

# North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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Rabbi Shear-Yashuv Cohen, the chief rabbi of Haifa, Israel, center, speaks during a news conference following a meeting between Pope Benedict XVI and a delegation of representatives of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel at the Vatican March 12. Also pictured are other rabbis in the delegation and Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, fourth from left. The delegation asked the pope to make Holocaust studies a required subject in Catholic schools, saying the move could help stamp out anti-Semitism in future generations. (CNS photo/Alessia Pierdomenico, Reuters)

## Pope responds to criticisms concerning Lefebvrite actions in letter to bishops

By John Thavis  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In a letter to the world's bishops, Pope Benedict XVI expressed regret that his lifting of the excommunications of four traditionalist bishops gave rise to a storm of protests and bitterness.

The pope said the controversy over Bishop Richard Williamson's statements denying the extent of the Holocaust was "an

unforeseen mishap" — one that could have been anticipated, however, by paying more attention to information easily available on the Internet.

The pope said he was particularly saddened at the reaction of some Catholics who seemed willing to believe he was changing direction on Catholic-Jewish relations and were ready to "attack me with open hostility." He thanked "our Jewish friends"

who helped clarify the matter and restore a sense of trust.

The Vatican published the 2,500-word letter in six languages March 12. The Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, called it a "unique, exceptional document" for its direct and personal style, and said it showed the pope had listened carefully to what people were saying.

SEE POPE, P. 12

## HHS opens 30-day comment period on conscience protections

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services is accepting comments until April 9 on its move to rescind a Bush administration regulation giving federal protection to the conscience rights of health care providers.

The 30-day comment period opened March 10 with publication of the rescission proposal in the print version of the Federal Register.

When the Obama administration announced its review of the proposal in late February, Deirdre

McQuade, assistant director for policy and communications in the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, encouraged participation in the comment process "by all committed to the sanctity of human life, the freedom of conscience, and the ethical integrity of our healing professions."

"Efforts to nullify or weaken any conscience protection will undermine our national heritage of diversity and religious freedom, reduce patients' access to life-affirming health care, and endanger the national consensus required to enact much-needed

health care reform," she added in a statement.

HHS asked for comment on four specific aspects of the regulation, which took effect two days before President Barack Obama took office:

— "The scope and nature of the problems giving rise to the federal rulemaking," including specific examples, "and how the current rule would resolve those problems."

— Information, with examples, to support or refute allegations that the regulation "reduces access to information and health

SEE HHS, P. 12

## Cardinal Rigali says new Obama stem-cell policy favors politics over ethics

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — President Barack Obama's executive order reversing the ban on federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research represents "a sad victory of politics over science and ethics," Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia said shortly after the March 9 signing of the order at the White House.

The chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities was among Catholic, pro-life and other leaders who criticized the reversal, which Obama had promised during his campaign.

Speaking in the East Room of the White House, Obama said the stem-cell policy of former President George W. Bush, in effect since Aug. 9, 2001, had forced "a false choice between sound science and moral values."

Obama also urged Congress to consider further expansion of funding for such research. Since 1995, the Dickey/Wicker amendment to the annual appropriations bills for federal health programs has barred federal funding of research involving the creation or destruction of human embryos.

But the president had strong

words against human cloning, which he said is "dangerous, profoundly wrong and has no place in our society, or any society." He said he would work to ensure that "our government never opens the door to the use of cloning for human reproduction."

Among the several dozen people present at the White House for the signing were members of Congress, scientists, families whose members had been or could be affected by stem-cell breakthroughs, and representatives of the Episcopal and United Methodist churches, several Jewish bodies, and the Interfaith Alliance.

Obama said a "majority of Americans — from across the political spectrum, and of all backgrounds and beliefs — have come to a consensus that we should pursue" embryonic stem-cell research.

But Cardinal Rigali said the executive order "disregards the values of millions of American taxpayers who oppose research that requires taking human life" and "ignores the fact that ethically sound means for advancing stem-cell science and medical treatments are readily available

SEE CARDINAL, P. 14

## Special Masses initiate St. Rita Parish centennial

When Miss Mollie Farrell came to Dallas Bishop Edward Dunn to propose a new Catholic Church for the little Tarrant County town of Handley, he told her it was impossible, hence his designation of the name of the new church as St. Rita — considered the saint of the impossible, said Bishop Vann in his remarks to the St. Rita congregation Feb. 28. The picture of the first St. Rita Church, taken in 1910, appears below. SEE STORY, Page 8



# St. Paul teaches us to accept God's wisdom and to embrace our crosses

Dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,

**S**o far we have reflected during this 40-day journey on our Holy Father's Lenten message on fasting and then on prayer through the eyes of St. Paul. Now, as we approach the midway point of this holy season of Lent, I believe our next step is to reflect on St. Paul's preaching on the Cross.

In the letters of St. Paul the cross is much more than the wooden instrument utilized to carry out Christ's death sentence. For St. Paul the cross represents the loving redemptive passion of Christ, a redemption that begins with obedience to the Father's will and continues down a path of pain and humiliation, our Lord's path of *kenosis*.

In Pope Benedict's Wednesday audience for Oct. 29 of last year, our Holy Father reminded us that St. Paul's understanding of the Cross began when he encountered Jesus. Paul learned that...

*...Jesus had died and [risen] for all and for himself. Both these things were important; universality: Jesus really died for all, and subjectivity: he also died for me. Thus God's freely given and merciful love had been made manifest in the cross.*

St. Paul not only realizes how life-changing the cross of Christ is, he also realizes that this profound truth is beyond the grasp of many to fully appreciate and understand. In his first letter to the *Corinthians*, chapter one verse 23 we read...

*...we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles...*

A crucified Christ is an almost insurmountable stumbling block for the Jews primarily because, according to Judaic law found in *Deuteronomy* 21:22-23, to die hanging from a tree as Christ did in his crucifixion, is a sign of being accursed by God. The Jews cannot grasp the significance of a suffering Messiah even though this is clearly taught by the prophet Isaiah.



Bishop Kevin W. Vann

**B**ut St. Paul doesn't stop in realizing the true meaning of the cross of Christ. He courageously goes on to recognize that as a follower of Christ he must also embrace the cross of Christ in his own life, a cross which he carries faithfully but with difficulty. In doing so he offers us an example of what each one of us is called to do as a disciple of Christ.

For the Jews a crucified Messiah is a contradiction in terms because for them the Messiah would be made manifest by many signs of his power and might, not in an apparent defeat of what they perceive to be a weak and helpless man.

A crucified Christ is foolishness for the Gentiles, such as the Greeks, because in their conception of divinity there can be no feelings and emotions, much less pain. For the Greeks, God and man are on opposite sides of a spectrum. Human elements such as those manifested by Jesus Christ, according to the "wisdom" of the Greeks, impoverish and take away from everything that true divinity should be.

A crucified Christ is for St. Paul not a stumbling block or folly but true wisdom, power, and strength. He tells us all this in *1 Corinthians* 1:24-25...

*...but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength.*

Pope Benedict XVI speaks on this point in the previously mentioned audience when he says...

*The "stumbling block" and "folly" of the cross lie in the very fact that where there seems to be nothing but failure, sorrow, and defeat, there is the full power of God's boundless love; for the cross is an expression of love and love is the true power that is revealed precisely in this seeming weakness.*

The Holy Father also stated later on in the same audience...

*God uses ways and means that seem to us at first sight to be merely weakness. The Crucified One reveals on the one hand man's frailty and on the other, the true power of God, that is the free gift of love: this totally gratuitous love is true wisdom.*

But St. Paul doesn't stop in realizing the true meaning of the cross of Christ. He courageously goes on to recognize that as a follower of Christ he must also embrace the cross of Christ in his own life, a cross which he carries faithfully but with difficulty. In doing so he offers us an example of what each one of us is called to do as a disciple of Christ.

To carry one's daily cross is never easy. We may even fear that we may be too weak to continue to follow Christ because the weight of the cross we carry may seem too much. In *2 Corinthians* 12:8-10, St. Paul offers us some words of true wisdom after speaking with the Lord in prayer on this issue ...

*Three times I begged the Lord about this, that it might leave me, but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness." I will rather boast most gladly of my weaknesses, in order that the power of Christ may dwell with me. Therefore, I am content*



A window at Holy Cross Church in Mendota, Illinois, depicts the conversion of St. Paul. The jubilee year dedicated to the saint ran from June 28, 2008 through June 29, 2009. (CNS photo/Crosiers)

*with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and constraints, for the sake of Christ; for when I am weak, then I am strong.*

May we be truly convinced that the Lord's grace is sufficient and may Our Lady of Sorrows guide us to the true strength and power that is found in the cross of her Son, our crucified Lord Jesus Christ.

God bless you always,

*+ Kevin W. Vann*

+ Bishop Kevin W. Vann



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# Diocesan Catholic Charities earns accreditation

By Nicki Prevou  
Editorial Assistant

Calling the agency "an outstanding social service provider that maintains and delivers the highest level of quality services," the international Council on Accreditation (COA) has awarded accreditation to Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth.

The COA, founded in 1977 by the Child Welfare League of America and Family Service America (now the Alliance for Children and Families), is an independent, not-for-profit child and family service and behavioral healthcare accrediting organization. The accreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of both an organization's administrative operations and its service delivery practices.

According to a press release from Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth, the organization is one of only two COA accredited service agencies in Tarrant County, and one of eight COA accredited service organizations in the Metroplex.

The agency is extremely proud to achieve accreditation, said Heather Reynolds, CEO of Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth, noting that "COA accreditation is an indication to our clients, partner agencies, funding sources, donors, and supporters at large that we're willing to invest in continually strengthening our services and improving outcomes in this community."

"COA accreditation is a significant accomplishment for Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth and it's a testament to their strength of purpose and quality of programs," agreed Ann Rice, executive vice president for United Way of Tarrant County. "In the future, this sort of accreditation will become more and more important for social service agencies looking for new funding and community support."

The COA accreditation process involves a detailed review and analysis of both an organization's administrative operations and its service delivery practices, said Catholic Charities officials. According to information released by the organization, Catholic Charities was evaluated against 820 quality and service standards.

Sara Ramirez, vice president of development and public relations for the agency, said that Catholic Charities offers a unique and comprehensive range of

*"Our staff members in the refugee resettlement programs are from Somalia, Nepal, the Sudan, and many other parts of the world. They serve within our program because they've had such a profound experience, and they want to help the next generation."*

— Sara Ramirez  
vice president of development  
and public relations  
Catholic Charities  
Diocese of Fort Worth

services in a variety of areas. Just one example of their work is the agency's commitment to caring for refugees from all parts of the world, said Ramirez, adding that the agency provides translation services for more than 70 different languages.

"Our staff members in the refugee resettlement programs are from Somalia, Nepal, the Sudan, and many other parts of the world," said Ramirez. "They serve within our program because they've had such a profound experience, and they want to help the next generation." Services to refugees include mentoring and assistance with housing, English classes, employment, and enrolling children in school.

For nearly 100 years, these and a wide variety of other services have been offered through Catholic Charities, said Ramirez, noting that the agency offers financial assistance to families in crisis, foster care licensing and training, emergency shelter, child abuse prevention, elderly housing and pharmaceutical assistance, and medical intervention efforts aimed at reducing infant mortality and the spread of HIV to newborns.

"The work that we do at Catholic Charities is faith-driven, and our desired end result, in all of the services that we offer, is quality that we can continue to build upon. Our mission isn't something we just put up on a wall," said Ramirez. "Our mission to provide hope is alive and breathing within our organization."

*Responding  
to God's Call*

*Like the early prophets and apostles, we are called to be Consumed for the Lord*

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

**A**s we enter into Holy Week and the Passion of our Lord, I have been drawn to meditate on the burning love God has for humanity and his creation. Even more, God Himself invites us to unite ourselves to his passionate mercy and love.

My favorite prayer as of late comes by way of the Serra International Prayer for Vocations which reads:

*O God, who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech You, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever virgin, Saint Joseph, her spouse, Blessed Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase of laborers for your Church, fellow laborers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.*

This small prayer has great meaning to me because it is a prayer that calls out to God for more men and women to give their lives to spend and consume their energy (body, mind, and spirit) for the Church to help save souls through the mercy of Christ. Is this not a great way to

glorify God through our bodies? Are not Catholic parents called to teach their children that the religious life is a most fulfilling way to spend one's life, saving souls from the snares of the devil through the power of our Lord Jesus Christ?

The Bible is filled with Scripture passages that speak of this inner fire, this inner burning love of God, which He offers humanity despite our fallen nature. The following are some powerful images we have from the Bible:

- God reveals Himself to Moses through the unconsumed burning bush (*Exodus 3:2*). Here Moses is told that he is standing on holy ground as he receives his calling from God to lead the Israelites out of the slavery in Egypt despite his doubts, unworthiness, and his slow speech and tongue (*Exodus 4:10*).

- Moses receives the Ten Commandments on top of Mount Sinai (*Exodus 24:12-18*). The glory of the Lord was seen as a consuming fire on the mountaintop as Moses spends 40 days and 40 nights in the presence of the Lord.

- John testifies to the power of baptism (*Luke 3:16*), stating, "I am baptizing you with water, but one mightier than I is coming...he will baptize you with the holy Spirit and fire."

- Jesus, with righteous anger, made a whip and spilled over the moneychanger's table and coins in the temple area and drove out those selling things saying, "It is written, 'My house shall be a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves'" (*Luke 19:45*). "His disciples recalled the words of Scripture, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'" (*John 2:17*) There is no fire here, but this is certainly an instance where an inner burning of Jesus is clearly demonstrated not to shortchange the worship of

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



God, which is to be above all things.

- At Pentecost the Holy Spirit descended upon the apostles like a strong driving wind and there appeared to them tongues as of fire, which parted and came to rest on each of them, transforming them from being a people afraid of suffering and persecution to being strong courageous leaders willing to give their lives to the Lord (*Acts 2:1-4*). We, ourselves, receive this great gift of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation.

Yet, the best image of fire during Holy Week comes on Good Friday, the telling of the passion of Christ according to John. After Jesus is handed over, Peter finds himself drawn to the Lord, yet unable to stand up for Him. Consequently, Peter finds himself separated from our Lord, at the wrong fire, warming his body by a man-made fire rather than the everlasting fire and passion of the Lord (*John 18:18*). It is here that Peter chose to be, in the cold of darkness, warmed by the ways of the world, scared to be a godly man who would stand up to tell the truth. It is here that Peter denies knowing Jesus three times. As the cock crows a third time, Peter catches the eye of Jesus and immediately begins to weep bitterly (*Luke 22:62*).

We have joined Peter many times with our denial of Jesus. May the reality of our sinfulness and our experience of Holy Week strengthen us in his Spirit so that we may have a burning desire to spend and consume our lives for the salvation of souls in Christ, as did Peter after Pentecost.

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

## OMM prepares for first Spring Gospelfest

Our Mother of Mercy Church in South Fort Worth will host its first annual Spring Gospelfest Saturday, April 25 at 7 p.m. in its building at 1001 E. Terrell St.

"We are kicking off 2009 with one purpose in mind — to share God's unconditional love and Word with everyone; to express the true joy of the Lord in serving Him with fellowship, worship, praise, prayer, music, and dance," says a flier for the event.

Our Mother of Mercy will host multiple choirs and other groups from a variety of Christian denominations to join in its celebration in conjunction with the parish's 80th anniversary.

For more information, call Joe Bernard at (817) 565-6717.

## Golf tournament to benefit OMM School

Our Mother of Mercy School's fourth annual "Golf and Networking Event" will be held at Squaw Creek Golf Course April 18. All are invited to participate as players or sponsors.

For more information, contact tournament co-chairs Howard Rattliff at rattlhj@yahoo.com, or Mike Barks at barkskully@sbcglobal.net, or visit the Web site [www.tournevents.com/omm2009](http://www.tournevents.com/omm2009) to register.

## Divine Mercy Celebration in Hillsboro planned

Our Lady of Mercy Parish at 107 Crestridge Dr. in Hillsboro will host a celebration for Divine Mercy Sunday April 19 at 2:30 p.m.

The celebration will conclude a novena for Divine Mercy, which begins on Good Friday.

The desire for this celebration was expressed by Jesus to St. Maria Faustina and found recorded in her diary.

A prayer service that will include the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and end with Adoration, will begin at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, April 19 with Our Lady of Mercy pastor Father Baby George presiding. Additional information on Divine Mercy, St. Faustina, the novena prayer, and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy can be found on the Web site [www.marian.org](http://www.marian.org).

For information and directions call the church office at (254) 582-5640 or Linda Alesi-Miller in the evenings at (254) 694-6188.

## Daughters of St. Ann sponsor lecture for March 26

The Daughters of St. Ann will host a Lenten lecture at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at St. Ann Church at 100 SW Alsbury Blvd. in Burleson. The topic is "Thank God for Purgatory!" presented by Father Mel Bessellieu, pastor of St. Ann. Refreshments will be available afterwards in the parish hall. Everyone is invited to attend. For additional information, call the church office at (817) 295-5621.

## St. Ann Spring Fest April 26

The parking lot of St. Ann Church in Burleson will be transformed into Spring Fest, a festival with games for children, bounce houses, dunking booths, bingo, cake walks, food from different countries and regions, pastries, and auctions. The festival will be Sunday, April 26 from 11:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Tickets can be bought on site. The public is invited to enjoy the food, fun, and fellowship. For more information, call the church office at (817) 295-5621.

## Nolan Catholic Make Up Placement Test March 28

Nolan Catholic High School is offering a make-up admissions/ placement test for the 2009-2010 academic year Saturday, March 28 at 9 a.m. Students should report to the Commons at 4501 Bridge St. in Fort Worth by 8:45 a.m. to register and receive their room assignment. The test will be approximately three hours.

For more information on testing or admissions to Nolan Catholic High School, contact Maureen Barisonok at (817) 457-2920, ext. 1551 or mbarisonok@nolancatholic.org.

## Nazareth Sisters invite women for vocations day retreat April 4

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth invite women interested in religious life to their convent in Grand Prairie for a day retreat Saturday, April 4 with Mass, prayer, praise, talks, and visiting with the sisters. For more information on these days, call Sister Mary Paul, CSFN, at (972) 642-5191 or smpaul@icgrandprairie.org.



Grade-level winners have been selected at Immaculate Conception Catholic School during the Zaner Bloser Handwriting Contest.

All students in first through eighth grades participated in the annual contest. The winning papers have advanced for state level competition. ICCS has garnered more than 40 state handwriting titles and one national title over the past eight years. Handwriting contest coordinator is Susan Byrd. Winners include in the first row from left to right: Chloe Morgan, first grade; Reed Taber, second grade; Justin Reinhardt, third grade; Grace Mappes, fourth grade; Hannah Dickson, fifth grade; and in the second row from left to right: Bethany Rush, eighth grade; Rebecca Klinke, sixth grade; Allie Shelton, seventh grade.

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

St. Joseph Covenant Keepers of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church is finishing out its annual Lenten Speaker Series featuring guest speaker Stephen Kellmeyer on March 27 and April 3. The six talks of the series have been presented throughout Lent. Each presentation, including these final two, has followed the Fish Fry and the Stations of the Cross at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, located at 2016 Willis

Ln. in Keller.

