

# NEWSMAGAZINE North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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## Religious Freedom: The most cherished of American freedoms

*More than 700  
gathered in Fort Worth,  
joining in one of many  
Stand Up for Religious  
Freedom Rallies across  
the country.*



More than 700 people gathered outside the Fritz G. Lanham Federal Building in Fort Worth March 23 to protest the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services mandate forcing religious institutions to violate their consciences. The rally was one of 140 held at cities across the United States.

*Story and Photos by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen ■ Correspondent*

**A**my Lerner packed a sack lunch for her three young children and braved the traffic and congestion of downtown Fort Worth on a busy Friday at mid-day for a very special reason. The determined mother joined more than 700 Catholics and non-Catholics outside the Fritz G. Lanham Federal Building on March 23 to peacefully rally against a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) mandate that threatens religious freedom.

Under the federal order, Catholic institutions are required to disregard Church teachings and offer free contraceptives, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs in their employee health plans.

“Religious liberty is guaranteed in the Constitution, and the HHS mandate does not allow Catholics or anyone else to practice religion freely,” said Lerner as she handed sandwiches to Andrew, 7, Peter, 4, and 18-month-old Clara.

At home, naps routinely follow lunchtime, and giving up that needed break to attend the rally was a sacrifice, the active mom admits.

“But this is so very important,” Lerner explained. “I had the wonderful liberty of

religious freedom growing up, and I want my children to experience that too.”

The local Stand Up For Religious Freedom gathering was one of 140 rallies held across the country in front of historical sites and government buildings. Organized at the national level by the Pro-Life Action League and Citizens for a Pro-Life Society, the public protest brought out more than 50,000 supporters nationwide who listened to motivating speeches, sang hymns, and offered prayers.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner Joe Jordan kicked-off Fort Worth’s outdoor assembly with a prayer and a partial reading of the Declaration of Independence.

“There are people who want to convince us that this argument is simply about contraception and the Catholic Church,” he told the retirees, home-schooled youngsters, and picketers who filled the small park in front of the federal building. “We are here to defend our freedoms, and that is the message we want to send to our representatives in Washington and at the state level.”

During the rally, participants circulated a petition addressed to President Barack Obama that stated the health care mandate is not supported by all women. Pat McMahan, a registered nurse trained at the Holy Cross School of Nursing in South Bend, Indiana, added her name to the list of signers.

“This mandate forces people to violate religious beliefs in order to meet the requirements of the government,” said the parishioner from St. Vincent de Paul Church in Arlington who is also president of the parish’s St. Vincent de Paul Society. “I’m against that.”

The long-time health care worker fears imposing the edict could force Catholic hospitals to close.

“They can’t violate Catholic principles in order to accommodate the government,” she pointed out. “That’s clearly an intrusion of

religious freedom.”

Addressing the group from a cement bench, Tabitha Mattiace read an open letter to President Obama, explaining the position of women who oppose the HHS contraceptive mandate. Proponents of the federal requirement have linked the controversy to preventive health care for women.

“Those currently invoking ‘women’s health’ in an attempt to shout down anyone who disagrees with forcing religious institutions to violate deeply held beliefs are more than a little mistaken,” Mattiace said. “It’s simply an attempt to deflect attention from the serious religious liberty issues at stake.”

She also dismissed the argument that costless birth control equals sexual equality.

“No one speaks for all women on these issues,” she insisted. “Each of us, Catholic or not, is proud to stand with the Catholic Church and its rich, life-affirming teachings on sex, marriage, and family life.”

One of the rally’s keynote speakers was Michele Wetteland, wife of John Wetteland, the 1996 World Series MVP and the 2005 Texas Rangers Hall of Fame inductee. A



# Our Shepherd Speaks

## *Ad Limina* visit, an experience of ‘ecclesial communion’

### Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Last month's *North Texas Catholic* had some pictures from the *Ad Limina* visit of the Region X Bishops to the Holy See. For all of us bishops from Texas, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, it was an experience of what could be called “ecclesial communion” and certainly a profound experience of Faith. The word *Ad Limina* means “to the threshold,” – this is a visit to the “threshold of the Apostles,” specifically the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. This was an experience of ecclesial communion because the purpose of the visit is to reflect on and strengthen the reality of the communion of Faith of the local Church with the Universal Church, especially in the person of the Bishop of Rome, Pope Benedict XVI, who is the successor of St. Peter. A month later, as I am writing these words, I see St. Patrick's Cathedral and the St. Ignatius building from the window of my office at St. Patrick's Cathedral, and think of the time with the Holy Father at St. Peter's and how the Universal Church and the local Church here in Fort Worth are truly in communion.

This reality of ecclesial communion was also reinforced by making this visit together with the Bishops of the Provinces of San Antonio, Galveston-Houston, and Oklahoma City. When our Province of San Antonio had our meeting with Pope Benedict XVI on the third day of our visit, he said to us, “Welcome, you are at home here in the House of Peter. We are a family. I would like to hear something of your local Churches.” Each of us, then, took a theme of the life of the Church in the Province of San Antonio. First, Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller from the Archdiocese of San Antonio gave a beautiful opening reflection. Bishop Kevin Farrell from our close neighboring Diocese of Dallas spoke of the increase in seminarians that we are experiencing, and yet the need for priests to minister to the increasing Catholic population. Bishop Douglas Deshotel, one of the Auxiliary Bishops in Dallas, spoke of Catholic schools, and Bishop Oscar Cantú, the Auxiliary Bishop of San Antonio, talked of the current challenges facing marriage and family life. I spoke on the important topic of ecumenism, reflecting especially on the work of the Pastoral Provision and *Anglicanorum Coetibus* and the recent establishment of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter here in the United States. The other Bishops took similar themes, for example, speaking of the challenges of immigration that face our country, especially here in Texas. This provided for us a truly powerful moment of ecclesial communion with



Bishop Kevin Vann

Pope Benedict and made us all realize just how united in faith we are with the Holy Father, and through him with the entire Universal Church.

During the remaining days we visited with the officials of the various departments of the Holy See called “dicasteries” which assist the Pope in teaching, governing, and sanctifying the Universal Church. We had the opportunity to visit such dicasteries as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, the Congregation for Bishops, the Congregation for Religious and Secular Institutes, the Congregation for Divine Worship, the Congregation for the Clergy, and other dicasteries and Pontifical Councils as well. Each of these departments oversees various parts of the life of the Church Universal, which is no easy task. We were warmly welcomed in each dicastery by the Prefect, the Secretary, and the Undersecretary. They listened to our questions and concerns about our local Churches, and offered reflections, counsel, advice, and direction. Many of the Bishops had a chance for individual appointments as well with the officials to speak of specific concerns or problems. We were given a very cordial welcome. The officials of the dicasteries were very grateful to hear about the life of the Church in this part of the country where the challenges are growth and expansion, both in numbers, mission, and vocations.

After visiting the dicasteries, we also had the opportunity to visit the *Villa Stritch* which is the residence for American priests who are missioned to work at the Holy See. We also celebrated Sunday Mass at the *Casa Santa Maria* of the North American College which is the graduate house of the North American College where United States priests are in residence while pursuing graduate studies at the Pontifical Universities. The original building dates back

to the 1500s and it is only one block over from the Trevi Fountain in the heart of Rome. Currently Father Jonathon Wallis from our Diocese is in residence there while completing his S.T.L. (Licentiate in Sacred Theology) from the Gregorian University. The entire visit was coordinated by the North American College, and I extend a special thanks to Monsignor James Checchio, the Rector, and the staff of the College, for their coordination of these visits. I was accompanied by Father Isaac Orozco, our new Vocations Director, and our Diocesan Chancellor, Father Dan Kelley. We had the chance to visit with not only Fr. Wallis, but our two seminarians, Matthew Tatyrek and Joseph Keating who are both completing their studies in Rome.

In addition to all the official business that needed to be done, there were personal moments for me as well. I had the chance to visit with longtime priests, religious, and laity in Rome and Italy who are close friends. Bishop Richard Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, and I were also able to have lunch at the *Angelicum* (the University of St. Thomas Aquinas in the city) with the Dominican Friars who are on the faculty. I earned my J.C.D. (Doctorate in Canon Law) from the *Angelicum*, so this was a homecoming for me as well!

This visit was also a visit of prayer and faith which was a blessing to me both personally and for my ministry as a bishop. We celebrated Mass at the four Major Basilicas of Rome (St. John Lateran, St. Peter, St. Paul Outside the Walls, and St. Mary Major). At St. Peter and St. Paul we were very conscious of praying directly over or near the tombs of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul. The Bishops of the Region together prayed the Nicene Creed at the tomb of St. Peter. On the last day, we celebrated Mass at the tomb of Blessed John Paul II which was just recently moved after his beatification to one of the side chapels on the main floor of St. Peter's Basilica. These were moments not only of ecclesial communion, but also of great Faith, being very aware of the presence of the Lord Jesus who called the first apostles to “Come follow me” and who has called each of us bishops to share in the apostolic ministry as successors of the apostles.

Most importantly for me the visit, having prepared the *Ad Limina* or *Quinquennial* (that is, five year) report to the Holy See on the state of the Diocese of Fort Worth, was a profound experience of gratitude for everyone in our local Church: their lives, faith, and sacrifices. Reading that report, I could not help but be very aware of all whose lives, faith, and sacrifice make up the living Body of Christ here in our Diocese. It was a great moment of “ownership,”

gratitude, and Faith, as this was my first report to the Holy See as the Bishop of the Diocese. It is a reflection of all of your lives, and your powerful witness to the presence of Christ to all in our Diocese and far beyond as well.

I dedicated the *Ad Limina* report to all who have come before us, and I would like to close with that dedication. It is taken from a book that describes the early history of the life of the Church here in Texas. This is how the dedication appears on the first page of the *Ad Limina* report:

#### DEDICATION

*“The story told in the preceding chapters is not one of perfect people who always got it right but rather the story of men and women who strived, in spite of their weaknesses and prejudices, to dedicate themselves to eternal ideals in the service of others. All in all, the Catholic Church thrived in frontier Texas. Often poor, its people were nevertheless a hearty lot who took their faith seriously and flourished spiritually. And this was in large part due to the determined priests and religious who led the frontier Church. Though not perfect, when viewed in the perspective of when and where they labored, they tend to put later generations to shame.”*

*(From the concluding chapter of THROUGH FIRE AND FLOOD: THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN FRONTIER TEXAS 1836-1890, by Father James Talmadge Moore, Texas A&M University Press, 1892.0)*

The above excerpt well described the faith of the early Catholic settlers in Texas. It is to these people, and their descendants, that I dedicate the pages of my first *Ad Limina* report as Bishop of Fort Worth.

A Happy Easter to all, and I pray that the Risen Christ will be a source of strength and joy to you and your families.

*+Kevin W. Vann*

+BISHOP KEVIN W. VANN, JCD, DD  
DIOCESE OF FORT WORTH





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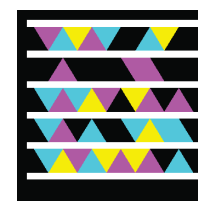
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## In the midst of attacks, we have hope

I don't know that our Church has ever faced the kind of challenge in this country as it is facing now. While historically, Catholics had been attacked and treated as second-class citizens (particularly in the 19th- and at the turn of the 20th centuries), such treatment was never officially sanctioned by the State. Now, we are being asked to violate our beliefs by the actual government entities.

As both a Catholic and a journalist, I take First Amendment rights very seriously. But if there is one thing I've learned by studying history, it's that the Catholic Church can be attacked, beaten, and damaged (sometimes, even internally), but it will never die. This is the Church Christ has given us, and that's enough to give us hope as we battle for religious freedom.

And there are a lot of things to be hopeful for, as well, especially in our diocese. Every Easter Vigil, our Church welcomes new members, and we've captured this moment in a photo essay on **Pages 14-15**. Bishop Vann writes about the hope he felt visiting with his brother bishops from Region X meeting with the Holy Father in Rome for their *Ad Limina*

visit in his column on **Page 2**. And in the midst of a nationwide vocations shortage, our diocese still has 27 men in formation to become priests, and is anticipating nine more for next year, all of whom will need support on **Page 17**.

And speaking of hope, being a monthly publication, there is no way we can fit all the wonderful things happening in our diocese into our print edition, but check out our website regularly at [www.fwdioc.org/ntc](http://www.fwdioc.org/ntc) to be inspired by stories of youth, the future of our Church, deepening their relationship with Christ at Youth 2000, or answering his call to serve others by helping their peers affected by the tornados that hit the area during Holy Week. And Bishop Vann is chronicling many other things to be hopeful for on his blog at [fwbishop.blogspot.com](http://fwbishop.blogspot.com), so be sure to see what he has to say. And as we're entering the digital world, we still invite you to become a fan of us on our **Facebook** page: "North Texas Catholic Newspaper."

Tony Gutiérrez, Associate Editor

## Next month in the North Texas Catholic:

Though Mary Crimmins, a Nolan Catholic High School student, and her family and neighbors had their lives "turned upside down" by the damage left behind by an EF-2 tornado on April 3, 30 of her Nolan classmates quickly lent a helping hand. The students, who were glad to help not only their classmate's family but various surrounding neighbors, took part in an extensive cleanup on Good Friday and Easter weekend to get the victims back on their feet.





## Santa Rosa Diocese will 'shut down' if HHS mandate imposed, bishop says

By Valerie Schmalz

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) — If the Diocese of Santa Rosa is required to cooperate with the Obama administration's mandate requiring most religious employers to provide no-cost contraceptive coverage, the diocese won't, said Bishop Robert F. Vasa.

"If they shut me down, they shut me down," the bishop said March 30 following a speech on Catholic health care at a three-day conference on Catholic health care reform hosted by Life Legal Defense Foundation and the Christus Medicus Foundation. The Archdiocese of San Francisco and the dioceses of Sacramento, Oakland, and Santa Rosa were among the sponsors.

However, in an interview with *Catholic San Francisco*, the archdiocesan newspaper, Bishop Vasa said he believes the Church will prevail on the issue because religious liberty is "enshrined in our Constitution."

"Precisely because Jesus healed the sick, the Church is involved in healing ministry," Bishop Vasa said in his keynote address to the conference, stressing the Catholic Church's commitment to health care. "We are involved in this based on

the conviction that each person has unique dignity."

Catholics must unite as they never have before if they hope to prevail against the federal contraceptive mandate, because the alternatives are bleak, according to speakers at the March 29-31 conference at St. Mary's Cathedral in San Francisco.

In the Santa Rosa Diocese, Bishop Vasa said he has taken the first steps to changing its health insurance coverage. He requested that Anthem Blue Cross send him all 20,000 or more codes for procedures and payments so he can analyze exactly what is and is not covered. In the past, as an official of the Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska, and as bishop of Baker, Oregon, Bishop Vasa said he changed health insurance to a self-insured plan that did not offer morally objectionable benefits to anyone.

A new federal proposal issued March 21 suggesting third-party administrators pay the costs of contraceptives for religious employers reinforced the mandated coverage for self-insured Catholic hospitals and social service agencies. The U.S. bishops said that even with the new proposal, the mandate "remains radically flawed."

# Briefly

## Church, National, & International

### Cardinal Dolan sets out six characteristics of New Evangelization



Photo by George Gongora / South Texas Catholic

Cardinal Timothy Dolan (left) proudly wears a cowboy hat presented to him during his address at the Corpus Christi Diocese's centennial conference, while sharing a laugh with Bishop Michael Mulvey.

Alfredo E. Cardenas, Editor  
SOUTH TEXAS CATHOLIC

CORPUS CHRISTI — Bishop William Michael Mulvey's efforts toward diocesan renewal got a boost at the Diocese of Corpus Christi's Centennial Jubilee Formation Conference on March 26 when Cardinal Timothy Dolan, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, and a group of bishops from throughout Texas provided guidance to the faithful on various aspects of pastoral care.

Cardinal Dolan shared with the faithful in Corpus Christi some of the thoughts he presented to Pope Benedict XVI and his brother cardinals on Feb. 27 when the Holy Father asked him to speak to the group on the New Evangelization in view of the upcoming "Year of Faith."

"We need to fall in love all over again with Jesus Christ and his Church," Cardinal Dolan told more than 2,000 of the faithful gathered at the Selena Auditorium.

So what is "new" about the New Evangelization, he asked.

After a review of the historical nature of the Church's evangelization efforts, beginning with Christ's command to "go make disciples of all men," Cardinal Dolan said the Second Vatican Council had set out the who and where of the New Evangelization, without giving it that name.

The "Who" is everybody. "All of us, by our very Christian identity, by the sacraments... are called to be missionaries," Cardinal Dolan said. The "Where" of evangelization is "wherever we are" not just in some distant land.

It was Blessed Pope John Paul II who first gave this notion the name of the "New Evangelization." The pope, Cardinal Dolan said, believed that "we need evangelization of people who are technically not only Christians but Catholics but whose faith has grown

lackluster."

The New York Archbishop set out six characteristics of the New Evangelization, which can be used to catechize ourselves.

The first is that the Church herself is in need of evangelization. Translating a Latin phrase, Cardinal Dolan said, "You can't give it if you ain't got it. We can't give Jesus to others if we don't have him."

Secondly, evangelization "starts with ourselves." One cannot evangelize others, unless "you first come to interior conversion," he said.

The third characteristic of the New Evangelization is that the Church does not preach a doctrine but introduces people to a person, the second person of the Blessed Trinity. "A person who revealed truths and doctrine," Cardinal Dolan said.

The primacy of discipleship is the fourth characteristic of the New Evangelization he continued. He described John Paul's Marian model of the Church in which, like the Blessed Mother, we are called to be attentive to the Word of God and eager to obey God in all things.

The fifth characteristic is that "we got a Church that says yes and not no," Cardinal Dolan said. "The Church says yes to everything that is noble, and decent, and liberating, and upbuilding and good and honorable," the cardinal said.

The only thing the Church says no to is to the "negating of the dignity of the human person." The Church is at the service of the human person, he said.

The sixth characteristic of the New Evangelization is that the Catholic Church is a Church of martyrs. Again, paraphrasing Pope John Paul II, Cardinal Dolan said, "If it ain't worth dying for, it ain't worth living for."

"There is someone worth dying for and living for, and his name is Jesus Christ," Cardinal Dolan said.

## Mexican Senate approves religious liberty amendment for Mexican constitution

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — The Mexican Senate narrowly approved a constitutional provision providing "freedom of religion," days after Pope Benedict XVI completed a visit to the country marked by an outpouring of enthusiasm and affection.

The Senate approved changes to Article 24 of the Mexican Constitution March 29, guaranteeing freedom of religion and making it possible to lift restrictions on religious groups to hold services outside of authorized churches without first seeking government permission. Earlier in the day, the Senate approved changes to Article 40 of the constitution by including the word "secular" as one of the descriptions of the Mexican state.

The Mexican bishops' conference welcomed the changes, saying in a March 29 statement that with the reforms,

"Mexico incorporates the highest levels of respect and promotion of human rights."

Critics of the measures, including some non-Catholic congregations, questioned why amendments were necessary and warned the changes would allow for the religious education and religious groups owning TV and radio stations — two Catholic Church priorities in Mexico.

"In Mexico, there's religious freedom. What's limited is priests' political expressions," Senator Pablo Gómez wrote in the newspaper, *Milenio*. Gómez opposed changing Article 24.

The constitutional changes now must be approved by a majority of Mexico's 31 state governments.

Pope Benedict visited central Mexico March 23-26.

## Vatican offers 'widget' containing content from Vatican website for blogs and websites

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Marking the seventh anniversary of the election of Pope Benedict XVI, the Vatican is offering a "widget" — a software application — that will allow anyone with a website or blog to provide readers with automatically updated news and documents from the Vatican.

