGURO

Al momento que comenzó el episcopado del Obispo Olson en la Diócesis de Fort Worth, el Programa de Ambiente Seguro diocesano ya llevaba más de 10 años.

El Programa de Ambiente Seguro requiere que cada miembro del clero, personal, miembros del coro, catequistas, maestros, seminaristas, ministros extraordinarios de la Santa Comunión, lectores, cantores, ujieres, directores, maestros de escuela, entrenadores, padres y voluntarios, así como el Obispo, sean capacitados para proteger a nuestros niños al aprender las señales para identificar el abuso sexual de menores.

En las auditorías anuales de nuestro Programa de Ambiente Seguro, la Conferencia Episcopal de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos ha señalado el excelente cumplimiento de la







El Obispo Michael Olson posa con un grupo de candidatos recién confirmados en la Parroquia de St. Andrew. (NTC/Jayme Donahue)



De La Torre comentó que el Obispo Olson también “hizo hincapié en la necesidad de llevar la comunión y armonía a todos”, por lo que la catequesis está disponible en inglés y español.

Según el Director de Catequesis, el énfasis del Obispo Olson de fortalecer a la familia ha dado como resultado un enfoque de “modelo familiar” que se ha incorporado a la catequesis de los niños. Múltiples parroquias, grandes y pequeñas, han adoptado el modelo, que alienta la participación de los padres en la formación de la fe. Por lo general, los padres o tutores son invitados a la sala de clases de catequesis para ayudar a enseñar a sus hijos la lección de fe para ese mes. Los resultados han sido muy positivos hasta ahora. De La Torre predice que dentro de los próximos cinco años la mayoría de las parroquias habrá integrado el modelo familiar.

En septiembre del año pasado, la Diócesis auspició el V Encuentro Nacional de Ministerio Hispano/Latino, que reunió a más de 3,000 católicos hispanos en Grapevine. Más de 50 delegados locales y 800 voluntarios laicos participaron en el evento de cuatro días que atrajo a participantes de 159 diócesis del país.

De La Torre dijo además que la Diócesis está elaborando un renovado plan pastoral para el ministerio hispano, ya que el actual tiene más de 20 años.

Durante los cinco años que el Obispo Olson ha sido el pastor de la Diócesis de Fort Worth, el rebaño ha sido testigo de un crecimiento multifacético. No obstante, mientras que el Obispo ha manejado los muchos y variados asuntos de una diócesis de casi el tamaño geográfico de West Virginia, ha mantenido siempre la importancia de la unidad en toda la Diócesis.

El Obispo Olson expresó que su esperanza para la Diócesis y, por lo que ora constantemente, es que los católicos locales vean su identidad en Cristo “como miembros de toda la Diócesis y no sólo de su propia parroquia individual. . . Que seamos como Cristo desea — que seamos uno. Ésa es mi esperanza”. ✝

Diócesis.

Sin embargo, al Obispo Olson le preocupaba que la familiaridad generara complacencia, por lo que le encargó a la Oficina de Ambiente Seguro que mejorara el programa.

La Oficina de Ambiente Seguro implementó en julio del 2018 *Protecting God's Children*®, un programa de capacitación más sólido con tres horas de capacitación en persona que se renueva cada dos años. Las verificaciones de antecedentes penales se hicieron aún más intensas y abarcadoras, al revisar las bases de datos nacionales que incluyen a las personas que han sido removidas de organizaciones que prestan servicios a los jóvenes y a los que se les han suspendido o revocado licencias profesionales.

La Diócesis de Fort Worth ha capacitado a casi 175 facilitadores que realizan sesiones de capacitación en todas las parroquias y escuelas de la Diócesis. Hasta la fecha, más de 34,000 adultos están al día en su entrenamiento de Ambiente Seguro.

## LA CATEQUESIS Y EL MINISTERIO DE LAICOS

El ministerio laico y la catequesis siguen desarrollándose tras un período de transición.

En los primeros dos años del episcopado del Obispo Olson la pastoral

juvenil fue renovada “con un mayor énfasis en la enseñanza, la evangelización y la catequesis”, dijo Marlon De La Torre, Director del Departamento de Catequesis y Evangelización de la Diócesis.

En el 2017 se creó el Instituto St. Junipero Serra para atender el llamado de los muchos fieles de la Diócesis que desean aprender más sobre su fe católica. Con sus diversos programas de estudio y temas de fe, el Instituto brinda a los adultos una comprensión integral de la doctrina católica y la historia de la Iglesia.