Kellmeyer will be discussing Pope John Paul II's Theology of the Body. Topics remaining include "Being the Best Spouse, Being the Best Parent" on March 27, and "Celibacy" on April 3.

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

## Volunteers invited to sing at cathedral Apr. 5

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

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

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

## St. Francis Tea and Auction March 29

St. Francis of Assisi Church's Mothers with Young Children will host their annual Tea and Auction Charity Event from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 29 at the parish Family Life Center at 861 Wildwood Ln. in Grapevine.

Admission is free and tea, sandwiches, refreshments, and sweets will be provided. Silent and live auctions will be held, in addition to door prizes being given. Only payment by cash or check will be accepted for auction items.

All proceeds will benefit adopted Christmas families, St. Francis Outreach, Children's Discovery Center Preschool, The Youth Scholarship Fund, and Catholic Charities.

For more information, contact Claudia Halman, Nancy Smith, Mary Beth Soucy, or Lori Spisak at [myc@sfatx.org](mailto:myc@sfatx.org).

## Divorce and Beyond program to be held at St. Andrew Apr. 16

St. Andrew Church will host a "Divorce and Beyond" program Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. April 16 through June 4 at its pastoral center at 3717 Stadium Dr. in Fort Worth.

Divorce and Beyond is an eight-week parish-based self-help program for people who are divorced or who have already filed for divorce, and is based on the premise that sharing thoughts, feelings, and experiences with others in the same or similar situation is one of the most helpful ways to move beyond the pain of divorce to a life of wholeness and joy.

Topics for sessions include: "The Process of Divorce"; "Self-image, Self-esteem"; "Self-affirmation"; "Stress, Anger, Blame, Guilt, Loneliness"; "Forgiveness"; "Happiness"; "Pathway to growth"; and "The Catholic Annulment."

The cost for registration is \$15, and includes the cost of book and supplies which will be available the first evening.

Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, call Alice Curran at (817) 927-5383 or Delphine Exman at (817) 292-1453.

## NTC deadlines for submission

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

Items for the April 10 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, April 1. Items for the April 24 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, April 15.

## Support group for mothers who have lost unborn children offered

Families who have lost a child because of miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion are invited to join a Mothers' Group offering support, sharing, and healing Thursday, April 2 at 7 p.m. at St. Andrew Church's pastoral center at 3717 Stadium Dr. in Fort Worth. Pastoral care professionals will facilitate the group, and confidentiality is assured.

For more information, contact Alice Curran at (817) 927-5383 or by e-mail [acurran@standrewcc.org](mailto:acurran@standrewcc.org). Childcare is provided if reservations are made at least 48 hours in advance by phone at (817) 924-6581. There will be a \$5 fee per child.

## YOUTH 2000 registration deadline Apr. 1

The 2009 YOUTH 2000 Retreat led by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal of the Bronx, will be held Friday, April 17 to Sunday April 19 at Nolan Catholic High School at 4501 Bridge St. in Fort Worth.

This eucharistic-centered retreat is for and by all youth and young adults between the ages of 13 and 30.

"This is a unique experience that you won't forget!" say event organizers. "The talks are inspiring and will help you to grow in your faith!"

The deadline for early registration of \$40 per person is Wednesday, April 1. Housing will not be provided.

All minors must be accompanied by an adult, and all adults must have had the Safe Environment training of their diocese.

For more information, call (817) 558-9805, or visit the Web site for the event at [www.fwdiocyouthretreat.org](http://www.fwdiocyouthretreat.org).

## World-renowned musician to lead annual retreat April 18-19

World-renowned musician and liturgist Christopher Walker will lead a liturgical retreat sponsored by Holy Redeemer Church in Aledo April 18 and 19.

The sessions on Saturday, April 18, will be held from 2 to 8:30 p.m. at the Diocese of Fort Worth Catholic Center at 800 W. Loop 820 South in Fort Worth, and will be broken up by a dinner from 6 to 7 p.m.

The session on Sunday, April 19 will be from 12:30 to 4 p.m. following the church's last Mass to be held at Aledo High School at 1000 Bailey Ranch Rd. in Aledo at 10 a.m. and a lunchtime social at 11:30 a.m.

"A compelling and inspirational speaker, Mr. Walker will uplift, energize, and strengthen participants as our diocesan family prepares to dedicate its newest church home — Holy Redeemer — just one week after the retreat," say event organizers.

All are invited to participate. To pre-register, contact the Holy Redeemer office at (817) 441-3500 by Saturday, April 4.

## 'The Human Experience' screening at St. Vincent de Paul

St. Vincent de Paul Church will host a free pre-screening of "The Human Experience," documentary about two brothers who travel the world and interview people about what it means to be human, at 7:30 p.m. Friday April 24, and Saturday, April 25 at 5819 Pleasant Ridge Rd. in Arlington. Doors will open at 7 p.m.

For more information, contact Chanacee Ruth-Kilgore, director of Respect Life for the Diocese of Fort Worth at (817) 560-3300, ext. 257, or by e-mail at [cruthkilgore@fwdioc.org](mailto:cruthkilgore@fwdioc.org).

## Official Assignments

**The following assignments have been made by Bishop Kevin Vann:**

Effective March 6, 2009, the Rev. Victor Cruz, HGN, has been appointed parochial vicar of Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton without prejudice to his assignment as Chaplain of the Catholic Campus Center for the University of North Texas and Texas Woman's University in Denton.

## Diocesan

# Boy Scout Troop 32 seeks information about member history dating to charter in 1927

Troop 32, sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 759, is announcing a year-long preparation for the 100th Anniversary of the Boy Scouts of America by researching its own history, looking for all Scouts or Scouters who have been a part of the troop, and planning a reunion to help celebrate this once in a lifetime event.

Throughout its history, Troop 32 has produced more than 180 Eagle Scouts, more than 70 Scouting religious award recipients, 14 St. George Award recipients, eight Silver Beaver Award recipients, one Silver St. George Award recipient, and one Order of the Arrow lodge chief, in addition to nine grand knights for the Knights of Columbus, five Catholic priests, two Protestant ministers, and three judges, among other honored citizens of Tarrant County.

The committee is compiling

stories, pictures, videos, and published articles that date back to the weekend Troop 32 was chartered on March 17, 1927.

Chairman of the Historical Committee John Ryan has begun a search for all alumni, is in the planning stages of a photo shoot of all alumni and current Scouts, and plans a 100th BSA Anniversary Dinner.

The committee is looking for stories of Scouters such as Eagle Scout Emmet Cook.

Cook, a young boy whose father was grand knight of Council 759 and whose family were members of St. Mary of the Assumption Church, joined the troop, attained Eagle Scout and was disappointed when then-President Franklin D. Roosevelt canceled the 1935 National BSA Jamboree because of a nationwide polio outbreak.

He was well into his engi-

neering studies when World War II interrupted them for military service. Rejected application after rejected application prevented him from becoming a pilot until he was finally approved for training.

Cook quickly earned his wings and had flown several missions when he was faced with the greatest challenge of his life after his plane had been shot down during a bombing mission. He used his Scout skills to survive a 36-hour death march during the height of the German winter.

Cook joined an international group of pilots in Stalag 17 and was tasked with an engineering problem that no one else could figure out — how long did the escape tunnels need to be to get beyond fields of cleared trees surrounding the prisoner of war camp. Cook used his engineering skills to pinpoint

the length and proper direction of the tunnels, which would be known to history as "The Great Escape."

Although he was moved to a camp for U.S. pilots a few weeks before the escape, he brought his Scout skills to the forefront near the end of the war when 140,000 prisoners were held in a camp designed for 20,000. He averted starvation in the POW camp, rejoined British pilots (who were also Scouts) and was thrilled by a visit from General George Patton.

After the war, Cook served several decades as a test pilot in El Paso.

These and other stories of faith and valor are a part of Troop 32 heritage that are being preserved. For those with more information about Troop 32 history, contact John Ryan at (817) 939-5673 or [thetexaswebguy@yahoo.com](mailto:thetexaswebguy@yahoo.com).



Troop 32 Eagle Scout Emmet Cook, pictured here in 1930, led a life that included becoming a pilot, utilizing Scout skills which enabled him to survive a 36-hour death march during the height of German winter during World War II, and serve for several decades as a test pilot in El Paso.

## St. Andrew Cub Scout Pack 97 feeds the hungry



Members of Cub Scout Pack 97 stand in the St. Andrew's Social Ministry Food Bank after collecting food and money donations for the ministry.

The shelves were towering with cans, the floor was covered, and shopping carts were filled to the fullest capacity. This is what the St. Andrew's Social Ministry Food Bank looked like on Saturday, Feb. 14. Cub Scout Pack 97 collected over 7,000 items. These Scouts started their Scouting For Food efforts in December by participating in a bike-a-thon to raise money by riding six miles or more and asking family and friends to sponsor them with pledges. They raised over \$2,000

in pledges and used every penny to buy food for the Social Ministries Food Bank.

In January, they placed grocery bags on the doors of their neighborhoods, asking for food donations. They collected over 3,000 items out in their own neighborhoods. On Feb. 7, they placed more grocery bags on the doors of the St. Andrew's community and went back to collect the filled bags the following Saturday. They collected over 2,000 items on Valentine's

Day. With the bike-a-thon pledge money, they purchased over 2,000 items.

City Market Grocery Store of Fort Worth and Albertson's near Texas Christian university donated numerous items.

St. Andrew's Social Ministries Food Bank is the fifth largest food bank in Tarrant County.

"We are so proud of our Scouts for going the extra mile to feed the hungry," said Bear Cub Den Leader, Karen Lamis. "They are great examples for all of us."

## Lenten services available for Deaf Community

Father Ken Robinson, pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Muenster, will celebrate a Lenten Reconciliation Service for the Deaf Community on Sunday, March 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the chapel at St. John the Apostle Church located at 7341 Glenview Dr. in North Richland Hills. He will be available to hear individual confessions in English, American Sign Language, and Spanish. Everyone is encouraged to bring their Bible and/or rosary to this service and pray as they wait their turn for confession.

A Lenten prayer group for Adults meets on Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8:15 p.m. at St. John during Lent. Everyone is invited to participate.

Members of the Deaf Community will gather at San Mateo Church located at 3316 Lovell Ave. in Fort Worth for Palm Sunday services. Fr. Robinson will also celebrate the 1:45 p.m. Mass in sign and voice. Hearing family members and friends are invited to join the Deaf Community for this liturgy and social after Mass.

Holy Thursday Mass will

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

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

Contact Mary Cinatl, director of Deaf Ministry, at [mcinatl@fwdioc.org](mailto:mcinatl@fwdioc.org) for more information.

## Knights of Columbus PRCA Rodeo to be held in Graham March 26-28

The seventh annual Young County Rodeo will be held March 26-28 at the Young County Indoor Arena at 120 Craig St. off U.S. Highway 380 East in Graham.

The Professional Rodeo Cowboys Association Rodeo is produced and sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council 9634 from St. Mary Church in Graham and St. Theresa Church in Olney.

The rodeo begins at 7:30 p.m. each evening, and features Liesel Harris, the Six White Horses of Hardin-Simmons

University.

Events include a calf scramble, a kids' nickel scramble, and nightly gate prizes.

Other rodeo events include a Rodeo Parade at 5:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 26 in downtown Graham, a Queens Contest, and dances on Friday and Saturday evenings after the rodeo.

Admission to the rodeo is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children ages 5 to 11.

For more information, call Don Machenberg at (940) 549-7719.

# Nolan Catholic announces ten 2009 National Merit Scholarship Finalists



Ten seniors from Nolan Catholic High School qualified as finalists for the National Merit Scholarship Program, an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. The National Merit Scholarship finalists include in the front row from left to right: Susan Matassa, Elizabeth Mengis, Anne Conover, Madeline Ross, and Stephanie McCauley; and in the back row from left to right: Chase Hattersley, Jessica Chung, Jennifer Dayrit.

Ten seniors from Nolan Catholic High School have qualified as finalists in the National Merit Scholarship Program, an academic competition for recognition and scholarships. The finalists are Jessica Chung, Anne Conover, Jennifer Dayrit, George Elkind, Angela Ferreira, Chase Hattersley, Susan Matassa, Stephanie McCauley, Elizabeth Mengis, and Madeline Ross.

These seniors have been chosen from more than 16,000 semi-finalists named in September 2008, and will be considered for National Merit Scholarships to be offered in 2009.

"The entire Nolan Catholic High School family salutes the special achievement of these 10 seniors," said NCHS Principal Stephen Hiner. "They are among the highest scoring entrants in the state of Texas."

To advance as a finalist in the competition, students must be endorsed and recommended by the principal, and earn SAT scores that confirm their earlier qualifying test performance. They also must submit a detailed scholarship application, which includes the student's self-descriptive essay and information about their participation and leadership in school and community activities.

Approximately half of the finalists will be selected as Merit Scholarship winners, earning the Merit Scholar title. This selection is based on their skills, accomplishments and potential for success in rigorous college studies, without

regard to gender, race, ethnic origin, or religious preference.

National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC) is a not-for-profit organization that operates without government assistance. It was established in 1955 specifically to conduct the annual National Merit Program. Scholarships awarded through the program are underwritten by NMSC's own funds and by approximately 500 business organization and education institutions that share NMSC's goals of honoring the nation's scholastic champions and encouraging the pursuit of academic excellence.

## Catholic Schools Office to hold teacher job fair

The Office of Catholic Schools will hold a "Teacher Job Fair" Saturday, March 28, from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. at Nolan Catholic High School located at 4501 Bridge St. in Fort Worth. Prospective teachers (from pre-kindergarten through 12th grade) will have the opportunity to visit with principals and representatives from the diocesan schools, according to a press release from the Catholic Schools Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Application and benefits information for the coming school year will be available. For more information, contact the Catholic Schools Office at (817) 560-3300 ext. 280, or visit the Web site: [www.fwdioc.org](http://www.fwdioc.org).

**The Lady Margaret Roper program** at the College of St. Thomas More helps Catholic parents in homeschooling their children. Classical learning. 8 a.m.-1 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Call 817-923-8459

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## Sacred Heart Church hosts Food Fast retreat for Northwest deanery

Approximately 100 teens from parishes within the Northwest Deanery of the Diocese of Fort Worth will gather for an overnight Lenten retreat March 27-28 at Sacred Heart Church, located at 1504 10th St. in Wichita Falls.

The retreat, called a "Food Fast," is an opportunity for youth to raise funds for Catholic Relief Services (CRS) through donations offered by sponsors. In return for the donations, the teens will fast for 24 hours, drinking only juice and water while listening to personal witness talks and participating in prayer services and educational activities.

CRS, an international Catholic humanitarian agency, provides assistance to those in need in more than 100 countries and territories. With a focus upon hunger and global poverty, the CRS Food Fast educational program connects young people with issues faced by their peers in the developing world.

Last year's Food Fast retreat at Sacred Heart involved nearly 100 teens and their adult leaders and raised over \$2,000 for Catholic Relief Services, said Cassandra "Cassie" Hoffman Erazo, coordinator of youth ministry and adolescent catechesis for Sacred Heart. "This year's theme is 'We Journey

as One To Change the World' and focuses on how, though we are many parts — different cultures, races, and languages — we are one through our faith, one body in Christ," she said.

Retreat participants will learn facts about migration at this year's program, said Erazo, noting that speakers at the program will include Father Hoa Nguyen, pastor of Sacred Heart Church; Nigerian students from Midwestern State University; and a citizen of Mexico, all of whom will share their own experiences of coming to the United States as immigrants.

"We put a lot of hard work and prayer into making this event a success. It is truly a humbling experience, and so inspirational to see teens today recognize the God-given blessings in their lives and [offer] their efforts to share those blessings," said Erazo.

The retreat will begin at 6 p.m. Friday evening and will conclude with the Saturday evening Mass at Sacred Heart at 5 p.m. A dinner for retreat participants will follow the liturgy. For more information about the Food Fast program, visit [www.crs.org](http://www.crs.org); for more information about participation in the retreat, contact Cassie Erazo at [cerazo@sacredheartwf.org](mailto:cerazo@sacredheartwf.org) or at (940) 723-5288, ext. 25.

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A sociological study of U.S. Catholics published two years ago indicates why *Why Catholic?* is a timely program. According to *American Catholics Today: New Realities of Their Faith and of Their Church*, only 21 percent of Catholics in 2005, compared to 27 percent in 1987, showed a strong commitment to the Church. In 2005, 37 percent of Catholics thought that one might be considered a "good Catholic" without believing in Christ's real presence in the Eucharist and 67 percent assumed that one might be a "good Catholic" even if his/her marriage is not

approved by the Church.

Obviously, there is both lagging commitment and growing misunderstanding among Catholics in the U.S. today. *Why Catholic?* addresses the need to engage Catholics more fully by promoting parish recruitment campaigns that will invite parishioners to participate in faith sharing groups. *Why Catholic?* is also a catechetical program that instructs participants in the basics of Catholic beliefs.

For more information, contact Father Carmen Mele, OP, at (817) 560-3300, ext. 262, or by e-mail at [cmele@fwdioc.org](mailto:cmele@fwdioc.org).

## Advocacy Day for life issues trip to Austin planned March 31

The Diocese of Fort Worth's Office of Respect Life, Catholics Respect Life, and the Texas Catholic Conference will sponsor the annual "Respect Life and Family Life Advocacy Day" at the Capitol in Austin Tuesday, March 31.

The day will provide an opportunity for participants to meet other pro-life advocates, and meet with their legislative representatives about issues important to the pro-life movement.

Advocacy Day organizers advise participants to bring a sack lunch, walking shoes, and a "willingness to defend life."

The trip will include training and instructions, possible photo opportunities with state House or Senate members, being present for the chamber openings, appointments with legislators,

reports and a debriefing, and a closing prayer.

Round-trip transportation to Austin will be provided. Those going to Austin will meet at 6 a.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral at 1206 Throckmorton St. in Fort Worth and return by 6:30 p.m.

For more information, visit [www.fwdioc.org](http://www.fwdioc.org), [www.catholicsrespectlife.org](http://www.catholicsrespectlife.org), or [www.tx-catholic.org](http://www.tx-catholic.org).

Those planning on traveling with the diocese, must RSVP to help with planning transportation and legislative visits.

To RSVP for the trip, no later than Wednesday, March 25, contact Chanacee Ruth-Killgore, director of Respect Life at (817) 560-3300, ext. 257, or by e-mail at [cruth-killgore@fwdioc.org](mailto:cruth-killgore@fwdioc.org), or Jeff Williams at (817) 763-5483 or [40daysforlifefortworth@gmail.com](mailto:40daysforlifefortworth@gmail.com).

