

North Texas Catholic

Bringing the Good News to the Diocese of Fort Worth

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The feast of the birth of Jesus approaches. The Nativity is depicted in this detail view from the "Adoration of the Magi" by Italian artist Gentile da Fabriano. (CNS photo)

Funding from *All Things Possible* vital for formation of priests, and contributes toward priests' needs

By Michele Baker
Correspondent

Catholics around the world continue to celebrate the "Year for Priests" as the Diocese of Fort Worth moves steadily forward with the *All Things Possible* campaign. While the two events might seem to be only coincidentally related, campaign organizers within the diocese see a necessary connection — especially as the need for priests is being felt more and more in the local church.

"The *All Things Possible* campaign has allotted \$3 million dollars just for priests with \$750,000 each going to the Priest Pension Fund and the Priest Care Fund,



while \$1.5 million has been designated for the Seminary Burse Fund," said Meegan Wright,

Executive Director of the 4-year, \$40 million campaign. "I feel that the financial support we give to our seminarians as they enter into a life of spiritual support for our diocese is a sign of this diocese investing in its future and it is a great investment," she said. "It's something that should be a focus now and in the future."

Annually, the diocese spends more than \$30,000 per student to educate its seminarians. With the current number of men in formation pushing toward 30, the price tag came in at \$780,000 last year.

"Three years ago, the an-
SEE FUNDING, P. 5

U.S. bishops again urge ban on abortion coverage in health care reform

WASHINGTON (CNS)—The U.S. bishops again have urged U.S. senators to put Hyde amendment language into proposed health care reform legislation to prohibit federal funds from being used for elective abortion coverage.

Such a step, they said, would align the legislation with policies now governing all other federal health programs and with the just-passed appropriations bill.

The bishops urged the action in a Dec. 14 letter from Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

In a separate letter Dec. 14, Cardinal DiNardo and the chairmen of two other USCCB committees urged the Senate to accept an amendment that would allow states to lift the five-year waiting period for legal immigrants to obtain Medicaid coverage.

On abortion, the bishops noted that senators voted overwhelmingly Dec. 13 for the Consolidated Appropriations Act, which contains Hyde language banning

federal funding for health coverage that includes elective abortion and maintains laws protecting conscience rights.

A major problem with the current health care reform legislation in the Senate, Cardinal DiNardo's letter said, is that "it explicitly authorizes the use of federal funds to subsidize health plans covering elective abortions for the first time in history."

"Health care reform is too urgently needed to be placed at risk by one lobbying group's insistence on changing the law," the cardinal added.

On Dec. 8 the Senate voted to table a bipartisan abortion amendment to its version of health care reform legislation.

The bishops said their three top priorities for health reform are respecting life and conscience, ensuring affordability and giving immigrants fair access to health benefits for which they pay taxes.

On immigrants, the bishops urged passage of an amendment by Sen. Robert Menendez, D-N.J., which they said would "ensure

SEE USCCB P. 13

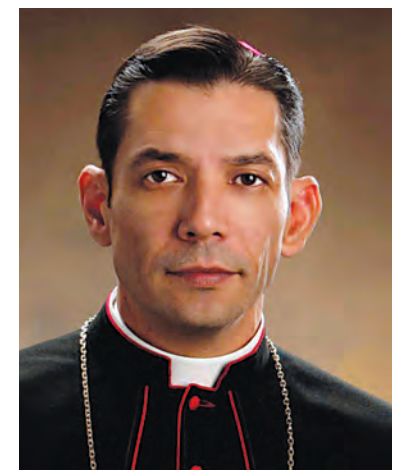
Bishop Peña of Brownsville retires; Bishop Flores, Detroit auxiliary with South Texas roots, to succeed him

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Pope Benedict XVI has accepted the resignation of Bishop Raymundo J. Peña of Brownsville and named Auxiliary Bishop Daniel E. Flores of Detroit to succeed him.

The changes were announced in Washington Dec. 9 by Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

Bishop Peña, who turned 75 Feb. 19, was the longest-serving active Hispanic bishop in the U.S. Born in Corpus Christi, he was named an auxiliary bishop of San Antonio in 1976 and had headed the Brownsville Diocese since 1995.

Bishop Flores, 48, has been an auxiliary bishop in Detroit since 2006. He is a native of Palacios in the Victoria Diocese.



Bishop Daniel E. Flores

Now one of 26 active Hispanic Catholic bishops in the U.S., he will be installed in Brownsville Feb. 2.

Bishop Flores said he was
SEE BISHOP, P. 12

The Basilica of St. Mary Major reminds us of the nearness of Jesus, the Word made flesh, among us

Dear Friends, beloved in Christ in the Diocese of Fort Worth,

You saw in the last issue some photographs from



Bishop Kevin W. Vann

our diocesan pilgrimage to Rome, and in this issue there is a lengthier article about the grace-filled week that we experienced.

I lived four years in Rome during my graduate study days at the Angelicum (The University of St. Thomas Aquinas in the City) while living at the graduate house of the North American College on the *Via dell'Umilta*. The four years were four very formative years for me as a priest. In many ways I grew up as a priest in the Eternal City, where I made some lasting friendships with priests, religious, and Italian and Roman families that persist to this day. So, I am always grateful to share what I consider a "second home" with people who come with me on pilgrimage.

It was truly a blessed week where we gathered in prayer at Mass at the major basilicas, a new Roman parish church built for the millennium called the parish of *Dives in Misericordia* (Rich in Mercy), Assisi (the home of St. Francis of Assisi), and the cities of Orvieto and Bolsena (where the solemnity of Corpus Christi originated). At the basilicas of St. Peter on Vatican Hill and St. Paul Outside the Walls, we were literally within a stone's throw of the tombs of the Apostles Peter and Paul. We gathered at the Wednesday Audience where we prayed with the successor of St. Peter, Pope Benedict XVI.

It was an experience of Faith and the Church Universal, and taught and reminded all of us of our history (2,000 years and more) and the fact that we are always part of a bigger picture of Faith and holiness of life.

The 7,000 or so pilgrims present the day of the General Audience certainly knew that the Diocese of Fort Worth was there when we were announced. We made ourselves known



Their last day in Rome, the Fort Worth pilgrims were able to celebrate Mass together at St. Mary Major Basilica. (Photo by Peter Flynn)

Among the special churches in which the Fort Worth pilgrimage of more than 500 were able to celebrate Mass was the church built for the millennium, the parish of *Dives in Misericordia* (Rich in Mercy). Here Bishop Vann preaches from its limestone ambo as Deacon Len Sanchez looks on. (Photo by Chris Kastner)



in Texas style! The Holy Father told me that it was wonderful that we had so many people present at the audience! I believe that all who were able to be present found it an experience of building of "Church community" and what I would call *communio* or family of Faith. People who had not known each other before, prayed with each other, walked together, shared meals, and prayed together at Mass. It certainly gave me a great opportunity to meet and pray with many people of the Diocese whom I did not know before. I am very grateful for all who helped to organize this pilgrimage as a part of the Diocesan 40th anniversary celebration, especially Father Michael Holmberg of Holy Cross Parish in the Colony, and Mrs. Barbara Boone of St. Michael's parish in Bedford.

The last place where we prayed and celebrated Mass the night before we left Rome was the Basilica of St. Mary Major. It is one of my favorites. It was first

constructed by Pope Liberius in the mid-fourth century. The church was rebuilt by Pope Sixtus III and rededicated shortly after the Council of Ephesus declaration in 431 that Mary is the Mother of God, the *Theotokos*.

Since St. Mary Major is dedicated to Mary as the Mother of God, and also because under the High Altar there is a relic of the manger in which Christ was placed, it can lead to a reflection on the mystery of Christmas all year around. As soon as one walks into this basilica, it is as if the Church itself invites one to contemplate the mystery of the "Word become Flesh," because one is immediately drawn to the High Altar, and to ponder the reliquary of the manger.

The dedication of the Church to Mary the Mother of God draws us to reflect as well on the Annunciation of the Angel Gabriel

it wants to extend to us the angels' invitation to the shepherds.... At the same time, however, this house of God seeks to draw us into the shepherds answer.... 'Let us go over to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has made known to us.'"

Reflecting on our experience in this holy Christmas church, is my prayer that this season, and the Christmas Masses and the preparation that we must all do, will in some way draw us into the mystery of Christ and the truth of the Incarnation ... even if we have been distant in some way this past year. The invitation is there to enter fully once more into the events of our salvation history where the Lord is waiting for us.

As he closes this chapter on St. Mary Major, Cardinal Ratzinger says concerning this basilica that "The true consolation appears in the image of the Mother of the Savior. God is near enough for us to touch him, even today. If, in our watchful stay in this church, we become aware of this consolation, then its saving and transforming message has entered into us."

The celebration of the Birth of the Savior reminds us again and again, that God has entered our concrete history, and thus is indeed near enough for us to touch Him, even today. How easily we forget that truth and reality! My prayer also for you is that you remember this truth deeply in your hearts this Christmas Day, and season ... which remember lasts for 12 days!

A blessed and holy Christmas season for all of you, and safe travels wherever you may be going. Thank you for all that you do and are for our Diocese and are for our Diocese and for so many people. God Bless you always. *Venite Adoremus Dominum!*

Kevin W. Vann

+Bishop Kevin W. Vann, JCD, DD
Diocese of Fort Worth

The pilgrims anticipate taking part in the papal audience Nov. 11, lining up to enter St. Peter's Square. (Photo by Sr. Yolanda Cruz)



Diocesan / Sports

Nolan wins state football championship, finishes 13-0 season



The Nolan Catholic High School Vikings hold up their trophy after defeating Trinity Christian Academy of Addison 21-20 in overtime for the championship game Dec. 5.

The Nolan Catholic High School Vikings defeated Trinity Christian Academy of Addison 21-20 in overtime to win the Division 1 state football championship for the Texas Association of Private and Parochial Schools Dec. 5 in Temple.

This is the second consecutive year and the fourth time in five years that the Vikings have won the championship. NCHS had a 13-0 season.

"The 2009 Nolan Catholic varsity football team has written a new chapter in school history with a perfect 13-0 season," said Joe Prud'homme, NCHS head football coach. "We have so much to be proud of not only with what they

accomplished on the field, but also the way that they did so.

"Many officials and observers commented on the way the team played the game [on the field] and how they conducted themselves off of it," Prud'homme added. "This was probably the most unselfish team that we have had in recent years; they were more concerned with team success and fulfilling whatever role would meet that end than what their stats were or how they looked," he said. "It was obvious by how they played and the passion displayed."

Senior tight end Tanner Smith was named the game's most valuable player.

*Responding
to God's Call*

A visit to Assisi reminded us of our Franciscan heritage

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

While the trip to Rome in November had too many highlights to put into a column, I do want to relay another memorable day that helped our group of more than 500 people from the Diocese of Fort Worth connect to our Christian heritage. Our third day in Italy took us on a road trip to Assisi.

A short two-hour drive to Assisi from Rome brought us back in time to the days of St. Francis and St. Clare at the end of the 13th century. This village, even today, holds a certain sense of humility, beauty, and peace as it is protected from the busyness of worldly people. Popes, cardinals, and bishops of every generation seem to gravitate to this location as a place to spend a few days of retreat away from the burdens of everyday life. St. Francis seems to have turned his personal love of poverty and humility into a safe haven for any and all souls who live in or come to visit the hillsides and valley of Assisi.

As we celebrated Mass with Bishop Kevin Vann at the magnificent Basilica of San Francesco, it dawned on me that gathered together with the bishop were four Franciscan priests, four diocesan priests, five deacons (St. Francis was a deacon), and more than 500 people who represented the diocese.* That is to say that it dawned on me that our diocese owes much to St. Francis and to his many followers from throughout the centuries who, today, are interwoven into the very fabric of our diocese and have kept us grounded in our faith. We have, in fact, four Franciscan orders of men and one of women, along

with several tertiary lay orders that complement our diocese. We also have a retirement community named St. Francis Village which includes many retired Franciscan priests, as well as two churches named after St. Francis: one in Graford and the other in Grapevine. Then, too, we may need to be reminded of how many friends and family members bear the name of Francis as a baptismal name or confirmation name. Indeed, it was a remarkable moment to be gathered together at Mass to honor St. Francis and to ask for his intercession and blessing over us and our entire diocese.

As one of his early followers, Brother Thomas of Celano, documented, Francis was born (1182) of high social class and well-to-do parents, and he embraced this lifestyle in his teenage years and into his early 20s.

However, an extended illness made him reconsider his ways as the Lord was speaking to him in his thoughts, as well as in his dreams. At 25, he found himself in prayer at the chapel of St. Damian and meditating upon the crucifix when he heard the Lord speak, "Go, Francis, and repair my house, which you see is falling into ruin." Immediately Francis ran home to borrow tools and materials to rebuild the chapel, not understanding that the Lord was talking about the universal Church in need of repair and not simply the little church below Assisi.

Francis' father reacted with great anger, and he sought to disinherit his son. As part of the repercussions, Francis was taken before the bishop, where he stripped himself of all the clothes he was wearing, gave them to his father and declared, "Up to now I have called you my father on earth, from now on I desire only to say 'Our Father who art in heaven.'"

Finally, Francis found his vocation, initially rebuilding the St. Damian and two other small churches while choosing to wear the coarse woolen tunic which was the dress worn by the poor peasants of the Umbria region and tying it around himself with a knotted rope, which you can

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

still see today as the standard robe of all Franciscans.

During Lent of 1212, a young heiress named Clare (18 years old) was deeply moved by Francis' life and preaching. She begged him to be allowed to enter into this new way of life. Eventually she began the women's first community, known then as the Second Order of Poor Ladies, or known today as the Poor Clares, named after St. Clare herself.

In 1224, two years before his death, during a 40-day fast, Francis received from our Lord a visible sign of his near perfect conformation to Christ as seen in the stigmata wounds on his side, his hands, and his feet, along with the suffering that this would entail.

Through Christ he had healed hundreds of people and had boldly preached the Gospel as more than 5,000 men had joined him in religious life as well as the numbers of women. Furthermore, he had stood up to mighty powers and authorities and had repeatedly lifted up the lowest of the lowly, while giving hope to all, and he did so not with wealth but with no more than an embrace of Lady Poverty and a complete trust in the Lord.

As St. Francis and St. Clare embraced poverty for the sake of revealing to the world the kingdom of heaven in their times, it seems that today we need a new generation of young men and women to shake up our own world.

Merry Christmas and a huge thanks to all our Franciscan priests, brothers, sisters, and lay leaders!

*Franciscan priests were Fathers Domingo Romero OFM Cap., Richard Eldredge TOR, Vincent Elsen OFM, and Matthew Kavi-purayidam, TOR. The diocesan priests were Msgr. Charles King, Fathers Michael Holmberg and Thu Nguyen, and myself. The deacons included Deacons Ruben Casteñeda, Jim Crites, Jim Fuller, Anastasio Perez, and Len Sanchez.

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The appearance of advertising in these pages does not imply endorsement of businesses, services, or products. Readers must exercise prudence in responding to advertising in all media.

Catholic Schools Celebration to be held Jan. 30

The 23rd Annual Catholic Schools Celebration will be held on Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010, at the Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom. The evening will honor outstanding individuals from the diocesan schools whose contributions have impacted and furthered the mission of Catholic schools.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to pay tribute to the honorees and celebrate the service of our Catholic schools with supporters from across the diocese," say event organizers.

Tickets are \$75 per person. For reservations, call Tessa Ross at (817) 560-2452, ext. 280 or visit the website: www.fwdioc.org.

Mount Carmel Center to offer series on theology of revelation

Mount Carmel Center, 4600 W. Davis St., Dallas, will offer a two-part series, "*Dei Verbum*: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," presented by Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD. Part one of the conference, to be offered Jan. 16, will examine the theology of revelation as presented in the first half of the Vatican Council's document, and part two, to be offered Jan. 23, will examine the theology of revelation in the second half the document. Both sessions will be held from 10 a.m. to noon.

Registration deadline for part one is Jan. 9 and the deadline for part two is Jan. 16. Suggested minimum donation for each conference is \$25.

For more information, contact the center at (214) 331-6224 or visit the Web site at www.mountcarmelcenter.org.

UTA Catholic Community to sponsor respect life art contest

The University Catholic Community at UTA is sponsoring a juried art competition entitled "*Amor Vitae*: Love of Life!" in April. Entries will be judged based on artistic quality and the artists' presentation of how they depict the Culture of Life, a respect for all forms of life that opposes abortion, euthanasia, capital punishment, human cloning, stem cell research, contraception, and other social concerns. This show is open to high school juniors and seniors and undergraduate college students. There is a \$5 entry fee for each piece submitted.

To receive an application, call the UCC at (817) 460-1155. For more information check the Web site at www.utacatholic.org or look on Facebook for the "Respect Life Art show" group. Additional information may also be obtained by contacting Stephanie Milligan at the UCC at smilligan@fwdioc.org or Matt Redden at matthew.redden@mavs.uta.edu.