El Instituto St. Francis de Sales sigue siendo un recurso para capacitar a los catequistas para que sean testigos efectivos del Evangelio, ya que los familiariza con los conceptos catequéticos, el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*, la planificación de las lecciones de clase y otros recursos.

“Las sesiones de formación para los directores de educación religiosa y directores de RICA han visto una mayor asistencia en todos los ámbitos”, agregó De La Torre, y la asociación con la Universidad Franciscana de Steubenville ha sido “una bendición”. A través de esta colaboración, la Diócesis recibe cursos adicionales en línea para los catequistas, brinda conferenciantes durante todo el año y trae eventos como la próxima Conferencia de Encuentro Familiar y la Conferencia de Jóvenes Lone Star de Steubenville.

# Formando una *Iglesia Santa*

Por Violeta Rocha

“**M**i necesidad más grande es el amor de Dios. Y quiero poder mostrar (a los catecúmenos) que crezcan en la fe, y que juntos sepamos que Dios lo es todo”, dijo María Rojas, 48, el Día de Formación de RICA el 26 de enero, en la Catedral de San Patricio, que la Diócesis de Fort Worth imparte anualmente a catequistas de RICA y RICA Adaptado para Niños.

Bajo el título de El Período del Catecumenado, más de 200 participantes, se nutrieron de valiosos expositores en inglés y español, que “inspiraron y llenaron de emoción”, señaló Rojas, catequista de RICA en la Parroquia de Santa Rita de Fort Worth.

Asistieron más de 100 catequistas bilingües que escucharon a Mary Ann Wiesinger, Directora de Evangelización y Vida Parroquial de la Diócesis de Miami, como la oradora principal en español de este año.

Wiesinger definió al catecumenado (como se le llama al proceso de RICA, Rito de Iniciación Católica para Adultos), como un camino de fe, esperanza y amor.

Ella explicó estas tres virtudes a la luz de las lecciones de vida de San Rafael

Guizar y Valencia, obispo mexicano que transmitió una fe viva, aún en tiempos de Los Cristeros; San Maximiliano Kolbe, sacerdote polaco que se aferró a la esperanza de Dios, bajo el régimen Nazi, y Chiara Cabello Petrillo, sierva de Dios italiana, que con profundo amor, se negó a abortar a su bebé, tras ser diagnosticada con cáncer, confiando en Dios para salvar la vida de su hijo, antes que la de ella.

Estos santos, “al practicar estas virtudes, estaban llenos de alegría y paz, en medio de las dificultades...por eso es que invitamos a la gente a conocer a Dios, para que se llenen de su alegría”, enfatizó Wiesinger, afirmando que RICA no sólo es un medio para cumplir con los sacramentos, es para “acercarlos a Dios” y “cultivar discípulos misioneros”.

Wiesinger pidió compartir testimonios de vida, y Juanita Elías, catequista de RICA en la Iglesia San Esteban de Weatherford, conmovió a los presentes, compartiendo cómo Dios detuvo la amenaza de deportación de su hijo, quien está bajo el programa DACA. “Dios se mostró cada día, cada momento, cada instante...comencé a hacer cosas que no hacía antes, especialmente esperar en El...ir al Santísimo, rezar el Rosario todos los días. Todo lo que Dios nos dio en ese proceso, para mí es un tesoro...confiar

plenamente en El”.

Wiesinger dijo que como catequistas, hablar de “lo que Dios ha hecho por mí”, es clave en el catecumenado y mostrar como herramientas: la oración, los actos en comunidad y la misión. “El poder de la enseñanza trasforma, pero lo que necesitan ver de nosotros es paz, alegría, caridad y esperanza”, y dejó un “reto muy grande. Ser santos y encaminar santos”.

Para Jorge Mireles, 52, este día fue “una motivación” para preguntarse “¿voy en el camino correcto?, ¿estoy enseñando lo que Dios tiene preparado para nosotros?, y no hay que desfallecer, es un compromiso y una fidelidad para servir”, dijo quien es catequista de RICA y RICA Adaptado para Niños en la Parroquia de San Francisco de Asís de Grapevine.

Irma Ramirez, 63, de la Parroquia de San Pedro de Fort Worth, dijo sentirse más segura de que “mi testimonio puede conectar realmente con las personas para que tengan un cambio...lo que vives dice más que lo que tú conoces intelectualmente”, señaló ella que ha sido catequista de RICA por 10 años.

