

North Texas Catholic

NEWSMAGAZINE

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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Vincentian works of charity flow from their spirituality



The elements of bread and wine and the sacramentary await their use in the Mass at which the SVDP installed new national officers at St. Francis of Assisi in Grapevine, Sept. 3. Bishop Kevin Vann presided at the Mass.

BELOW: The third edition of the Roman Missal which will go into use in the U.S. Nov. 27, the first Sunday of Advent (CNS photo/Gregory A. Shemitz)

Ralph Hassel, National Vice President of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul for the South Central Region, including Texas, New Mexico, Louisiana, and Arkansas, presents a workshop titled "Our Conference Life" at the Saturday Sept. 3 session of the SVDP National Meeting at the Gaylord Texan in Grapevine. Hassel has been a leader in the Society in our diocese for 18 years. He was re-elected to a second six-year term as National Vice President for the South Central Region.



Keynote speaker Philip DeVol outlined an approach to coordinating work with the poor among the various agencies and programs that serve them, and listening to the poor themselves to learn from them.



SVDP National Meeting helps leaders learn how to better serve the poor

Story by Michele Baker
Photos by Donna Ryckaert

More than 600 members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul — including one member who travelled from Australia — participated in the society's 2011 Annual Meeting Aug. 31 to Sept. 3. Held at the Gaylord Texan Resort and Convention Center in Grapevine.

The event was hosted by The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Diocesan Council of Dallas.

True to its title, the National Meeting began with a series of meetings: for executive directors, spiritual advisors, and national and regional committee members. Yet by the time keynote speaker Philip DeVol took the podium Thursday morning, the mission behind the meetings emerged. Though not a Vincentian himself, DeVol — an author, consultant, and something of an expert on poverty issues — has ideas about working with those who live in poverty that certainly

resonate with the Society's ministry.

"One of the most important things I learned while growing up in India with parents who were medical missionaries," DeVol explained, "is that our mission requires that we be completely engaged and involved with the people we serve."

DeVol practices what he preaches as a consultant on poverty issues. He's written several books about the topic, most notably his 1997 volume *Bridges Out of Poverty: Strategies for Professionals and Communities* the basic

The Mass: Source of strength for daily life

By María de Lourdes Ruiz Scaperlanda

Catholics believe that in the celebration of the Mass, they join the sacrifice of everyday life to the sacrifice of Christ, says Msgr. Joseph DeGrocco, Professor of Liturgy at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York. "The offering and self-emptying we do at Mass, in union with Christ, is the offering and self-emptying we are supposed to be living every moment of every day — that is

Our Shepherd Speaks

Catholic Social Teaching calls us to work toward civilization of love, dignity for all

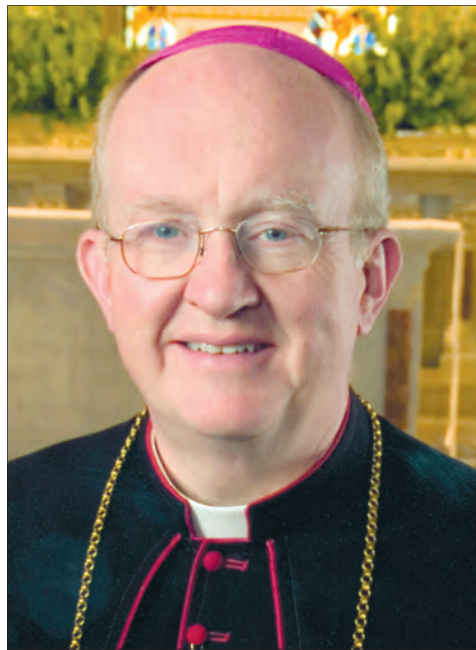
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

In the month of September, the Diocese of Fort Worth has been blessed to host the national conventions of two important organizations that do vital work in the area of Catholic Social Teaching. First, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul held their national conference in Grapevine Aug. 31 through Sept. 3.

In my years of priestly ministry, and now as the Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, I have always greatly valued the work of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul. When I was a student at Kenrick Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, I learned much about the heritage and life of St. Vincent de Paul, and the Vincentian family (including Frederick Ozanam and the Society of St. Vincent de Paul) from the priests of the Congregation of the Mission and the Daughters of Charity. That was an important part of my formation that is with me to this day. I have an icon both of St. Vincent de Paul and St. Louise De Marillac in my chapel in the Cathedral Rectory here in Fort Worth.

The Society is a true witness to the mission of the Church to reach out to those who are in need and to do so with the compassion and love of Jesus himself. Through their work the Society of St. Vincent de Paul helps to make the life and spirit of St. Vincent continue to be alive in our world today. I want to thank the Society for their invaluable work in the life of the Church and know that your compassionate work is truly making a difference in many lives throughout the United States and beyond.

I am also very pleased that the Diocese of Fort Worth has hosted Catholic Charities USA's annual Gathering and Poverty Summit "Think and Act Anew" held here in Fort Worth from Sept. 18 to 21. This gathering of participants from across the country offered us the opportunity to renew and refine our own efforts as we address and assist those who are suffering from poverty and to affirm our solidarity with those doing this important work of the Church across the country. Catholic Charities throughout the United States has done and continues to do incredible work in providing both the corporal and spiritual works of mercy to the



Bishop Kevin Vann

poor and those in need in a wide variety of areas and circumstances. Catholic Charities in many ways has been the backbone of the Church's efforts to be a continuous presence to the poor, and, as Blessed Pope John Paul II so often called for, has engaged in the building of a true civilization of love. Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, also highlighted the importance of the work of organizations like Catholic Charities:

Whoever loves Christ loves the Church, and desires the Church to be increasingly the image and instrument of the love which flows from Christ. The personnel of every Catholic charitable organization want to work with the Church and therefore with the Bishop, so that the love of God can spread throughout the world. By their sharing in the Church's practice of love, they wish to be witnesses of God and of Christ, and they wish for this very reason freely to do good to all. (33)

I know firsthand that the presence of Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Fort Worth continues to be an instrument of mercy and hope to thousands each year. I am grateful for their work and presence here in the Diocese and all across the country. Thank you to Heather Reynolds and all of her staff and board members for all that they do, and for the work that was entailed in hosting Catholic Charities USA here in Fort Worth. This has been an honor for us. It was an honor having them with us, and especially to have welcomed so many involved in living the Church's social teaching. A special thanks also to Father Larry Snyder, director

of Catholic Charities USA.

All of this serves to remind us of the richness of the Church's social teaching, which has its foundation in the dignity of each and every human person. The Church has always been, from her beginning, concerned with the dignity of the human person as created in the image and likeness of God, and the Church exists to see that this dignity is promoted, protected, and served at all times and in all circumstances. Catholic Social Teaching has developed from the 2,000 year teaching Tradition of the Church, but has been more explicitly developed over the past 120 years especially by the Papal Magisterium. The first social encyclical *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII in 1891 was a foundational document in the history of the Church's social teaching and primarily addressed the rights of workers during the peak of the industrial revolution. The popes of the twentieth century have continued to draw from the richness of Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition to expound upon the Church's social teachings and apply them to the present day economic and societal issues faced by modern man. There are a number of great social encyclicals written by most of the Popes of the twentieth century, many of them on specific anniversaries of the promulgation of *Rerum Novarum*. The most recently issued social encyclical was *Caritas in Veritate* or *Love in Truth* by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009.

As developed by the modern popes, these social teachings provide guidelines and criteria to be used in the varying times, circumstances, and situations in which the dignity of the human person may be threatened or diminished. These guidelines are to be used so that true justice and peace may be established by a proper ordering of the state, the family, and the rights of persons. Catholic Social Teaching calls all of us to work to establish a civilization of love in which the dignity of every person is promoted and protected, and teaches that all of us, as members of the Body of Christ, the Church, are called upon to follow the example of the Good Samaritan and respond to the suffering of others and to unleash the love of Christ. As Blessed Pope John Paul II teaches:

Following the parable of the Gospel, we could say that suffering, which is present under so many different forms in our human world, is also present in order to unleash love in the human person, that unselfish gift of one's "I" on behalf of other people, especially those who suffer. The world of human suffering

unceasingly calls for, so to speak, another world: the world of human love; and in a certain sense man owes to suffering that unselfish love which stirs in his heart and actions. The person who is a "neighbor" cannot indifferently pass by the suffering of another: this in the name of fundamental human solidarity, still more in the name of love of neighbor. He must "stop", "sympathize", just like the Samaritan of the Gospel parable. The parable in itself expresses a deeply Christian truth, but one that at the same time is very universally human. It is not without reason that, also in ordinary speech, any activity on behalf of the suffering and needy is called "Good Samaritan" work.

— *On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering, Salvifici Doloris, 29*

I encourage all to take some time to study the Church's social teaching as presented in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* as well as some of the more recent papal social encyclicals. The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace has also published the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* which is another excellent resource to study Catholic social teaching. This resource can be purchased through USCCB publishing at www.usccbpublishing.org.

Finally, I also wanted to take this opportunity to reflect upon the tenth anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terror attacks. As we have once again watched the horror that unfolded upon that terrible day, we need to pray for the many who died that day and that healing, faith, and forgiveness may continue in their families and loved ones. We also need to continue to remember with great gratitude and love the fallen heroes of that day: the firefighters, police, and other brave responders who gave the ultimate sacrifice in helping others to safety. They truly lived out the words of our Lord, "No one has greater love than this, to lay down his life for one's friends" (*John 15:13*). I would like to conclude with the words of Blessed Pope John Paul II from his General Audience of September 12, 2001, the day after the attack on our country, for our prayerful reflection as we again remember the events of September 11, 2001:

Yesterday was a dark day in the history of humanity, a terrible affront to human dignity. After receiving the news, I followed with intense concern the developing situation, with heartfelt prayers to the Lord. How is it possible to

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So that's what rain is like...

We have been waiting a long time, expectantly, for rain, for clouds in the sky and cool breezes. They seem to be on their way as we prepare this issue. Many of our neighbors have suffered, lost cattle, crops and hay, even their homes. The absence of water in this drought is a reminder of what our lives would be like without the presence of God with us. Without his love, our lives would be as scorched and barren as the browning fields and dry creek beds that cover our state right now.

But several of the stories in this issue, will bring you spiritual refreshment, like a taste of cool spring waters, flowing waters.

You've already noticed, no doubt, Sister Mary Clare Bezner's vocation story on the back page, detailing how she came to be a newly vowed Olivetan Benedictine nun after hearing God's call. But you may not have seen the story of how Michael Strong, a Nolan graduate who grew up in Holy Family Parish on Fort Worth's West Side, and then attended and graduated from the University of Dallas came to his vocational decision, leading to his ordination as a Cistercian priest. He was ordained as Father Ambrose on Aug. 19 at Cistercian Abbey in Irving. His story is on **Page 33**.

The reputation of the University of Dallas is growing at a rate to match the

school's excellence and solid grounding in the Catholic faith. Joan Gillen's articles about UD's Rome Campus, its new pastoral ministry undergraduate degree, and the upcoming University of Dallas Ministry Conference round out the introduction to its history and vision for the future offered by UD President Thomas Keefe. That all begins on **Page 20**.

And Texas isn't the only place that's been ridiculously hot this year. Joan Gillen brings us an account of the trials of some of our World Youth Day pilgrims in Madrid. Though many of them suffered in the extreme heat, experiencing dehydration and illness, they also learned much through the shared sacrifice and mutual support that got them through. That article is on **Page 26**.

The **Bishop's Blog** at www.fwdioc.org brings us up to date on the arrival of new religious orders in the diocese, the visit of a Burmese bishop and the convening of our community of 300 Burmese Catholics, and the celebration of the restoration of the beautiful St. Peter's Church in Lindsay. And you can always get more news — including new video from Catholic News Service from the NTC at www.fwdioc.org/ntc.

Jeff Hensley
Editor

commit acts of such savage cruelty? The human heart has depths from which schemes of unheard-of ferocity sometimes emerge, capable of destroying in a moment the normal daily life of a people. But faith comes to our aid at these times when words seem to fail. Christ's word is the only one that can give a response to the questions which trouble our spirit. Even if the forces of darkness appear to prevail, those who believe in God know that evil and death do not have the final say. Christian hope is based on this truth; at this time our prayerful trust draws strength from it.

+ Kevin W. Vann

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



NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC

PUBLISHER: Bishop Kevin W. Vann

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS: Pat Svacina

EDITOR: Jeff Hensley

ASSOCIATE EDITOR: Tony Gutiérrez

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT: Judy Rousseau

WEB DESIGNER: Chris Kastner

CIRCULATION: Rita Garber

REGULAR COLUMNISTS:

Jean Denton
Kathy Cribari Hamer
Jeff Hedglen
Jeff Hensley
David Mills
Mary Regina Morrell
Sharon K. Perkins
Lucas Pollice
Father John Rausch
Father Kyle Walterscheid

Contributors:

Michele Baker
John English
Juan Guajardo
Kathy Cribari Hamer
Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Donna Ryckaert
Kristen Zwiesche

Editorial Office: 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, Texas 76108, (817) 560-3300; FAX (817) 244-8839.
Circulation Office: Rita Garber, 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, Texas 76108, (817) 560-3300.

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Ella's effects go beyond contraception to abortion, experts say

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In marketing materials for ella, the emergency contraception pill that will be available without co-pay or deductible to American women of child-bearing age under the new health reform plan, a cartoon character egg peeks out from behind a glass door while a cartoon character sperm stands on the steps, apparently cajoling her to come outside.

"I can't come out for five days," the egg tells the sperm. The ad goes on to tout the drug's "power to help keep these two apart" and says ella, known generically as ulipristal acetate, "provides extra time for extra pregnancy prevention."

But that's not all it does. "Ella may also work by preventing attachment to the uterus," say the materials distributed by Watson Pharma Inc. of Morristown, N.J., which sells ella.

It is that effect of preventing the fertilized egg from attaching to the uterine wall that can make ella an abortifacient and has led the U.S. Catholic bishops and others to criticize the Department of Health and Human Services' decision to include it among the preventive services for women that nearly every health plan in the United States will be required to cover.

"No emergency contraception would work very well if it only worked to prevent ovulation," said Dr. Kathleen Raviele, a gynecologist in private practice in the Atlanta area. "It has to have other effects."

Like the abortion pill RU-486, ella operates as a progesterone antagonist. A rise in a woman's levels of the hormone progesterone, called an LH surge, is necessary before ovulation — the release of the woman's egg — can occur, but ella keeps the levels down to prevent ovulation.

Because progesterone also plays an essential role in maintaining a pregnancy, ella can have "an adverse effect on the embryo as it tries to implant or after it has implanted," said Raviele, a past president of the Catholic Medical Association who serves on the board of the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians & Gynecologists.

She likened the process to a car that "might look pretty sitting in your driveway, but isn't going anywhere without the key." In her analogy, progesterone is the key that is needed for ovulation, but a drug like ella "keeps

you from putting the key in the ignition," Raviele said.

And if ovulation has already occurred before the drug is taken and the fertilized egg is already traveling down the fallopian tubes or has already reached the uterus, it's as if the car has started and "you can take it wherever you want to go" but then the electrical system fails, she said.

"The car comes to a halt," just like ella "makes the process of ovulation to implantation come to a halt" by making the lining of the uterus a hostile environment for a pregnancy.

The American Congress of Obstetricians and Gynecologists says an abortion occurs "when the fetus is expelled from a woman's uterus." It defines a fetus as "the developing offspring in the uterus from the ninth week of pregnancy until the end of pregnancy" and says the earlier, embryonic stage of life goes "from the time it implants in the uterus up to eight completed weeks of pregnancy."

But Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, noted that the "Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services" state that abortion includes "the interval between conception and implantation of the embryo" so a drug is an abortifacient "even if it only interferes with the embryo's survival prior to the completion of implantation."

He said some have accused the bishops of exaggerating ella's effects or using "scare tactics" against it. But "sometimes it is reality itself that is scary," he said.

"To be quite frank, the fact that this drug can work up to and after the usual time of implantation is not seen as a disadvantage but as a benefit by those who are promoting the drug, whose only goal is maximum effectiveness in countering unintended pregnancy," Doerflinger said.

"Of course this mandated coverage, and accepted rules of medical privacy, will also mean that the minor daughters of almost all Americans with health insurance (including millions of Catholic parents) will also have confidential access to this abortifacient drug without their parents' knowledge," he said.

Briefly

Church, National, & International

Religious freedom includes freedom to act on beliefs, leaders say

ROME (CNS) — True religious freedom includes allowing believers to contribute to their countries' political discussions and to allow their beliefs and morals to impact the way they engage in public life, said the Vatican's foreign minister.

"No one should confuse or compare the marginalization of religion with the true persecution and killing of Christians in some parts of the world," but efforts to ban religious expressions from public life are still an attack on religious freedom, said Archbishop Dominique Mamberti, the Vatican secretary for relations with states.

The archbishop was one of several speakers at a Rome meeting Sept. 12 on "preventing and responding to hate crime incidents and crimes against Christians." The meeting was sponsored by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

The organization's Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights has reported "a growing intolerance of Christians" — including desecration of places of worship, arson and other property damage, and attacks on worshippers and religious leaders — in the organization's 56 member states, which include most European countries as well as the United States and Canada.

Archbishop Mamberti said the definition of religious freedom cannot be simply freedom of worship, although that is a key element. "With due respect for the rights of all, religious freedom also includes the right to preach, educate, convert, contribute to political discourse and participate fully in public activities," he said.

Russian Orthodox Metropolitan Hilarion Alfeyev of Volokolamsk, director of foreign relations for the Moscow patriarchate, told the gathering that

For true believers faith is not something lived only a couple of hours a week in a church, synagogue or mosque. Faith has consequences for the way people live and behave, including publicly.

— Archbishop Dominique Mamberti

too many governments, institutions, and individuals in Europe "use religious diversity as an excuse to exclude signs of Christian civilization from the public and political reality," as if denying Europe's Christian roots would make Europeans more welcoming and tolerant of other faiths.

In reality, he said, such policies and attitudes teach disrespect for all believers.

For true believers, he said, faith is not something lived only a couple of hours a week in a church, synagogue, or mosque. Faith has consequences for the way people live and behave, including publicly, he said.

"Radical secularism is just as dangerous for religious freedom as religious extremism in all its manifestations is," he said.



Volunteers serve food cooked by nuns and other volunteers in late February in the Wednesday Soup Kitchen at St. Blase Parish in Argo Summit, Ill. A faith-based coalition called Circle of Protection, which includes the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, has been urging the federal government to not cut funding of programs for the poor in the national budget. (CNS photo/Karen Callaway, CATHOLIC NEW WORLD)

Bishops urge 'supercommittee' to remember poor in budget cut talks

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The chairmen of the U.S. bishops' international and domestic policy committees urged the 12-member Joint Select Committee on Deficit Reduction — popularly known as the "supercommittee" — to remember the poor and vulnerable as they come up with a plan to deal with the nation's financial deficit.

"In this effort, you will examine endless data, charts and alternative budgets," said Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, N.Y., chairman of the bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace, and Bishop Stephen E. Blaize of Stockton, Calif., chairman of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, in their Aug. 31 letter.

"Behind all those numbers are people we serve every day in our parishes, schools, hospitals, shelters, and soup kitchens. The poorest and most vulnerable do not have powerful lobbyists, but they have the most compelling needs and a special claim on our individual consciences and national choices, especially in these times of massive joblessness, increasing poverty, and growing hunger," they said.

The supercommittee, made up of six members of the Senate and six of the House of Representatives, and equally divided between Democrats and Republicans, was created as part of the August deal to raise the national debt ceiling. It will first meet Sept. 16, and it must recommend by Thanksgiving cuts of \$1.5 trillion over 10 years. If its recommendations are not adopted, \$1.2 trillion in cuts over 10 years would be triggered — half involving defense

spending.

"A just framework for future budgets cannot rely on disproportionate cuts in essential services to poor and vulnerable persons. These programs need to be made more effective, efficient and responsive and we should work to strengthen and improve them on an ongoing basis," said Bishops Hubbard and Blaize.

"However, it would be wrong to balance future budgets by hurting those who already hurt the most by cutting programs such as foreign aid, affordable housing programs, child nutrition, or health care," they said. "A just framework also requires shared sacrifice by all, including raising adequate revenues, eliminating unnecessary military and other spending, and addressing the long-term costs of health insurance and retirement programs fairly."

The two bishops offered moral criteria to the supercommittee when making budget decisions.

"Every budget decision should be assessed by whether it protects or threatens human life and dignity," they said.

"A central moral measure of any budget proposal is how it affects 'the least of these,'" a reference to Matthew 25, they added. "The needs of those who are hungry and homeless, without work, or in poverty should come first."

Also, Bishops Blaize and Hubbard said, "government and other institutions have a shared responsibility to promote the common good of all, especially ordinary workers and families who struggle to live in dignity in difficult economic times."

Pope travels to Ancona, urges life centered on eucharistic spirituality

ANCONA, Italy (CNS) — A religious life centered on and nourished by the Eucharist should lead to a life marked by gratitude for Christ's sacrifice, a commitment to self-giving and real unity within the church and the community, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Traveling to Ancona, on Italy's Adriatic coast, Sept. 11, the pope presided over the closing Mass of the Italian National Eucharistic Congress and held meetings with priests and married couples in Ancona's cathedral and with

engaged couples in a town square.

With the Adriatic glistening behind the altar platform, Pope Benedict's homily at the Mass focused on the marks of a "eucharistic spirituality."

Eucharistic communion, he said, "draws us out of our individualism, communicates to us the spirit of Christ, who died and is risen, and conforms us to him: It unites us intimately to our brothers and sisters in the mystery of communion, which is the church."

A eucharistic spirituality is one

marked by taking responsibility for one's role in the church community and society at large, paying special attention to those who are poor, sick, or disadvantaged, he said.

"A eucharistic spirituality, then, is a real antidote to the individualism and selfishness that often characterizes daily life," he said.

It should lead people to work to overcome divisions within the church and societies, the pope said.

Meeting with married couples and

priests in the afternoon, Pope Benedict said the two categories of church members must put more energy into recognizing how both have a vocation that flows from the Eucharist, which is a clear sign that God's love for humanity is so great that he allowed his son to sacrifice his life for the salvation of the world.

Priests and married couples must support each other in living out their vows, he said. Priests must be patient with couples experiencing difficulty, and couples must never stop asking

their priests to be "exemplary ministers who speak of God and lead you to him," the pope said.

Addressing about 500 engaged couples in the early evening, Pope Benedict encouraged them to use their engagement and marriage preparation as a time of spiritual growth and maturity.

"In some way, ours isn't an easy time, especially for you young people. The table is set with many delicious things but, like in the Gospel story of the wedding at Cana, it seems like the wine has run

out," he said.

The difficulty young people in Italy and much of Europe have in finding a job casts a huge shadow over engagement years of many of them, he said.

And then there is the wider culture that tends not to offer people any firm moral values and, so, leaves the young adrift, he said. Sharing the same "feelings, state of mind, and emotions seems more important than sharing a project for their lives."

Diocese of Fort Worth welcomes three new congregations of religious women

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

At the invitation of Bishop Kevin Vann, three communities of women religious now call the Diocese of Fort Worth home. The Vietnamese Dominicans, the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, and the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart "Ad Gentes" have, as of early September, settled in parishes in the diocese.

The Vietnamese Dominican Sisters from the Province of Mary Immaculate in Houston will live in community at the new Blessed Imelda Convent in Fort Worth. In harmony with their Dominican charism to "Contemplate and share the fruits of contemplation," the sisters' mission focuses on educating youth and doing charitable works. The Dominican Sisters will teach at Holy Rosary School in Arlington and St. George School in Fort Worth.

The Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary, known as "Las Violetas," will be in residence at St. Bartholomew Parish in

Southwest Fort Worth. These bilingual sisters are a very welcome addition to the parish. They will serve in a wide range of capacities whether helping with the Why Catholic? program or providing much needed assistance with the St. Vincent de Paul Society. Las Violetas, who are well known for their home visits and works of charity, are returning to the Diocese of Fort Worth after a two-year absence. This year will mark their fiftieth year of service in the diocese.

The Missionaries of the Sacred Heart "Ad Gentes," have a strong presence in Springfield, Illinois, from which Bishop Kevin Vann hails. Known for their work in religious education and adult formation for Hispanic communities, sisters from this community have been invited to minister at Holy Name of Jesus and Immaculate Heart of Mary parishes in Fort Worth. The former Capuchin residence will be repurposed as a convent for the sisters, and they will live in community there.

The Diocese of Fort Worth joyfully welcomes these new members to the community.

Briefly

Local & State

Parish serves as shelter for victims displaced by Texas wildfires



CNS photo / Mike Stone, Reuters

Eric Kemper takes a moment to gather his composure Sept. 6 as he sorts through the debris that remains of his home after it was destroyed as wildfires burn out of control near Bastrop, Texas. At least two people have died in the wildfire, which has destroyed at least 700 homes and blackened about 45 square miles in and around Bastrop, a city near Austin, the state capital.

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Ascension Parish in Bastrop has been serving as a shelter and a nerve center for relief efforts related to the ongoing Texas wildfires that have struck the state.

As of Sept. 7, wildfires had been recorded for 296 straight days in drought-stricken Texas. But in the recent surge of such blazes in early September, more than 1,500 homes in the state had been destroyed and four deaths were attributed to the fires.

"We're not turning anybody away," said Steve Venzon, one of four Ascension parishioners who are taking daily six-hour shifts in directing aid efforts at the church. The town of Bastrop and Bastrop County are in the heart of the fire zone in the 25-county Diocese of Austin.

Ascension started housing its first evacuees Sept. 4 but quickly filled up its parish hall. Evacuees moved to the parish's religious education building, where 50 people were staying, Venzon told Catholic News Service in a Sept. 7 telephone interview.

Venzon added that the religious education building had cots laid out for 200, and was expecting an upsurge in evacuees with the closure of a Red Cross emergency shelter. He said the parish, the Red Cross, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency were coordinating efforts; with a Sept. 7 federal declaration of disaster status for wildfire-stricken areas, FEMA is able to marshal more resources to help those affected by the fires.

If the religious education building fills up with evacuees, Venzon said, they would add bed space in the parish hall. "After that, God help us," he added.

Venzon said the pastor, Father Rafael Padilla Valdez, was in the first week of the first parish assignment of his priesthood when the wildfires hit. "He's done a remarkable job," he said.

Christian Gonzalez, Austin Diocese communications director, said the wildfires were a combination of drought and heat — the Austin area has recorded more than 80 days of highs in the 100s this year — plus an ironic source: Hurricane Lee.