The Vatican's Internet Office announced April 19 that the widget is available free from the Vatican's website: [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

When installed, the widget opens a small rectangular window with four tabs; clicking on one provides the latest news from the Vatican, the pope's Sunday Angelus or "Regina Coeli" address, recent speeches and the Vatican press office's daily news bulletin.

The Vatican said the widget should help make the content of its website more widely known and is another opportunity to use new technology "to spread the word of the Holy Father."



CNS Photo

A new widget offered by the Vatican enables anyone with a website or blog to provide readers with automatically updated news and documents from the Vatican. The Vatican's Internet Office announced April 19 that the widget is available free by emailing this address: [widgets@vatican.va](mailto:widgets@vatican.va).

## Chinese bishops not recognized by government, detained, released on Easter

HONG KONG (CNS) — Two Chinese bishops not recognized by the government were freed by authorities on Easter, Church sources told the Asian church news agency UCA News.

Coadjutor Bishop Peter Shao Zhumin of Wenzhou, in eastern Zhejiang province, and Bishop Peter Jin Lugang of Nanyang, in central Henan province, were detained, respectively, for four weeks and for four days.

Bishop Jin was taken away in early April by officials wanting to prevent him from celebrating the Christ Mass, which symbolizes a bishop's communion with his clergy, and other Easter liturgies.

The prelate was detained in a guesthouse and taken by four officials to several tourist spots before being released April 8, UCA News reported April 16.

Bishop Shao was detained March 19. Local Church sources said his detention included a "brainwashing" class on the

country's religious policies.

Sources told UCA News that Bishop Shao was detained because he participated in the secret episcopal ordination of the bishop of Tianshui last year. His participation was seen by the government as "an act of defiance to the official Church's 'self-election and self-ordination' of bishops," said the sources.

They said Bishop Shao, 49, was escorted by government officials to Leshan Diocese, where he met the excommunicated Father Paul Lei Shiyin, ordained as a bishop without a papal mandate last June. Father Lei and the officials showed Bishop Shao some historic monuments, a church-run hospital, guesthouse, and the construction site of the new bishop's house.

Father Paul Jiang Sunian, chancellor of Wenzhou, who was detained with Bishop Shao, was released March 24, UCA News reported.

## Review of Arizona law has implications beyond state's own immigrants



CNS photo / Jim West

Water and food for migrants from Mexico that were left along a desert trail by volunteers with "No More Deaths" are seen in late January in Arivaca Junction, Arizona. When the U.S. Supreme Court considers the constitutionality of Arizona's 2010 immigration law April 25, the eventual ruling will have an effect on far more than one border state's relationship to its own residents.

By Patricia Zapor  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — When the Supreme Court considers the constitutionality of Arizona's 2010 immigration law April 25, the weight of an eventual ruling will come to bear on far more than one border state's relationship to its own residents.

The outcome of *Arizona v. United States* could affect the half-dozen states that have passed laws modeled on Arizona's, the 20 that have considered doing so, and the remaining states that haven't weighed in legislatively on immigration. So could the practices of churches, employers, and social service providers. Foreign relations and business ventures also may be affected.

Meanwhile "copycat" legislation, much of it drafted by the same Kansas attorney who helped write Arizona's S.B. 1070, roiled other states over the last year, particularly Alabama. As that state's law, among other provisions, made it illegal to rent or provide utility service without proof of the customer's immigration status, thousands of immigrants moved

away, leaving Alabama's agriculture industry reeling from lost workers while crops rotted, unpicked in the fields.

The Supreme Court is being asked to settle the constitutionality of four key provisions, centered on the question of whether immigration is solely the enforcement concern of the federal government, or whether states can act independently in some areas. These key provisions:

— Require that state and local law enforcement officers verify the immigration status of every person stopped, arrested or detained if there is "reasonable suspicion" the person might be in the country without permission.

— Make it a crime for immigrants to fail to carry their "alien registration document."

— Criminalize the act of working for pay without authorization from immigration authorities.

— And allow officers to arrest someone without a warrant if the officer thinks there is "probable cause" to think the subject is guilty of a crime that subjects him or her to deportation.



## Diocese of Corpus Christi celebrates 100 years of service in South Texas



Photo by George Gongora / South Texas Catholic

Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, metropolitan archbishop for the province that includes the Diocese of Corpus Christi, serves as the main celebrant for the diocese's 100th anniversary celebration Mass. He is joined on the altar by bishops from dioceses across the region, and priests from the diocese.

**Alfredo Cardenas, Editor**  
**SOUTH TEXAS CATHOLIC**

Daniel Cardinal DiNardo of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston was the principal celebrant at the Centennial Jubilee Mass for the Diocese of Corpus Christi at the American Bank Center on March 26. He said he would title his report to the Holy Father on the event as "Walking on ice with confidence."

He was referencing the fact that the Mass he had celebrated was on the floor of an ice rink used by the local semi-professional hockey team; and the ice was underneath the flooring.

It is from the Diocese of Galveston that the Diocese of Corpus Christi sprang forth, and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston is today the province to which it belongs. Cardinal DiNardo is no stranger to Corpus Christi, having presided over the installation Mass for Bishop William Michael Mulvey two years ago.

Bishop Mulvey, Bishop Emeritus Edmond Carmody, and bishops from Texas and other invited bishops and priests concelebrated the Mass.

More than 5,000 faithful attended the Mass, making it the largest attendance at any Mass in the history of the diocese.

In his opening remarks before the Penitential Rite, Bishop Mulvey expressed his appreciation to Cardinal DiNardo and the many other clergy and religious present. San Antonio Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller and bishops from throughout Texas (including Bishop Kevin Vann), Oklahoma, Arkansas, Minnesota, and Connecticut were in attendance. Benedictine Abbots from Oklahoma and Arkansas were also present.

Among the bishops present were four who were born in and served as priests of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, including Bishop Emeritus Raymundo Peña of Brownsville, Bishop James Tamayo of Laredo, Bishop Daniel Flores of Brownsville, and Bishop Michael Pfeiffer of San Angelo, who was born in Alamo and ordained a priest while the Rio Grande Valley was still part of the Diocese of Corpus Christi.

Bishop Mulvey extended a special thanks to the many women religious in attendance. He told them they "played a vital and indispensable role in the life of the Church." Even before the diocese was erected, women religious educated youth, comforted the sick, gave shelter to the homeless, and consoled those in need, Bishop Mulvey said.

He thanked the faithful for their "willingness to march together into the future with hope to bring to life the Word of God..."

Bishop Mulvey also shared with attendees his meeting with the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI earlier in the month. The pope, Bishop Mulvey said, sent "not only his greetings but his blessings."

Cardinal DiNardo read a letter from the Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Angelo Sodano on behalf of the pope. The letter said the Holy Father was confident that the people of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, inspired by their pioneering predecessors, would continue their "missionary commitment to the spread of the Gospel."

Lee Gwozdz (one-time liturgy and music director of St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth), assisted by Guadalupe Rivera, directed the Diocesan Chorus.

In his homily, Cardinal DiNardo offered congratulatory remarks to Bishop Mulvey and the faithful of the diocese. The Centennial Mass fell on the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord and the Cardinal's homily focused on the Blessed Mother's "yes," which resulted in the Word made flesh and in Corpus Christi — the Body of Christ, which is the Church.

Recalling the tumultuous first decade of the diocese, which faced two hurricanes, the unexpected death of clergy to the Spanish flu, and the caring for clergy and religious fleeing the uprising in Mexico, Cardinal DiNardo said the people possessed a "resilience of faith in the Word made flesh."

"What a tremendous history you have of that reality in the Diocese of Corpus Christi," Cardinal DiNardo said.

"We need to take this 100th anniversary, stand back, thank God, praise God, ponder, and then move ahead in mission, the mission is to make Jesus known," the cardinal said.

He closed his homily by reminding the faithful of the urgent challenge the Church faces today against incursions into its religious liberty. He said that they are called to provide witness in the public square.

He said this challenge required everyone to adhere to the central lesson taught by Jesus in the beatitudes that "blessed are the pure of heart."

"You can't do anything unless there is purity of heart...if you don't have that, all the battles we have to deal with, it won't work," he said.

# Briefly

## Local & State

### Rosary Vigil for Life draws more than 600 outside Planned Parenthood



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / North Texas Catholic

Four-year-old Digory Milburn prays alongside his grandfather Tony Milburn at the annual Good Friday Rosary Vigil for Life.

**By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**  
**Correspondent**

Larry West and Rick Campos sported Texas Rangers jerseys, but attending the April 6 season opener wasn't a priority for the baseball fans as they stood outside an abortion facility on Good Friday.

"Baseball is a pastime. This is about a lifetime for those babies," West said, explaining why he chose to attend the 27th Annual Rosary Vigil for Life instead of going to the Ballpark. "The benefits of this are eternal. You have to live life knowing there's a greater purpose."

For Campos, a parishioner at St. Joseph Parish in Arlington, prayer took precedence over pleasure.

"We came out here to do the Lord's work before enjoying any type of recreation or entertainment," he added.

The two men joined more than 600 people who turned out for the annual event sponsored by Catholics United for Life and the Mother and Unborn Baby Care Center. Led by Bishop Kevin Vann and other clergy, the large crowd weathered high temperatures and a blazing sun to pray 20 decades of the Rosary.

Organizers have held the Good Friday prayer vigil at Planned Parenthood's Henderson Street location for 12 years, but that is expected to change, according to Chuck Pelletier, long-time organizer of the event and director of Mother and Unborn Baby Care.

"This is probably the last year we will be at this location," Pelletier announced using a public address system to reach the throng of supporters.

Planned Parenthood recently broke ground for a new two-story building in Southwest Fort Worth to replace its current facility. The project includes an ambulatory surgical center for late-term abortions.

"The mega abortion mill will be almost five times as big as this one," Pelletier told the crowd. "They plan to

get an outpatient surgical license that will enable them, under the laws of Texas, to kill babies until the end of the sixth month (of gestation)."

Pelletier asked participants to remember that reality as they recited the Rosary. Pro-life supporters have already begun prayerful protests at the construction site. Several building contractors withdrew their services once the building's purpose was disclosed.

Located on a bus line in an upscale neighborhood, the new facility could make abortion more accessible in Tarrant County. Planned Parenthood currently performs 6,000 abortions a year in North Texas.

"A lot depends on what happens in the election this fall," Pelletier told the *North Texas Catholic*. "It's becoming more difficult to find doctors who will do abortions. New laws could allow nurse practitioners to perform them."

One regular participant in the sidewalk prayer ministry is Dr. Daniel McDonald. The obstetrician, who promotes natural family planning at his Denton practice, tries to pray outside an abortion facility every First Friday. Attending the Good Friday Rosary Vigil was a first-time experience for his wife, Michelle, and five children.

"The first time I stood outside an abortion clinic really had an impact [on me]," explained Dr. McDonald, still dressed in his hospital scrubs from an earlier emergency.

Watching women exit the building after their abortions tugged at the heart of the medical professional who brings life into the world dozens of times in the course of a year. The previous day, he had delivered a 17-week-old premature baby.

"When you deliver a baby like that, it makes you think of all the babies torn apart in the uterus. I wonder what those doctors (who perform the abortions) must be thinking," he explained. "When I come out here, I pray for the mothers but I pray for those doctors, too."

## Fifth-graders learn about religious life at annual Fifth Grade Vocations Day



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / North Texas Catholic

Brother Stephen Dufrene, CFR, talks about becoming a Franciscan friar with fifth grade boys during the Diocesan Fifth Grade Vocation Day.

**By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**  
**Correspondent**

The fifth grade was a pivotal time in the life of Father Isaac Orozco. After years in public school, the new diocesan director of Vocations enrolled in Cistercian Preparatory School in Irving. It was his first exposure to Catholicism and the religious community of Hungarian monks who operated the school.

Looking back on that experience, the young priest calls it a seminal moment in his vocation.

"The monks sacrificed everything to establish a new life here," remembers Fr. Orozco. "They inspired me in a lot of ways."

He hopes the diocesan-sponsored Vocations Day has similar impact on the Catholic school fifth-graders who come together every year to learn about life as a priest, seminarian, sister, or member of a religious order. More than 450 students heard speakers share their spiritual journeys at this year's event, March 28 at Holy Family Church in Fort Worth.

For many, the highlight of the day was a question and answer session with Bishop Kevin Vann following Mass.

Inquisitive young minds wanted to know: What is the difference between a priest and a bishop? Have you had any

miracles in your life? Do you have a pet?

The bishop, good naturedly, answered every question while driving home the day's message — everyone is called to lead a holy life, but some are chosen for a consecrated life as a religious.

Reflecting on his own vocation, during his homily at the Mass, Bishop Vann admitted thinking about the priesthood in elementary school.

"But, I didn't respond right away. I had other plans," he said. "Finally, God got through, and I listened and responded in the same way I responded to my parents at the end of the day."

Other speakers included Carmelite Sisters of Our Lady Jocelinda Cacas and Chita Torres; Sister Mary Paul Haase, CSFN; Sister Maria Hinajosa Del Pilar, MSC; Brother Stephen Dufrene of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal; transitional Deacon Manuel Holguin; and Father Kyle Walterscheid, who had served as Vocations director for the last six years.

For Kennedy Tate, a Holy Family fifth-grader, Vocations Day eased some nagging concerns she's had since her cousin entered a convent.

"I've been wondering for a long time if you would miss your family," she said. "The nuns told us what they do, where they go, and everything else a nun does."

## Bishop leads public Stations of the Cross through Downtown Fort Worth



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / North Texas Catholic

Carmelite Sister Jocelinda Cacas reads the reflection for the 11th Station during the public Stations of the Cross held annually on Good Friday.

**By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen**  
**Correspondent**

A cloud-like crown of thorns, created by the contrail of a small plane, was an appropriate backdrop for a Good Friday procession through the Stations of the Cross in downtown Fort Worth April 6. Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann led the observance attended by more than 150 people on a grassy strip of land adjacent to Lancaster Avenue. Dressed in full regalia, the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus

of the Texas Third District, held signs depicting the Passion of Christ, as the crowd advanced to each Station.

Louis and Lucette Adam and their two children traveled from Duncanville to attend the outdoor prayer service. They searched the Internet to find a public Good Friday observance in the Metroplex.

"This is such an important day in our Catholic faith as we walk with Christ and understand what He went through to set us free," Louis said. "We need to keep that in mind as we go through life."



# In Memory

## Josephite Father Michael Farrell (1933-2012), former Our Mother of Mercy pastor, was affectionately known as the 'Hillbilly Priest'

By Jenara Kocks Burgess  
Correspondent

Father Michael Farrell, 78, a retired Josephite priest and former pastor of Our Mother of Mercy Church in Fort Worth who was known for his love of bluegrass music, died March 12 at St. Joseph Manor in Baltimore after a long illness.

"He was very, very pastoral," said Ralph McCloud, former parishioner of Our Mother of Mercy and Fr. Farrell's friend. "He was always available. He had a tremendous sense of humor — always ready to cheer you up," he said.

A funeral Mass was held for Fr. Farrell on March 21 at St. Joseph Manor, and again at Our Lady of Fatima Church in Jackson Heights, Queens, New York. Fr. Farrell was interred in Calvary Cemetery, Jackson Heights on March 22, 2012.

Michael Jerome Farrell was born in Queens, on Jan. 11, 1933,

to Patrick and Nora Farrell, (nee O'Sullivan). He received his theology training at St. Joseph Seminary in Washington, D.C., where he earned his degree. He was ordained to the priesthood June 4, 1960, as a Josephite, the only male American religious community dedicated to evangelization in the African-American community.

Fr. Michael Farrell's final assignment was at Our Mother of Mercy Church where he served the only traditionally African-American parish in the Diocese of Fort Worth from 1997 to 2006. Prior to coming to Fort Worth, he served in Washington, D.C.; New Orleans, Louisiana; Montgomery, Alabama; Lebeau, Louisiana; and at St. Nicholas Parish and at St. Anne de Beaupre Parish, both in Houston.

"He was very loved by the people of Our Mother of Mercy Parish," said McCloud.

Frank Staton, a lifetime member of Our Mother of Mercy Church and retired Fort Worth

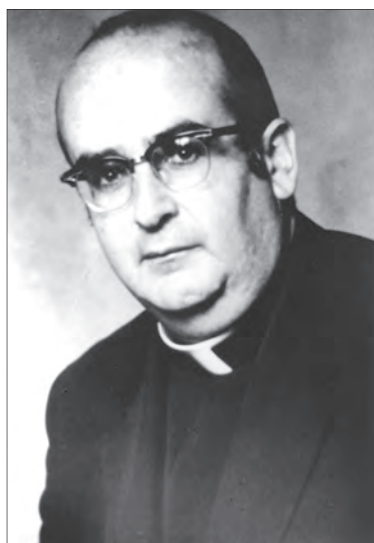


Photo Courtesy of Society of St. Joseph

### Fr. Michael Farrell, SSJ

teacher and coach, said Fr. Farrell was a great priest.

"He made everyone feel at home. He really worked with people if they ever needed help. I know we're all going to miss him," he said.

Increasing health problems ended Fr. Farrell's pastoral career, forcing him to retire to St. Joseph

Manor in Baltimore, Maryland in March 2006.

"I moved up here [Washington, D.C.] about the same time he [moved to Baltimore], and we remained friends," said McCloud, who works for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington.

"What he was known most for was his love of country or what he called hillbilly or bluegrass music. He had over 2,000 albums on 78s," McCloud said. "He loved to listen to them, and let you listen with him," he said.

From his youth he collected the best of country music and maintained that practice all his life.

"When he was a child, he heard it on the AM radio stations

in New York. He was crazy about that music," McCloud said.

Fr. Farrell did radio interviews about his country music library and country itself with some of the stars of the genre who count him as a friend. Called affectionately the "Hillbilly Priest," he was well-known in the industry for possessing one of the nation's most complete libraries of country music, numbering in the thousands, especially mint condition vinyl 78 rpm albums going back many decades, along with tapes and CDs. Using his interest in musical talent, he successfully launched singing careers for several of his parishioners in New Orleans.

He is survived by his sister, Patricia Walsh.



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# Institute for Pastoral Theology to host lecture on Year of Faith declared by Pope Benedict XVI

By Michele Baker  
Correspondent

Douglas Bushman, director of Ave Maria University's Institute for Pastoral Theology, will give a lecture at 7 p.m. Tuesday, May 8, about the Year of Faith declared by Pope Benedict XVI.

A frequent guest on Catholic television and radio, Bushman has a reputation as one of the preeminent scholars of the Second Vatican Council and the post conciliar Church. Yet despite a nearly encyclopedic knowledge of Church history and doctrine, Bushman has a gift for illuminating their relevancy in the lives of the faithful. Perhaps most telling is the title he's chosen for his presentation, "I Believe in Love: Pope Benedict's Vision for the Year of Faith."

"There are many doctrines and disciplines that people associate with the Church," Bushman explained in a recent interview. "When we speak of love, we are not taking any of those things off the table. But they are only fully understood in the light of love."

As always, Bushman takes his cues from Pope Benedict himself, pointing out that love is one of the Holy Father's most important recurring themes in both his writings and his preaching.

"For the vicar of Christ to emphasize love is profoundly fitting because our Lord did and so did the apostles, especially St. Paul," Bushman said. "Love is the heart of the gospel."

Building on that foundation, Bushman says that it all comes back to Vatican II and the Church's call to renewal. Central to enacting that call is proclaiming the fact that God's love makes a difference.



**Douglas Bushman**  
Director of Ave Maria University's  
Institute for Pastoral Theology

"The joy that Pope Benedict is constantly challenging us to rediscover is going to be a function of not just knowing that God loves us, but experiencing it," Bushman said. "Lots of people know that God loves us but just as many are missing the joy of the lived experience of it. What good is doctrinal truth if it doesn't impact your life?"