Durante la Misa del medio día, en la Catedral de San Patricio, el Padre Sojan George, rector de la Catedral, se dirigió a los participantes del Día de Formación de RICA, se refirió al Evangelio de *Marcos*



Mary Ann Wiesinger, Directora de Evangelización y Vida Parroquial de la Diócesis de Miami, habla en el Día de Formación de RICA el 26 de enero, en la Catedral de San Patricio. (NTC/Juan Guajardo)



3, 20-21, diciendo que Jesús es juzgado de estar fuera de sí por no importarle las inconveniencias al recibir a quien llegaba a escucharlo, “ustedes que están atendiendo el taller RICA, saben que en el ministerio que están ofreciendo hay inconveniencias, pero si aman su ministerio, aman al Señor...no les importa la inconveniencia porque están en su misión”, dijo e invitó, en el día de su festividad, a pedir por la intercesión de San Tito y San Timoteo para como ellos, “mantenernos firmes en el Evangelio y proclamar la Buena Nueva del Señor a través de la forma que vivimos nuestras vidas”.

Marlon De La Torre, Director de Evangelización y Catequesis de la Diócesis de Fort Worth, señala que trayendo expositores de otras diócesis del país muestra a los catequistas que “lo que estamos ofreciendo aquí, es universal”, dijo al referirse a esta conferencia que se ofrece también en español desde el 2011.

Más que una clase, RICA es una “una jornada de fe”, afirma De La Torre, “una oportunidad para ofrecer acompañamiento al muchacho, a la muchacha que está buscando su casa y esa casa es nuestro Dios...por eso todos (Catequistas y Catecúmenos) se sienten muy orgullosos de participar aquí, y siguen participando; ¡Gracias a Dios!”

Agregó que en el futuro se requerirá de un sitio más grande, pues “el número de asistentes es cada vez mayor, llegan catequistas de Dallas y estamos recibiendo interés de otras diócesis de Austin, Tyler, Oklahoma City y Arkansas”, dijo. 🇺🇸

Un hombre escucha atentamente durante el Día de Formación RICA sostenido en la Catedral de San Patricio. (NTC/Juan Guajardo)



Diácono Matias Lagunas conversa con su grupo. (NTC/Juan Guajardo)







# Un Paso ADELANTE

Otras diócesis de Texas se unen a Fort Worth en la divulgación de los nombres de clérigos acusados de abuso sexual de menores

**Por Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**

**S**iguendo el ejemplo establecido por la Diócesis de Fort Worth en el 2005, las otras 14 diócesis católicas de Texas y el Ordinariato Personal de la Cátedra de San Pedro dieron a conocer los nombres del clero acusado creíblemente de abusar sexualmente de un menor. Esta acción es un esfuerzo conjunto de los obispos de Texas para restaurar la confianza pública.

Compilada de forma independiente, pero publicada el mismo día, la lista general nombra a 278 clérigos individuales de todas las 15 diócesis de Texas que

tienen acusaciones creíbles contra ellos a partir del 1950. Una “acusación creíble” es una acusación que una diócesis cree que es cierta después de haber revisado información razonable y relevante al respecto, y de haber consultado con las juntas diocesanas de revisión de conducta laica y otros profesionales. En la Diócesis de Fort Worth, tal alegación requiere la remoción del acusado del ministerio.

En la publicación de todas las diócesis del estado se eliminaron los nombres duplicados que aparecen en varias listas diocesanas y los nombres de personas que no pertenecen al clero.

La primera diócesis de Texas en

identificar públicamente a los sacerdotes acusados de abuso dentro de su jurisdicción fue la Diócesis de Fort Worth, que tiene 17 clérigos con acusaciones creíbles de abuso de un menor. Actualizada en el sitio web diocesano desde el 2007, la lista incluye ocho sacerdotes diocesanos, un diácono permanente, un hermano religioso y siete sacerdotes de otras diócesis u órdenes religiosas. Once de ellos ya han fallecido y varios han sido condenados a la cárcel. Ninguno de ellos está en el ministerio activo.

La publicación de la lista es parte de los esfuerzos continuos de la Diócesis de Fort Worth para garantizar la seguridad de los niños y adultos vulnerables y es



testimonio de su serio compromiso con la transparencia, la responsabilidad y la sanación de las víctimas.