While the tropical storm never drenched Texas, it came close enough for its winds to "suck out some of the moisture we did have" in the air, Gonzalez said.

He added that residents made donations at the Austin diocesan pastoral center during the morning and afternoon rush hours Sept. 6, and that some radio stations in the Texas capital conducted on-air drives Sept. 7 for donations, with the proceeds going to Catholic Charities.

The diocesan website, www.austindiocese.org, has a large orange "donate" button on its home page to allow people to make contributions.

Melinda Rodriguez, executive director of Catholic Charities of Central Texas, told CNS Sept. 7 that other important donations included warehouse space and 18-wheel trucks to haul donated goods to the warehouse so that they can be sorted and distributed to those in need.

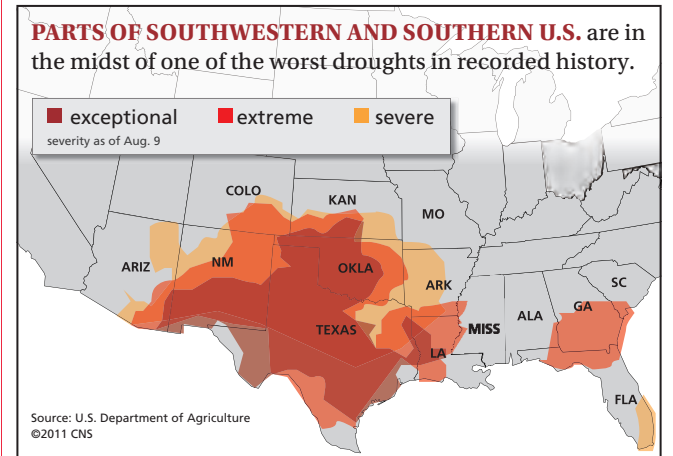
"We're waiting for organizations like FEMA to get established so we can leverage our own resources most effectively," Rodriguez said.

She added that firefighters have had difficulty containing the wildfires, which have scorched tens of thousands of acres. "We've been told they're jumping roads and lakes and other natural barriers," Rodriguez told CNS.

In Bastrop, Venzon said he did not know the fate of his own house, where he lives with his wife, two grown sons and four grandchildren.

"It was (standing) yesterday. I don't know," Venzon said Sept. 7. "The fire got within a few blocks. The cops blocked it (access) off. It (the fire) was jumping the streets."

Texas among states hardest hit by one of worst droughts in recorded history



Most of Texas, and significant portions of New Mexico and Oklahoma, are in a "D4" drought zone as assessed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. D4 is equal to "exceptional" drought — the most intense level on USDA's scale.

In Mexico City, Blessed Pope John Paul II's relics bring hope for peace in ravaged nation

By David Agren
Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY — Julian Salvador and his wife, Paola Rivera, hold fond memories of Blessed John Paul II. The couple saw him during his inaugural visit to Mexico City in 1979.

"It was the most beautiful thing and incomparable to anything I've ever experienced," Rivera recalled.

Holding onto memories and candles, they prayed the rosary Aug. 24 outside the papal nuncio's office in Mexico City. Inside was blood drawn from Blessed John Paul shortly before his death. It was there to be venerated and taken to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe following day.

Later, it will be taken to all of the country's dioceses as part of a pilgrimage of peace.

Peace in Mexico was on the minds of Salvador and Rivera as they prayed with approximately 100 others on a cool evening.

"(We're) praying that it quiets down, that there's peace. It's important that it (peace) returns to this country," Salvador said.

"We're praying for a miracle," his wife added.

Salvador and Rivera came to pray for peace in a country where drug violence has claimed more than 40,000 lives since December 2006. The church has confronted the challenges of ministering to populations in violent pockets of Mexico and fending off allegations that cartel kingpins — who are often described as religious — have laundered money through collection plates.

Census data shows the number of Mexicans declaring themselves Catholic has declined, reaching 84 percent in 2010.

That the Mexican bishops' conference would request relics of Blessed John Paul's blood be sent to Mexico at such a troubled time failed to surprise some church observers, especially given the late pontiff's enormous popularity and feeling of kinship with the faithful in what had been a country — like his own — where Catholics were persecuted for

their faith during the last century.

"John Paul II is a Mexican hero," said commentator and church observer Bernardo Barranco. "No other person in public, political or social life of the country has had the impact that John Paul had during his five visits to Mexico.

"He's a key person in the contemporary life of this country," he added.

Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera of Mexico City mentioned the same thing during Mass at the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe, where many celebrating the service waved paper flags with Blessed John Paul's image and chanted, "Viva!"

"He was our Mexican pope," the cardinal said. "We feel very privileged to have (these relics) here."

Cardinal Rivera focused his homily on promoting peace through strengthening families, saying it was an important topic for Blessed John Paul.

"The main base and the cradle of peace is the family," he said.

Blessed John Paul made Mexico a priority during his papacy, Cardinal Rivera said. The last of his five visits, in 2002, resulted in the canonization of St. Juan Diego, the first indigenous saint of the Americas.

The visits began under less favorable circumstances as Mexico and the Vatican were officially estranged and anti-clerical laws — so strict that priests and nuns were forbidden to wear habits — were still on the books.

Blessed John drew an estimated 20 million visitors during his first visit and paved the way for the restoration of church relations with the Mexican state in 1992.

Those outside the nunciature and at the Mass expressed their feelings about venerating the relics.

"This is a country deeply rooted in faith," said retiree Patricia Ayala.

"This is about faith, about hope," said banker Ernesto Rowe as he used his phone to take photos of a replica of Blessed John Paul and the glass container of blood. "Maybe we don't demonstrate (our faith,) but it's there."

Texas Catholic Conference supports DREAM Act

AUSTIN (TCC) — The Texas Catholic Conference is encouraging parishes across Texas and the country to participate in the "Pray for the DREAM (Act)" Sunday, Sept. 25. This national effort seeks to raise public awareness to the obstacles facing immigrant students and to alert parishioners to ways they can support struggling students earn a college degree and eventual employment.

Churches are gathering to raise awareness and support through a host of activities such as petition drives, prayers, vigils, homilies, etc. between Sept. 18 and Oct. 9, with the biggest focus being Sunday, Sept. 25.

The proposed DREAM Act (Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors) is currently before the U.S. Congress. It offers to provide temporary residency to undocumented immigrant students who agree to complete two years military service or register for at least two years at a four-year college. Upon successfully completing military service or earning a college degree, the undocumented residents could apply for permanent legal status.

The DREAM Act is partially modeled on legislation signed by Governor Rick Perry in 2001, which provides in-state tuition for undocumented students who have lived in Texas for three years prior to earning their high school diploma and a year before enrolling in a state college of university. In exchange, students must promise to become permanent residents of the United States as soon as they are eligible.

"The downside to Texas' law is that while immigrant students can earn college degrees, they are stalled or impeded in obtaining their legal

status, which subsequently prohibits them from entering the workforce," the TCC said on its website, www.txatholic.org.

According to the conference's website, the DREAM Act is important to Catholics because it's intended to help undocumented immigrant minors hone their God-given talents.

"The Lord gives each of us a skill or talent, that if honed and developed properly, can benefit ourselves and our communities. Ignoring these gifts — or actively preventing the nurturing of the gifts of others — is a shameful waste," the website said.

"Jesus' Parable of the Talents (*Matthew 25:14-30*) tells the story of a man who entrusts his wealth to three servants while he is away. While two of the servants use their talents and wits to invest and double their master's wealth, the third servant buries his allotment in the ground out of fear. The master lauds the servants whose efforts brought benefits, but scolds the third for wasting the opportunity.

"Bright, eager students who desire to learn, grow, and develop their gifts to benefit us all are a treasure to our nation. Ignoring (or burying) these students' talents not only thwarts their hopes and dreams but diminishes the quality of life of us all."

To help parishes organize projects and events, the U.S. Catholic Conference of Bishops' Justice for Immigrants' has created an online resource kit available at www.justiceforimmigrants.org/parishes.

According to the TCC's website, the conference wants to know of any parish events and activities being planned to feature them on its website and publications.

Diocese

Father Dan Kelley named new diocesan chancellor; Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, and Peter Flynn take on new vice-chancellor roles

North Texas Catholic Staff

Bishop Kevin Vann has appointed Father Daniel Kelley, pastor of St. Joseph Church in Arlington, chancellor of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Fr. Kelley has served in the new role since Aug. 1, while also continuing as pastor of St. Joseph. Fr. Kelley, who was ordained Dec. 9, 1995, is currently pursuing studies in canon law at the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. He will complete the requirements for the degree in May of 2012.

"As chancellor, I serve as the official notary to the bishop," Fr. Kelley explained. In this capacity, he witnesses the signing of important documents, and performs other official functions at the request of the bishop, while also continuing to serve, as he has for the past five



Father Dan Kelley

years, at the diocesan Marriage Tribunal office.

The bishop has made two additional appointments within the diocesan leadership structure, leading to the creation of two new Vice Chancellor positions. As of Aug. 1, Peter Flynn, who has served within the diocese for 26 years, and previously served as director of Finance and Administrative Services, has been appointed Vice Chancellor of Administrative Services. In this capacity, Flynn



Peter Flynn

will continue to oversee the areas of diocesan finance, advancement, and record management and archives.

The only change in his actual areas of responsibility includes his new work in human resources, said Flynn. "The new structure addresses reporting functions," he explained. "Any administrative functions 'report up' through me, and I report directly to [vicar general] Father Stephen Berg."

Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, who has served as director



Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN

of Children's Catechesis and Catechetical Ministry since 2002, has been named Vice Chancellor of Parish Services and Women Religious. In this capacity, she will work closely with the diocesan Office of Vocations in order to support and nurture the needs of women's congregations within the diocese. Additionally, she will assist parishes with any needs that arise as a result of transitions in pastors and staff members.

"I am overjoyed to have been

able to welcome several religious communities of women to our diocese this month, including the Missionary Sisters of the Sacred Heart, who are now at the Holy Name of Jesus and the Immaculate Heart of Mary parishes," said Sr. Cruz. "I further rejoice to have been a part of the facilitation of the return of the Missionary Catechist Sisters of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary to St. Bartholomew Parish in Fort Worth."

In her new role, Sr. Cruz has also attended the blessing of the Vietnamese Dominican Sisters' convent in Arlington and helped to welcome Father Armando Flores of Celaya, Mexico, to St. George Parish in Fort Worth and Father Gildardo Alvarez of the Congregation of the Operarios del Reino de Cristo at Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Fort Worth.

Diocese creates Archives Office and hires archivist; names new directors for Children's Catechesis and Marriage and Family Life

North Texas Catholic Staff

Recent changes in personnel at the diocesan offices include the appointment of two new diocesan staff members, a change in existing staff roles, and the creation of a new diocesan department, according to Mark Simeroth, director of Human Resources for the diocese.

"We are happy to welcome new diocesan staff members Claire Galloway and Chris Vaughan," said Simeroth. "Additionally, Marlon De La Torre, who has previously served as the director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life over the past year, will now serve as the director of the Office of Catechist Formation and Children's Catechesis for the Diocese."

De La Torre, an adjunct professor of Catechetics for the Catholic Distance University, has previously served as the Superintendent of Schools and as associate director of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, in Kansas City, Missouri. Additionally, De La Torre has served in the Diocese of Memphis as principal and chair of Catechesis at Sacred Heart of Jesus Catholic High School. While in Memphis, he also served as diocesan director of Religious Education and



Marlon De La Torre

Apologetics and as adjunct professor of Catechetics for Diocesan Catholic High Schools.

The ministry professional earned his undergraduate degrees in theology and in mental health/human services at Franciscan University of Steubenville in Steubenville, Ohio. He continued on at the university to earn his graduate degree in theology with a concentration in Catechetics, and also earned his master's degree in education administration/curriculum at the University of Saint Mary in Leavenworth, Kansas.

"I look forward to evangelizing and catechizing the faithful... In particular, instructing catechists at the parish and school levels in the areas of catechist and doctrinal formation, curriculum development, and catechetical administration," wrote De La Torre in an e-mail to the



Chris Vaughan

North Texas Catholic, noting that he also looks forward to "meeting fellow catechists in the field and sharing the good news of Jesus Christ."

Chris Vaughan, now the director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life for the Diocese of Fort Worth, is also a graduate of Franciscan University of Steubenville, where he earned his undergraduate degree in theology with a concentration in religious education. "Since graduation I have worked full-time in various parish ministries," wrote Vaughan, also by e-mail to the *NTC*, noting that he has most recently served as the director of young adult ministry at All Saints Church in Dallas in the Diocese of Dallas.

"In that position I helped lead 20- and 30-somethings, married or single, to a deeper relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ and his Church," wrote Vaughan. "I



Claire Galloway


look forward to helping the people of the Diocese of Fort Worth prepare for a marriage centered in the Eucharist and to foster holiness and ongoing formation in marriage and family life."

Claire Galloway, director of the newly-formed Office of Records Management and Archives, is a certified archivist who received her undergraduate degree in history from Centenary College in Shreveport, Louisiana, and her master's degree in public

history from the University of Arkansas at Little Rock. While in Arkansas she worked as a graduate assistant at the Clinton Presidential Library for two years, and went on to work in Special Collections in the Texas Christian University Archives in Fort Worth. For the past two years she has served as archivist in the University, Labor, and Political Collections within the University of Texas at Arlington Special Collections area of the university library.

"I greatly look forward to working with the diocese to manage its records and archives material," said Galloway, noting her deep interest in the history of the local Catholic Church.

"The diocese has such a rich heritage, and I feel blessed to be a participant in its life."

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In Memory

Deacon Dámaso Castellón is remembered as compassionate and diligent in his ministry with parishes, hospitals, nursing homes, and prisons

Deacon Dámaso R. Castellón, a faithful servant who often worked with the Hispanic community, died on Aug. 18, one day short of the twenty-second anniversary of his ordination to the diaconate in the Diocese of Fort Worth. Much of his service in the diaconate was spent doing prison ministry.

"I remember him being the nicest, sweetest man. He was always so considerate. He was a very holy, spiritual guy," said Mary Garcia, business manager at Immaculate Conception Church in Denton.

Visitation was during the day on Aug. 20, with a Rosary at 5 p.m. at Mount Olivet Funeral Home in Fort Worth. Mass of Christian burial was at 2 p.m. on Aug. 22, at All Saints Catholic Church in Fort Worth.

Dcn. Castellón was born in Midland on March 27, 1926 to Thomas and Ascension Castellón, and grew up in Mexico. He had

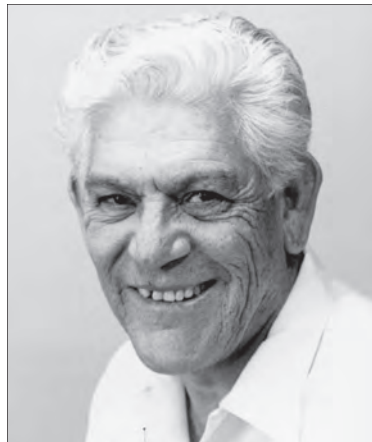
lived in the North Texas area since 1968.

He and his wife Maria had been married for 60 years, and had been parishioners of All Saints Church. Before becoming a deacon, he and his wife had already been very active in their parish. They both served as lectors and extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist and helped with nursing home visitation. Dcn. Castellón also was former chairman of the Spanish Cursillo Leader's School.

Dcn. Castellón was ordained to the diaconate on Aug. 19, 1989, at St. Michael Parish in Bedford, by Bishop Joseph Delaney, the second bishop of the Diocese.

Dcn. Castellón first served in his home parish, All Saints, in 1989 and then served at St. Joseph's Church in Cleburne from 1989-1992. He was at Immaculate Conception Church in Denton from 1992-1995.

Garcia said Dcn. Castellón



Deacon Dámaso R. Castellón

drove from the Fort Worth area to help with the Spanish Masses at ICC and with anything else that was needed. She said he preached at the Spanish Masses, visited people in the hospital and nursing homes, and attended meetings to give the Hispanic community a voice.

"We enjoyed working with him," said Garcia.

From 1995-1996, Dcn. Castellón served at St. John the

Apostle Church in North Richland Hills.

Mary Wolfle, pastoral secretary of Immaculate Conception Church in Denton, said that Dcn. Castellón also worked with the Hispanic ministry while she worked with him at St. John the Apostle.

"You could tell how much he loved [the people] by how he managed to take time for them," she said.

Wolfle said Dcn. Castellón was always kind and helped with visiting people in nursing homes, hospitals, and the homebound.

"Whatever he was doing, he would keep at it until he got it done," she said.

Dcn. Castellón served at St. Jude Church in Mansfield from 1996-2005 and at St. Matthew Church in Arlington from 2005-2006.

Dcn. Castellón was a retired auto mechanic after 26 years. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Maria Castellón; daughter, Genevieve Reece and husband Coby; sons Robert Castellón and wife Suzanne; Thomas Castellón; Domingo Castellón; and Marco Castellón and wife Patricia; nine grandchildren, and seven great-grandchildren.

Condolences can be sent to his wife Maria Castellón and his family at 1017 Barclay Ave., Fort Worth, TX, 76111.

Sister Mary Walden, OSU, (1922-2011) dies



Sister Mary Walden, OSU

Editor's Note: This obituary has been adapted from a press release sent by the Ursuline Sisters.

Sister Mary Walden, OSU, died Aug. 12 at the Ursuline Queen of Peace infirmary in Alton, Illinois. Sr. Mary served in the Diocese of Fort Worth

for 10 years from 1973 to 1983 at the Texas Christian University Catholic Campus Ministry and in the marriage tribunal office.

Sr. Mary was born Colleen Viola Walden Nov. 15, 1922 to William F. and Viola Fay Harlan Walden, in St. Louis.

Sr. Mary received a bachelor's degree from Briar Cliff College in Sioux City, Iowa, and the College of New Rochelle in New York. She earned a master's degree in religious education at The Catholic University of America and a master's degree in theology at St. Mary's University in San Antonio. She entered the Ursuline Sisters in 1942 and made her religious vows in 1944.

Sr. Mary shared her gifts and her education through ministry

in Texas, Missouri, and Illinois. Her ministries included teaching, campus ministry, community leadership, and marriage tribunal work in three dioceses. She served at TCU from 1973 to 1977, and in the diocese's marriage tribunal from 1977 to 1983.

Father Tom Craig, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Arlington, was a student at TCU while Sr. Mary served there, and credits her with helping him in his vocation to the priesthood.

"She was a great mentor to me," Fr. Craig said. "It's probably because of her and her prayers and guidance that helped me in my vocation. She'll be sorely missed."

In 2009, Sr. Mary retired to Queen of Peace in Alton, Illinois.

A funeral Mass was celebrated Aug. 17 at the Ursuline Convent Chapel in Alton. She is survived by two brothers, Pat Walden of Kansas City, Missouri, and James Walden of Sioux Falls, South Dakota. She was preceded in death by her sisters Frances and Anastasia, and brothers Harvey, Raleigh, and Eugene.

Memorials may be made to the Ursuline Sisters' Queen of Peace Healthcare Center, 845 Danforth St., Alton, IL 62002.

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Key changes to Missal capture original meanings

By James Breig

Casual observers of the Roman Catholic Church often remark that it hasn't changed in 2,000 years. Actually, just like any living institution, it is constantly changing. Over the centuries, where and when the Mass is celebrated, how saints are chosen, and the method of electing popes are some of the ways the Church has adjusted its traditions and policies.

Now come changes to the Roman Missal, the book containing the prayers for the Mass. For years, the Church has been working to more accurately translate those prayers from the Latin in which the original Missal is promulgated into modern languages, including English. Msgr. Kevin Irwin, dean of the School of Theology and Religious Studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington, says those alterations were necessitated by two factors.

"First, the Committee charged with the English translation of

the Roman Missal issued the post-Vatican II translations very quickly," he notes, referring to the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. "They realized, after a few years' use of the Missal, that some translations should have been more accurate. Second, some feasts have been added to the Church's liturgical calendar in recent years, for example, St. Padre Pio's. Those Latin Masses need to be translated into English."

Peter Finn, associate director of the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL), compares the changes "to the cleaning of an old painting whose images are brought to clearer light in the cleaning process. ... The translations have sought to achieve a suitable balance between the word-for-word, literal meaning of the Latin and the demands of good proclamation, style, and intelligibility."

One of the most significant changes, Msgr. Irwin says, involves the familiar phrase, "And also with you," which the congregation recites after the celebrant of the



A workshop participant takes notes during a presentation on upcoming changes in the Mass Aug. 31 at the chancery in Green Bay, Wis. The third edition of the Roman Missal is gradually being introduced in parishes throughout the English-speaking world. (CNS PHOTO/Sam Lucero, THE COMPASS)

Mass says, "The Lord be with you."

He explains that "the congregation will now say, 'and with your spirit.' This places the English translation in line with most other languages. The response is not to the person of the priest but to the Spirit of God, who ordained him to permanent service in the Church. It is an acknowledgment of the 'spirit' and grace which is in him."

Msgr. Anthony Sherman, executive director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Divine Worship, offers another example: Instead of saying "we believe" at the beginning of the Creed, Catholics will soon recite, "I believe." The reason for the shift, he says, is "to underline the fact that, although we share our belief together with our brothers and sisters, each one of us is called to make an individual profession of faith."

As the changes are introduced, parishioners will have many guides to help them learn their new responses. "Plans are underway by a number of publishers to print up Mass booklets or cards containing the changes," Msgr. Irwin notes. Adds Msgr. Sherman: "Eventually all participation aids and hymnals will include the new responses of the people." Finn notes that "today, the people's responses can be made more readily available not only in printed editions but also on websites, CDs, iPhones, etc."

One website available to

help people become familiar with the new translation of the Roman Missal is sponsored by the U.S. Bishops: www.usccb.org/romanmissal.

Average Catholics may not immediately grasp the necessity and benefits of the changes, Msgr. Irwin admits, but the familiarity that comes with time should lead people to comfort with and understanding of the words.

"All of us — laity, clergy, and religious — will need to take time to review the changed words and come to appreciate what we may not have understood or appreciated before," he says. "There are layers of meaning to liturgical texts, not just one meaning. These translations and the education we shall receive before they are implemented will offer us a chance to 'brush up' our

knowledge of the Mass and of our beliefs."

Msgr. Sherman believes the changes "will invite the faithful to pause and reflect on what, after so many years, we may have taken for granted. People will listen more attentively to the various prayers proclaimed by the priest and these will convey a much deeper richness, which can be the basis for meditation and prayer for the enrichment of one's spiritual life."

James Breig, a long-time diocesan newspaper editor and freelance writer, has written hundreds of articles for Catholic magazines. For 25 years, he also authored an award-winning column on the media for Catholic newspapers. Now retired, he continues to write and is working on a book about World War II.

Mass Prayers and Responses

(Text in bold represents the wording that has changed in the Roman Missal.)

Greeting
Priest: *The Lord be with you.*
People: **And with your spirit.**

Penitential Act, Form A (Confiteor)
I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have **greatly sinned** in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, **through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault;** **therefore** I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.

Penitential Act, Form B
Priest: **Have mercy on us, O Lord.**
People: **For we have sinned against you.**
Priest: **Show us, O Lord, your mercy.**
People: And grant us your salvation.

Gloria
Glory to God in the highest, and **on earth peace to people of good will.**

We praise you, we bless you, we adore you, we glorify you, we give you thanks for your great glory, Lord God, heavenly King, O God, almighty Father.

Lord Jesus Christ, **Only Begotten Son, Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,** you take away the **sins** of the world, have mercy on us; **you take away the sins of the world, receive our prayer;** you are seated at the right hand of the Father, **have mercy on us.**

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

This pew card, published by Our Sunday Visitor, shows the updated language in the third edition of the Roman Missal. The new English version of the Roman Missal will be implemented in the U.S. on the first Sunday of Advent, Nov. 27. (CNS)

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Preparation, participation, and perseverance can help us appreciate Christ's real Presence in the Eucharist

FROM PAGE 1

what the Christian life is!"

The relationship between the Mass and everyday life is a reciprocal relationship, an active experience. At every Mass Catholics bring the offering of what's going on in their lives — and offer that in union with Jesus. It is that union, culminating in the Holy Communion, that strengthens them for everyday life, explains Msgr. DeGrocco. "We do liturgy in order to try to do Christian life right. What we do at Mass is a summation or a 'microcosm,' if you will, of the way we are supposed to be living Christian life."

According to Msgr. DeGrocco, this awareness of what takes place at every Mass is precisely why Catholics should invest themselves into appreciating the Mass. "We cannot be Catholic without it," he says. "We cannot be fully united to Jesus without

sacramental communion with Him in the Eucharist."

Not only is daily life about the Mass, says Liturgy Professor Sister Janet Baxendale, SC of New York City's St. Joseph's Seminary, but the Mass also "offers extraordinary help in my efforts to live my life well" through Scripture, the Word of God, the Prayers of the Faithful, and most powerfully, by receiving the Eucharist.

In Holy Communion, "Christ comes to us to nourish us; to be food for our souls as we struggle to fulfill our baptismal call to be like Christ, to be his presence in our world," notes Sr. Baxendale.

Distractions can make participation and appreciation of the Mass discouraging, notes Sr. Baxendale. "Our thoughts stray; we find ourselves trying to solve problems of home, of office, of life in general. The people around us distract us: a crying child; someone with an annoying habit sharing

'my' pew; the choir is off-key; the readings can't be heard—and on and on."

Sr. Baxendale says there are strategies to reduce the impact of these distractions:

Prepare for Mass. Read over that day's Scriptures. "In this way you will have done the 'ground work,' tilling the soil so that the seed of God's Word may find ready soil in you."

Participate in Mass. Sing the hymns, pray the responses, listen to the readings and to the prayers said by the priest on our behalf: the opening prayer, the prayer over the gifts, the prayer after Communion, the Eucharistic prayer. "Work at doing this well, and there will be less time for distractions." Learn about the Mass. Check online sources provided by the United States Conference of

Catholic Bishops and printed materials in your own parish for resources to "enhance your understanding and appreciation of the great gift God has given to his people in the Mass."

Take daily time to be silent and to listen. The self-discipline of a regular period of quiet reflection teaches us to "empty our minds of the cares, ideas, and distracting thoughts that press on us—and to concentrate on God, on his incredible love for me [personally], and his presence to me. Our perseverance can bear fruit in the ability to concentrate more fully when we are at Mass."

Don't get discouraged. "It is the effort that counts. The results are in the hands of God."