Bringing doctrinal truth to relevance, however, implies a knowledge of that truth, which Bushman has devoted his life to imparting through the Institute for Pastoral Theology. Now in its first year in the Diocese of Fort Worth, the IPT offers a three-year program culminating in a Master of Theological Studies (MTS) degree. Designed for non-

traditional students who might be impeded from undertaking graduate level study due to work or family commitments, the IPT uses a once-a-month weekend intensive format. With the first year of courses drawing to a close, the IPT is looking to assemble another class of first-year students for the fall. However, the upcoming lecture on the Year of Faith is not restricted to prospective students.

"Anyone who is interested in the Year of Faith and has heard the Church's call for renewal should come," Bushman said. "And we hope that among those who attend, some will be interested in the IPT program."

When asked what he hopes attendees will take away with them at the end of the lecture, Bushman mentions his desire that people leave with a sense of having more to learn about their faith. Reading the *Catechism*, the documents of Vatican II, and the Scriptures that are woven throughout these documents are all good ideas. But, as always, Bushman returns to love.

"I would hope that people will be able to prayerfully reflect on the Holy Father's message and ask themselves if they are open to letting God love them," he said. "We open up through the sacraments, through our devotions. And with love, we move through mere knowledge to personal conversion."



## Catholic Charities Spotlight: 'Leading Families'



Photo courtesy of CCFW

2012 Graduates of the Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) "Leading Families" program held in Cisco are shown with their families after completing a 13-week parenting program for men.

Walker York, 22, is a dedicated single father, retaining custody of his three year-old daughter while working as a heavy equipment operator. York, a lifelong resident of Cisco, recently graduated from a 13-week parenting program, "Leading Families," held at a family resource center in Cisco and designed specifically for men to help them learn necessary tools for success with their children and spouses or other loved ones. The program, sponsored by Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW), is available to men residing in 14 rural counties in North Texas.

York was one of ten fathers of varying ages in his weekly Thursday night group. "I knew I was a good dad when I agreed to take the class, but I figured I could always sharpen my skills. I'm really glad I did it, because I learned a lot from the experience," says York. "Each week, we had a different topic to discuss about aspects of parenting, such as appropriate discipline, managing stress, and the importance of playing with our kids, having fun times together, and making good memories."

Workbooks, childcare, snacks, and a trained facilitator to lead the classes are all offered at no cost. Leading Families' program manager, CCFW staff member Betsy Pattullo, notes that since the program's launch in November of 2011, four classes of varying sizes have "graduated"

and five are currently in session in areas such as Cisco, De Leon, Bowie, Graham, and Wichita Falls.

"We hold the sessions in community centers, libraries, agencies, and churches," says Pattullo. "It is difficult for many of the residents in rural areas to access these kinds of opportunities, so our commitment is to go out to the communities."

The men who attend the sessions tend to form small communities of mutual support and friendship, says Pattullo. "It's great to see the kind of connections that come out of the groups, and to know that these friendships will continue in the future," she says. "It's especially heartwarming to be present on the last night of the programs, when all of the men invite their families to attend and to hear the essays they've written about the kind of fathers they want to be for their children."

According to Walker York, Catholic Charities' commitment to helping build healthy families is evident in the success of this particular form of outreach. "[Leading Families] is a great program," he says. "It helped to remind me of something I already knew, which is how important it is to me to be the best father I can possibly be."

For more information about the Leading Families program, call (817) 289-3888 or visit [www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesfortworth.org).

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• Call Judy Locke, victim assistance coordinator, (817) 560-2452 ext. 201 or e-mail her at [jlocke@fwdioc.org](mailto: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 moderator of the curia, Father Stephen J. Berg

### To Report Abuse

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



# Vocations

## Responding to God's call



Father Isaac Orozco  
Diocesan Director of Vocations

### *Encouraging for some; uncomfortable for others*

I think for some time now young Americans have been looking for a way to make their mark on society. This effort finds its expression in technological advances, popular culture, politics, and in church. Like a competitor on the "Amazing Race" (I've only seen the promotional commercials), we find the adventurous young discerners who are idealistic, sincere, open, and faithful. For some this is encouraging but for others it's uncomfortable.

In what will be two years this June, I've had the opportunity to experience various levels of the 28 counties that make up the Diocese of Fort Worth. I've been able to add this to my almost five years

of priestly ordination and recent history as a seminarian, which spanned 1998-2007, although five of those years were spent in Rome. These numbers are not impressive. What they show however, is the time line for a new Vocations director who begins a ministry in discernment, where determining God's will in the world is both rewarding and difficult. And after mentioning a timeline, I now mention a timetable: five years. My assignment is a term of five years and will end while I am still in my thirties, but just barely.

The benefit of coming onto the scene now is that I can claim credit for all the new seminarians that are coming in. Not really. Some planted, Fr. Kyle watered,

but only God grants the increase. I am here to make sure that our thirty-odd seminarians discern in a formal way what was begun from before their birth. And from another priest's mouth, I have a responsibility to practice "truth in advertising." Our seminarians need to know what future ministry will entail. Conversely, my responsibility to our bishop as director of Vocations is to ensure that he knows exactly who he is ordaining. Is this an exact science? No.

So going back to that part about some being encouraged and others being uncomfortable. At first, I was thinking about the people in the pews and not the discerners. But now that

I think about it, those who are considering the priestly or religious life are the ones, who in making their mark, will either be encouraged or uncomfortable. With being idealistic comes possibility and imagination. Coupled with sincerity and faithfulness, this is promising for both discerners and the Church. The discomfort comes when, faced with diversity of opinion and experience, the discerners realize that up close, Christ's Bride has wrinkles and warts. And he or she will have to put on the mind of Christ and make a decision. Do I love?

The answer to this question century after century and millennium after millennium

has been, "yes." What comes to my mind is the old story of St. Peter abandoning Rome after reaching his threshold of patience with the local Church and seeing Jesus journeying in the opposite direction to be with his people. It reminds us that the decision to love is one made repeatedly. It isn't idealistic or made just once. It's sincere and made daily. We know that in this tale Peter, perplexed by the sight of Jesus on the way back to Rome, asks Christ, "Where are you going?" To this Jesus replies, "I am going back to Rome to be crucified again." And in this tale we should read, "I will love." As I mentioned before, some will be encouraged and others will be uncomfortable.

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# Catechesis

## THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST IS THE VERY CORNERSTONE OF OUR FAITH

By Lucas Pollice

REJOICE,  
HEAVENLY POWERS!  
SING,  
CHOIRS OF ANGELS!  
EXULT,  
ALL CREATION  
AROUND  
GOD'S THRONE!  
JESUS CHRIST,  
OUR KING, IS RISEN!  
SOUND THE TRUMPET  
OF SALVATION!

These opening words of the *Exultet* sung at the great liturgy of the Easter Vigil announce with great joy the resurrection of Christ. Jesus Christ has been truly raised from the dead and sin and death have been destroyed forever! Christ's victory over death reveals in a real and powerful way the merciful love of God that is greater than sin and death, a transforming love that brings even out of the death of the Son of God, the salvation of the world.

The resurrection of Christ is the very cornerstone of our faith: that Christ is truly resurrected from the dead and has destroyed sin and death forever. For as St. Paul says, "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." (1 Cor 15:17) The resurrection fulfills and confirms Christ's entire mission, words, and actions; for he came to free us from sin and death and forever establishes the Kingdom of God.

The resurrection is not just simply Christ being resuscitated from the dead in the same way Jesus brought others back to life such as Jarius' daughter and his cousin, Lazarus. They were brought back to ordinary earthly life but would someday die again and were still subjected to sin and death. The resurrection of Christ is the inauguration of a new creation, of a glorified humanity that is freed from sin and death and destined to live in glory forever. The resurrected Christ truly had a human body, for he ate and drank, and Thomas placed his fingers in the nail marks in his hands and the wound in his side. But it is a true human body and a true human nature filled with the grace and power of the Holy Spirit, and not bound by space and time. The resurrected Christ is the first

fruits of a humanity freed from the power of sin and death and transformed by the grace of the Father. Through the resurrection of Christ we truly become glorified sons and daughters of the Father living forever in his life and love. As St. Paul powerfully reveals:

*Behold, I tell you a mystery. We shall not all fall asleep, but we will all be changed, in an instant, in the blink of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For that which is corruptible must clothe itself with incorruptibility, and that which is mortal must clothe itself with immortality. And when this which is corruptible clothes itself with incorruptibility and this which is mortal clothes itself with immortality, then the word that is written shall come about:*

*"Death is swallowed up in victory. Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. (1 COR 15:51-57)*

Above all, the resurrection is the revelation of the love and mercy of God that is fully revealed in Christ. Easter morning manifests to the entire world the mercy of God is greater than sin and death and has no limits or boundaries. This is the mystery and paradox of the Cross: on the one hand the Cross reveals the horror of sin. But in the light of the resurrection, the Cross reveals the unimaginable mercy and love of God. This is the good news of Christianity: the love of Christ conquers and triumphs over all! This is the very foundation of our faith and hope, and the inspiration of all the saints and martyrs that have been the powerful and convincing witnesses to the hope of the resurrection over the centuries. The truth of the resurrection reveals that if we live in the grace and friendship of Christ, we should not be afraid, for nothing can separate us from the love of Christ who is in all and conquers all. As St. Paul convincingly testifies in his letter to the Romans:

*What will separate us from the love of Christ? Will anguish, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or the sword? No, in all these things we conquer overwhelmingly through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. (ROM 8:35-39)*

Thus, the truth of the resurrection of Christ is the source and foundation for the Church's mission of evangelization. In the same way that the women at the tomb raced back to the eleven to witness to them the joy and hope of the resurrection, the Church

today must continue to preach and be a faithful witness to the joy and hope of the resurrection to a world that is often in desperate need of the mercy of God. In a culture that in so many ways degrades the dignity of the human person, and with so many who find themselves overcome by the power of sin, the resurrection is a permanent reminder of the great dignity and worth of each and every human person who is redeemed by

the blood of Christ and destined to live forever in glory. Now is the time to proclaim without fear the mercy of God revealed in Christ!

In fact, on the Sunday after Easter, we celebrate Divine Mercy Sunday in which the universal Church celebrates and proclaims with joy and hope the great mercy of God revealed in the death and resurrection of Christ. This devotion to the Divine Mercy was revealed by our Lord to St. Faustina Kowalska in the 1930s. In these visions, Jesus appeared with a message of great divine mercy he wished to outpour over the entire world, and especially to souls that are in particular need of his mercy. Jesus also asked the Sunday after Easter be proclaimed Divine Mercy Sunday which John Paul II finally promulgated in 1995. Jesus summarized this devotion to his mercy with the simple prayer, "Jesus I trust in you."

Therefore, now more than ever do we need to be a people free from fear and be

witnesses of the resurrection and mercy of Christ to a world that is very much in need of hope and friendship with Christ. The upcoming Year of Faith, promulgated by Pope Benedict XVI, calls us in particular, to be this witness, to be a living Gospel proclaiming the love and mercy of the Risen Christ that, even in the midst of suffering and death, conquers all. As Pope Benedict XVI states:

*"That the word of the Lord may speed on and triumph" (2 TH 3:1): may this Year of Faith make our relationship with Christ the Lord increasingly firm, since only in him is there the certitude for looking to the future and the guarantee of an authentic and lasting love. The words of Saint Peter shed one final ray of light on faith: "In this you rejoice, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire, may redound to praise and glory and honour at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy. As the outcome of your faith you obtain the salvation of your souls" (1 PET 1:6-9). The life of Christians knows the experience of joy as well as the experience of suffering. How many of the saints have lived in solitude! How many believers, even in our own day, are tested by God's silence when they would rather hear his consoling voice! The trials of life, while helping us to understand the mystery of the Cross and to participate in the sufferings of Christ (CF. COL 1:24), are a prelude to the joy and hope to which faith leads: "when I am weak, then I am strong" (2 COR 12:10). We believe with firm certitude that the Lord Jesus has conquered evil and death. With this sure confidence we entrust ourselves to him: he, present in our midst, overcomes the power of the evil one (CF. LK 11:20); and the Church, the visible community of his mercy, abides in him as a sign of definitive reconciliation with the Father.*

May we all thoroughly experience the joy of the Easter season, be instruments of life, mercy, and reconciliation, and bring others to experience the fullness of life found only in the Risen Christ.

**HAPPY EASTER!**

*Lucas Pollice is director of Catechesis and Adult Faith Formation and RCIA for the diocese.*



Resurrection of Christ and the Women at the Tomb, 1441  
Fra Angelico (1387 - 1455)



# VOICES of the CHURCH

opinions, stories, wisdom, and personal voice

## More than just a bandage, Faith is a source of healing, eternal life

**T**oday, as I was writing my column, I received an email alert reminding me that “today is Joan’s birthday.” I bawled my eyes out, because Joan, one of my closest friends, was buried four days earlier following a sudden and unexpected death.

It seems surreal that I cannot drive over to her house for a cup of coffee, will not have her company for summer outings or family get-togethers, or simply see her smile.

I recalled the profoundly meaningful words of Pope Benedict, as he explained our human fear of death, saying, “We cannot accept that all that is beautiful and great, realized during a lifetime, should be suddenly erased, should fall into the abyss of nothingness. Above all, we feel that love calls and asks for eternity and it is impossible to accept that it is destroyed by death in an instant.”

Certainly, within that failure to accept death, we are aware that mortality is a fact of life.

I don’t know if that’s considered irony, paradox, or just plain, hard truth.

No matter which, I don’t like it.

I’m never ready for it. It always hurts.

And even though I understand the value of suffering and being broken, there are times when I’d just as soon not incur any more value-added experiences in my life. Nature tells us oversaturation is not a good thing. I agree. There are times, like today, when I’m OK with mediocre and half-grown.

There are also times when we need to be reminded that faith in God and the promises of eternal life are not the bandage people sometimes think they should be.

Bandages may aid in healing, but they do not heal; they may keep wounds clean but they don’t take away pain.

Faith is more than a bandage, it gives us strength and purpose, it is a font of God’s healing. But it is not cause to deny or diminish our humanness. Being human means losing and hurting and trying to make sense of an imperfect world while we are in it.

Jesus, who was like us in all ways except sin, cried over a lost Jerusalem, he wept at the death of Lazarus, his friend, and with his last breath he asked God, “Why...?”

So, today I, a sinner, am going to take human license, similar to artistic license, and follow in the footsteps of an Irish grandmother who felt comfortable enough with God to argue with him, to be embarrassingly honest with him, and to turn his picture to the wall when she was mad at him.

She walked in the footsteps of St. Theresa of Avila, who once chastised God, whom she loved above all things, saying, “If this is how you treat your friends, it’s no wonder you have so few.”

*The road to death,  
in reality, is a  
way of hope and it passes  
through our cemeteries,  
just as can be read on the  
tombstones and fulfills a  
journey marked by the hope  
of eternity.” Pope Benedict*

*XVI, general audience, Nov.  
2, 2011*

Today, I identify with these women. Today, Jesus is in the drawer, face down, no doubt waiting patiently for me to come around, because he is God and I am not.

I am human, and I hurt.

But tomorrow is another day; a day when the rest of Pope Benedict’s reflection on death will speak profound words of hope in a time of darkness: “...only those who can recognize a great hope in death, can live a life based on hope. ... Man needs eternity for every other hope is too brief, too limited for him. Man can be explained only if there is a love which overcomes every isolation, even that of death, in a totality which also transcends time and space.”

God became accessible to us, explains the pope, and “in the supreme act of love on the Cross, immersing himself in the abyss of death, he conquered it, and rose and opened the doors of eternity for us too. Christ sustains us through the night of death which he himself overcame; he is the Good Shepherd, on whose guidance one can rely without any fear, for he knows the way well, even through darkness.”

*Mary Morrell is a free-lance writer and communications consultant for pastoral projects working from Ortley Beach, New Jersey. She blogs at <http://wellspringcommunications.typepad.com/god-talk-and-tea>.*

## The Cardinal and the Atheist

### Christianity fends off social darwinism

**T**here’s a scene in one of Dorothy L. Sayers’ Lord Peter Wimsey mysteries where a dangerous criminal begins to figure out who the disguised Lord Peter really is, and Lord Peter starts insulting him. The criminal gets angry but backs off, and the detective gets away. Later he explains that people are much less likely to look at you closely when you’re being rude to them.

Recently the leading “New Atheist” Richard Dawkins told a “Reason Rally” to “ridicule and show contempt” for religion. He singled out the Catholic belief in the Eucharist as something simply unbelievable and (using the word in the old sense) ridiculous. He told the crowd of earnest atheists gathered in Washington, D.C., to “mock” religious people and “ridicule them in public.” Other speakers said the same thing, some in language that can’t be quoted here.

I admit to feeling that Dawkins, like Sayers’ detective, is trying to insult us so that we don’t look too closely at what he’s actually doing. The “New Atheists” differ from the great atheists of the past mostly by invoking evolution as if it provided a knock-down argument against religious belief, and also by quite naively thinking that atheism is good news for man.

They don’t think to answer the basic questions of why there is something to evolve in the first place and how you decide what to do when you’ve tossed out any transcendent source of truth and goodness. They’re not so reasonable even if they hold rallies claiming reason for themselves.

But that is a subject for another day. Here I want to look at what happened when Dawkins ran into someone he couldn’t ridicule. In Australia for the Global Atheists Convention, he debated Cardinal George Pell, the archbishop of Sydney.

They were arguing about the meaning of life, with Pell noting that science can’t answer the question of why we are here and Dawkins declaring that a “silly question,” when the cardinal brought up one of the great advantages of Christianity over atheism. He mentioned “social darwinism,” which applies evolutionary ideas about the development of species to the way people relate to each other. If different species developed through lots and lots of random mutations, so that those best adapted to the world around them survived and those that weren’t died out, so some people survived and others didn’t. And that’s just the way things are.

This was a popular idea in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

The great Christian writer G. K. Chesterton and others battled it tooth and nail. In England, successful people decided that Darwin had shown that the poor — I like the Irish whose country they’d run for centuries to their own advantage, and pretty much anyone else whose name ends in a vowel — were biologically or culturally or otherwise

**‘D**o you want  
a world  
in which the weak  
and vulnerable are  
protected or one in  
which they’re not?

inferior. Science said so. There was nothing to be done about it.

There were caring social darwinists as well as brutal social darwinists, of course. Some said this meant that they should do more for the poor, some said it meant they should do less. To be fair to Dawkins himself, he says in the debate that “We should not live by Darwinian principles.” But when you strip the world of any transcendent meaning, when you insist that life evolved randomly, you take away the moral law that tells people to be kind to the weak.

As the cardinal said in the debate, “Because it is the struggle for survival, the strong take what they can and the weak give what they must and there is nothing to restrain them.”

Pell, wrote an Australian writer named Andrew Bolt, brought up “what even I, as a non-Christian, know is one of the strongest cases for Christianity. As Pell suggested, Christianity stands against totalitarians by defending the value of every human life. It insists that no human whether weak, sick, in the womb, or of another race is so insignificant that he or she can be sacrificed to some creed, whether communism, fascism or, Gaia.”

And that is something to say if you run into a New Atheist: “Do you want a world in which the weak and vulnerable are protected or one in which they’re not?”