Annual Respect Life Mass to be celebrated Jan. 9 at St. Patrick's

All are invited to participate in the annual Respect Life Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St. in downtown Fort Worth. The Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Kevin Vann, Saturday, Jan. 9, at 7 p.m. The diocesan liturgy, held each January, will mark the anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. A candlelight procession will be held in remembrance of the millions of deaths that have occurred as a result of abortion.

For more information, call Chanecee Ruth-Killgore at (817) 560-3300 ext. 257.

Marriage preparation classes start new schedule in January

Classes for Pre Cana, Cana II, and Today... Tomorrow... Forever, will no longer be held on Sundays. Pre Cana classes will be offered one Saturday a month during odd months at the Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House in Lake Dallas, and for two evenings a month during even months at the Catholic Center, 800 W. Loop 820 S. Both evenings are required. Cana II and TTF classes will also be changed to Saturdays, and will be held at either Montserrat or the Catholic Center. Dates and times will vary from month to month, and participants should consult the Family Life Office's calendar at its Web site, www.fwdioc.org/ministries/familylife. For more information, contact Family Life Coordinator Diane Schwind at (817) 560-2452, ext. 304.

Deaf Community Christmas Masses planned

Christmas Eve Mass will be interpreted for the Deaf Community on Dec. 24 at 8 p.m. at St. John the Apostle Church at 7341 Glenview Dr. in North Richland Hills. Christmas morning Mass will be interpreted at 10 a.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church at 2016 Willis Ln. in Keller. Seating for the members of the Deaf Community and their families will be reserved in the front pews. Please arrive early as Mass is always crowded. Please contact Mary Cinatl at (817) 284-3019 for more information or visit the Deaf Ministry Web site for maps and directions at www.fwdioc.org/ministries/deaf.

Courage group meets twice monthly

Courage D/FW, a spiritual support group for Catholics striving to live chaste lives according to the Catholic Church's teachings on homosexuality, meets the second and fourth Friday evenings of each month.

For more information, e-mail to CourageDFW@Catholic.org or call (972) 938-5433.



PARADE OF LIGHTS, ST. PETER SCHOOL — Students from St. Peter the Apostle School in Fort Worth pose with their float at the Downtown Fort Worth Parade of Lights on Nov. 27. The float won the award for "Third Place Overall" in the Parade.

NTC publication deadlines

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

Submit items to jrusseau@fwdioc.org. Items for the Jan. 15 issue must be received by noon on Jan. 6. Items for the Jan. 29 issue must be received by noon on Jan. 20.

Diocesan Singles Council plans Singles Mass Jan. 30

A Diocesan Singles Mass will be held 7 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, at St. Joseph Church, 1927 SW Green Oaks, Arlington. All single and single-again Catholics are invited to join in worship, fellowship, food, and dancing. Attendees are encouraged to bring a friend, a potluck item for dinner, and/or nonperishable items for the church pantry. To volunteer with the Diocesan Singles Council, including Mass ministries, call Rosalie (940) 564-0092.

Our Lady of Victory School to host first alumni Mass and dinner

Our Lady of Victory School in Fort Worth will host its first Alumni Mass and Dinner on Feb. 6, 2010.

The school is looking for alumni who are not on its mailing list and would like to be included. Those interested should send their contact information to Rachael Garnett, development director, 3320 Hemphill St., Fort Worth, TX, 76110 or email olv.alumni@yahoo.com.

Cardinal DiNardo to speak at Southwest Liturgical Conference

This year the Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week, hosted by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston Jan 13-16, and held at George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston, will explore the theme "Many Cultures: One Church at Prayer." Led by over 40 scholars, theologians, priests, religious, and professional pastoral ministers, conference participants will enjoy an abundance of formation opportunities as part of the 48th annual Southwest Liturgical Conference. Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Archbishop of

Galveston-Houston will deliver the keynote address.

Registration for the conference is \$150 after Dec. 11. Single day registration is also available. Hotel accommodations are offered through Hilton of the Americas adjoining the conference center.

The conference brochure and secure registration is available online at www.swlc.org. Information for exhibitors is also available online. For more information e-mail studyweek@swlc.org.

Nolan alumni invited to annual alumni soccer game Jan. 2

All Nolan Catholic High School alumni are invited to participate in the annual men's and women's alumni soccer games on Jan. 2, 2010, at Daskocil Stadium on the NCHS campus. The women's game will start at 11 a.m. and be followed immediately by the men's game. For more information, contact the alumni office at (817) 457-2920, ext. 1670 or alumni@nolancatholic.org.

Natural Family Planning classes offered

The Couple to Couple League offers classes in the symptothermal method of Natural Family Planning for married and engaged couples. Since the course consists of three classes at monthly intervals, engaged couples are encouraged to attend a course beginning at least four months before their wedding. To register for a course starting Jan. 15 at 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 1501 Ninth St., Wichita Falls, contact Jacob and Lauren Morath at (940) 544-2515. To register for a course starting Jan. 17 at 3 p.m. at Loreto House, 913 Ave. C, Denton, contact Kevin and Michele Vina at (940) 433-5664. To register for a course starting Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. at St. Peter the Apostle Church, 1201 N. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, contact Bill and Mary Kouba at (817) 370-9193. Visit www.ccldfw.org for more class dates and information.

Holy Family to celebrate Christian Unity prayer week Jan. 21

Holy Family Church and the Tarrant Area Community of Churches will celebrate the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" with dinner, prayer, and song Thursday, Jan. 21, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The celebration will be held at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in Fort Worth.

For more information, contact the parish office at (817) 737-6768.

Cardinal Newman Institute to offer 10-week course on the Old Testament

The Cardinal Newman Institute will begin a 10-week course on "The Theology of the Old Testament" Jan. 9. The study will concentrate on the meaning of significant passages, events, and terms as well as God's relationship with the primary biblical characters in salvation history. It will also demonstrate how the Old Testament prefigures and establishes the foundation for the teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church. Although this course is especially appropriate for persons involved in Bible study groups, all will find this course enriching for a deeper understanding of the Old Testament as well as its relevance today.

The course, co-taught by Gregory Golden and Christopher Tunnell, will be held at St. Maria Goretti Parish in the Holy Family Life Center, 1200 S. Davis, Arlington, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.

For more information, contact the Cardinal Newman Institute at cni.info@yahoo.com or (817) 277-4859.

Ministry with gay, lesbian Catholics announces holiday schedule

The regular monthly meeting of The Fort Worth Diocesan Ministry With Lesbian and Gay Catholics, Other Sexual Minorities, and Their Families will not be held in December due to the Christmas holidays. All who are interested are invited to attend a vesper service at 6:30 p.m. Thursday, Dec. 10, at the Catholic Renewal Center Chapel, 4503 Bridge Street, Fort Worth. A pot-luck dinner will follow. Meat will be provided.

The next regular meeting will be held Thursday, Jan. 28, at 7 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center. For more information, contact Father Warren Murphy, TOR, at (817) 927-5383, Dorene Rose at (817) 329-7370, or Sister Dorothy Eggering, SSND, at (817) 283-8601.



ST. RITA MISSION PREPARATION — A group of seventh- and eighth-graders from St. Rita School adapted a University of North Texas project designed to allow them to experience the feel of religious life in preparation for a field trip to San Jose y La Espada Missions. They took temporary vows of obedience, purity, and silence. Pictured above are several of the students making rosaries as one part of the experience.

Diocesan

Bishop Vann blesses mariachis on feast of St. Cecilia

By Nicki Prevou
Editorial Assistant

The city of Fort Worth's Mariachi Festival, held each November in honor of St. Cecilia, the patron saint of musicians, took place Sunday, Nov. 22 at La Gran Plaza Mall in South Fort Worth. Bishop Kevin Vann, joined by Father Stephen Jasso, TOR, pastor of All Saints Church in Fort Worth, led an evening prayer service for a crowd of 10 mariachi groups and an enthusiastic audience of festival attendees.

"Each year, the mariachi singers from around Fort Worth—including some from Dallas—come to honor St. Cecilia at the festival," explained Fr. Jasso. "This year, it was the biggest crowd we have ever had; more than a thousand people attended. Everyone was especially delighted that Bishop Vann came to lead the special

prayer service we had in the evening, the blessing of the mariachi singers."

A highlight of this year's event was a performance by young mariachi singers who attend a children's "mariachi academy," said Fr. Jasso. "The children have outstanding voices, and they gave an excellent presentation at the festival," he added. "Many of the adult mariachi singers, the young musicians, and their family members who participate in the festival each year are from local parishes, including Our Lady of Guadalupe, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Holy Name, and All Saints.

"We told Bishop Vann that he has to continue coming back to do the blessing each year," said Fr. Jasso, laughing. "Through his presence, he made it a very special occasion for everyone."



Bishop Kevin Vann and Father Stephen Jasso, TOR, preside over an evening prayer service blessing mariachis on Nov. 22, the feast day of St. Cecilia, patroness of music.

Official Assignments

The following assignments have been made by Bishop Kevin Vann effective Dec. 11:

Deacon José Aragón has been assigned to serve St. Jude Parish in Mansfield.

Deacon Bill Archer has been assigned to serve Sacred Heart Parish in Wichita Falls.

Deacon Tom Bates has been assigned to serve St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Grapevine.

Deacons Jim Bindel and **Vincent Blake** have been assigned to serve Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish in Wichita Falls.

Deacons Jesús Cárdenas, Wendell Geiger, and **Lynn Sowers** have been assigned to serve St. Peter the Apostle Parish in White Settlement.

Deacon Marcelino Carranza has been assigned to serve Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Fort Worth.

Deacons John Clark and **Larry Sandoval** have been assigned to serve St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller.

Deacon Bruce Corbett has been assigned to serve St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Arlington.

Deacon Jim Crites has been assigned to serve St. George Parish in Fort Worth.

Deacon Tommy Díaz has been assigned to serve Sacred Heart Parish in Comanche.

Deacon Scott France has been assigned to serve Holy Redeemer Parish in Aledo.

Deacon Gelasio García has been assigned to serve St. Mary's Parish in Gainesville.

Deacon Martín García has been assigned to serve All Saints Parish in Fort Worth.

Deacons Eldon Gray and **Mauricio Hernández** have been assigned to serve St. John the Baptist Parish in Bridgeport.

Deacon Terry Howard has been assigned to serve St. Andrew Parish in Fort Worth.

Deacons Juan Jasso and **Matías Lagunas** have been assigned to serve St. Matthew Parish in Arlington.

Deacon Bill Johnson has been assigned to serve St. Joseph Parish in Arlington.

Deacon Pat Lavery has been assigned to serve Good Shepherd Parish in Colleyville.

Deacon Rigo Leyva has been assigned to serve Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Mineral Wells.

Deacon John Nguyen has been assigned to serve Vietnamese Martyrs Parish in Arlington.

Deacons Alfonso Ramírez and **Barry Sweeden** have been assigned to serve Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton.

Deacon Piedad Sánchez has been assigned to serve Holy Family Parish in Vernon.

Deacon Walter Stone has been assigned to serve St. Catherine of Sienna Parish in Carrollton.

Deacon Reyes Tello has been assigned to serve St. Bartholomew Parish in Fort Worth.

Deacon Sangote 'Ulupano has been assigned to serve St. Michael Parish in Bedford.

Funding...

FROM PAGE 1

budget for seminarians was \$300,000," said Father Kyle Walterscheid, director of Vocations for the diocese. "We've nearly tripled the budget, but we've also doubled the number of seminarians."

"Given where we are in our diocese, we know we don't have enough priests to cover us," continued Fr. Walterscheid. "We need to have about 30 seminarians in formation at all times over the next 10 years in order to have a priest back in each parish again. The good news is that we already have outstanding men in the seminaries who will be able to begin filling the gap."

Still, even with the diocese picking up the cost of tuition, room and board, and health insurance, Fr. Walterscheid admits that financial support for those studying to enter the priesthood remains a challenge. "We really have to pool our resources together. If it weren't for support from the Seminary Trust Fund, the Serra Club, the Knights of Columbus—who provide a stipend—and the diocesan annual capital campaign, we couldn't make ends meet," he said.

Of course, the other side of the story about financial support comes from the seminarians themselves who take it very seriously.

"It's not always fun to talk about money," said Father Jonathan Wallis of St. Matthew Parish in Arlington. "But there's a spiritual sacrifice and an actual sacrifice as well. You are no longer relying on yourself for your livelihood."

Ordained in 2007, Fr. Wallis remembers the weight of the responsibility he felt toward the people of the diocese. "I know that early on in the seminary, I looked at what I received as gifts from God. That helped



"I know that early on in the seminary, I looked at what I received as gifts from God. That helped me a bit in receiving them... But as time went on, I began to see that I was a member of the diocese and the diocese was supporting me in my education. There was a relationship between the diocese and myself. Then it became like a mother feeding her child."

— **Father Jonathan Wallis**
Associate pastor, St. Matthew

me a bit in receiving them," he said. "But as time went on, I began to see that I was a member of the diocese and the diocese was supporting me in my education. There was a relationship between the diocese and myself. Then it became like a mother feeding her child."

"All Things Possible is about equal sacrifice," said Fr. Walterscheid. "Think of the sacrifices made by seminarians and other religious and realize that if we all sacrifice equally, things that appear impossible become possible."

Correction

The photographs taken for the story "Knights of Columbus lead a group of Holy Cross parishioners to repair a widow's roof, offering a Neighbor's Love" appearing in the Dec. 4 issue were taken by NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC photojournalist Juan Guajardo.

Diocesan

243 enrolled in Pope John Paul II Institute's School of Lay Ministry

The diocesan lay ministry formation program, the School of Lay Ministry (SLM) of the Pope John Paul II Institute, has enrolled 243 participants in its first year of operation.

The program has six sections: three meeting at different locations around the diocese in English, two meeting at the Catholic Center in Spanish, and one using the Internet.

Participants of the School of Lay Ministry are almost equally divided according to language. However, men outnumber women by more than 50 percent. Program coordinator Father Carmen Mele, OP, said he believes the reason behind this disparity is because the completion of the two-year SLM program is a partial requirement for admission into the diocesan deacon formation program.

Each SLM participant has indicated a general ministry preference for classes in a

general area of ministry at the end of the year leading to specialized training in the second year. Almost one-third of registrants have chosen pastoral ministry as their principal interest, and another third have declared catechetical ministry as their preference. Slightly more than 20 percent are planning on specializing in a liturgical ministry while approximately 11 percent see themselves doing social ministry.

Classes for the first "basic competency" year of SLM will proceed until June. Registration for the second "certification" year will take place in the spring. Although the first year courses will generally be required for participating in specialized training, Fr. Mele said that other prospective ministers having basic theological education may be admitted to the second year's specialized classes on an individual basis.

St. Mary and St. Boniface parishes honor all those who have received milestone sacraments from past two years

St. Mary Parish of Windthorst and St. Boniface Parish of Scotland held a Celebration of the Sacraments Nov. 22. The celebration is meant to honor all those who have received the sacraments of baptism, first reconciliation, first Holy Communion, confirmation, and marriage in the past two years.

Honorees and their families were treated to a catered meal and were introduced during the meal. St. Mary's Praise Band and the First Eucharist students provided music.

In conjunction with this celebration and The Year for Priests, the parishes also honored their pastor, Father David Kraeger, TOR. Fr. Kraeger was presented with an engraved plaque and a gift card in appreciation for his 14 years of service to St. Mary and St. Boniface.



Third and fourth grade students from St. Mary Church in Windthorst and St. Boniface Church in Scotland who have received the sacraments of first reconciliation and first Holy Communion are honored at the parishes' joint "Celebration of the Sacraments."

This was the third time the two parishes have held a Celebration of the Sacraments. This celebra-

tion began several years ago as a project of the Whole Community Catechesis group.