Christ is present at Mass in many ways, explains Msgr. DeGrocco, "in the gathered assembly, in the Word, in the priest, and most especially in the Real Presence of the Eucharist... The person in the pew who does nothing 'more' than being internally attentive and bringing the sacrifice of his/her life, and who does all the external participation (sitting, standing, kneeling, responding, singing) is nonetheless participating fully."

He notes, "The best way to improve one's appreciation of the Mass is to improve one's living of the sacrifice of one's life."

María de Lourdes Ruiz Scaperlanda is a frequent contributor to the Catholic press. She is an award winning Catholic journalist, the author of five books, and an occasional contributor to the NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC. See www.mymaria.net



WORLD YOUTH DAY

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 23, 2011

PARK HOURS: 11 AM - 8 PM

JOIN US IN THE MUSIC MILL AMPHITHEATER FOR:

Special Performance by
Steve Agrisano – 4:15 pm
Mass Time – 5:00 pm

PURCHASE EARLY... YOU'LL RECEIVE

- One FREE Chaperone admission ticket for every 20 tickets your group purchases in advance!
- FREE admission to Holiday in the Park for each ticket purchased in advance!



SPECIAL WORLD YOUTH DAY MEAL OPTION


CHOPPED BBQ SANDWICH OR HOT DOG, CHIPS, COOKIE AND A DRINK

- Pre-purchase the WYD meal deal with your park admission ticket!
- Meal Deals redeemable only at the Picnic Pavilions (next to Titan) 12 PM – 4 PM.

ONLY \$7.00 (+ TAX)

Tickets must be purchased in advance with the attached order form or by calling (817) 607-6150. (Mon. – Fri. 9:00am to 5:00pm) Order deadline is Oct 7, 2011.
Your Parish may add additional cost to cover transportation.

2011 WORLD YOUTH DAY ORDER FORM



ORDER IN ADVANCE TO RECEIVE GROUP DISCOUNTS!

Minimum ticket order is 10. This offer is available through mail order or by phone and cannot be purchased at Six Flags' Main Gate or Administrative Offices. Order deadline is October 7, 2011. Orders placed before deadline will receive one free chaperone ticket per 20 tickets purchased PLUS a free return ticket to Holiday in The Park. For telephone orders or information, call 817-607-6150. (Four business day minimum to charge order by phone). Phone orders will be accepted with credit card payment through Oct. 17, 2011.


NAME OF GROUP		# OF BUSES
MAILING ADDRESS		
CITY	STATE	ZIP
WORK PHONE	HOME PHONE	
YOUR NAME		
EMAIL ADDRESS		

TICKET TYPE	QUANTITY	TICKET PRICE	TOTAL
WORLD YOUTH DAY, ONE DAY TICKET <small>October 23, 2011</small>		\$22.50 <small>(+ \$1.80 tax)</small>	
WORLD YOUTH DAY MEAL <small>See box for menu selections</small>		\$7.00 <small>(+ \$0.56 tax)</small>	
SFOT PARKING <small>Bus / General Parking</small>		\$15.00	
KODAK SOUVENIR PHOTO <small>Must equal number of paid tickets</small>		\$3.00 <small>(+ \$0.24 tax)</small>	
<small>** Tickets good for World Youth Day, October 23, 2011 Only!</small>			
PROCESSING FEE			\$5.00
TOTAL PRICE			

- Children age 2 and under are admitted FREE!
- Tickets are non-refundable.
- Multiple checks will not be accepted: Please make check payable to Six Flags Over Texas.
- If Tax Exempt: Groups complying with the Texas State law must submit a Texas tax exemption certificate with this order form to be eligible to deduct the state tax from the total.

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VOICES of the CHURCH

opinions, stories, wisdom, and personal voice

What doctors owe women: A clear assessment of the risks

By Susan Wills

The largest, most definitive analysis of the mental health risks associated with abortion was published September 1 in the prestigious *British Journal of Psychiatry*. Conducted by Priscilla Coleman, PhD of Bowling Green State University, the meta-analysis examines 22 studies published between 1995 and 2009 involving 877,181 women, of whom 163,831 had abortions.

Taking into account all the mental health problems studied — anxiety, depression, alcohol use/misuse, marijuana use, and all suicidal behaviors — here is what this rigorous analysis found:

- Women who have had an abortion have an 81 percent higher risk of subsequent mental health problems compared to women who have not had an abortion.
- Women who aborted have a 138 percent higher risk of mental health problems compared to women who have given birth.
- Women who aborted have a 55 percent higher risk of mental health problems compared to women with an “unplanned” pregnancy who gave birth.
- Women with a history of abortion have higher rates of anxiety (34 percent higher), depression (37 percent), alcohol use/misuse (110 percent), marijuana use (230 percent), and suicidal behavior (155 percent), compared to those who have not had an abortion.

Dr. Coleman notes that a 2010 study by Canadian researchers (Mota et al.), published after she completed her analysis of the twenty-two studies, arrived at “strikingly similar” conclusions regarding the increased risk of mental health problems associated with abortion.

The staff, priests, and counselors in Project Rachel, the Church’s post-abortion ministry, are well aware of the mental health problems women experience following an abortion. The national Project Rachel Ministry website, which lists offices to call for confidential help (www.hopeafterabortion.org), receives countless letters from women and men expressing profound anguish, sometimes for decades after an abortion. Thousands of tragic personal stories are posted in chat rooms and on message boards like those at www.afterabortion.com.

And yet a handful of “pro-choice” academics continue to churn out papers attempting to show that “the few” women

As former abortion clinic staff attest ... counselors at abortion clinics conceal mental and physical health risks — as well as the fact that the procedure will violently end a child’s life — in order to sell abortions.

who have mental health problems after abortion are those who had mental health problems before their abortion. They claim that having an abortion is better for one’s mental health than giving birth to an “unplanned” (and therefore to their mind “unwanted”) child.

Dr. Coleman’s meta-analysis disproves these contentions, weeding out weak and potentially biased studies by including only studies that (1) were published in a peer-reviewed journal, (2) had at least 100 participants in the sample, (3) used a comparison group (e.g., women who had given birth, women who had not had an abortion), (4) measured one or more outcomes, such as depression, substance abuse or suicidal behavior and (5) controlled for other variables, such as prior history of mental health problems or exposure to violence.

Health care professionals have a duty to advise patients of the benefits and risks of a procedure “in a manner that reflects the current scientific literature,” so patients can make an informed choice. As former abortion clinic staff attest, and as undercover journalists in the U.S. and U.K. have discovered, counselors at abortion clinics conceal mental and physical health risks — as well as the fact that the procedure will violently end a child’s life — in order to sell abortions.

Thanks to Dr. Coleman, the current scientific literature now proves that the increased risks to mental health from abortion outweigh any imagined “benefit” to women. Women considering abortion deserve to be told these facts — but they won’t hear them once they’re inside the clinic. It is up to us to get the word out.

Susan Wills is Assistant Director for Education & Outreach, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat of Pro-life Activities. For more information on the Church’s ministry to women and men after abortion, visit www.hopeafterabortion.org.

Over ‘The Ledge’ Atheist movie makes unintended point

By David Mills

I’d never heard of “The Ledge”, a movie released just a couple of months ago. I never would have heard of it but for an article by a blogger for the *National Catholic Register*, the alert and entertaining Matthew Archbold.

It’s a movie about an evangelical Christian couple who meet a really nice and pretty cool atheist, who liberates the young wife from her oppressive, judgmental, uptight, and generally annoying husband by seducing her into an affair. The husband gets upset and tells the atheist that he has to jump off a ledge at noon or he (the crazy Christian husband) will kill the wife. As the storyline summary goes: “He then has one hour to make a choice between his own life and someone else’s. Without faith in an afterlife, will he be capable of such a sacrifice?”

I’m guessing without seeing the movie that the really nice and pretty cool atheist jumps, because that proves that he’s a good man even though he doesn’t believe in God, while the crazy Christian is a bad man even though — or maybe because — he believes in God. Or maybe he’s saved at the last moment when the police knock down the door and rescue the poor wife from her crazy Christian husband. But even if he is rescued, we know he was going to jump because he’s such a great guy he’d give up the only life he thinks he’s going to have to save someone else. Save her from her crazy Christian husband and by extension from her imaginary God.

Archbold includes the trailer for the movie, and it features several scenes promising what used to be called cheesecake shots of the young and beautiful Liv Tyler. The producers and director were clearly trying to create as much audience appeal as they could. If the plot won’t bring them in, a topless Liv Tyler might. That’s the way they think in Hollywood, and (alas) not without reason. To be fair, I can understand them hedging their bets on the box office appeal of theological debates.

The director reportedly worked hard to promote the movie among atheist groups and on atheist websites. It was to be, I suspect, the atheist’s break out movie.

The movie website IMDB estimates the movie’s budget at \$10 million. According to IMDB, the movie made \$5,176 on its opening weekend. It opened on two screens, just two, in the whole country. Apparently it only lasted a week at those two, since it made (grossed, in the movie world’s language) only \$5,176. Rotten Tomatoes’ critics gave it an 11

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percent score. “The Smurfs” did twice as well with the critics as “The Ledge”.

Let’s enjoy that. \$5,176. Two screens. An 11 percent rating. Beaten by “The Smurfs”. And a loss of about \$9,995,000.

We can’t make too much of this, because many anti-Christian movies make a lot of money, and many movies that make a lot of money are implicitly anti-Christian. But I think the movie’s failure does say something at least a little encouraging about Americans and religion.

As Archbold writes, “I think one of the things that went wrong with this movie isn’t just that it was an atheist movie. It’s that it was anti-Christian. Instead of showing atheists dealing with dramatic situations which they do, the director chose to have the atheist in a battle with a crazy Christian caricature. And guess what, people in a mainly Christian country decided not to see it. Now that’s the kind of natural selection I can get behind.”

A lot of our neighbors think: some implicit anti-Christianity, okay. But obvious, direct Atheism vs. Christianity, with the Atheist coming out on top, not okay.

That suggests Christians still have an opening to share the faith with others who may seem uninterested. Many Americans may have pushed God into the corner, but they don’t like it when someone tries to push him out of the room. As long as he’s still in the corner, we can try to help them see why he ought to be in the center of the room.

In any case, it’s nice to know that a movie-maker can’t beat up on Christianity and make money doing so.

David Mills is executive editor of First Things (www.firstthings.com). Matthew Archbold’s blog can be found at www.ncregister.com/blog/matthew-archbold.

VOICES of the CHURCH

opinions, stories, wisdom, and personal voice

Trapped in space, but not alone: Alone on a downtown street, but with a church nearby

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

At our opening yearbook meeting this September, my TCU students played an icebreaker game in which participants were asked to name their favorite movie genre and film.

Most of the students said they liked comedy, but they also listed sci-fi and “anything related to dance.” Nobody named horror or mystery, I noted, and more significantly, I realized I hadn’t seen most of the 60 students’ favorite flicks.

When all had taken their turns, they gave me mine: “Easy,” I said, “I like ‘Trapped in Space’ movies and ‘Back in Time’ movies.”

Instead of rousing affirmation, I was met with blank faces.

I chided them: “You know! ‘Back in Time’ movies, when the leading lady passes out and wakes up at a 1961 homecoming dance, or a man encounters his dad speaking through a ham radio!

“In ‘Trapped in Space Movies,’ NASA saves the astronauts, and then everyone in mission control tosses their papers in the air and cheers.”

Silence. The room was so quiet you could hear crickets.

“The best ‘Trapped in Space’ movie ever was in 1969,” I concluded. “It was called ‘Marooned.’

“I always cry at the end.”

When I first discovered the computer program “Google Earth,” I was fascinated by the idea of seeing a satellite view of my Fort Worth home, our roof, awnings and porch! I wondered when the image had been captured, and if we were in the house when that happened.

You can look at Google Earth and see anything. In seconds you can fly from the Pyramids to the Mendenhall Glacier, and you don’t need a coat, luggage, or snacks for the trip.

I like the feeling of omnipotent-flying-person with super-close-up viewing power, so when I open Google Earth, I speed from one wonder of the world to another. My favorites are Lady Liberty, the Eiffel Tower, and 316 Harrison, Pueblo, Colorado.

But what if Google maps could time travel, like “Peggy Sue Got Married,” my second-favorite “Back in Time” movie. I don’t mean providing historical imagery, because Google already does that, in a disappointing, black-and-white, low-res-ish sort of way.

I mean really looking back in time, like seeing Daddy on the porch nonchalantly “getting some fresh air” whenever I got home with a date.

“Can you spare some change?” Of course I could, I thought, handing her two dollars, but what did she need it for? Not an iPad, I mused, silently.

I’d like to see the pine tree that used to be in our yard, and the juniper bushes I fell in and broke my collarbone. I’d like to see what made me ME.

What would I say to the me I used to be? Would it be encouragement or a caution?

A few months ago, walking in downtown San Antonio, I encountered a little girl on East Commerce, begging for money. She looked like a waif — an adorable one, who certainly would have been selected for the role of Orphan Annie, had she ever auditioned for it. But when she said, “Can you spare some change?” I realized, sadly, she was real, not an actress.

I had seen people her age and size begging for money before, and they always got it. (But they were my own children, who were as good at begging as I was at okay-ing.)

This child was the size mine were in junior high. She wore a helmet of curls, and her eyes were clear, although her blemish-free cheeks were dirty.

“Can you spare some change?” Of course I could, I thought, handing her two dollars, but what did she need it for? Not an iPad, I mused, silently. What was she going to do with it? About that I was concerned. About that I didn’t even want to muse.

I asked her why she was begging on the streets — did her parents know where she was?? The emerging story was of leaving home, three states away, harboring mutual anger, and refusing to reconcile in spite of her inability to live on her own.

The girl was 20 years old, not 12, like she looked, and she seemed to become progressively more vulnerable. She couldn’t get an apartment because she needed a job, and she couldn’t get a job because she needed an ID.

But I noticed she had one thing: a crucifix around her neck.

“What is your name?” I asked. “Ruby,” she answered.

“There is a Catholic Church two blocks away,” I pointed out. “They will give you advice, and maybe help you.” The thought of her living on the street was incomprehensible to me.

Forty years ago, grimy little girls didn’t live on the streets of Pueblo, where we could walk all the way to The Junction for a lime-aid and caramel corn just about any time we wanted.

If I could see.... if only I could log on to Time-Travel Google Earth, a program yet to be invented, and see my best friend and me walking home to 316 Harrison! Joe Cribari would get home; he’d pour himself a beverage; and talk to us, and all would be well.

Even more significant, though, I’d like to jump forward in time, to San Antonio’s Downtown St. Joseph Catholic Church, and see what became of that begging girl.

On Commerce Street, when she walked away from me, I had asked myself, “What was I thinking?!” and called after her: “Ruby! Ruby!!”

I jogged to her, handed her the last cash I had in my wallet — a five dollar bill. “Do not spend this on drugs or alcohol!” I admonished, strongly. I watched as she went into the church.

I hope, some moment in time, if I were able to zoom into San Antonio on Future Google Earth, there would be no sign of Ruby on the streets.

If that were to happen.... oh if that were to happen!

If goodness came out of Ruby’s visit to Downtown St. Joseph’s, I bet there would be a lot of cheering in Mission Control, where God watches us. I bet he’d throw his hat in the air and cheer.

Those kinds of movie endings always make me cry.

Kathy Cribari Hamer and her husband are members of St. Andrew Parish near TCU in Southwest Fort Worth. In May 2009 her column received the second place award for best family life column from the Catholic Press Association of the U.S. and Canada for the second time in two years. In 2005, Kathy’s column received the first place award in the same category.



Carry Hope Totes filled with basic food, hygiene and cleaning items.

Now \$20 could help Carry Hope

By Jeff Hensley
Editor, North Texas Catholic

Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth is promoting a new way for families and individuals to reach out and help their neighbors in need. They’re rolling it out this month, distributing colorful Carry Hope Totes, reusable tote bags, with lists of either hygiene and food items or hygiene and cleaning supply items, each totaling around \$20.

Participants wanting to assist the mostly working poor Catholic Charities serves, fill the Carry Hope Totes with the items on the list and return them to Catholic Charities. Charities is seeking parish youth groups to partner with in this project, using it as a way to help youth realize that most individuals and families they work with don’t have enough income to take care of all of their needs.

As the letter accompanying the Carry Hope shopping lists puts it:

“Can you imagine having to tell your children that the pantry is empty and you have no food for them to eat, no laundry detergent to wash their clothes, no soap for them to bathe with? For many of the families served by Catholic Charities, that is the grim reality they face each day,” the letter states.

“Of the nearly 111,000 individuals and families served by Catholic Charities in 2010, the vast majority have an annual household income of less than \$17,000. We serve the working poor and people in financial crisis.

“At the front end of these services is the Creating Hope Donation Center,” the letter goes on, “established to provide the very basic items that relate to the well being and survival of a family; items such as food, hygiene products, and cleaning supplies, items that many take for granted.”

Now, for only \$20, young people and their families can become part of the Catholic Charities mission, helping people who may be working, but cannot earn a living wage in today’s economy, enough to make ends meet. It’s a small price to pay to be able to help our neighbors.

Catechesis

'ARE YOU WILLING TO CONFORM YOUR LIFE TO THE CROSS?'

By Lucas Pollice

In this month of September, the Church celebrates two liturgical events which call our attention to the mystery of the Cross. The first is the Feast of the Exultation of the Cross on September 14 and the second is the Rite of Acceptance which will be celebrated in many parishes this month as a part of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. During this powerful Rite, those who are preparing for baptism are asked by the priest, "Are you willing to conform your life to the Cross?" These two great liturgical events call all of us to once again reflect upon the Cross of Jesus Christ and its place in our daily lives. What does the Cross reveal to us, and what does accepting the Cross in our lives call us to?

First, the Cross reveals to us the unending and merciful love of the Father, a Father who is faithful to Himself and his promise of salvation. For many, the Cross is a stumbling block, the image of the disfigured Christ crushed by the sins of humanity. But this is the paradox of the Cross! Through the horror of sin and death is revealed a love that is more powerful than any conceivable evil. The Cross reveals the love and mercy of a Father that knows no bounds and that no sin, no evil, and not even death can separate us from his love. Thus, the Cross reveals to us in the most powerful way the unfathomable love of the Father. Blessed Pope John Paul II speaks of this "divine dimension" of the revelation of the Cross:

Therefore "for our sake (God) made him (the Son) to be sin who knew no sin." If he "made to be sin" him who was without any sin whatsoever, it was to reveal the love that is always greater than the whole of creation, the love that is he himself, since "God is love." Above all, love is greater than sin, than weakness, than the "futility of creation"; it is stronger than death; it is a love always ready to raise up and forgive, always ready to go to meet the prodigal son, always looking for "the revealing of the sons of God, who are called to the glory that is to be revealed." This revelation of love is also described



as mercy; and in man's history this revelation of love and mercy has taken a form and a name: that of Jesus Christ
— *The Redeemer of Man, 9*

The Cross also reveals to us the great dignity of each and every human person. Through his passion and death, Christ unites himself intimately with each and every person, takes upon himself our sins, and through the shedding of his precious blood, raises our dignity to a new and unsurpassing dignity. How precious must we be in the sight of God that he gave his only Son so that we may be redeemed! Thus, the Cross is a powerful revelation of the dignity of the human person that confronts our modern day "culture of death" which cheapens in so many ways the dignity of the person. The Cross stands as the eternal witness to the preciousness of human life, the very human life that was redeemed, from the moment of his conception in Mary's womb to the moment of his death when death itself was destroyed, by the very Savior hanging from its wood. This is the good news of Christianity, the "gospel of life" that Blessed Pope John Paul II also speaks of as the "human dimension" of the redemption:

In this dimension man finds again the greatness, dignity and value that belong to his humanity. In the mystery

of the Redemption man becomes newly "expressed" and, in a way, is newly created. He is newly created! The man who wishes to understand himself thoroughly — and not just in accordance with immediate, partial, often superficial, and even illusory standards and measures of his being — he must with his unrest, uncertainty and even his weakness and sinfulness, with his life and death, draw near to Christ. He must, so to speak, enter into him with all his own self; he must "appropriate" and assimilate the whole of the reality of the Incarnation and Redemption in order to find himself. If this profound process takes place within him, he then bears fruit not only of adoration of God but also of deep wonder at himself. How precious must man be in the eyes of the Creator, if he "gained so great a Redeemer," and if God "gave his only Son" in order that man "should not perish but have eternal life."

— *The Redeemer of Man, 10*

Therefore, in order to truly know ourselves, we must put ourselves in communion with the redemption of Christ and take up the Cross in our daily lives. To take up our cross means to be like Christ and lay down our lives and give of ourselves

out of love for others. In fact, this gift of self stands at the very heart of what it means to be human, to be created in the image and likeness of God. As Vatican II profoundly states: "This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself" (*The Church in the Modern World, 24*). Thus, it is only through giving of ourselves that we can come to know true freedom and life! Our freedom is not given to us to just do as we please, but that we may freely give of ourselves in love to God and others. The Cross both reveals to us and calls us to this truth. As John Paul II states: "The Crucified Christ reveals the authentic meaning of freedom; he lives it fully in the total gift of himself and calls his disciples to share in his freedom" (*The Splendor of Truth, 85*).

Therefore, the Cross must become our example and pattern of living as disciples of Christ. This does not mean that we need to go out looking for suffering, but it is an overall attitude of love and giving of a gift of self through our ordinary lives. By carrying our own daily cross and uniting ourselves intimately to the Cross of Christ, our daily duties, activities, and even sufferings take on a new meaning and light. Even the most menial tasks can suddenly become redemptive when offered with a spirit of sacrifice and love. In fact, our whole life can become a "spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (*1 Peter 2:5*) We especially offer ourselves as a living sacrifice in the sacrifice of the Mass, when we offer ourselves with Christ to the Father in the power of the Holy Spirit. At each and every Mass we literally stand at the foot of the Cross and offer ourselves wholly and entirely to the Father. Through this gift of sacrifice, we are then transformed by the grace of the Eucharist and sent forth into the world "to love and serve the Lord."

Imagine if all of us were to take the mystery and power of the Cross through our lives to our own little corners of the world? The world would be a very different place! So, with faith and trust in God's grace, we must daily ask ourselves anew, "Are you willing to conform your life to the Cross?"



Lucas Pollice is director of Catechesis and Adult Faith Formation and RCIA for the diocese. Lucas holds a degree in theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville and has a master's degree in theological studies from the Institute for Pastoral Theology of Ave Maria University.

Vocations

Responding to God's call

Four Steps to Christian Maturity: *Recognize Christ! Listen to Christ! Proclaim Christ! Give your life to Christ!*



By Father Kyle Walterscheid

Have you ever wondered why those who have just joined the Catholic Church are excited about their faith, are filled with the Spirit, and ready to spread the Word of God? Sometimes we may say to ourselves, “Wow, I wish I had that kind of zeal!”, yet on other occasions we may say under our breath, “Whatever. In a few months I hope it wears out.” I hope we lean toward a desire for the good of another and not toward jealousy or envy because someone has been powerfully blessed.

I propose to you that there are four clear steps needed for any Christian, male or female, to grow in maturity of their faith and reliance on God. From all that I have read on the lives of the saints they have all gone through these four steps that I will outline. Furthermore, it would be most advantageous for teenagers and the college-aged to know that these steps are a prerequisite for a lifetime of spiritual growth in order to make good adult decisions. These four steps, which are progressively more difficult, will also prepare young people as they consider their careers, or court the idea of marriage or the religious life. Let's see these four steps and challenges that Jesus presents to Peter in Luke 5:1-11.

The first step to Christian maturity is to recognize that God is with us at all times, that Jesus has chosen to step into the boat that is our life. We see that Jesus was already preaching to the crowds when he chose to get into the boat that belonged to Simon Peter who was minding his own business. This may remind us of the passage from John 15:16, “It was not you who chose me, but I who chose you.”

So, when did Jesus decide to step into your life? When you were baptized! That's the day that Jesus most assuredly came into

your life, cleansed you from your sins, and opened up the channel to life in the Holy Spirit by a new birth to live a holy life, gave you a mission in life that is irrevocable, incorporated you into the Christian community of faith centered on Christ in the Eucharist, raised you in dignity through his grace, and welcomed you to a place of honor where you shall never be shamed but always treasured.

The first sign of Christian maturity is to “put on Christ”, to embrace Christ, and to be grateful each day that Jesus is in our boat to help us along each day. Therefore, acknowledge Christ as your Lord and Savior and embrace the gift of your baptism! If our sons and daughters are not doing this then their confusion and sins will continue to grow exponentially.

The second step of Christian maturity is to listen to the Word of God which parallels Jesus' request to Peter as “he asked him to

and in the parish. When we awaken to the true message of Jesus it is like the moment during the Transfiguration when Peter says to Jesus, “It is good that we are here!” When we look forward to attending and participating in Mass and the parish we are reaching the second level of Christian maturity.

The third level to Christian maturity is much more difficult. It involves personal risk and courage and all too few Catholics are willing to take their faith to this level, but maybe it's time to get there. The Gospel continues: “After he had finished speaking he said to Simon, “Put out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch.” Simon said in reply, “Master, we have worked hard all night and have caught nothing, but at your command I will lower the nets.” When they had done this, they caught a great number of fish and their nets were tearing.”

To help others through small gestures

“...the love of Christ compels us

... So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away.”

—2 Corinthians 5:14

put out a short distance from the shore. Then he sat down and taught the crowds from the boat.” Jesus calls Peter to be attentive and to listen to the Word of God as he preached to the multitude. Jesus was as gentle with Peter at this step as he is with us. He did not ask too much from Peter, simply to row a short distance from the shore, something ordinary yet an act that will forever change his life. The Church throughout the centuries has been depicted in art as a boat of salvation.

Jesus calls us to come to step into our local church (boat) on Sunday, a rather simple task, where the Word of God is proclaimed and preached. We are called to listen to the Word of God, to embrace the Word of God, to have a deeper prayer life and trust in the Lord, to delve into the teaching of Christ as expounded by the Church, and to reflect upon the preaching and the true events that take place at Mass

of kindness does not take much risk, but to be willing to say that you are Catholic or Christian in public or to take a stand on a moral issue is to take a huge risk. You can imagine how James and John probably sat on the shore and laughed at Peter as they watched him cast his nets with Jesus. But then again, James and John hadn't caught a thing all night either!

All too often we are embarrassed to share our faith, to respond to the call of Christ to do a particular task, or to take a Christian stand on a particular injustice or against a particular sin in our society. Peter made the leap of faith, Jesus blessed him with so many gifts that he called over his friends, James and John, and they too began to believe that Jesus was the Christ.