*David Mills is the executive editor of FIRST THINGS ([www.firstthings.com](http://www.firstthings.com)).*



# The Contraceptive Mandate: what is its real impact?

By Susan E. Wills

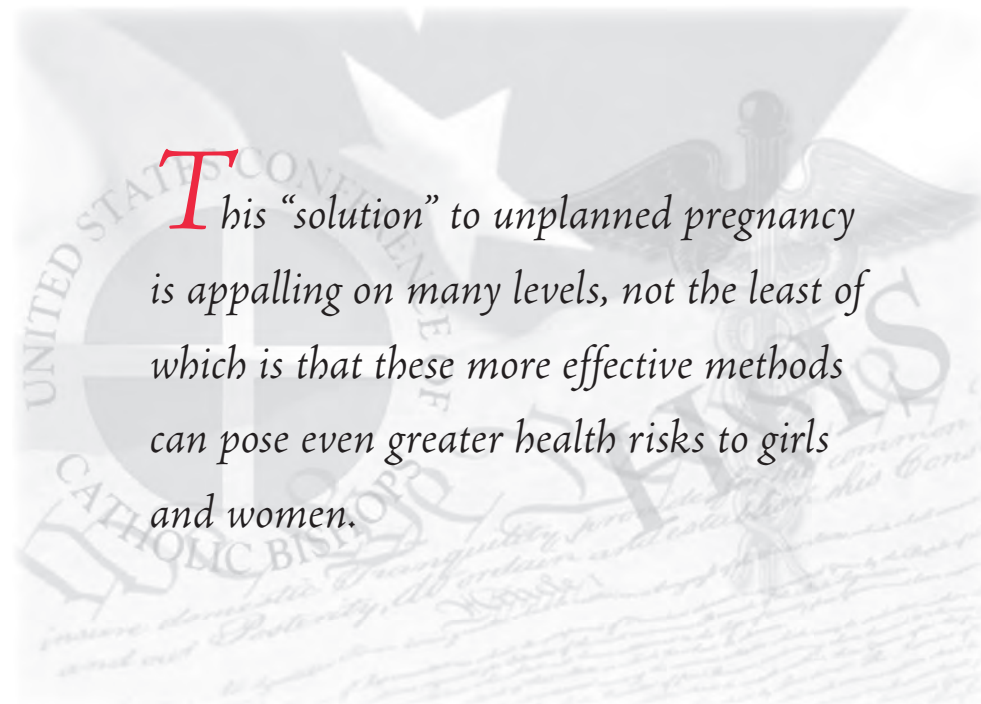
Supporters of the Health and Human Services (HHS) contraceptive mandate endlessly repeat these claims: contraception is an essential preventive healthcare benefit; cost is the chief barrier to access; and those who object to the mandate are “waging war on women.”

These are red herrings to distract from the core issue: the Administration’s unprecedented violation of rights of conscience and religious liberty in forcing almost everyone who offers or purchases a health plan — including faithful Catholics and most Catholic employers — to cover sterilization procedures, contraceptives, and abortifacients.

Can supporters claim access is a problem, while also asserting that over 99% of sexually active American women age 15-44 have used contraceptives?

Low-income women can’t afford contraceptives? They received \$2.73 billion in federal and state funding for family planning in 2010. Oral contraceptives are also available from many pharmacies for a few dollars a month.

Even teens have access! Contraceptive use is “virtually universal” among sexually experienced teens (96%), according to an October 2011 report on teen sexual activity and contraceptive use by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The good news is that most teens are now choosing self-control instead of fertility control with hormones and latex. Currently, 57% of girls 15-19 and 58% of boys have never had sex. Since 1988, abstinence rates increased 20% among these girls and almost 50% among boys.



*This “solution” to unplanned pregnancy is appalling on many levels, not the least of which is that these more effective methods can pose even greater health risks to girls and women.*

The importance of this trend cannot be overstated, because one-third of sexually active teen girls will become pregnant — despite using contraception — within two years of initiating sex. And young people aged 15-24 acquire close to 10 million new sexually transmitted infections each year. Many STDs are incurable, and annual treatment costs are estimated to exceed \$14 billion.

But the contraceptive mandate is not just about access to condoms and pills. Reproductive “rights” advocates hope it will help take fertility out of the control of contraceptive users (who may not always take a pill promptly or use a condom as instructed) and give control to drug companies and doctors, by switching women to expensive “long-acting reversible contraceptives” (LARCs).

In its 1995 “Uneven and Unequal” position paper, the Guttmacher Institute proposed a comprehensive plan to accomplish this through health care reform:

- All methods must be covered by all plans, along with surgical procedures like sterilizations and abortions.
- No co-pays or minimums required. This eliminates the barrier of the high upfront costs of implants (\$800) and IUDs (up to \$1,000), and the monthly or quarterly office visits for injectables.

• With cost no longer a barrier, only one obstacle remains: Parents! How does a girl on her parents’ insurance policy get an IUD without their finding out? The Guttmacher “solution” is reflected in HHS’s March 21 “Advance Notice of Proposed Rulemaking”:

Spouses and dependents must be included in all policies, and confidentiality and privacy between the insurer and user are mandated. Parents need never know, and the teen doesn’t even need to beg, borrow, or steal the co-pay from Mom and Dad.

This “solution” to unplanned pregnancy is appalling on many levels, not the least of which is that these more effective methods can pose even greater health risks to girls and women. The estrogen/progestin combination in most methods significantly increases the risk of the two most common cancers in women: breast and cervical cancer. Depo-Provera doubles the risk of acquiring AIDS and other STDs, and even 12 months’ use can double breast cancer risk. The contraceptive patch reportedly doubles the risk of blood clots and death, compared to second-generation pills. Nuvaring’s manufacturer is facing at least 730 U.S. lawsuits for blood-clot-related injuries and deaths. In a large study of copper IUD users, two-thirds experienced abdominal pain and a 60% increase in bleeding.

So, why do some people think contraception prevents health problems? And why is it a “war” on women to speak up for their health, and their freedom to say no to this agenda?

*Susan Wills is Assistant Director for Education & Outreach, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities. To learn more about the Catholic bishops’ pro-life work visit [www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities](http://www.usccb.org/about/pro-life-activities).*

## When we take up our crosses, we unite with Christ

By Tony Gutiérrez  
Associate Editor,  
North Texas Catholic

Seven years ago, my roommates (all fellow Catholics) and I were watching live coverage of now Blessed Pope John Paul II’s final hours on this earth. I believe it was the first time we had cried in front of each other (which is a big deal considering we were all college-age guys still worried about what others thought of us).

What I remember most about his death, though, wasn’t all the great work he had done during his pontificate, but it was the way he was dying. There’s no doubt that he was suffering, but he was also showing us how to suffer.

It’s very easy when we’re faced with trying times to give in to despair, self-pity, and anger. JP II faced his suffering with joy. He was more than happy to take it on, following in the example of our Lord.

I read plenty of other stories about other saints as well, and how they suffered, with great joy. St. Lawrence, patron saint of comedians, got his patronage because he joked with his killers as he was being martyred by being roasted over a spit that he was done on that side and to flip him over. And that wasn’t even his last joke — that credit goes to him being declared patron saint of barbecue.

Recently I’ve faced some emotional and mental suffering in my own life, and I was tempted to give in to despair. I wasn’t willing to embrace the Cross. Christ told us that he would. God would not give us anything we couldn’t handle, but that we still had to take up our crosses. I wasn’t willing to take up mine.

Recently, a friend and mentor was admitted to the hospital. I continue to be amazed by this man who probably suffered more not because he was in pain, but because his pain hindered his ability to do other things.

Suffering is all around us — it will always be a part of our lives. I suppose that’s a result of the Fall. The question isn’t, “Why is there suffering?”; the question is, “How do I deal with it when it happens?”

God will always give us a choice: to either turn to him or to run away. In embracing his Parkinson’s, Blessed John Paul united himself to Christ and found joy. In embracing the human barbecue, St. Lawrence united himself to Christ. We are all called to unite ourselves with Jesus, to live our lives for Him, and to lead others to Him.

Jesus doesn’t promise us that life will be easy (as a matter of fact, he promises the opposite), but he does promise He’ll always be with us. Next time we suffer, let us unite with Him.



# Features

## I never thought of Jesus being a 'person in my life'

By Jeff Hedglen

In 1984 I went on my first Cursillo retreat. It was one of those "mountain top" experiences of closeness to Jesus and His Body. It was also a weekend of learning about what it means to be a Christian. Cursillo is short for *Cursillos de Cristiandad* (A short course in Christianity). Throughout the weekend we hear talks about the three legs that hold up our faith life: Piety, Study, and Action. After the weekend we are encouraged to join small faith-sharing groups to talk about how we are living these three important aspects of our faith and to share our "closest moment to Christ" since we last met.

Over the years I have been in a number of small groups and my favorite part of the time together was sharing our closest moments. I like it because it challenges me to reflect on my walk with Jesus and determine when I felt close to Him, or when I needed Him the most or when I really saw his hand at work. I will admit that sometimes I could not think of an especially close moment, but I learned that was OK. After all, Jesus is always close to me whether or not I feel Him.

In my life I have had a number of significantly close moments to Jesus. The first I remember was when I was 16-years-old. I was on a retreat and was asked a question: "Who are the two most important people in your life?" After some time to think about the question, the retreat master asked: "Was one of those people Jesus?"

That seemingly innocent and rather obvious question rocked my world. I had never thought about Jesus being a "person in my life." He had always been a loving God watching me from a distance. Thinking of Jesus in this personal way really transformed my faith.

Another especially close time with Jesus was early on in my marriage when my wife and I experienced six

miscarriages in about 30 months. That year-and-a-half was a very tumultuous time. Every emotion imaginable, from joy crashing down to loss, and grief giving way to hope only to be dashed again, was just about unbearable. It was a time of loud questioning. "Why us?" "Where are you God?" "How will we ever get through?" "What now?" Through it all, though it seldom felt this way, God was by our side seeing us through the labyrinth of emotions, sustaining us, and reshaping our lives.

Working in ministry for 25 years has provided countless close moments with Jesus. Every retreat has these special moments when students open their hearts to let in the love of God. Every session of Camp Fort Worth shows how serving the poor, praying, receiving the sacraments, and making new friends transforms people's lives. But encounters with Jesus come in smaller moments too: religious education classes, heartfelt conversations on a whim, and in the frustrating times that come with leading teens and young adults through life.

Encounters with Jesus have always been transforming. In this Easter season, we continue to hear the Apostles post-resurrection moments with Jesus. They bring about doubt, fear, and a cautious hope. As the Easter season continues, we will hear Jesus calling himself a Good Shepherd. These Gospels share how he cares for us and wants to be in a relationship with us to the point that we know his own voice. He also says that he is a vine and we are the branches; if we stay connected we will bear much fruit.

These two images reveal that Jesus wants to have encounters with us, just like he did with the disciples before and after his resurrection. Sure, we probably will not experience him walking through walls and appearing in human form, but that does not mean that we cannot have a real encounter with the risen Christ.

Having a close moment with Jesus does not mean that you are so overcome with emotion that you are reduced to a babbling, weeping mess. Rather it simply means that you are graced with a glimpse of the truth that Jesus is alive and closer than you could ever imagine.

*Jeff Hedglen is campus minister at UTA and associate director of Young Adult Ministry. He remains active with Camp Fort Worth. Readers with questions can contact Jeff at [Jeff.hedglen@gmail.com](mailto:Jeff.hedglen@gmail.com).*



(CNS photo/Paul Haring) Augustinian Father Richard G. Cannuli brushes off carbon after tracing a design while creating an icon in Rome April 12.



(CNS photo/courtesy Father Browne S.J. Collection) This is one of a collection of photographs of the Titanic taken by the late Irish Jesuit Father Frank Browne. Father Browne's Titanic Album has been reprinted to mark the centenary of the demise of the massive liner. Father Browne became a prominent documentary photographer and a much-decorated chaplain in the British army in World War I.



(CNS photo/Lisa Johnston, St. Louis Review) Three Carmelite nuns profess their vows in 2011 in the chapel of the Divine Heart of Jesus convent in St. Louis. Love of God nurtures love of neighbor, especially in people with vocations to the priesthood or religious life, said Pope Benedict XVI in his message for the World Day of Prayer for Vocations, which will be observed April 29.

## Cross-Words

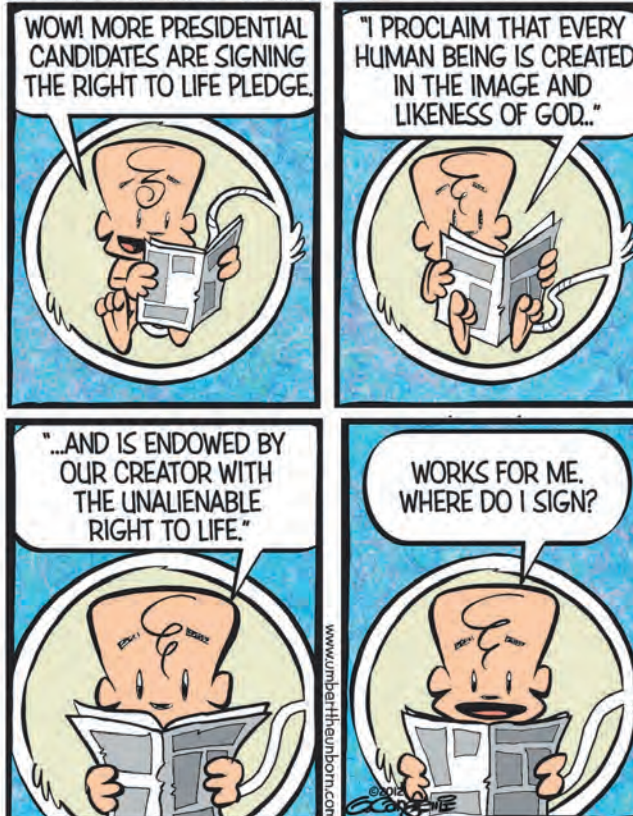
By Mark Simeroth

Across & Down:

1. Pontius Pilate was one
2. Salad oil
3. Quarries
4. Turn aside
5. Homes for Robins

1	2	3	4	5
2				
3				
4				
5				

### Umbert the Unborn by Gary Cangemi



### The FLOCK by Jean Denton

www.sheepdotcom.com





# Diocese

## Five dedicated priests invested as monsignori at March 27 Vespers

Story and Photos by  
Joan Kurkowski-Gillen  
Correspondent

Well-wishers filled St. Patrick Cathedral on March 27 to watch five diocesan priests receive the pontifical honor designating them as monsignors during a solemn vespers service.

Pope Benedict XVI conferred the title Prelate of Honor on Monsignor Stephen J. Berg, Vicar General and Moderator of the Curia, and Monsignor Raymund Mullan, pastor of two churches — St. Mary in Graham and St. Theresa in Olney.

Named Chaplain of Honor to His Holiness were Monsignor E. James Hart, pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church and Vicar for Special Projects; Monsignor Juan Rivero, pastor of St. Frances Cabrini Church in Granbury and Vicar for Priests; and Monsignor Publius Xuereb, pastor of Holy Redeemer Church in Aledo.

Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann presented each honoree with a large, framed certificate issued by the Vatican Secretariat of State stating the new title and rank.

“We thank our brothers here this evening for having been sent by God’s providence from California, Mexico, Malta, South Africa, and Montana,” Bishop Vann said, addressing the congregation. “They have ministered to the people in their parishes urging them to trust, telling them not to fear and to rejoice in the Lord’s presence in their lives.”

Many of the people sitting in the pews journeyed with the men during various stages in their priesthood.

“This recognition of their priestly ministry is recognition of all the people in their communities whom they have served and prayed with and, in turn, who have supported them,” the bishop said.

The title “monsignor” is a papal honor recognizing a priest’s service to the Church. Each priest is nominated for the honor by his bishop who submits a request and biography to the Holy See. Bishop Vann announced the names of the new monsignors during a Feb. 14



Newly invested monsignori proudly display their certificates during a March 27 vespers service honoring them. From left to right are Msgr. E. James Hart, Msgr. Juan Rivero, Msgr. Publius Xuereb, Msgr. Stephen Berg, and Msgr. Raymund Mullan.

luncheon at the diocesan Catholic Center.

For the ceremony, the new monsignors wore distinctive vestments indicating they now are members of the papal household and listed on the *Annuaria Pontificio* (the papal yearbook.) Chaplains are permitted to wear the black cassock with purple trimming, buttons, and sash. Prelates of honor wear a purple cassock with red trimming, buttons, and sash.

A group of 40 parishioners from St. Mary in Graham traveled 100 miles from the small, West Texas city to witness their pastor, Msgr. Mullan, receive his papal honor. Among the group was the new monsignor’s brother, Dr. Bertram Mullan, of Denton.

“He’s an outgoing man. He’s done tremendous work in Graham,” said Dr. Mullan. “They love him out there,” he said, during a reception in St. Patrick’s new pastoral center following the evening service. “It’s a wonderful honor, and he’s a wonderful priest.”

His brother always wanted to be a priest, the older sibling explained, and he credits their late mother, Hermina, for instilling a devotion to Church in the family home.

“Strangely enough, my mother was not Catholic but would go to church with us,” Dr. Mullan pointed out. “She was Dutch Reformed and a true saint. She was a role model for me, my brother, and our father.”

Letitia Guerrero, Angie and Pablo Torres and the couple’s daughter, Christi, were some of the parishioners from St. Frances



Monsignor Raymund Mullan, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Graham and St. Theresa in Olney, and Dean of the Southwest Deanery, stands with his brother, Dr. Bertram Mullan of Denton (right), and Bishop Kevin Vann.



Monsignor Publius Xuereb, pastor of Holy Redeemer Parish in Aledo, is invested as a monsignor by Bishop Kevin Vann at the March 27 liturgy. Assisting is diocesan Vocations Director Father Isaac Orozco.

Cabrini Church in Granbury who attended the service to congratulate their pastor, Msgr. Juan Rivero.

“He’s not just special to the Mexican community, he works well with everybody,” Pablo Torres said. “Eleven years ago, he married us and later baptized our daughter. We would not have missed this.”

Several members of the newly formed Anglican ordinariate (the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter) also came to witness the diocesan event. Msgr. James Hart, a former Episcopalian priest, is supporting their transition to the Catholic faith.

“He’s helped us move from the Anglican community to the Catholic Church, so we wanted to support him in return,” explained Chuck Hough, IV, who is on staff at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and is both a seminarian studying for the Catholic priesthood to serve within the ordinariate and a former Anglican priest. “We not only wanted to honor Msgr. Hart, but all the monsignors. They have been very welcoming.”

Like many others who came to the Solemn Vespers and celebration, Bert Guidry, knows several of the new monsignors. Msgr. Stephen



Monsignor Stephen Berg, Vicar General for the Diocese, poses with his mother, Jeanne, who traveled from Montana to see her son receive the papal honor.



Monsignor Juan Rivero, pastor of St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Granbury, Dean of the South Deanery, and Vicar for Priests for the diocese, poses with parishioners at a reception following the investiture.



Monsignor E. James Hart, pastor of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller and Vicar for Special Projects, stands with his wife LaDorne (left center), brother John (far left), and sister, Sister Edith Mary, RSM (far right).

Berg and Msgr. Hart were both assigned at different times, to his parish. He met Msgr. Publius Xuereb at a diocesan function.

“We wanted to come and show our respect,” said the St. Michael parishioner. “They are all wonderful, dedicated men.”