#### Evangelization Workshops (in English)

Day	Date	Time	Church	City
Wednesday	April 22	7 p.m.	St. Michael the Archangel	Bedford
Thursday	April 23	7 p.m.	Most Blessed Sacrament	Arlington
Friday	April 24	7 p.m.	St. Ann	Burleson
Saturday	April 25	10 a.m.	Catholic Center	Fort Worth
Sunday	April 26	3 p.m.	Sacred Heart	Wichita Falls
Monday	April 27	7 p.m.	Immaculate Conception	Denton

Fr. Carmen Mele: "Finally let me ask again, if you have not already done so, would you please send me a list of names and email addresses for the parish *Why Catholic?* Planning Team."



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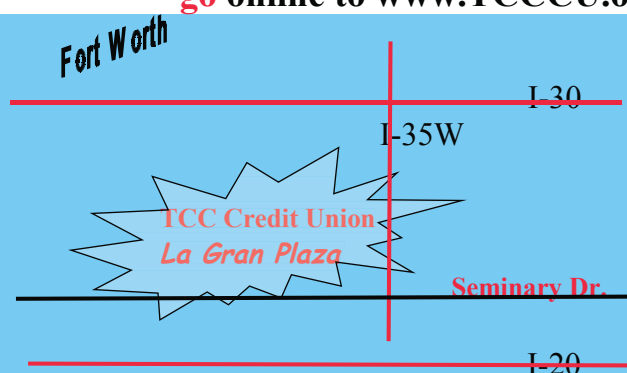
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# St. Rita starts year-long centennial celebrations

By Nicki Prevou  
Editorial Assistant

February 28 marks an important anniversary for the thousands of Catholics who have called St. Rita Church their spiritual home through the years. On that date, in 1909, 14 Catholic families gathered in a small frame church on Erie Street in Fort Worth to celebrate Mass as charter members of the small parish. The faith community was considered a "mission" church of St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth, at that time a parish of the Diocese of Dallas.

Telling the congregation that it was his "honor and joy" to join them in marking the occasion, Bishop Kevin Vann celebrated a 100th anniversary Mass at St. Rita's at the Saturday evening liturgy held on Feb. 28. "St. Rita Catholic Church was born from the vision and persistence of Miss Mollie Farrell," he reflected. "In 1908, seeing the need for a Catholic church in the Handley area, Miss Mollie brought her dream to the attention of Bishop Edward Dunne, the second bishop of the Diocese of Dallas. The bishop advised Miss Mollie that it would be an 'impossible task,' but eventually gave his permission for her to pursue support of her vision."

Bishop Dunne named the community after Saint Rita, said Bishop Vann, "because she was considered the patron saint of the impossible. St. Rita, in all of the difficult realities of her own life, never gave up on her faith. Today, we celebrate the circumstances of Providence that gave birth to this faith community, 100 years ago today."

The parish grew through the years to include a vibrant elementary and middle school community, which was established in 1954 and built on the parish's present church site at the corner of Weiler and East

Lancaster streets. Groundbreaking for the current parish building was April 25, 1974, and Bishop John Cassatta dedicated the new structure March 9, 1975. The current pastor is Father Paul Kahan, SVD.

Special celebratory Masses were held throughout the weekend of Feb. 28-29 at the parish's regular 5 p.m., 9 a.m., and 10:30 a.m. Masses held in English, said Barbara Shropshire, coordinator of sacramental preparation at St. Rita's. "These Masses [were] the official beginning of our observance of a centennial year," said Shropshire. "[In the year ahead] we will join together as brothers and sisters in the Body of Christ to rejoice in our parish's history and accomplishments."

According to Lori Strittmatter, coordinator of the St. Rita anniversary committee, the centennial will be marked at all regular parish events in the year ahead. "And on Feb. 28, 2010, Bishop Vann will be with us again to mark the close of our year of celebration," said Strittmatter. "There have been many religious vocations that originated from our parish, and so we will be inviting all of these priests, brothers, and sisters to participate in the closing celebration, as well as all of our former pastors and staff members."

"We are grateful for the vocations, for the wonderful parish school here, for the religious orders of women who have been here through the years, for the wonderful multicultural character of this community, as it is celebrated in the International Fair each year," said Bishop Vann in his closing remarks to the congregation at the Feb. 28 liturgy. "Congratulations on 100 years of faith and life. As Mollie Farrell said, truly, 'nothing is impossible with God.'"



**ABOVE:** Father Paul Kahan, SVD, celebrates the 9 a.m. Sunday Mass on March 1 at St. Rita Church. He is joined on the altar by Deacon Thomas Giovannitti and three young servers.

**BELOW:** Stations of the cross from the original St. Rita Church building were carried into the church during the procession at each Mass during the anniversary weekend and were placed before the altar.



At left, longtime parishioner Marie Pastusek stands after communion with her son, Ed, waiting to receive a candle symbolizing the light of Christ. During each anniversary Mass held Feb. 28-March 1, a lit candle was passed from older parishioners to members of younger generations. At right, Aiden Schwericke is shown lighting the parish candle with the help of Fr. Kahan.



Miss Mollie Farrell, a resident of the former small Tarrant County town of Handley, near downtown Fort Worth, was instrumental in persuading Dallas Bishop Edward Dunne to establish St. Rita Church in 1909. Farrell, born in 1865, died in Fort Worth in 1937.



## Tribunal personnel study church law at annual spring conference

SAN ANTONIO — The Department of Judicial Vicars of the Texas Catholic Conference held its 34th annual spring conference at the Oblate Renewal Center March 10-11, examining the roles of judges and other personnel who serve in marriage tribunal ministry.

Representatives from the Diocese of Fort Worth included Bishop Kevin Vann, JCD, Fathers Daniel Kelley, and Karl Schilken, both canon law students, tribunal workers Meg Romano-Hogan, Anna Maria Chamblee, Joleen DuBois, JoAnn Gordon, Linda McKinney, Denise Snider, and tribunal volunteers Bernice Crocker, Helen Engle, Terry Taylor.

The presenter for the event was

Father Patrick R. Lagges, judicial vicar and vicar for canonical affairs for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Fr. Lagges has worked in Tribunal Ministry since 1982, and served as secretary of the Canon Law Society of America from 2000 to 2002. He received his doctorate in canon law from St. Paul University in Ottawa in 1988.

His writings have appeared in *The Jurist*, *Loyola Magazine*, *Liguorian*, and *Marriage and Family*.

He is an adjunct member of the faculty at Mundelein Seminary at the University of St. Mary of the Lake, and is also an instructor at the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago.

Fr. Lagges presented four talks during the two-day conference in

the Alamo City, and the first of the sessions was titled, "The Pastoral Work of Judges."

Although the marriage nullity process is a legal process in the church, the Code of Canon Law and *Dignitas Connubi* — the Vatican instruction on the norms to be observed by ecclesiastical tribunals in matrimonial proceedings — still contain many places where judicial discretion is called for. In these cases, the judge acts as pastor, deciding what is good and equitable. Papal texts have also drawn attention to this aspect of judicial ministry. This presentation examined some of these texts and the ways in which the judge exercises discretion in handling a case.

In "Discretion of Judgment in Reaching a Decision," the "discretion of judgment" that ought to be expected of judges in coming to a decision in marriage nullity cases was examined. This presentation examined the procedural and substantive canons of the Code of Canon Law and the articles of *Dignitas Connubi*, with particular attention paid to the judicial discretion of judgment.

"Wrestlemania: The Interaction of Procurators, Advocates and Defenders in Marriage Nullity Cases" examined these various roles and indicated how they interact in a marriage nullity case. The clarification of roles can often make a case run smoothly, as there is no overlap between functions.

"Sometimes just having each person know what he or she is supposed to do makes for a more harmonious processing of the case," stated Fr. Lagges.

In addition, a number of other roles exist in a marriage tribunal, such as that of auditor, assessor, and notary. *Dignitas Connubi* also added two offices to the Tribunal. In Fr. Lagges' final session, "The Rest," he examined each of these functions and indicated ways in which the creative use of offices can allow cases to be handled in better ways.

Lastly, attendees to the conference also heard the "president's report" from Father Lawrence Jurcak, JCL, from the Canon Law Society of America.



## Diocesan

# Holy Trinity students advance to DI state competition

Two teams from Holy Trinity School in Grapevine will represent the Mid-Cities District at the Destination Imagination (DI) state competition in Houston on April 4, 2009. Each of these teams took first place in their respective DI Challenge categories at the Mid-Cities Regional Tournament held Feb. 28 in Colleyville. In addition, two more of the school's teams placed in their categories as well.

"We are very proud of all of our teams," said Maureen Ramirez,

Holy Trinity Destination Imagination coordinator. "We had such a huge response this year to this creative-thinking program. Nine teams including 54 kindergarten through eighth grade students participated in DI this year and competed in the Regional Tournament in both the team and instant challenge categories. We are hopeful these two teams will perform well at the state competition and be able to advance to the Global Tournament in Tennessee

mid-May."

For Haden Hickman, a member of one of the seventh and eighth grade Holy Trinity teams called the PeequoDIan's (named after the boat in Moby Dick and the piece of literature this group chose to put to music for its challenge), this year's state tournament will be the fifth time he has advanced, saying he's participated in the tournament since he was in the second grade.

"I really enjoy the challenge of making it to the state level. I've

been together with many of my current team members for the majority of those years, and we have had a great time together as well."

Julie Lucht, coach to another middle school team that will advance to the state tournament, the Bee52's (named after the creature they selected to highlight as part of the Instinct Messaging challenge), sums up the opportunity for her team members as "a wonderful experience that gives each of the

students a chance to think differently about things while utilizing their own gifts and talents. They take what they have learned from school curriculum ... the arts, science, and even history, and put it to use. From a coach's perspective, however, what they learn about working as a team ... with people they might not otherwise have even met ... is a truly amazing thing and something they will be able to benefit from in the years ahead."

## Annual Good Friday Rosary for Life planned

Bishop Kevin Vann and other priests in the Diocese of Fort Worth will again lead Catholics United for Life and Mother and Unborn Baby Care's 24th Annual Rosary Vigil for Life at the Planned Parenthood abortion center located at 301 S. Henderson, from 1 to 2:30 p.m. on Good Friday, April 10. More than 500 people joined with Bishop Vann and other clergy and religious at last year's vigil.

"With the election of the most pro-abortion President in the country's history, it is even more important to implore God's help for all the victims of abortion at the

very place where these despicable acts occur," say event organizers in a press release. "Planned Parenthood of America is the biggest promoter, provider, and protector of abortion in the country. Planned Parenthood in the Fort Worth-Dallas area aborts over 200 babies a week. The Fort Worth center on Henderson commits up to 100 abortions a week. We will raise our voices in humble supplications to Almighty God on behalf of all our precious pre-born brothers and sisters who die by abortion before they ever see the light and love of this world. It may be the only love they know on this earth."

Prayers will also be offered for the abortionists and staff and for all who suffer after abortion. In keeping with the request of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the group will pray: "In reparation for all sins of abortion; In thanksgiving for all graces God gives to those who fight abortion; In petition for the end of abortion; and for our souls and the souls of all the victims of abortion, including those who perform and promote abortions and for all the people of our nation."

For more information, call Chuck or Pat Pelletier at (817) 738-1086.



Father Mel Bessellieu led 55 parishioners from St. Ann Church in Burleson traveling to San Juan, Texas for a pre-lenten pilgrimage to the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle in February. Trip highlights included the outside life-size Stations of the Cross, daily Mass, sacrament of reconciliation, and quiet meditation. It was a special treat for the group to attend Mass celebrated by Fr. Bessellieu on the feast of Our Lady Of Lourdes at this Marian shrine.

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**APRIL 26 @ NOLAN CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL**

# Viewpoints

## Catholic Social Teaching calls us to recognize the rights and dignity of others

By Lucas Pollice

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

**A**s we continue our journey of Lent and a deeper look at Catholic Social Teaching, let us now look at the next three themes as outlined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. These themes are Rights and Responsibilities, the Poor and the Vulnerable, and the Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers.

### RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This theme of Catholic Social Teaching is based upon the fact that every person has the inalienable right to life and to the basic necessities of life. Every human person has the right to what is required to live a full and decent life, such as the right to work, education, healthcare, and the basic necessities of life such as food, water, and adequate living conditions. In addition, all people have the responsibility to see that these rights are safeguarded and preserved so that the common good of all is established and protected.

This theme is closely connected to the common good, which is a fundamental principle of Catholic Social Teaching. The common good is "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily." *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* gives three basic elements of the common good and the rights and responsibilities concerning it: respect for the person (1907), social well-being and development (1908), and the requirement of peace (1908).

### THE POOR AND VULNERABLE

Another important theme in Catholic Social Teaching is the preferential option for the poor and the most vulnerable. This principle is derived directly from the teaching and action of Jesus himself. We see throughout his earthly ministry that Jesus was most

concerned with the poor, the sick, the dying, and the outcast. We also see within his teaching the story of the Good Samaritan who helped even his enemy in time of need and distress. We also see the great story of the Last Judgment in Matthew 25 where the people of God will be judged upon how they cared for the most poor, weak, and vulnerable. This theme of Catholic Social Teaching addresses three issues that are of particular concern in our modern culture today:

#### THE POOR AND HOMELESS:

This theme calls us to be concerned with the poor, the homeless, and the outcasts of our society. Are our local communities and charities receiving enough resources to put toward care for the poor and homeless? Are we helping the poor and homeless integrate back into society and become productive citizens, or are we allowing them to continue to degenerate in an undignified and ineffective welfare system? These questions must be asked, and these issues become a concern to all as we are all called by the example of Christ himself to concern ourselves with the poor and the outcast.

#### IMMIGRATION:

One of the most controversial issues of our present time is the issue of immigration. This is a very difficult issue with no clear-cut solutions. However, it is a very serious issue of human rights and dignity and must be addressed seriously by our government and communities. While the Church certainly respects and upholds the right of a country to protect its borders and national security, this needs to be accomplished while preserving the human dignity of the person to the fullest extent possible. The immigrants of today are seeking the basic necessities of life and are often escaping horrible social and living conditions in their home countries. While there are no easy answers and numerous ways of approaching and addressing this issue, our society must find a just solution to this growing issue that respects the human rights and dignity of all while also protecting our nation's borders and security. It is also very important that this issue does not continue to be politicized, or become motivated purely by economic or racial motives.

#### THE UNBORN, THE ELDERLY, AND THE DISABLED:

Human life is most weak and vulnerable at both the dawn and dusk of our existence on earth. Abortion is an attack on the most absolutely weak and innocent of our society. One often-neglected aspect of abortion is

the weakness and vulnerability of the mothers who seek and obtain abortions. In most cases, these mothers are in desperate and vulnerable situations. By helping them in these weak and vulnerable circumstances, we can also help save the life of the unborn child and bring the light of Christ to a very dark moment in a woman's life.

On the other end of the spectrum of human life is the care and concern for the elderly of our society. How well does our society meet the needs of our aged population who have already given so much of themselves to the benefit of the community and society? Issues such as Social Security, Medicare, dignified health care, and end of life issues are great social justice concerns that cannot be neglected and must be addressed.

Catholic Social Teaching also calls us to help and protect the disabled in our society. Even those who have serious disabilities must be afforded adequate care and living conditions. The dignity of the human person cannot be degraded or tossed aside, even when one requires significant care and economic resources. Even those who are in a persistent vegetative state still have human dignity and need to be protected and cared for. Our society must always resist the temptation to discard human life and dignity due to economics or the perceived burden of care. The vulnerable and disabled among us call us to a deeper and more compassionate love and to develop a true civilization of love.

### THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS

The ability to work and to be productive and creative is an important part of the dignity of the human person. We see in the book of Genesis that God places Adam in the Garden of Eden and gives him the command to cultivate and care for it. Even in the original innocence of the human person, work was established as a fundamental good and gives witness to its dignity.

Furthermore, work has always been a part of human society and in a sense affects many aspects of a community and culture. This theme and principle of Catholic Social Teaching flows not only from the fact that human work must always be fostered and respected, but above all, the worker must be the source and the end of all human work.

This issue is of such importance that it was the impetus for the first social encyclical *On Capital and Labor (Rerum Novarum)* by Pope Leo XIII in 1891. He defended the rights and dignity of workers in the face of the industrial revolution and the rising philosophies of Engels and Marx who were promot-

ing radical collectivism, which would spark the Communist revolutions of the Twentieth Century.

Catholic Social Teaching respects the rights of workers against both the state and against unjust companies or corporations. Among these fundamental rights of workers is the right to associate in unions in order to protect themselves from unfair or unjust practices or working conditions. Catholic Social Teaching also vigorously upholds the right of all men and women to work and that all work, no matter how menial, contributes to the dignity of the human person and to the betterment of society. As John Paul II states in his social encyclical *On the Dignity of Work (Laborem Exercens)*:

*As man, through his work, becomes more and more the master of the earth, and as he confirms his dominion over the visible world, again through his work, he nevertheless remains in every case and at every phase of this process within the Creator's original ordering. And this ordering remains necessarily and indissolubly linked with the fact that man was created, as male and female, "in the image of God." This process is, at the same time, universal: It embraces all human beings, every generation, every phase of economic and cultural development, and at the same time it is a process that takes place within each human being, in each conscious human being, in each conscious human subject. Each and every individual is at the same time embraced by it. Each and every individual, to the proper extent and in an incalculable number of ways, takes part in the giant process whereby man "subdues the earth" through his work. (4)*

May we during this holy season of Lent take some time to meditate on these important themes of Catholic Social Teaching and consider how we can act in our own families and parish communities that we may follow the example of Jesus in going out to meet the needs of so many in our society who are poor, hungry, and vulnerable.



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

# Science and Ethics

— no conflict

By Richard M. Doerflinger

Though tempered by sober realism, President Obama's inaugural address in January delivered a message of hope — including a hope that science will help our nation solve its serious problems.

"We will restore science to its rightful place," he said, "and wield technology's wonders to raise health care's quality and lower its costs."

But now the president has decided to force U.S. taxpayers to subsidize research that requires destroying live human embryos. That decision actually ignores his pledge to take science seriously — because science is moving on, and embryonic stem cells are becoming "obsolete."

That's the considered judgment of the first female director of the National Institutes of Health, Dr. Bernadine Healy, writing in the March 4 issue of *U.S. News and World Report*. Dr. Healy cites a recent study in Israel, showing the formation of multiple tumors in a boy's nervous system after he was treated with derivatives from early fetal stem cells.

In January, a study in *Nature Biotechnology* confirmed that embryonic stem cell cultures generally contain abnormal cells that can cause cancer — and there is no simple way to tell which cells are abnormal, as they have a normal genome and may seem to be the healthiest and most viable cells. Dr. Martin Pera, stem cell expert at the University of Southern California in Los Angeles, comments: "Ultimately it may be difficult or impossible to rule out with certainty that a given culture is totally free of abnormal cells." How reassuring for those needing therapies!

Producing genetically

Adult stem cells, obtained without harming the donor, are benefiting more and more real patients, reversing the symptoms of multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease in the latest published trials.

tailored embryonic stem cells that cannot be rejected as "foreign" by a patient's body also remains a challenge. To solve this problem, teams around the world have tried to obtain usable stem cells from cloned human embryos, but failed. Cloning also requires a huge supply of women's eggs — and according to the Feb. 1 issue of the *American Journal of Epidemiology*, the drugs needed to stimulate women's ovaries to produce these eggs boosts the women's risk of, yes, cancer. The bizarre approach of using eggs from animals instead was approved last year in Great Britain, but scientists now find that animal eggs (big surprise) do not program a human genome properly.