Yes, this type of faith is contagious in all the right ways. A community of faith like this would light the world on fire! And this

is exactly the faith the early Church had, and it is the same faith Jesus calls us to today, to be a light to the world. As we reach this level of spiritual maturity we are willing, for example, to also straighten out our lives by seeking counseling for an addiction or a troubled past, get our marriages right with the Church, teach our faith to others at work or in the classroom. For young adults this might mean spending a year in programs like NET, the National Evangelization Team, or attending the diocese's vocational awareness programs to learn more about their own mission in life to evangelize, teach, serve, and care for others. Young women at this point may consider the possibility of being called to be a sister or a consecrated lay woman. Young men may consider a calling from God to be a brother or priest.

The fourth and last step to spiritual maturity is to give our whole lives over to Christ who perpetually loves us despite our fallen nature. “When Simon Peter saw this, he fell at the knees of Jesus and said, “Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.” ... Jesus said to Simon, “Do not be afraid; from now on you will be catching men.” When they brought their boats to the shore, they left everything and followed him.” St. Paul says it best in 2 Corinthians 5:14: “the love of Christ compels us ... So whoever is in Christ is a new creation: the old things have passed away.”

When we are convinced that Jesus is the only way for our lives and we become convicted in our faith, then we, like Peter and the apostles, have reached spiritual maturity while embracing the will of God for our lives even though we will still struggle internally to be reformed and conformed in Christ, and even though externally we will be harshly treated and mocked. Let us not forget all the saints who urge us on the path of Christ which they themselves also chose.

In summary these four steps to spiritual maturity are: Recognize Christ! Listen to Christ! Proclaim Christ! Give your life to Christ! Then and only then can you reach your full potential as a Christian adult as Christ intends. Most converts have gone through all four of these stages and hence their joy and excitement of being Catholic can seem over the top, as it should be for all of us. Where do you see yourself? Let's all strive to reach that next step as the love of Christ compels us!

Features

Someday **each** of us will be remembered. It's up to us **how**

By Jeff Hedglen

There is nothing like learning how to live from attending a funeral. I recently attended two funerals, both were filled with sadness and joy, a mixture of mourning and celebration, just like it should be when faith filled people pass away. The surprising thing was the life lessons I learned from these two wonderful women.

The first was a friend of mine named Jackie. During the sermon portion of the service the presider pulled out a Bible and informed the congregation that this was Jackie's Bible and that the sermon was going to be taken from the highlighted and underlined sections of the Bible. Page by page, line by line, highlight by highlight, we saw into the heart of our dear friend. We were privileged to see what parts of God's living Word had touched, encouraged, challenged, and comforted Jackie over the years. It was a beautiful mirror into our dear friend's soul.

Later on in the funeral we were challenged with the idea that when our own came and if our own Bible was the fodder for the sermon, what would the message be? We all kind of looked around, and I could tell that we were all thinking, geez; we have to start highlighting our Bibles! But of course this goes way beyond what we have underlined and has more to do with the challenge to read and meditate on the Word of God in such a way that the words come alive and move us so much that we want to be able to find these words again with ease.

The second funeral was for Lura, the mother of a good friend. She had lived a long and wonderful life. There seemed to be an endless stream of people who had an equally endless fount of powerful and touching memories of their connection with her. Stories came from her children, grandchildren, church family, and friends, each one more touching than the

last. It was abundantly clear that Lura not only was a woman of faith, but that she lived that faith.

As we gathered outside the church I overheard a friend saying tearfully "O my gosh, I have to start being a better mother, grandmother, wife, friend, and Christian. Otherwise what will people be saying about me at my funeral." I'm sure many of us felt the same way. Hearing about the reckless abandon with which this woman lived her life and faith was a powerful challenge to all in attendance to step up our game.

What is life all about and what is our purpose on this planet? I have heard it said that when someone is on their deathbed they never say: "I wish I had made more money" or "I wish I had bought a bigger home." Rather, the regrets people have when they are nearing death surround their relationships, their faith, and how they spend their limited time on earth.

Yet, while we are living our lives, we often are consumed with things that, in the big scheme of things, are really trivial. This is not to say that making money and having a home are inconsequential things, only that we can get way too worked up over things that are not all that important.

We can hold on to grudges for no real good reason, destroying relationships and ruining lives. We can stay so busy that we leave very little time for friends and family, or for that matter, ourselves. We have so few days on this planet, even though living to 90 seems like a long time, when that day gets here it will seem like a blink of the eye.

Attending those two funerals caused me to take a look at my life and the way I spend my time. The lives of those two women encouraged me to focus more time on my relationship with Jesus and the people in my life who matter most. Most of all, the experience got me thinking about my funeral and what people might say about me. That thought alone is motivating me to give everything I have to each day I live.

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



(CNS photo/courtesy of the Philadelphia Museum of Art)

The etching "Christ Preaching" (The Hundred Guilder Print) is among the works being shown in "Rembrandt and the Face of Jesus" on display at the Philadelphia Museum of Art through Oct. 30. After its showing in Philadelphia, the exhibit moves to the Detroit Institute of Art.



(CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Pope Benedict XVI waves as he arrives to lead his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Sept. 7.



(CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Archbishop Zygmunt Zimowski, president of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry, greets attendees at an international conference on women's health care and the dignity of motherhood sponsored by MaterCare International at the Vatican Sept. 2. Also pictured are Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J., right, who spoke at the conference, and Dr. Jose Maria Simon de Castellvi, president of the World Federation of Catholic Medical Associations.

Cross-Words

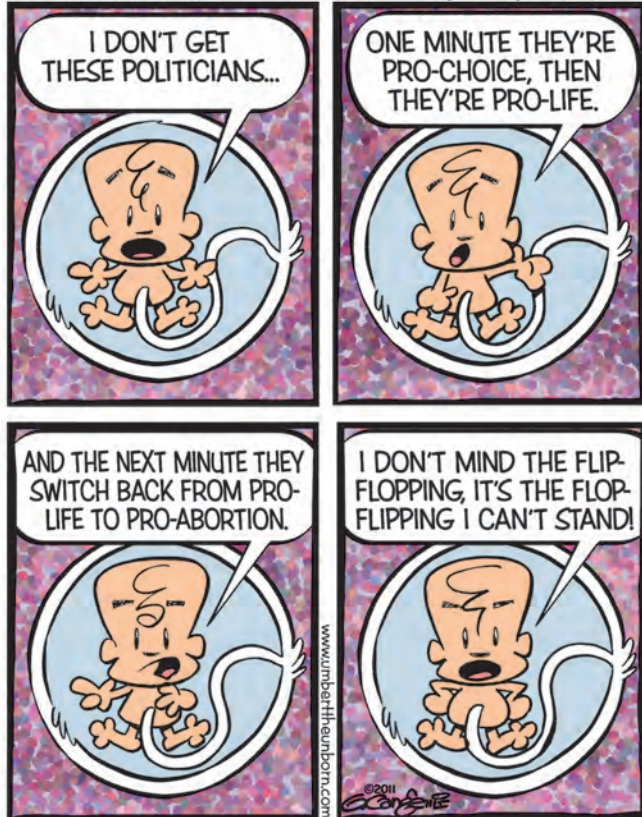
By Mark Simeroth

Across & Down:

- 1. Essential book
- 2. Thoughts
- 3. Sounds the horn
- 4. Slip
- 5. German industrial town

1	2	3	4	5
2				
3				
4				
5				

Umbert the Unborn by Gary Cangemi



The FLOCK by Jean Denton



Respect Life Month

Ministries that offer families healing after miscarriages and stillbirths are growing in the Diocese of Fort Worth

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen | Correspondent

Maria Walters had a feeling something was wrong with the baby she was carrying. The expectant mother wrote down her fears in a pregnancy journal, then quickly brushed them aside. Having already produced three healthy children calmed the busy mom's anxiety as she prepared her brood for a trip to the obstetrician's office to hear the new sibling's heart beat.

"Seconds after the doctor started the sonogram, he asked the kids to leave the room, and I knew I miscarried," Walters remembers. "For the next few minutes, I went numb to what the doctor was saying."

The miscarriage catapulted Maria and her husband, Jeff, into a world of unexplained and unexpected loss. In the days that followed, few resources were available to help the family cope with the chemically induced labor and delivery of the lost pregnancy or the need to acknowledge their child's death. At 15 weeks gestation, the five-inch long fetus — a girl named Mary Abigail — was perfectly formed with fingers and toes.

"She even had a dimple on her chin, just like the one my husband and older daughter [share]," recalls the grieving mother who held her baby following delivery. "She was beautiful but lifeless."

The St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioners never considered surrendering their daughter's tiny body to the hospital for disposal. State law requires cremation or burial of a fetus only after 20 weeks. At the same time, they had no Church guidelines to follow regarding funeral services after miscarriage.

"I don't know how people go through something like this without faith," Walters says tearfully. "Mary never took a breath, but I know she had a purpose."

The couple hopes their experience sheds light on a personal tragedy few people talk about. In a culture where the existence of life at conception is debated, miscarriage is dismissed as an "act of nature." For the Walters, the unborn soul they created deserved a name, proper burial, and respect. Their discussion with hospital staff following the miscarriage was typical.

"They said most parents leave the remains at the hospital because it's too expensive to do anything else, and funeral homes don't mess with a baby that size," Maria says, her voice cracking with emotion. "We wanted our daughter treated with dignity."

Linda Puente knows what it's like to field insensitive remarks from people following a miscarriage. The St. Andrew Church member suffered two miscarriages and the birth of

a stillborn son before finding comfort and understanding during a parish-sponsored memorial service for unborn children. Held each January during Sanctity of Human Life Month, the liturgy and naming ceremony at St. Andrew offers support and healing to parents who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion. Mothers are encouraged to acknowledge their baby with a name and are given an unsealed certificate. Entire families sometimes attend the service together.

"When I sat down at my first memorial service, I realized I wasn't alone," says Puente, who waged a personal struggle with grief for years despite loving support from husband, Cruz.

She was the mother of a two-year-old daughter when her first miscarriage happened 10 weeks into a pregnancy.

"It didn't seem real," she says, describing the sudden loss. "You're told you're expecting, and your head begins to fill with plans and ambitions for this child. All of a sudden it's gone, and you're left wondering 'why?'"

Uncomfortable talking about the miscarriage, Puente's friends either ignored the situation or said the wrong thing. The words, "You can have another baby," didn't ease her overwhelming feeling of emptiness.

"There's no coffin, burial, or service," she explains. "Eventually you get over the shock, but never acknowledging that baby compounds the grief."

Today, Puente shares the comfort she found at her parish with others. As one of the directors of Healing Hearts, the mother



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / North Texas Catholic Archives

ABOVE: Luz Galdanez places a rose at the altar of Mary in honor of her deceased daughter, Jasmine. She is joined by her son, Romy, and her baby daughter, Isabella.

of two grown children organizes the annual memorial service for unborn children at St. Andrew. The outreach ministry also gives prayerful support to grieving families, if parents contact them.

"We're in the process of growing the ministry, so we can offer more than just one event," she explains. "We'd like to host quarterly gatherings where women could sit down and talk with one another. It helps to listen to someone who's gone through the same experience."

Puente says the miscarriages made her a more compassionate person.

"People don't realize how often miscarriage happens until it happens to them," the organizer says. "There's definitely a need for this ministry. No one should go through this alone."

A diocesan Mass for Children Who Died Before Baptism also provides grieving parents

with a sense of community and closure. Sponsored by Mother & Unborn Baby Care of North Texas and Catholics United for Life, the annual Mass is held each October at St. Mary the Assumption Church, 509 W. Magnolia Ave. on the near South Side of Fort Worth. Father David Bristow will celebrate this year's liturgy on Saturday, Oct. 8 at 12 noon.

"We've had women come to this Mass who lost their babies 50 years ago," explains Chuck Pelletier, who organizes the event along with his wife, Pat. "At the time they didn't get counseling or help. Their baby's body was lost to them."

Found in the Sacramentary of the Catholic Church, the liturgy commemorates the loss of children before baptism and prays that mourning parents find strength and

SEE MISCARRIAGE, P. 17

Respect Life Month

Fort Worth 40 Days for Life kick-off rally to be held Sept. 28

Fort Worth's fourth annual 40 Days for Life campaign is set to kick off with a rally at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 28, across the street from the Planned Parenthood facility on 301 S. Henderson St., and will run through Nov. 6.

The 40 Days for Life campaign is a focused pro-life prayer campaign that is held in hundreds of cities throughout the world.

Bishop Kevin Vann is expected to deliver the opening prayer for the rally, followed by the event's main speaker, Chris Aubert, a Catholic apologist who focuses on addressing pro-life issues such as abortion and contraception from a man's perspective.

"He's an enthusiastic and charismatic speaker, and we expect him to deliver an encouraging speech to the prayer volunteers," said Jeff Williams, the Fort Worth 40 Days for Life communications coordinator about Aubert.

Since its inception in Bryan / College Station in 2004, 40 Days for Life has mobilized more than 400,000 people worldwide, saved more than 4,300 lives from abortion, seen 13 abortion facilities close, and led to the conversion of 52 abortion workers, including Abby Johnson, the former director of a Planned Parenthood facility in Bryan and author of *UnPlanned*, a memoir detailing her experience working for the abortion provider. Johnson, who came into the Catholic Church in the Diocese of Austin on Easter of this year, helped kick off last year's 40 Days for Life campaign in Fort Worth.

"We're expecting the largest group of prayer volunteers we've had so far," Williams said.

At the end of the Sept. 28 rally, there will be a closing prayer, and participants will have an opportunity to sign up for

prayer hours.

In an effort to encourage participants throughout the full 40 days, Williams said organizers are planning a rally half-way through the campaign this year, with a date and location to be announced later. Organizers are also hoping to increase communication with prayer volunteers.

According to a flier, 40 Days for Life is made up of three components:

Prayer and Fasting — believers throughout the Fort Worth metro area are invited to join together for 40 days of fervent prayer and fasting for an end to abortion;

Peaceful Vigil — participants take a stand for life during a 40-day peaceful public witness outside Planned Parenthood;

Community Outreach — help take a positive, upbeat pro-life message to every corner of the area through media efforts, advocacy, and public visibility.

"We're trying to increase people's awareness about the need to pray and fast," Williams said.

To do this, organizers will distribute prayer cards labeled "The Discipline of Fasting" with tips on fasting.

"We can fast from meat or food, but there are other ways to fast that might be more beneficial to our spiritual life," say the prayer cards, encouraging people to fast from things such as judging others, pessimism, or bitterness, and instead, encouraging to feast on Christ dwelling in others, in optimism, or in forgiveness.

To learn more about 40 Days for Life, or how to participate, e-mail local coordinators at 40daysforlifeforth@gmail.com or by visit the website at www.40daysforlifeforth.com.



Photo by Kathy Cribari Hamer / North Texas Catholic Archives

An unidentified woman at last year's 40 Days for Life kick-off rally Sept. 22 holds her baby while joining other participants in prayer.

Life Chain invites pro-lifers to prayerful witness

Since 1987, pro-life advocates have been coming together in October to form Life Chains in cities and towns across the country, offering a peaceful, silent, and prayerful witness for life.

"It is a silent witness of the Christian community standing together in honor of the 54 million babies whose lives have been lost to [surgical] abortion," said Sharron Albertson, state director for Life Chain in Texas, noting the prayer is also for the countless numbers of unborn children killed by abortifacient drugs such as the "morning after" pill.

"Last year we listed more than 1,500 cities and towns — many with multiple locations, so that more than 1,800 locations were listed," added Albertson, who is also Life Chain's website coordinator.

Typically held on the first Sunday of October, this year, most cities and towns will hold their Life Chains on Sunday, Oct. 2. Albertson mentioned that some locations, such as Flower Mound and Dublin, choose to hold their events later in the month to avoid conflicts with other community events.

Signs for the Life Chain are provided, and only approved non-graphic signs will be allowed. Other guidelines include remaining a silent prayerful presence, standing 25 to 30 feet apart along the route, and not to park in front of any open businesses. Lawn chairs, strollers, umbrellas, and water are welcome. Donations will be accepted to cover the cost of the Life Chain.

Signs provided at each location proclaim "Abortion Kills Children"; "Adoption the Loving Option"; "Jesus Forgives & Heals"; "Lord, Forgive Us and Our Nation"; "Abortion Hurts Women"; "El Aborto Mata Ninos"; "Life — the first Inalienable Right"; "Pray to End Abortion"; and "Pregnant? Need Help? 1-800-395-HELP".

Life Chain Location List

Life Chain locations will continue to be updated on the website, www.lifechain.net, up through Oct. 1. The following Life Chains are scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 2:

Arlington — Pioneer Parkway at Fielder Road, 2 to 3 p.m. — John Gleason (817) 457-9564

Aubrey — Main Street at Sherman Drive, 2 to 3 p.m. — Brother Bill Chastain (940) 365-2560

Azle — Highway 199 at Pearson Lane, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — The Rev. Joe Bruce (817) 594-7994

Burleson — Alsbury Boulevard at Renfro Street, 3 to 4 p.m. — Gimarie Menchaca (817) 295-8139

Carrollton — Frankford at Josey, 2 to 3 p.m. — Paul Kramer (972) 492-2029

Cleburne — W. Henderson Street at Persons Street in front of stadium, 2 to 3 p.m. — Robert Battle (817) 556-3848

Comanche — Highway 16 at Highway 377 south of courthouse, 2 to 3 p.m. — The Rev. Tim and Rhonda Boykin (325) 998-0818

DeLeon — Highway 6 at Highway 16, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — The Rev. Ray Seckinger (254) 734-5146

Denton — Carroll Boulevard at University Drive, 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. — Cheryl Spooner (940) 594-8870

Fort Worth — 3601 Alta Mesa Blvd., 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. — Julie Vecera (817) 297-1557

Gainesville — Grand Avenue at Belcher, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — Father Victor Cruz, HGN (940) 665-5395

Graham — Elm Street between Third and Fourth Streets east of Courthouse Square, 2 to 3 p.m. — Guilda King (940) 521-1512 and The Rev. Wayne Harden (940) 521-1737

Hurst / Euless / Bedford — Pipeline Road at Interstate 820, northeast corner, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — Dave Palmer (972) 757-2990

Keller — Highway 377 between North Tarrant Parkway and Watagua Road, 2 to 3 p.m. — Alana Demma (817) 337-1721

Lewisville — Main Street at Interstate 35-E, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — John Lance (972) 436-2273

Lindsay — Highway 82 between Ash Street and Pecan Street, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — Stan and Stephanie Stoffels (940) 727-8663

Mansfield — Highway 287 at F.M. 157 (Cooper Street), 2 to 3 p.m. — Kathi Miller (817) 335-9258

Mineral Wells — Highway 180 at Garrett Morris Parkway, 2 to 3 p.m. — Sharon Walls (940) 325-8920

Muenster — Highway 82 at Muenster Park, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — John Bezner (940) 634-1434

North Richland Hills — Rufe Snow at Interstate 820 (Chick-fil-A), 2 to 3 p.m. — Larry Stevens (817) 400-1982

Southlake / Grapevine — Southlake Boulevard (FM 1709) at Kimball Avenue and Carroll Avenue, 2 to 3 p.m. — Mary Solis (817) 329-0402

Weatherford — S. Main Street, 2 to 3 p.m. — Jeanette Houle (817) 613-8008

Wichita Falls — Midwestern Parkway at Kemp Boulevard, 3 to 4 p.m. — Brenda Grayson (940) 716-9775

The Life Chain in Dublin will be held Sunday, Oct. 9:

Dublin — Highway 377 at Highway 6, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — The Rev. Tim and Rhonda Boykin (325) 998-0818

The Life Chain in Flower Mound will be held Sunday, Oct. 30:

Flower Mound — Highway 2499 at Forest Vista, Sun, Oct 30, 2 to 3:30 p.m. — Myra Jean Myers (972) 539-6770

Respect Life Month

Miscarriage ...

FROM PAGE 15

comfort knowing their loved one is entrusted to God's care.

A ritual included in the local Mass invites families to place a rose on the Marian altar in memory of their miscarried, aborted, or stillborn babies. Pelletier hopes heartbroken parents will turn to Mary — the Mother of all humanity — to help them cope with their grief.

"Some people have the spiritual need to go to a cemetery for closure, but most of these parents have no grave for their babies," he points out. "The Marian altar gives them a place they can come back to and visit."

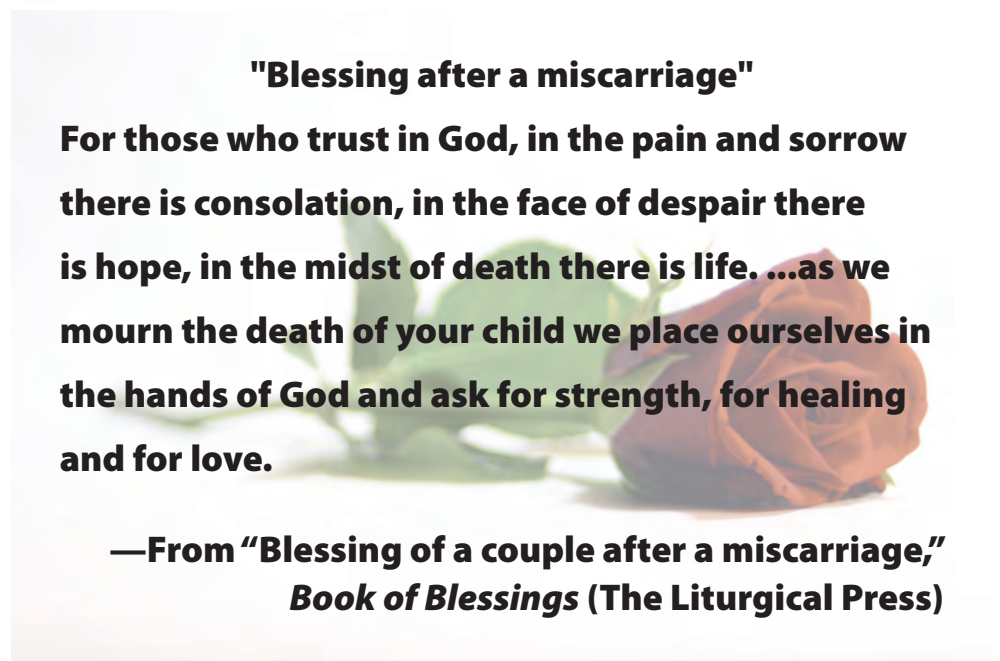
Pelletier, a former post-abortion counselor, says providing parents with the opportunity to "give their baby to God" helps them heal emotionally and move forward. The Mass typically draws a crowd of 80

to 250 people and is open to everyone. A reception following the Mass is intended to replicate the meal and social gatherings most families host after a funeral.

Feedback from the Mass is always positive. When it comes to the healing power of prayer, "you can't do any better than a Mass," Pelletier adds.

For Maria Walters and her husband, the prayers and thoughtfulness of family and friends made a difficult time easier. A fellow parishioner and OB-Gyn nurse, Amy Cook, arrived for her shift at the hospital in time to deliver the couple's baby with dignity and care. Father Jeff Poirot, pastor of Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, called to reassure the couple and Thompson's Harveson and Cole Funeral Home came to pick up their daughter's remains in a small, wooden box.

A few days later, one of the directors, Cindy Thompson, led the family in a brief prayer service before placing Mary Abigail in a sealed brass box for burial next to her



"Blessing after a miscarriage"

For those who trust in God, in the pain and sorrow there is consolation, in the face of despair there is hope, in the midst of death there is life. ...as we mourn the death of your child we place ourselves in the hands of God and ask for strength, for healing and for love.

**—From "Blessing of a couple after a miscarriage,"
Book of Blessings (The Liturgical Press)**

grandfather in Kaufman, just southeast of Dallas. Losing a child so unexpectedly made Maria's faith stronger. She likes to think of her little girl as an angel.

"As parents, our job is to get our kids to heaven," the resilient mother says, recalling an observation made by a friend. "I find comfort knowing I've already got one there."

Bishops aim to mobilize Catholics to guard consciences on contraception



CNS file photo / Paul Haring

In this 2009 CNS file photo Dr. David Stevens, CEO of the Christian Medical Association, is accompanied by other medical professionals as he speaks concerning conscience protection at the National Press Club in Washington April 8, 2009. The physician was among those voicing opposition to the Obama administration's proposal to rescind federal conscience protection rules for medical professionals.

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — The U.S. bishops are working to mobilize Catholics across the country to tell the Obama administration that contraception and sterilization do not constitute preventive care for women and must not be mandated as part of health reform.

Through a new website at www.usccb.org/conscience, the bishops hope to generate thousands of comments to the Department of Health and Human Services about its Aug. 1 proposal that would require nearly all employers to provide sterilization and all FDA-approved contraceptives, including some that can cause an abortion, at no cost to women covered by their health insurance plans.

But time is of the essence, because the 60-day comment period on the HHS proposal closes Sept. 30.

The site also includes a second "action alert" asking Catholics to tell their members of Congress to co-sponsor and pass the Respect for Rights of Conscience Act, which would guarantee the protection of conscience rights in all aspects of implementation of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Proposed in the House of Representatives this spring, the legislation was introduced in the Senate Aug. 2 by three Republican senators — Roy Blunt of Missouri, Marco Rubio of Florida, and Kelly Ayotte of New Hampshire.

"Respect for rights of conscience in health care has been a matter of strong bipartisan consensus for almost four decades," said Cardinal Daniel

N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, in a Sept. 7 letter to Congress.

The Respect for Rights of Conscience Act "would change no current state or federal mandate for health coverage, but simply prevent any new mandates under (the health reform law) — such as HHS' new set of 'preventive services for women' — from being used to disregard the freedom of conscience that Americans now enjoy," he added. "This would seem to be an absolutely essential element of any promise that if Americans like the health plan they now have, they may retain it."

In addition to the two action alerts, the bishops' website features backgrounders on conscience-related topics, news releases and documents on the HHS mandate and similar issues, and a commentary by Richard M. Doerflinger, associate director of the bishops' Secretariat on Pro-Life Activities, about "the high costs of 'free' birth control."

Doerflinger said it is "nonsense" to see the proposed requirement that health plans offer contraceptives without co-pays or deductibles as "free birth control."

"Currently women who want birth control coverage pay for it through their premiums, and sometimes also have a co-pay or out-of-pocket expense," he wrote. "Under the new mandate they will still pay for it, but the cost will be buried in the overall premium — and everyone else, including churches and other religious employers as well as individual Catholics, will be forced to pay for it

in their premiums too, so payments coerced from those who object will make birth control coverage a bit cheaper for those who want it."