“Le doy mi apoyo a los otros obispos de Texas por tomar medidas similares”, dijo el Obispo de Fort Worth Michael Olson en un comunicado. “Se toma este paso para ayudar a las víctimas en su proceso de sanación y en aras de la transparencia y la responsabilidad”.

Calificando a la protección de los niños como una “obligación moral muy grave”, el Obispo Olson prometió tomar medidas enérgicas para garantizar que la seguridad de los niños siga siendo la primera prioridad de la Diócesis.

Desde el 2002, la Diócesis de Fort Worth ha requerido que todo el clero, empleados de la Iglesia, ministros laicos, catequistas, maestros de escuela y todos los voluntarios tomen un curso de capacitación sobre el ambiente seguro. Bajo las nuevas pautas implementadas el año pasado, el curso debe repetirse cada dos años. La información compartida durante la sesión alienta y refuerza una cultura de conciencia, conocimiento y vigilancia para proteger a todas las personas dentro de las parroquias, las escuelas y la Diócesis. Hasta la fecha, 34,000 adultos han recibido la capacitación para identificar las señales de abuso sexual de menores y mala conducta.

Como parte de la política de cero tolerancia de la Diócesis, cualquier informe de abuso real o sospechoso se reporta a la policía para ser investigado.

Antes de servir en el ministerio u otro servicio voluntario en la Diócesis, los solicitantes deben pasar una verificación de antecedentes penales completa que involucra una búsqueda en el Registro Nacional de Criminales y Delincuentes Sexuales. Es también obligatorio que cada solicitante firme el Acuerdo del Código de Conducta.

“Es responsabilidad de la Iglesia Católica estar a la vanguardia de estos esfuerzos para erradicar el mal de la conducta sexual inapropiada con menores en nuestra sociedad mediante nuestras palabras y acciones”, enfatizó el Obispo Olson.

El Obispo ofreció sus sinceras disculpas a cualquiera que haya sufrido abusos

perpetrados contra ellos por el clero en la Diócesis u otros que trabajaban para la Iglesia.

“Rezo para que se logre la sanación y la reconciliación para cada víctima de abuso sexual y que los perpetradores sean llevados ante la justicia”, agregó. “Como su Obispo, haré todo lo posible para evitar que alguien vuelva a sufrir tal indignidad”.

El Cardenal Daniel DiNardo de Galveston-Houston, Presidente de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, expresó su “más profundo pesar por el daño que se ha hecho”.

“En múltiples incidentes a lo largo de los años, la Iglesia y sus ministros fallaron en proteger a las almas más vulnerables confiadas a nuestro cuidado”, dijo. “No hay excusa para las acciones de los acusados creíblemente de tales graves pecados contra la persona humana”.

El Arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller de San Antonio dijo que la publicación de los nombres de clérigos acusados de manera creíble es “lo que hay que hacer” y un “paso adelante” para construir una comunidad y sociedad más sanas. Dijo que cada diócesis sigue comprometida a apoyar y trabajar con los sobrevivientes y otras personas afectadas por el abuso del clero, ofreciendo servicios psicológicos y pastorales a través de un coordinador de asistencia a las víctimas.

El Ordinariato Personal de la Catedral de San Pedro, que se fundó en el 2012 y tiene su sede en Houston, no ha recibido ninguna denuncia de abuso de un menor por parte del clero. En una declaración, el Ordinariato dijo que divulgará públicamente cualquier acusación creíble que ocurriera en el futuro.

La Diócesis de Fort Worth invita a cualquier persona que tenga información sobre un abuso o que haya sido víctima de abuso por parte de algún sacerdote, diácono, empleado o voluntario de la Iglesia a informar al Coordinador de Asistencia a las Víctimas de la Diócesis o al Director de Ambiente Seguro.

El Obispo Olson instó a los fieles a que “se unan a mí para orar por todos los que son víctimas y sobrevivientes de abuso sexual, especialmente los perpetrados contra menores. Trabajemos juntos en nuestra sociedad para erradicar este grave mal”. 🇺🇸

## AMBIENTE SEGURO

### Para Reportar Conducta Inapropiada:

Si usted o alguien que usted conoce es víctima de abuso sexual por parte de cualquiera que sirve a la iglesia, puede:

- ▶ Llamar a la Línea Directa de Asistencia a Víctimas: (817) 602-5119.
- ▶ Llamar el Director Diocesano de Ambiente Seguro: (817)-945-9334 y dejar un mensaje.
- ▶ Llamar al Canciller de la Diócesis: (817)-945-9315.