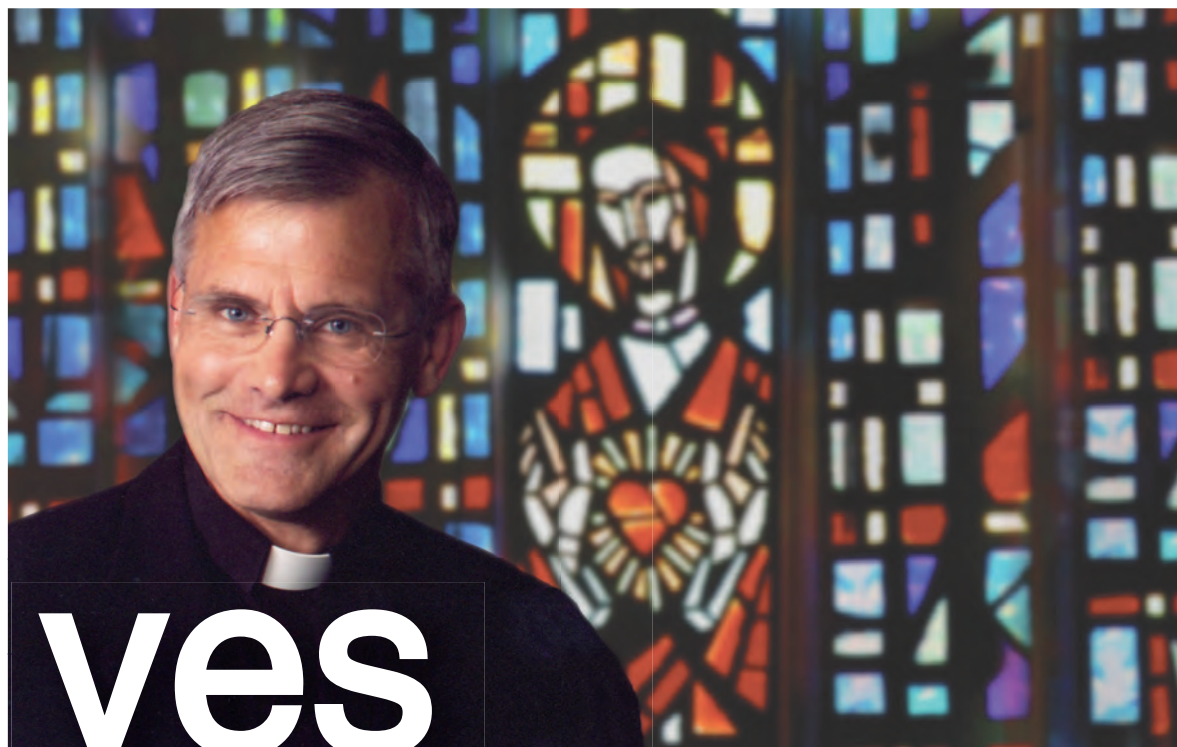
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Diocesan

Parishioners gather for dedication of St. Andrew School's new kindergarten building

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

The author Robert Fulghum once mused that all you really need to know in life you learn in kindergarten.

Thanks to the industrious fundraising efforts of parents and the parish community, students enrolled in St. Andrew School will learn those life lessons in a spacious, well-designed kindergarten building. The four new classrooms, connected by a large community space, were blessed and dedicated by Bishop Kevin Vann during a Dec. 6 ceremony at the school.

Father Tom Stabile, TOR, pastor of St. Andrew Church, greeted the crowd of young families and parishioners by displaying a ceremonial key given to him at the building's Jan. 25 groundbreaking.

"I've kept this on my desk since that day as a reminder,"

he said, holding up the golden key. "The last time I was in this building, the floor wasn't down and the walls weren't painted. We've come a long way."

The 6,000-square-foot state-of-the-art structure features bathrooms and sinks in the classrooms, extra storage space, and a common area known as The Guardian Angel Hall. All four kindergarten classes gather in the hall for religion classes and to watch educational or religious-themed videos on the large projection wall. The new building opened in August and currently houses 60 youngsters.

More space for storybooks and group instruction meets the growing needs of today's kindergartener, according to Linda Loughry.

"They learn a lot. Children leaving our kindergarten program are reading and writing. They're ready for first grade," says the teaching veteran who joined St. Andrew's faculty 20 years ago. "Academic expectations are higher."

Former St. Andrew principal Clarice Peninger, who retired last



After expressing his gratitude to the St. Andrew School community for making the new addition possible, Bishop Kevin Vann blesses four new kindergarten classrooms and a large community space at the school.

May after 24 years at the school, credited the efforts of SAS plant manager Mike Irwin and School Advisory Chairman Charlie Klutz for making the construction project a success.

"They shepherded this building day by day and did an incredible job," she said. "This is a building we're proud of. Our teachers simply cannot believe their good luck."

She thanked the crowd for their support and contributions that made, "this incredible dream come true. It's a building I hope will be with us for the next 50 years."

Before blessing the classrooms with sprinkles of holy water, accompanied as he went by a gaggle of excited kindergarteners, Bishop Vann praised the St. Andrew church and school com-

munity for its long tradition of Catholic education.

"I'm grateful to be here today and want to thank you for your generosity, faith, and sacrifices that made this wonderful addition possible," he told the crowd.

The ceremony concluded with kindergarteners leading a recitation of the Guardian Angel Prayer.

Catholic Charities raises more than \$600,000 at annual luncheon

By Kathy Cribari Hamer
Correspondent

It has come to be an event that foreshadows the holiday season, and at each Catholic Charities annual luncheon, the festive assembly projects both the spirit of giving and the spirit of Christmas.

"Creating Hope for the Community," organized more than a decade ago, strives to follow Catholic Charities' mission statement: "To provide service to those in need. To advocate compassion and justice in the structures of society...."

Significantly, it is the third prong of the mission statement that is most fulfilled at the agency's pre-Christmas luncheon: "To call all people of goodwill to do the same."

Catholic Charities was founded in 2010, and during this 99th year of its existence, served one in 20 Tarrant County residents, or enough to fill the TCU football stadium two times, Executive Director Heather Reynolds said at the luncheon. TCU's Amon Carter Stadium holds some 45,000 to 50,000 people; Catholic Charities helped nearly 100,000.

The bad news, she said, was that twice as many — one in 10 — came in for help. "That is one-half that we said 'no' to because we didn't have the capacity to serve them."

"This year we had to triple the size of our call center just so we could get down our call-back time to 48 hours. Our immigration office opened its doors on Saturday to keep up with people's needs. Our financial assistance office is receiving 50 to 75 applications a day for families who have lost their jobs and have burned through their savings."

With emotion in her voice, Reynolds addressed the gathering of 550 people, telling them, "We have to do better."

Citing the country's economic downturn and how it has affected her own extended family, Reynolds explained, "This year has been different at Catholic Charities. The stories this year aren't just stories of desperation; they

are paired with humiliation. The folks we are seeing have never before had to turn to someone for help. And when they do, frankly, they are embarrassed."

Catholic Charities has the largest breadth of services of any agency in Tarrant County, Reynolds said. "We have 32 programs to serve people in need, and we provide 115 services to this community. We offer them to everyone... Catholics, Baptists, Buddhists, and everything in between. And, we are forward-driven by being innovative in what we do, and always striving to rise to the occasion in time of community need."

Speaking at the luncheon was a former client, Vanja Djuric, who was in second grade in 1992 when war broke out in Bosnia, her home country. She was separated by walls and military force from her parents, who, she said, escaped by the grace of God.

"After the war, the countries were divided and we had no place to call home. My mother was Muslim and my father was Christian Orthodox, so no matter where we settled, my family was at constant risk." The family arrived in the United States at midnight Aug. 27, 1997 and were

"welcomed at DFW International Airport, by the smiling face of Catholic Charities."

"We were safe, together, and fully supported by Catholic Charities," she said. "They did many things... such as providing a safe and furnished home, access to medical care and food, teaching us English, enrolling me in school, and helping my parents find jobs. Catholic Charities gave our family these resources and connections to start rebuilding our life here in America."

The family members are now U.S. citizens; Djuric, at 25 years old, has a master's degree, a CPA license, and her own accounting firm.

At the Creating Hope luncheon, guests heard video testimonies and personal ones, after which they made pledges and donations totaling \$626,064.

"The work we are doing at Catholic Charities is outstanding," Reynolds said, with the energy and enthusiasm that has marked her eight-year tenure at the agency. "We are faith driven.... We do this work, not because we believe in doing good, but because we believe in Christ's commandment to love one another."

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St. Joseph Health Care Trust expands services across diocese

By Nicki Prevou
Editorial Assistant

The woman who recently approached Catholic Charities staff member Jackie Gordon had a heartbreaking story, Gordon recalled. The single mother of a young child had been the victim of a house fire, and was burned over most of her body. She had spent long months away from her daughter during her hospitalization, and was struggling to regain a normal appearance and a productive life.

"One ear had been totally destroyed," said Gordon, a community health facilitator for St. Joseph Health Care Trust, a fund administered by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Fort Worth. "Although she was able to get Medicaid assistance in paying for her surgeries, and even for the prosthesis for her ear, this client had no way of paying for the magnets that were needed to attach the prosthetic ear to the side of her face."

Because the total cost of the necessary devices was less than \$1,000, St. Joseph Health Care Trust was able to pay for the magnets, thus helping to ease the trauma of a stressful situation, Gordon explained. "That's what the trust is for," she added. "Not only were we able to meet the immediate need, but we also offered counseling for the little girl and for the mom. The mother knew that we really cared about her and her family."

The health care trust, established after St. Joseph Hospital in Fort Worth closed in 1995, has a simple, yet profoundly important mission, according to Lori Kennedy, who serves as the trust's program coordinator for Catholic Charities.

"The trust exists in order to promote a healthier community

by increasing access to care and in increasing opportunities for health education," said Kennedy. "We serve the community by offering information and preventive care, and by making sure that the uninsured — or those who are underinsured — can find a medical home for ongoing care."

The trust has traditionally served several "partner" parish communities within Tarrant County, explained Kennedy, "communities with lower income levels and, traditionally, those neighborhoods with greater needs. We've had great success in offering health education and primary care services within those neighborhoods, but we're now at this very exciting point where the members of the trust's board have determined that the trust's scope can be expanded. The trust is now able to offer services, not just within those partner parish communities in the Fort Worth area, but also within all 28 counties of the Diocese of Fort Worth. That is truly a tremendous breakthrough."

The expanded outreach of the trust is indeed an event that honors the legacy of the original healthcare providers of North Texas, agreed Peter Flynn, director of the Finance and Administrative Services for the Diocese of Fort Worth and the executive director of the Catholic Foundation of North Texas. "The trust, funded by generous benefactors many years ago, was always intended to support the work of St. Joseph Hospital in Tarrant County and the surrounding area," explained Flynn. "There is an incredible history of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word coming to Texas, as health care professionals, establishing hospitals, [and] working to serve the most basic needs within the

communities. By reaching out to those in need in every corner of our diocese," he said, "we honor the commitment, the vision, and the hard work of those extraordinary women."

In the meantime, eligible individuals living in Tarrant, Denton, Wise, Jack, Cooke, Wichita, Clay, Montague, Archer, Baylor, Wilbarger, Foard, Hardeman, Knox, Bosque, Hill, Johnson, Hood, Somervell, Erath, Comanche, Palo Pinto, Parker, Eastland, Stephens, Throckmorton, and Schackelford counties are now able to receive services from the trust, including counseling, diagnostic mammograms and other tests, vision exams, dental care, and assistance with prescriptions and with hearing aids.

"There are so many people out in the communities who have lost their jobs, and have lost hope, because of the economy," said Kennedy. "Our job is not only to give help, but to share hope, as well. Some agencies are not able to provide personal care and individual attention. There are many services we can't provide — for example, we can't afford services dealing with hospitalizations or surgery — but do offer help with primary care services, and we offer individual attention and personal assistance, as well."

Yet another new development is the health trust's ability to offer a new prescription discount card to all eligible clients, added Kennedy. "This card will allow clients to go to most pharmacies and to receive a significant discount." The uninsured, she said, can use the card and receive a discount of from 10 to 40 percent on their prescriptions.

For more information about the trust and available services, call Catholic Charities at (817) 920-7733.

Eligibility for St. Joseph Health Care Trust

Potential clients must have an unmet health care need that is within St. Joseph Health Care Trust's scope of services, including needs such as hearing aids, dental care, counseling, prescription assistance, medical goods, eyeglasses, and diagnostic tests.

- Potential clients must live within one of the twenty-eight counties served by the Fort Worth Diocese.

- All potential clients must have a household income at 300 percent of poverty level or below, *and* not have medical insurance that covers the health care service being requested.

- Individual circumstances can be considered when determining eligibility for services. If a potential client does have health care coverage, they must show that the medical need is not covered by their health care program and that the cost of the care would create an undue financial hardship for the individual or family.

- St. Joseph Health Care Trust does not restrict services in regard to religious affiliation, race, ethnicity, gender, or disability.

Potential clients must provide the following documents in order for eligibility to be determined:

- Picture ID (Exceptions to this policy are allowed).

- Last two paycheck stubs for income verification or award letters from food stamps, TANF, or the Social Security Administration on all household members receiving an income. Income must be at or below 300 percent of federal poverty level (for guidelines, check www.povertyguidelines.org).

- Address Verification (e.g., lease, utility bill, property tax document).

- If the potential client has medical insurance they must submit proof that their medical insurance policy will not cover the requested health care service.

The scope of service that St. Joseph's Health Care Trust provides excludes certain services that would be contrary to Catholic social and moral teaching, which specifically includes services such as abortions, artificial contraception, tubal ligations, and vasectomies.

Potential clients are informed of eligibility/ineligibility within 48 hours of applying for services. To check eligibility or for more information, call the St. Joseph Health Care Trust office at Catholic Charities at (817) 920-7733 or 1-888-757-9647.

Residents of the Northwest deanery may contact Catholic Charities staff member Stella

Centeno at her office at Holy Family Church in Vernon, at (940) 552-0347.

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Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth Statement on Fr. Joseph Tu Sexual Abuse Lawsuit

Editor's note: The following news release was distributed by the Diocese of Fort Worth to news media outlets across North Texas Friday, Dec. 11.

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth expresses its deep concern for the women who have alleged in a lawsuit filed today that they were sexually abused by Dominican priest, Rev. Joseph Ngoc Tu Nguyen O.P., who formerly served in the diocese. Nguyen was one of seven priests whose files were made public in June 2005 by the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth.

He is a priest of the Southern Dominican Province of St. Martin de Porres.

"Any form of sexual abuse is a tragic violation of an individual's God-given right to exercise control over their own bodies and their own behavior," Bishop Kevin Vann said. "Keeping children, young people, and vulnerable adults safe from inappropriate sexual behavior is a high priority of the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth."

Father Nguyen was ordained in Vietnam by the Dominicans. His assignments in the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth were:

St. Matthew Catholic Church (Arlington): 1975-1977

St. Michael Catholic Church (Bedford): 1979-1980

St. Matthew Catholic Church (Arlington): 1980-1993

The Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth invites anyone who wishes to report sexual misconduct on the part of anyone who serves the church to contact Victims' Assistance Coordinator Judy Locke at 817 560-3300, Ext. 201 or Father E. James Hart at 817 560-3300, Ext. 104.

Diocesan

Catholic parishes unite to build Habitat house

Project part of Trinity Habitat for Humanity's 'Building on Faith' campaign

Story and Photos by
Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Heather and Frank Williams are looking forward to the Christmas season with more hope and anticipation thanks to nine Catholic parishes in the Diocese of Fort Worth who banded together to build them a home.

Parishioners from St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller, Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville, St. Patrick Cathedral, Holy Family, St. Andrew, and St. Bartholomew churches in Fort Worth, and St. Joseph and St. Vincent de Paul churches in Arlington raised money to underwrite the cost of construction and are volunteering to work at the site. Organizers broke ground at the home's Mansfield location in September and expect to finish construction in early 2010.

The Williams and their children Richard, 16, and Ryan, 10, are one of 11 families receiving homes as part of Trinity Habitat for Humanity's annual "Building on Faith" campaign which brings together sponsors from different faiths and perspectives to "build homes and hope."

Deacon Mike Mocek from Holy

Family handed the Mansfield couple the ceremonial keys to their new 1,200-square-foot dwelling during an outdoor luncheon hosted by Trinity Habitat for Humanity on Dec. 5 in the Stockyards Station. The organization, celebrating its 20th anniversary, builds affordable, quality homes with volunteer labor and donations of money and materials. This is the second time Catholic parishes have united for a Habitat project.

"Just as the house has a foundation, let the Good News — the word of God — lay the foundation for the rest of your life," the deacon said, presenting the new homeowners with a Bible.

The Williams family currently lives in a run-down, crime-riddled trailer park.

"This new home will give us peace of mind," explained Frank Williams, a disabled Marine Corps veteran who served in Desert Storm. "A lot of teenagers hang out around our home, and it's a bad environment for the boys. When they get off the school bus, they have to come right inside."

Habitat for Humanity and North Texas Catholics will give them the backyard they've never had.

"We've already met some of our new neighbors, and the boys are looking forward to playing outside with their dogs."

In addition to the home for the Williams family, Catholic parishes are also participating in an interfaith Habitat project which is building a home in Fort Worth for the Abdulle family.

Father Richard Eldredge, TOR,



Fr. Richard Eldredge, TOR (far left), and Deacon Mike Mocek (right), present a Bible to Heather and Frank Williams and their two sons, Richard and Ryan, at a luncheon held Dec. 5. The Williams family also received the ceremonial keys to their new Habitat for Humanity home, currently under construction in Mansfield through the efforts of several Catholic parishes within the Diocese of Fort Worth.

who gave the opening prayer at the luncheon, is proud of his parish's partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

"It's a wonderful experience," said the Good Shepherd pastor. "What a wonderful example to give as Christians. We're helping people 'build a house on rock,' as Christ called us to do."

He praised local Catholics for their efforts.

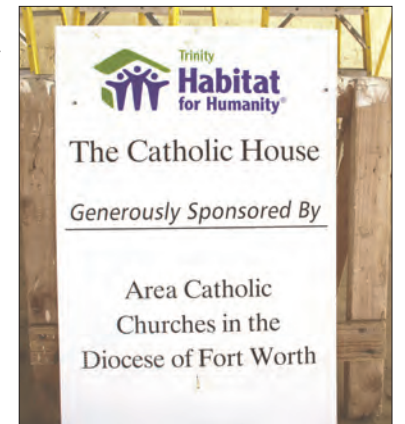
"It's an example of how we can be charitable and reach out to others in need as Jesus called us to do," Fr. Eldredge added.