The site also offers information about the HHS mandate and what the bishops call the "incredibly narrow" religious exemption to it, the abortion-causing effect of at least one drug that would be included under the mandate and what should constitute preventive

services under the health reform law.

"Everyone deserves access to basic life-affirming health care, and health care reform is supposed to serve that goal," says a backgrounder on preventive health. "The effect of this mandate is just the opposite, as it pressures organizations to drop their health coverage for employees and others altogether if they have a moral or religious objection to these particular items."


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Bishop's Annual Appeal 2011



Dear Brothers and Sisters in

As we begin a new **Sharing in Ministry** appeal, I want to express my sincere gratitude for your generosity and your commitment to stewardship in this effort. Through this appeal we come together as a local Church to support a broad range of ministries, programs and apostolates within the Diocese that reach beyond the scope of any individual parish and are made possible by the collective giving of you, the faithful.

During 2009 and 2010, your generosity to the **All Things Possible** Campaign

enabled us to continue programs and ministries funded by the annual appeal. With the fall of 2011, we are resuming **Sharing in Ministry** in its separate form.

TOGETHER REACHING OUT is the theme for this year's appeal. Each of us is being challenged to go forth as the Body of Christ, "to do good, to be rich in good works, to be generous, ready to share." – 1 Timothy 6:17-19. We need the generosity of all parishioners to help our diocesan Church provide:

- grants to supplement local funds raised to meet facility, program and ministry needs in our rural and center-city parishes and schools
- funds for tuition assistance for Catholic school families
- outreach to thousands of needy people served through Catholic Charities

The **Sharing in Ministry** Bishop's Annual Appeal provides essential, annual operating funds that directly impact the lives of people throughout the Diocese of Fort Worth with programs, services and ministries that reach beyond the scope of any individual parish and are made possible by the collective giving to the appeal.

The **All Things Possible** campaign was an extraordinary effort above and beyond **Sharing in Ministry** to ensure the future viability of the Diocese and to raise funds for individual parishes. The campaign was a necessary measure to meet the growing demands of the Diocese that **Sharing in Ministry** cannot meet on an annual basis. **Sharing in Ministry** was included in the **All Things Possible** campaign for 2009 and 2010. Four million dollars was allocated to fund the programs normally fulfilled by **Sharing in Ministry**. In 2011, the **Sharing in Ministry** Bishop's Annual Appeal returns to its separate form.

La Campaña Anual del Obispo de **Compartir en Ministerio** provee fondos esenciales y operacionales que tienen un impacto directo sobre las vidas de las personas en la Diócesis de Fort Worth mediante programas, servicios y ministerios que abarcan más allá de cada parroquia y que son posibles gracias a las donaciones colectivas de la campaña.

La campaña de Todo es Posible fue un esfuerzo extraordinario más abarcador que la campaña de **Compartir en Ministerio** para asegurar la viabilidad futura de la Diócesis y para recaudar fondos para las parroquias. La campaña fue una medida necesaria para satisfacer las demandas de la Diócesis que **Compartir en Ministerio** no puede llenar en todos los meses. **Compartir en Ministerio** fue incluida en la campaña de **Todo es Posible** de los años 2009 y 2010. Se asignaron cuatro millones de dólares a los programas que normalmente son financiados por **Compartir en Ministerio**. En 2011 la Campaña Anual del Obispo de **Compartir en Ministerio** volverá a estar separada.

Lời Kêu gọi Hàng năm **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** của Đức Giám mục sẽ cung cấp những khoản quỹ hoạt động cần thiết hàng năm có ảnh hưởng trực tiếp đến đời sống của người dân trong Giáo phận Fort Worth thông qua các chương trình, dịch vụ và thừa tác vụ ngoài phạm vi của một giáo xứ đơn lẻ và thực hiện được nhờ sự đóng góp tập thể cho lời kêu gọi.

Chiến dịch Mọi Điều Đều Có Thể là một nỗ lực vượt bậc, cao và xa hơn **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** đó là chiến dịch đảm bảo khả năng tồn tại trong tương lai của Giáo phận và kêu gọi đóng góp quỹ cho các giáo xứ đơn lẻ. Chiến dịch là một biện pháp cần thiết để đáp ứng nhu cầu ngày càng tăng của Giáo phận mà **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** không thể đáp ứng được hàng năm. Trong năm 2009 và 2010, **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** nằm trong chiến dịch **Đối với Thiên Chúa thì mọi sự đều có thể được**. Bốn triệu đô la đã được phân bổ để tài trợ cho các chương trình mà **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** vẫn thường thực hiện. Trong năm 2011, Lời Kêu gọi Hàng năm **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** của Đức Giám mục lại trở về hình thức hoạt động riêng biệt.



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Christ,



- support to priests and sisters transitioning to ministry in our diocese and those pursuing advanced studies
- pastoral and administrative resources and services to our parishes, schools and other ministries

I invite you to join me in support of **Sharing in Ministry**. It is only by working together that we can accomplish much. Thank you for embracing God's grace within you in loving generosity to others as our local Church in North Texas. May God bless each of you always.

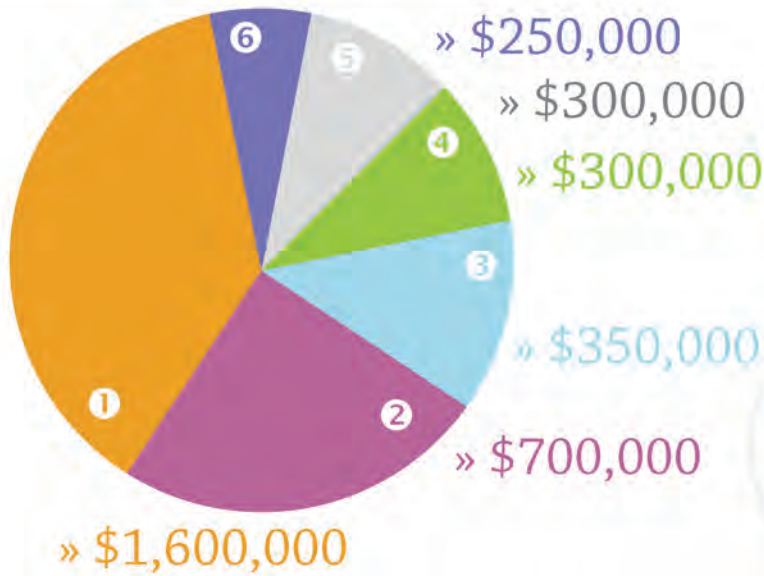
Sincerely in Christ,

Kevin W. Vann

Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, J.C.D., D.D.
Bishop of Fort Worth



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TOTAL NEED: \$3.5 million

1

...to Bring Ministries to All

Enables our service to others in the diocese by providing annual pastoral and administrative resources, counsel, information, education and formation for the clergy, staff, volunteers, parishioners and parents of our parishes, schools and other ministries.

...para llevar los Ministerios a Todos

Hacer posible nuestro servicio a los demás en la diócesis proveyendo recursos pastorales y administrativos anuales, consejería, información, educación y formación para el clero, el personal, los feligreses y las familias de nuestras parroquias, colegios y otros ministerios.

...để Đưa Thừa tác vụ đến Toàn thể Giáo dân

Mang mục vụ của chúng ta đến với những giáo phận khác trong giáo khu thông qua việc hằng năm cung cấp nguồn lực mục vụ và quản lý, lời khuyên, thông tin, đào tạo và cơ cấu tổ chức cho giới tăng lữ, nhân viên, tình nguyện viên, giáo dân và cha mẹ của giáo dân, trường học và những thừa tác vụ khác.

2

...in Support of Center-City and Rural Parishes and Schools

Provides grants to center-city and rural parishes and schools to supplement local funds raised for facilities, programs and ministries. Supports tuition assistance for families and students who desire quality, faith-based education in one of the 19 diocesan Catholic schools.

...para apoyar las Parroquias y Colegios Rurales y del Centro de la Ciudad

Ofrecer becas a las parroquias y colegios rurales y del centro de la ciudad para complementar los fondos locales recaudados para facilidades, programas y ministerios. Asistir con la matrícula del colegio para familias y estudiantes que deseen una educación de calidad basada en la fe en uno de los 19 colegios católicos diocesanos.

...trong việc Hỗ trợ cho Trường học và Giáo xứ tại Trung tâm Thành thị và Vùng xa

Dành trợ cấp cho những giáo xứ và trường học vùng xa và trung tâm thành thị để bổ sung quỹ địa phương đảm bảo nhu cầu về cơ sở vật chất, chương trình và thừa tác vụ. Hỗ trợ học phí cho những gia đình và học sinh mong muốn tiếp nhận nền giáo dục dựa trên lòng tin tín ngưỡng chất lượng tại một trong 19 trường Thiên Chúa giáo của giáo khu.

3

...to Assist Local Parish Needs

Benefits local parish ministries through a 10% share of all funds raised up to the parish goal and 50% of everything contributed over the goal.

...para ayudar con las Necesidades de cada Parroquia

Beneficiar a los ministerios de la parroquia local contribuyendo el 10% de todo el dinero recaudado hasta la meta de la parroquia y el 50% de todas las contribuciones hechas por encima de la meta de la parroquia.

...để Hỗ trợ Nhu cầu Giáo xứ Địa phương

Tạo nguồn lợi cho thừa tác vụ giáo xứ địa phương thông qua khoản chia sẻ 10% trên tổng số quỹ thu được đến mức chỉ tiêu của của giáo xứ và 50% của toàn bộ phần quỹ cao hơn chỉ tiêu.

4

...to Meet Community Needs

Supports Catholic Charities, who in collaboration with parishes, ministers to the suffering, the neglected and those who need our help to survive in their daily lives.

...para llenar las Necesidades de la Comunidad

Apoya a Caridades Católicas, la que en colaboración con las parroquias, ofrece su ministerio a los que sufren, los marginados y aquellos que necesitan nuestra ayuda para sobre vivir en su diario vivir.

...để thỏa mãn Nhu cầu Cộng đồng

Tổ chức Hỗ trợ Từ thiện thừa tác vụ phục vụ những người đau khổ, nghèo đói và những người cần sự giúp đỡ của chúng ta để sống qua ngày.

5

...for Transitioning Priests and Women Religious

Gives the priests and sisters newly arriving to this diocese, as well as those leaving for advanced studies, much-needed support and guidance in their time of transition and their preparation for service to parishes and schools.

...para ayudar a los Sacerdotes y Religiosas en Transición

Ofrecer a los sacerdotes y hermanas recién llegados a esta diócesis, así como a los que se ausentan para cursar estudios avanzados, el apoyo y guía que necesitan durante el tiempo de transición y de preparación para servir a las parroquias y colegios.

...để hỗ trợ các Linh mục và Nữ tu Chuyển tiếp

Dành cho những linh mục và sơ mới đến giáo khu, cũng như những bằng hữu đã rời khỏi giáo khu các khóa đào tạo cao cấp, hỗ trợ và hướng dẫn tối cần thiết trong thời gian chuyển tiếp và chuẩn bị phục vụ cho giáo xứ và trường học.

6

...the Administrative Costs

Pays the annual expenses for conducting the **Sharing in Ministry** Bishop's Annual Appeal.

...los Gastos Administrativos

Paga los gastos anuales para llevar a cabo la campaña de **Compartir en Ministerio**.

...chi phí quản lý

Chi trả chi phí xây dựng lời kêu gọi **Chia Sẻ Mục Vụ** tác vụ.

For more than 50 years, the University of Dallas has provided the North Texas area with a

Legacy of Catholic Higher Education

Stories by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / Correspondent

If you ask Thomas W. Keefe about the University of Dallas' rigorous core curriculum, he immediately recalls a recent conversation with a grouching underclassman.

The college junior complained to the university's president about a literature assignment that required him to read Geoffrey Chaucer in Old English. Written in the Middle Ages before English pronunciation more like modern English, the poet's works — like *The Canterbury Tales* — are difficult to study.

"I'm going to medical school. Why do I have to read Chaucer?" the student grumbled.

Keefe reminded the young man that challenging courses prepare UD graduates for success beyond the classroom.

"If you can read and understand Chaucer as a junior in college, there's not a medical textbook out there you can't master," Keefe assured him.

The core curriculum — specific courses that outline the development of Western thought and culture from classical to modern times — is one of the traits that set the small, Catholic liberal arts university and its students apart. Pioneered by the university's third president Donald A. Cowan and his wife, Dr. Louise Cowan, the common courses required of all undergraduates are based on classic texts. Academically challenging and personally transformative, the core curriculum encourages critical thinking and oral debate.

"Of the 700 colleges and universities in the U.S., only 17 still have a rigorous academic core committed to a broad appreciation of liberal arts before one pursues a specific course of study," Keefe points out.

Adherence to a core curriculum is based on the belief that 17- and 18-year-old college freshmen don't understand the academic world well enough to decide on a proficient, professional course of study. Classes in Western Civilization, literature, language, theology, philosophy, and science not only provide a broad base of knowledge, but also develop reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.

"We're a classic university that prepares the mind and prepares the spirit of students to take on significant challenges in life, academically and professionally," President Keefe explains.

The school's post-graduate statistics support that claim. Within two years of completing an undergraduate degree, 80 percent of students enroll in a graduate program. Ninety percent of pre-law students are accepted into law school and 85 percent of UD applicants go to medical school.

"Those numbers are comparable to any classic university in this country," Keefe boasts.

Take into consideration that the school has no formal pre-med major, and the figures become even more impressive.

"Students are well-prepared because of the rigor and discipline of the curriculum," he continues. "Not only do our students attend medical and law school at a high rate, they succeed at an even higher rate."

Tim Gesner, a junior biology major, is planning a career in medicine but strong academics aren't the only reason he chose the University of Dallas.

"What also sets it apart is its strong Catholic heritage," says the practicing Catholic. "I was so enthusiastic about coming to a school where they truly care about building a strong Catholic community."

UD's Catholic heritage has its roots in the Diocese of Fort Worth where the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur operated the Our Lady

SEE LEGACY, P. 21



Legacy of Catholic Higher Education

University of Dallas Rome program exposes students to Christian roots

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

University of Dallas students, who spend a semester studying at the school's Rome campus, agree on one thing — the experience is transformative.

No one knows that better than Dr. John Norris. After winning a full academic scholarship to UD, the New Mexico native arrived in North Texas planning to follow in his father's footsteps. The young college student thought he'd earn a degree in math or chemistry and become a professor.

That ambition changed after Norris took Western Theological Tradition — part of the core curriculum offered at the Eugene Constantine Rome Campus at Due Santi.

"Theology led me to look at life deeply and in an intellectual fashion," says the 1984 graduate, remembering how the course material helped him cope with the death of his father at the end of his sophomore year. "It helped me answer questions about suffering, dying, purpose, and meaning that I was processing personally."

Today, Norris, a 20-year veteran of UD's theology department, credits his former Rome professor, Michael Waldstein, for fueling a burgeoning interest in the Christian faith that led to his teaching career.

"He took the questions and comments of his students seriously and really listened, tried to understand and respond," explains the theology professor. "At the same time, he lived out his faith. We saw that in the lunchroom and as we traveled."

It's that kind of exposure to knowledge, spirituality, and example that makes the Rome semester a life changer for UD underclassman. The program, started in 1970, has become a valuable recruitment and retention tool for the university.

"Rome is an incredible, concentrated, imaginative core of what we do in UD as a whole," says Norris who directed the program from 1992 to 1995. "There's something about the Rome semester that is radically life-altering and unforgettable."

The opportunity to study abroad was one of the reasons Anthony Nguyen chose the University of Dallas over other schools. Living in the Eternal City last spring made him a more confident traveler and a better Catholic.

"Being in the heart of the Catholic faith made me feel something I hadn't before," explains the junior psychology major who witnessed Holy Week liturgies and the beatification of Pope John Paul II at the Vatican. "It brought me closer to God and closer to my faith."

His Rome studies also allowed him to explore foreign countries. One of the UD student's favorite destinations was Poland.

"It was beautiful and cheap," Nguyen admits. "I saw the house where Pope John Paul was raised and visited Auschwitz. The curriculum is really challenging so taking small vacations really taught me time management."

Eighty percent of UD students choose to spend a semester in Rome. About 60 percent go as sophomores after reading



Photo courtesy of University of Dallas website

University of Dallas students visit the Colosseum while in Rome.

works by Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Virgil, Augustine, Aquinas, and Dante. A solid background in the classics helps make the Rome curriculum relevant and meaningful. Courses include the Philosophy of Man, the Art and Architecture of Rome, the literature of ancient Greece, and Shakespeare, theology, and Western Civilization up to the Renaissance.

Classroom material comes alive thanks to lectures, given in Greece, Florence, Venice, and Assisi.

"We take a 10-day trip to Greece and we do lecturing on-site in museums," says Norris who calls those teaching moments "amazing."

When they're not touring ancient ruins or visiting historic shrines, the "Romans" live on a 12-acre villa at the base of the Alban Hills near Marino, Italy. Castel Gandolfo, the Holy Father's summer retreat, is visible from the campus known as Due Santi which means "two saints." According to local tradition, Peter and Paul stopped in the area on their way to Rome.

Designed to reflect western architectural traditions, the campus include a Renaissance palace dormitory, a Greco-Roman amphitheatre, and a basilica-style classroom building. Before construction was completed in 1994, young people studying in Rome were housed in a convent and, later, in the Hotel LaVilla.

Program graduates return to the U.S. with a global perspective that encourages them to look beyond their own country, says Norris, who believes there's an identifiable difference between students who opt for the Rome semester and those who do not.

"They (Rome alumni) develop a sense of self-reliance and independence after traveling all over Europe where they don't know the customs or speak the language," he explains. "After three and a half months, they come back home with an ease, confidence, and knowledge in their own capabilities."

Rome was Tim Gesner's first trip outside the U.S., and he prepared for the adventure by studying Italian. The pre-med student was eager to immerse himself in a foreign culture.

"When the program took us to Assisi, Venice, Bari, and

Rome is an incredible, concentrated, imaginative core of what we do in UD as a whole. There's something about the Rome semester that is radically life-altering and unforgettable."

— John Norris
Director of Rome program,
1992-95

Florence I truly learned how Italians live day-to-day," says the junior biology major. "I walked the streets and listened to the most beautiful language around. The amount of Italian I picked up just hearing Italians talk to one another was astounding."

Never a history buff, Gesner was quickly drawn into the thrill of seeing sites and relics preserved from ancient times.

"In class you would read how the Romans fought and died on Palatine Hill. The next day we stood on the same hill where countless battles took place years ago," he explains. "In the atmosphere we were learning in, it's hard not to fall in love with history."

Intellectually, the five-course curriculum, coupled with hands-on experience, fires up a "catalytic reaction," according to Norris.

"Students start to see how philosophy, literature, theology, history, art history, and language all intertwine. And they do this in an environment where they can touch, see, feel, and smell what they are learning," the professor continues. "They walk through the Roman forum as Julius Caesar did. They go to Corinth and Athens where St. Paul spoke, and they visit St. Peter's and stand on the stone where the Emperor Charlemagne was crowned."

Vacations are educational but living in Europe for an extended period of time leaves an imprint that lasts a lifetime, Norris says.

"I think our students who have studied abroad are always Romans," he adds. "They come back knowing that city better than any other. They've walked through it, read and studied about it, eaten the food, fallen in love, and worshipped in it. Rome becomes part of who they are."

Legacy ...

FROM PAGE 20

of Victory Junior College. When the religious community decided to relocate the school, it teamed with laymen Eugene Constantine, Jr., and Edward R. Maher, Sr., in the hopes of establishing a four-year Catholic institution of higher learning in North Texas. With the approval of Bishop Thomas Gorman, The University of Dallas opened in 1956 under the

auspices of the Catholic Diocese of Dallas with ownership by a Board of Trustees. Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann currently serves on the board.

Throughout its 54-year history, the Irving-based school has maintained a strong adherence to Catholic beliefs and principles. In its mission statement, the university says it is shaped, "by the long tradition of Catholic learning and acknowledges its commitment to the Catholic Church and its teachings."

When it comes to rigorous academics and fidelity to the Catholic

faith, "there isn't a university that can hold a candle to us," Keefe insists. "We have a great joy, acknowledgement, and enthusiasm for our Catholic heritage and commitment to the Church."

UD is "enthusiastically" Catholic but welcomes students of all faiths. When the school admitted its first 96 undergraduates in 1956, Bishop Gorman hoped the university wouldn't become a place exclusively for the affluent.

"He challenged us to open our

SEE LEGACY, P. 22

HOLY TRINITY SEMINARY SEMINARIAN WELCOME DINNER

The annual Holy Trinity Seminary Seminarian Welcome Dinner will be held Saturday, Oct. 1, 2011, at The Fairmont Hotel in Downtown Dallas. This fundraising event will allow the Catholic community and the seminarians to be able to come together to visit. There will be a live auction of "priest prize packages", a silent auction, the popular wine pull, on-site raffles, and an angel tree. Registration begins at 5 p.m. To register, visit www.holytrinityseminary.com and click "Seminarian Welcome Dinner" or call (972) 438-2212.



Photo by Juan Guajardo / NTC

Graduating students from the University of Dallas's Class of 2011 sit in the university mall during the commencement ceremony.



North Texas Catholic file photo

In this NTC file photo, faculty and staff from the early days of the University of Dallas process outside in their academic robes.

Legacy ...

FROM PAGE 21

doors to quality students of every race, religion, and economic situation," the university president says.

Seventy percent of the student body is Catholic with the remaining 30 percent "on different paths to the Lord," according to Keefe.

Being unabashedly Catholic doesn't negate the university's obligation to be ecumenical.

"We give students of other faiths encouragement and support," he adds. "We love all of God's children and want to provide them with a quality education."

To achieve that objective, the university makes tuition costs as affordable as possible. Almost every freshman pays less than 50 percent of the stated tuition rate thanks to scholarships, grants, and loans. One of the President Keefe's goals is to grow UD's \$50 million endowment fund, so more scholarship money is available.

Other schools have larger endowments, but "there isn't

a school as good as we are that charges less than we do," he promises.

Touted as one of the country's best institutions for undergraduate education by *The Princeton Review*, the University of Dallas draws a notable number of National Merit Scholars. Currently, 60 are enrolled among a student body of 1,360 undergraduates.

"Proportionately, that's the highest number of any Catholic university in the country," Keefe enthuses.

Last year, 47 students were inducted into Phi Beta Kappa, the oldest and most respected undergraduate honors organization in America. The University of Dallas is the only Catholic university in Texas with a chapter.

A growing national reputation is helping the school attract admissions from across the U.S. Fifty-eight percent of the school's population comes from outside the state making UD "the most national university" in Texas.

"In Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and in Southern California, we're better known, and in some ways, better appreciated, than in our own neighborhood," Keefe explains.

Nineteen-year-old Mary Couture admits experiencing some culture shock when she first arrived in Dallas from Maine two

Legacy of Catholic Higher Education

years ago. The hot climate and concrete vistas were a shock to the senses for the newcomer.

"When I got to campus all my trepidation went away," the college junior remembers. "I was in a place where everyone was outgoing and friendly."

Couture, who applied to two colleges, chose UD because of its uncompromising academics and Rome program. The home-schooled teen hopes to become an English teacher and is pleased with her decision. Core classes, taken by everyone, help students choose a major and strengthen bonds within the community.

"I feel blessed to be here," says Couture who appreciates the way teachers challenge students to pursue truth, beauty, and ask the big questions — "Who am I?" and "Why am I here?"

"They help you discern who you are," she explains. "Once you know that, you can serve God and those around you."

Couture says the university's Catholic identity not only survives on campus but thrives, adding, "it's beautiful the way the university lives the beliefs we hold here."

Like many other UD students, Couture followed in the footsteps of her older sister, Therese, an alumna of the university. Legacies are the school's best endorsement, according to President Keefe.

"We have a huge percentage of parents and grandparents who send their kids to the University of Dallas," Keefe asserts. "Our best recruitment tool is the older brother or sister who encourages their younger brothers and sisters to come here."

Alumni are the school's most ardent supporters. After four years on campus, University of Dallas students leave knowing they have received an education second to none.

"And they love the University of Dallas," the university president says proudly. "They loved the experience of being here."

University of Dallas introduces new pastoral ministry undergraduate program

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

When it comes to the shortfall of priests ministering to a growing population of North Texas Catholics, the numbers aren't good.

Serving the burgeoning numbers of Catholics in the dioceses of Fort Worth and Dallas, is a highly dedicated cadre of diocesan and religious priests. Though both dioceses have experienced a recent surge in the number of young men studying for the priesthood, even with all of them ordained and in place, the ratio of active priests to Catholic parishioners in both dioceses is likely to remain vastly disproportionate.

The demand for well-trained, lay ministers is the reason why Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann and Dallas Bishop Kevin Farrell approached the University of Dallas with a special request. They asked the Catholic, liberal arts school to consider offering an undergraduate degree in pastoral ministry. The University's Board of Trustees overwhelmingly approved the measure last March.

Launched this fall, the pastoral ministry major is an example of the school's passionate commitment to serve Christ and his Church, according to Brian Schmisek, Ph.D.

"As a Catholic university, we're called by *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* to be of service," explains the School of Ministry Dean, referring to an apostolic decree by Pope John Paul II regarding Catholic institutions of higher learning. "One of the ways we do that is through this undergraduate degree in pastoral ministry."

Offering concentrations in both catechetical ministry and youth ministry, the program targets the areas of greatest demand in parishes right now. The University of Dallas has a master's program in pastoral ministry, but more and more young people are choosing to serve the Church through their work right after college, Schmisek says.

"Many college students want to pursue church work and, until now, we didn't really have a degree to educate them," the

dean says. "This degree gives them the education and experience they need and, at the same time, meets the requirements that the U.S. bishops have laid out."

The university's renowned theology department is popular. "But that offers more of an academic, research degree," Schmisek points out. "It's for those who go on to graduate school, earn a Ph.D. and want to be professional theologians."

Pastoral ministry students will begin their studies with "Essentials of Catholic life and Identity," — a prerequisite for the other eight courses in the major. The class will explore all the central elements of Catholic life and faith in the context of 21st century U.S. culture and circumstances.

Diana Dudoit Raich, the National Catholic Educators' Association executive director of religious education for the past eight years, was hired to teach the introductory class. Schmisek expects the university to employ other instructors as the pastoral ministry program grows.