That's the sobering reality. Here's the hope. Adult stem cells, obtained without harming the donor, are benefiting more and more real patients, reversing the symptoms of multiple sclerosis and Parkinson's disease in the latest published trials.

An advance hailed by the journal *Science* as the top scientific breakthrough of last year — a technique for reprogramming ordinary adult cells

into "induced pluripotent stem cells" — looks better with each passing month. These "induced" cells can be an exact genetic match to any patient, and the journal *Nature* just published two studies showing that initial concerns about the safety of the procedure are being resolved. If there is any research purpose for which embryonic stem cells have an advantage, these reprogrammed cells seem able to perform that task as well or better, without ethical problems.

Science and ethics are pointing the way forward together. The only thing standing in the way now is an ideology favoring embryo destruction — an ideology that is reflected in the president's new executive order, but that the American people do not support.



Mr. Doerflinger is Associate Director of the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Go to [www.usccb.org/prolife](http://www.usccb.org/prolife) to learn more about the bishops' pro-life activities.

Our Lenten challenge  
as we face hard times:

Who  
— or what  
— is our  
master?

By Effie Caldarola

There were seven of us gals gathered around a coffee table with a bottle of red wine, a bottle of white and a lot of good chatter.

We all taught preschool together at one time, and we're dedicated to maintaining our friendship. So every month or two, we make a date and catch up on families, jobs, vacations, life.

It occurred to me late in the conversation that no one had said, "Hey, let's talk about the economy." But just as the late afternoon sun breaking through the window infused the room with light, so too did the economy, unbidden, seep into every nook and cranny of our conversation.

One woman told us that her daughter, son-in-law, and the kids had moved back home with her. They could no longer afford the mortgage on the condo and were trying to sell it. Others, married to oil-company workers, that mainstay of our Alaskan economy, talked about possible layoffs and definite wage freezes.

Another spoke of her son and daughter-in-law buying a vacation home close to theirs in Arizona. The home was a foreclosure, and they were getting a terrific buy.

For my part, when asked about my graduating daughter's college plans, I mentally cringed at the current state of our college savings portfolio.

No, this economic downturn is unavoidable.

Did I say "downturn"? Every week, it seems, the media and their experts come up with a new term. Downturn seems too polite and cautious now. We've moved from "recession" to "severe recession," and then some use the "D" word, only they tell us it won't be as bad as the Great Depression. At least that's what they assure us now.

Some remark that this event, whose end we really cannot foresee, will change the way Americans live and spend forever. That reminds me of the commentator who said after 9/11 that Americans might never regain their sense of humor.

Please — historical events may change us, but it takes a lot to revolutionize us.

But it is Lent, a time for reflection and personal revolution. Reflection should include how we feel about money, affluence, trust, security.

Some people think money and prayer belong in two

SEE CALDAROLA, P. 22

# Pope responds to criticisms over Lefebvrite decision

FROM PAGE 1

The pope said he was taking the unusual step of writing to the bishops because the episode had generated "a discussion more heated than any we have seen for a long time," both inside and outside the church.

He said his overture to Bishop Williamson and the other three bishops of the Society of St. Pius X was designed to close a wound and bring unity to the church, by lifting excommunications incurred in 1988 and opening the way to dialogue with the society.

But when Bishop Williamson's comments about the Holocaust were circulated, "it suddenly appeared as something completely different: as the repudiation of reconciliation between Christians and Jews, and thus as the reversal of what the (Second Vatican) Council had laid down in this regard to guide the church's path," he said.

As a result, he said, "an avalanche of protests was unleashed, whose bitterness laid bare wounds deeper than those of the present moment.

"I was saddened by the fact that even Catholics, who, after all, might have had a better knowledge of the situation, thought they had to attack me with open hostility," he said.

"Precisely for this reason I thank all the more our Jewish friends, who quickly helped to clear up the misunderstanding and to restore the atmosphere of friendship and trust," he said.

The pope acknowledged something critics have pointed out: that a simple Internet search would have revealed Bishop Williamson's views on the Holocaust and helped the Vatican anticipate the reaction.

"I have been told that consulting the information available on the Internet would have made it possible to perceive the problem early on. I have learned the lesson that in the future in the Holy See we will have to pay greater attention to that source of news," he said.

Pope Benedict said he deeply regretted another mistake: that the lifting of the excommunications was not adequately explained and gave rise to misinterpretations about the traditionalist society's status in the church.

He emphasized that the removal of the excommunications was a disciplinary measure that affects individuals. But the fact that the Society of St. Pius X has no standing in the church depends on doctrinal reasons, he said.

"Until the doctrinal questions are clarified, the society has no

*"I was saddened by the fact that even Catholics, who, after all, might have had a better knowledge of the situation, thought they had to attack me with open hostility. Precisely for this reason I thank all the more our Jewish friends, who quickly helped to clear up the misunderstanding and to restore the atmosphere of friendship and trust."*

— Pope Benedict XVI

canonical status in the church, and its ministers — even though they have been freed of the ecclesiastical penalty — do not legitimately exercise any ministry in the church," he said.

In view of the importance of the doctrinal issues still to be clarified with the society, the pope announced that he was putting the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, which has handled reconciliation efforts with traditionalist groups, under the auspices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

"This will make it clear that the problems now to be addressed are essentially doctrinal in nature and concern primarily the acceptance of the Second Vatican Council and the post-conciliar magisterium of the popes," he said.

He underlined what Vatican officials have said in recent weeks, that for the Society of St. Pius X full communion implies acceptance of Vatican II.

"The church's teaching authority cannot be frozen in the year 1962 — this must be quite clear to the society," the pope said.

At the same time, he said, some defenders of Vatican II need to be reminded that being faithful to the council also means being faithful to the church's entire doctrinal history, without cutting "the roots from which the tree draws its life."

After making his clarifications, the pope confronted the question: "Was this measure needed? Was it really a priority?" He answered with a heartfelt defense of his reconciliation move, saying the

church cannot stop working for unity among its ranks.

"That the quiet gesture of extending a hand gave rise to a huge uproar, and thus became exactly the opposite of a gesture of reconciliation, is a fact which we must accept. But I ask now: Was it, and is it, truly wrong in this case to meet halfway the brother who 'has something against you' and to seek reconciliation?" he said.

The pope also asked whether the church could be totally indifferent about a traditionalist society that has 491 priests, 215 seminarians, six seminaries, 88 schools, two university-level institutes, 117 religious brothers, 164 religious sisters and thousands of lay faithful. "Should we casually let them drift farther from the church?" he said.

He offered a special thought for the society's priests, saying he did not think they would have chosen the priesthood unless they had a love of Christ and a desire to proclaim the Gospel.

"Can we simply exclude them, as representatives of a radical fringe, from our pursuit of reconciliation and unity? What would then become of them?" he said.

The pope said he recognized that disturbing statements have often come from the society's leadership, reflecting "arrogance and presumptuousness." But he said he has also witnessed "an openness of hearts" among some members.

He said the traditionalist society deserves the same kind of tolerance given to other members in the church.

"At times one gets the impression that our society needs to have at least one group to which no tolerance may be shown, which one can easily attack and hate. And should someone dare to approach them — in this case the pope — he, too, loses any right to tolerance; he too can be treated hatefully, without misgiving or restraint," he said.

Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state, denied reports that the pope was isolated inside the Vatican or cut off from much of the Roman Curia.

"The pope is not alone. His closest collaborators are loyally faithful to the pontiff and totally united with him," the cardinal told bishops participating in a Vatican meeting on communications March 13.

Cardinal Bertone added that the pope had received many letters of support during the recent controversy, in contrast with "some out-of-tune voices among bishops and journalists."

# Papal preacher says intelligent design is truth of faith, not science

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Affirming the reality of an intelligent design for the creation and development of the universe is not a scientific theory, but a statement of faith, said the preacher of the papal household.

Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa, offering a Lenten meditation to Pope Benedict XVI and top Vatican officials March 13, said the controversy that has arisen between scientists supporting evolution and religious believers promoting creationism or intelligent design is due mainly to a confusion between scientific theory and the truths of faith.

The intelligent-design theory asserts that the development and evolution of life is such a hugely complex process that a supreme being, God, must be directly involved in it.

While some proponents of intelligent design claim that it is a scientifically valid theory, most scientists dismiss it as pseudoscience.

The arguments, he said, occur because "in my opinion, there is not a clear enough distinction between intelligent design as a scientific theory and intelligent design as a truth of faith."

While science and evolution can explain part of the history of creation and how life exists, they cannot explain why, he said.

"Even those who eliminate the idea of God from the horizon don't eliminate the mystery," the

preacher said.

"We know everything about the world, except how it started. The believer is convinced that the Bible furnishes precisely this missing first page. There, as on the title page of every book, is the name of the author and the title of the work," he said.

Father Cantalamessa's Lenten reflection focused on a verse from St. Paul's Letter to the Romans: "All creation is groaning in labor pains even until now."

The text, he said, is an indication that St. Paul believes that the entire cosmos — not just humanity — is waiting to be saved and restored to its original beauty by Christ.

The suffering of the cosmos "is not closed and definitive. There is hope for creation, not because creation is able to hope subjectively, but because God has a redemption in mind for it."

Christians contribute to keeping hope alive by respecting and defending nature, he said.

"For the Christian believer, environmentalism is not only a practical necessity for survival or a problem that is only political or economic; it has a theological foundation. Creation is the work of the Holy Spirit," he said.

Christians must see that the moans of creation described by St. Paul "today are mixed with the cry of agony and death" because of "human sin and selfishness," he said.

# HHS opens comment period on conscience protection regs

FROM PAGE 1

care services, particularly by low-income women."

— Whether the rule is clear enough "to minimize the potential for any ambiguity and confusion" that might result from it.

— Whether the objectives of the rule could be accomplished "through nonregulatory means, such as outreach and education."

The regulation codifies several existing federal statutes prohibiting discrimination against health professionals who decline to participate in abortions or other medical procedures because of their religious or other moral objections.

Planned Parenthood of America, which has filed suit against what it calls the "midnight regulation" of President George W. Bush, is mobilizing its members to support the rescission proposal.

The organization said rescind-

ing the regulation would restore "the rights of patients to receive complete and accurate reproductive health information and services, without fear that health care providers will withhold vital information and services based on their personal biases."

Comments may be submitted electronically on the Web site [www.Regulations.gov](http://www.Regulations.gov) (by entering 0991-AB49 in the search box) or via e-mail to [proposedrescission@hhs.gov](mailto:proposedrescission@hhs.gov). Attachments may be in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect or Excel, but Microsoft Word is preferred.

By mail, one original and two copies of written comments may be sent to: Office of Public Health and Science, Department of Health and Human Services, Attention: Rescission Proposal Comments, Hubert H. Humphrey Building, 200 Independence Ave. SW, Room 716G, Washington, DC 20201.

## International

## Pope tells Israeli rabbis he hopes trip will promote dialogue, peace

By Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI met representatives of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel March 12 and pledged continued efforts to improve Catholic-Jewish relations.

Referring to his scheduled May visit to Israel, the pope told the rabbis he hoped his trip would "help to deepen the dialogue of the church with the Jewish people so that Jews and Christians and also Muslims may live in peace and harmony in this Holy Land."

The meeting with the pope was part of the annual dialogue sponsored by the chief rabbinate and the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews.

The meeting was held the same day the Vatican published Pope Benedict's letter expressing regret over the controversy caused by his lifting the excommunications of four bishops from the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X.

The meeting with the rabbis had been planned for earlier in March, but was postponed after the pope lifted the excommunications of the four, including Bishop Richard Williamson, who has publicly questioned the extent of the Holocaust.

The chief rabbinate quickly rescheduled the dialogue meeting after Pope Benedict publicly affirmed the obligation to recognize and remember the Holocaust and after the Vatican said Bishop Williamson must publicly repudiate his position in order to be fully reinstated in the Catholic Church.

Pope Benedict did not mention the case when he met the Israeli rabbinical delegation March 12, but the head of the delegation did.

Rabbi Shear-Yashuv Cohen, chief rabbi of Haifa, told the pope, "We thank the Holy See for making this renewal (of dialogue) possible by the clear and unequivocal statements deploring the Holocaust denial and making it very clear that the Catholic

Church leaders are committed" to continue working for improved relations with the Jews.

The rabbi also asked the pope to consider making the history and moral significance of the Holocaust a required subject for study in Catholic schools around the world.

Such a directive, he said, would reinforce the pope's "strong stand regarding Holocaust denial," the church's teaching that anti-Semitism is a sin and Catholic respect for Judaism and the Jewish people.

The pope told the rabbis, "The church recognizes that the beginnings of her faith are found in the historical divine intervention in the life of the Jewish people and that here our unique relationship has its foundation.

"The Jewish people, who were chosen as the elected people, communicate to the whole human family knowledge of and fidelity to the one, unique and true God," the pope said.

Pope Benedict also expressed his hope that Catholic-Jewish

relations would continue to deepen and that members of the two faiths would explore more deeply their common spiritual heritage and common positions on modern ethical and social issues.

After leaving the pope, Rabbi Cohen told reporters, "It was not just another meeting, it was a turning point" that marked the end of the Bishop Williamson controversy, reaffirmed the unacceptability of Holocaust denial and anti-Semitism, and laid the groundwork for the pope's visit in May.

In the pope's letter to the world's bishops explaining the lifting of the excommunications, including that of Bishop Williamson, "he admits — which is unusual for a pope — that it was a misstep and that it will never happen again," the rabbi said.

Rabbi David Rosen, a member of the rabbinate's delegation and director of interreligious affairs of the American Jewish Committee, said he hoped a papal recommendation that Catholic

schools teach about the Holocaust would be "the silver lining" to the uproar over the Bishop Williamson case.

Rabbi Rosen also praised the pope's decision, announced March 12, to place the office responsible for discussions with the Society of St. Pius X under the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

While the discussions with the society appeared to have been taking place "under the radar" for the past 20 years, "now under the magnifying glass it is clear that their statements are totally incompatible with the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, especially on Jews and Judaism," he said.

The lifting of excommunications is an internal church affair, Rabbi Rosen said, "but when it involves a group of people who have hostile attitudes toward Jews and Judaism, then it becomes a matter of concern for Jews and for all those who care about the Catholic-Jewish relationship."

24th ANNUAL

Join Bishop Kevin Vann, other clergy and fellow laity in prayer.

# GOOD FRIDAY VIGIL FOR LIFE

**April 10**  
2009  
1:00 pm - 2:30 pm

"We may not save their lives,  
and should they die (as usually  
happens, God forgive us) we can  
lift up our hearts to God  
Almighty on their behalf. It will  
be the only human love they  
will know on this Earth!"

(Excerpted from a letter by Joan Andrews Bell)

*"Can you not pray  
with me one hour?"*

Matthew 26:40

*In reparation for All sins of abortion;*

*In thanksgiving for All the graces God  
gives to those who battle abortion;*

*In humble supplication for All the  
mothers and babies hurt by abortion;*

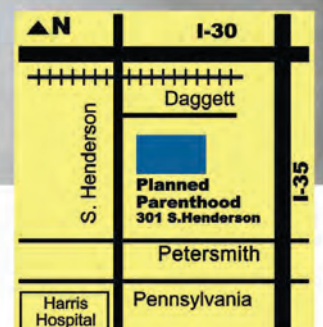
*In petition for the end of All abortions.*

**Planned Parenthood  
Abortion Center**

**April 10 1:00pm - 2:30pm**

**301 S. Henderson  
Ft. Worth, TX**

**For more information call  
(817)738-1086**



From I-30 take exit  
13B/S. Henderson

## NATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

### Percentage of Catholics down slightly but church still largest U.S. denomination

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A new survey shows the percentage of U.S. residents who identify themselves as Catholics has declined, but Catholicism at 25 percent remains the largest denomination in the country, having dropped by only one percentage point while growing by 11,000,000 since the survey was begun in 1990. Trinity College of Hartford, Connecticut, released its third American Religious Identification Survey March 9. The survey also found that the U.S. Catholic population has shifted away from the Northeast toward the Southwest, the percentage of Latinos in the U.S. Catholic Church has grown, and the number of U.S. residents claiming no religion has increased dramatically. Most of the Christian population growth came from people who identify themselves only as Christian, evangelical/born again, or nondenominational Christian. Stephen Schneck, director of the Life Cycle Institute at The Catholic University of America in Washington, told Catholic News Service March 10 the biggest surprise in the survey for him was the surge in the number of Americans who don't identify with any religion. "As a trend, I think it's accelerating at a faster rate than any of us expected," Schneck said. "To a certain extent, it's a trend we can expect to continue to see happen. The erosion most noticeable is with young people."

### Archbishop says HHS nomination 'troubling,' bad for U.S. health policies

KANSAS CITY, Kan. (CNS) — The archbishop who told Kansas Gov. Kathleen Sebelius not to present herself for Communion unless she repudiates her support for keeping abortion legal says her nomination as secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services does not bode well for health care policies in this country. In a column for the March 6 issue of the archdiocesan newspaper, *The Leaven*, Archbishop Joseph F. Naumann of Kansas City said Sebelius, who is Catholic, "represents well Catholic social teaching" on some important issues but not on abortion or embryonic stem-cell research. "With her history of support for legalized abortion and embryonic stem-cell research, it is troubling the important influence that she will have on shaping health care policies for our nation," Archbishop Naumann wrote. He called Sebelius "a very bright and gifted leader" who has advocated for low-income housing, health care for poor children, and adoption incentives. But he said her abortion position made her nomination "particularly troubling."

### Cardinal to seek advice from bioethics center on health care proposal

BRAINTREE, Mass. (CNS) — Boston Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley announced March 6 that he would seek the advice of the National Catholic Bioethics Center on a proposed relationship between Catholic hospitals in his archdiocese and a state-subsidized health program for the poor. Caritas Christi Health Care, the second-largest health care system in New England, announced March 3 that it is considering an agreement that would allow it to be a health care provider for poor and low-income Massachusetts residents enrolled in the Commonwealth Care Program. The proposal has come under fire because the state-run program covers abortions and family planning services. But Caritas officials said their facilities at "all times and in all cases" would abide by the U.S. bishops' ethical directives for health care facilities forbidding abortions and all other procedures that contradict church teaching. "To be perfectly clear, Caritas Christi will never do anything to promote abortions, to direct any patients to providers of abortion, or in any way to participate in actions that are contrary to Catholic moral teaching, and anyone who suggests otherwise is doing a great disservice to the Catholic Church," Cardinal O'Malley said in his blog, [www.cardinal-seansblog.org](http://www.cardinal-seansblog.org).



People protest outside the White House around the time President Barack Obama signed an executive order March 9 reversing the Bush administration limits on embryonic stem-cell research. The small protest was led by the Christian Defense Coalition. Pictured are: Mason Whittington, 7, his sister Esther, 2, Kaitlin Martinez, Tina Whittington, Katie Mahoney and Justus Whittington, 8. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

## Cardinal Justin Rigali says new Obama embryonic stem-cell policy favors politics over ethics

FROM PAGE 1  
and in need of increased support."