Eddie Monroe, who is coordinating the Habitat for Humanity project with Ann Marie Brannan, worked a shift at the construction site before attending the group dedication ceremony. The Mansfield home is the second Catholic-

sponsored house the Holy Family parishioner has helped build. Giving people a home of their own is important, the computer programmer says.

"Statistics show that families who own a home are more stable and their children do better in school," Monroe explained. "Ownership gives them a sense of pride. These homes get them over-the-hump, so they can live comfortably instead of just getting by."

Partner families who qualify for the Habitat program are required to invest 250 hours of "sweat equity" into their own home's construction or another family's. Pete Przybyla, project manager for the home sponsored by Catholic parishes, helped build three other Habitat houses and has gotten to



know the recipients.

"It's a diverse group," says the St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner. "Some are handicapped or have other medical issues." All of them, he said, have faced difficult circumstances that have blocked their way to home ownership.

Przybyla would like to see more parishes become involved with Habitat for Humanity.

"All kinds of things come with home ownership," says the retired General Motors manager. "Homeowners prosper compared to their neighbors who rent. It improves their style of life and gives them more opportunities. Studies show drug use, arrests, and teen pregnancy rates decline. Owning a home makes people more responsible and accountable."

The Williams family appreciates the generosity shown to them by their Catholic benefactors. Work crews building their home have already made up for time lost due to rain delays.

"We've gotten to meet so many different people," says Heather Williams. "There's definitely a feeling of community in a Habitat project. It's nice to know people care."

Diocese's Reyna Castelán honored as UD Catholic Biblical School distinguished alumna with DEI VERBUM award at Landregan Lecture

By Nicki Prevou
Editorial Assistant

Reyna Castelán, an employee of the Diocese of Fort Worth for more than 20 years, has received one of two annual Distinguished Alumni Awards given by the University of Dallas Catholic Biblical School (CBS) in 2009. *The Dei Verbum* award, presented to her at the 11th annual Landregan Lecture Dec. 5 at the University of Dallas, recognizes outstanding service to the Church, particularly in its educational mission, and to the larger community, especially serving the poor and those in need.

Castelán served as administrative assistant to Bishop Joseph Delaney from 1997 until his death in 2005, and has served Bishop Kevin Vann in the same capacity since his ordination as bishop of the diocese

in July of that year. Castelán, a volunteer at the Federal Correctional Institution in Fort Worth for the past twelve years, began to serve as a leader of Bible study groups at the prison in 2006. She graduated in 2007 from the CBS four-year intensive study of the Bible.

Sister Dorothy Jonaitis, OP, an instructor for the Catholic Biblical School and assistant professor with the University of Dallas School of Ministry graduate theology program, spoke of Castelán's "dedication, fidelity, diligence, and compassion" while presenting the award. "An associate of the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur for 14 years, three years ago she became an oblate of the sisters' community," Jonaitis told the gathering of approximately 100 attending the award ceremony. "And so she



Reyna Castelán

has participated in the mission of the Church in conjunction with these sisters." Castelán translated some materials into Spanish to use with Spanish-speaking inmates, and later, as a CBS graduate, she received permission from the school to use their Spanish mate-

rials to lead inmates through the comprehensive curriculum.

In accepting the award, Castelán spoke of her deep appreciation for the opportunity to study Scripture and to learn from the "excellent" professors in the CBS program. "The classes gave me more than just information about the Bible," said Castelán. "They helped me to know at a new level that God loves us, no matter what. The teachers' love for the Scriptures inspired me to share that deep truth with my brothers in prison."

A second School of Ministry honor, the *Lumen Gentium* award, was also presented at the Dec. 5 ceremony to Michelle Elchlepp, of the Diocese of Dallas, who chairs the theology department at Jesuit College Preparatory School in Dallas.

The 2009 Landregan Lecture, entitled "Eucharist, Hunger, and Environmental Destruction: Can a Religious Ritual Heal the World?" which followed the awards ceremony, was given by author and theologian Richard Gaillardetz, who serves as the Thomas and Margaret Murray/James J. Bacik professor of Catholic Studies at the University of Toledo in Toledo, Ohio.

The Landregan Lecture was inaugurated in 1999 to honor Steven T. Landregan, a UD alumnus, former editor of the *Texas Catholic* newspaper for the Dallas Diocese, and current Dallas diocesan archivist. For more information about the UD School of Ministry, visit the school's Web site at www.udallas.edu/academics/ministry or call the school at (972) 721-4118.

Viewpoints

Advent and Christmas remind us that God has redeemed us by becoming one of us

By Lucas Pollice

As we continue the season of Advent and prepare to celebrate Christmas, it is quite fitting that we complete the first six weeks of *Why Catholic?* by more deeply pondering the great mystery of the Incarnation.

Through the Incarnation (meaning “to become flesh”) God becomes fully human in the person of Jesus Christ, who is indeed Emmanuel, or “God with us.” Jesus comes as God to fully reveal God the Father to man, but he also comes as truly human to reveal man to Himself and to restore in us the image and likeness of God that was disfigured through sin.

WHY DID JESUS BECOME BOTH FULLY GOD AND FULLY HUMAN?

After the fall of Adam and Eve, there existed a great chasm between God and humanity. Through original sin, each and every human being is born into this world with a natural separation from God. Sin entered the world through Adam’s disobedience, and since he is the father of all the living, the entire human family enters the world with a wounded and disfigured human nature.

Thus, the fall of Adam and Eve presents a grave problem. First of all, this chasm, this rift between God and man, is so great that only God has the power to remove or heal it. No mere man, no matter how good, no matter how faithful to God, could ever fix it. But at the same time, since sin entered the world through a man, it would take unique and extraordinary faith and obedience of another man to atone and do justice for the sin of the first man, Adam. This is the dilemma that God and all of humanity faced after the fall.

However, immediately after the first sin God announced and inaugurated his plan of salvation in Jesus Christ. It would be through Christ, who is both fully and truly God and fully and truly human, that the redemption of the world would be accomplished. Jesus, being God, has the power to restore the communion between God and man. He can also, as a man, atone for the disobedience of Adam through his own extraordinary obedience to the Father. Thus, just as it was through the one man, Adam, that sin and death came into the world, it is through the one man, Jesus Christ, that all of humanity is restored to justification and life.

This truth and reality of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ is the “tidings of great joy” that we celebrate every Christmas. The tiny baby born in the stable in Bethlehem reveals that God and humanity will forever be one — that nothing, absolutely nothing can ever again separate God from his people — and at the same time reveals the great dignity and worth of each and every human person.

JESUS FULLY REVEALS THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD

Through the first sin, Adam and Eve separated themselves from God and no longer saw Him as their loving Father. Through sin, humanity lost intimate knowledge of God, but because we were made to be in communion with Him, man still craved to have union and knowledge of Him. Throughout the Old Testament, God gradually revealed Himself and gathered his chosen people until, in the fullness of time, God Himself entered human history and fully revealed Himself through his only Son, Jesus. This revelation of the Father in Jesus Christ is the revelation and restoration to man of that great divine love that created Him. That merciful divine love, that has set out to redeem all of humanity from slavery to sin, brings all men back into communion with God. Pope John Paul II speaks of this “divine dimension” of the Incarnation, and what Jesus, as the Son of God, comes to reveal about the Father and his love:

This revelation [in Christ] of the Father and outpouring of the Holy Spirit, which stamp an indelible seal on the mystery of the Redemption, explain the meaning of the Cross and death of Christ. The God of creation is revealed as the God of redemption, as the God who is “faithful to himself,” and faithful to his love for man and the world, which he revealed on the day of creation. His is a love that does not draw back before anything that justice requires in him. 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 whatever, 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 re-

velation of love and mercy has taken a form and a name: that of Jesus Christ.
—The Redeemer of Man, 24

JESUS FULLY REVEALS MAN TO HIMSELF

Not only is Jesus the God who comes to fully reveal Himself and to forgive our sins, but Jesus is also fully human, and through his Incarnation is the full and inseparable union between God and man. The entire reality and purpose of the Father’s loving plan of salvation is contained in the one person, Jesus Christ. Through the Incarnation, man, who lost his likeness to God through sin, once again receives a share in the very life of God.

It is through this union of God and man in the person of Jesus Christ that God fully reveals man to Himself. Christ enters human history as the one and unique man who shows each and every person his or her dignity and destiny as a son or daughter of God. God’s love and mercy for us is so great and profound that He clothes Himself with our humanity and all that it entails in order to redeem and restore our human nature. Jesus reveals to us our divine likeness that had been disfigured by sin and communicates to us through his words and deeds the fullness of life for which we were created and to which we are called:

The truth is that only in the mystery of the Incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light. For Adam, the first man, was a type of him who was to come (Rom. 5:14), Christ the Lord. Christ the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, fully reveals man to himself and brings to light his most high calling. He who is “the image of the invisible God” (Col. 1:15), is himself the perfect man who has restored in the children of Adam that likeness to God which had been disfigured ever since the first sin.

— Vatican II: *Gaudium et Spes*, 22

Therefore, Christ, by becoming fully human, united Himself with each and every person in all times, places, cultures, and circumstances. By fully assuming our

human nature and living a truly human life, Jesus redeems and restores each and every aspect of human nature and existence.

WE MUST WITNESS THE JOY OF CHRISTMAS

This truth and reality of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ is the “tidings of great joy” that we celebrate every Christmas. The tiny baby born in the stable in Bethlehem reveals that God and humanity will forever be one — that nothing, absolutely nothing can ever again separate God from his people — and at the same time reveals the great dignity and worth of each and every human person. As Vatican II beautifully states:

Human nature, by the very fact that it was assumed, not absorbed, in him, has been raised in us also to a dignity beyond compare. For, by his Incarnation, he, the son of God, in a certain way united himself with each man. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind. He acted with a human Will, and with a human heart he loved. Born of the Virgin Mary, he has truly been made one of us, like to us in all things except sin.

— *Gaudium et Spes*, 22

Therefore, we are called to embrace this Christmas joy and to be a witness to this good news, this Gospel of life and love revealed in the Christ-child. We ourselves need to be a testimony to the fact that humanity is so loved by God that He came down to us to become one of us so we could once again have intimate communion with God and receive salvation and redemption. As John Paul II so powerfully states:

Humanity is loved by God! This very simple yet profound proclamation is owed to humanity by the Church. Each Christian’s words and life must make this proclamation resound: God loves you, Christ came for you, Christ is for you “the Way, the Truth and the Life!” (Jn. 14:6).

— *The Lay Members of Christ’s Faithful People*, 34



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

from the Institute for Pastoral Theology of Ave Maria University. He is an adjunct professor of theology with the Cardinal Newman Institute in Fort Worth. Lucas and his wife, Mary, have five children, Cecilia, Nicholas, Timothy, Christian, and Julia.

Can we make room in the inn of our lives?

By Deirdre McQuade

Every Christmas, people from Mexico and other parts of Central America celebrate Las Posadas, a nine-day novena of prayer, song, and hospitality built around Mary and Joseph's struggle to find lodging in Bethlehem.

Families walk from home to home, singing their request for shelter. But owners reject their uninvited would-be guests, turning them away with excuses like: "We're not running an inn," or "You could be a thief."

The "pilgrims" are finally received humbly by the last home each night, where they often sing: "Posada os brindo / Santos Peregrinos, / y disculpa os pido, / no os reconocía" ("I offer you hospitality / Holy Pilgrims, / and for not recognizing you / I apologize"). They then host one of the nine nightly parties with more songs, a shared meal, and a piñata for the children.

Having received the hospitality of others, neighbors then offer it in turn. The nine-day vigil prepares the whole neighborhood to receive Jesus Christ in Holy Communion on Christmas, celebrating God's generosity to us.

The children — and by extension, all the family members — learn what it means to make room for the unborn Christ Child and his parents in their own lives: "Entren Santos Peregrinos, Peregrinos / Reciban este rincón, / que aunque es pobre la morada, la morada / os las doy de corazón" ("Enter, Holy Pilgrims / Take this little corner of our house, / even though it is a poor place to stay / we give it to you with all our heart").

Like Mary, some pregnant

This Christmas, through the motherly intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, may we and our families receive the Christ Child into our hearts, recognize all the vulnerable holy pilgrims in our midst whether born or unborn, and share the little we have "en el nombre del cielo" — in the name of Heaven.

women today face many challenges and may need our hospitality. This is especially true for mothers expecting an unexpected child. Whether rich or poor, they require welcome in an age when the unborn child is seen as an unwelcome burden — and, at times, even as a threat.

Tragically, abortion is often offered as a violent response to that perceived threat. But this "choice" is the ultimate failure to recognize a great gift wrapped in the living gift-wrap of a mother's womb! The Posadas invite us to welcome the unborn child as a precious guest "with all our heart," even when we may have little to offer.

Maternity homes for unwed or displaced mothers offer such hospitality in a tangible way every day. The Gabriel Project, a parish-based program, brings pregnant moms together with "angels" who befriend them, get to know their needs on a personal level, and offer ongoing support and care both before and after their children are born. Pregnancy care centers provide confidential services

and referrals for women in need — some of whom are tempted to abort their children. All such organizations help women and their families realize that it is never impossible to do the right thing, and that the answer to a crisis pregnancy is to eliminate the crisis, not the pregnancy.

This Christmas, through the motherly intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe, may we and our families receive the Christ Child into our hearts, recognize all the vulnerable holy pilgrims in our midst whether born or unborn, and share the little we have "en el nombre del cielo" — in the name of Heaven.



Deirdre A. McQuade is Assistant Director for Policy and Communications at the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. For a novena to Our Lady of Guadalupe, go to www.usccb.org/prolife/programs/rfp/2009/liturguide.pdf (pp. 9-11).



Though we see
Mary's image
as
Our Lady
of Guadalupe
a lot at this
time of year,
she leads us
to her Son

EVERY DAY

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

It was a treasure, a masterpiece. And one year, between January and December, I lost it.

Every November the search ensued, without success, and periodically I would ask my daughters if they knew the whereabouts of that priceless piece of artwork.

"Meredith, have you seen that nativity scene Abby made in fifth grade?"

"You mean the one with the flattened donkey? It probably broke."

"Julie, where is the nativity scene I got at St. Andrew's art auction?"

"You mean Abby's class one? The one with the angel who has two wings on the same side? Maybe we threw it away."

"Thrown away," at our house, is the natural answer to "Where is ... ??" But in the case of the lost nativity scene, that was never an option.

Losing that nativity scene in a garbage bag with coffee grounds and used bubble wrap was unthinkable. Hence, those yearly lost-and-found conversations with my daughters always ended up hopefully: "We'll find it someday."

This year "someday" came. We found baby Jesus in a Minyard's grocery sack, the top wadded up like a lunch bag at the end of a school day.

The paper bag was not hidden, exactly. It had just fallen out of a Christmas box, onto the attic floor, next to the ductwork. There it lay, like a discarded clump of tangled tinsel.

"Look at this," I smiled, bending to investigate the sack. "I finally found you!"

I had purchased that nativity scene — for an extravagant price — at the school auction when Abby was in fifth grade.

Those lovely child-crafted items on the auction block were never designed to be practical purchases. They were solely for heart-string tugging, and big-bucks spending. The previous year, when Abby was in fourth grade I had paid even more for a platter with a painting of the ballpark, all the children's thumbprints as fans, and their signatures around the rim. That has been our turkey tray for more than a decade.

The 19-piece nativity scene (once you were lost but now you're found) was sculpted of terracotta, each piece hand-signed by the artist: Christina, Anne Marie, Rheanna, Ryan, Amanda, David, Allen, Kaci, Alison.

I knew when I purchased the manger scene that it was special, but I didn't know how special until I got

SEE HAMER, P. 26

Vatican, Russia upgrade ties to establish full diplomatic relations

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Vatican and Russia announced they would upgrade diplomatic relations to the highest level.

During a meeting at the Vatican Dec. 3, Pope Benedict XVI and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev agreed to establish full diplomatic ties between their two countries. Since 1990 they have exchanged diplomatic representatives but without full relations.

The two leaders discussed “the challenges currently facing security and peace” and the international and political situation in the world, according to a written statement released by the Vatican after the meeting.

They also discussed “cultural and social questions of mutual interest, such as the value of the family and the contribution believers make to life in Russia,” the Vatican statement said.

The private discussions between the two leaders were

“cordial,” it said.

In a customary exchange of gifts, the pope presented Medvedev a copy of his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (*Charity in Truth*) in Russian. The president gave the pope 22 volumes of an encyclopedia on the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Vatican and the Russian federation forged high-level official contacts in 1990, a year before Russia voted the communist government out of existence and the former Soviet Union collapsed. It was the first time the two countries exchanged official representatives since full diplomatic relations had been broken after the Russian Revolution of 1917.