In addition to classroom work, students will also complete a required internship before graduation. Seniors will spend part of the year in a parish where they will be given responsibilities under the direction of a mentor.

"Many students are familiar with the parish they grew up in, but may not be aware that there are other kinds of parishes, Schmisek says. "Someone who came from an inner-city parish will have a different experience of church than someone who came from a suburban parish. We want students to see parish life in a variety of ways."

The university's Joint Committee on Ministry Education developed the curriculum for the pastoral ministry degree with input from the theology, philosophy, education, and business departments. It meets the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops standards for ecclesiastical ministry and was approved by both Bishop Vann and Bishop Farrell.

In a letter to the school's Board of Trustees, Bishop Vann voiced his support saying, "[Bishop Farrell's] support for this program at the University of Dallas, and my support are another



Photo by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen / NTC

University of Dallas students kneel in prayer during Mass at the school's Church of the Incarnation.

clear expression of a spirituality and theology of communion. I know together we will continue to be involved with President Keefe in the ongoing development and strengthening of this program."

Backed by strong faculty support, the new major will become an effective recruitment tool for the university. Schmisek says. A full year of promotion and advertising planned by the university should draw incoming freshman interested in professional lay ministry.

Schmisek said he and his colleagues were encouraged by the fact that currently enrolled UD students are choosing it as their major. He described how one sophomore psychology student, who wants to become a youth minister, is now reconsidering her major. "The bishops were very prescient in their desire to have this degree."

Schmisek calls UD's new undergraduate pastoral ministry degree one of the premier programs in the nation.

"It combines the richness of a UD education with practical knowledge and skills," he explains. "We anticipate that every (pastoral ministry) graduate will be working for the Church."

Legacy of Catholic Higher Education

University of Dallas Ministry Conference to feature Cardinal George

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

The University of Dallas considers itself, “an enthusiastically Catholic community of learners.” Students and faculty thrive in an environment that celebrates a classical, liberal arts education and a deep, abiding belief in God.

But the school’s search for wisdom, truth, and virtue isn’t confined to campus classrooms and lecture halls. Since 2007, the Irving-based university has hosted a gathering that invites the wider community of Catholics to learn more about faith and discipleship. This year’s University of Dallas Ministry Conference (UDMC), set for Oct. 28-29 at the Dallas Convention Center, is an opportunity for professional lay ministers, as well as ordinary parishioners, to hear inspiring talks and discussions on everything from parenting adolescents to contemporary art and its place in worship. Cardinal Francis George, OMI, Archbishop of Chicago and past president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, will kick-off the two-day schedule with a keynote speech on Friday, Oct. 28.

Organizing a ministry conference for people living in Fort Worth and Dallas is part of the university’s overall mission, according to Thomas W. Keefe, University

of Dallas president. When Dallas Bishop Thomas Gorman established the university in 1956, he asked the institution to serve the needs of Catholics in North Texas.

“This is an opportunity for us to bring speakers and leaders of the Church to the Fort Worth/Dallas community where they can address cutting edge issues affecting the Church today,” he says.

The Catholic population in North Texas is exploding, and the conference is a way of introducing new residents to the local Church. Dallas is the second fastest growing diocese in the state with Fort Worth not far behind.

“This gives us a chance to welcome newcomers, especially Hispanics — to the area,” the university president said.

Conference sessions aren’t geared to just academics and clergy, but also the average person in the pew and Catholic educators.

“It’s a venue for all Christians and Catholics in North Texas to come join in fellowship as they learn about pertinent and timely topics of faith, theology, apologetics, and social justice,” explains Oscar Carranza, UDMC coordinator. “The event offers participants the opportunity to step away from their daily tasks to really enliven their faith.”

Attendance at the conference has grown



CNS Photo / Nancy Wiehede

Cardinal Francis E. George of Chicago, immediate past president of the USCCB, delivers the homily during Mass at the start of the bishops’ meeting last fall. Cardinal George will deliver the English keynote at this year’s UDMC.

from 1,000 in 2007 to the 6,000 participants expected this year. It is co-sponsored by the Dioceses of Fort Worth and Dallas and attracts professional and volunteer church workers from Tyler, Austin, and San Antonio. Sessions are offered in English, Spanish, and Vietnamese.

The conference’s broad scope of topics contributes to its success.

“The UD Ministry Conference specifically seeks to help participants become better and more knowledgeable volunteers in their parishes,” Carranza says, explaining

the event’s popularity. “This is something other conferences do, but I think UDMC stands out because it specifically addresses continuing education or enrichment for those who teach the faith in parishes and Catholic schools.”

Many of the Friday sessions are designed specifically for teachers, but school parents would also benefit from the information.

“The challenge we face is helping all Catholics in this area understand this conference is for them,” he adds. “It’s a place they can go to find the educational tools needed to seek growth in their personal faith.”

A plethora of session topics include “Teens Standing Strong in a Sex-Crazed World,” “The Faith Community and Domestic Violence,” “Scouting as Youth Ministry,” and “Aging and the Elderly in the Bible.”

The 2011 conference will feature more speakers and exhibitors than last year’s, according to Danielle Schumer, events and communications manager for the University of Dallas School of Ministry.

The long term goal of organizers is to have a nationally known conference.

“We’re doing wonderful things already,” she says. “We eventually want a conference that puts us on a national stage.”

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World Mission Sunday to be observed Oct. 23

Editor's Note: This article has been adapted from a press release sent to the NTC by the Pontifical Mission Societies in the United States.

In anticipation of World Mission Sunday to be held Oct. 23, Monsignor Robert Fuhrman, assistant national director of the Pontifical Mission Societies, toured the dioceses of Texas, including Fort Worth, promoting mission outreach.

World Mission Sunday, organized by the Propagation of the Faith, is a day set aside for Catholics worldwide to recommit themselves to the Church's missionary activity through prayer and sacrifice, according to the Societies' website, www.onefamilyinmission.org. Annually, World Mission Sunday is celebrated on the next-to-last Sunday in October. As described by Blessed Pope John Paul II, World Mission Sunday is "an important day in the life of the Church because it teaches how to give: as an offering made to God, in the Eucharistic celebration and for all the missions of the world" (*Redemptoris Missio* 81).

"Mission is alive and well in Texas," Msgr. Fuhrman said. "Our mission directors and staff in those dioceses are tapping into generous

hearts and minds of Catholics to support our outreach to the poor in mission countries."

Msgr. Fuhrman emphasized the great opportunity presented by the Pontifical Mission Societies. "It's the 'big picture,'" he said. "It's a direct connection into mission work in every corner of the globe. In prayer and sacrifice, Catholics reach directly into Africa, Asia, the Pacific Islands, and Latin America, with the hope of our Lord and concrete help for the poor."

Msgr. Fuhrman came to Texas after a phone call from Father Tom Craig, pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Church in Arlington, and chairman of the Diocese of Fort Worth's Mission Council. Fr. Craig also emphasized the missionary role that all Catholics are called to.

"It's important that we see ourselves as missionary... That's who we are," Fr. Craig said. "By our baptismal call, we are missionaries, and called to support all our brothers and sisters whether foreign or domestic."

There are plans to make World Mission Sunday "front and center" this October, Msgr. Fuhrman said. "Missionaries from Fort Worth serve in Bolivia, Honduras, and Vietnam — and right inside this

diocese," he added.

Fr. Craig said that parishes will receive packets on how to participate in World Mission Sunday, and that Bishop Kevin Vann encourages pastors to get involved.

"We're doing formation to help parishes do missionary outreach," Fr. Craig said.

Fr. Craig added that those interested in helping with the missions should either contact their pastors or parish mission councils.

Mission dioceses — about 1,100 at this time — receive regular annual assistance from the funds collected. In addition, these mission dioceses submit requests to the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples for assistance, among other needs, for catechetical programs, seminaries, the work of Religious Communities, for communication and transportation needs, and for the building of chapels, churches, orphanages and schools. These needs are matched with the funds gathered in each year. The world's national directors of the Propagation of the Faith vote on these requests, matching the funds available with the greatest needs. These funds are then distributed, in their entirety, to mission dioceses throughout the world.

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Bishop Vann, Fr. Ciski to lead pilgrimage to France

Bishop Kevin Vann has announced that he and Father Michael Ciski, TOR, associate pastor of St. Maria Goretti Church in Arlington will lead a 10-day pilgrimage to the shrines of France June 30 to July 9, 2012. The Franciscan University Pilgrimage will include Lyon, Ars, Paray-Le-Monial, Chartres, Mont-St.-Michel, Normandy, Lisieux, Paris, and Lourdes. According to a letter of invitation from Bishop Vann offering a description of the tour, much of the Catholic history of France and that nation's contributions to the Church and the world will be explored.

"Even during times of secularization, turmoil, and war — great saints, wonderful works of art, and a high level of culture," have been among the gifts the French have offered, writes Bishop Vann. The pilgrimage will include the contributions of French saints John Vianney, the Cure of Ars; St. Vincent de Paul; St. Margaret Mary Alocoque; St. John Eudes; and St. Catherine Labore, touring their humble childhood homes, celebrating Mass at and visiting the holy sites associated with their lives.

Highlights of the tour include explorations of Medieval Paris and the Louvre, Notre Dame Cathedral, a cruise on the Seine and a day at the site of the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944 that includes the beaches of Normandy and the American Military Cemetery at St. Laurent where 9,000 American soldiers who died in the campaign are buried.

Parts of two days and one full day in Lourdes will offer pilgrims opportunities on two days to take part in the miraculous baths and blessing of the sick, as well as two opportunities to take part in the evening candlelight procession reciting the Rosary, singing

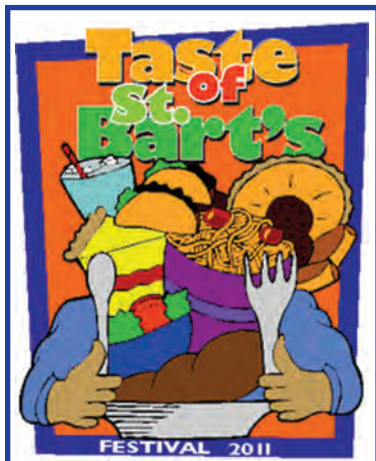
Marian hymns with thousands of other pilgrims from around the world, as well as visits to St. Bernadette's birthplace and the humble home she lived in at the time of the apparitions of Mary. A walking tour will allow the pilgrims to visit the three basilicas nearby and to walk behind the altar of the grotto and see the niche and the spring which flows there.

Bishop Vann closes his letter of invitation with a blessing: "May the sacred and Immaculate Hearts pour forth abundant love and grace into your lives, now and as we travel through France, a land where they have called forth such great devotion and manifested such tender care for all the children of God on this earth."

For more information, contact Franciscan University Pilgrimages at 1-800-437-8368 or go to www.franciscan.edu/pilgrimages.

Arrangements for the pilgrimage are made by Peter's Way Tours, Inc., of Jericho, New York. They can be reached by phone at (800) 225-7662 or (516) 605-1551, by e-mail at peter@petersway.com, or by through their website at www.petersway.com. Estimated package price per person is listed as \$3,495 plus \$550 departure taxes and fuel surcharges with prices subject to change due to fluctuations in currency rates of exchange, fuel charges, and other associated costs. All admissions and travel and hotel are covered by the tour's price, some meals are not. Pilgrims must provide their own transportation to and from Newark Airport.

A deposit of \$350 per person is due on or before Dec. 23. According to tour information the initial deposit must be paid by check or money order. Balances may be paid by credit card, subject to a \$100 surcharge.



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Notice about Thomas H. Teczar

Most Reverend Robert J. McManus, Bishop of Worcester, announced on 9 September 2011, that the Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI decreed that Thomas H. Teczar is dismissed *ex officio et pro bono Ecclesiae* from the clerical state, and is released from all obligations of the Sacred Priesthood, including that of celibacy. Bishop Vann joined Bishop McManus in petitioning the Holy See, through the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, for the laicization of Teczar. Teczar was convicted of sexual assault and indecency with a minor and is serving a 50 year prison sentence in Texas.

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Despite trials at international event, Fort Worth Diocese pilgrims to World Youth Day in Madrid were able to

Strengthen their faith

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

After hearing about the camaraderie and devotion her friends experienced at previous gatherings in Germany and Australia, Abby Rodriguez couldn't wait to spend Aug. 16-21 in Madrid, Spain, participating in World Youth Day 2011. The 21-year-old expected a six-day spiritual adventure that brought together the Vicar of Christ with young Catholics from around the world in a celebration of faith.

What she didn't anticipate was a record breaking crowd of 1.5 million pilgrims filtering into Spain's capital during a heat wave. A blazing sun, coupled with packed venues, a limited water supply, and no shade, presented Rodriguez and her 70 traveling companions from the Diocese of Fort Worth with a challenging worship experience.

"Dehydration was an issue," says Rodriguez who waited six hours in 102-degree heat with other group members to see Pope Benedict XVI only to be told his route had been changed. "Being outdoors was a difficult situation, but we found ways to deal with the sun. People used boxes and blankets to make huts for shade. We tried to make do."

A stomach virus, that swept through the Fort Worth contingent, added to the trying conditions. On the eve of the closing Papal Mass, the North Texans slept outside at the Palacio de Deportes, with thousands of other pilgrims.

"We rallied together by helping the sick in our group," Rodriguez says. "We held the hands of people we hardly knew. Being Catholic means having a sense of charity and we definitely exemplified that."

Madrid was the third time Susan Mullins served as a chaperone for diocesan youth traveling to World Youth Day — an international celebration initiated by Pope John Paul II in the early 1980s. The youth minister from Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton shepherded large groups to gatherings in Sydney, Australia (2008) and Cologne, Germany (2005), but the event in Spain was different.

"Organizers were overwhelmed by the numbers and not prepared," Mullins says expressing her opinion. "And it wasn't just at one event. At the opening Mass there wasn't enough space for people or adequate police presence. It was unsafe to enter (the Plaza de Cibeles), so we left. At the vigil Mass, they ran out of water by noon and heat exhaustion hit everyone."

According to an unnamed source quoted in an Aug. 31 Catholic News Agency story, perhaps as many as 75 percent of the estimated 2 million young people in Madrid World Youth Day events were unregistered, throwing kinks into the planning efforts of Spanish organizers.

Health issues forced Catholics from 11 different North Texas parishes to form a close-knit community. The young travelers, who were mere acquaintances at the beginning of the journey, learned life lessons in compassion and resilience by caring for one another.

"I'd say 90 percent of the group grew stronger because of what they went through," Mullins says thoughtfully. "We just reminded them to 'offer it up' and there was a lot to 'offer up.'"

But, despite the disappointments, sickness, and



ABOVE: Youth from Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Fort Worth take a picture with their new friends from Michigan they met while waiting five hours to see Pope Benedict XVI. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Father Hoa Nguyen of Sacred Heart Parish in Wichita Falls prepares to concelebrate Mass with scores of other visiting priests in Zaragoza, Spain, near the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Pope Benedict waves to millions of youth from his popemobile during the World Youth Day celebration.

(PHOTOS COURTESY OF THUY LE)



heat-related problems experienced in Madrid, there were many "blessed and beautiful moments," during the 23-day pilgrimage, according to the chaperone. In addition to their stay in Spain, the Fort Worth travelers visited shrines and holy sites in Paris and Lourdes, France and in Portugal. Mullins was joined in supervising the group by Father Hoa Nguyen, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Wichita Falls; Deacon Jim Novak, pastoral administrator of Sacred Heart Parish in Seymour; Larry West, middle school youth minister for Good Shepherd Parish in Colleyville; and Bryan Webb, former youth minister at Holy Family Parish in Vernon. Watching Fr. Nguyen concelebrate Mass with scores of other visiting priests in Zaragoza, Spain, near the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar was one of the pilgrimage high points.

"It was wonderful seeing our young people reaching out to say hello to people from other countries like Poland, Iraq, and Kuwait. Their eyes sparkled every time they met someone," Mullins enthused. "The nice thing about World Youth Day is that politics goes by the wayside. Everyone is there for one reason — to be Catholic Christians on a pilgrimage to explore the love of Christ together."

Thuy Le and her brother, Quy, both students at Nolan Catholic High School, attended World Youth Day with 10 other young people from Our Lady of Fatima Parish in Fort Worth. The high school senior, who wrote an essay to win a



slot on the pilgrimage, said she became interested in World Youth Day after viewing a video about the gathering in a sophomore religion class.

"Mr. Baca talked about his experiences at World Youth Day and how much fun it was," says Thuy referring to her former Nolan theology teacher Jonathan Baca.

Ironically, Baca, who now lives in Denver and is discerning a call to the priesthood, was in Madrid and spotted Thuy and her brother on a crowded sidewalk. Seeing her former teacher was just one of the surprises that delighted the Nolan student.

"I loved seeing the large crowds and all the American flags waving," the 17-year-old explains. "I met a lot of great people."

Like other pilgrims participating in the outdoor liturgies, Thuy braved sweltering 100-degree temperatures, but her sacrifice reaped a visual reward. Pope Benedict XVI, perched in his Popemobile, passed by the teenager as she stood in an outdoor plaza.

"It was the best moment of my life," she gushed. "He seemed so young and happy and that made me happy."

Thuy says the World Youth Day experience energized her faith.

"I saw young people praying and singing hymns in the streets," she adds. "It made me realize I shouldn't be ashamed to make the Sign of the Cross in public."



Bishop Kevin Vann serves as chief celebrant of the Mass at which St. Vincent de Paul's new national officers were installed by Diocese of Winona Bishop John Quinn, national episcopal advisor to the Society. Bishop Quinn stands at Bishop Vann's left. St. Francis of Assisi pastor Father Anh Tran, at whose parish the Mass was celebrated, stands at Bishop Vann's far right. (NTC photo / Donna Ryckaert)

SVDP Convention stresses practical, spiritual

FROM PAGE 1

outline of which he presented in his address. The book puts forth a systemic approach to collaborative dialogue between social service programs, community organizations, and the citizens they serve.

"Bridges is not a program," DeVol insists. "It is a set of ideas based on the premise that we must actually learn from the people who live in poverty."

Nothing could be more central to the members of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul who see themselves

as a "listening ear" to the people they assist.

"As Vincentians, we know that walkin' is more important than talkin'," explained Bishop Mark Seitz, Vicar General and Auxiliary Bishop of the Diocese of Dallas in his workshop, "Prayin', Lovin', Walkin', and Talkin': A Texas Take on Vincentian Spirituality."

Founded in Paris in 1833 by a group of Catholic lay people, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is an international Christian community. Members of the Society, who call themselves Vincentians, follow Christ through service to the

poor. Vincentians have a Rule that outlines their spirituality and acts as their guide to growth through service.

"It's truly a call," said Linda Kindel, who served as the National Meeting Committee Chairperson for this year's event. "I never would have imagined myself doing this. If you'd told me that I'd be going into people's homes and asking them personal questions, I'd never have believed you. But I was called — and if you talk to other Vincentians, they'll tell you the same thing. It's truly a miracle."

The Vincentian approach to assisting people in need involves personal interviews in the homes of the people they help in order to get to know them better and to avoid what the Vincentians regard as the indignity of having to expose their neediness to others by going to the offices of public welfare agencies.

Because of the way Vincentian works of charity flow from their spirituality, conference workshops covered a wide variety of topics. There were practical topics such as "Running Successful Stores for Mission and Profit" and "How to Help Those With Mental Illness"; sessions on spirituality like Vincentian Formation; even administrative issues like "Who Are Those Guys? — Marketing Basics for Councils and Conferences."

Yet through it all, the Vincentian identity as part and parcel of their ministry remained at the forefront. Bishop Kevin Vann, who presided over the closing Mass Saturday evening summed it up well. He said, "The Society of St. Vincent de Paul is more than charity. It is a response of love, rooted in faith and going forth in mission. It comes from and is in communion with the Church."



Bishop Kevin Vann delivers a homily of appreciation and encouragement at the Mass for the SVDP convention Sept. 3, at St. Francis of Assisi Church, Grapevine. (NTC photo / Donna Ryckaert)



Julie Douglas co-presented a workshop on the "Practical Vincentian Approach to Social Justice". (NTC photo / Donna Ryckaert)

The SVDP approach to helping those in need emphasizes their dignity

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

Everyone knows what they do. Who hasn't filled the grocery bags with the envelopes attached, helped stock a food pantry, or contributed to the special collections? Those who work in parish offices and social service organizations alike know that if someone is in need, the Society of St. Vincent de Paul is there to help. But how many people truly know who the Vincentians are?

"Vincentians come from all walks of life: all ages and backgrounds," explains Julie Walters, Executive Director of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, Diocesan Council of Dallas. "We are a religious community. Through our activities our members grow spiritually in communion with each other and the people that we serve."

A religious community? As in, those who experience a "call" from God?

"I absolutely had the experience of a call," Walters affirms.

A cradle Catholic who attends Holy Trinity Parish, just north of downtown Dallas, Walters recalls a particular Mass in 2001. The

For Vincentians that moment of conversion is key. St.

Vincent de Paul himself said, "God asks first for your heart and only then for your work."

Gospel reading that Sunday was Matthew 25 ("... I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink..."). As she listened, she asked God how she could live that Gospel. In response to her question, a member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul spoke during the homily. He described the Society as a vehicle for living that Gospel call. As he made an appeal for membership, Walters remembers, "I literally felt God speak to me and tell me, 'You HAVE to do this.' It was a moment of conversion for me."

For Vincentians that moment of conversion is key. St. Vincent de Paul himself said, "God asks first for your heart and only then for your work."

Even so, the saint whose name the Society bears was not its founder. That distinction belongs to a small group of French students, including

the now Blessed Frederic Ozanam.

The group, which met frequently to discuss the intellectual ideas of the day, was engaged in a lively discussion of faith when someone in their midst challenged them by asking how they could defend the Church when it did so little to help the people of their time. Rather than become insulted, the friends were moved to action and, in 1833, created a Conference of Charity in Paris. The purpose of this little conference was simply to help the members live out their baptismal call through charitable activity. They soon adopted St. Vincent de Paul as their patron because his ministry grew out of small works of charity.

"Our motto is that no act of charity is foreign to the Society of St. Vincent de Paul," said Walters.

At the heart of those acts of charity is true love and a deep respect for the dignity of the human person. Vincentians enact this through the home visit.

"It's what makes us different," Walters explained. "We go to them. That is a very powerful moment. It helps to restore dignity to people. By going to them, we become a guest in their home. We listen to their stories and are receptive to what they have to say."

Being that "listening ear" in the homes of those they serve corresponds to the most fundamental aspect of Vincentian spirituality. The first part of the Rule of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul clearly states that "Members show their commitment through person-to-person contact." The Society is not an institution. In fact, Vincentians know that the primary purpose of the Society is the spiritual growth of its members. Their works of charity are merely a

vehicle.

Bishop Mark Seitz, Auxiliary Bishop of Dallas and Vicar General of the Diocese of Dallas drove this point home in his workshop during the Society of St. Vincent de Paul National Meeting this year. As he cautioned Vincentians against equating financial aid as "help" he said, "Think of this: If the Society had no money at all would it still exist?"

And the Vincentians answered with a resounding, "Yes!"

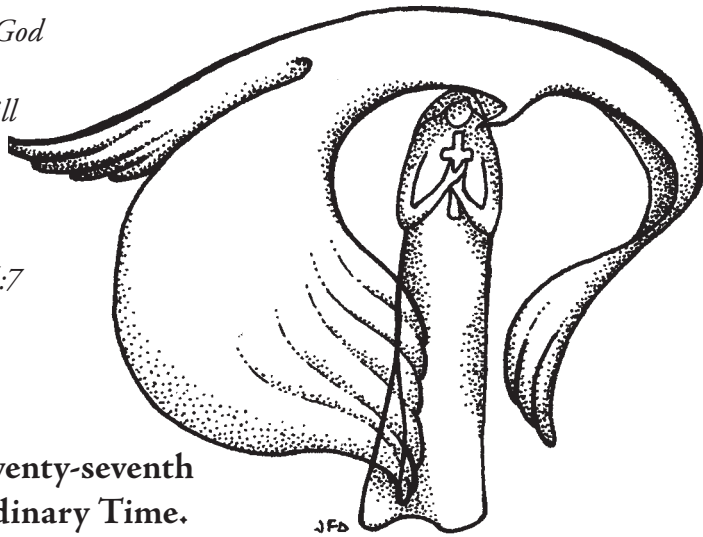
National Episcopal Advisor Bishop John Quinn installs the new national vice presidents of the Society of SVDP at St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Grapevine. Third from the left is Ralph Hassel, national vice president for the South Central Region of the Society. Hassel has been a member of the Holy Family Conference in Fort Worth based in Holy Family Church for 18 years, and is a former conference president, diocesan council president, and regional vice president. He is now beginning a second six-year term as vice president. (NTC photo / Donna Ryckaert)



Word = Life

Readings Reflections

“The peace of God that surpasses all understanding will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”
— *Philippians 4:7*



October 2, Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time. Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalm 80:9, 12-16, 19-20
- 2) Philippians 4:6-9
Gospel) Matthew 21:33-43

By Jeff Hedglen

In this week's second reading from St. Paul's Letter to the Philippians, we are told to have no anxiety at all. As I read this I thought, "Have you seen today's paper?"

Whether in the television news, the daily paper, on the radio, or Internet blogs, there are constant reminders of troubling things happening these days. From earthquakes and hurricanes to flooding and wildfires, to unemployment and a collapsed economy, to famine and war, not to mention personal struggles with relationships and illnesses, there sure is a lot of reason to freak out a bit.

The Scripture reading brought to mind a song from the 1980s, "Don't Worry Be Happy." But with all this stuff going on, simply not worrying and being happy seems an ostrichlike, head-in-the-sand kind of attitude.

As I kept reading St. Paul's letter, I discovered that the message is not so much that we are not to worry, rather it is more this: Instead of worrying, try praying and petitioning God with thanksgiving. If we do this, instead of the fear and unease that comes with anxiety, we will receive "the peace of God that surpasses all understanding." As if this were not enough, St. Paul says this peace will also guard our hearts and minds in Jesus.

I remember one time when I faced a huge decision. The consequences of the choice would affect many people and would quite possibly change my life dramatically. I fretted over all the possible scenarios and implications for weeks. My mind and my heart were doing battle, with my desires and loyalties as weapons. Round and round options and opportunities swirled in my mind. I shared this with a friend, and she said, "Don't think about it, just do what you can and trust the Holy Spirit."