He reiterated points raised by Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, USCCB president, who said in a Jan. 16 letter to Obama that a change in the policy on funding of embryonic stem-cell research "could be a terrible mistake—morally, politically, and in terms of advancing the solidarity and well-being of our nation's people."

Archbishop Rino Fisichella, president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, said most scientists recognize embryonic stem-cell research has not proved promising, which led him to wonder if economic interests might be driving the push to use embryos.

Most scientists have affirmed that "currently embryonic stem cells lead nowhere," he told Vatican Radio March 11, while "adult stem cells, on the other hand, have already led to the cure of some 2,000 diseases."

People, therefore, should try to figure out "what special interests, probably of some pharmaceutical companies, are behind this ever more forcible interference in science and research and, in this case, in politics, too," he said.

Bishop Elio Sgreccia, former president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, said the decision to reverse the ban on federal funding was based on "utilitarian logic" that failed to take into account the fact that embryos are human beings, he told the Italian news agency ANSA March 9.

"It's about the destruction of human beings in order to turn them into material for experimen-

tation," he said.

Bishop Sgreccia said it was unclear why research on embryonic stem cells would need to be pursued now that new discoveries have been made with other kinds of stem cells.

He referred to the work of a Japanese biologist who found in 2007 that adult stem cells could easily be reprogrammed to an embryonic state.

At the White House, Obama said he "cannot guarantee that we will find the treatments and cures we seek. No president can promise that."

"But I can promise that we will seek them — actively, responsibly, and with the urgency required to make up for lost ground," he added.

The Bush policy had allowed funding of embryonic stem-cell research only when the stem-cell line had been created before Aug. 9, 2001. The executive order Obama signed permits federal funding of stem-cell lines created since then, but would not allow funding of the creation of new lines, leaving that decision to Congress.

Obama also signed a "presidential memorandum on scientific integrity" March 9, ordering the director of the Office of Science and Technology Policy to develop a strategy for ensuring that "the administration's decisions about public policy be guided by the most accurate and objective scientific advice available."

But Paul A. Long, vice president for public policy at the Michigan Catholic Conference, said the order "regrettably places

ideology and political posturing ahead of proven scientific therapeutic advancements."

"There are endless studies and stories of patients who have been treated, even cured of their debilitating condition following stem-cell therapies that do not necessitate the destruction of human embryos, yet the... executive order makes every tax-paying American citizen unwittingly complicit in the destruction of human embryos for experimental research."

Kristen Day, executive director of Democrats for Life of America, said the president's decision — which the organization "is against, ... period" — surprised the group and signaled "a cooling of our relations" with the Obama administration.

"While we have zero confidence that a call for a reversal of this executive order will prevail, we are hopeful that the president will heed our call for common-ground solutions in dealing with pro-life Democrats," Day added, citing in particular the Pregnant Women's Support Act.

Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., the author of a 2005 law authorizing \$265 million in federal research funds for adult stem cells from cord blood and bone marrow, asked in a statement: "Why does the president persist in the dehumanizing of nascent human life when better alternatives exist?"

"On both ethics grounds and efficacy grounds nonembryonic-destroying stem-cell research is the present and future of regenerative medicine — and the only responsible way forward," Smith added.

# Focusing on Africa: Papal trip to highlight challenges, possibilities

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI opens a new chapter in his papal travels when he visits Cameroon and Angola in mid-March, a trip designed to highlight the church's message of hope on a continent beset by problems.

The visit March 17-23 will mark the first trip to Africa for a pope who has sometimes been described as Eurocentric, and it launches a series of important church events in 2009 focusing on the African continent.

For Pope Benedict, who is completing work on his first social encyclical, the trip will bring him closer to populations that are struggling daily against poverty, disease, corruption, and armed conflict.

The global financial crisis is aggravating the burden on Africa's poor, and the pope's words on economic justice may offer a preview of the encyclical's themes.

The trip will unfold in two parts. In Cameroon, the pope will meet with bishops from the entire continent and hand-deliver the working document for the Synod of Bishops for Africa, which will take place in Rome in October.

The synod's theme is justice, reconciliation, and peace, and it offers the pope a seemingly endless choice of topics for the seven speeches and homilies he'll deliver during his four days in Cameroon. Certainly he will touch on the ethnic and political tensions that have afflicted areas like Darfur in Sudan, Somalia, and the Great Lakes region, and address the responsibilities of governments to promote dialogue, reduce corruption, and respond to the human needs of their populations.

But rather than read a laundry list of challenges, the pope is more likely to zero in on the church's specific mission to be a community that heals, reconciles, forgives, and encourages. The point is to move evangelization past the stage of bringing people into the church, and toward the goal of witnessing the Gospel in personal lives and the life of society.

One small but significant event in Cameroon will be the pope's visit to the Cardinal Paul Emile Leger Center, also known as the National Center for the Rehabilitation of the Handicapped. Even more than the synod document's thousands of words on pastoral strategy, this is where the pope sees the church eloquently expressing the faith and affecting lives, through charity in action.

In Cameroon, the pope will also meet with representatives

*Rather than read a laundry list of challenges, the pope is more likely to zero in on the church's specific mission to be a community that heals, reconciles, forgives, and encourages.*

of the country's Muslim community, which comprises about 22 percent of the population. At this encounter and in meetings with the African bishops, the pope is expected to emphasize the need for interfaith collaboration in tackling the moral and material problems of the continent.

In Nigeria, which borders Cameroon, attacks between groups of Christians and Muslims have left hundreds dead in recent months, although church leaders have emphasized that the violence has been primarily political and not religious.

The second part of the pope's trip takes him to the Angolan capital of Luanda for a series of encounters with political and government officials, church leaders, and groups of the faithful. Here the emphasis is on the 500th anniversary of Christian evangelization in a country where the faith arrived with Portuguese missionaries in the late 15th century.

Angola is still recovering materially, politically, and spiritually from a disastrous 27-year-long civil war that ended in 2002. The first postwar presidential elections are scheduled for later this year, and many Angolans believe the pope's visit could bring a spark of hope and encouragement to the country as it continues to reconcile and rebuild.

One key event will be the pope's Mass with young people in a soccer stadium in Luanda. Trip planners realize that the papal program in Africa will be largely consumed by meetings with groups of bishops, and they want

to make sure the pope also has an opportunity to build bridges to younger generations.

On his last full day in Angola, the pope is taking time to meet with Catholic movements that promote women's welfare. The encounter underlines the church's concern about the many forms of continuing discrimination and violence against women in Africa, and it offers the pope a chance to make clear church teaching on gender equality.

Health care is a major concern in Angola and throughout Africa, and the AIDS pandemic in particular has devastated the continent. The disease now kills about 1.5 million people in sub-Saharan Africa each year, and has left more than 11 million children orphaned.

When it comes to the church and AIDS, the media often focus on the church's distrust of condoms as the answer to AIDS prevention. Pope Benedict has never mentioned the condom issue explicitly, but he spelled out his thoughts on AIDS in a talk to African bishops in 2005, noting that the church is in the forefront in treatment of this "cruel epidemic" and saying the "only failsafe way" to prevent its spread is found in the church's traditional teaching on sexual responsibility.

Under Pope John Paul II, the church in Africa grew by 160 percent and the number of priestly vocations tripled. Pope Benedict has spoken less of numbers and more about proper formation and a deepening of the faith — in a sense, quality control. That's likely to be his focus in Cameroon and Angola, too.

What do African Catholics expect from the pope's visit?

Certainly they'll be listening to the pope as he speaks about their problems and the gifts they bring to the church. But African bishops say the importance of a papal visit is more than the sum of his speeches, sermons, and liturgies.

"The Holy Father, wherever he goes, carries along with him this aura of God's representative on earth," Nigerian Bishop Michael Odogwu Elue of Issele-Uku told Catholic News Service.

"His nearness to us is almost equated with God's nearness to us. We do not talk about his political figure ... it's his spiritual presence that gives us a lot of encouragement and strength in the faith," he said.

Beyond the pope's message, many Africans will be looking for his blessing.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWSBRIEFS

### On Women's Day, pope prays that dignity of all women will be respected

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI marked International Women's Day March 8 by praying that the dignity of all women would be recognized and respected. After leading the recitation of the Angelus prayer, the pope told a crowd gathered in St. Peter's Square that the observance honoring women "invites us to reflect on the condition of women and to renew a commitment to ensuring that always and everywhere every woman can live and demonstrate fully her own abilities, obtaining full respect for her dignity." While recent church documents stress the equal dignity of women and men and the importance of women in the church and society, the pope said that the witness of the lives of saintly women speaks even more loudly. "Our age had Mother Teresa of Calcutta; the humble daughter of Albania became by the grace of God an example for the whole world through her exercise of charity and her service of human promotion," he said. "Many other women work each day, hidden from view, for the good of humanity and for the kingdom of God," the pope said.

### Document confirms Pope Pius XII's efforts to save Jews, expert says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A document found in a Rome convent confirms that Pope Pius XII quietly ordered church institutions to open their doors to Jews fleeing Nazi arrest and deportation, a church expert said. "The Holy Father wants to save his children, including the Jews, and orders that hospitality be shown to these persecuted people in the convents," said a note found in the historical journal of the Augustinian Community of Santi Quattro Coronati. The note, written by one of the nuns and dated November 1943, had an appendix with the names of 24 people, including Jews, who were hidden by the sisters of the cloistered convent, located near the Colosseum. Nazi soldiers began rounding up thousands of Jews in Rome and shipping them to death camps in October 1943. One of the accusations against Pope Pius XII, repeated in a number of books in recent years, was that he did little or nothing to stop the deportations. Jesuit Father Peter Gumpel, the "relator" or investigating judge of the sainthood cause of Pope Pius, found the document and spoke about it with Vatican Radio March 4. He said it was an important written confirmation of the many oral reports of Pope Pius' concern for the Jews and his unpublicized efforts to help them.

### Pope, in World Youth Day message, asks young people to be witnesses of hope

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Even as the global economic crisis makes it more difficult to find a job and start a family, young Catholics are called to hold firmly to their faith in Jesus and be witnesses of hope to their peers, Pope Benedict XVI said. "True Christians are never sad, even if they have to face trials of various kinds, because the presence of Jesus is the secret of their joy and peace," the pope told the world's young Catholics. In his message for World Youth Day 2009, which will be celebrated in most dioceses on Palm Sunday, April 5, the pope asked young people to anchor the enthusiasm of their age in the firm hope that comes from a relationship with Christ. The theme the pope chose for the 2009 celebration was from St. Paul's First Letter to Timothy: "We have set our hope on the living God." Everyone is looking for hope, "especially in these times," the pope said in the message, released March 4 at the Vatican.

## Scripture Readings



March 29, Fifth Sunday of Lent.  
Cycle B. Readings:

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

By Jean Denton

I watched my young friend Curtis play in his final collegiate basketball game recently. It was a joy. He'd had an outstanding season, reaching peak performance at the end of his college career. A few days earlier, he admitted to his mother that he was feeling the bittersweet emotions that come with the end of "the best time of my life."

I remember four years ago when he played in his last high school game, and he was feeling similar conflict, sad about leaving his teammates and excited about beginning again on the college level.

Back then, his sadness was tempered by some difficult struggles with unfair treatment and the resulting lack of self-confidence and disappointment. As a 17-year-old, though, Curtis was an extraordinary example to his friends as he quietly, humbly endured those trials without public complaint, thanks to the guidance and support of his family who assured him of his worth.

His friends and family since then have been

**"He learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him."**

— Hebrews 5:8-9

gratified by his development and wonderful success as a college player and his growth and capability as a man. His college career was everything his high school experience wasn't, although the testing of the latter certainly prepared and strengthened him for it.

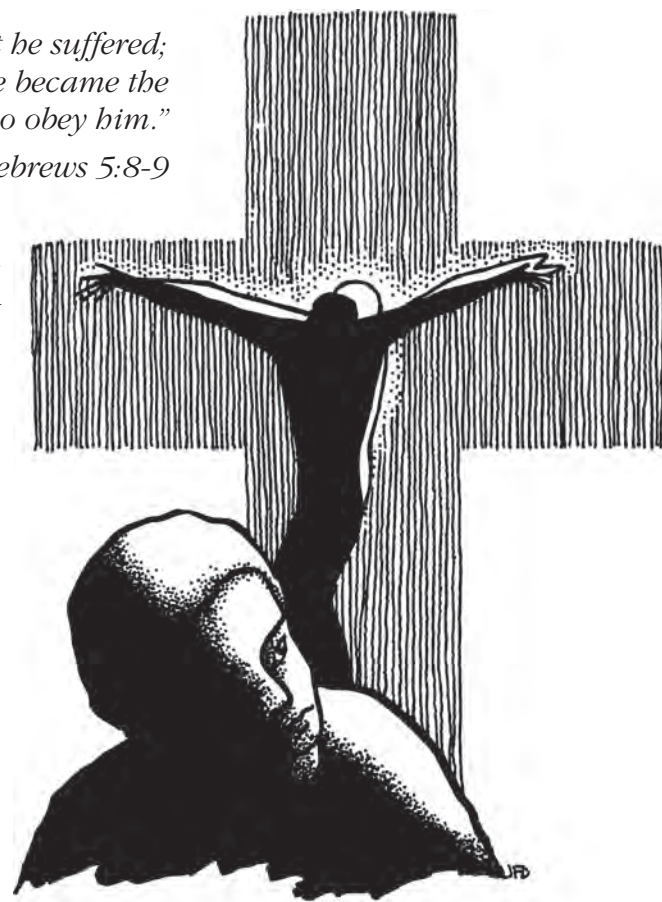
Curtis' family and friends are sad we won't get to watch his graceful performance on the court anymore. But we also know that when he leaves it behind, there is much ahead in his next stage of life that will be even richer and more fulfilling.

The Gospel for this fifth Sunday of Lent tells us — as Jesus told his disciples — that the only way to a new and greater life is by leaving the old one behind. The grain of wheat cannot serve its bigger purpose until it falls to the ground to grow and produce much fruit, he explained in simple terms.

Jesus felt troubled at leaving his friends in this earthly life, but he knew God's truth — that it was necessary in order for him to live his glorified life. That included his promise that those who love and follow him will also follow him out of this lesser life and on to a greater life with God.

### QUESTIONS:

When have you had to leave a place or end a situation in order to begin "a new life"? In retrospect, why was it necessary for the old circumstance to die away? How does this prepare you for celebrating Easter?



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## Christianity promotes a culture of values, human progress, says pope

By Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Because Christianity promotes a culture of values, it aids in human development and progress, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Early Christian monastic women and men began this essential role by proclaiming the Gospel and spreading knowledge about the arts and sciences to the general population, he said March 11 during his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Square.

Promoting the Gospel "must also entail promoting a true human culture," he said.

Because the pope's normal schedule was interrupted by Ash Wednesday celebrations and a weeklong Lenten retreat, it was the first general audience in nearly three weeks.

The pope continued his catechesis on early Christian writers of the East and West by focusing his talk on St. Boniface, the eighth-century martyr and missionary of the Germanic peoples.

The Apostle of Germany tirelessly spread the faith, promoted



Rabbi Shear-Yashuv Cohen, the chief rabbi of Haifa, Israel, exchanges greetings with Pope Benedict XVI during their meeting at the Vatican March 12. Representatives of the Chief Rabbinate of Israel asked the pope to make Holocaust studies a required subject in Catholic schools, saying it could help stamp out anti-Semitism in future generations. (CNS photo/L'OSSEVATORE ROMANO)

Christian morality, and established dioceses and monasteries throughout northern Europe, the pope said.

He said the saint saw these monasteries for men and women

religious as being a kind of "lighthouse for the irradiation of faith and a Christian and human culture."

By living holy lives and being well-versed in both sacred

and secular disciplines, these religious proclaimed the Gospel and spread a true human culture that is inseparable from the faith and reveals where beauty lies, he said.

St. Boniface encouraged a meeting between Rome's Christian culture and Germanic culture "and knew that to evangelize and humanize culture was part of his episcopal mission," the pope said.

By imbuing the native customs and traditions with Christian values, a new style of life was born in Germany, which was more humane and "resulted in a person's inalienable rights being better respected."

The saint showed how "Christianity — by fostering the spread of culture — promotes human progress," the pope said.

It is the task of modern Christians to carry forward "such a precious heritage and let it blossom and benefit future generations," he added.

St. Boniface gives a good example to today's Christians, whose faith has often become "lukewarm and bureaucratic," he said.

He said St. Boniface was so ardently in love with the word of God that he zealously followed its call and his duty to bring it to others even though it meant risking his own life.



## Scripture Readings



April 5, Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion.  
Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 50:4-7  
Psalm 22:8-9, 17-20, 23-24
- 2) Philippians 2:6-11  
Gospel) Mark 14:1-15:47

By Jeff Hensley

Last year Easter came early, and I found myself in Washington on the weekend of Palm Sunday at an annual meeting I take part in with other editors and the leadership of Catholic News Service. At a coffee shop near Dupont Circle that Sunday morning, I looked out on rain slick sidewalks, pondering some painful situations of people I care about very much.

One of my fellow editors had shared stories of serious health problems in his family. Another friend I'd spent time with that weekend was facing a trip home to Fort Worth for his mother's surgery to remove a large tumor, not knowing if it might be cancerous. I had just received word of a trauma in my own family the night before.

We shared a sense of loss, a sense of fear of outcomes, a sense of powerlessness. We also shared a mutual support.

Peering out into the light rain, I realized that none of what we each faced could compare to the

pain of our Lord as he faced physical persecution and ultimately his crucifixion at the hands of at least some of the same people who honored him on his triumphal entry into Jerusalem.

No palms covered the streets here, just rain.

In the year since then, I have encountered the spirituality of the Focolare movement. One central element of that spirituality embraces the notion of focusing in prayer on the moment in which Jesus, on the cross, experienced separation from his Father, and seeking to identify with him in that moment of absolute abandonment.

I must confess that I can only read the Passion readings during Lent. They affect me too much to allow me to read them frequently throughout the year. But during the very hard year since last Palm Sunday, I have found strength in the practice of contemplating Jesus' great isolation so that he could redeem us from our sins — a greater loss than any of us will ever experience. It is quite comforting somehow. I recommend it.

*“My God, my God, why have you abandoned me?”*

— Psalm 22:2

### QUESTIONS:

Do you find contemplating Jesus in his last day difficult? How can you use contemplation of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection to build your own faith?



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## Our redemption was bought by **Jesus' Passion**

By Jeff Hedglen

There are a lot of shows on television that have become must-see-TV. For my family when I was a kid, it was things like “The Six Million Dollar Man,” “Charlie’s Angels,” or “M\*A\*S\*H.” We loved to gather in the living room, fight over the best seats, and share a big bowl of popcorn. The show I remember most came on each year around this time for many years.