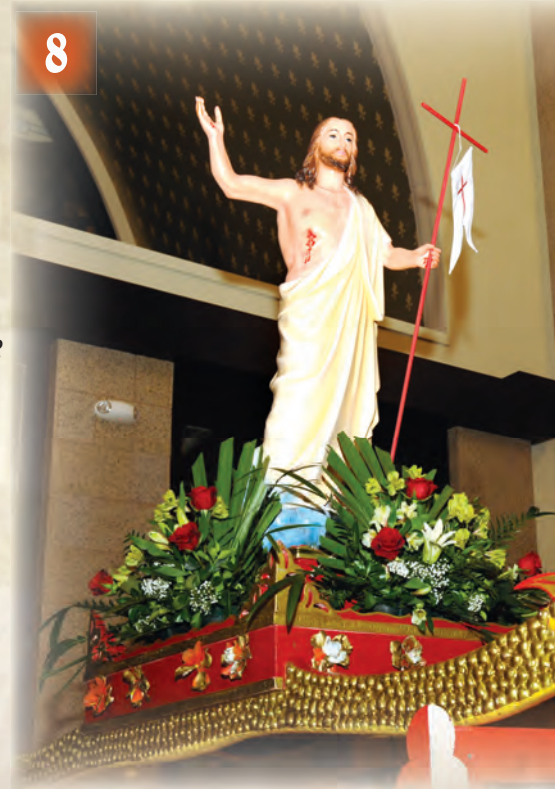
But, perhaps, the happiest person in the room was Jeanne Berg, mother of Msgr. Stephen Berg. The elderly mother of nine traveled from Montana to see her son receive his papal honor.

“I’m very proud of him,” she said. “This is a happy moment for our family.”



# Easter Vigil S and Rituals po Resurre

Photos by NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC photographers JUAN GUAJARDO and DONNA RYCKAERT



7. Just as the Easter Vigil is the focal point of the point of the Mass. Fr. Polycarp, Vietnamese Mar

8. A statue of the Risen Christ, victorious over c Martyrs on a processional stand. (DONNA RYCKAERT)

1. Monsignor Publius Xuereb and Deacon Patrick Bresler laugh with parishioners at Holy Redeemer Parish in Aledo at the start of the vigil Mass. (JUAN GUAJARDO)

2. James Key, a catechumen at Holy Redeemer, holds his candle in the darkened church during the vigil Mass. (JUAN GUAJARDO)

3. Holy Redeemer Deacon Scott France holds up the Easter Candle so candidates could light their candles. (JUAN GUAJARDO)

4. Father Polycarp M. Duchuan Nguyen, CMC, prepares to light the Paschal Candle at Vietnamese Martyrs Church. (DONNA RYCKAERT)

5. Catechumens from Good Shepherd Parish in Colleyville process into the church with lit candles at the beginning of the Easter Vigil. (MICHAEL MCGEE)

6. Monsignor Publius Xuereb sprinkles the congregation with holy water after the renewal of baptismal promises. (JUAN GUAJARDO)



# Sacraments Point us to the Resurrection

by Juan Guajardo, Donna Ryckaert, and Michael McGee



the Church calendar, the Eucharist is the focal point of the liturgical year. The priest, as the representative of Christ, holds up the host. (DONNA RYCKAERT)



13



14



12



11



10

**9.** Good Shepherd Pastor Father Richard Eldredge, TOR, baptizes a catechumen into the Catholic Church. (MICHAEL MCGEE)

**10.** Fr. Polycarp baptizes a young woman into the Catholic Church. (DONNA RYCKAERT)

**11.** During the Easter Vigil, the newly elect receive a candle after being baptized into the Body of Christ, allowing them to carry the Light of Christ. (MICHAEL MCGEE)

**12.** Fr. Polycarp places chrism oil on a confirmation candidate, bringing him into full communion with the Church. (DONNA RYCKAERT)

**13.** Deacon Pat Lavery hands the chalice carrying the Precious Blood to the newly elect who received the Eucharist for the first time. (MICHAEL MCGEE)

**14.** Monsignor Publius Xuereb confirms Dylan Bush into the Church during the Easter Vigil service. Bush (LEFT) was confirmed alongside his brother, Denver (RIGHT). (JUAN GUAJARDO)



9



Parish-based retreat program spreading through the dioceses encourages parishioners to respond to

# ACTS of the Spirit

By Juan Guajardo / Correspondent

**M**arc Pierel says it was out of the ordinary for him to step up to the ambo near the end of Mass at Holy Redeemer Parish in Aledo earlier this year and extend an invitation to fellow parishioners to come on an ACTS retreat. After all, says Pierel, who describes himself as reserved, pulpit talks aren't something he usually does.

"Standing in front of people like that is not me," said Pierel, a long-time participant and volunteer in ACTS retreats. "That's not something that comes to me naturally; that's something that I did because I knew it was the right thing to do and I knew that it was part of what the Lord expected me to do."



Photo courtesy of Ralph Lira

Immaculate Conception youth participate in an activity during a Teen ACTS retreat.

ACTS retreats are parish-focused, laity-led, four-day retreats put on by the non-profit ACTS Missions, which has several chapters around the country. ACTS retreats (which stand for Adoration, Community, Theology, and Service) aim to deepen retreatants' faith by focusing on those four aspects and inspiring men and women to serve in their parish and community, build fellowship, and engage in prayer and study of the Catholic faith.

"I was very surprised, I was very moved and touched by the whole experience," Pierel said of his first ACTS retreat in 2005. "I had been on maybe a dozen or so silent retreats. I had never been on a retreat like this that was so lively and peppy and enthusiastic. It seemed like every time I turned around there were some more blessings coming my way and things I didn't expect."

Since then, Pierel and his wife, Carolyn (who is also an ACTS participant), have become more involved in their parish, spend more time in prayer, and have had an easier time remembering the "Lord's involvement in our lives."

Founded in 1987 by a group of three men from Selma, Texas, who witnessed Blessed John Paul II's visit to San Antonio and were inspired by his call for a "new evangelization," ACTS retreats have spread to every diocese in Texas, 22 states across the country, and five other countries, said Jay Vela, executive director of ACTS Missions in San Antonio, the movement's headquarters.

Aiming to spread the new evangelization one parish at a time, the retreat has reached 500 parishes nationwide and 400,000 retreatants. On any given weekend there are 20 ACTS retreats happening around the six countries that have them, Vela said. Approximately 3,800 people have participated in ACTS retreats in the Diocese of Fort Worth since the first retreat was held in 2004 in Denton. Now, there are nine parishes that hold ACTS retreats for men, women, and teenagers, according to the Fort Worth ACTS chapter, which

oversees core groups that plan retreats at each parish in the diocese that holds them. Parishes include St. John the Baptizer in Bridgeport, Holy Cross in The Colony, Immaculate Conception and St. Mark in Denton, St. Mary's in Gainesville, St. Mary in Jacksboro, St. Philip the Apostle in Lewisville, St. Peter in Lindsay, Our Lady of Lourdes in Mineral Wells, Sacred Heart in Muenster, St. Thomas Aquinas in Pilot Point, and Holy Family in Vernon.

"ACTS is about men and women giving hope, joy, peace, and love to others," Vela said, adding that many participants say those blessings come back to them "one hundred fold."

Vela is quick to point out the retreats are a means, not an end, that helps men and women experience or re-experience God's love.

After a retreat, Vela says, participants give more to their communities and parishes, and work to grow in their faith by attending weekday Masses, adoration, or faith-sharing groups.

Ralph Lira, a board member of the Fort Worth ACTS chapter and long-time retreat volunteer, first participated in an ACTS retreat in 2005, after he was invited by a fellow parishioner who went through a Denton ACTS retreat (which combines Immaculate Conception and St. Mark Parishes).

"I was one of those Catholics who basically checked in to go to Mass on Sunday and then checked out as soon as I could," said the Immaculate Conception parishioner. Initially, Lira was hesitant about going, but his friend kept insisting.

"So I signed up not having any clue what I was getting into," Lira said. "I went on my retreat and it was life-changing. ... Then my wife went the next year. Our son and daughter have been on retreats. So our entire family has been on [the retreats], and it's just helped us — especially during some trying times in our lives. So it's been a great blessing."

Athena Stolzer of St. Mark, and a board member for the Fort Worth chapter, attended her first retreat in 2006.

"I'm a convert, so for me it was a great celebration of some of the things the Catholic faith has to offer that I had kind of missed out on during my RCIA," Stolzer said.

Since her retreat, Stolzer's husband has attended, and their children have gone on Teen ACTS retreats.

"It's a really nice thing for us to share," she said. "I don't know how a whole family can go through it and not experience that kind of positive impact."

Father Tim Thompson, pastor of Immaculate Conception, and the bishop's liaison to the Fort Worth chapter, has seen his parish benefit too. ACTS participants have become involved as extraordinary ministers of holy Communion, lectors, volunteers in religious education, faith support groups, groups that visit the sick, and in *Why Catholic?*

Furthermore, he says the popularity of ACTS at his parish has spread to the Hispanic community, with Denton ACTS



North Texas Catholic file photo

Retreatants from the first Spanish men's ACTS retreat in Gainesville held Oct. 15-18, 2009 at the Lone Oak Retreat Center return to St. Mary's Church to attend the 1 p.m. Spanish Mass with their families.

holding its first Spanish retreat last year.

Fr. Thompson says the retreats don't just benefit the parish.

"It's revived the faith of a lot of people — people that have kind of quit practicing their faith or have a minimal faith or people that just never really made any kind of awakening. It's been a tremendous thing. At the personal level it's been really powerful," he said.

Aside from strengthening individuals, families, and parishes, ACTS also fosters a sense of fellowship and community, Fr. Thompson, Lira, Pierel, and Stolzer said.

"Really, to this day when I'm with my fellow brothers who had been on the ACTS retreat with me, either fellow retreatants or team members, my reaction is still the same: It's a big smile and a big hug," Pierel said. "And the experience leaves you feeling like, I think it's described by the apostles and the disciples after Pentecost, ... how they lived together as a community."

That community spreads far and wide, and provides support even during bad times.

Pierel recalls how a retreat friend's house burned down a few years ago. While the firefighters were still putting out the flames, several other retreat friends were already there "at his side consoling him and supporting him and his family."

The next Sunday at Mass, several parishioners and ACTS participants assisted the family with gift cards and lent a hand.

"It was just like I pictured the disciples living as it's described in the *Acts of the Apostles*," Pierel said. "They just took care of each other."

At St. Philip Parish in Lewisville, that sense of community among ACTS retreatants is also evident. According to Greg Walterscheid, who along with a handful of other parishioners helped bring the retreat to the parish, the retreat draws 20-35 parishioners per event.

"From my own personal experience, now I can say I have a close-knit connection with 200 people that I didn't know before," said Walterscheid, the core group's facilitator. "It's given a lot of other attendees a sense of belonging and a recommitment to our parish."

Since ACTS began there in 2010, Walterscheid has seen 50 ACTS participants take part in weekly faith-sharing groups. Another eight became Knights of Columbus, and many more became involved in other ministries.

"I think that's the beauty of it ... it builds the parish up into one big family," Lira observes.

For more information on ACTS or Teen ACTS, visit [www.actsmissions-fortworthchapter.org](http://www.actsmissions-fortworthchapter.org) or contact Jeanne Greathouse, the Fort Worth ACTS chapter facilitator, at [bighouse@embarqmail.com](mailto:bighouse@embarqmail.com).



# Vocations

## Good Shepherd Sunday special collection, which supports education and living expenses for seminarians, to be held April 28-29

By Michele Baker  
Correspondent

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. A good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep (*John 10:11*)."

When these words are read this year on Good Shepherd Sunday, April 28 and 29, the faithful of the Diocese of Fort Worth are asked to remember the good shepherds among them, especially the seminarians who are preparing to lay down their lives in service to the local Church. The Good Shepherd Sunday special collection helps the diocese to offset the cost of educating those who have discerned a call to the priesthood. There are currently 27 such men in formation while another nine have been accepted to begin their studies in the Fall.

"One of the most beautiful things about the Diocese of Fort Worth is that we're very blessed to have a number of men preparing

for the priesthood," said Michael Messano, director of Advancement for the diocese. "While that's great, when a diocese has this many men, the costs are staggering. That doesn't mean that we abandon them, though. It means we work harder to provide for them."

Right now the diocese spends more than \$1.2 million each year to provide education, room, and board for seminarians. And while the material need is great, the spiritual support is just as important.

"Every year around Christmas, we get letters from the Catholic elementary and high schools," said Gary Picou, a seminarian who is completing his pastoral year at St. Joseph Parish in Arlington. "The kids write to encourage us and to let us know that they're praying for us."

Picou, a Houston native, found his way into the Diocese of Fort Worth when he relocated

to North Texas for his job as a mechanical engineer. Through involvement in parish life at St. Michael in Bedford, Picou, who had begun formation for the priesthood right out of college but had left the seminary to pursue a secular career, found himself back in formation for the priesthood.

"The call is much larger than the traditional path to the priesthood," he observed. "I'd consider myself atypical but God's call doesn't go away."

**Give online to the 2012 Good Shepherd Sunday Special Collection for the Seminarian Formation Fund at [www.fwdioc.org](http://www.fwdioc.org).**

Picou recognizes that the support he's received spiritually and materially have helped him to answer that call.

Messano says that this is how

it should be. "These seminarians are making a commitment to our diocese," he said. "Supporting them is an investment in the future of our local Church."



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Two rally participants share a supportive embrace during the Stand Up For Religious Freedom gathering.



Alice Kendall of St. Peter Church in Lindsey and Jackie Schilling of Sacred Heart Church in Muenster read over rally literature.



Rally supporters carry placards listing First Amendment freedoms.

# Religious Freedom

FROM PAGE 1

motivational speaker in her own right, Wetteland fired up the crowd's patriotism with stories about her family's military service to the country. Her grandfather served in four wars, and her father was an Air Force Commander.

"I come from a family of great Americans," explained the mother of five who lives in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. "I have truly understood for my entire life that our freedoms are not free."

Wetteland feels there is an assault on long-held American values and she encouraged her listeners to stand up for what they believe.

"By being here today, you're sending a message that you care about your freedom and liberty," she continued, "so the sacrifices of our forefathers will not be in vain."

Reading from a March 14 statement issued by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Diane Schwind explained for the assembly, "what the



Diane Schwind of Balanced Family Ministries explains the ramifications of the HHS mandate to an attentive audience.

HHS mandate is and what it is not."

"This mandate is not about contraception," stated the Pre-Cana instructor and co-director of the Balanced Family Ministries apostolate in the Diocese of Fort Worth. "It's about religious freedom. And it's not just about religious freedom for Catholics."

Acknowledging the presence of non-Catholics in the crowd, Schwind thanked them for their participation, then warned, "they're coming after you next. We're here to let the government know we are not standing for this as a group of faithful Christians."

And, despite political spin surrounding the issue, opposition to the mandate is not a war on women, she pointed out.

"As a Catholic woman who converted to this faith, I believe there is no institution [that] holds women higher than the Catholic Church."

The St. Thomas Aquinas, Pilot Point, parishioner cautioned women not to be fooled by misrepresentations in the media.

"If this is really about women's health care, where is the free care for pregnancy and birthing



Home-schooled youngsters show off their homemade posters.

costs?" she queried.

Schwind told the *North Texas Catholic* she wanted to educate and motivate the audience.

"I hope people have a clearer idea of how serious this is when they leave here," she added.

Carrying a sign with an image of Our Lady of Fatima, Estela and Eduardo Aguilar listened intently to each presentation. They came to the Stand Up For Freedom rally after learning about it on the Internet. The St. Patrick parishioners believe prayer can stop the mandate from being enforced.

"Our Lady of Fatima has a lot of truth, and we need to pray for her to intercede," Eduardo suggested. "Prayer is stronger than anything man can do."



Estela and Eduardo Aguilar's sign asks Our Lady of Fatima to pray for "our religious freedom."

## Catholics urged to resist unjust laws, join in 'fortnight for freedom'

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — American Catholics must resist unjust laws "as a duty of citizenship and an obligation of faith," a committee of the U.S. bishops said in a new statement on religious liberty.

Titled "Our First, Most Cherished Liberty," the 12-page statement by the Ad Hoc Committee on Religious Liberty also calls for "a fortnight for freedom" from June 21, the vigil of the feasts of St. John Fisher and St. Thomas More, to July 4, U.S. Independence Day.

"This special period of prayer, study, catechesis and public action would emphasize both our Christian and American heritage of liberty," the committee said. "Dioceses and parishes around the country could choose a date in that period for special events that would constitute a great national campaign of teaching and witness for religious liberty."

Made public April 12, the document was approved by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Administrative Committee during its March meeting for publication as a committee statement.

The ad hoc committee opened its statement with several "concrete examples" of recent threats to religious liberty, saying that "this is not a theological or legal dispute without real-world consequences."

Cited first was the Department of Health and Human Services' mandate that most health plans must include contraception, sterilization and some abortion-inducing drugs free of charge, even if the employer is morally opposed

to such services.

"In an unprecedented way, the federal government will both force religious institutions to facilitate and fund a product contrary to their own moral teaching and purport to define which religious institutions are 'religious enough' to merit protection of their religious liberty," the statement said. "These features of the 'preventive services' mandate amount to an unjust law."

Among other examples of "religious liberty under attack" the bishops named:

- Immigration laws in Alabama and other states that "forbid what the government deems 'harboring' of undocumented immigrants — and what the Church deems Christian charity and pastoral care to those immigrants."

- An attempt by the Connecticut Legislature in 2009 to restructure Catholic parishes.

- Discrimination against Christian students on college campuses.

- Government actions in Boston, San Francisco, the District of Columbia and the state of Illinois that have "driven local Catholic Charities out of the business of providing adoption or foster care services" because the agencies would not place children with same-sex or unmarried heterosexual couples.

- A New York City rule that bars small church congregations from renting public schools on weekends for worship services, while allowing such rentals by nonreligious groups.

- Changes in federal contracts for human trafficking grants that require Catholic agencies "to refer for contraceptive and abortion services in violation of Catholic teaching."

The statement quotes the Founding Fathers

and the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. to bolster its arguments.

Rev. King, writing from jail in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963, described an unjust law as one "that is out of harmony with the moral law," and said he agreed with St. Augustine that "an unjust law is no law at all."

"An unjust law cannot be obeyed," the bishops' statement said. "In the face of an unjust law, an accommodation is not to be sought, especially by resorting to equivocal words and deceptive practices."

"If we face today the prospect of unjust laws, then Catholics in America, in solidarity with our fellow citizens, must have the courage not to obey them," it added. "No American desires this. No Catholic welcomes it. But if it should fall upon us, we must discharge it as a duty of citizenship and an obligation of faith."

The bishops also distinguished between conscientious objection and an unjust law.

"Conscientious objection permits some relief to those who object to a just law for reasons of conscience — conscription being the most well-known example," the committee said. "An unjust law is 'no law at all.' It cannot be obeyed, and therefore one does not seek relief from it, but rather its repeal."

The statement also raised the issue of religious freedom abroad and said "the age of martyrdom has not passed."

"Assassinations, bombings of churches, torching of orphanages — these are only the most violent attacks Christians have suffered because of their faith in Jesus Christ," the bishops said. "It is our task to strengthen religious liberty at home, ... so that we might

defend it more vigorously abroad."

The statement called on "American foreign policy, as well as the vast international network of Catholic agencies" to make "the promotion of religious liberty an ongoing and urgent priority."

The bishops assigned special responsibility for advancing religious freedom to several groups:

- Those who hold public office must "protect and defend those fundamental liberties guaranteed by the Bill of Rights," regardless of their political party.

- Leaders of Catholic hospitals, universities, and social service agencies "who may be forced to choose between the good works we do by faith, and fidelity to that faith itself" were encouraged to "hold firm, to stand fast, and to insist upon what belongs to you by right as Catholics and Americans."

- Priests must offer "a catechesis on religious liberty suited to the souls in your care," a responsibility that is shared with "writers, producers, artists, publishers, filmmakers and bloggers employing all the means of communications."

In addition to the "fortnight for freedom" June 21 to July 4, the bishops designated the feast of Christ the King — Nov. 25 this year — as "a day specifically employed by bishops and priests to preach about religious liberty, both here and abroad."

**Editor's Note:** The full text of "Our First, Most Cherished Liberty: A Statement on Religious Liberty" is available at [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/our-first-most-cherished-liberty.cfm](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/our-first-most-cherished-liberty.cfm).