I think this is the message from St. Paul. Worrying can drive us crazy, but if we let go of our need to be in control and offer our heartfelt prayers to God, peace will come. That doesn't mean the problems go away or that the going will get easier; it is just a promise that God will walk with us and bring us peace on the journey.

QUESTIONS:

How do you typically handle stressful situations? How has your faith helped in these situations? What are some things you can do to let go of the worry and trust in God?

“Everything is ready; come to the feast.”
— *Matthew 22:4*

October 9, Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 25:6-10a
Psalm 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5,6
- 2) Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20
Gospel) Matthew 22:1-14

By Sharon K. Perkins

I had just finished a very long and hectic Saturday morning working our neighborhood garage sale and my empty stomach was growling in protest. As I entered my front door, my senses were welcomed by the sweet, buttery aroma of freshly baked cookies cooling on the pan. Homemade peanut butter chocolate chip, topped with chunks of chocolate peanut butter cups. Oh, bliss!

I was about to reach for one and was already imagining a glass of cold milk to go with it when my teenaged daughter stopped me with the announcement that the cookies were not for household consumption. "I'm going to my friend's house to finish a project for school and I'm taking the cookies," she informed me, "because I'm always going over there and I don't want to go empty-handed this time."

When I started to object, she reminded me that I had taught her that this is what one does as an invited guest. One prepares a gift to show one's appreciation for the invitation. I'll admit she had me there; how could I possibly argue? Her friend's parents' frequent hospitality was being acknowledged, and matched, by my daughter's luscious homemade gift given in return.

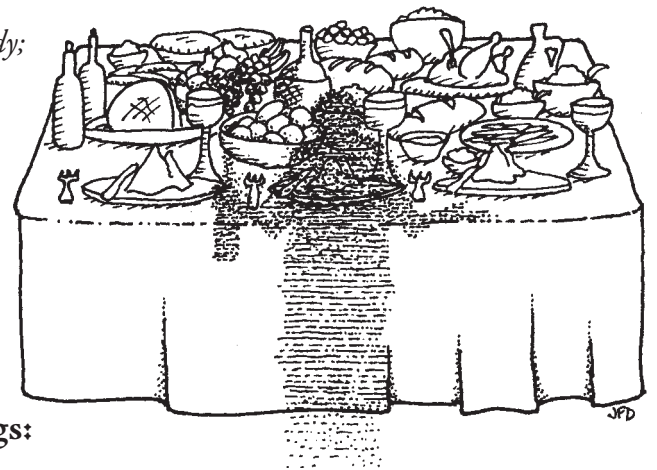
This Sunday's readings are filled with images of unreserved invitation, cordial hospitality — and food! Not just enough food to get by, but mouth-watering, "juicy, rich food and pure, choice wines," an overflowing cup and a wedding feast of fattened cattle.

The gracious host, of course, is the Lord, who prepares an enticing banquet, issues the invitation and waits with undisguised yearning for us to accept the gift of his love, his Bbody and Bblood presented as food. How crushingly disappointing it must be when we partake nonchalantly — or worse yet, don't respond at all because we have "something better to do."

Bearing homemade cookies, a bottle of wine or a bouquet of flowers to the home of one's host or hostess might be an old-fashioned custom promulgated by grandmothers and mothers of days gone by. But it also bespeaks sincere thankfulness and an attitude of thoughtful preparation for receiving the gift of hospitality that is offered. Accepting the Lord's invitation to His sacred meal deserves better than our empty hands and indifferent hearts.

QUESTIONS:

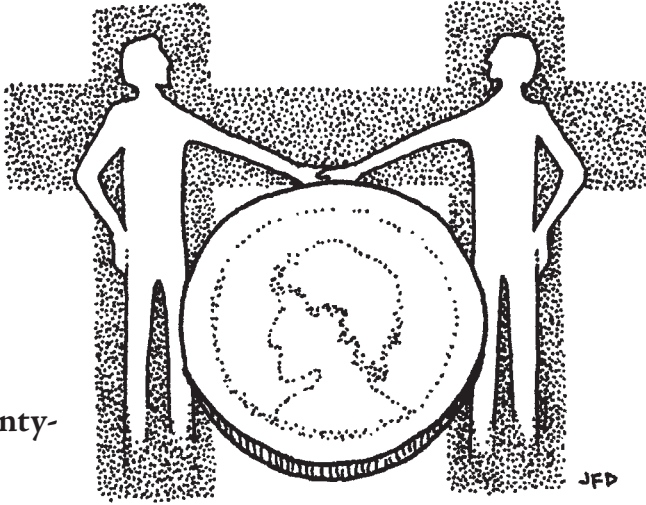
When was the last time you reflected on the abundance of God's love for you as a personal invitation anticipating your response? How do you prepare yourself to receive Jesus' banquet of the Eucharist?



Word = Life

Readings Reflections

“Whose image is this, and whose inscription?’ They replied, ‘Caesar’s.’”
— Matthew 22:20b-21a



October 16, Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Isaiah 45:1, 4-6
Psalm 96:1, 3-5, 7-10
- 2) 1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b
Gospel) Matthew 22:15-21

By Jeff Hensley

Over the last year, I've lost, to death, two very special friends who believed strongly that the Gospel was not to be brought in word alone, “but also in power and in the Holy Spirit and with much conviction,” as Paul stated in his First Letter to the Thessalonians.

Both of these friends were 15 or more years older than I, but one was active in leadership in the local Catholic charismatic renewal before me, and the other was an active leader in the renewal after me. Both were fine Catholics, admired by others for their character and leadership. Each was someone to whom others turned for advice, comfort, and counsel.

These two men would agree with today's responsorial psalm response, which begins:

“Give the Lord glory and honor; Sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all you lands. Tell his glory among the nations; among all peoples, his wondrous deeds.”

Also, each of them, though their politics were vastly different, would have found no problem with Jesus' brilliant answer to the Pharisees' attempt to trip him up which ends with Jesus saying, “Then repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar and to God what belongs to God.”

Each of these men entered into dialogue with others in a reasonable fashion, discussing the political issues of the day and how to go about resolving them. But they also knew, given their different political bents, any resolutions of the issues of the day, other than those involving the sacredness of human life, would involve compromise.

Perhaps there is a pattern here in my two friends' lives that would help today's politicians to act a bit more like statesmen, and we, the not disinterested citizens of our nation, to act more like patriots in support of the common good rather than pursuing only our own narrow self-interests. Perhaps the key is that we as a nation have forgotten to put God first, because having laid that as the cornerstone of our lives, everything else comes into proper order.

QUESTIONS:

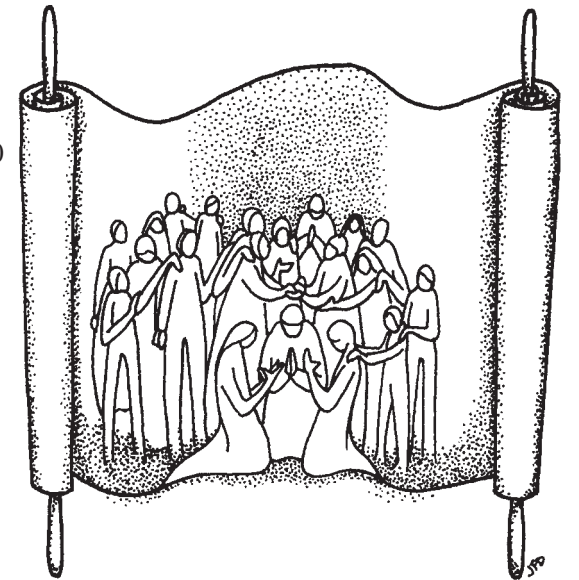
How do you think people's faith — whatever their politics — might become visible in their discussion of issues with others? How might this encourage a more civil tone?

October 23, Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Cycle A. Readings:

- 1) Exodus 22:20-26
Psalm 18:2-4, 47, 51
- 2) 1 Thessalonians 1:5c-10
Gospel) Matthew 22:34-40

“Which commandment in the law is the greatest?’”
— Matthew 22:36



By Jean Denton

As correspondent for my diocesan newspaper, I cover the western part of Virginia. That includes many, mostly rural communities in the Appalachian region. I've lived all my life in urban areas, but ever since my very first visit to a small Catholic parish in Clintwood, I can't seem to get enough of documenting the Gospel life among people in Appalachia.

Catholics in this largely non-Catholic region love their faith and their church. But they don't come to church to genuflect properly or learn the fine points of church doctrine. As in most remote places in the world, religious ritual and formation have a role, but for the most part expressions of faith are more practical.

Parishioners come together to receive and share the life of Christ.

They come because they love God, and they love and want to care for each other and their neighbors. That's what Jesus, in today's Gospel, calls all of us to do: Love God and your neighbor. He says these greatest commandments make up the entirety of his message.

St. Joseph Parish in Clintwood has only about 20 households in an impoverished county where the coal industry has come and gone and left behind a lot of need. There's so much need among their elderly and low-income neighbors that this tiny parish will never be able to address it all.

But they try because they love their neighbors. Every summer, for 12 weeks solid, they host visiting youth groups from around the country who come to help them serve their neighbors with roofing, plumbing, and home repair.

The visitors are embraced by the people of St. Joseph who serve them a meal every evening and share their local culture and music. They worship together, learning how loving God and neighbor are part of the same reality.

One youth leader explained that when visiting with his teens at the end of their work week, “They don't talk about how hard the work was; they talk about the people they've gotten to know.”

Conversely, a local parishioner explained, “The young people make a big impression, because everyone knows about them and why they are here. You truly believe you are seeing God.”

QUESTIONS:

How is your love of God borne out in your love of neighbor and vice versa?

Nuestro Pastor Habla

La enseñanza social católica nos llama a trabajar por el amor y la dignidad de todos

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo,

En el mes de septiembre, la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* ha sido bendecida al recibir las convenciones nacionales de dos importantes organizaciones que hacen un trabajo importante en el área de la doctrina social católica. En primer lugar, la *Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl* celebró su conferencia nacional en Grapevine desde el 31 de agosto hasta el 3 de septiembre.

En mis años de ministerio sacerdotal, y ahora como obispo de la *Diócesis de Fort Worth*, siempre he valorado mucho el trabajo de la *Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl*. Cuando fui estudiante en el *Seminario Kenrick* de St. Louis, Missouri, aprendí mucho sobre el patrimonio y la vida de *San Vicente de Paúl*, y la familia vicenciana (incluyendo Federico Ozanam y la *Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl*) de los sacerdotes de la *Congregación de la misión y las hijas de la caridad*. Esa fue una parte importante de mi formación que sigue conmigo en la actualidad. Tengo un ícono de San Vicente de Paúl y Santa Luisa de Marillac en mi capilla dentro de la casa parroquial de la catedral aquí en Fort Worth.

La *Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl* es un verdadero testimonio de la misión de la Iglesia para llegar a aquellos que están en necesidad, y hacerlo con la compasión y el amor de Jesús mismo. A través de su trabajo, la *Sociedad de San Vicente de Paúl* logra que la vida y el espíritu de San Vicente sigan vivos en nuestro mundo de hoy. Quiero agradecerle a la Sociedad su invaluable labor en la vida de la Iglesia, y quiero que sepan que su trabajo compasivo realmente hace una diferencia en las vidas de muchos en los Estados Unidos y en otros lugares.

También estoy muy contento de que la *Diócesis de Fort Worth* ha sido anfitrión de la reunión anual de *Caridades católicas EE.UU.* y la *Cumbre de la pobreza "Think and Act Anew"* ("Pensar y actuar de nuevo"), celebrado aquí en Fort Worth del 18 al 21 de septiembre. Esta reunión de participantes de todo el país nos ofrece la oportunidad de renovar y refinar nuestros propios esfuerzos al abordar y ayudar a las personas que sufren de la pobreza, y para afirmar nuestra solidaridad con aquellos que realizan esta importante labor de la Iglesia en todo el país. *Caridades católicas de los Estados Unidos* ha hecho y sigue haciendo un trabajo increíble al proveer tanto por las obras de misericordia corporales como espirituales a favor de los pobres y necesitados en una amplia variedad de áreas y de circunstancias. *Caridades católicas*, en muchos aspectos, ha



Monseñor Kevin Vann

sido la columna vertebral de los esfuerzos de la Iglesia en ser una presencia constante entre los pobres y, como el beato Papa Juan Pablo II pidió con tanta frecuencia, se ha involucrado en la construcción de una verdadera civilización de amor. El Papa Benedicto XVI, en su primera encíclica *Deus caritas est*, también destacó la importancia de la labor de organizaciones como *Caridades católicas*:

Quien ama a Cristo ama a la Iglesia y quiere que ésta sea cada vez más expresión e instrumento del amor que proviene de Él. El colaborador de toda organización caritativa católica quiere trabajar con la Iglesia y, por tanto, con el Obispo, con el fin de que el amor de Dios se difunda en el mundo. Por su participación en el servicio de amor de la Iglesia, desea ser testigo de Dios y de Cristo y, precisamente por eso, hacer el bien a los hombres gratuitamente. (33)

Sé de primera mano que la presencia de las *Caridades católicas de la diócesis de Fort Worth* sigue siendo un instrumento de la misericordia y la esperanza a miles de personas cada año. Estoy muy agradecido por su trabajo y su presencia aquí en la diócesis y en todo el país. Gracias a Heather Reynolds, todo su equipo de trabajo, y miembros del consejo por todo lo que hacen, y por el trabajo envuelto en ser anfitriones para la actividad de *Caridades católicas EE.UU.* aquí en Fort Worth. Fue un honor tenerlos con nosotros, y sobre todo de el haber acogido a tantos involucrados en la *Doctrina social de la Iglesia*. Un agradecimiento especial también para el padre Larry Snyder, director de *Caridades católicas EE.UU.*

Todo esto sirve para recordarnos de la riqueza de la doctrina social de la Iglesia, que tiene su fundamento en la dignidad de cada persona humana. La Iglesia siempre ha

estado, desde sus comienzos, preocupada por la dignidad de la persona humana, quien fue creada a la imagen y semejanza de Dios y la Iglesia; existe para asegurar que se promueva, proteja y sirva a esta dignidad en todo momento y en cada circunstancia. La *Doctrina social católica* se ha desarrollado en la tradición de 2,000 años de enseñanza de la Iglesia, pero ha sido más explícitamente desarrollada en los últimos 120 años, sobre todo por el *Magisterio pontificio*. La primera encíclica social del Papa León XIII en 1891, *Rerum novarum*, fue un documento fundacional en la historia de la *Doctrina social de la Iglesia* y sobre todo se dirigió a los derechos de los trabajadores durante la época de mayor florecimiento de la revolución industrial. Los papas del siglo XX han seguido sacando de la riqueza de la *Sagrada escritura* y la *Sagrada tradición* para exponer sobre la *Doctrina social de la Iglesia*. Aplicaran esas riquezas a los problemas actuales económicos y sociales que enfrentan al hombre moderno. Hay una serie de grandes encíclicas sociales por escrita a la mayoría de los Papas del siglo XX, muchas de ellas en los aniversarios específicos a la promulgación de la *Rerum novarum*. La encíclica social emitida más reciente, *Caritas in veritate* o *Amor en la verdad*, por el Papa Benedicto XVI, nos llegó en el 2009.

Desarrolladas por los Papas modernos, estas enseñanzas sociales proporcionan directrices y criterios que se utilizarán en los tiempos, circunstancias y situaciones diferentes, en las que puede ser amenazada o disminuida la dignidad de la persona humana. Estas directrices se van a utilizar para que la verdadera justicia y paz pueda ser establecida por un ordenamiento apropiado del estado, la familia, y los derechos de las personas. La *Doctrina social católica* nos llama a todos a trabajar para establecer una civilización de amor en que la dignidad de cada persona se promueva y proteja, y nos enseñe que todos nosotros — como miembros del Cuerpo de Cristo, la Iglesia — estemos llamados a seguir el ejemplo del buen samaritano, responder a los sufrimientos de los demás, y dar rienda suelta al amor de Cristo. Como el beato Papa Juan Pablo II nos enseña:

Siguiendo la parábola evangélica, se podría decir que el sufrimiento, que bajo tantas formas diversas está presente en el mundo humano, está también presente para irradiar el amor al hombre, precisamente ese desinteresado don del propio «yo» en favor de los demás hombres, de los hombres que sufren. Podría decirse que el mundo del sufrimiento humano invoca sin pausa otro mundo: el del amor humano; y aquel amor desinteresado, que brota en su corazón y en sus obras, el hombre lo debe

de algún modo al sufrimiento. No puede el hombre « prójimo » pasar con desinterés ante el sufrimiento ajeno, en nombre de la fundamental solidaridad humana; y mucho menos en nombre del amor al prójimo. Debe « pararse », « conmoverse », actuando como el Samaritano de la parábola evangélica. La parábola en sí expresa una verdad profundamente cristiana, pero a la vez tan universalmente humana. No sin razón, aun en el lenguaje habitual se llama obra « de buen samaritano » toda actividad en favor de los hombres que sufren y de todos los necesitados de ayuda.

— Sobre el Sentido Cristiano del Sufrimiento Humano, *Salvifici Doloris*, 29

Animo a todos a tomar algún tiempo para estudiar la *Doctrina social de la Iglesia*, tal como se presenta en el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*, así como algunas de las más recientes encíclicas sociales papales. El *Consejo pontificio para la justicia y la paz* también ha publicado el *Compendio de la doctrina social de la Iglesia*, que es otro recurso excelente para estudiar la enseñanza social católica. Este recurso puede ser adquirido a través de www.usccbpublishing.org.

Por último, también quisiera aprovechar esta oportunidad para reflexionar sobre el décimo aniversario de los ataques terroristas del 11 de septiembre de 2001. Como hemos visto, una vez más el horror que se desató en ese día terrible, tenemos que orar por los que murieron y pedir que la sanación, fe y perdón puedan continuar entre sus familias y seres queridos. También tenemos que seguir recordando con gratitud y amor a los héroes caídos de ese día: los bomberos, policías y otros socorristas valientes que dieron el máximo sacrificio por ayudar a que los demás llegaran a lugares seguros. Ellos realmente vivieron las palabras del Señor: "No hay amor más grande que dar la vida por sus amigos" (*Juan 15:13*). Me gustaría concluir con las palabras del beato Papa Juan Pablo II de la audiencia general del 12 de septiembre de 2001, el día después del ataque a nuestro país. Estas palabras las ofrezco para nuestra reflexión y oración, ya que nuevamente estamos recordando los acontecimientos del 11 de septiembre de 2001:

Ayer fue un día tenebroso en la historia de la humanidad, una terrible afrenta contra la dignidad del hombre. Desde que recibí la noticia, seguí con intensa participación el desarrollo de la situación, elevando al Señor mi apremiante oración. ¿Cómo pueden verificarse episodios de una crueldad tan

CONTINUADA A LA DERECHA



Eric Kemper toma un momento para componerse el 6 de septiembre mientras revisa los escombros que quedan de su casa después de ser destruida por los incendios forestales que siguen fuera de control cerca de Bastrop, Texas. Por lo menos dos personas han muerto en los incendios, que han destruido más de 700 hogares y han ennegrecido aproximadamente 45 millas cuadradas alrededor de Bastrop, una ciudad cerca de Austin, la capital del estado. (Foto CNS / Mike Stone, Reuters)

Parroquia sirve como refugio para víctimas desplazadas por incendios forestales en Texas

BASTROP, Texas (CNS) — La parroquia *Ascensión* en Bastrop, ha estado sirviendo como refugio y centro neurálgico para los esfuerzos de socorro relacionados con los incendios forestales en el estado.

Hasta el 7 de septiembre, incendios forestales han sido listados durante 296 días consecutivos en un Texas azotado por sequía. Pero en la reciente oleada de llamas a principios de septiembre, más de 1,500 casas han sido destruidas en el estado y cuatro muertes han sido atribuidas a los incendios.

“No estamos rechazando a nadie”, dijo Steve Venzon, uno de cuatro feligreses de *Ascensión* que están tomando turnos diarios de seis horas para dirigir los esfuerzos en la iglesia. El pueblo de Bastrop y el condado Bastrop están en el corazón de la zona del fuego en la *Diócesis de Austin*, compuesta de 25 condados.

Ascensión comenzó a alojar

sus primeros evacuados el 4 de septiembre, pero rápidamente llenó su salón parroquial. Los evacuados se movieron al edificio parroquial de educación religiosa, donde 50 personas se estaban quedando, dijo Venzon a *Catholic News Service* durante una entrevista telefónica el 7 de septiembre.

Venzon añadió que el edificio de educación religiosa tenía catres para 200 y que esperaba una oleada de evacuados con el cierre del refugio de emergencia de la *Cruz roja*. Dijo que la parroquia, la *Cruz roja* y la *Agencia federal de manejo de emergencias (FEMA)* estaban coordinando esfuerzos; con una declaración federal de estado de emergencia del 7 de septiembre para las zonas impactadas, *FEMA* puede juntar más recursos para ayudar a aquellos afectados por los incendios.

Si el edificio de educación religiosa se llena, dijo Venzon,

añadirían espacio para camas en el salón parroquial. “Después de eso, Dios nos ayude”, añadió.

Venzon dijo que el pastor, padre Rafael Padilla Valdez, estaba en la primera semana del primer nombramiento parroquial de su sacerdocio cuando azotaron los incendios forestales. “Ha hecho un trabajo notable”, dijo.

Christian González, director de comunicaciones para la *Diócesis de Austin*, dijo que los incendios forestales eran una combinación de sequía y calor — la zona de Austin ha tenido más de 80 días de temperaturas altas sobre los 100 grados este año — además de una fuente irónica: el huracán Lee.

Aunque la tormenta tropical nunca empapó a Texas, ésta estuvo lo suficientemente cerca para que sus vientos “se chuparan alguna de la humedad que teníamos” en el aire, dijo González.

Obispo pide a ‘supercomité’ recordar pobres en conversaciones de recortes

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Los directores de los comités de política internacional y nacional pidieron al *Comité conjunto selecto sobre reducción del déficit*, popularmente conocido como el “supercomité”, recordar a los pobres y vulnerables mientras diseñan un plan para atender el déficit financiero de la nación.

“En este esfuerzo ustedes examinarán datos, tablas y presupuestos alternativos interminables”, dijeron el obispo Howard J. Hubbard de Albany, Nueva York, director del *Comité sobre justicia y paz internacional*, y el obispo Stephen E. Blaize de Stockton, California, director del *Comité sobre justicia y desarrollo humano nacional*, en su carta del 31 de agosto.

“Detrás de todos esos números hay personas que servimos todos los días en nuestras parroquias, escuelas, hospitales, refugios y comedores públicos. Los más pobres y más vulnerables no tienen cabilderos poderosos, pero tienen las más apremiantes necesidades y un reclamo especial a nuestras conciencias individuales y opciones nacionales, especialmente en estos tiempos de desempleo masivo, creciente pobreza y creciente hambre”, dijeron.

El supercomité, compuesto por seis miembros del *Senado* y seis de la *Casa de representantes*, y divididos igualmente entre demócratas y republicanos, fue creado como parte de un trato logrado en agosto para aumentar el límite de la deuda nacional. Este se reunirá por primera

vez el 16 de septiembre y, para el *Día de acción de gracias*, tiene que recomendar recortes por \$1.5 millones de millones distribuidos durante 10 años. Si sus recomendaciones no son aceptadas, se activarán recortes de \$1.2 millones de millones distribuidos durante 10 años, la mitad involucrando gastos de defensa.

“Un marco de trabajo justo para presupuestos futuros no puede depender de recortes desproporcionados en servicios para personas pobres y vulnerables. Estos programas tienen que hacerse más eficaces, eficientes y receptivos, y debemos trabajar para fortalecer y mejorarlos sobre una base continua”, dijeron los obispos Hubbard y Blaize.

“Sin embargo, sería erróneo equilibrar presupuestos futuros, hiriendo aquellos que ya son más indefensos, al recortar programas como la ayuda extranjera, programas de vivienda asequible, nutrición infantil y servicios médicos”, dijeron. “Un marco de trabajo justo también requiere un sacrificio compartido por todos, incluyendo aumentar los ingresos adecuados; eliminar gastos militares innecesarios y otros; y atender justamente los costos a largo plazo de los programas de seguro médico y jubilación”.

Los dos obispos ofrecieron al supercomité criterios morales para tomar decisiones presupuestarias.

“Toda decisión presupuestaria debe ser evaluada por si protege o amenaza la vida y dignidad humanas”, dijeron.

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@fwdiocese.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.

salvaje? El corazón del hombre es un abismo del que brotan a veces planes de inaudita atrocidad, capaces de destruir en unos instantes la vida serena y laboriosa de un pueblo. Pero la fe sale a nuestro encuentro en estos momentos en los que todo comentario parece inadecuado. La palabra de Cristo es la única que puede dar una respuesta a los interrogantes que se agitan en nuestro espíritu. Aun cuando parecen dominar las tinieblas, el creyente sabe que el mal y la muerte no tienen la última palabra. Aquí se funda la esperanza cristiana:

aquí se alimenta, en este momento, nuestra confianza apoyada en la oración.

+ Kevin W. Vann

+ Obispo Kevin W. Vann.
JCD, DD



Peregrino lleva una bandera de los Estados Unidos en medio de la nutrida concurrencia antes del inicio de la Misa de clausura de las Jornadas Mundiales de la Juventud, en la base aérea de Cuatro Vientos de Madrid, el 21 de agosto. (Foto CNS/Paul Haring)

Noticias

de la Iglesia

Se honra a la Virgen María con 'gran procesión', para celebrar la fundación de Los Ángeles en su 230° aniversario

LOS ANGELES (CNS) — La gran procesión mariana se inició dentro de *La Placita* temprano en la tarde del 3 de septiembre, un día anterior al 230° aniversario de la fundación y dedicación de Los Ángeles a *Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles*.

“Aquí es donde Los Ángeles nació. Aquí es donde empezó a existir nuestra gran ciudad”, dijo el padre claretiano Roland Lozano, pastor de la primera iglesia de Los Ángeles, que está cerca a lo que hoy es la *Avenida César Chávez* con *Main Street*.

Entonces los 300 peregrinos modernos, que representaban 44 personas de ascendencia española, india y afroamericana, que empezaron su viaje en Sonora, México y después, acompañados por cuatro soldados, hicieron la caminata desde la *Misión de San Gabriel* para colonizar el nuevo asentamiento de “El Pueblo de *Nuestra Señora la Reina de los Ángeles*”. Originalmente fue el 4 de septiembre del año 1781; este día replicaron



Muchas personas marcharon desde la *Iglesia La Placita* hasta la *Catedral de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles*, durante una procesión mariana, para celebrar el 230° aniversario de la fundación de la Ciudad de los Ángeles, el 3 de septiembre, en Los Ángeles. (Foto CNS/ Víctor Alemán, VIDA NUEVA)

participaba en el evento. “Y en la catedral, muchas veces, cuando hemos organizado marchas, ha sido triste la intención con la que las hicimos casi todas, pues eran por el funeral de un policía o de un bombero; pero hoy la intención de nuestra procesión es la de celebrar”.