The mini-series “Jesus of Nazareth” was a tradition in our house during Lent. Sure it was long and a bit boring for my childhood tastes, but it is my most vivid memory of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection. That series introduced me to what it might have been like 2,000 years ago in Israel, and it has shaped my reading of the Gospels. I still see images from that television program when I hear about the blind man Jesus healed with mud made from his own spit, or the whip made of chords when Jesus cleansed the temple, or cloaks on the

One minute we sing Hosanna, and the next we cry “crucify him.” By the end of Mass many of those palms we were just waving are now fittingly transformed into the image of the device of death for Jesus.

ground and the palms in the air for Jesus’ triumphant entrance into Jerusalem.

Those images not only help me understand the Bible better, they transported me back in time and helped me enter the story. Fast forward now to 2004 and the first time I saw the movie “The Passion of the Christ.” That film has forever changed my experience of the Passion readings, the sorrowful mysteries of the rosary, and the Stations of the Cross.

Every time I encounter the passion and death of Christ, the horrific images from “The Passion” flash in my mind. “Jesus

of Nazareth” was wonderful, but this, at least in my mind, was more realistic. The brutality with which Jesus was hurled around and mercilessly beaten and killed was like nothing I have ever seen.

In the next few weeks we will hear the reading of the Passion at Mass twice. On Palm Sunday and Good Friday we will once again walk with Jesus down the way of suffering. We will once again be asked to play the part of the crowd that taunts Peter. We will chant in unison “Crucify him!” and we will mock our Lord as he painfully dies on the cross.

Then he will breathe his last, and we will all get on our knees and have a moment of silence for the death of our Savior. This death scene we have just heard is not just a Passion play or a reading of an archaic tale like a Shakespearian tragedy, no, it is the lifeblood of our faith, celebrated and proclaimed.

Every year the Church brings us this opportunity to remember the love God has for us, shown in the sacrifice of his Son. This is a love that knows no bounds and is offered to all.

It always seemed strange to read about the death of Jesus on Palm Sunday. It is such a joyous day of proclaiming Jesus as King, waving the palm branches and being blessed with Holy Water. But as the Mass continues, we turn our eyes and hearts from triumph to tragedy.

One minute we sing Hosanna, and the next we cry “crucify him.” By the end of Mass many of those palms we were just waving are now fittingly transformed into the image of the device of death for Jesus. We

start Palm Sunday on a very high note and leave a bit more solemn, hopefully in the right frame of mind to celebrate the great feasts of Holy Week.

The importance of the reading and remembering of the Passion of Jesus cannot be overstated. In fact it is too often underappreciated. We sometimes prefer the “shorter version in brackets.” But this reading is best experienced in the long form with deep meditation on the reality that every word spoken, every action remembered, every step taken, and every drop of blood spilled was for us and our sins.

So as the Passion is read this year, enter into the scene, recall “Jesus of Nazareth” or “The Passion of the Christ,” or just close your eyes and walk with Jesus as he carries you to the place of your redemption.

Jeff Hedglen, youth minister at St. Bartholomew Parish in Southwest Fort Worth, is the principal organizer of Camp Fort Worth each summer. Readers with questions can contact Jeff at [jeff@stbartsfw.org](mailto:jeff@stbartsfw.org).

# San Pablo y la cruz

## Una reflexión cuaresmal

**Estimados hermanos y hermanas en el Señor,**

**H**asta ahora hemos estado reflexionando durante nuestra peregrinación de cuarenta días sobre el Mensaje cuaresmal de nuestro Santo Padre cuyo tema es el ayuno y después meditamos sobre la oración a través de los ojos de San Pablo. Ahora, al acercarnos a la mitad del camino de la época santa de la Cuaresma y creo que nuestro siguiente paso es reflexionar sobre la predicación de San Pablo sobre la cruz.

En las cartas de San Pablo la cruz es mucho más que el instrumento de madera utilizado para llevar a cabo la sentencia de muerte de Cristo. Para San Pablo la cruz representa la amorosa pasión redentora de Cristo. Una redención que comienza con la obediencia a la voluntad del Padre y que continúa por el camino del dolor y de la humillación, el camino de la kenosis de nuestro Señor.

En su audiencia de los miércoles del 29 de octubre del año pasado nuestro Santo Padre nos recordó que San Pablo comenzó a comprender el significado de la cruz cuando tuvo su encuentro con Jesús. Pablo aprendió que...

*...Jesús había muerto y resucitado por todos y por él mismo. Ambas cosas eran importantes; la universalidad: Jesús murió realmente por todos; y la subjetividad: murió*



Monseñor Kevin W. Vann

**S**an Pablo no se detiene al entender el verdadero significado de la cruz de Cristo. Él, valientemente va más allá y reconoce que como seguidor de Cristo él también debe abrazar la cruz de Cristo en su propia vida.

*también por mí. En la cruz, por tanto, se había manifestado el amor gratuito y misericordioso de Dios.*

San Pablo no sólo se da cuenta de cuanto es que cambia la vida por la cruz de Cristo, él también comienza a entender que esta verdad profunda está más allá de la capacidad de muchos para apreciar y entender completamente. En su *Primera Carta a los Corintios, verso 23 del primer capítulo* leemos...

*...en cambio, predicamos a un Cristo crucificado, escándalo para los judíos y locura para los paganos...*

Un Cristo crucificado es un escándalo casi insuperable para los judíos sobre todo porque, según la ley judaica encontrada en *Deuteronomio 21:22-23*, el morir colgado de un árbol, como hicieron con Cristo en su crucifixión, es una muestra de ser malditos y rechazados Dios. Los judíos no pueden entender el significado de un Mesías sufriente aunque esto fue lo que claramente fue enseñando por el profeta Isaías. Para los judíos un Mesías crucificado es una contradicción de términos porque para ellos el Mesías se manifestaría por muchas muestras de fuerza y poder y no en una aparente derrota de lo que perciben ser un hombre débil y desamparado.

Un Cristo crucificado es locura para los gentiles y paganos tales como los griegos porque en su concepto de divinidad no puede haber sensaciones, emociones y mucho menos dolor. Para

los griegos, Dios y el hombre están en distintos extremos de una realidad existencial. Los elementos humanos tales como aquellos manifestados por Jesucristo, según la "sabiduría" de los griegos, empobrece y quita de todo aquello que la divinidad verdadera debería ser.

Un Cristo crucificado es para San Pablo no un escándalo, necedad o una locura sino sabiduría, fuerza y poder verdadero. Él nos dice todo esto en *1 Corintios 1:24-25...*

*...pero fuerza y sabiduría de Dios para los que han sido llamados, tanto judíos como griegos. Porque la locura de Dios es más sabia que la sabiduría de los hombres, y la debilidad de Dios es más fuerte que la fortaleza de los hombres.*

El Papa Benedicto XVI habla sobre este punto en su audiencia de los miércoles, previamente mencionada, cuando él dice...

*El "escándalo" y la "necedad" de la cruz radican precisamente en el hecho de que donde parece haber sólo fracaso, dolor, derrota, precisamente allí está todo el poder del Amor ilimitado de Dios, porque la cruz es expresión de amor y el amor es el verdadero poder que se revela precisamente en esta aparente debilidad.*

El Santo Padre también nos indicó más tarde en la misma audiencia...

*Dios se sirve de modos e instrumentos que a nosotros, a primera vista, nos parecen sólo debilidad. El*

*Crucificado desvela, por una parte, la debilidad del hombre; y, por otra, el verdadero poder de Dios, es decir, la gratuidad del amor: precisamente esta gratuidad total del amor es la verdadera sabiduría.*

Pero San Pablo no se detiene al entender el verdadero significado de la cruz de Cristo. Él, valientemente va más allá y reconoce que como seguidor de Cristo él también debe abrazar la cruz de Cristo en su propia vida. Una cruz que lleva fielmente pero con dificultad. Al hacer esto él nos ofrece un ejemplo de lo que cada uno de nosotros estamos llamados a hacer como discípulos de Cristo.

Llevar nuestra cruz de cada día nunca es fácil. Podemos incluso temer estar demasiado débil para continuar siguiendo a Cristo porque el peso de la cruz que llevamos puede parecernos demasiado. San Pablo nos ofrece algunas palabras de verdadera sabiduría después de haber hablado con el Señor en la oración sobre este tema...

*Tres veces pedí al Señor que me librara, pero él me respondió: «Te basta mi gracia, porque mi poder triunfa en la debilidad». Más bien, me gloriaré de todo corazón en mi debilidad, para que resida en mí el poder de Cristo. Por eso, me complazco en mis debilidades, en los oprobios, en las privaciones, en las persecuciones y en las angustias soportadas por amor de Cristo; porque cuando soy débil, entonces soy fuerte.*

Que cada uno de nosotros estemos verdaderamente convencidos de que la gracia del Señor nos basta y que Nuestra Señora de los Dolores nos dirija hacia la verdadera fuerza y poder que se encuentra en la cruz de su Hijo, Nuestro Señor Crucificado, Jesucristo.

Que Dios los bendiga siempre.

*+ Kevin W. Vann*

+Monseñor Kevin W. Vann  
Obispo de Fort Worth

## Concurso de video auspiciado por Maryknoll, con premio de viaje de misión a Brasil

MARYKNOLL, Nueva York (CNS) — El 10 de abril marca la fecha límite para que católicos jóvenes de edades que fluctúen de 18 a 35 años entren al concurso de video llamado "Explore mi misión", auspiciado por los padres y hermanos de Maryknoll.

Dos de los ganadores aprovecharán un viaje de misión, con duración de 10 días

a Brasil, en donde trabajarán hombro con hombro con miembros de la comunidad de Maryknoll, que trabajan con los pobres en los cordones de miseria de Joao Pessoa.

"Estoy muy entusiasmado por acompañar en este viaje a los ganadores", dijo el padre de Maryknoll Dennis Moorman, misionero que ha trabajado en Brasil por muchos años. "Promete ser una experien-

cia única en la vida".

Los videos que se envíen deberán de ser de tres minutos o menos de duración, en donde se perfile la personalidad del competidor o competidora y el servicio o ministerio en el que esté involucrado o involucrada, dando las razones por las cuales se considera como candidato idóneo o candidata idónea para el proyecto

de misión.

Se les notificará a los ganadores del concurso el 14 de mayo; y el viaje a Brasil se llevará a cabo del 15 al 25 de junio.

**Nota del editor:** Los videos que se presenten pueden enviarse vía red electrónica al sitio oficial del concurso: [www.explore-mission.org](http://www.explore-mission.org).

# ¿Por qué ser católico?

## Detalles del evangelismo católico

Aumenta la comprensión del evangelismo católico y explora la relación entre el evangelismo y el catecismo. Ofrece estrategias prácticas y concretas para involucrar a los católicos activos e inactivos en la fe. (El público clave: el pastor, el personal pastoral, el equipo de ¿Por qué ser católico?)

Según un estudio de los hispanos en los Estados Unidos que son o eran católicos, 33 por ciento son devotos, 30 por ciento participan en la fe pero no están de acuerdo con todas las enseñanzas de la Iglesia, 20 por ciento no practican la fe aunque se consideran a sí mismos como católicos, y 17 por ciento han dejado la Iglesia Católica. Estas estadísticas señalan la necesidad

de un programa como ¿Por qué ser católico? que invita a la gente a un entendimiento más profundo de nuestra fe y una participación más coherente.

Para más información, hablar con Padre Carmen Mele, OP: 817-560-3300, ext. 262, o mandar correo electrónico a cmele@fwdioc.org

La lista de instancias del Taller de la Evangelización sigue:

### Talleres de Evangelización (en español)

miercoles	22 de abril	7:00 p.m.	St. John the Apostle	Fort Worth
jueves	23 de abril	7:00 p.m.	St. Joseph	Arlington
viernes	24 de abril	7:00 p.m.	St. Ann	Burleson
sábado	25 de abril	10:00 a.m.	St. Rita	Ranger
domingo	26 de abril	3:00 p.m.	Nuestra Sra. de Guadalupe	Wichita Falls
lunes	27 de abril	7:00 p.m.	Immaculate Conception	Denton

El Padre Carmen Mele: "Permítame pedirle de nuevo. Si todavía no me ha enviado la lista de los integrantes del Equipo Promotor para ¿Por qué ser católico? con sus direcciones de e-mail, por favor, que lo haga pronto."

## En carta a los obispos, el Papa responde a críticas por decisión lefeburista

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — En una carta a los obispos del mundo, el Papa Benedicto XVI expresó pesar porque su retiro de las excomuniones de cuatro obispos tradicionalistas dio lugar a una tormenta de protestas y amargura.

El Papa dijo que la controversia sobre las declaraciones del obispo Richard Williamson negando la extensión del Holocausto fueron "una desgracia imprevista", una que, sin embargo, pudo haber sido anticipada prestando más atención a la información que estaba fácilmente disponible en la Internet.

El Papa dijo que estaba entristecido particularmente por la reacción de algunos católicos que parecían estar dispuestos a creer que él estaba cambiando la dirección en las relaciones católico-judías y estaban listos para "atacarme con hostilidad

abierta". Agradeció a "nuestros amigos judíos" que ayudaron a clarificar el asunto.

Extractos de la carta fueron publicados el 11 de marzo.

El Papa dijo que estaba tomando la medida inusual de escribirle a los obispos porque el episodio había generado "una discusión más acalorada que ninguna que hayamos visto durante mucho tiempo" en ambos, dentro y fuera de la iglesia.

Dijo que su acercamiento al obispo Williamson y los otros tres obispos de la *Sociedad de San Pío X* estaba diseñado para cerrar una herida y traer unidad a la iglesia, levantando las excomuniones incurridas en 1988 y abriendo el camino al diálogo con la *Sociedad*.

Pero cuando los comentarios del obispo Williamson sobre el Holocausto fueron circulados, "aparentó ser repentinamente

como algo completamente diferente: como el repudio de la reconciliación entre los cristianos y los judíos, y por lo tanto la reversión de lo que el *(Segundo) concilio (vaticano)* había establecido en cuanto a esto para guiar el camino de la iglesia", dijo.

Como resultado, dijo, "una avalancha de protestas fue desatada, cuya amargura hizo heridas descubiertas más profundas que las del momento actual".

El Papa reconoció algo que los críticos han señalado: que una simple búsqueda en la Internet habría revelado las opiniones del obispo Williamson sobre el Holocausto y ayudado al Vaticano a anticipar la reacción.

"He aprendido la lección que en el futuro en la Santa Sede tendremos que prestar mayor atención a esa fuente de noticias", dijo.

## Cardenal dice que nueva política de Obama sobre células madres favorece política en vez de ética

WASHINGTON (CNS) — La orden ejecutiva del presidente Barack Obama que revierte la prohibición del financiamiento federal de la investigación embrionaria con células madres representa "una victoria triste de la política sobre la ciencia y la ética", dijo el cardenal Justin Rigali, de Philadelphia, poco después de la firma de la orden el 9 de marzo en la Casa Blanca.

El director del *Comité sobre actividades pro vida* de la Conferencia Estadounidense de Obispos Católicos (USCCB) estuvo entre líderes católicos, pro vida y otros que criticaron la reversión que Obama había prometido durante su campaña.

Hablando en el Salón Este de la Casa Blanca, Obama dijo que la política del ex presidente George W. Bush sobre células madres, en vigor desde el 9 de agosto de 2001, había obligado "una opción falsa entre la ciencia sólida y los valores morales".

Obama también pidió al Congreso que considerara una extensión adicional del financiamiento para tal investigación. Desde 1995 la enmienda Dickey/Wicker a los proyectos anuales de designación de fondos para programas federales de la salud ha prohibido el financiamiento federal de la investigación que implique la creación o destrucción de embriones humanos.

Entre las docenas de personas presentes en la Casa Blanca para la firma había miembros del Congreso, científicos, familias cuyos miembros han sido o podrían ser afectados por descubrimientos relacionados con las células madres.

Obama dijo que una "mayoría de los estadounidenses, procedente de todo el espectro político y de todos los trasfondos y creencias, ha llegado a un consenso de que debemos seguir" la investigación embrionaria con células madres.

Pero el cardenal Rigali dijo que la orden ejecutiva "ignora los valores de millones de contribuyentes estadounidenses que

*La orden ejecutiva "ignora los valores de millones de contribuyentes estadounidenses que se oponen a la investigación que requiera terminar vida humana"*

—el cardenal Justin Rigali

se oponen a la investigación que requiera terminar vida humana" e "ignora el hecho que medios éticamente sanos para avanzar la ciencia de las células madres y para tratamientos médicos están fácilmente disponibles y en necesidad aumentada".

Reiteró los puntos planteados por el cardenal Francis E. George, de Chicago, presidente de la USCCB, quien dijo en una carta del 16 de enero a Obama que un cambio en la política de financiamiento de la investigación embrionaria con células madres "podría ser un error terrible moralmente, políticamente y en términos de avanzar la solidaridad y el bienestar de la gente de nuestra nación".

Obama dijo: "No puedo garantizar que encontraremos los tratamientos ni las curas que buscamos. Ningún presidente puede prometer eso".

"Pero puedo prometer que los buscaremos activamente, responsablemente y con la urgencia requerida para compensar por el terreno perdido", añadió.

La política de Bush había permitido el financiamiento de la investigación embrionaria con células madres solamente cuando la línea de células madres usada había sido creada antes del 9 de agosto de 2001. La orden ejecutiva que Obama firmó permite el financiamiento federal para usar líneas de células madres creadas desde entonces, pero no permitiría el financiamiento para crear nuevas líneas, dejándole esa decisión al Congreso.

### Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada

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

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

jlocke@fwdioc.org

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

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

### Mecanismo para reportar abuso

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



Monjas de Camerún celebran durante la audiencia general semanal del Papa Benedicto XVI en la Plaza de San Pedro, en el Vaticano, el 11 de marzo. El Papa visitará Camerún y Angola del 17 al 23 de marzo. (Foto CNS/Alessia Giuliani, Catholic Press Photo)

## El Papa dice que viaje a Tierra Santa será misión de paz

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El Papa Benedicto XVI dijo que su viaje a Tierra Santa en mayo sería una peregrinación de oración por la paz en el Oriente Medio y en el mundo entero.

El Papa, hablando durante su bendición de mediodía del 8 de marzo, confirmó que la visita ocurriría del 8 al 15 de mayo. Su itinerario planificado lo llevará a Jordania, Israel y los territorios palestinos.

El Papa dijo que está haciendo la peregrinación a Tierra Santa "para poder pedirle al señor, visitando los lugares sagrados de su paso terrenal, el preciado regalo de la unidad y la paz para el Oriente Medio y toda la humanidad".

"Aun ahora estoy contando con en el apoyo espiritual de todos ustedes, de modo que Dios me acompañe y llene de gracia a todos aquellos que encontraré a lo largo del camino", dijo.

El Papa también pidió oraciones por el éxito de su visita a Camerún y Angola del 17 al 23 de marzo. Dijo que estará viajando África "para demostrar la cercanía concreta mía y de la iglesia con los cristianos y con los otros pueblos de ese continente, que para mí es particularmente querido".

El itinerario preliminar indica que el Papa llegará a Amán, Jordania, el 8 de mayo y

procederá hacia Israel el 11 de mayo, presidiendo eventos en Jerusalén y Nazaret y en Belén, Cisjordania.