The Vatican’s representative in Moscow has had the title of apostolic nuncio and Moscow’s representative to the Vatican has had the title of ambassador since 1990, but the diplomats’ functions have been that of representatives.

The atypical diplomatic status of the two representatives has not had a negative impact on their work as they enjoy normal working ties and diplomatic rights and privileges, said Pavel Dyukarev, charge d’affaires at the Russian Embassy to the Vatican.

Tense relations between the Russian Orthodox and Catholic churches had been partially responsible for the lack of establishing full diplomatic relations in the past, he said by phone to Catholic News Service Dec. 4. He said that while church and state are separate in Russia, “the church is not separate from society and at the time one had to take this into consideration.”

“It’s true that the (improved) relations between the two churches have facilitated” this political step forward, “but there is no direct link, just an atmosphere that has been marked by closer, friendlier relations,” said the diplomat.

Bishop

FROM PAGE 1

grateful to the pope “for having given me this sign of the providence of God.”

“I am grateful too for the opportunity to serve as shepherd over the Diocese of Brownsville, a local church situated in the beautiful Rio Grande Valley, rich in gifts of faith, hope, and charity, as well as in tradition and culture,” he said in an open letter posted in English and Spanish on the Archdiocese of Detroit’s Web site.

Bishop Flores noted his appointment came on the feast of St. Juan Diego.

The bishop was in Brownsville for a morning press conference with Bishop Peña at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral. The two bishops also were scheduled to visit the diocesan pastoral center later in the day.

Bishop Flores said, “The ties of friendship and communion that I have formed during my three years in Detroit give me strength to move forward with confidence in the providence of God.”

As an auxiliary bishop, he has overseen seven of the 18 vicariates in the archdiocese, advised the archdiocese on immigration issues and helped establish the Office for Hispanic Affairs.

Ordained a priest of the Diocese of Corpus Christi, then-Father Flores was parochial vicar at Corpus Christi Cathedral, secretary to the bishop, diocesan master of ceremonies, assistant chancellor, rector of St. John Vianney House of Studies, and vicar

for vocations.

Named a monsignor in 1995, he went to Rome in 1997 to study at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, also known as the Angelicum. He completed his doctorate in sacred theology there in 2000, and returned to Corpus Christi, where he was named chancellor.

In August 2001 he was sent to the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston to become part of the formation faculty at St. Mary’s Seminary and the teaching faculty at the University of St. Thomas School of Theology in Houston.

He was named vice rector of St. Mary’s in 2002 and three years later named rector of Corpus Christi Cathedral. He administered the cathedral while completing his seminary duties. In 2006 he served full time as rector and in October of that year was named a Detroit auxiliary.

“The years of Bishop Flores’ ministry here in the archdiocese have been a great blessing. In particular he has placed the ministry to Hispanic Catholics here on a solid foundation,” said Detroit Archbishop Allen H. Vigneron in a statement.

“He goes with the love and prayers of all of us, his family in Detroit — where he will always find a ready welcome ‘back home,’” Archbishop Vigneron added.

The Brownsville Diocese in South Texas stretches along the Rio Grande, and has a Catholic population of 800,000 out of a total population of 940,000.

Bishop Peña was ordained for the Diocese of Corpus Christi in

1957. In addition to parish posts, he served as diocesan youth director, 1967-70, and editor of the *Texas Gulf Coast Catholic*, as the Corpus Christi diocesan newspaper was then known, 1970-75.

He was an auxiliary bishop of San Antonio from 1976 until 1980, and served for about six months in 1979 as administrator of the archdiocese. Named to head the Diocese of El Paso in 1980, he held that post for 15 years until his appointment to Brownsville.

Over the years a chief concern for Bishop Peña has been the lack of priests available to serve the region’s burgeoning Catholic population. As a bishop of a border diocese, he also has been a long-standing advocate of justice for immigrants, especially those coming into the U.S. from Mexico. He has been outspoken about “the anti-stranger sentiment” that he has seen taking shape in public policy and attitudes in recent years.

On the national level, Bishop Peña is a former chairman of what were then the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Hispanic Affairs and Committee for the Church in Latin America. He also was a member of the committee on what is now the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, the Committee on Migration, and the now defunct Committee on Pastoral Response to the Challenge of Proselytism.

In 1990 he urged the U.S. bishops’ conference to give “an ever more focused emphasis to Hispanic concerns” and said increasing the number of Hispanic bishops “would certainly attest to the church’s response to the nationwide Hispanic presence.”

Special Collection: Annual Collection for the Holy Father

Parish Name	Parish Location	Holy Father June 2008	Holy Father June 2009
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Abbott	207.00	265.00
Jesus of Nazareth	Albany	69.00	46.43
Holy Redeemer	Aledo	977.00	1,424.95
Most Blessed Sacrament	Arlington	3,220.21	3,225.13
St. Joseph	Arlington	2,895.65	2,719.54
St. Maria Goretti	Arlington	3,300.30	2,679.00
St. Mary the Virgin	Arlington	381.00	0.00
St. Matthew	Arlington	351.50	453.35
St. Vincent de Paul	Arlington	2,043.25	1,856.00
Vietnamese Martyrs	Arlington	1,959.00	1,375.00
Holy Trinity	Azle	546.00	751.00
St. Michael	Bedford	2,514.00	2,340.00
St. Jerome	Bowie	0.00	65.00
Sacred Heart of Jesus	Breckenridge	293.95	277.55
St. John the Baptizer	Bridgeport	491.57	469.31
St. Jude Thaddeus	Burkburnett	274.00	290.00
St. Ann	Burleson	1,039.00	1,599.00
St. Catherine of Siena	Carrollton	2,383.00	2,370.91
Holy Rosary	Cisco	0.00	71.00
St. Joseph	Cleburne	817.43	752.43
Holy Angels	Clifton	389.10	192.00
Good Shepherd	Colleyville	2,077.00	2,416.87
Holy Cross	The Colony	988.75	1,143.31
Sacred Heart	Comanche	0.00	139.00
St. Joseph	Crowell	33.00	36.00
Assumption/Blessed Virgin Mary	Decatur	645.29	805.07
Our Lady of Guadalupe	De Leon	67.75	90.00
Immaculate Conception	Denton	842.00	1,118.00
St. Mark	Denton	3,076.94	2,248.49
St. Mary	Dublin	381.00	242.00
St. Francis Xavier	Eastland	0.00	123.00
St. Paul	Electra	28.00	0.00
All Saints	Fort Worth	1,383.90	1,391.87
Christ the King	Fort Worth	940.00	957.00
Holy Family	Fort Worth	2,778.00	2,578.00
Holy Name of Jesus	Fort Worth	0.00	0.00
Immaculate Heart of Mary	Fort Worth	528.00	0.00
Our Lady of Fatima	Fort Worth	833.00	836.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Fort Worth	658.00	2,682.00
Our Mother of Mercy	Fort Worth	278.00	292.00
San Mateo	Fort Worth	0.00	573.50
St. Andrew	Fort Worth	4,681.27	4,059.27
St. Bartholomew	Fort Worth	4,920.85	4,835.00
St. George	Fort Worth	345.00	345.00
St. John the Apostle	Fort Worth	2,135.41	1,222.00
St. Mary of the Assumption	Fort Worth	386.00	238.00
St. Patrick Cathedral	Fort Worth	0.00	0.00
St. Paul	Fort Worth	834.70	1,750.30
St. Peter the Apostle	Fort Worth	600.00	956.00
St. Rita	Fort Worth	279.00	187.00
St. Thomas the Apostle	Fort Worth	1,937.72	1,576.53
St. Mary	Gainesville	1,007.00	375.00
St. Rose of Lima	Glen Rose	219.20	125.50
St. Francis of Assisi	Graford	0.00	0.00
St. Mary	Graham	515.00	633.05
St. Frances Cabrini	Granbury	2,618.00	1,113.50
St. Francis of Assisi	Grapevine	2,414.00	1,582.00
St. Mary	Henrietta	50.00	30.00
Our Lady of Mercy	Hillsboro	960.87	731.53
Korean Catholic Community	Hurst	0.00	0.00
Christ the King	Iowa Park	23.00	35.00
St. Mary	Jacksboro	39.00	123.00
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton	Keller	5,893.90	3,827.25
Santa Rosa	Knox City	88.34	197.33
St. Philip the Apostle	Lewisville	2,778.71	3,314.33
St. Peter	Lindsay	1,882.75	1,102.00
St. Jude	Mansfield	1,251.85	958.40
St. Mary of the Assumption	Megargel	125.00	5.00
Our Lady of Lourdes	Mineral Wells	122.00	0.00
St. William	Montague	0.00	0.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Morgan	121.45	45.00
Sacred Heart	Muenster	1,317.00	1,122.00
St. Joseph	Nocoria	0.00	0.00
St. Theresa	Olney	108.75	85.11
Nativity/Blessed Virgin Mary	Penelope	102.00	133.39
St. Thomas Aquinas	Pilot Point	628.00	733.83
St. Mary	Quanah	254.00	200.00
St. Rita	Ranger	0.00	103.25
St. Joseph	Rhineland	219.00	243.00
St. Boniface	Scotland	102.00	107.00
Sacred Heart	Seymour	164.20	184.00
St. Brendan	Stephenville	365.00	282.00
St. John	Strawn	0.00	55.00
Holy Family of Nazareth	Vernon	272.00	275.00
St. Stephen	Weatherford	1,943.00	1,838.00
Immaculate Conception of Mary	Wichita Falls	975.00	508.00
Our Lady of Guadalupe	Wichita Falls	658.18	891.51
Our Lady Queen of Peace	Wichita Falls	883.00	30.00
Sacred Heart	Wichita Falls	1,113.00	1,013.00
St. Mary	Windthorst	406.75	448.00

85,431.49 78,513.79

Prepared by the Accounting Dept for the Catholic Diocese of Fort Worth
Please forward all questions and comments to Debbie Lankford

Not so secret:

New book features 105 documents from Vatican archives

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—With millions of documents filling almost 53 miles of shelf space, the Vatican Secret Archives obviously still hold some secrets.

Despite the aura of mystery surrounding the archives, the Vatican actually encourages academics to research its holdings and has worked with a Belgian publishing house to bring 105 of the most important, or curious, documents to the public.

The coffee-table book, *The Vatican Secret Archives*, was published by VdH Books in Dutch, English, French, and Italian.

Cardinal Raffaele Farina, the Vatican archivist, wrote in the introduction that he knows popular books and movies love to imply there are deep dark secrets intentionally hidden from public view.

But, as Bishop Sergio Pagano, prefect of the archives, explained, the “secret” in the archives’ title comes from the Latin “secretum,” meaning “personal” or “private.”

In fact, Pope Leo XIII ordered the archives opened to researchers in 1881, and currently 60 to 80 scholars work there each day, poring over the parchments, ledgers, letters, and texts.

The new book lets readers see some of the things the academics have seen, including handwritten letters to Pope Pius IX from Abraham Lincoln and from Jefferson Davis.

Both letters were written in 1863 while the U.S. Civil War raged on.

President Lincoln’s letter is a formal, diplomatic request that Pope Pius accept Rufus King as the U.S. representative to the Vatican.

The letter makes no mention of the war, but assures the pope that King is “well informed of the relative interests” of both the United States and the Vatican “and of our sincere desire to cultivate and strengthen the friendship and good correspondence

between us.”

On the other hand, the letter from Jefferson Davis, president of the secessionist Confederate States, is filled with references to the war and its “slaughter, ruin, and devastation.”

Only the first page of the letter and Davis’ signature are included in the book, but the Vatican historian’s commentary about the letter includes quotations from the second page as well.

The commentator said Davis wrote to Pope Pius after the pope had written to the archbishops of New York and New Orleans “urging them to employ every possible means to end the bloodshed and restore peace.”

Davis wrote to the pope about the suffering caused by “the war now waged by the government of the United States against the states and people over which I have been chosen to preside.” He assured the pope that the people of the South are fighting only to defend themselves and to ensure they can “live at peace with all mankind under our own laws and institutions.”

The book’s historical commentary said the letter was, in fact, a veiled ploy to convince Pope Pius to recognize the independence of the Confederacy and establish diplomatic relations; the pope did not do so.

The book also includes a photograph of a letter to Pope Leo written on birch bark. The 1887 letter from the Ojibwe people of Grassy Lake, Ontario, thanks the pope — “the Great Master of Prayer, he who holds the place of Jesus” — for having given them a good “custodian of prayer,” the local bishop.

The birch-bark letter and the most fragile ancient documents in the archives have been digitally scanned, and scholars consult them on one of the computers in the archives’ Index Room.

But most of their requests result in the actual document

being retrieved from storage in an underground bunker, a loft or one of the many rooms lined with 16th- and 17th-century wooden cupboards.

In a silence broken only by an occasional page turning and a constant click-click of keys on laptop computers, the scholars examine and write about the documents.

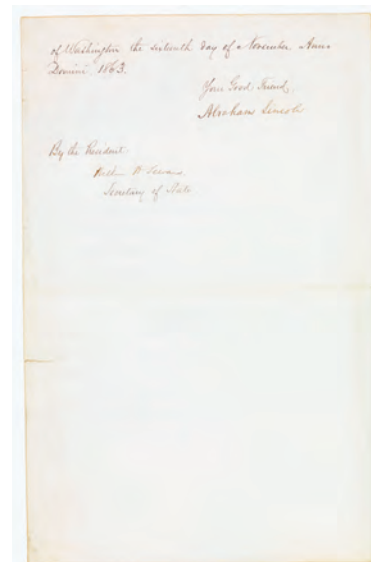
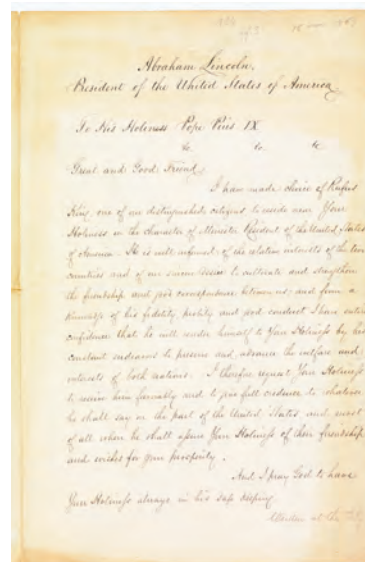
Alfredo Tuzi, director of the reading room, said the most popular topics of current research are the 1936-39 Spanish Civil War and the rise of Nazism in Germany and Fascism in Italy, roughly during the same years.

The archival material those scholars are working with has been available to the researchers only since 2006 when Pope Benedict XVI authorized the opening of all materials related to the papacy of Pope Pius XI, who died in February 1939.

Tuzi said that like any government, the Vatican has a set policy for the gradual opening of documents to public research. While some countries stipulate a number of years — often 50 years after the documents were written — the Vatican Secret Archives open records one entire pontificate at a time. Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have asked the archives’ staff to speed up the organization and cataloguing of the records from the pontificate of Pope Pius XII — who reigned during and after World War II — so that scholars can access them soon.

Archival material created after February 1939 is kept behind a strong wire fence in the archives’ two-story underground bunker, inaugurated by Pope John Paul II in 1983.

Made of reinforced concrete, the bunker resembles an underground parking garage featuring rows of metal shelves instead of cars. The yellow lines painted on the floors do not indicate parking spaces, but are glow-in-the-dark arrows pointing to emergency exits.



An 1863 letter from U.S. President Abraham Lincoln to Pope Pius IX is preserved in the Vatican Secret Archives. The letter tells the pope that Rufus King will be the U.S. representative to the Vatican, that he is “well informed of the relative interests of the two countries and of our sincere desire to cultivate and strengthen the friendship and good correspondence between us.” Lincoln’s signature can be seen on the second page, at right. (CNS photo/courtesy of Vatican Secret Archives and VdH Books)



Above and Below: Documents from the Vatican’s Secretariat of State are seen in an underground bunker of the Vatican Secret Archives. The room looks like a parking garage and is filled with rows of steel shelves. The two-level underground storage area was ordered constructed by Pope Paul IV. (CNS photo/courtesy of Vatican Secret Archives and VdH Books)



USCCB...

FROM PAGE 1

adequate coverage to as many as 600,000 legal immigrants each year who otherwise may not be able to access such coverage.”

“We believe that legal immigrants, who work, pay taxes, and are on a path to citizenship, should have access to health care services, such as Medicaid, for which they help pay,” said the letter from the cardinal and Bishops John C. Wester of Salt Lake City

and William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, New York.

“Moreover, providing low-income legal immigrants access to Medicaid would help ensure that the general public health of immigrant communities and the nation is served,” they added.

Bishop Wester chairs the USCCB Committee on Migration and Bishop Murphy the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development.

Sent to the senators along with Cardinal DiNardo’s letter was a sheet containing quotes

from senators who said during debate on an abortion-related amendment proposed by Sen. Ben Nelson, D-Neb., and others that the Nelson amendment went too far.

But in their vote on the appropriations bill, “almost all Democrats, including almost every senator who claimed the Nelson amendment’s policy went too far, voted in favor of that exact policy,” the cardinal said.