Erika Manier, de 16 años de edad, estuvo de acuerdo. “Creo que es algo estupendo ver cómo tanta gente se reúne solamente con la intención de hablar de la Virgen María y celebrar unidos como comunidad verdadera”, dijo la alumna de la escuela preparatoria del *Inmaculado corazón*.

El arzobispo de Los Ángeles, Jose H. Gómez, les dio la bienvenida a las personas que participaron en la procesión, desde un estrado improvisado en la plaza. Y dijo que era muy adecuado que la celebración continuara en la catedral con cuyo nombre se celebra a la santa patrona de la Ciudad de Los Ángeles.

la procesión por las calles de *Main* y *Temple* hasta llegar a la *Catedral de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles*.

En transporte ornamentado, seis miembros de la *Hermandad del Señor de los milagros*, vestidos

con túnicas sueltas, llevaban una estatua de nuestra bienaventurada Madre con el Niño Jesús de tamaño casi actual, danzantes aztecas marchaban al compás del ritmo de un tambor.

“Creo que es importante que reconozcamos la historia de Los Ángeles, y cómo nuestra fe católica formó parte importante de esa historia”, dijo Tom LaBonge, concejal de la Ciudad de Los Ángeles, que

Los católicos deben ligar sus creencias con participación política, dice orador, en conferencia sobre *Ciudadanos fieles*

Por Beth Griffin
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — La política es algo bueno; la participación dentro de la vida pública es una obligación moral, y los católicos necesitan realizar un mejor trabajo al ligar sus creencias con su participación política, de acuerdo con un orador que tomó parte en una conferencia que se llevó a cabo el 6 de septiembre, y que llevó el título de *Ciudadanos fieles: votantes, obispos y elecciones presidenciales*.

En ese programa, organizado por la *Universidad Jesuita de Fordham*, se concentró el trabajo en una exploración del documento sobre responsabilidad política, publicado cada cuatro años por los obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos.

“El proceso de polarización se escurre dentro de nuestra vida de iglesia, y con frecuencia nos debemos preguntar (si) nuestra fe le da forma a nuestra participación política o, al revés, lo político le da forma a

nuestra fe. Podemos ciertamente repartir el trabajo en nuestra Iglesia, pero no debemos dividir nuestra comunidad de fe”, dijo John Carr, director ejecutivo del *Departamento de justicia, paz y desarrollo humanos*, que depende de los obispos de los Estados Unidos.

“Todos nosotros, tanto obispos, como profesores, miembros del personal, seglares, académicos y estudiantes, necesitamos realizar un mejor trabajo para ligar nuestras creencias con nuestras acciones en la vida pública”, añadió.

Desde el año 1976, los obispos católicos de los EE.UU. publican cada cuatro años un documento en el que explican cómo se debe ligar las enseñanzas de la iglesia con la responsabilidad de participación política.

“En estos tiempos en los que vivimos dentro de un ambiente de intenso cinismo y, francamente, frustración justificable para con el proceso político, la cosa que la Iglesia

enseña y que los obispos han dicho, que va contra corriente de la cultura actual, es que la participación en la política es una buena cosa, que es una obligación moral y que es una parte esencial de ser ciudadano de los Estados Unidos y católico”, dijo Carr. “Y eso es quizá más en contra de la corriente en lo que se refiere a lo sagrado de la vida, a que la guerra es el último recurso, que los pobres deben ponerse primero y que al matrimonio no se le debe de dar otra definición de la que ya tiene”.

Y dijo que los católicos comparten una unión de fe y no de participación política. “Somos iglesia y no camarilla de cabilderos. Somos una comunidad de fe y un grupo de intereses creados. Lo que nos une a todos es la palabra de Dios y las enseñanzas de la Iglesia; no la política ni la ideología”.

Carr dijo que en el documento *Ciudadanos fieles* se fundamentan los principios básicos y se aplican asuntos de suma importancia que tiene que

resolver el país. Históricamente, las versiones del documento han compendiado las enseñanzas de la Iglesia, con énfasis en el papel de los laicos y con estímulo para la participación y el compromiso. “Lo que llevemos a la vida pública no es solamente lo que creemos, sino también lo que realicemos. ¿Quién le da de comer al hambriento? ¿Quién le da refugio al que no tiene hogar? ¿Quién atiende a los pobres?”

En el documento *Ciudadanos fieles*, se nos exhorta a la formación de conciencia y a la práctica de la prudencia, dijo Carr. Se les dice a los católicos que resistan el mal y que actúen con responsabilidad positiva para lograr que las cosas se tornen mejores. Se dice que las personas deben distinguir entre asuntos morales que no son de la misma importancia, como por ejemplo, dijo: “Un millón de abortos no es lo mismo que un recorte en el programa de *WIC*”.

“Necesitamos contar con mayor

número de católicos en ambos partidos políticos dentro de la vida pública, llevando nuestras creencias a la plaza pública y luchando por ellas”, dijo Carr. “Necesitamos más diálogo dentro de nuestra iglesia y necesitamos entender si la política no trata de nuestros valores fundamentales, entonces solamente se trata de dinero, egoísmo y poder”.

Robert George, profesor de jurisprudencia y director del *Programa James Madison* sobre ideales en Estados Unidos e instituciones de la *Universidad de Princeton*, afirma que en ninguno de los partidos políticos sobresalientes se encarnan por completo los principios señalados por los obispos.

Y dijo que el partido republicano necesita “mayor dosis de pensamiento social católico, y que el partido demócrata necesita una dosis más fuerte de mensajes de la tradición católica, referentes a una actitud que revele respeto por la familia y por la vida”.

Whether it's at home, his home parish of Holy Family in Fort Worth, or his Cistercian community, newly ordained Father Ambrose Strong has always had the support of

STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATHY CRIBARI HAMER / CORRESPONDENT

FAMILY

BACKGROUND PHOTO: Deacon Ambrose (third from bottom) lies prostrate during the ordination rite along with his Deacon Thomas Esposito and Cistercian Brothers Lawrence Brophy and Stephen Gregg.

When Michael Strong was ordained to the priesthood Aug. 14, he became part of a strong community of monks and brothers at the Cistercian Abbey of Dallas.

But the change might have seemed small to him, because the young man sprang from other communities of strength: a solid family that constantly supported him, a succession of pastors and teachers who guided him, and a parish that glowed with pride at the very mention of him.

So it happened that a beaming white-habit clad novice, newly named Brother Ambrose, first was pictured on the cover of the Holy Family *Family-gram*, the parish newsletter. It was fall of 2005, and he wrote, "Three young men, including myself... on August 19 took the habit and began our novitiate."

Brother Ambrose's letters to the parish newsletter would continue from then until he had finished his studies, advanced degrees and formation, and become a Cistercian priest.

"I first noticed him when he was an altar boy," said Shirley Matsinger, Holy Family parishioner, who has watched the young man's progress, and initiated his correspondence with the parish. There was something special about that little altar boy, she remembered, noting that later, his ongoing letters had made a positive impact on their efforts to encourage vocations.

Fr. Ambrose's own vocation began long before the family knew about it, his mother, Terry said. Baptized in June of 1983, the boy studied from third to eighth grade at Holy Family, ninth through twelfth at Nolan Catholic High School, then earned his bachelor's degree at the University of Dallas. Throughout the process, she said, he had mentors — Holy Family teachers Genni Sayers and Mary Ann Wood, pastor Father Joe Pemberton, Nolan principal Brother Oscar Vasquez, SM, (who has since then been ordained to the priesthood), and religion teacher Mark Rist — who made impressions and contributed to his vocation.

But the final link was Cistercian Abbott Father Denis Farkasfalvy, whose counsel Michael Strong sought, finally, in his sophomore year at UD, when he requested to make a Christmas retreat at the abbey. "That was it," his mother said.

"All we did was provide Catholic schools, and surround our children with good people. We tried to surround them with God, and we did not let up on it.

"If God wants you, he wants you."

Terry Strong said the first year in the Abbey was tough on the family, because the process allowed only e-mails and visits once each month. "They cut you off completely," said the mother of two younger children, Mary Ellen and Robert, both of whom have now graduated from Texas Christian University.

"The abbey wants them to separate themselves and see what happens," she said. "I understand it now." As the process went on, the family was allowed to visit each other much more frequently, and vacation together in the summers.

The siblings, she said, are in awe of their older brother. "It totally has set an example for them to live right. They think twice when something difficult comes up."

Celebrating the ordination liturgy was Dallas Bishop Kevin Farrell, who, in addition to Brother Ambrose, also ordained Brother Thomas Esposito to the priesthood,

and Brothers Lawrence Brophy and Stephen Gregg to the diaconate. The Mass took place at Our Lady of Dallas Abbey Church.

The church, a contemporary example of Cistercian architecture, is constructed of massive slabs of Texas limestone, and, according to the Abbey website, reflects simplicity, poverty, and seclusion. The assembly is seated in pews on the floor of the sanctuary, while the monks sit in wooden seats near the altar, and chant the liturgical prayers.

In his homily, Bishop Farrell spoke of St. Benedict, whose rule the community follows.

"Please reflect on the words of your holy father Benedict in his rules for monks," the bishop said. "'The abbot ought to arrange things so that the strong have something to strive for, and the weak have nothing to fear...'

"The rule of St. Benedict and our Scripture readings, remind us of the wideness of God's mercy, and that every race, language, and tongue are invited to be part of God's family, life, and love in this world. You hear this rule, you know this rule, we hear these Scriptures on your ordination day.

"You are now about to be ordained to the ministry of the word and the ministry of the sacraments. May these readings and may the words of St. Benedict remain with you always and guide you in your priestly life. May God who has begun this good work in you, bring it to completion."

At the ordination, Fr. Ambrose said he "felt available for God, and for receiving the sacrament after so many years when that had been a goal. There was no uncertainty or even nerves; it was a peaceful coming to completion of all that had happened to me.

"And the sense of uplifting, gratitude, happiness, and joy was enhanced by having so many family members and friends there to show support," he said. "Holy Family Parish has always been my second home."

Not many people get to see their children with or even near a pope. But Terry and Garland Strong had that privilege last Holy Thursday when their son Michael (Brother Ambrose), and his Cistercian Brother Thomas, served Mass with Pope Benedict XVI.

The two were finishing two years of graduate study in Rome, and with other Cistercian seminarians would be chosen to participate in the 2011 Chrism Mass. "There were hundreds of cardinals and thousands of priests," said Terry who recorded the Mass off a television broadcast. "Michael was one of two main deacons to serve."

A breath-taking moment, she described, was seeing Pope



Dallas Bishop Kevin Farrell (CENTER) and newly ordained Cistercian Fathers Ambrose Strong from Holy Family Parish in Fort Worth (LEFT) and Thomas Esposito join the Cistercian community in song at the end of the Mass.



ABOVE: Fr. Ambrose greets his father, Garland Strong, and other family members during the Sign of Peace. **BOTTOM LEFT:** Bishop Farrell lays hands on Fr. Ambrose, ordaining him to the priesthood. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Fr. Joe Pemberton, who had been Fr. Ambrose's pastor at Holy Family, prays over the new priest.



Benedict walk up that long aisle at St. Peter's Basilica, with Brother Thomas and Brother Ambrose on either side of him.

"And then the three of them walked up the steps," Terry Strong said, "and they bent, together, and kissed St. Peter's altar."

That Holy Thursday Mass, which was so spiritually enriching and personally joyful then, was to be enhanced in a way Michael/Brother Ambrose's mom did not foresee. Her son had requested a vial of the holy chrism that had been blessed that day by Pope Benedict.

And that was the chrism Bishop Kevin Farrell used, four months later, to anoint the new priests' hands at their ordination.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The video of the April 21, 2011 Chrism Mass Terry Strong describes can be viewed at <http://www.catholicstv.com/Pope-Benedict-XVI-Chrism-Mass.aspx>

Vocations

I would say it was a collective effort by my church family that fostered my religious practices and led to my accepting my vocation... The Rosary/share group of women had a huge impact on me because they introduced me to the idea that everyone can live a radical life for Christ no matter what the vocation, and then they prayed for religious vocations constantly. Once I accepted that I wanted to live my life in God's will and not my own, it was only a matter of time.

— Sr. Mary Clare Bezner, OSB

Sr. Mary Clare ...

FROM PAGE 36

it was the dreams I had for family. It was the beautiful family I grew up in. It was to leave it all. He wanted me to give it up and let Him have it and follow Him," she said.

Sr. Mary Clare said she told her family that day.

"I went from 'No, I'm not going to do this,' to 'I'm doing it and there's no going back,'" she said.

Sister Mary Clare said she thought her mom would be surprised.

"But she told me that she had told people before that if anybody in our family would become a sister, it would be me, but I had no idea. She had never mentioned being a religious to me. So I thought it would be something she wouldn't like. But really, she was all in favor of it."

Sr. Mary Clare said her parents, Skipper and Barbara Bezner raised her in a loving, Catholic home along with her siblings, Jennifer, Jeff, and Jacque in Lindsay. Her paternal grandparents, Joe and Anna Bezner, live in Lindsay and her maternal grandparents, Richard and Florence Schumacher live in Gainesville. She said that the small Catholic community in Lindsay played an important role in her spiritual life.

"I would say it was a collective effort by my church family that fostered my religious practices and led to my accepting my vocation," Sr. Mary Clare said. "I had many friends growing up who were faithful Christians, and we talked and prayed often — especially when we were older, in our 20s. The Rosary/share group of women had a huge impact on me because they introduced me to the idea that everyone can live a radical life for Christ no matter what the vocation, and then they prayed for religious vocations constantly. Once I accepted that I wanted to live my life in God's will and not my own, it was only a matter of time."

And after looking at many different communities and even after spending a week with the Olivetan Benedictines, it wasn't until she prayed with them in a chapel in Muenster that she realized that's where God

wanted her to be.

"I was praying, and I didn't even know what I was doing because I was just following what they were doing. Then I thought, 'This is what I'm supposed to be doing, and these are the sisters I'm supposed to be doing it with. This is it. I'm done. I can actually go,'" Sr. Mary Clare said.

At her profession, she and Sister Mary Beth, read their vows — which they had each written out before the ceremony — and signed them on the altar. After this, the two sisters participated in the "Suscipe," kneeling and raising their hands while leading the congregation in singing "Receive me, oh Lord, according to your Word and I shall live, and do not fail me in my hope." They sang this verse three times in honor of the Trinity.

The two sisters then lay prostrate before the altar under a pall, which signifies their death to their old lives, covered with the same pall that will be used when they die. While on the ground, the bell is tolled and the Litany of Saints is sung, signifying their complete death to their old lives and rising as new brides of Christ. "I really felt like I was floating. I can't explain it," Sr. Mary Clare said.

When the Litany of the Saints was completed both sister arose, and were given gold rings by Bishop Taylor. "It's symbolic of the Church receiving you as Christ's bride," she said. "I can't imagine that anyone could possibly feel more like a bride than I do."

"When you look at a community, you think you want certain things, but really and truthfully, your call is from God, so God has to be the one to put you in the right community," Sr. Mary Clare said. "It's got to be the one He made you for. It's kind of like saying you'll marry any man," she said laughing. "You've got to marry the man God made for you or it won't work."

Sr. Mary Clare is now the associate to the director of religious education for pre-K-12th grade at Blessed Sacrament Church in Jonesboro. She also works in the Hispanic ministry at the church and is the vocations director for the Olivetan Benedictine community.

"I love our prayer life. And serving God's people," she said.



Photo courtesy of Sara Flusche

Sister Mary Beth (LEFT) and Sister Mary Clare (RIGHT) carry lit candles to the altar before the offertory, representing the Light of Christ, symbolic of their baptismal candles. Their vows are an extension of their baptism.



Photo courtesy of Sara Flusche

Sister Mary Clare and Sister Mary Beth lie underneath the pall, symbolizing their death to their old way of life, and their rising as new brides of Christ. The pall is similar to the one that will be used when they die.



Photo courtesy of Sara Flusche

Sister Mary Beth (LEFT) and Sister Mary Clare (RIGHT) smile joyfully together following their vows.

Events Calendar

Around the Diocese and region

October Dates

1

MATTHEW KELLY, LIVING EVERY DAY WITH PASSION AND PURPOSE

9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., hosted by St. Mary's Parish in Gainesville and First Christian Church of Gainesville, 401 North Dixon St., Gainesville. For information, visit www.DynamicCatholic.com or call (940) 902-3939.

ST. JUDE 35TH ANNUAL FALL FESTIVAL

11 a.m. to 10 p.m. - St. Jude Parish, 500 E. Dallas St., Mansfield. For information, contact Russ Hart at (817) 228-6509.

ST. MARIA GORETTI KOUNTRY KARNIVAL

Saturday and Sunday - St. Maria Goretti School, 1200 S. Davis Dr., Arlington. For information, contact the school office at (817) 275-5081.

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.

2

OUR LADY OF MERCY, HILLSBORO, FALL FESTIVAL

11 a.m. - Our Lady of Mercy Parish, 1-35 Hwy., 107 Crestridge Dr., Hillsboro. For information contact Barbara Clevenger at (254) 582-9657.

4

ST. FRANCES CABRINI, GRANBURY, PARISH MISSION

7 to 8:30 p.m., Tuesday through Thursday - St. Frances Cabrini Parish, 2301 Action Hwy., Granbury. For information, call (817) 326-2131 or e-mail mhernandez@stfrances.net.

5

GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP

Noon to 1:30 p.m. each Wednesday through Nov. 9. St. John the Apostle Parish, 7341 Glenview Dr., North Richland Hills. For information, contact Kathy Campbell at (817) 870-7117.

7

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

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

7-9

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION FALL FESTIVAL

Friday, 6 to 9 p.m.; Saturday, 8:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.; Sunday, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. - Immaculate Conception Church, 2255 N. Bonnie Brae, Denton. For information, call Teresa Meyer at (972) 977-5841.

CATHOLIC BOY SCOUTS AND CUB SCOUTS RETREAT

Two-night camping event - Barn on Dunham Rd., Flower Mound. This year's theme is "Search for the Holy Grail." For information, visit www.bsaccs.org or contact Barbara Moore at (972) 539-0257 or by e-mail at treasurer@bsaccs.org.

8

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON CHARITY 5K AND 1 MILE FUN RUN

1 Mile Fun Run, 8 a.m.; 5K Run, 8:30 a.m. - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 2016 Willis Ln., Keller. For information, contact Hillarie Van Zanten at (817) 874-5080 or seas5k@yahoo.com.

ST. THOMAS THE APOSTLE FALL FESTIVAL

10 a.m. - St. Thomas the Apostle Church, 2920 Azle, Fort Worth. For information, call the parish office at (817) 624-2184.

9

CATHOLIC RESPECT LIFE SPEAKER SERIES

6:30 p.m. to 9 p.m. - Good Shepherd Parish, 1000 Tinker Rd., Colleyville. For information, contact the parish office at (817) 421-1287 or the Catholics Respect Life Office at (817) 560-2452, ext. 257.

BILINGUAL PARISH MISSION

Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, 7 to 9 p.m. - St. Paul the Apostle Parish, 5508 Black Oak Lane, River Oaks. For information, call (817) 738-9925.

10

CATHOLIC RESPECT LIFE SPEAKER SERIES

1 p.m. to 3 p.m. - Good Shepherd Parish, 1000 Tinker Rd., Colleyville. For information, contact the parish office at (817) 421-1287 or the Catholics Respect Life Office at (817) 560-2452, ext. 257.

16

TASTE OF ST. BART'S FALL FESTIVAL

Noon to 4 p.m. - St. Bartholomew Church, 3601 Altamesa Blvd., Fort Worth. For information, contact the parish office at (817) 292-7703.

18

WHITE MASS FOR HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONALS

7 p.m. - St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Thorckmorton St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Deacon Bruce Corbett at (817) 880-5479 or Patricia Gonzales at (817) 560-2452 ext. 254.

21

NOLAN CATHOLIC 50TH ANNIVERSARY HOMECOMING

Dinner, 5:30 p.m.; Game, 7:30 p.m. - Nolan Catholic High School, 4501 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For information, call (817) 395-0249 or e-mail alumni@nolancatholic.org.

21-23

RETRouvaille WEEKEND

Ministry offering tools for couples to rediscover a loving marriage relationship. For information or to register, call (800) 560-3300 or visit the website at www.retrouvaille.org.

22

STEAK DINNER / SILENT AUCTION

6:30 p.m. - Holy Redeemer Parish, 16250 Old Weatherford Rd., Aledo. For information, call the parish office at (817) 441-3500.

HOLY SPIRIT SISTERS HOST 'COME & SEE'

Discernment retreat for women ages 18-45 - Motherhouse, 300 Yucca St., San Antonio. For information visit www.shsp.org, or contact Sister Gabriel Hession at (210) 533-5149 or sghession@hotmail.com

23

WORLD YOUTH DAY AT SIX FLAGS

11 a.m. to 7 p.m. - Six Flags Over Texas, Arlington. For information, contact Diocesan Office of Youth Ministry at (817) 560-2452, ext. 255.

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 Father Warren Murphy at (817) 927-5383 or Dorene Rose at (817) 329-7370.

30

ST. JUDE THADDEUS PARISH FESTIVAL

10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. - St. Jude Thaddeus Church, 600 Davey Dr., Burkburnett. For information, contact the parish office at (940) 569-1222.

Classifieds

Part-time Administrative Assistant

The Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas is seeking a part-time administrative assistant to help primarily in the Risk Management Department at the Catholic Center. Main duties will include providing timely and accurate clerical support to the Claims/Risk Manager by answering all calls, processing electronic and standard mail, photocopying documents, and maintaining an accurate filing system for all claims and safety inspections. This position is expected to be 20 hours per week. Some allowance for flexible scheduling may be considered. The qualified applicant will be a practicing Catholic with a high school diploma, will have a minimum of three years secretarial experience, will have good organizational skills, and be experienced with Microsoft Office software, copy machines, and general office equipment. English/Spanish bilingual applicants are highly preferred. The Diocese of Fort Worth offers excellent pay and benefits to its employees. If interested in this position, visit www.fwdioc.org for a full job description and on-line application. Complete the application on your computer and save it. Then submit it via e-mail, along with your résumé, to msimeroth@fwdioc.org. Qualified applicants will be contacted for an interview by Mark Simeroth, director of Human Resources. Application deadline is Sept. 30.

Youth Ministry Coordinator

St. Patrick Cathedral is seeking a full-time youth minister (30 hrs. per week) to develop and coordinate a holistic youth ministry. Degree in religious education or certificate in youth ministry with some experience preferred. Salary competitive, generous benefits provided. Send résumé to Father Joseph Pemberton, St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth, Texas 76102.

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.

Hawaiian Cruise

Deacon Patrick Burke, Pastoral Adm. of Christ the King Parish, Iowa Park will host a 14-days Hawaiian Island Cruise, April 14-28, 2012, visiting LaHaina, Honolulu, Kauai, Hilo, and Ensenada, Mexico. Round-trip from DFW to LA and then cruising to the Hawaiian Islands aboard the Sapphire Princess. Prices starting at \$1,745.00 *(plus taxes). For more information, or a cruise brochure, contact Deacon Burke at (940) 592-2802 or cell: (940) 337-3319; e-mail, ctkip@sbcglobal.net.



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(817) 560-2452 ext. 308**

Good Newsmaker

After a 10-year journey, Lindsay native Sister Mary Clare Bezner, professes final vows as an Olivetan Benedictine sister and

Rises to new life as a bride of Christ

By Jenara Kocks Burgess / Correspondent

On the feast day of the Assumption of Mary, Lindsay native Sister Mary Clare Bezner's 10-year journey toward sisterhood ended and her new dedicated religious life began as she professed her perpetual vows to become an Olivetan Benedictine sister at Holy Angels Convent in Jonesboro, Arkansas. Approximately 70 family members and friends from the Dallas-Fort Worth area, including many from her home parish of St. Peter in Lindsay, and nearby Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster, attended the ceremony.

Bishop Anthony B. Taylor of Little Rock celebrated the Mass at 2 p.m., Aug. 15, at Holy Angels Convent in Jonesboro. Another member of Sr. Mary Clare's community, Sister Mary Beth Hackley, also professed her perpetual vows that day.

Sr. Mary Clare said her call to religious life first came when she spent a year in Honduras for the Diocese of Fort Worth in 2000-2001. She worked at a clinic for women and children and a home for the elderly during her year of service.

"I encountered some beautiful young sisters who were joyful there," she said. "I was also reading a Christian novel, and in the book, the main character became a sister. While I was reading that, in my heart, I felt deep down that the Lord wanted me to be a sister. I just knew it, and I actually got

very upset," she said, indicating her reluctance to hear what the Lord was saying. "But I know it was my first call. Mary said 'yes' when she was asked, but I said 'NO,'" she recalled, laughing.

Sr. Mary Clare said she didn't tell anyone about that call at first. She returned to the United States in 2001 and got a job as a nurse.

"Then I started going to a prayer group and praying the Rosary every week," Sr. Mary Clare recalled, adding that she began praying by herself more frequently, and attending daily Mass. "When that started, I was still looking for



Photo courtesy of Sara Flusche

Sister Mary Clare Bezner, OSB, poses for a portrait taken of her at Holy Angels Convent in Jonesboro, Aug. 15, during her profession of final vows for the Olivetan Benedictine Sisters.

someone to marry, thinking that was what I wanted to do," trying to ignore, she said, that God had already called her to religious life.

Sr. Mary Clare said for the next two years, during that prayer time with her church and women's prayer group, she started growing closer to the Lord and really felt that she wanted to serve Him even more.

"I said I would even have as many children as He wanted, if He would just let me get married. I would do whatever He wanted, just don't let me be a sister," she said.

The turning point came one day in 2004 when Sr. Mary Clare was attending a Bible study in Muenster.

"We were reading the story of Abraham and Isaac. And Abraham

was asked to sacrifice the only son God had ever given him and the leader of the scripture study said, 'If there is something you're supposed to be offering on the altar, what is it? It could even be something that is considered good by the eyes of the world but God is asking you to give it up.' I knew immediately ...

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