# Andy Nguyen...

FROM PAGE 28

Nguyen's older brothers managed an opportune escape in 1979. Notably, one of them eventually became a well-respected priest in the Diocese of Fort Worth — the Rev. Hoa Nguyen, now pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls. The two brothers would establish residence in the United States and work tirelessly to reunite their family.

In 1981, after six years of imprisonment, Nguyen's father secretly boarded an overcrowded fishing boat with five of his children, while his wife and youngest son remained behind to distract the communists. By now, Nguyen was 14 years old and about to embark on a voyage he would never forget.

## Guided by faith

A banker by trade, Nguyen's father studied navigation in preparation for this escape from oppression. Now it was his goal to get 80 desperate boat passengers to a refugee camp in Malaysia, several hundred miles across the South China Sea. No one aboard expected it to be easy, and the wise navigator knew he must take the boat on a circuitous route away from the Gulf of Thailand. The longer course would help them avoid pirates, but it would create additional hardships for passengers short on water and food.

After several days of severe hunger and thirst, relief came in the form of an offshore oil rig. When the refugees neared the structure, friendly rig hands greeted them. Upon learning that the refugees in the boat below their platform were dehydrated, the rig workers showered fresh water down on them from a thick hose.

Nguyen opened his mouth wide. "It tasted like milk and honey. I can't describe that feeling. It was just wonderful."

The respite would not last long for the refugees. Their next experience at sea came in the form of a treacherous

storm. Nguyen's father had prepared passengers well for this latest challenge. He led daily prayer services on the boat and taught his countrymen to always put their faith in God.

That faith was tested during the maelstrom. "Everybody was praying. Even non-believers were praying to Mary and Joseph and Jesus," Nguyen said.

Miraculously, the ship and its passengers weathered the storm. After more than a week at sea, they made it to the refugee camp in Malaysia.

Young Nguyen had seen his father save lives through exceptional perseverance, keen navigation skills, and a steadfast Catholic faith.

The experience taught all the survivors a lesson in spirituality, Nguyen said.

"Around you is a lot of water but you are dying of thirst. You are in an ocean with tons of fish, but you are dying of hunger. A storm comes and you cannot do anything about it. You are like a tiny little leaf floating in the giant Pacific Ocean. You are totally helpless.

"When you are in that situation, even a non-believer has to believe. Who else can save you, except God?"

## Freedom found

After several months at the refugee camp, the Nguyens were reunited with the two older brothers who had escaped earlier and were living in Covington, Kentucky.

From the Nguyen family would come great contributors to society, including engineers, business leaders, a nurse, an architect and two Roman Catholic priests. The clergy includes Fr. Hoa and Fr. Linh Nguyen, a younger brother who is a priest in Georgetown, Kentucky. All seized the opportunity to realize their potential in the U.S.

They also succeeded in bringing their mother and the family's youngest child to America in 1992, and the entire family now lives in this country.

All are proud of Nguyen's public service post in Tarrant County, said Fr. Hoa. "Andy always thought big. He always wanted to do more. And he's always been a leader."

***Around you is a lot of water but you are dying of thirst. You are in an ocean with tons of fish, but you are dying of hunger. A storm comes and you cannot do anything about it. You are like a tiny little leaf floating in the giant Pacific Ocean. You are totally helpless. ... When you are in that situation, even a non-believer has to believe.***

***Who else can save you, except God?***

— Andy Nguyen

A devout Catholic, Nguyen attends St. Vincent de Paul Church in Arlington and St. Joseph Vietnamese Catholic Church in Grand Prairie. Married and a father of three, Nguyen is committed to his family.

"Through it all, we always supported each other," Nguyen said. That involved his mother serving as a decoy for the final escape and his father's resoluteness, even through imprisonment, to find a better way for his family. Support also came from his father's Catholic spiritual guidance to keep his family and fellow refugees strong. And necessary help came from his older brothers, along with the entire family, as they pooled their resources to fund one another's plans for a better way of life in America.

"I always remember where we came from," said Nguyen, "and the prices we had to pay to get here. And I remember the sacrifices that our parents and my older brothers made.

In hard times, the only thing we could do was count on each other. Family, I learned, is very important. And I believe it's the fundamental bedrock for our society."

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# International

Apostolic visit to Mexico

## Trust in God to help change society, pope says in Mexico's heartland

By Francis X. Rocca  
Catholic News Service

SILAO, Mexico— Celebrating Mass in the Catholic heartland of Mexico, Pope Benedict XVI told a nation and a continent suffering from poverty, corruption and violence, to trust in God and the intercession of Mary to help them bring about a "more just and fraternal society."

"When addressing the deeper dimension of personal and community life, human strategies will not suffice to save us," the pope said in his homily during the outdoor Mass at Guanajuato Bicentennial Park March 25, the second full day of his second papal visit to Latin America. "We must have recourse to the one who alone can give life in its fullness, because he is the essence of life and its author."

Citing the responsorial psalm for the day's Mass — "Create a clean heart in me, O God" — the pope said that evil can be overcome only through a divinely inspired change of the human heart.

The pope made note of the



(CNS photo/L'OSSERVATORE ROMANO)

Pope Benedict XVI, wearing a sombrero, arrives to celebrate Mass at Bicentennial Park in Silao, Mexico, March 25

monument to Christ the King visible atop a nearby hill and observed that Christ's "kingdom does not stand on the power of his armies subduing others through force or violence. It rests on a higher power that wins over

hearts: the love of God that he brought into the world with his sacrifice and the truth to which he bore witness."

That message was consistent with Pope Benedict's frequently stated objections to strategies for

social progress that blend Christian social doctrine with Marxism or other secular ideologies.

"The Church is not a political power, it is not a party," the pope told reporters on his flight to Mexico March 23. "It is a moral reality, a moral power."

In his Silao homily, the pope did not specifically address any of Latin America's current social problems, but after praying the Angelus following the Mass, he recited a litany of ills plaguing Mexico and other countries in the region: "so many families are separated or forced to emigrate ... so many are suffering due to poverty, corruption, domestic violence, drug trafficking, the crisis of values, and increased crime."

Speaking in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato, which was a stronghold of the 1920s Cristero Rebellion against an anti-clerical national regime, Pope Benedict recited the invocation that served as the Cristeros' rallying cry: "Long live Christ the King and Mary of Guadalupe."

But reaffirming his message of nonviolence, the pope prayed that Mary's influence would "promote fraternity, setting aside futile acts of revenge and banishing all divisive hatred."

The presidential candidates from Mexico's three main political parties attended the Mass, along with President Felipe Calderon and his family.

The Vatican said 640,000 people attended the Mass. Some Mexicans took long trips just to see Pope Benedict on his first trip to the

country since being elected in 2005.

The journey was not easy for many. Thousands of the faithful walked more than three miles from parking lots in the town of Silao, 220 miles northwest of Mexico City.

"This is nothing too difficult," quipped Jose Trinidad Borja, 81, a retired hardware store owner from Queretaro who boasts of having participated in the annual eight-day diocesan pilgrimage to the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City for 65 straight years.

An army of vendors hawked water, coffee, and tamales along the route in addition to Vatican flags and photos of Pope Benedict and his predecessor, Blessed John Paul II, who, with his five visits, became one of the most beloved figures in an officially secular country.

"With Benedict, I feel something indescribable," said Guadalupe Nambo Gutierrez, a retired secretary from Guanajuato City, who saw the pope in the colonial town March 24 and attended the Mass the following day.

Getting a ticket was another matter. Nambo won a raffle for some of the tickets the Archdiocese of Leon allotted to St. Joseph and St. James the Apostle Parish. Others simply decided to try their luck by showing up -- and many could be seen outside the Mass site behind barricades guarded by federal police officers.

Bishop Raul Vera Lopez of Saltillo said his diocese only received its allotment of 2,500 tickets 10 days before the Mass, making it difficult for parishes to plan trips for churchgoers. Still, all the tickets were claimed and more than 6,500 requests were made.

Most of those coming from Saltillo, in northern Mexico, traveled overnight and were expected to return immediately after the Mass. Some parishes opted not to send people to the Mass because of concerns about security along the route.

"We hope that things calm a little after this visit," said Silao resident Jorge Morales as he walked to the Mass.

The previous evening, after a brief appearance before a crowd in Guanajuato's main square, Pope Benedict privately greeted a group that included eight people who have lost relatives to violence, much of it drug-related, which has killed nearly 50,000 Mexicans over the last five years.



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# International

Apostolic visit to Cuba

## At Mass, pope recognizes Cubans' struggles, calls freedom a necessity

By Francis X. Rocca

Catholic News Service

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba — Celebrating an outdoor Mass on his first day in Cuba, Pope Benedict XVI acknowledged the struggles of the country's Catholics after half a century of communism and described human freedom as a necessity for both salvation and social justice.

The pope spoke March 26 in Antonio Maceo Revolution Square, in Cuba's second-largest city. He had arrived in the country a few hours earlier, after spending three days in Mexico.

The Vatican had said the square would hold 200,000 people and it was full; several thousand also filled the streets leading to the square. Cuban President Raul Castro, who welcomed the pope at the airport, sat in the front row for Mass.

Tens of thousands of those at the Mass were wearing white T-shirts welcoming the pope as the "pilgrim of charity"; many wore baseball caps to protect them from the hot sun.

Before the pope arrived in the Popemobile, the original statue of Our Lady of Charity of El Cobre, Cuba's patroness, was driven atop a white truck through the cheering crowd. The statue then was enthroned near the papal altar.

In his homily, Pope Benedict



(CNS photo/Rickey Rogers)

A girl receives Communion from Pope Benedict XVI during Mass at Antonio Maceo Revolution Square in Santiago de Cuba, Cuba, March 26

recognized the "effort, daring, and self-sacrifice" required of Cuban Catholics "in the concrete circumstances of your country and at this moment in history." Though now more tolerant of religious practice than in earlier decades, the

communist state continues to prevent the construction of new churches and strictly limits Catholic access to state media.

In a possible allusion to reports that the regime had prevented political opponents from attending the Mass, Pope Benedict extended his customary mention of those absent for reasons of age or health to include people who, "for other motives, are not able to join us."

Before the pope arrived, a man in the crowd shouted an anti-communist slogan and was immediately taken away.

The pope painted a dire picture of a society without faith.

"When God is set aside, the world becomes an inhospitable place for man," he said. "Apart from God, we are alienated from ourselves and are hurled into the void.

"Obedience to God is what opens the doors of the world to the truth, to salvation," the pope said. "Redemption is always this process of the lifting up of the human will to full communion with the divine will."

Taking his theme from the day's liturgical feast of the Annunciation, when Mary learned that she would conceive and bear the Son of God, the pope emphasized that fulfillment of the divine plan involved Mary's free acceptance of her role.

"Our God, coming into the

world, wished to depend on the free consent of one of his creatures," Pope Benedict said. "It is touching to see how God not only respects human freedom, He almost seems to require it."

The most specific advice in the pope's homily regarded a topic familiar to his listeners in the prosperous capitalist countries of Western Europe and North America: the sanctity of the "family founded on matrimony" as the "fundamental cell of society and an authentic domestic church."

"You, dear husbands and wives, are called to be, especially for your children, a real and visible sign of the love of Christ for the Church," Pope Benedict said. "Cuba needs the witness of your fidelity, your unity, your capacity to welcome human life, especially that of the weakest

and most needy."

According to the Center for Demographic Studies at the University of Havana, Cuba's divorce rate has almost tripled in four decades, rising from 22 divorces per 100 marriages in 1970 to 64 in 2009. The country's parliament is scheduled later this year to consider the legal recognition of same-sex marriage, in response to a campaign led by Mariela Castro, daughter of President Raul Castro.

Despite his challenges to Cuban society, Pope Benedict concluded his homily by repeating an earlier call for patience with the Catholic Church's policy of dialogue and cooperation with the communist regime, a process initiated by Blessed John Paul II during his 1998 visit to Cuba.

"May we accept with patience and faith whatever opposition may come," the pope said. "Armed with peace, forgiveness, and understanding ... strive to build a renewed and open society, a better society, one more worthy of humanity, and which better reflects the goodness of God."

After the Mass, the pope paid homage to Our Lady of Charity by placing at the statue a gold rose weighing more than a pound and standing almost a foot tall.

A 30-year-old woman in a baseball cap who identified herself only as Xichel told Catholic News Service she and about 100 others traveled about 165 miles from Camaguey for the Mass, and she hoped to see the pope in Havana. Older pilgrims traveled by train or bus, she said.

"I came to see the pope because I am Catholic and he is the successor of Peter, who was the first pope," she said, adding that she saw Blessed John Paul in Camaguey in 1998.

She also expressed pride that a member of her parish was to read the second reading.

*Contributing to this story was Cindy Wooden in Havana.*



(CNS photo/Alessia Giuliani, Catholic Press Photo)

People line a street in Havana as they wait for Pope Benedict XVI to pass in his popemobile

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# Word = Life

## Readings Reflections

**“H**e takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit, and every one that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.”  
— John 15:2

### May 6, Fifth Sunday of Easter. Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 9:26-31  
Psalm 22:26-28, 30-32
- 2) 1 John 3:18-24  
Gospel) John 15:1-8



By Jean Denton

**T**his time of year the good results of pruning become evident in a profusion of new growth in flowering trees and shrubs.

Witnessing such beauty and vitality in nature shows how the Gospel metaphor of pruning is so appropriate to Jesus' message. He promises new growth, if we hold tight to God's life in us even as we suffer injury and loss.

Jesus says he is the vine and the Father the vine grower who, while disposing of the dead wood, nurtures — and renews — the life force that has survived the pain. Our relationship to Jesus is similar: He is the vine, and we are the branches who receive life through Him.

Just before Easter, I got a card from my friend Marie. She wrote it while on a retreat — an annual retreat we attended together for many years. I moved away nearly 15 years ago, but her note recalled a spiritual bond we still have because of the times we shared being away with Jesus.

Since then, Marie has experienced some heavy setbacks including, most notably, the death of her son when he was in his early 20s. I can't imagine the darkness of her grief but remember my amazement at how she never seemed to waver in clinging to a deep force that was her relationship with Jesus.

That relationship has produced much fruit, seen in the vital, faith-filled lives of Marie's daughters, grandchildren, and friends who have learned from her how to remain in Christ and draw strength from Him.

In her card, Marie wrote, "As always, when I'm on retreat I think of you and I pray for you." Then she added that she hoped the Lord manifests Himself to me every day in new ways, that I find in new places the peace we had on retreat and new people with whom to share our love for Jesus.

While recognizing the core of faith and love that God first planted in us and nurtured through our experience, Marie kept emphasizing newness.

Christ's life is resurrection. Marie shared her hope for things new because she understands the fundamental constancy of God who strengthens us through continual new life, offering salvation and willing us to bear fruit.

### QUESTIONS:

What makes it most difficult for you to draw on Christ within you?  
When has an instance of suffering or injury led to new life for you?

**“N**o one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends.”  
— John 15:13

### May 13, Sixth Sunday of Easter. Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 10:25-26, 34-35, 44-48  
Psalm 98:1-4
- 2) 1 John 4:7-10  
Gospel) John 15:9-17



By Jeff Hedglen

**S**id had been out of work for some time. He had sent off countless résumés and been to a number of interviews. His friend Al knew about Sid's predicament and also knew that there were some job openings at his place of employment, so he invited Sid to come to work with him to inquire about a job.

When they arrived, Al went in to see his boss and asked if he would be open to talking to Sid about a job. His boss looked through the window, saw that Sid was a black man and said, "We don't hire that kind here." Sid did not know what was being said in the office, but when Al came out he told Sid, "I guess we're both looking for a job." When Al heard such a bigoted statement from his boss, he had quit on the spot.

In this week's Gospel, Jesus calls us all to love each other as he has loved us. He goes on to say that the greatest measure of love is to lay down your life for a friend. Then he looks at his disciples and says, "I call you friends." Jesus gives us the prime example of love by laying his life down for us all.

I have always liked that story from John's Gospel but wondered if I ever would be in a situation where I would have the choice to lay down my life for a friend. But the story of Sid and Al revealed to me that laying down my life could have many forms.

Jesus calls us to love one another as He loves us, that is, completely, without thought of self, pride, or wanting something in return. I have heard love defined as "wanting the good for another and being willing to do what it takes to make that good happen." This definition of love has nothing to do with feelings, but everything to do with actions, and it is exactly the kind of love Al had for Sid and Jesus has for all of us.

### QUESTIONS:

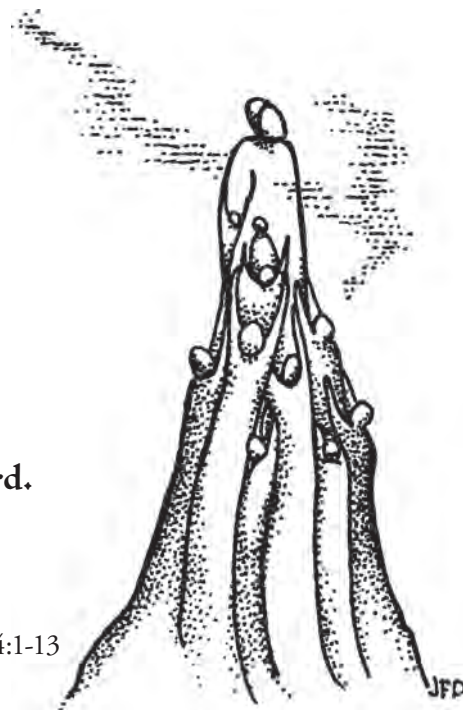
Have you, or someone you know, ever done something extreme out of love for a friend or family member? What are some ways we can lay down our lives for our friends in everyday life?



# Word = Life

## Readings Reflections

*“Why are you standing there looking at the sky?”*  
— Acts 1:11



### May 20, Ascension of the Lord. Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 1:1-11  
Psalm 47:2-3, 6-9
- 2) Ephesians 1:17-23 or Ephesians 4:1-13  
Gospel) Mark 16:15-20

By Sharon K. Perkins

When our son was a youngster, he played T-ball with a local YMCA league. (For readers not familiar with the game, it's like baseball, but the batter swings at a ball perched on an adjustable tee in lieu of a pitched ball.) David's position was usually in the outfield, which was a problem.

Like many boys his age, he had an active imagination and was prone to daydreaming, especially when relatively few hits reached the outfield to command his attention. Thus it invariably happened that when a ball finally found its way to his vicinity, he was usually looking up at the sky or at something else more interesting, away from the field of play. Distant from the action in the infield and lulled into complacency, he was caught unprepared to fulfill the task his team was counting on him to do.

Before his ascension to the Father, Jesus gave his disciples a clear mandate: “Go into the whole world and proclaim the Gospel to every creature.” Empowered by the Holy Spirit, they would go on to be Christ's witnesses “in Jerusalem, throughout Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” In most cases, their zealous and single-minded obedience would result in martyrdom.

You or I may not be called to martyrdom (although far more of our contemporaries have given their lives for Christ than in the first century), but our directive from the risen Lord is no different and no less critical. However, perhaps because of both our geographical and chronological distance from Jesus' earthly ministry, we are either looking up at the sky for his eventual return, or we're looking down at the ground at our own cares and concerns.