“These senators voted to retain the actual current language of the Hyde amendment, and of

the parallel provision governing abortion in the Federal Employees Health Benefits Program — and that language clearly requires a policy in all other federal health programs that is identical to that of the Nelson amendment,” he said.

The “only substantive difference” between the current “noncontroversial and widely supported” provisions and the Nelson amendment “is that the latter explains at length that (a) it does not prevent purchasers who do not receive federal sub-

sidies from buying a health plan including elective abortions... and (b) it does not prevent purchasers receiving federal subsidies from buying separate supplemental abortion coverage with their own funds,” the letter said.

After a break of several days to consider the appropriations bill, the Senate resumed debate on its version of health reform legislation Dec. 15. Senate leadership hoped to bring the legislation to a vote before the Christmas recess.

Pope Benedict XVI greets several thousand of the faithful from all over the world, including 550 members of the Diocese of Fort Worth, during his weekly papal audience, held Nov. 11 at the Vatican. (Photo courtesy of Peter Flynn)



Pilgrims approach the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls on Nov. 10, their first day in Rome, to attend the 40th Anniversary Welcome Mass celebrated by Bishop Vann. (Photo courtesy of Chris Kastner)

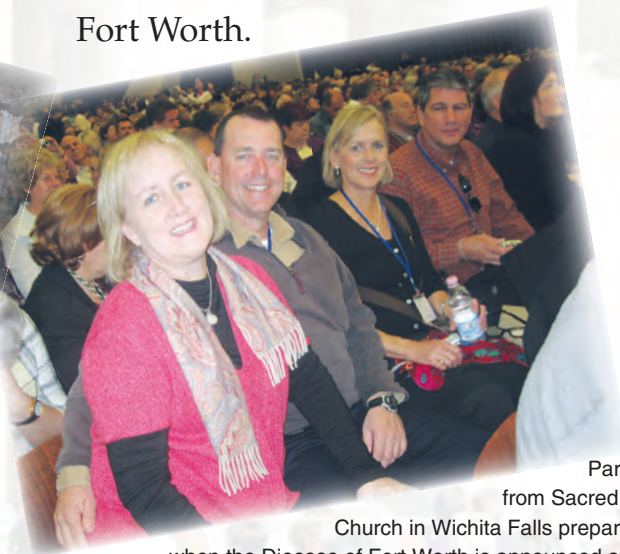


Pilgrims visited the National Monument to Victor Emmanuel II, a monument designed to honor the first king of a unified Italy. The monument holds Italy's Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, built after World War II. (Photo courtesy of Rita Garber)

It was a cool, cloudless November evening in Rome, and it was also a night that Maureen Fuller — a parishioner and staff member at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Granbury — will never forget. She and her husband of 43 years, Deacon Jim Fuller, as members of the recent pilgrimage offered Nov. 9-16, had enjoyed a week in Rome and the surrounding area with 550 other travelers from parishes across the Diocese of Fort Worth.



Several of the pilgrims chose to take a day tour of Pompeii on Nov. 15, solemnly visiting the site where so many tragically lost their lives in 79 A.D. after the eruption of Mount Vesuvius. (Photo courtesy of Sr. Yolanda Cruz)



Parishioners from Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls prepare to cheer when the Diocese of Fort Worth is announced at the papal audience. Pictured, from left to right, are Cecile Leming; Paul Leming; Cary Likins, and Randy Likins. (Photo courtesy of Judy Shaw)



For those diocesan pilgrims who chose to extend their stay in Italy, options for travel to Venice and Florence were offered. These visitors are shown enjoying a gondola ride during a Nov. 18 visit to Venice. (Photo courtesy of Peter Flynn)



Pilgrims representing several parishes gather at night in front of Rome's Colosseum. Shown on the far right side, in the back row, are Fathers Matthew Kavipurayidam, TOR, and Emmanuel Lewis. Fr. Lewis, a native of Nigeria, is currently a student in Rome, but has previously assisted at St. Michael Church in Bedford. (Photo courtesy of Barbara Boone)

As part of the 40th Anniversary Bishop Vann leads 550 Catholics Pilgrimage to Eternal Rome

By Mike
Editorial

On their last night together, the group gathered for a closing Mass, celebrated by Bishop Kevin Vann, at the Basilica of Mary Major, a magnificent church that houses the relic of the baby Jesus' crib from his manger in Bethlehem.

"It was a beautiful liturgy, and we were just feeling so thankful for all of the blessings of this pilgrimage, a trip that was so important to us for so many reasons," said Maureen. "And then, we were called back into the sacristy after the Mass was over, and Bishop Vann anointed my husband, giving him the sacrament of the sick. I really couldn't control my tears. It's hard to express how deeply that kindness touched me," she said. "And it meant everything to my husband, after everything he has been through. It was another sign, to me, that we were absolutely meant to experience this pilgrimage."

Dcn. Fuller's chronic and increasingly serious health condition for the past 18 months might have seemed like an insurmountable obstacle in the couple's quest to participate in the trip, but they, like several of their fellow pilgrims on the trip, somehow knew that the blessings of the experience would far outweigh the challenges. "I get so choked up when I talk about the pilgrimage with people," admitted Maureen. "Because the greatest gift of the trip for both of us was coming to realize that, whatever happens with my husband's illness, we will be fine, and God is going to take care of us. Being with Bishop Vann and all these people of faith in these beautiful, holy places, we came to realize that. And truly, we're now both at peace."

As each of the pilgrims prepared to fly to Rome, they were given an itinerary and information packet, with additional words provided by tour director Michael Menof of Golden World Tours in Dallas: "A successful pilgrimage involves a commitment to leave behind one's problems and to focus on learning more about our Heavenly Father, filling one's heart full of desire for special graces, praises, petitions,

and thanksgiving transformed, renewed by the abundant grace of Your spiritual journey, your openness, faith, and love."

The pilgrimage was led by Bishop Vann as a way to mark the 40th anniversary of the Diocese of Fort Worth and the opportunity to visit sites and artistic treasures in Assisi, Orvieto, and the lights of the journey. The audience with Pope Benedict XVI at the Sistine Chapel, and the spectacular basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, and the Cathedral.

The hundreds of pilgrims came pouring into the Airport on Nov. 9. Many also expressed their joy. Rita Garber, a parishioner of St. Apostle Church in Hills. "Several people who had not traveled outside the state before, and there was a bit of chaos, and crazy things happened. Rita laughed. "What exactly what to expect that all of us, from across the diocese, our desire to know more about our Catholic faith. I met so many wonderful new people, and they were like old friends, but a common factor throughout the trip."

Mike and Julie were pilgrims without a travel experience. In consideration, the couple was offered an Engaged Encounter retreat that are offered at the Renewal Center in Dallas. That the pilgrimage was an opportunity to experience the faith of parishioners from across the Diocese of Fort Worth and visit with chaplain Father Vann.

"It was a great experience for the 40th anniversary."

Anniversary of the diocese, Catholics to Europe as pilgrims to the Holy City

by
Debra
Assistant

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fering this pilgrimage," Mike reflect-
ed. "I've lived in this area all my life,
and it was amazing to see, in this way,
how our diocese has grown, because
at every meal we had the opportunity
to sit with people from other parishes,
people we had so much in common
with, but would never have met oth-
erwise.

"The bishop talked, at all of the
daily Masses, about the aspect of our
unity, our community of faith," Mike
added. "And it's so true that, by being
a part of this trip, Julie and I had a
sense of really being members of the
larger church, and that we were rep-
resenting the diocese when we attend-
ed the [weekly] papal audience. It felt
like a great honor."

That audience, the morning of
Wednesday, Nov. 11 at the Vatican,
was a special highlight for two life-
long members of the Diocese of Fort
Worth. Monsignor Charles King, pas-
tor of Immaculate Conception Church
in Denton, and Sister Francesca
Walterscheid, SSMN, came forward to
personally greet Pope Benedict XVI.

"It was Msgr. King who said the
important things, like where we were
from and what we were celebrat-
ing," wrote Sr. Francesca, in recall-
ing the great event. "When my turn
came, I could only say [in the Ger-
man language] what sprang to my
heart: 'Mein nomen iz swester Francesca
Walterscheid von Muenster, Texas. Wir
lieben si! (We love you!)' To say that I
was awed is an understatement, as I
felt that I spoke to the representative
of Christ for our entire diocese in this
truly blessed experience."

For Humberto Serrano, the op-
portunity to attend the pilgrimage
with his wife Hilda and with 25 other
parishioners from Our Lady of Gua-
dalupe Church in Fort Worth, where
he has served as a Spanish choir
director for 22 years, was "incredibly
able." "This trip gave me a great deal
of peace," mused Humberto. "It gave
me the energy to do what I do, here at
church, with even more enthusiasm.
It was like going on a retreat, because
it was so spiritually enriching." A
special blessing of the trip for him,



Bishop Vann, surrounded by priests and deacons of the Diocese of Fort Worth, offers Mass in St. Peter's Basilica, at the Altar of the Chair of St. Peter. Above the altar is a masterpiece created by the artist Bernini and placed in the basilica in 1666. Encased in the magnificent bronze monument are fragments of an ancient wooden throne, said to be part of the Episcopal chair of St. Peter. (Photo courtesy of Peter Flynn)

said Humberto, was the
opportunity to offer, in
the Spanish language, the
first reading at the Nov.
12 Mass, celebrated by
Bishop Vann and held in
the Basilica of St. Francis
in Assisi, located three
hours outside of Rome.

Judy Shaw, a lifelong
parishioner at Sacred
Heart Church in Wichita
Falls, was one of 25 Sacred
Heart parishioners on
the pilgrimage. "I knew
most of them pretty well
already, but this trip really
strengthened our bond,"
said Judy. "There were lots
of families on the trip, not
just couples, but several
parents with their children,
mothers and daughters,
and one set of three sisters.

It was a very comfortable
group to be with, and the bishop was
so wonderful to all of us," she said.
"He was there every morning to make
sure we got on the buses, and he was
greeting us when we arrived at our
destination each day. He knows so
much about Rome and each place we
visited, and he wanted all of us to get
the most we possibly could out of the
trip." The bishop will be invited, Judy
added, to the reunion gathering that
Sacred Heart pilgrimage participants
will host after Christmas, in order
to share photographs and to plan a
visual presentation to be offered to
the larger Sacred Heart parish com-
munity.

Pilgrimage coordinator Father
Michael Holmberg, pastor of Holy
Cross Church in The Colony, said he
has been pleased to hear the over-
whelmingly positive response from
pilgrimage participants. "Everybody
who came on this experience left as a
different person, in terms of the way
they grew deeper in their own faith,"
he reflected, noting that planning for
the trip began in the spring of 2007.

"This definitely was not a tour,"
added Fr. Holmberg. "This was truly



Msgr. Charles King, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Denton, points out an interesting sight to diocesan staff member Chris Kastner, a parishioner of St. Bartholomew Church in Fort Worth. (Photo courtesy of Barbara Boone)

a spiritual pilgrimage, because it was
important to the bishop that it not be
just a trip with a lot of time for people
to do their own thing. This was an
opportunity for people from our dio-
cese to come together, to have a full
experience of the spiritual treasures
that are available, to celebrate daily
Mass together, and in our 40th year as
a diocese, to experience a true sense
of unity. I think, from what I hear,
that this goal was definitely accom-
plished."



Pilgrims from the Diocese of Fort Worth traveled to Assisi on Nov. 12 for a day of sightseeing and of spiritual enrichment, including Mass celebrated by Bishop Vann at St. Francis Basilica. This view of lower Assisi was taken from the side of Mount Subiasso. (Photo courtesy of Nancy Eder)



This view of the Basilica of St. John Lateran shows the 15 statues of Christ and flanking saints atop the majestic structure, built in the fourth century. (Photo courtesy of Chris Kastner)



Many of the diocesan pilgrims, including Vocations Director Father Kyle Walterscheid (center) prayerfully ascended Scala Santa, the "Holy Stairs," on their knees after visiting St. John Lateran. Jesus was led up the 28 marble steps during his Passion, and the steps were brought to Rome in 334 A.D. (Photo by Sr. Yolanda Cruz)



Once inside, visitors to the Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi will see the famous Giotto frescoes, as well as the tomb of the beloved saint. (Photo courtesy of Rita Garber)

God revealed the depth of his love and compassion in The human face of Jesus



The Nativity is depicted in a mural titled "Birth of Jesus" in the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception at Conception Abbey in Conception, Missouri. Painted by Benedictine monks in the late 1800s, the artwork is one of the first uses of the German Beuronese style in a U.S. church. St. Peter Parish in Lindsay is also decorated in the warmly ornate Beuronese style. (CNS photo courtesy Conception Abbey)

How do we respond to God's unfathomable love?

How does one respond to the unfathomable love of God that we celebrate at Christmas?

By feasting on the word of God with humility, gratitude, and joy!

In the first reading for the Mass at dawn on Christmas Day we hear: "Your savior comes!" (Isaiah 62:11).

Our responsorial for that Mass is: "A light will shine on us this day: The Lord is born for us."

In the second reading, wretched mankind is called "beloved" and then is told: "Not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us" (Timothy 3:5).

Joy fills our hearts as we hear again Luke's wondrous Gospel (2:15-19):

"When the angels went away from them to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, 'Let us go, then, to Bethlehem to see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.'

"So they went in haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the infant lying in the manger. ... They made known the message ... told them about this child. All who heard it were amazed by what had been told them by the shepherds.

"And Mary kept all these things, reflecting on them in her heart."

Carole Norris Greene
Associate Editor, *Faith Alive!*

Following in the footprints of the Magi

By David Gibson
Catholic News Service

So much shows in a person's face. I'm sure this is one reason so many people head home for Christmas — to see the faces of those they care about most.

Gazing into the faces of people we love has a way of reminding us not only of "who" they are, but "how" they are. The face speaks; it has a language all its own.

The often unspoken "words" of this unique language can express affection,

warmth, concern. Whether others are hopeful or not also may show in their faces.

The human face is a revelation.

Of course, what the human face reveals is sometimes surprising in wonderful or disturbing ways. What we see in someone's face may not be what we expected. Our encounter may prompt us to realize that our understanding of this person has room to grow. The encounter may change us.

This happened to the Wise Men from the East when they gazed into the face of the newborn Jesus. Matthew tells of their long, star-guided journey. The Magi expected to lay eyes on a newborn king, yet to behold, the Bethlehem stable was no palace.

What a surprise!

During the August 2005 World Youth Day in Cologne, Germany, Pope Benedict XVI spoke of this surprise. Here the Magi were "bowing down before the child of poor people," the pope observed.

The Wise Men found that God is not what they expected. The pope said this meant they had to become different themselves and "learn God's ways"; they had to "learn to give themselves."

"It is important to discover the true face of God," the pope concluded.

This is a point Pope Benedict makes frequently, a theme of his pontificate. He speaks of the need "to rediscover God, not just any God but the God who has a human face."

Recognizing God in the face of Jesus will change people, the pope believes.

The face of Jesus was a great revelation to the Wise Men. It was a revelation about God, what God is really like.

The face of Jesus also reminds us how much any human face is able to reveal. Gazing into the faces of others we think we know well, we may finally "see" what they actually need or grasp the value of the

unrecognized gifts they could offer.

But there is one more set of faces to mention here, mine and yours. What do our own faces reveal to others?

Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta might have encouraged us to recognize Christ's face in others and to follow up by revealing our compassion to them. She might have called attention to the place for kindness in the human face.

During a time of year that heavily accents gift-giving, we could do worse than to reconsider the advice Mother Teresa once had for people who felt they had nothing to give to others. Just give them your smile, she said.

DAVID GIBSON served on Catholic News Service's editorial staff for 37 years. He was the founding editor of ORIGINS and edited special projects for CNS, including FAITH ALIVE! and CNS columns.

Christmas brings us 'God with a Human Face'

Carols draw us closer to Jesus, to others

By Sharon K. Perkins
NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC Correspondent

There are traditional Christmas carols of the joyful, exuberant variety, such as “Hark the Herald Angels Sing,” and the more tranquil kind, like “Silent Night.”

There are the holiday pop songs that come and go, and then there are the beautiful but lesser-known Christmas songs that make you stop and think. I have included pianist George Winston's version of “Some Children See Him” among my list of Christmas favorites for some time now. The haunting melody is the perfect accompaniment to a cup of hot chocolate, a crackling fire, and a freshly-lighted and decorated tree. But it was the song's simple lyric by Alfred Burt that came immediately to my mind during a visit to an exhibit of Christmas crèches — reawakening in me an equally simple but profound truth.