Se espera que la visita incluya una visita a una mezquita en Amán, una parada en el Memorial del Holocausto Yad Vashem en Jerusalén, una visita a un campamento de refugiados palestinos y varias liturgias al aire libre.

Este será el primer viaje papal a Tierra Santa desde el 2000, cuando el Papa Juan Pablo II viajó por una ruta similar durante el Año Santo.

El presidente israelita Shimon Peres, quien más de una vez había invitado al pontífice a visitar Israel, acogió el anuncio oficial del viaje del Papa.

"El Papa será un huésped muy honrado, bienvenido y respetado por la gente de todos los tipos de vida", dijo.

En una conferencia de prensa del 10 de marzo en Jerusalén el arzobispo Antonio Franco, representante del Papa ante Israel y los territorios palestinos, enfatizó que el enfoque de la visita papal es pastoral.

"Hemos intentado arduamente equilibrar todo, que esta peregrinación no sea capturada para decir que es para este lado o el otro", añadió. "Sería incorrecto leer esta peregrinación con lentes políticos".

## Dialogantes católicos y musulmanes exhortan a que se mejore la enseñanza para alcanzar la paz

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Los libros de texto que se usan en las escuelas católicas y escuelas musulmanas, y en países predominantemente católicos o musulmanes, deben ser revisados para asegurarse que proporcionen un retrato respetuoso y acertado de la historia y creencias de otras comunidades, dijeron los dialogantes católicos y musulmanes.

El diálogo anual llevado a cabo entre representantes del Vaticano y representantes de la Universidad al-Azhar en el Cairo, Egipto, que es una institución musulmana de primera línea, el 24 y el 25 de febrero, se enfocó sobre el papel de las religiones en la enseñanza a favor de la paz.

Los dirigentes religiosos deben

de trabajar para asegurar que "una cultura de paz" penetre todas las actividades, especialmente los esfuerzos educativos, se decía en la declaración final de la reunión.

"Los libros de texto de escuela se deben revisar para que no contengan material que sea ofensivo en contra de los sentimientos religiosos de otros creyentes", en la forma como su doctrina, sus enseñanzas morales e historia se presentan, dijeron los dirigentes.

"La juventud, que es el futuro de todas las religiones y de la humanidad misma, requiere especial cuidado para que se le proteja de fanatismo y violencia, y pueda convertirse en constructores de la paz para un mundo mejor", se decía en la declaración.

## El guitarrista Tony Meléndez le lleva un mensaje musical de esperanza a la juventud de Delaware

WILMINGTON, Delaware (CNS) — A menos de un minuto de que hubiera aparecido en el escenario, con su guitarra, Tony Meléndez tenía a más de 400 estudiantes bailando, cantando, aplaudiendo, dando abrazos y ejecutando la conga, en fila, alrededor del auditorio de la escuela preparatoria Wilmington catholic.

"Había querido verlo durante mucho tiempo", dijo Paige Thommes, alumno del 8º grado de la escuela Santa María Magdalena en Wilmington. "Yo también toco la guitarra, pero verlo a él cómo la toca es inspirador".

Meléndez, que tiene 47 años de edad, nacido en Nicaragua y que hoy vive en Branson, Missouri, toca la guitarra con los pies. Nació sin brazos, debido a que a su mamá le recetaron la medicina thalidomide, que durante un tiempo se recetó a las mamás en estado de buena esperanza para aliviar los síntomas que algunas de ellas sufren, especialmente por las mañanas.

"Mi mensaje es de esperanza", le dijo Meléndez a *The Dialog*, periódico de la diócesis de Wilmington. "Este grupo de alumnos que cuentan con suficiente edad, son respetuosos de lo que yo hago. Ven a una persona que no tiene brazos y que sin embargo canta y toca la guitarra. Esto les da esperanza".

Meléndez fue el actor principal y orador en la conferencia destinada a la juventud, que llevó el título de "Un solo espíritu, una sola Iglesia", y que fue patrocinada, el 1º de marzo, por la *Oficina diocesana de ministerio católico para la juventud* en la escuela preparatoria de San Marcos.

Se invitó a estudiantes que acudieron en representación de



Meléndez fue el actor principal en la conferencia destinada a la juventud, que llevó el título de "Un solo espíritu, una sola Iglesia" en la escuela preparatoria de San Marcos en la diócesis de Wilmington. (CNS foto/Don Blake, *The Dialog*)

22 parroquias de toda la diócesis, que asisten respectivamente del grado 8º al 12º, a la conferencia, que también incluyó una Misa, celebrada por el obispo W. Francis Malooly de Wilmington.

Los estudiantes vieron un video en donde se detallaba la carrera (artística) de Meléndez. En 1987, mientras daba una presentación frente al Papa Juan Pablo II en Los Ángeles, Meléndez recibió un mensaje que lo llevó a una carrera (artística) mundial.

"El Papa subió al estrado y me dio un beso y me dijo que yo era esperanza. Me dijo que continuara haciendo lo que hacía", recordó.

Al final de su actuación, Meléndez les dijo a los estudiantes: "Dios los ha escogido a cada uno de ustedes. Él los necesita a ustedes para algo. Recuerden que la Virgen María fue escogida desde muy temprana edad. No me digan que Dios no los necesita a ustedes. Dios necesita a los jóvenes de una iglesia joven".

Durante la Misa, el obispo bendijo una cruz hecha por la *Oficina de ministerio católico de la juventud* dedicada al grupo de

dirigencia juvenil. La cruz de madera, que tiene más de 6 pies de alto, es una réplica de la cruz usada en la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud, que el año pasado recorrió todas las diócesis de Australia, hasta llegar a su destino final en Sydney.

Durante el año, los estudiantes de la diócesis de Wilmington pasarán en relevo su propia cruz, hasta que llegue de nuevo a la ciudad de Wilmington.

"Espero que mi música los haya llevado a algunos lugares", dijo Meléndez acerca de la conferencia para jóvenes. "La música nos deja vulnerables, expuestos. Espero que durante ese tiempo yo haya podido hacer que algunos mensajes importantes hayan llegado (a la mente y al corazón de los jóvenes)".

"La oración diaria es importante durante la Cuaresma, y la música de Tony es una oración," les dijo el obispo Malooly a los jóvenes. "El entusiasmo, el júbilo y las sonrisas que ustedes tenían cuando Tony ejecutó sus canciones hoy en la mañana, todo eso, debe de ser lo que hagamos siempre".



La policía federal patrulla la frontera Ciudad Juárez, México, el 2 de marzo. Casi 5,000 soldados y policías mexicanos han sido enviados a Ciudad Juárez para restaurar la ley y el orden en la ciudad más violenta del país. (Foto CNS/Tomás Bravo, Reuters)

## Vast majority of dioceses comply with sex abuse charter, audits find

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The latest audits assessing compliance with the U.S. Catholic bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People" found nearly complete compliance among participating dioceses and eparchies, but the number refusing to participate rose from five to seven.

A report released by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops March 13 showed that only four of the dioceses or eparchies participating in audits between July 1, 2007, and June 30, 2008, were found to be noncompliant with any articles of the charter.

Three — the dioceses of Lansing, Michigan, and Las Cruces, New Mexico, and the Archdiocese of San Francisco — had corrected the problems cited by auditors by the end of December, while the Diocese of Tulsa, Oklahoma, "continues to work toward full compliance with providing safe environment training to children," the report said.

But Judge Michael R. Merz, chairman of the National Review Board, the lay advisory group under whose direction the report was produced, expressed concern in a letter to Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, USCCB president, that the number of bishops or eparchs refusing to participate had grown.

"Your Eminence is already well aware of the position taken on auditing by the bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska; our concern about that does not need to be reiterated," Merz wrote. "However, this year the bishop of Baker in Oregon also declined to be audited because he has declined to have safe environment training for children in his diocese.

"The board and the USCCB Committee on the Protection of Children and Young People ... continue to believe that safe environment training is very important to protecting children," he added. "We hope the conference will encourage open dialogue on any reservation bishops may have about this part of charter implementation."

In addition to the dioceses of Baker and Lincoln, refusing to participate in the audits were the Chaldean eparchies of St. Thomas the Apostle in Detroit and St. Peter the Apostle in San Diego; the Melkite Eparchy of Newton, Massachusetts; the Ukrainian Eparchy of St. Josaphat in Parma, Ohio; and the Syrian Eparchy of Our Lady of Deliverance in Newark, New Jersey.

In a statement last year, the

**G**avin said in a letter ... that the "lack of noncompliance issues" in the latest audits "does not tell the full story of the dedication of the bishops, eparchs, and their staffs. It is the positive, proactive, and caring manner in which they have discharged their responsibilities that demonstrates their dedication," he added, noting that many dioceses and eparchies "have established internal controls and protocols that exceed charter mandates...."

Diocese of Lincoln said that after participating in the initial USCCB audit the diocese "has exercised its option to refrain from participation in the audit, as its application, though perhaps helpful in some dioceses, has not proven to be so in the Diocese of Lincoln."

The audits were conducted by the Gavin Group, a Boston-based firm founded by former FBI agent William Gavin, and overseen by the USCCB Office of Child and Youth Protection.

Audits also were conducted at the parish level in 17 of the 188 dioceses or eparchies where audits took place.

Each of the four dioceses cited for noncompliance with the charter was found not to have completed safe environment training — the Diocese of Lansing for volunteers in the diocese, the Archdiocese of San Francisco and Diocese of Tulsa for children, and the Diocese of Las Cruces for children, employees, and volunteers.

The Diocese of Las Cruces also was cited for failing to have a functioning review board and for not carrying out background checks

on volunteers and employees.

All the problems were corrected by the end of 2008, except for Tulsa's safe environment training, the report said.

Gavinsaid in a letter to Cardinal George and Merz that the "lack of noncompliance issues" in the latest audits "does not tell the full story of the dedication of the bishops, eparchs, and their staffs."

"It is the positive, proactive, and caring manner in which they have discharged their responsibilities that demonstrates their dedication," he added, noting that many dioceses and eparchies "have established internal controls and protocols that exceed charter mandates" in order to ensure that "problems are identified, aggressively addressed, and rapidly adjudicated."

The National Review Board included four recommendations in its 2008 report and followed up on four other recommendations from its 2007 report.

Board members urged a wider use of parish audits; examination of policies and practices related to background evaluations and safe environment training of international priests; more easily obtainable access by the public to contact information for each diocese's victim assistance coordinator; and greater attention to the qualifications of those coordinators and the resources and cooperation made available to them.

The board also stressed the importance of completion of the \$2.6 million study of the causes and context of clergy sex abuse of minors, which is to be conducted by the New York-based John Jay College of Criminal Justice. Commissioned by the bishops in the 2002 charter, the study had been set for completion in 2009 but has not been fully funded.

In its 2007 report, the review board noted that \$2.6 million represented "less than one-half of 1 percent of the amount spent by the American dioceses on the abuse crisis in 2007" and encouraged dioceses to contribute to closing the funding gap, which at that time was slightly less than \$1 million.

The 2008 status report said several contributions had been made to the project, and several Catholic organizations are still considering whether to donate, but no individual dioceses had done so. It did not say how much more needed to be raised.

"If the balance of funding is not raised in the next six months, the study's scope will have to be curtailed," the report said.

## Bishops join call for U.S. to support long-term development in Iraq

By Dennis Sadowski  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has joined a broad group of religious, justice, and relief and development organizations in calling upon President Barack Obama to assist and protect vulnerable Iraqis and pursue efforts that lead to long-term development in war-torn Iraq.

In a March 4 letter to the White House, 44 organizations asked the president to mandate that "civilian agencies take the lead in formulating and implementing an effective humanitarian and development strategy."

Stephen Colecchi, director of the U.S. bishops' Office of International Justice and Peace, said the letter's call parallels one aspect of the U.S. bishops' 2006 statement seeking a responsible transition in Iraq and the eventual withdrawal of American military forces from the country.

A key to Iraq's development is creating a stable country where all Iraqis are safe and refugees — both Christian and non-Christian — can return to their communities, Colecchi told Catholic News Service March 9.

"Iraq still has very high levels of unemployment, and that is never good for the stability of the country. High levels of unemployment tend to correlate with instability in societies, and so economic and humanitarian development assistance is more than just assistance; it's also building peace," Colecchi said.

The two-page letter urged Obama to ask Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to lead an interagency effort within the federal government to develop a strategy that includes goals for humanitarian efforts and human development as well as ways to measure how those goals are being met.

The organizations placed particular emphasis on establishing programs that would allow Iraq's 2.5 million refugees and another 2 million internally displaced people to return to their communities and live in safety. The letter also sought aid for Iraq's neighboring countries where refugees have fled and a commitment to resettle the most vulnerable Iraqi refugees in the United States.

"We're particularly concerned about the Christian community that has been particularly hard hit both internally within Iraq and

**A** key to Iraq's development is creating a stable country where all Iraqis are safe and refugees — both Christian and non-Christian — can return to their communities.

— **Stephen Colecchi,**  
director of the  
**U.S. bishops' Office**  
**of International**  
**Justice and Peace**

in the region. That's a symptom of pain all Iraqis are feeling," Colecchi said.

In 2006 Bishop Thomas G. Wenski of Orlando, Florida, then chairman of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, called for bipartisan cooperation in the United States to achieve a responsible transition to end the war and the withdrawal of U.S. armed forces as early as possible consistent with that goal.

The bishops' criteria for such a transition included:

— Minimizing the loss of life.

— Addressing the humanitarian crisis in Iraq and the refugee crisis.

— Promoting political reconciliation in Iraq.

— Engaging international support, especially with Syria and Iran, to stabilize Iraq.

Other organizations that signed the March 4 letter include Catholic Relief Services; Pax Christi USA; the Maryknoll Office for Global Concerns; Network, a Catholic social justice lobby; the Chaldean Federation of America; the Episcopal Church; the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the United Methodist Church, General Board of Church and Society.

# Dairy farmers seek federal intervention in price slump

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Dairy farmers, many of whom have seen the prices they get for milk cut in half since last spring, have asked Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack to invoke a clause in a 1937 law to assure the farmers adequate prices for the milk their cows produce.

"We're getting \$10 a hundred-weight (100 pounds), which is roughly half of what it cost to produce in the first place," said Paul Rozwadowski of Stanley, Wisconsin, a Catholic who has been farming since 1979. He disputed claims that dairy farmers are overproducing. "They couldn't be more wrong," he said.

While retail prices of dairy products in stores have dipped, Rozwadowski said, "they aren't low enough to reflect the poor price dairy farmers are receiving right now," adding that dairy farming is in its worst crisis "since the Great Depression."

Rozwadowski made his comments during a March 4 conference call sponsored by the Washington-based National Family Farm Coalition. He is chairman of its dairy subcommittee.

The Agricultural Marketing Agreement Act of 1937 allows for the agriculture secretary to adjust farm milk price orders to "reflect the feeds, the available supply of feeds, and other economic conditions which affect market supply or demand for milk and its products."

Kathy Ozer, National Family Farm Coalition executive director,

said in the conference call that a letter had been written two years ago in a failed attempt to get the Agriculture Department to adjust prices, but that she cannot recall that section of the act ever having been invoked in its 72 years.

The coalition, which sent the letter March 2, said it had not received a reply from Vilsack, although Ozer said White House and Agriculture Department officials contacted the coalition about farming issues in February as the economic stimulus bill was being written, and dairy prices were the subject of discussions.

Without price adjustments, "it's gonna cause thousands of dairy farmers to stop producing," Rozwadowski said.

In a subsequent telephone interview with Catholic News Service, he said he wasn't in immediate danger of shuttering his operation. "After 30 years, I'm pretty well established. I'm not going to go broke overnight. But I can't very well go on for much longer," he said.

Rozwadowski is not alone. Brenda Cochran and her husband have raised 14 children on their farm in Westfield, Pennsylvania, where they tend 250 dairy cattle and a small beef herd.

"We've given each of them a name," Cochran said of the cows, adding that her children "can tell you the mothers, the grandmothers, the aunts, the nieces, the sisters. ... My husband always says a little prayer when he puts a (beef) cow in the truck" on its

way to slaughter.

Cochran married into a dairy family; her husband's family can trace its dairy farming origins to Europe. "I have grown to love the farming, but I have not grown to love what's going on with this economic adjustment, let's put it that way," she said with a rueful laugh.

Last year "there was that little bubble" when prices went beyond the cost of production, Cochran said. "That was the first time since 1981 that we got a milk (payment) check that was actually fair."

The price spike, she said, enabled the Cochrans to make improvements to the operation "that gave us a better crop last year" and to pay bills. While 12 of the 14 children still help with the farm, as do some grandchildren, "not one has chosen to dairy full time," she added.

Cochran estimated that 90 percent of the dairy farmers in her area have already gotten out of the business. If prices don't improve soon, "we, too, will be gone," she said.

As Catholics, Cochran said, "we care about our animals. We have a strong stewardship motivation to do this. Personally, I don't want to sell my cows to a huge, industrialized, mechanized operation in Michigan or California or Idaho or New Mexico."

While organic products are taking a larger market share, organic dairy farmers are also feeling the pinch.



Jacki Roden and her mother, Cindy, feed dairy calves on their 280-acre family farm in West Bend, Wisconsin, in 2008. The Rodens operate Rob-n-Cin Farms where cows are milked daily. (CNS photo/Sam Arendt, CATHOLIC HERALD)

John Kinsman, 82, of Sauk County, Wisconsin, a member of the board of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, said he has been farming organically for the last 50 years.

While he has entered into a fair-trade deal with a local cheese producer that pays him a set price for his milk, "the big ones" in the organic industry, including Horizon and Organic Valley, are "cutting their prices by a dollar or two," Kinsman told CNS.

Kinsman said he has a partner who "kind of" wants to take over the operation when Kinsman is

no longer able to farm, but wants more stability in prices before that happens. "This man is not related to me," Kinsman said. "My own children all want to farm, but they are unable to because they cannot afford the low prices."

The pricing structure has life-long farmer Kinsman bothered. "I keep telling people, 'Are you in it to break even or do you want to live?'" he said.

Without federal action, Cochran said, "We need to pray for a miracle. Whether we are victorious or not depends on (God's) will and his grace."

## Caldarola...

FROM PAGE 11  
separate niches of their psyche. I, on the other hand, feel challenged by Thomas Merton, who said, "A life is either all spiritual or not spiritual at all."

How hard it is to ask how I measure up against that phrase!

In a time when my college and retirement funds sink, do I thank the Lord for asking me, "Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing?" (Matthew 6:25)

Your heavenly Father knows

you need these things, Christ says, and as for me, well, I'm supposed to seek first the kingdom of heaven and not worry about all that "stuff."

What better time than Lent in the midst of recession to ask: Where have I really put my trust?

My mother lived and suffered through the Great Depression. It did change her. She saw her father lose his farm, and she had to work as a teenager to help her family survive. She clung to security after

that, and unlike our generation, she was a woman who saved money strenuously.

But she didn't really enjoy her money because she tried never to spend it. And she didn't give a lot of it away. I don't judge her; I have those same tendencies.