### Para Reportar Abuso o si Sospecha Abuso:

Si usted sospecha de abuso de un niño, anciano, o adulto vulnerable, o si alguien le ha revelado algún tipo de abuso,

- ▶ Llame al Departamento de Servicios para la Familia y de Protección (DFPS) de Texas al (800) 252-5400.
- ▶ Reporte inmediatamente el presunto abuso a su supervisor, sacerdote o director, y presente el Aviso Confidencial de Preocupación con la información requerida por DFPS.

**Para Más Información:** Para inscribirse o informarse sobre nuestros programas de prevención de abuso, visite [fwdioc.org/safe-environment](http://fwdioc.org/safe-environment)







# Tiempo de *Familia*

**E**l tiempo en familia es el mejor momento de la semana para nosotros. Tratamos de tenerlo tanto como podamos. Si pudiéramos, lo tendríamos todos los días ... pero claro, ¡no todo el día! Necesitamos nuestro espacio también. Necesitamos nuestro “tiempo de marido y mujer” a solas ... sin hijos. Esto es muy importante para nosotros también. Sin este tiempo de intimidad ya habríamos perdido la cabeza ... por completo.

Disfrutamos realmente de pasar tiempo con nuestros hijos: jugando con ellos, leyéndoles, sosteniéndolos en nuestros brazos mientras les decimos cuánto los amamos, rezando con ellos, etc. Nos gusta participar en sus “pequeños mundos”. No porque siempre nos llevamos bien o porque nunca peleamos. Tenemos nuestros momentos. ¡Créanme! Los niños pelean entre ellos todo el tiempo. Se pasan de listos con nosotros. Nosotros les hacemos saber quiénes son los que mandan. Constantemente nos pedimos perdón unos a otros. Entonces volvemos a comenzar.

No existe tal cosa como un “tiempo perfecto en familia”. Pero hay innumerables recuerdos llenos de alegría que, ojalá y tengan un impacto positivo y duradero en ellos. Hacemos todo lo posible para inculcarles las virtudes de la fe, la esperanza y la caridad. Hacemos todo lo posible para ser testigos de Cristo. No siempre tenemos éxito. No estamos ni cerca de ser perfectos o santos. Pero sí creemos que tenemos una tremenda responsabilidad dada por Dios hacia nuestros hijos. Es más que eso, es un llamado, una vocación. Nuestra vocación es poner lo mejor de nosotros para poder

criar hijos santos y fieles a Dios. Quizás no veremos los frutos durante nuestra vida. Y eso está bien. Aquí es donde aprendemos a confiar en Dios. Un día

crecerán y es posible que no quieran pasar tiempo con nosotros. Nos damos cuenta de eso. Pero no vamos a dejar que eso nos impida vivir nuestro presente.

Los frutos que hemos visto al tener “tiempo de familia” saludable y frecuente son numerosos. El tiempo de unión con nuestros hijos:



Joel de Loera

- ▶ reafirma su identidad como miembros únicos e insustituibles de nuestra familia y la familia de Dios,
- ▶ nutre su confianza en nosotros, alentándolos a expresar sus sentimientos y opiniones libremente, sin el temor de ser castigados o rechazados,
- ▶ les ayuda a sentirse seguros y amados,
- ▶ les ayuda a desarrollar rasgos sociales y de comportamiento claves que los acompañarán a lo largo de sus vidas,
- ▶ elimina la presión y el estrés innecesario,
- ▶ fortalece su voluntad y autocontrol, ya que se les recuerda constantemente su dignidad como hijos de Dios y las expectativas que tienen como tal (también se les recuerda esta realidad con acciones concretas, no sólo con palabras),
- ▶ los llena del valor y la fuerza que se necesitan para enfrentar los diferentes obstáculos y problemas que nuestro

mundo cansado constantemente nos presenta.

También nos damos cuenta de que hay muchas familias que casi no disfrutan de tiempo en familia. Hay muchas razones y factores que contribuyen a esto. Muchos niños crecen sin papá o mamá o sin ninguno de ellos. Muchos padres que no pueden encontrar el tiempo para sus hijos. Muchos matrimonios y familias sufren de adicción, infidelidad, codicia, cargas financieras, persecución, pobreza extrema, hambre, pérdida de un ser querido, violencia doméstica o sexual, etc. Esto nos pone tristes. Tenemos conversaciones con nuestros hijos sobre otras familias que están teniendo dificultades para disfrutar de la vida. Nuestros hijos oran por ellos y les sirve para que sean más agradecidos de lo que tienen. Si bien no podemos cambiar a otras familias o cómo viven sus vidas, ciertamente podemos tratar de hacer lo mejor para ser testigos de esperanza y un faro de luz en medio de la oscuridad.