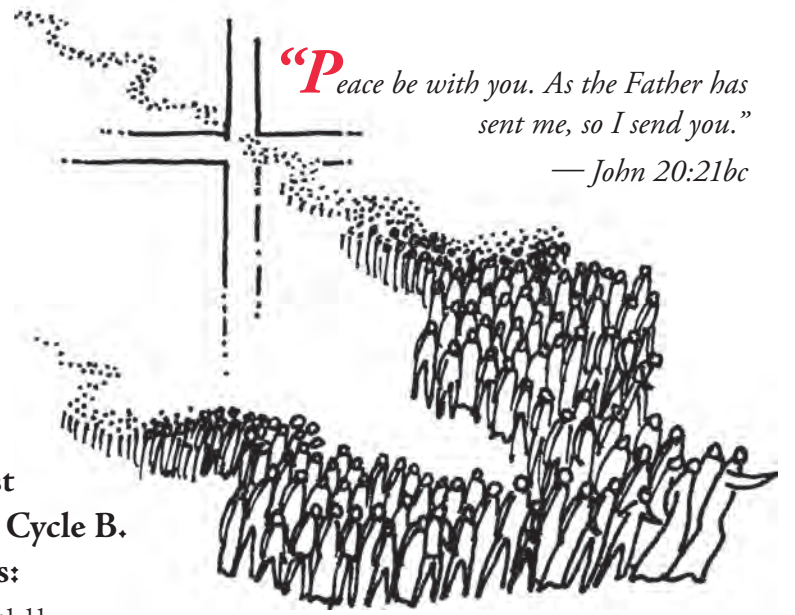
Either way, we're not focused outward to fulfill the task we've been given which is to “equip the holy ones for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ.”

Each of us is called to proclaim the Gospel in our own unique way, in our own set of circumstances and to persons whom no one else might be in a position to reach. St. Paul assures us that the same “grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.” To borrow a saying from another sport: “The ball's in our court.” What are we waiting for?

### QUESTIONS:

To whom is the Spirit calling you to share the good news of Jesus Christ? What is keeping you from fulfilling the task you've been given?

*“Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.”*  
— John 20:21bc



### May 27, Pentecost Sunday. Cycle B. Readings:

- 1) Acts 2:1-11  
Psalm 104:1, 24, 29-31, 34
- 2) 1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13  
Gospel) John 20:19-23

By Jeff Hensley

As we approach the beginning of Pope Benedict's Year of Faith observance this fall, these Pentecost readings take on a fresh significance, perhaps offering us some glimpses of what we ought to be doing to prepare ourselves.

The reading from Acts focuses on what happened when the Holy Spirit came upon the disciples gathered in one room, when a noise came from the sky, “a noise like a strong, driving wind,” a wind that brought a fire, tongues of fire, in fact, “which parted and came to rest on each one of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in different tongues.” This was really dramatic.

But it gets better, they went out into the street where a crowd had gathered and the crowd — from Europe, Asia, and Africa, the known world — each heard them speaking “of the mighty acts of God” in their own native language.

Part of what we don't get in the scope of this reading, is that the disciples, upon whom the Holy Spirit fell with such overwhelming power, had been gathering to pray and read the Scriptures for some time, waiting on the promise of the Holy Spirit that Jesus had given them.

As we prepare for a New Evangelization, I'm betting some of the things the disciples did, we should be doing: gathering together in a spirit of unity, praying, both for one another and others outside our circles, but also for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in our own times.

In the many spiritual renewal movements God has given the church in recent decades, Cursillo, Charismatic Renewal, and the ACTS Movement come to mind, these have been common elements. Perhaps with the foundation laid by RENEW and *Why Catholic?* we should now enter into a time of prayer for the whole Church, not just smaller groups of it, to experience a fire of renewal that will draw crowds to find out what it is that the Holy Spirit is doing with us.

Hopefully, they will come to make the observation that was made of the early Christian Church: “See how they love one another.”

### QUESTIONS:

Have you experienced God's gift of the Holy Spirit, given to you at Confirmation, making a difference in your own life? How might you go about increasing the influence of God's Spirit on your life?



# Nuestro Pastor Habla

## Visita Ad Limina Apostolorum, una experiencia de 'comunidad eclesial'

### Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo:

El mes pasado el *North Texas Catholic* tuvo algunas fotos de la visita *Ad Limina Apostolorum* de los obispos de la *Región X* a la *Santa Sede*. Para todos nosotros los obispos de Texas, Oklahoma y Arkansas, fue una experiencia de lo que podría llamarse la "comunidad eclesial" y, ciertamente, una profunda experiencia de fe. El término *Visita Ad Limina Apostolorum*, en ocasiones llamada solamente *Visita ad limina*, significa "visita al umbral de los apóstoles". Específicamente es una visita a las grandes basílicas de los Apóstoles, la *Basílica de San Pedro* y la *Basílica de San Pablo Extramuros*, o sea, una visita a la *Ciudad del Vaticano* en Roma y al sucesor de San Pedro, el Papa Benedicto XVI y sus colaboradores. Esta fue una experiencia de profunda comunión eclesial, porque el propósito de la visita fue para reflexionar y fortalecer la realidad de la comunión de la fe de la Iglesia local de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* con la Iglesia universal centrada en el Vaticano en Roma, especialmente con la persona del obispo de Roma, el Papa Benedicto XVI, el sucesor de San Pedro. Pasado ya un mes, al escribir estas palabras, veo la *Catedral de San Patricio* y el edificio de *San Ignacio* desde la ventana de mi oficina aquí en la *Catedral de San Patricio*, y pienso en el tiempo que compartí con el Santo Padre en *San Pedro* y como la Iglesia Universal — o sea la Iglesia Católica extendida a través de todo el planeta, y la Iglesia local aquí en esta porción del norte de Texas, o sea la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* — está verdadera y profundamente unida, está en comunión.

Esta realidad de comunión eclesial se vio reforzada también por hacer esta visita junto con los obispos de las *Provincias eclesiásticas de San Antonio, Galveston-Houston y Oklahoma City*. Cuando nuestra *Provincia de San Antonio* tuvo el encuentro con el Papa Benedicto XVI en el tercer día de nuestra visita, nos dijo: "Bienvenido, estás en casa aquí en la *Casa de Pedro*. Somos una familia. Me gustaría escuchar algo de vuestras iglesias locales". Cada uno de nosotros, entonces, tomó un tema de la vida de la Iglesia en la *Provincia de San Antonio*. En primer lugar, el Arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller de la *Arquidiócesis de San Antonio* hizo una reflexión de apertura hermosa. El Obispo Kevin Farrell de nuestra vecina *Diócesis de Dallas* habló del aumento de seminaristas que estamos viviendo, y sin embargo, de la necesidad de sacerdotes para atender a la creciente población católica. El Obispo Douglas Deshotel, uno de los obispos auxiliares en Dallas, habló de las escuelas católicas, y el Obispo Oscar Cantú, obispo auxiliar de San Antonio, habló de los desafíos actuales que enfrentan el matrimonio y la vida familiar. Yo hablé sobre el importante tema del ecumenismo, reflexionando sobre todo en el trabajo de la *Provisión pastoral y ANGLICANORUM COETIBUS* y la reciente creación del *Ordinariato de la Cátedra de San Pedro* aquí en los Estados



Monseñor Kevin Vann

Unidos. Los demás obispos tomaron temas similares, por ejemplo, hablando de los retos de la inmigración que enfrenta nuestro país, y especialmente aquí en Texas. Esto realmente proveyó para nosotros un momento fuerte de comunión eclesial con el Papa Benedicto, y todos nos dimos cuenta de cuán unidos en la fe estamos con el Santo Padre, y a través de él, con toda la Iglesia Universal.

Durante los restantes días visitamos con los funcionarios de los distintos departamentos de la *Santa Sede* en el Vaticano que se llaman "dicasterios", que asisten al Papa en las responsabilidades de enseñar, gobernar, y santificar a la Iglesia Universal. Tuvimos la oportunidad de visitar dicasterios como la *Congregación para la doctrina de la fe*, la *Congregación para los obispos*, la *Congregación para los religiosos e institutos seculares*, la *Congregación para el culto divino*, la *Congregación para el clero* y otros dicasterios y consejos pontificios también. Cada uno de estos departamentos supervisa varias partes de la vida de la Iglesia Universal, que no es tarea fácil. Nos dieron una cálida bienvenida en cada dicasterio por el Prefecto, el Secretario y el Subsecretario. Ellos escucharon nuestras preguntas y preocupaciones acerca de nuestras iglesias locales, y ofrecieron reflexiones, consejos, asesoramiento y orientación. Muchos de los obispos también tuvieron la oportunidad de citas individuales con los funcionarios, para hablar de preocupaciones o problemas específicos. Nos dieron una muy cordial bienvenida. Los funcionarios de los dicasterios se mostraron muy agradecidos de escuchar sobre la vida de la Iglesia en esta parte del país, donde los desafíos son el crecimiento y expansión, tanto en número, misión y vocaciones.

Después de visitar los dicasterios, también tuvimos la oportunidad de visitar la *Villa Stritch*, que es la residencia de los sacerdotes estadounidenses que tienen la misión de trabajar en la *Santa Sede*. También celebramos la Santa Misa el domingo en la *Casa Santa María* del *Colegio norteamericano*, que es la casa de estudios

graduados, donde sacerdotes de los Estados Unidos están en residencia mientras cursan estudios de postgrado en las *Universidades pontificias*. El edificio original data del año 1500 y está a sólo una cuadra más de la *Fuente de Trevi*, en el corazón de Roma. En la actualidad el Padre Jonathan Wallis, de nuestra diócesis se encuentra en residencia allí mientras completa su STL (licenciatura en Sagrada Teología) en la *Universidad gregoriana*. Toda la visita fue coordinada por el *Colegio norteamericano*, y un agradecimiento especial a Monseñor James Checchio, el Rector, y el personal del *Colegio*, para la coordinación de estas visitas. Estaba acompañado por el Padre Isaac Orozco, nuestro nuevo *Director de vocaciones*, y nuestro *Canciller diocesano*, el Padre Dan Kelley. Tuvimos la oportunidad de visitar, no sólo con el Padre Wallis, sino de visitar también a nuestros dos seminaristas, Mateo Tatyrek y José Keating, que están completando sus estudios en Roma.

Además de todos los asuntos oficiales que tuvimos que hacer, hubo momentos personales para mí. Tuve la oportunidad de visitar a sacerdotes, religiosos y laicos en Roma e Italia, que son amigos cercanos de hace mucho tiempo. El Obispo Richard Pates de Des Moines, Iowa, y yo también pudimos almorzar en la *Angelicum* (la *Universidad de Santo Tomás de Aquino* en la ciudad) con los *Frailes dominicos* que están en la facultad. Obtuve mi J.C.D. (Doctorado en Derecho Canónico) de la *Angelicum*, ¡así que esto fue un regreso a casa para mí también!

Esta visita también fue una visita de oración y de fe, que ha sido una bendición para mí personalmente y para mi ministerio como obispo. Hemos celebrado la Misa en las cuatro basílicas mayores de Roma (*San Juan de Letrán, San Pedro, San Pablo Extramuros y Santa María la Mayor*). En *San Pedro* y *San Pablo*, estuvimos muy conscientes de orar directamente sobre o cerca de las tumbas de los Apóstoles San Pedro y San Pablo. Los obispos de la región, rezaron todos juntos el *Credo de Nicea* en la tumba de San Pedro. En el último día, se celebró la santa Misa en la tumba del Beato Juan Pablo II, que fue recientemente trasladado después de su beatificación a una de las capillas laterales en la planta principal de la *Basílica de San Pedro*. Fueron momentos no sólo de comunión eclesial, sino también de gran fe, estando muy consciente de la presencia del Señor Jesús, quien llamó a los primeros apóstoles "Ven y sígueme", y que ha llamado a cada uno de nosotros, los obispos, a compartir en el ministerio apostólico, como sucesores de los apóstoles.

Lo más importante para mí de la visita, después de haber preparado y entregado el informe *Ad Limina* o "Quinquenal" (que significa, cada cinco años) a la *Santa Sede* sobre el estado de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth*, fue la experiencia de profunda gratitud por todos los miembros de nuestra iglesia local: su vida, fe y sacrificios. Leyendo el informe, no podía sino ser muy consciente de todos aquellos cuyas vidas, fe y sacrificio constituyen el cuerpo vivo

de Cristo aquí en nuestra diócesis. Fue un gran momento el sentir personalmente responsable, sentir agradecimiento, y sentir una profunda fe, ya que este fue mi primer informe a la *Santa Sede* como *Obispo de la Diócesis de Fort Worth*. Es un reflejo de todas sus vidas, y su poderoso testimonio de la presencia de Cristo a todos en nuestra diócesis y mucho más allá también.

Dediqué el informe *Ad limina* a todos los que vinieron antes que nosotros, y me gustaría terminar con esa dedicación. Está tomado de un libro que describe la historia temprana de la vida de la Iglesia aquí en Texas. Así es como aparece la dedicatoria en la primera página del informe *Ad limina*:

### DEDICACIÓN

"La historia narrada en los capítulos anteriores no es una de las personas perfectas que siempre lo hicieron bien, sino más bien la historia de hombres y mujeres que se esforzaron, a pesar de sus debilidades y prejuicios, para dedicarse a los ideales eternos en el servicio de los demás. Con todo, la Iglesia Católica prosperó en las fronteras de Texas. A menudo pobre, sus habitantes fueron, sin embargo, un grupo lleno de entusiasmo, que tomaron en serio la fe y florecieron espiritualmente. Y esto fue debido en gran parte a la determinación de los sacerdotes, religiosos y religiosas que dirigieron la Iglesia dentro de las fronteras. Aunque no son perfectos, cuando se ven en la perspectiva de cuándo y dónde trabajaron, tienden a poner las generaciones posteriores en vergüenza".

(En el capítulo final de *Through Fire and Flood: The Catholic Church in Frontier Texas 1836-1890*, por el Padre James Talmadge Moore, *Texas A&M University Press*.)

La cita anterior también describe la fe de los primeros colonos católicos de Texas. Es a estas personas y sus descendientes que dedico las páginas de mi primer informe *Ad limina*, como obispo de Fort Worth.

¡Feliz Pascua a todos, y pido que Cristo Resucitado sea la fuente de fortaleza y alegría para ustedes y sus familias!

+ Kevin W. Vann

+ OBISPO KEVIN W. VANN, JCD, DD  
DIOCESIS DE FORT WORTH





# Noticias

## Visita apostólica a México

### Confianza en Dios para ayudar a cambiar la sociedad, pide el papa

Por Francis X. Rocca  
Catholic News Service

SILAO, México — Celebrando Misa en el corazón católico de México, el papa Benedicto XVI les pidió a un país y a un continente aquejados por la pobreza, la corrupción y la violencia, que tuvieran confianza en Dios y en la intercesión de María para ayudarles a conseguir una sociedad más justa y fraterna.

“Cuando se trata de la vida personal y comunitaria, en su dimensión más profunda, no bastarán las estrategias humanas para salvarnos”, dijo el papa en su homilía durante la Misa al aire libre en el Parque Guanajuato Bicentenario el 25 de Marzo, el segundo día completo de su segunda visita papal a América Latina. “Se ha de recurrir al único que puede dar vida en plenitud, porque Él mismo es la esencia de la vida y su autor”.

Citando el salmo responsorial de la Misa del día — “Crea en mí, Señor, un corazón puro” — el papa dijo que el mal puede ser vencido sólo a través de un cambio en el corazón humano, inspirado por Dios.

El papa hizo referencia al monumento de *Cristo Rey*, visible en lo alto de una colina cercana, y observó que “el reinado de Cristo no consiste en el poder de sus ejércitos para someter a los demás por la fuerza o la violencia. Se funda en un poder más grande que gana los corazones: el amor de Dios que él ha traído al mundo con su sacrificio y la verdad de la que ha dado testimonio”.

Ese mensaje concuerda con las



El Papa Benedicto XVI, llevando puesto un sombrero mexicano, llega a celebrar Misa en el PARQUE BICENTENARIO en Silao, Guanajuato, el 25 de Marzo.

objeciones que el papa Benedicto ha lanzado frecuentemente hacia las estrategias para el progreso social que mezclan la doctrina social cristiana con el marxismo u otras ideologías seculares.

“La Iglesia no es un poder político, no es un partido”, dijo el papa a los periodistas en su vuelo a México el 23 de marzo. “Es una realidad moral, un poder moral”.

En su homilía en Silao, el papa no abordó específicamente ninguno de los problemas sociales actuales de América Latina, pero después de rezar el *Ángelus* al término de la Misa, recitó una letanía de males que aquejan a México y a otros países de la región: “tantas familias se encuentran divididas o forzadas a la migración... muchas padecen a causa de la pobreza, la corrupción, la violencia doméstica,

el narcotráfico, la crisis de valores, o la criminalidad”.

Hablando en el estado de Guanajuato — en el centro de México, que fue un baluarte de la Rebelión Cristera de 1920 contra un régimen estatal anticlerical — el papa Benedicto recitó la invocación que sirvió a los Cristeros como grito de guerra: “Viva Cristo Rey y María de Guadalupe”.

Pero reafirmando su mensaje de no-violencia, el papa rogó que la influencia de María promueva “la fraternidad, evitando la inútil venganza y desterrando el odio que divide”.

Los candidatos presidenciales de los tres principales partidos políticos de México asistieron a la Misa, junto al presidente Felipe Calderón y su familia.

El Vaticano dijo que 640.000 personas asistieron a la Misa. Algunos mexicanos hicieron un largo viaje para poder ver al papa Benedicto en su primer viaje al país desde que fue elegido, en 2005.

La jornada no fue fácil para muchos de ellos. Miles de fieles caminaron más de tres millas desde los estacionamientos en la ciudad de Silao, a 220 millas del noroeste de la Ciudad de México.

### Senado mexicano aprueba cláusulas de libertad religiosa

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (CNS) — El senado mexicano aprobó por margen estrecho una cláusula constitucional proveyendo “libertad de religión”, días después que el papa Benedicto XVI terminara una visita al país, marcada por un derrame de entusiasmo y afecto.

El senado aprobó, el 29 de marzo, cambios al artículo 24 de la constitución mexicana, garantizando la libertad de religión, y haciendo posible levantar las restricciones a grupos religiosos de celebrar servicios fuera de iglesias autorizadas, sin primero procurar permiso gubernamental. Temprano ese día, el senado aprobó cambios al artículo 40 de la constitución, incluyendo la palabra “secular” como una de las descripciones del estado mexicano.

La Conferencia episcopal mexicana acogió los cambios, diciendo en un comunicado del 29 de marzo, que con las reformas,

“Esto no es nada difícil,” bromeaba José Trinidad Borja, de 81 años, un propietario jubilado de una ferretería de Querétaro, que se jacta de haber participado en el peregrinaje anual de ocho días a la *Basilica de Guadalupe*, de la Ciudad de México durante 65 años seguidos.

Un ejército de vendedores servía agua, café, y tamales a lo largo de la ruta, además de banderas vaticanas y fotos del papa Benedicto y su predecesor, el beato Juan Pablo II quien, con sus cinco visitas, se convirtió en uno de los personajes más amados en este país oficialmente laico.

La noche anterior, tras comparecer brevemente ante una multitud en la plaza principal de Guanajuato, el papa Benedicto saludó privadamente a un grupo que incluía a ocho personas que han perdido a familiares por la violencia, en buena parte relacionada con la droga, que ha matado a casi 50.000 mexicanos durante los últimos cinco años.

Dirigiéndose especialmente a los niños del lugar, el papa pidió “proteger y cuidar a los niños, para que nunca se apague su sonrisa, puedan vivir en paz y mirar al futuro con confianza”.

David Agren contribuyó a esta noticia.