I've been doing graduate work at the University of Dayton for the past five years, and one of the outstanding resources there is the International Marian Research Institute which houses a collection of several

thousand nativities from all over the world and displays many of them each year. There were ebony carved sculptures from Africa, pressed-board paper cutouts from the Czech Republic, hand-painted ceramics from France, and red clay pottery figures from the American Southwest. As I wandered from one display case to another and back again, I took in the many representations of the infant Jesus, recalling the words to that evocative Christmas tune:

*Some Children see Him lily white, the
Baby Jesus born this night.
Some Children see Him lily white, with
tresses soft and fair.*

*Some Children see Him bronzed and
brown, the Lord of heav'n to earth come
down*

*.... Some Children see Him almond eyed,
this Saviour whom we kneel beside*

*.... Some Children see him dark as they,
sweet Mary's Son to whom we pray...*

As a youngster, I always thought the lyric had a certain romance to it. It's nice to think that children all over the world would see a baby Jesus who uniquely resembles them. But this time, the variety of crèches helped me grasp a much deeper meaning. While I studied a detailed Italian village scene, it occurred to me anew that Jesus, fully human as he is fully divine, has never been, and never will be, some abstract reality. Each lovingly crafted figurine celebrates the central tenet of the Christian faith: that Jesus became flesh in the person of a particular human baby, born to one young Palestinian girl who



An Ecuadoran village scene is among 50 Nativity sets from around the world on display through Jan. 9 at the University of Dayton's Marian Library in Ohio. For Sharon Perkins, viewing part of the collection there recently, sparked reflection on the unity we have in Jesus, in the Christ Child. (CNS photo courtesy, the University of Dayton)

said “yes” to an angel's invitation.

Even so, both the song and the crèches also declare a hugely profound truth about Jesus' humble birth in a singular time and place. From the colorful, professionally-painted carvings to the plainest folk-art figures of desert clay, every rendering reminds me that the Incarnation of Jesus is powerfully significant for people of every race and culture, past, present, and future. The same faith-filled gaze given to the shepherds, the Magi, and the artist creating each crèche, are granted to every believer who wishes to see Jesus face to face — in the Christ Child, in the Eucharist, in his Body, the Church — in every human person. It's a timeless and universal mystery that calls us to transcend all “culture wars,” class divisions, and racial prejudices, drawing us nearer to one another even as it moves each of us to adore the One who created us, became one

of us, and now saves us. The final verse of Burt's lyric says it perfectly:

*The Children in each different place
will see the Baby Jesus' face
Like theirs, but bright with heav'nly
grace,
and filled with holy light.
O lay aside each earthly thing,
and with thy heart as offering,
Come worship now the Infant King,
'tis love that's born tonight!*

SHARON K. PERKINS, currently works as a parish DRE in Austin. She recently completed graduate work in theology at the University of Dayton in Ohio. She and her family are former members of St. Rita Parish in Fort Worth, and Sharon coordinated the Fort Worth Diocese's first Synod.

Jesus' names reveal both him – and us

By Jeff Hedglen
NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC Columnist

The Christmas crib scene is quiet and peaceful, Mary and Joseph with their newborn child swaddled in a manger.

Wrapped up in that makeshift cradle is more than we could ever imagine. Even though it has been 2,000 years, I think we have only just begun to unwrap the fullness of the Christ Child.

The prophet Isaiah said he would be called Immanuel, Mary was told that she was to name her child Jesus, the Magi, following a star, came looking for the “new born king of the Jews.” We know him as Lord, Savior, and Friend. We have heard him called Messiah and Christ, both of which mean Anointed One. He is the Lamb of God, the Bread of Life and the Son of God. While many of these titles for Jesus are familiar to us, in a recent trip through the index of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I discovered that there are 60 titles for Jesus found there.

Many of the titles were new to me and the breadth of their scope shed new light on who exactly it is that came to earth to save us. Additionally these names for Jesus revealed that the Incarnation is packed with a whole lot more than we sometimes think.



The Christ Child is pictured in a detail of a Nativity scene. (CNS photo/Rick Musacchio, TENNESSEE REGISTER)

One of the titles for Jesus that jumped out at me was “example.” Jesus is THE example of everything. This is similar to the WWJD bracelet where what Jesus would do is the measure by which we decide what we should do. The *Catechism* paragraphs associated with this title speak of Jesus being the model for family relationships, for the service of bishops and how to pray. But this title for Jesus reads simply “example” and

the lack of elaboration leaves the limits of his example wide open.

Another title given to Jesus is “Heart of Catechesis.” Catechesis is the word that we use when we speak of passing on the richness of our faith. It literally means to echo, thus when we pass on the faith we echo Christ. Paragraph 426 of the *Catechism* says this: “At the heart of catechesis we find, in essence, a Person, the Person of Jesus of Nazareth. To catechize is to reveal in the Person; catechesis aims at putting people in communion with Jesus Christ.” Jesus is the Word spoken into being by the Father's love. We are the echo of this love in our words and actions.

Jesus is also referred to as the “Master of prayer.” Under this title 18 paragraphs are given for referencing this characteristic of our loving Savior. The first entry of these paragraphs reads: “In seeing the Master at prayer the disciple of Christ also wants to pray. By contemplating and hearing the Son, the master of prayer, the children learn to pray to the Father.” Jesus continually said that he and the Father are one. Being one with the Father is the goal of all our prayer. Seen in this light, when we go to Jesus in prayer we are sitting at the feet of the Master.

Jesus is also called the “New Adam.” The name Adam, in Hebrew, means “the man” or “Human being.” St. Paul says that just as through one man sin entered the world, even more so through one man, salvation comes to us (*Romans 5:10-18*). The *Catechism* says it this way, “In reality it is only in the mys-

tery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear” (*CCC 359*). This means that in Jesus, being human takes on a whole new meaning. We are no longer simply flesh and blood. Now, through faith and baptism the old human dies and rises to new life IN Jesus, the God-Man.

One final title of Christ that struck me is “Physician of souls and bodies.” The *Catechism* describes Jesus as a healer like this: “Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; he has come to heal the whole man, soul and body” (*CCC 1503*). Whatever ails us, be it sin or illness, Jesus desires our healing. Some of these healings happen while on earth, but the ultimate and complete healing comes to us when we see Him face to face.

Jesus is all of these things and much more. The Father's infinite love for us sent Him here in the exact same way we all entered time. It is my prayer that this Christmas Jesus will come to us in brand new ways, that Jesus, the complete revelation of the Father, will uncover one more facet of his magnificence for us to contemplate and that this reflection on our Immanuel will lead us ever deeper into the God who is with us.

JEFF HEDGLEN, youth minister at St. Bartholomew Parish in Southwest Fort Worth, is the principal organizer of Camp Fort Worth each summer. Jeff writes regularly in the NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC as a columnist and as a contributor to Word to Life, Scripture reflections distributed to Catholic News Service subscribers.

Christmas brings us 'God with a Human Face'

What it means to worship a holy God

By Father Robert L. Kinast
Catholic News Service

Near my residence there is an upscale gift shop called *J'adore* ("I adore/worship"). It specializes in French imports. The name implies that the owners, and presumably the customers, adore or worship the art objects inside.

Admirers often say they worship the ground their heroes walk on, and a lover may confess that he worships his beloved.

These references derive from the original and proper sense of the adoration or worship of God. In this religious context, worship is an acknowledgement of who God is and who we are in relation to God.

That acknowledgement has a specific meaning in the tradition of Jewish and Christian religion.

The God who is worshipped by Christians and Jews is the God of the covenant, a God who has initiated an intimate, permanent union with us, and through it has invited us to enter more deeply into the experience of

divine life. Recognizing this pure gift, we are moved to express our gratitude and acknowledgement through worship.

The worship appropriate for a covenant relationship with God is communal, public and salvific.

It is communal because God's covenant is not with individuals as such but with a people, a community of individuals. Our communal acknowledgement of this fact is ritualized in the liturgy, the action of a graced and grateful people.

Worship is also public because the covenant is intended not as a private possession but as a commitment and responsibility to share our blessing with the world. Worship draws the faithful together in order to empower us spiritually to go forth and spread God's saving grace to others.

Finally, worship is salvific. As we acknowledge who God is, we are drawn more fully into the divine life, especially through the sacraments. This process also confronts us with who we are, including our sins and shortcomings, and enables us to remain united to the God of the covenant.

Does our worship offer anything to God?

Certainly not in the sense of anything that God needs in order to be God. God would not be deficient or less divine without our worship.

But because the covenant is a mutual relationship, God desires our worship in a spirit of truth and love. Just as a parent welcomes a child's acknowledgement of parental care, a teacher receives a student's appreciation, a service provider accepts a recipient's gratitude. So analogously God

Women pray during a weekday Mass at a chapel near Sacred Heart Cathedral in Shenyang, China. Father Robert L. Kinast writes, "The worship appropriate for a covenant relationship with God is communal, public and salvific." (CNS photo/Nancy Wiechec)



expects and delights in our free, conscious, and deliberate affirmation of who God is.

As the preface at Mass declares, it is right and just that we always and everywhere acknowledge our God.

Worship during the Advent and Christmas season has a special significance in this regard. Each liturgical year begins with Advent as a reminder that our spiritual life should be regularly renewed, and Advent culminates in Christmas when we reaffirm just how intimately God wishes to share life with us.

The current liturgical year follows the "C" cycle of Scripture readings with the Gospels drawn from St. Luke.

On the first Sunday of Advent we heard a dramatic, perhaps even frightening, depiction of the end of the world. Then on the second Sunday John the Baptist exhorted

us to get ready and prepare the way for the Lord to come, followed on the third Sunday by a palpable anticipation of Christ's nearness.

This year's Advent season closed with a concrete, humanly moving enactment of what all the preparation and anticipation of Christmas was about. Mary, carrying the incarnate Lord within her, went to be of assistance to her older relative, Elizabeth, also with child.

This type of service is no less an act of true worship than the communal, public rituals we perform. In fact, it is the completion of those rituals, befitting the God who is among us, inviting us to honor and acknowledge the life we share together.

FATHER ROBERT KINAST is a pastoral theologian in Prairie Village, Kansas and a long time contributor to Catholic News Service.

Christmas traditions around the world

By Margo MacArthur
Catholic News Service

The Christmas customs that unify Christians worldwide center around Nativity scenes, Christmas trees, carols, gift-giving and Christmas dinner. In fact, religious celebrations and secular pageantry have merged to produce a season of good cheer for all.

Christmas in England, for instance, gave the English-speaking world the Christmas tree. During the reign of Queen Victoria, trees were first brought indoors and decorated with apples to satisfy Prince Albert's longing for a custom from his German childhood.

On Boxing Day, the day after Christmas, visitors to English homes are given tiny wrapped boxes containing sweets or gold coins. It seems that Father Christmas



A wooden creche is seen on display at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Gift Shop in Rochester, New York. (CNS photo/Mike Crupi, Catholic Courier)

(a tall, red-robed version of Santa Claus) accidentally dropped some coins down the chimney when delivering gifts centuries ago, and the English have included gold coins among their gifts ever since.

In Africa, where Catholicism is on the

rise, Christmas customs are spirited and prolonged.

In Ghana, for example, Christmas and the weeks leading up to it are celebrated publicly and joyously with shouts of "Afishapa!" ("Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!")

Since Ghanaians have moved to the cities in droves in recent years, at Christmastime most try to return to the villages or towns where they grew up. They share a Christmas Eve meal of soup or stew. Then they go to church, inviting all relatives, friends, and even strangers along the way to join them.

On Christmas Day, a larger feast which includes rice, chicken or goat, and many native fruits and nuts is served in houses decorated with brightly painted paper ornaments. Mango, guava, and cashew trees in the middle of a courtyard are also decorated, and the bright decorations extend to schools and churches.

New clothes and new shoes or books and journals are also popular gifts on Christmas Day, after which Ghanaians go to church, and processions and revelry extend into the evening and through many nights beyond.

For Italians, the Christmas season begins with the Novena, the eight days before Christmas during which necessary preparations are made and Christmas itself.

Presepios, life-size Nativity scenes, which St. Francis of Assisi first commissioned to dramatize Jesus' humble birth,

are the center of activity outside most Italian homes. Some include beautifully carved figures. An "urn of fate" in which gifts are placed resides beside the presepio.

On Christmas Eve, Italians fast. At evening, canons are fired.

Christmas Day is acknowledged with a feast after which gifts are selected from the urn. As twilight falls, families gather again by the presepio to light candles, sing songs, and recite poetry. But the main exchange of gifts does not take place until Epiphany on January 6.

The night before, Italian children hang up their stockings, hoping that the good witch Befana, who has been looking for the Christ Child for centuries, will leave gifts at every house in case Jesus is there.

In Mexico, Christmas, or *Navidad*, is celebrated for nine days. Neighbors dressed as Mary and Joseph go door to door, asking if they may stay the night. Each night, they are turned away; then the door is reopened for a party, and children are given piñata full of candy. Finally, on the ninth night, Mary and Joseph are let in. Family and guests dine together, and then go to church to celebrate Christ's birth.

Recognizable in these varied traditions is the same gladness in celebrating the birth of Jesus within the family and beyond, and the same goals of choosing and giving gifts.

MARGO MACARTHUR is a freelance writer in Andover, New Jersey.

Christmas brings us 'God with a Human Face'

Silent Night, Holy Night

By Stephen J. Steinbeiser
Catholic News Service

One of my favorite questions to challenge a choir or group of musicians with is: "What was the first instrument you ever heard in your life?"

I get so many furrowed brows and interesting answers as gifted singers and instrumentalists stretch their aural and musical memories.

But it's an important question for all of us to consider and one that directly impacts the creation of all great music, and possibly the greatest Christmas carol ever written, "Stille Nacht! Heilige Nacht!" or, as we know it, "Silent Night."

Learning this beloved carol in German as a child from my grandparents and hearing it sung each Christmas in our Bavarian Catholic parish, homes and neighborhoods, I could have hardly imagined that this simple peasant carol had circled around the globe many times and influenced countless people in the most remarkable situations.

All great music, if it is to be inspiring, timeless and speak to all of humanity, must withstand the "three s" test: bear simplicity, strength and story.



Residents pose in a live creche scene outside a small village near Prague in the Czech Republic Dec. 12. Villagers participate in the annual tradition each year, with the youngest baby in the town playing the role of Jesus. (CNS photo from Reuters)

An enduring work of art reveals something about our common humanity, something we have known all along but never imagined in that particular way.

Indeed many might agree that the work of the Holy Spirit is often accomplished through the inspiration and edification of great artistic works.

And so it is with the beloved Christmas carol "Silent Night." The strength and simplicity of both lyric and melody coalesce to reveal a tender story, the intimate portrait of a mother and child.

"Silent Night" evokes all that we hope

for in the Christmas story, all that we long for in the story of our own lives too. We begin to breathe differently, a little easier perhaps, when we hear it. We begin to feel differently, a bit more hopeful perhaps, when we sing it.

The song becomes us year after year as we realize its transformative power.

What other Christmas carol could actually bring soldiers to stop fighting a war?

What other Christmas carol would eventually claim its own museum and a live streaming webcam at the simple Austrian parish church where it was first heard?

What other carol was born of such necessity, a broken church organ and a priest's deep desire to share the compelling message of Christ's birth with his flock?

"Silent Night" perennially continues to light up our cold, dark winter nights with the fire of faith and the beauty of a mother's love for her son and savior.

"Silent Night" is the night that we all dare imagine can someday be if we only live up to our potential as children of God.

"Silent Night" is the human family the way God loves us.

Like other great works of art, this simple song holds a density of meanings, personal stories within the story. It will ultimately lead us to silence, the deepest silence of our own hearts. This is the greatest and truest silence, in which and through which we hear an altogether new and yet familiar sound — the melody of love.

It is not a sentimental or maudlin melody, not even a comforting or happy tune that we look forward to each holiday season, but the music of God made flesh, Emmanuel, a God who is Love incarnate.

Hearing the refrain, we remember then the first instrument that any one of us ever heard: the strong and simple drumbeat of our mother's heart, giving and sustaining our life.

And in that moment, when "all is calm, all is bright," the melody of love plays on.

STEPHEN STEINBEISER is director of liturgy with the Spiritan Campus Ministry at Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

Christmas will be different this year for them

By Maureen E. Daly
Catholic News Service

New economic realities are shaping how some people will celebrate Christmas this year.

KATHY MAXWELL, 58, AND MAGGIE LINDGREN, 59, are sisters who will be celebrating Christmas this year unemployed and living in a new city, but they seem quite cheerful about starting over.

This Christmas, Maxwell says, they plan "to keep it small and fun."

Both are professional women. Maxwell served as finance director for several towns in Connecticut for over 25 years. Lindgren, a lifelong educator newly on a leave of absence from the School Sisters of Notre Dame, had been teaching at a high school in Lawrence, Massachusetts.

The two women decided to leave their jobs and move to Baltimore last summer in part because of a car crash Maxwell was involved in right after the 2008 Christmas holiday. She broke many bones and spent months recovering. Soon afterward, she learned that her son in Baltimore was expecting her first grandchild.

"After I crashed my car ... it made



"Mary, Joseph and the infant Jesus are depicted with Native American features in 'The Nativity' by Father John B. Giuliani. The painting is one in a series of 14 Marian panels hanging in the Church of St. Denis in Crow Agency, Montana. (CNS photo courtesy Father Giuliani)

me ask, 'What am I going to do with my life?'" Maxwell said. "I want to know my grandchild. ..."

"I thought, when God calls me, the question will be: 'Did you enjoy the gift of life I gave you?' I didn't want to answer, 'Oh I thought I should be saving for my IRA and planning every moment of the future.'"