Oramos para que la Sagrada Familia bendiga y proteja a todas las familias del mundo y para que un día toda la familia humana pueda ser una como la Familia Divina, el Padre, el Hijo y el Espíritu Santo, que en la plenitud del amor permanecen unidas por la eternidad.

*“Respirose en el hogar doméstico aquella caridad que ardía en la familia de Nazaret; florezcan todas las virtudes cristianas; reine la unión y resplandezcan los ejemplos de una vida honesta.”*

— San Juan XXIII 🇺🇸

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Joel de Loera tiene una maestría en Teología Pastoral y es el Director de Formación de la Parroquia San Bartolomé de Fort Worth.



## Quítate las sandalias...

**S**e aproxima el tiempo de la Cuaresma, tiempo maravilloso para escuchar la voz de Dios en nuestras vidas, especialmente es un tiempo de discernimiento de Su santa voluntad en nuestras vidas y para nuestras vidas.

Este tiempo sagrado evoca entrar en el desierto, es decir, permitirle a Dios que nos hable y escucharle sin la distracción de otras voces, sino solamente escuchar la suya.

Moisés en su huida al desierto se encuentra con aquel momento fundamental de su vida donde Dios le manifiesta su proyecto liberador. Dios que escucha el clamor de su pueblo, llama a Moisés a colaborar con Él en su proyecto de libertad hacia su pueblo.

En aquel encuentro en el Horeb, Dios invita a Moisés a despojarse de sí mismo y ser guiado por Su gracia y a ser instrumento de Su salvación para Su pueblo. “Quítate las sandalias que el suelo que pisas es sagrado” (*Ex 3:5*).

Para poder ser instrumento de Dios, el joven que discierne su vocación es necesario que entre en diálogo íntimo con Dios en el desierto a través de la oración, darse tiempo para escuchar Su voz que nunca es confusa, que penetra el corazón y manifiesta su voluntad. Es ahí en ese espacio sagrado de intimidad con Aquel que llama, que seduce el corazón y que inunda con su gracia la búsqueda más

profunda del ser humano, es decir Dios mismo.

Es necesario en ese encuentro, despojarse de sí mismo, dejarse guiar por Dios, ser moldeado por Él y ser dócil a Su voluntad. Es necesario para ello con humildad y sencillez de corazón responder con generosidad a Su voluntad, es decir, no tener miedo a entregar su vida y abandonarse totalmente en la voluntad de Dios.



Fr. Manuel Holguín

Es importante dejar las sandalias a un lado, reconocer que el llamado SACERDOCIO no es un proyecto humano, sino divino, y está en favor del pueblo de Dios. Este llamado corresponde a Dios que es santo e invita a los que Él quiere a colaborar con Él en este bendito plan de salvación.

Hoy en nuestro tiempo, Dios escucha el clamor de Su pueblo que necesita mensajeros de esperanza, emisarios que escuchen la voz de Dios, que se dejen transformar por Él, que sean valientes y que confíen en Su palabra, que arriesguen sus vidas a servir a Dios y a la Iglesia.

Joven te digo a ti, que sabes que Dios te está llamando, entra en el desierto, escucha Su voz, déjate moldear por Él, deja tus sandalias, despójate de ti mismo y responde con generosidad. La Iglesia del tiempo presente necesita hombres de oración, enamorados de Dios, generosos en su respuesta al servicio de Su pueblo

y comprometidos a hacer la voluntad de Dios en sus vidas.

Este tiempo cuaresmal es un tiempo propicio para hablar de corazón a corazón con Dios, que siempre es nuevo, que sigue llamando a hombres concretos para Su hacerlos instrumentos de Su amor y Su gracia en favor de Su pueblo. El sacerdocio es un llamado bendecido que requiere oración y abandono en Él.

En esta tu Diócesis de Fort Worth, te invitamos a ti joven que, al igual que Moisés, entres en el desierto de tu corazón, escuches Su voz, te abandones en Su voluntad, descubras Su plan para ti y seas generoso en tu respuesta al llamado que Él te hace.