## Jesus Sana Mi Matrimonio

Te invitamos a ti y a tu pareja para que Jesús Sane tu Matrimonio

Costo \$30 por pareja  
(Incluye desayuno y lonche)

SABADO 5 DE MAYO (8AM-4PM)  
DOMINGO 6 DE MAYO (8AM-5:30PM)

Miguel Aquino



Padre Pedro Muñoz

Hnos. Carlos y Lupita



Dirección: 481  
Wildwood Ln. Grapevine, TX

NO HABRA  
CUIDADO DE NIÑOS

“Porque yo se muy bien lo que haré por ustedes; les quiero dar paz y no desgracia y un porvenir lleno de esperanza. Cuando me invoquen y vengán a suplicarme, yo los escucharé. Jeremias 29:11-12

PARA MAYOR INFORMACION:

Ricardo y Marce 817-247-9645 • Ricardo y Itzy 682-554-9592 • Victor y Nubia 817-692-6972



# Noticias

## Visita apostólica a Cuba

### El papa reconoce las dificultades de los cubanos y que la libertad es una necesidad

Por Francis X. Rocca  
Catholic News Service

SANTIAGO DE CUBA, Cuba — Celebrando una Misa al aire libre en su primer día en Cuba, el papa Benedicto XVI reconoció las dificultades que atraviesan los católicos de este país tras medio siglo de comunismo, y describió la libertad humana como una necesidad tanto para la salvación como para alcanzar la justicia social.

El papa habló el 26 de Marzo en la Plaza de la revolución Antonio Maceo, en la segunda ciudad más grande de Cuba. Había llegado al país unas horas antes, tras pasar tres días en México.

El Vaticano dijo que en la plaza cabían unas 200.000 personas y estaba llena; varios miles tuvieron que ocupar las calles que llevaban a la plaza. El presidente de Cuba, Raúl Castro, que había recibido al papa en el aeropuerto, se sentó en primera fila para la Misa.

Decenas de miles de asistentes iban vestidos con una camiseta blanca, dando la bienvenida al papa como “peregrino de la caridad”; muchos de ellos también llevaban una gorra de béisbol para protegerse del tórrido sol.

Antes de que el papa llegara a bordo del papamóvil, la estatua original de *Nuestra Señora de la Caridad del Cobre*, patrona de Cuba, fue conducida en lo alto de un furgón blanco, entre

los vítores de la gente. La estatua fue después entronizada junto al altar.

En su homilía, el papa Benedicto reconoció el “esfuerzo, audacia, y abnegación” de los católicos cubanos “en las circunstancias concretas de su país, y en este tiempo de la historia”. A pesar de que ahora es más tolerante con la práctica religiosa que en décadas anteriores, el estado comunista sigue impidiendo la construcción de nuevas iglesias y limita estrictamente el acceso de la Iglesia católica a los medios de comunicación estatales.

En una posible alusión a las informaciones que afirman que el régimen impidió a opositores políticos asistir a la Misa, el papa Benedicto extendió su habitual mención a quienes estuvieron ausentes por razones de edad o salud, e incluyó a aquellas personas que “por otros motivos no han podido estar aquí con nosotros”.

Antes de la llegada del papa, un hombre en la multitud gritó un slogan anti-comunista y se lo llevaron de inmediato.

El papa pintó un cuadro grave de lo que puede llegar a ser una sociedad sin fe.

“Cuando Dios es arrojado fuera, el mundo se convierte en un lugar inhóspito para el hombre”, dijo. “Apartarse de Dios nos aleja de nosotros mismos y nos precipita en

el vacío”.

“La obediencia en la fe es la verdadera libertad, la auténtica redención”, señaló. “La redención es siempre este proceso de llevar la voluntad humana a la plena comunión con la voluntad divina”.

Tomando el tema de la fiesta litúrgica del día de la Anunciación, cuando María supo que iba a concebir al Hijo de Dios, el papa remarcó que el cumplimiento del plan divino implicaba que María aceptara libremente su papel.

“Nuestro Dios, al entrar en el mundo, ha querido contar con el consentimiento libre de una criatura suya”, dijo el papa Benedicto. “Resulta conmovedor ver cómo Dios no sólo respeta la libertad humana, sino que parece necesitarla”.

El consejo más concreto en la homilía del papa se refirió a un asunto conocido por sus seguidores en los prósperos países capitalistas de la Europa Occidental y Norteamérica: la santidad de la “familia fundada en el matrimonio” como “célula fundamental de la sociedad y verdadera Iglesia doméstica”.

“Ustedes, queridos esposos, han de ser, de modo especial para sus hijos, signo real y visible del amor de Cristo por la Iglesia”, dijo el papa Benedicto. “Cuba tiene necesidad del testimonio



Foto por CNS / L'Osservatore Romano

El Papa Benedicto XVI reza frente a la estatua de *NUESTRA SEÑORA DE LA CARIDAD DEL COBRE*, en la iglesia dedicada a ella en El Cobre, Cuba, el 27 de marzo. El papa llegó al santuario como un peregrino, uniéndose a miles de personas que han visitado la ermita para marcar el 400 aniversario del descubrimiento de la estatua.

de su fidelidad, de su unidad, de su capacidad de acoger la vida humana, especialmente la más indefensa y necesitada”.

Según el *Centro de estudios demográficos* de la *Universidad de la Habana*, la tasa de divorcio en Cuba se ha casi triplicado en cuatro décadas, aumentando de 22 divorcios por cada 100 matrimonios en 1970, a 64 en 2009. El parlamento del país tiene previsto contemplar, antes de finales de año, el reconocimiento legal al matrimonio entre personas del mismo sexo, en respuesta a una campaña liderada por Mariela Castro, hija del presidente Raúl Castro.

A pesar de sus desafíos a la sociedad cubana, el papa Benedicto concluyó su homilía repitiendo una petición anterior de paciencia hacia

la política de diálogo, y cooperación de la Iglesia Católica con el régimen comunista, un proceso iniciado por el beato Juan Pablo II en su visita a Cuba en 1998.

“Aceptemos con paciencia y fe cualquier contrariedad o aflicción”, dijo el papa. “Con las armas de la paz, el perdón, y la comprensión, luchan para construir una sociedad abierta y renovada, una sociedad mejor, más digna del hombre, que refleje más la bondad de Dios”.

Después de la misa, el papa rindió homenaje a *Nuestra Señora de la Caridad*, colocando al pie de la imagen una rosa de oro, que pesa más de una libra y mide casi un pie de alto.

Cindy Wooden contribuyó a esta noticia desde la Habana.

## Se exhorta a los católicos a que se resistan contra leyes injustas y a que participen en 'una quincena de libertad'

Por Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Los católicos de los Estados Unidos deben resistirse en contra de leyes injustas “como deber cívico y obligación de fe”, se dijo en una declaración sobre la libertad religiosa, emanada de un comité de los obispos de los Estados Unidos.

En la declaración, contenida en un escrito de 12 páginas redactado por un comité ad hoc, formado con propósito de defender la libertad religiosa, se hacía también un llamado a guardar “una quincena de libertad” que iría del 21 de junio, vigilia de la fiesta de *San Juan Fishery Santo Tomás More*, hasta el 4 de julio, *Día de la independencia de los Estados Unidos*.

Y se invitaba a dos semanas de oración, estudio, catequesis y acción pública en todas las diócesis

y parroquias.

El documento, que salió a luz pública el 12 de abril, había sido aprobado por el *Comité administrativo de la Conferencia de obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos, USCCB*, durante su reunión del mes de marzo para su publicación, como declaración oficial del comité.

En la declaración se ofrecían varios ejemplos de lo que se describía como amenazas recientes en contra de la libertad religiosa, afirmando que “esto no es una disputa teológica o legal vacía de consecuencias reales en nuestro mundo”.

Primero se citaba la ordenanza impuesta por el *Departamento de salud y servicios humanos*, mediante la cual se obligaba a incluir en la mayoría de planes de salud la práctica de la esterilización, la contracepción, y el uso de algunas drogas que inducen

el aborto; todo, en forma gratuita, incluso si el empleado en cuestión se opusiera a tales servicios por seguir la moral en conciencia.

Y entre otros ejemplos en los que claramente se ven “que la libertad religiosa está sometida a ataques”, los obispos mencionaban en su declaración los siguientes puntos:

- Leyes de inmigración en Alabama y otros estados del país que “prohíben lo que el gobierno tilda de ‘encubrimiento’ a favor de inmigrantes indocumentados y que la Iglesia, por el contrario, llama caridad cristiana y cuidado pastoral a favor de esos inmigrantes”.

- Intento de la *Legislatura del estado de Connecticut*, en el año 2009, de reestructurar las parroquias católicas.

- Discriminación en contra de estudiantes católicos en recintos universitarios.

- Acciones por parte del gobierno local en Boston, San Francisco, el

Distrito de Columbia y el estado de Illinois que “han corrido a *Catholic Charities* de actividades mediante las cuales se buscaba la adopción de menores, o servicios de familias subrogadas”, con el pretexto de que las agencias católicas se negaron a destinar a menores a que vivieran con parejas formadas de dos personas del mismo sexo o parejas normales — de hombre y mujer — pero que no estaban casados.

- Una ordenanza de la *Ciudad de Nueva York* que les prohíbe a las

congregaciones de iglesias pequeñas que renten espacio en escuelas públicas, los fines de semana, para servicios de culto, concediéndoles ese privilegio de renta a grupos que no estén afiliados a ninguna religión.

- Cambios en contratos federales sobre asignaciones en operaciones en contra de tráfico con humanos, en los que les exigen a las agencias católicas “que envíen a las personas necesitadas a que reciban contraceptivos y/o servicios de aborto, en violación de las enseñanzas católicas”.

#### 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](mailto: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 Stephen Berg.

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

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



# Events Calendar

Around the Diocese and region

## May Dates

### 4-5

#### ST. MARK'S 'FUND' FESTIVAL

Friday, 6:30 to 10 p.m. adults only dinner; Saturday, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. family festival - St. Mark Church, 2800 Pennsylvania, Denton. For information, e-mail [smfundfestival@gmail.com](mailto:smfundfestival@gmail.com) or visit the parish website at [www.stmarkdenton.org](http://www.stmarkdenton.org), or contact the parish office at (940) 387-6223.

### 4

#### AN EVENING OF PRAYER & SHARING WITH THE SISTERS OF ST. MARY OF NAMUR

4 to 7:30 p.m. - Our Lady of Victory Center, 909 West Shaw, Fort Worth. For information, contact Sister Yolanda Cruz at (817) 923-3091 or [sycruz@sbcglobal.net](mailto:sycruz@sbcglobal.net).

### 5

#### CALIX SUPPORT GROUP

10 a.m. - A monthly support meeting for Catholics who are alcoholic and those struggling with addiction and seeking recovery. Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth. For information, contact Deacon Joe Milligan at (817) 431-5369.

#### LET'S TALK CHASTITY - GABRIEL PROJECT WORKSHOP

1:30 to 3:30 p.m. - St. Rita Church, 5550 E. Lancaster Ave., Fort Worth. For information, contact Debra Heron at (800) 545-5935.

### 6

#### KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS PRO-LIFE CHARITY DISC GOLF PICNIC

8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. - Turner Park, 699 SE 8th St. (N. Beltline), Grand Prairie. For information, visit the diocesan website calendar page at [www.fwdioc.org](http://www.fwdioc.org), or contact Dan Norman at (817) 419-8227.

### 8

#### AUXILIARY TO THE DISCALCED CARMELITE NUNS MEMBERSHIP LUNCHEON

11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. - Rolling Hills Country Club, 401 E. Lamar, Arlington. For information and reservations, contact Sandy Fallon at (817) 893-0083.

#### WOMEN'S MONTHLY DISCERNMENT: SINGLE WOMEN, 16-50

6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Father Isaac Orozco at (817) 560-3300.

#### LECTURE AND INFORMATION SESSION: INSTITUTE FOR PASTORAL THEOLOGY

7 to 8:30 p.m. - Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth. For information, contact Lucas Pollice at (817) 560-2452 ext. 260 or [lpollice@fwdioc.org](mailto:lpollice@fwdioc.org)

### 11-13

#### RACHEL'S VINEYARD WEEKEND RETREAT

A weekend retreat for healing following an abortion. For information, contact Betsy Kopor at (817) 923-4757. All information is kept confidential.

### 12

#### RESPECT LIFE PARISH COORDINATORS' QUARTERLY MEETING

10 to 11:30 a.m. - The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth. For information, contact Chanacee Ruth-Killgore at (817) 560-2452 ext. 257.

### 14

#### MEN'S MONTHLY DISCERNMENT: SINGLE MEN, 16-50

6 to 9 p.m. - St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Father Isaac Orozco at (817) 560-3300.

### 17

#### DCCW QUARTERLY LUNCHEON MEETING

9:30 a.m. - St. Jude Parish, 500 E. Dallas, Mansfield. For information, contact Kathy Thome at (817) 236-8518.

### 19

#### MAGNIFICAT PRAYER BREAKFAST

9 a.m. to noon - Hilton Garden Inn, 785 State Highway 121, Lewisville. For information, contact Nanci Ferri at (817) 498-7980.

### 23

#### WORKSHOP - 'LUMEN GENTIUM' (PART 2 OF 4)

10 a.m. to noon - Mount Carmel Center, 4600 W. Davis St., Dallas. For information, call (214) 331-6224.

### 24

#### FORT WORTH DIOCESAN MINISTRY WITH LESBIAN AND GAY CATHOLICS, OTHER SEXUAL MINORITIES, FAMILIES, FRIENDS

7 p.m. - Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Dorene Rose at (817) 329-7370 or Rita and Ron Clegg at (817) 795-9747.

### 26

#### WORKSHOP - 'LUMEN GENTIUM' (PART 2 OF 4)

10 a.m. to noon - Mount Carmel Center, 4600 W. Davis St., Dallas. For information, call (214) 331-6224.

## June Dates

### 1

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### 2

#### CALIX SUPPORT GROUP

10 a.m. - A monthly support meeting for Catholics who are alcoholic and those struggling with addiction and seeking recovery. Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth. For information, contact Deacon Joe Milligan at (817) 431-5369.

### 9-10

#### GABRIEL PROJECT ANGEL TRAINING

Saturday, 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; Sunday, 12:30 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. (includes Mass at 6 p.m.) - St. Mary the Virgin Church, 1408 N. Davis Dr., Arlington. For information, contact Mary Stroupe at (940) 464-3224.

### 11

#### MEN'S MONTHLY DISCERNMENT: SINGLE MEN, 16-50

6 to 9 p.m. - St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Father Isaac Orozco at (817) 560-3300.

### 12

#### WOMEN'S MONTHLY DISCERNMENT: SINGLE WOMEN, 16-50

6 p.m. to 9 p.m. - St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Father Isaac Orozco at (817) 560-3300.

### 28

#### FORT WORTH DIOCESAN MINISTRY WITH LESBIAN AND GAY CATHOLICS, OTHER SEXUAL MINORITIES, FAMILIES, FRIENDS

7 p.m. - Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Dorene Rose at (817) 329-7370 or Rita and Ron Clegg at (817) 795-9747.

### 29-1

#### PRO-LIFE BOOT CAMP SESSION 1

High school students ages 14-18. For information, contact Sue Laux at (817) 939-8595.

Courage, a support group for persons with same-sex attraction living chastely according to Catholic Spirituality meets twice monthly in the DFW area. Father James Gigliotti, TOR, of the Diocese of Fort Worth, serves as Spiritual Director. For more information, call (972) 938-LIFE (5433) or e-mail [CourageDFW@Catholic.org](mailto:CourageDFW@Catholic.org) or visit the national Courage website at [www.CourageRC.net](http://www.CourageRC.net).

## Classifieds

#### Youth Minister

Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Wichita Falls, a parish of over 1,200 families, is looking for a full-time youth minister to develop, coordinate and implement a holistic youth ministry. Degree in religious education or certificate in youth ministry with some experience preferred. Candidate must exercise personal initiative, the ability to work in collaboration with other staff and youth ministry team, and possess excellent organizational skills. Candidate must be a prayerful, practicing Catholic, who works well with parents, has a genuine love for teens, and possesses excellent relational and communication skills. Application deadline is May 31. Send résumé to Fr. Sojan George, Our Lady Queen of Peace, 4040 York St., Wichita Falls, Texas 76309, or to [sojangeorge520@hotmail.com](mailto:sojangeorge520@hotmail.com).

#### Business Manager

The Catholic Communities of Wise and Jack Counties need a full-time business manager to work in their central office at Bridgeport. Applicant must be Roman Catholic and have three years experience in business management or accounting. Bilingual with college degree is preferred. For an application and complete job description, call (940) 683-2743 or e-mail [stjhns76426@embarqmail.com](mailto:stjhns76426@embarqmail.com).

#### Director of Religious Education

Holy Name Parish seeks a new director of religious education. Requirements include: organizational skills, interpersonal skills, and knowledge of the Church's life and practices to inspire and teach so that everyone in the parish experiences the rich depth and impact of the Church's solemn teaching in how they worship, evangelize, grow as disciples throughout life, and live as grateful stewards. In this position, the DRE will oversee the religious education of youth, the formation of youth program (6th-12th grade), campus ministry, and assist the pastor with adult formation and RCIA. The role description, explaining this full-time position and the qualifications, is available from the parish office during regular business hours. Interested applicants should contact the office at (405) 224-6068. Please submit a résumé and letters of recommendation/references to PO Box 748, Chickasha, OK 73023, by May 15. Qualified applicants will be contacted later.

#### Home Healthcare Needed

Weekend home healthcare needed for elderly man; light housekeeping, cooking. Please contact Catherine at (817) 602-8854 or [cathmac57@aol.com](mailto:cathmac57@aol.com).

#### Christian Caregiver

Christian Caregiver; excellent references; 12 years experience; (817) 713-7353

#### General Construction Services

General construction work/repairs inside and out including topsoil, sand, gravel, washed materials, driveways, concrete, backhoe, and tractor services. Custom mowing lots and acres. Call (817) 732-4083.



## Good Newsmaker

# From Refugee to Public Servant:

*Tarrant County Commissioner Andy Nguyen's faith strengthened him during his journey from Vietnam to Texas, and inspired him to give back through public service*

By Jerry Circelli  
Correspondent

Few elected officials in the United States appreciate living in one nation under God in quite the same way as Andy Nguyen. Born in South Vietnam in 1966, Nguyen saw his country overrun by communist forces that abruptly put an end to all basic freedoms. Only a near-death struggle for survival, a fight against all odds, and unshakable Catholic faith eventually led the way to newfound liberty.

Now an American citizen living in Arlington, Nguyen's experiences as a refugee taught him that anything is possible through perseverance.

It was that conviction that gave Nguyen the confidence to throw his hat in the ring in an election for Tarrant County Commissioner a few years ago. An unlikely political contender, Nguyen was not given much of a chance to win a race against a 20-year incumbent. But he proved the experts wrong. Early last year, Nguyen was sworn in as the first Asian-American elected to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court. It was the latest destination in a journey that began more than 30 years ago in the South China Sea.



Photo by Jerry Circelli / North Texas Catholic

*A devout Catholic, Andy Nguyen became the first Asian-American elected to the Tarrant County Commissioners Court, the general governing body of Tarrant County. He was elected from Precinct 2, in Southeast Tarrant County, and serves with a county judge and three other commissioners.*

### Losing freedom and a father

After the April 30, 1975, fall of South Vietnam to communists from the north, events unfolded rapidly at Nguyen's home in Vung Tau, about 40 miles from Saigon. The 8-year-old lived there with his parents and seven siblings. It was the middle of the night when communist soldiers stormed into their home and dragged Nguyen's father off to prison at gunpoint.

"They called it a 're-educational camp,'" Nguyen said. "But really it was a hard-labor camp. It was a prison."

The father of eight was held there for three years and his family faced enormous challenges in his absence.

"We experienced total starvation," Nguyen said. "But we learned to survive. We ate off the land. We basically ate weeds and whatever we could find."

In 1978, Nguyen's father was released, only to be arrested again after trying to leave the country with his family. He was then imprisoned for another three years.

While the family's fate seemed hopeless, two of

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