And that's why I feel Lent is calling right now and demanding that I answer in an honest way, What do I seek first? Who — or what — is my master?

Effie Caldarola is a columnist for Catholic News Service who lives in Anchorage, Alaska with her husband Jim and their three children.

## Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi

LET'S SEE... FIFTY MILLION PEOPLE WERE ABORTED OVER THE LAST 35 YEARS...

THAT'S 685,714 TEACHERS OUT OF WORK, 1.7 BILLION PAIRS OF SHOES NOT BEING MADE, 12.5 MILLION HOMES NOT BEING BUILT....

87 MILLION CARS NOT BEING MADE, AND 459 BILLION DOLLARS IN SOCIAL SECURITY TAXES UN-COLLECTED.

AND AMERICANS WONDER WHAT'S CAUSING THE ECONOMIC CRISIS?

### The FLOCK

By Jean Denton  
Copyright © 2009, Jean Denton

I'M GOING TO GIVE ALMS FOR LENT.

Great.

YOU ARE SO POOR AND COLD. HERE ARE SOME OF MY OLD SOCKS TO KEEP YOUR FEET WARM.

THAT WAS AN ALM!

THAT was an ALM-ost!

DENTON

# Calendar

## UTA CATHOLIC ART SHOW

The University Catholic Community at the University of Texas at Arlington is sponsoring a juried art competition entitled *Amor Vitae: Love of Life!* on Saturday, April 25 and Sunday, April 26 at Artspace 111 in downtown Fort Worth. The show is open to high school juniors and seniors and undergraduate college students throughout the Diocese of Fort Worth. Artists are asked to depict work that reflects Catholic Social Teaching to respect all forms of life. To receive an application, call the UCC at (817) 460-1155 or download it from the Web site at www.utacatholic.org. Deadline to submit work will be Monday, April 20. Artwork, application forms, and money can be dropped off Monday through Friday from 12 to 6 p.m. at the UCC, located at 1010 Bengel Dr. in Arlington, or at the Catholic Campus Center for the University of North Texas, located at 1303 Eagle Dr. in Denton from Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information, call Lisa Campbell at the UCC or e-mail her at lcampbell@fwdioc.org.

## LENTEN SERVICES FOR DEAF

Father Ken Robinson will celebrate a Lenten reconciliation service for the Deaf Community on Sunday, March 29 at 6:30 p.m. in the chapel at St. John the Apostle Church located at 7341 Glenview Dr. in North Richland Hills. He will be available to hear individual confessions in English, American Sign Language, and Spanish. A six-week Lenten Prayer Group for Adults meets Wednesday evenings from 7 to 8:15 p.m. at St. John during Lent. The Deaf Community will gather at San Mateo Church located at 3316 Lovell Ave. in Fort Worth for Palm Sunday services. Fr. Robinson will also celebrate the 1:45 p.m. Mass in sign and voice. Hearing family members and friends are invited to join the Deaf Community for this liturgy and social after Mass. Holy Thursday Mass will be interpreted for the deaf at 7 p.m. at St. John. Good Friday Services will be at 6:30 p.m. at St. John. All parishes with Deaf Ministry-interpreted Masses will be available on Easter morning. However, the 5 p.m. Mass on Saturday evening at St. John will not be interpreted because parishioners will be preparing for their Easter Vigil Mass instead. Contact Mary Cinatl, director or Deaf Ministry, at mcinatl@fwdioc.org for more information.

## SPRING GOSPELFEST

Our Mother of Mercy Church in South Fort Worth will host its first annual Spring Gospelfest Saturday, April 25 at 7 p.m. in its building at 1001 E. Terrell St. with multiple choirs and other groups from a variety of Christian denominations to join in the its celebration in conjunction with the parish's 80th anniversary. For more information, call Joi Bernard at (817) 565-6717.

## MOMS' SUPPORT GROUP

Families who have lost a child because of miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion are invited to join a Mothers' Group offering support, sharing, and healing Thursday, April 2 at 7 p.m. at St. Andrew Church's pastoral center at 3717 Stadium Dr. in Fort Worth. Pastoral care professionals will facilitate the group, and confidentiality is assured. For more information, contact Alice Curran at (817) 927-5383 or by e-mail at acurran@standrewcc.org. Childcare is provided if reservations are made at least 48 hours in advance by phone at (817) 924-6581. There will be a \$5 fee per child.

## ST. FRANCIS TEA

St. Francis of Assisi Church's Mothers with Young Children will host their annual Tea and Auction Charity Event from 2 to 4 p.m. Sunday, March 29 at the parish Family Life Center at 861 Wildwood Ln. in Grapevine. Admission is free, and tea, sandwiches, refreshments, and sweets will be provided. Silent and live auctions will be held, in addition to door prizes being given. Only payment by cash or check will be accepted for auction items. All proceeds will benefit adopted Christmas families, St. Francis Outreach, Children's Discovery Center Preschool, The Youth Scholarship Fund, and Catholic Charities. For more information, contact Claudia Halman, Nancy Smith, Mary Beth Soucy, or Lori Spisak at myc@sfxatx.org.

## To Report Misconduct

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

- Call **Judy Locke, victim assistance coordinator**, (817) 560-2452 ext. 201 or e-mail her at jlocke@fwdioc.org
- Or call the **Sexual Abuse Hotline** (817) 560-2452 ext. 900
- Or call The Catholic Center at (817) 560-2452 ext. 102 and ask for the chancellor/moderator of the curia, Father James Hart

## To Report Abuse

Call the **Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services)** at (800) 252-5400

## MOZART REQUIEM CHOIR

Choir members from all parishes in the diocese have been invited to join the St. Patrick Cathedral Adult Choir in singing *Mozart's Requiem* at the cathedral's Palm Sunday Mass, April 5 at 7:30 p.m. Volunteers must be available to attend the dress rehearsal on April 5 from 2 to 4 p.m. and are also invited to attend regular choir rehearsals each Wednesday from 7 to 9 p.m. Contact Cynthia Cardenas at ccards@att.net or call (682) 465-5248 for more information. St. Patrick Cathedral is located at 1206 Throckmorton St. in downtown Fort Worth.

## NTC DEADLINES FOR SUBMISSION

The *North Texas Catholic* is published twice monthly, except during the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly. The deadline to submit information is noon on the Wednesday of the week before the paper is published. Items for the April 10 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, April 1. Items for the April 24 issue must be received by noon on Wednesday, April 15.

## YOUTH 2000

The 2009 YOUTH 2000 Retreat led by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal of the Bronx, will be held Friday, April 17 to Sunday April 19 at Nolan Catholic High School at 4501 Bridge St. in Fort Worth. This retreat is for and by all youth and young adults between the ages of 13 and 30. The deadline for early registration of \$40 per person is Wednesday, April 1. Housing will not be provided. All minors must be accompanied by an adult, and all adults must have had the Safe Environment training of their diocese. For more information, call (817) 558-9805, or visit the Web site for the event at www.fwdiocyouthretreat.org.

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## RACHEL MINISTRIES

Rachel Ministries, a program that offers a safe, non-judgmental, and supportive environment to those struggling with abortion's aftermath, is expanding its outreach to include programs and services in Spanish. The expanded outreach program is currently seeking volunteers who can read and speak Spanish to help build the Spanish program. The ministry is also seeking Spanish-speaking licensed counselors to volunteer during the Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreats. There are also opportunities for volunteers to be included on the referral list. Training will be provided to all volunteers. Anyone who is bilingual and is interested in this ministry is asked to contact Betsy Kopor at (817) 923-4757 or by e-mail to forgiven@racheltx.org.

## CENTERING PRAYER

This half-day workshop will be held in St. Andrew Church, 3717 Stadium Dr. in Fort Worth in the chapel Saturday, April 4 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. with registration at 8:45 a.m. The presenters will be Sandy Guancial and Wilma Yarrington of Contemplative Outreach in Dallas. This "Prayer of the Heart" dates to the desert fathers and mothers of the fourth century. It is an introduction to contemplative life as practiced in monasteries and convents to this day, but one designed by Trappist monks for the use of the laity. A \$15 offering is suggested. Participants can pre-register at www.cellofpeace.com. For more information, contact Tom Uhler at tomuhler@yahoo.com, or (817) 874-2894, or Sandy Guancial at cellofpeace.com. For more information about this and other events in the Fort Worth area, visit the Contemplative Outreach-Fort Worth Web site at http://www.cpfortworth.org. For groups that meet regularly and would like to be added to the list on the Web site, contact Tom Uhler.

## DIVORCE AND BEYOND

St. Andrew Church will host a "Divorce and Beyond" program Thursday evenings from 7 to 9 p.m. April 16 through June 4 at its pastoral center at 3717 Stadium Dr. The cost for registration is \$15, and includes the cost of book and supplies which will be available the first evening. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, call Alice Curran at (817) 927-5383 or Delphine Exman at (817) 292-1453.

## GOLF TOURNAMENT

Our Mother of Mercy School's fourth annual "Golf and Networking Event" will be held at Squaw Creek Golf Course on April 18. All are invited to participate as players or sponsors. For more information, contact tournament co-chairs Howard Rattliff at rattlhj@yahoo.com, or Mike Barks at barksully@sbcglobal.net, or go to the Web site www.tournevents.com/omm2009 to register.

## ST. ANN LECTURE

The Daughters of St. Ann will host a Lenten lecture at 7 p.m. Thursday, March 26, at St. Ann Church at 100 SW Alsbury Blvd. in Burleson. The topic is "Thank God for Purgatory!" presented by Father Mel Bessellieu, pastor of St. Ann. Refreshments will follow in the parish hall. Everyone is invited to attend. For additional information, call the church office at (817) 295-5621.

## DIVINE MERCY SUNDAY

Our Lady of Mercy Parish at 107 Crestridge Dr. in Hillsboro will host a celebration for Divine Mercy Sunday April 19 at 2:30 p.m. The celebration will conclude a novena for Divine Mercy, which begins on Good Friday. A prayer service that will include the Divine Mercy Chaplet, and end with Adoration, will begin at 2:30 p.m. Sunday, April 19 with Our Lady of Mercy pastor Father Baby George presiding. Additional information on Divine Mercy, St. Faustina, the novena prayer, and the Chaplet of Divine Mercy can be found on the Web site www.marian.org. For information and directions call the church office at (254) 582-5640 or Linda Alesi-Miller in the evenings at (254) 694-6188.

## NAZARETH SISTERS

The Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth invite women interested in religious life to their convent for a day retreat Saturday, April 4 with Mass, prayer, praise, talks, and visiting with the sisters. For more information on these days, call Sister Mary Paul at (972) 642-5191 or smpaul@icgrandprairie.org.

## NOLAN PLACEMENT TEST

Nolan Catholic High School is offering a make-up admissions/placement test for the 2009-2010 academic year on Saturday, March 28 at 9 a.m. Students should report to the Commons at 4501 Bridge St. in Fort Worth by 8:45 a.m. to register and receive their room assignment. The test will be approximately three hours. For more information on testing or admissions to Nolan Catholic High School, contact Maureen Barisonnek at (817) 457-2920, ext. 1551 or mbarisonnek@nolancatholic.org.

## ST. AUGUSTINE GROUP

The St. Augustine Men's Purity Group, a support group for men who struggle with sources of sexual impurity such as those found on the Internet, meets regularly in Room 213 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School, located at 2016 Willis Lane, Keller; at 1301 Paxton Ave. (Padre Pio House) in Arlington; and at Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton at 2255 Bonnie Brae St. For additional information, visit the Web site at www.samg.org, or e-mail to Mark at seasmenspurity@yahoo.com.

## VOCATION AWARENESS

All single men and women ages 18 to 50 are invited to attend the Lenten Vocation Awareness Program held every Monday night from 6 to 9 p.m. throughout Lent at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. High school sophomores and older are welcome too. Women will be led by the sisters, and men will be led by priests. "Single men and women — Is God calling you to the religious life, the married life, or to be committed to the Church as you are? Come and see," says Vocations Director Father Kyle Walterscheid. This program includes prayer, eucharistic adoration, reflection, presentations, discussion, and a free dinner. The first gathering will be on Monday, March 2. For more information contact Fr. Walterscheid at kwalterscheid@fwdioc.org or at (817) 560 3300, ext. 105, or visit the Religious Vocations page on the diocesan Web site www.fwdioc.org.

## CALIX SUPPORT GROUP

Calix, a monthly support meeting for Catholics who are alcoholic and others who are struggling with addiction and seeking recovery, is offered the first Saturday of each month at 10 a.m. in the chapel of Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth. The next meeting will be Saturday, April 4. Calix meetings focus on enhancing spiritual growth through sharing Eucharist, discussion, and fellowship. For more information, call Deacon Joe Milligan at (817) 737-6768 ext. 105.

# Classified Section

## ACCOMPANIST

Accompanist with experience at three-manual pipe organ needed for three weekend Masses at Holy Family Church in Fort Worth. Responsibilities include rehearsals with up to two choirs weekly, holy day Masses; availability for parish funerals, weddings, and major parish celebrations throughout the year is preferred. Applicant must be familiar with post-Vatican II Catholic liturgy. Send a resumé to Holy Family Church; Attn: Diane Kain, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth 76107 or e-mail to dkain@holymfamilyfw.org. For more information, call (817) 737-6768 ext. 104

## LITURGY AND MUSIC DIRECTOR

A North Dallas Suburban Parish in transitional growth is seeking a full-time director of liturgy and music to lead the assembly in worship and song as a member of our pastoral team. A collaborative person is needed to initiate and grow a comprehensive liturgical music ministry; to guide parish liturgical ministries, plan and accompany weekend liturgies, holy days, weddings, funerals, special liturgical celebrations, direct and rehearse choir and cantors and interface with existing Spanish Choir. Requires close collaboration with staff and parishioners. Needs strong piano and conducting skills, good vocal skills, knowledge of Catholic liturgy and must be a practicing Catholic with a degree in liturgy or music, or equivalent years of experience. Salary and diocesan benefits commensurate with education or experience. Send letter, resumé, salary requirements and three current/verifiable references to: Search Committee Liturgy and Music, 352 Cascata Drive, Frisco, TX 75034.

## SPANISH MUSIC DIRECTOR

Musician needed to coordinate and direct a newly forming Spanish choir for one liturgy per weekend at St. Michael Catholic Church in Bedford. Qualifications for this position include: knowledge of Roman Catholic liturgy, proficiency in voice and keyboard, experience in directing choirs and training cantors. Job description is available upon request. Please send resume to jwerner@smchurch.org.

## CHOIR DIRECTOR

Holy Family Church in Ft. Worth is seeking a director for the Contemporary Music Group which presents music for the 9:15 a.m. Mass and various special celebrations throughout the year. Candidates should have a working knowledge of Catholic liturgy and music, experience in directing, and enthusiasm to work with volunteers. Call Diane Kain at 817-737-6768, x104 for more information.

## OLG TEACHERS

Our Lady of Grace Catholic High School in Roanoke, TX is seeking the following positions for fall 2009: Full-Time or Part-Time Math/Science, Theology, 6-man football coach (stipend only position). Please e-mail olghsdonohue@gmail.com or call (817) 833-6516.

## PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR

Little Apostles Nursery School at St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church in Lewisville has an opening for a Preschool Director; 12-month position, 30 hours/week with benefits. Little Apostles is a state-licensed preschool serving children 6 weeks to not yet in kindergarten with an average enrollment of 140 students. Will manage all aspects of preschool including curriculum, staff development, business planning, finances, and communication, and will supervise 35+ employees. Current director will assist with transition. Job description at www.stphilipcc.org, Job Board page. Resumes and cover letter to office@stphilipcc.org; deadline 4/15/09. No phone calls please.

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## Good Newsmaker

Guitarist, songwriter Tony Melendez brings music and more when he performs. Commissioned by Pope John Paul II in 1987, the armless musician brings a

# MESSAGE OF HOPE

By Elissa Serrao  
The Dialog  
Newspaper of the  
Diocese of Wilmington,  
Delaware

Less than a minute after he took the stage with his guitar, Tony Melendez had more than 400 students dancing, singing, clapping, hugging, and doing conga lines around the auditorium at a Wilmington Catholic high school.

"I've wanted to see him forever," said Paige Thommes, an eighth-grader at St. Mary Magdalen School in Wilmington. "I play the guitar, too, but to see how he plays it is inspirational."

The 47-year-old Melendez, born in Nicaragua and now living in Branson, Missouri, plays the guitar with his feet. He was born without arms because his mother was prescribed thalidomide, a drug once used to ease morning sickness in pregnancy.

"My message is hope," he told *The Dialog*, newspaper of the Diocese of Wilmington. "This age group is respectful of what I do. They see a guy with no arms, singing and playing the guitar. It gives them hope."

Melendez was the keynote performer and speaker at the "One Spirit, One Church" youth conference sponsored March 1 by the diocesan Office for Catholic Youth Ministry at St. Mark's High School.

Students representing 22 parishes from across the diocese in grades eight through 12 were invited to participate in the day, which also included a Mass celebrated by Bishop W. Francis Malooly of Wilmington.

Students watched a brief video clip detailing Melendez's career. In 1987,



Composer and musician Tony Melendez plays guitar and sings during Mass at the "One Spirit, One Church" conference at St. Mark's High School in Wilmington, Delaware, March 1. Melendez led an upbeat crowd of more than 400 students in the auditorium. (CNS photo/Don Blake, THE DIALOG)

**You have been handpicked by God. He needs you for something. Remember the Virgin Mary was chosen at a very young age. Do not tell me God doesn't need you. He needs the young church.**

while performing for Pope John Paul II in Los Angeles, Melendez received a message that took his career global.

"The pope jumped off the stage and kissed me and told me I was hope. He told me to continue what I was doing," he recalled.

At the end of his performance, Melendez told students, "You have been handpicked by God. He needs you for something. Remember the Virgin Mary was chosen at a very young age. Do not tell me God doesn't need you. He needs

the young church."

During Mass the bishop blessed a cross made by the Office for Catholic Youth Ministry's youth leadership team. The wooden cross, more than six feet tall, is a replica of the World Youth Day cross, which last year was passed across every diocese in Australia until reaching its final destination in Sydney.

During the coming year, students from the Diocese of Wilmington will pass around their own cross until it makes its way back to the city of Wilm-

ington.

"I hope my music was able to take them places," Melendez said about the teens at the conference. "Music leaves us vulnerable, exposed. I hope during that time I was able to sneak in some important messages."

"Praying every day is important during Lent, and Tony's music was prayer," Bishop Malooly told the youths. "The enthusiasm, joy, and smiles you had when Tony sang this morning — that should be what we do all the time."

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## Inside... This issue of the NTC

1930s Scout Emmet Cook was a pilot in WWII whose experiences as a POW were part of the famed "Great Escape." Scouter John Ryan seeks other stories of former Scouts from Troop 32. **5**

The USCCB's Richard Doerflinger cites science journals and scientists on the dangers of embryonic stem cell use and the already widespread therapeutic uses of adult stem cells, averting ethical problems. **11**

Jeff Hedglen writes about the images of the Passion in "Jesus of Nazareth" and "The Passion of the Christ" and how they have shaped his experience of Jesus' suffering for our redemption. **17**