Hijo, acércate a nosotros que queremos acompañarte en tu camino de discernimiento. Tu Obispo Michael Olson y los cuatro enlaces de vocaciones oramos por ti y encomendamos tu vocación al corazón inmaculado de María Madre del Sumo Sacerdote para que guíe siempre tu caminar.

*“Tú eres mi siervo, en quien me cubriré de gloria.” Is 49:3* ✚

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Ordenado al sacerdocio en 2012, el Padre Manuel Holguín es el párroco de la Parroquia de San Pedro Apóstol en Fort Worth y sirve de enlace con la oficina vocacional.





# LA MUERTE DE LOS BEBÉS Y LA MUERTE DE LA CONCIENCIA

**OBISPO MICHAEL OLSON**  
es el cuarto Obispo  
de la Diócesis de Fort  
Worth.

 @BpOlsonFW



**E**l 22 de enero de 2019 el Gobernador de Nueva York, Andrew Cuomo, promulgó un estatuto que legaliza el aborto durante todas las 40 semanas de embarazo de una mujer, incluso hasta el momento de un parto a término, basado en criterios amplios y vagos para determinar la salud de la mujer.

La aprobación de la ley de Nueva York nos lleva aún más profundo a la oscuridad inevitable de lo que fue profetizado por muchas personas en el momento de la decisión de *Roe v Wade*: que la legalización del aborto conduciría en última instancia al infanticidio. La llegada al triste cumplimiento de esta profecía se manifiesta por el derramamiento de los desgastados eufemismos del movimiento a favor del aborto, que incluye que “el feto es una masa de tejido”, “no es un ser humano, es un ser humano potencial,” es una elección triste y trágica que enfrentan las mujeres, que requiere que al menos se haga segura y rara”. La legislación reciente deja en claro que los defensores del aborto a petición saben muy bien que es la vida de un bebé en juego que se contraponen con la elección de una madre para tomar esa vida con la colaboración de los médicos.

En particular, la aprobación de la ley

de Nueva York estuvo acompañada por algo que no era tristeza por parte de los responsables de los que la aprobaron. Fue celebrado con júbilo rebosante por los legisladores junto con el Gobernador Cuomo como un triunfo de la autonomía caprichosa. El gobernador expresó rápidamente que “las decisiones que decido tomar en mi vida privada, o al aconsejar a mis hijas, se basan en mis creencias morales y religiosas personales ... pero que el juramento del cargo de gobernador es a la Constitución de los Estados Unidos y al Estado de Nueva York — no a la Iglesia Católica. Mi religión no puede exigir favoritismo mientras ejecuto mis deberes públicos”. El Gobernador Cuomo no ha articulado si estaba celebrando públicamente como el jefe ejecutivo del estado de Nueva York, mientras se lamentaba en privado de acuerdo con sus propias creencias morales y religiosas personales que él convenientemente dice ser católicas.

Las acciones y declaraciones del gobernador carecen de coherencia en su razonamiento y no simplemente de insuficiencia en la fe católica. Si algo es inherentemente malo, es malo todo el tiempo y en cualquier lugar y circunstancia. No es simplemente una cuestión de punto de vista público o valores subjetivos que se mantienen en

privado.

Está claro que el Gobernador Cuomo no es la única persona, católica o no, en nuestra sociedad que reduce el juicio de la conciencia a ser un mero mediador de la elección para cumplir con las normas de las convenciones sociales o con los deseos de preferencia egoísta.

Sin embargo, lo ha hecho no de manera privada, sino de una manera muy pública que no sólo afecta el bien común de la sociedad, sino que también alienta a otros a actuar de una manera destructiva de la vida humana y la felicidad. Esto reduce la verdad, verificable por hechos empíricos como la fisiología de un bebé antes de nacer, a un conjunto de valores privados impuestos en la vida pública por el poderoso dictado del legislador, a expensas de los miembros más débiles, pero reales de nuestra comunidad. El gobernador ofrece al discurso público una distinción sin una diferencia real y excusas cuando se requieren razones.

Como católicos y miembros de la comunidad humana, nos hacemos daño si nos conformamos con excusas. Tenemos la responsabilidad de formar nuestras conciencias bien, con razón y fe, para conservar y proteger la dignidad de la vida humana — en todas sus etapas — con consistencia en la esfera pública y privada. ✚



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