"So I decided to live in the now."

At the same time, Lindgren decided to leave the school that she helped open with other members of her religious community in 2004.

"I decided to take a step back from things that were exhausting me," Lindgren said, "and I needed to be with my sister," who needed to be with her grandchild.

For Christmas this year, Maxwell has suggested to family and friends that they "just give each other our stuff. Wrap up things that other people have admired and give it to them."

ELLIE CASSON, 24, will celebrate her first Christmas with a full-time job with benefits. After graduating in December 2007 from Hampshire College in Massachusetts, Casson left her hometown of Dover Plains, New York, moved to San Francisco and spent more than a year looking for work in her field, sustainable economic and environmental planning.

Casson's Christmas will also reflect another widely observed trend among young adults: She has no church home.

"Because I have moved around so much since graduation, I have not really established any religious community here," she said, noting that the same is true of most of her acquaintances.

ROCHELLE BARRETT, 46, a Baltimorean who spent many Christmases in jail, drug treatment centers or homeless because of more than 20 years of drug addiction, now has a new home too.

Barrett entered a recovery program at Marian House in Baltimore four years ago, not long after her younger daughter was murdered at age 19. Now she lives in a small apartment in Serenity Place, part of the Marian House complex run by the Sisters of Mercy and the School Sisters of Notre Dame to "help women moving from dependence to independence" by providing housing and support services.

What was Christmas like before for Barrett?

"I stayed sedated," Barrett said. "I thought I was happy because I was high. But when I was alone I would cry. I was lonely. I had a few laughs, but it wasn't joy. ... I was lonely, ashamed, distant."

"Christmas is much different now. I love to see the lights. I am like a child when it comes to decorations. I can feel the peace and the warmth in the air even though it is cold outside."

MAUREEN DALY is a freelance writer in Baltimore.

Scripture Readings



December 20, Fourth Sunday of Advent.

Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) Micah 5:1-4a
Psalm 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19
- 2) Hebrews 10:5-10
Gospel) Luke 1:39-45

By Jeff Hensley

The time grows short until we celebrate the coming of our Lord Jesus as an infant. Our waiting in hope is soon to be fulfilled.

Many years ago during the season leading to Christmas — a time when, most of us would agree, Christmas is overcommercialized with too much tinsel and artificial snow, too many lights and too little connection to the underlying reason for the season — my wife stood along the upper rail of a mall overcrowded with Christmas shoppers. A wistful look came over her face, and a smile, and she said, “This is the one time of the year when you know that everyone here is thinking about what they can buy for someone else.” Of course, she was right.

Hope is more than a feeling, more than a bit of wishful thinking. It has substance.

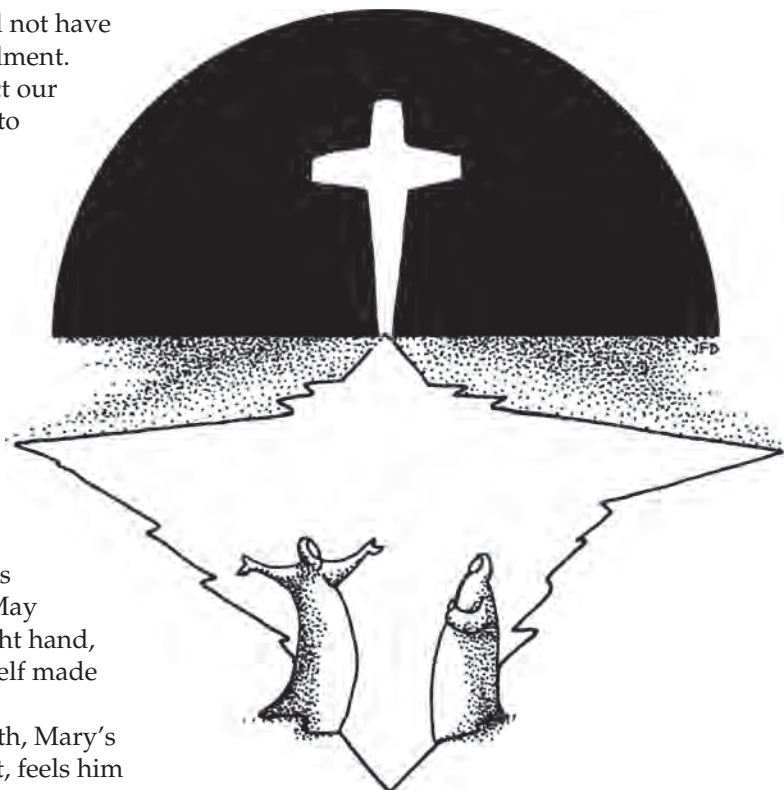
Some Scripture scholars have described more than 300 Old Testament passages that point to

the birth of Jesus. Many of them could not have been interpreted until after their fulfillment. But after the fact, they obviously direct our attention to how Jesus was to come into the world. At least three of them are found in the readings for today.

The Micah reading may be the most stunning of these, speaking as it does of one whose “origin is from of old” coming forth from Bethlehem, one who would “stand firm and shepherd his flock by the strength of the Lord,” whose “greatness shall reach to the ends of the earth,” who “shall be peace.”

Then the psalmist tells the Lord in his hymn of praise and supplication: “Lord, make us turn to you; let us see your face and we shall be saved. May your help be with the man of your right hand, with the son of man whom you yourself made strong.”

And in the Gospel of Luke, Elizabeth, Mary’s cousin, pregnant with John the Baptist, feels him leap in her womb as Mary approaches carrying the yet to be born Jesus. She says, “Blessed are you who believed that what was spoken to you by the Lord would be fulfilled.” Mary becomes, even then, before Jesus’ birth, our example in faith, the first to believe in the son of man.



“Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb.”

— Luke 1:42bc

QUESTIONS:

How can you nurture the virtue of hope in your life and the lives of those around you?

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Love of God and fellow man is the driving force of the human spirit

By Sarah Delaney
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Choosing to love God and fellow human beings is the only choice that gives meaning to peoples’ lives, Pope Benedict XVI said in reviewing the teachings of a 12th-century monk.

At his weekly general audience Dec. 2 in a sunny St. Peter’s Square, the pope explained the writings of William of St.-Thierry, a monastic theologian who believed that love of God is “the ultimate vocation and driving force of the human spirit.”

Pope Benedict has been analyzing the lives and works of important church figures from Europe in the Middle Ages during his weekly catechesis, drawing out ideas that can be relevant to contemporary men and women.

The pope called William “a singer of love and truth,” whose writings “teach us to make the fundamental choice of our lives, that which gives sense and value to all the other choices: the love of God and our neighbor.” Only by making this choice, the pope said, “can we have true joy and beatitude.”



For William, the pope explained, “this innate human drive finds perfection in the love of the triune God, the source and goal of all love.”

William, born in present day Belgium around 1075, served as abbot of the Benedictine monastery of St.-Thierry near Reims, France, where he attempted to undertake reforms, the pope said. He found much resistance to change, and eventually gave up his position for a more con-

templative and studious life at the Cistercian abbey of Signy, where he died in 1148.

He was a good friend of St. Bernard of Clairvaux, another important medieval thinker whose works were reviewed by the pope in a recent weekly audience. St. Bernard opposed William’s choice to leave the St.-Thierry monastery; with this move, however, William was able to dedicate himself to the many theological treatises that

Pope Benedict XVI waves to pilgrims at his general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Dec. 2. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

were important for the history of monastic theology, Pope Benedict said.

William believed that man has only one real task to perform during his life, that of “learning to love sincerely, authentically, freely,” the pope said.

The theologian wrote that this education in loving was an arduous undertaking that lasts a lifetime but brings serenity and the knowledge that “all the faculties of man — intelligence,

will and affection — lie with God who is known and loved through Christ,” the pope said.

William taught that true love is possible through reciprocity or an exchange of affection, which permits a deeper knowledge of God and of other people, the pope said.

“Isn’t it like this in our own lives?” he asked. “Isn’t it perhaps true that we really only know the things and people we love? Without a certain feeling of sympathy we don’t know anyone, and this is true also for the love of God. ... We can’t know God if we don’t love him,” he said.

William also taught that people seeking union with God must pass through three phases that begin with obedience and trust, progress to a reasoned and convinced acceptance of faith, and culminate in a faith in communion with the most intimate parts of the soul, intellect and sentiments, the pope said.

“May the example and teaching of William of St.-Thierry strengthen our desire to love God above all things and to let that love overflow in love of our neighbor,” the pope concluded.

Scripture Readings



December 27, The Holy Family of Jesus, Mary and Joseph.
Cycle C. Readings:

- 1) Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14
Psalm 128:1-5
- 2) Colossians 3:12-21
Gospel) Luke 2:41-52

By Jean Denton

Here we are amid that time of year Americans call “the holidays” which, culturally, extends roughly from Thanksgiving through New Year’s Day. It ends — some would say mercifully — when people return to their routine.

A centerpiece of the holidays is the gathering of family. We come together to celebrate traditions and joyfully remember how we are bound to one another.

So why did my mid-November parish bulletin advertise a number to call for counseling if the stresses of family and the holidays become overwhelming? Why did my friend complain that her daughter-in-law isn’t much for attending holiday gatherings with “the other side of the family”?

Just before the Thanksgiving break, the instructor of a college class I’m taking told students to feel free to call him during the next week “preferably between the hours of 3 and 8 p.m. Thursday.” The class laughed, knowingly. “Mother-in-law?”

someone asked. “Anybody I’m related to,” he responded. It was a joke, but as the adage goes: Many a truth has been spoken in jest.

It’s not easy to be family.

But God gives us family to help us understand how he loves us. So today we celebrate the feast of the Holy Family. The readings call us to honor our parents, respect our children as they mature to independence and, in unity, to dedicate ourselves to God.

However, Paul’s Letter to the Colossians addresses the reality of the family’s more difficult challenges in living together and loving each other. Calling us to imitate Christ’s patience and compassion, he goes to the heart of the matter when he says to bear with one another and forgive each other as God has forgiven us.

At an interreligious discussion, I recently heard a Protestant minister explain that, “among Christians, the intent of forgiveness is reconciliation.

“If your brother sins against you,” she said, “you must persist in forgiveness. Because what can be worse than losing your brother?”

Being family can be stressful. Emotions run high and feelings run deep, but that’s because we care so much.

So we must persist. We must be patient and understanding. We must bear with one another and forgive.

Because what can be worse than losing your family?

QUESTIONS:

What is a difficult situation in your family at present? How can forgiveness and reconciliation in your family honor your relationship with God?



“Let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body.”

— Colossians 3:15

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He's not the God of I Was, but the God of I Am

By Jeff Hedglen

What are you doing right now? Where are you? Are you sitting or standing? Which room are you in? Are you happy, sad, in between, or something else entirely? How do you feel physically? Are you in pain, under the weather, or are you feeling just fine? Are you hungry or thirsty? What exactly is going on with you in this moment? The answer to these questions might just help you experience God more fully this Christmas.

One of the hardest things for me to do is simply be in the moment. I am constantly thinking of the 10 things I have yet to do, and just when I am sufficiently overwhelmed about these things I remember two more. If it is not the unfinished things on my plate, it is the upcoming plans or dreams for the future that occupy my thoughts.

When the future is not looming in my mind, the memories of yesterdays gone by and the “if onlys” and unanswered whys, dominate my thinking. Each

This notion of living in the moment and experiencing the God who is eternally present is not a flight of fancy. Our Catholic history is full of people who have attempted it.... But you and I do not have to become saints to experience God in the present moment.

year that goes by brings with it a slew of wonderings about what might have been and what is yet to be. But the reality is that none of these moments on the timeline of my life are really real. The only moment that is truly real is the one I am in right now.

This is not to say that our past is worthless, nor am I saying that it is a bad idea to make plans and have dreams. I am not even saying that God cannot use our past or

influence our future. It is just that God revealed his name to Moses as “I AM who AM” not: I was who was, or I will be who will be. Furthermore Jesus comes to us as Emmanuel, which means God with us, not before or after us, but right beside us here and now.

This notion of living in the moment and experiencing the God who is eternally present is not a flight of fancy. Our Catholic history is full of people who have

attempted it and, there are even a few who have attained a measure of success at the practice. These people are often called mystics and many of them have been canonized. But you and I do not have to become saints to experience God in the present moment.

Additionally we do not have to travel back in time to simpler days to achieve this experience of God. A friend of mine, Gene Monterastelli, an itinerant preacher, professional juggler, gifted storyteller, popular speaker, and half of the dynamic duo known as Apex Ministries, is what I consider a modern day mystic. He has discovered a way to focus on the here and now while surrounded by the hustle and bustle.

His brand of mysticism does not send him off into a lonely desert to live in solitude, but it does cause him to be like some certain poor shepherds who, while tending their sheep, encountered an angel who announced the birth of Jesus. I sometimes wonder why it was these people that the angel appeared to. Maybe the angel stopped by the local pub, the blacksmith’s shop, and the

bakery, and those people were too busy to notice.

Shepherds are out away from the noise of popular culture, and they are listening to the creation around them. They must be conscious of every moment to be sure a predator is not stalking their flock and that none of the sheep has strayed away. I think it is their experience of living in the present moment that makes them ready to hear and believe.

Jesus is eternally present to us, and the Christmas season is a special time to focus on this great gift of the Father’s love. With all the festivities that surround the holidays, it can seem like the time flies past, one blurry moment to the next. As the season progresses, every once in a while, pause and become aware of what you are doing right now in this present moment. That is where God is; be there too!

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.

La Basílica de Santa María la Mayor nos recuerda la proximidad de Jesús, la Palabra hecha Carne entre nosotros

Estimados amigos de la Diócesis de Fort Worth, amados en Cristo,

Ustedes vieron en la pasada edición algunas fotografías de nuestra peregrinación



Monseñor Kevin W. Vann

diocesana a Roma, y en esta edición hay un artículo más largo acerca de la semana que vivimos llena de bendiciones.

Viví cuatro años en Roma durante mi época de estudios avanzados en la *Angelicum* (La Universidad de Santo Thomas de Aquino) mientras vivía en la casa de estudios graduados del Colegio Norteamericano en la *Via dell'Umilta*. Los cuatro años fueron muy formativos para mí como sacerdote. En gran medida, crecí como sacerdote en la Ciudad Eterna, donde hice amistades duraderas que persisten a este día con sacerdotes, religiosos, y familias italianas y romanas. Así pues, siempre me agrada compartir lo que considero como mi "segundo hogar" con aquellos que vienen conmigo en peregrinación.

Fue en verdad una semana llena de bendiciones donde nos reunimos para orar en Misa dentro de las basílicas principales, en una nueva parroquia romana construida para el milenio, la *Parroquia de Dives in Misericordia* (Rico en Misericordia), Assisi (el hogar de San Francisco de Asís), y las ciudades de Orvieto y de Bolsena (donde originó la solemnidad de *Corpus Christi*). En las basílicas de *San Pedro*, en la volina del Vaticano, y de *San Pablo Extra Muros*, estábamos literalmente a un tirar de piedra de las tumbas de los Apóstoles San Pedro y San Pablo. Participamos de la audiencia de los miércoles y oramos con el sucesor de San Pedro, el Papa Benedicto XVI.

Fue una experiencia de fe y de la Iglesia Universal, que nos enseñó y recordó a todos sobre nuestra historia de 2.000 años y más, además de recordarnos que siempre somos parte de una realidad más grande de fe y santidad de vida.

Los aproximados 7.000 peregrinos presentes el día de la audiencia general ciertamente supieron que la diócesis de Fort Worth estaba presente cuando



Su último día en Roma, los peregrinos de Fort Worth pudieron celebrar Misa juntos en la basílica de Saint Mary Major. (Foto de Peter Flynn)

Entre las iglesias en las cuales los más de 500 peregrinos de Fort Worth pudieron celebrar Misa fue la iglesia construida para el milenio, la parroquia de Dives in Misericordia (Rico en Misericordia). Aquí el obispo Vann predica desde el ambón de piedra caliza mientras el diácono Len Sánchez observa. (Foto de Chris Kastner)

anunciaron nuestro nombre. ¡Nos dimos a conocer al estilo de Texas! ¡El Santo Padre me dijo que era maravilloso que tuviéramos tantas personas presentes en la audiencia! Creo que todos los que podían estar presentes encontraron que lo que vivimos fue una experiencia de construir comunidad y lo que llamaría *communio*, o familia de fe. Las personas oraban unos con otros y caminaban unos con otros, compartían comidas y juntos participaban en Misa con personas que no habían conocido antes. Ciertamente me dio una gran oportunidad de encontrarme y orar con muchas personas de la diócesis que antes no conocía. Estoy muy agradecido con todos los que ayudaron a organizar esta peregrinación como parte de la celebración del 40° aniversario de la diócesis, especialmente al Padre Michael Holmberg, de la parroquia Santa Cruz, en Colony, y la Sra. Barbara Boone de la parroquia de San Miguel, en Bedford.

El último lugar donde oramos y celebramos Misa la noche antes de salir de Roma fue en la *Basílica de Santa María la Mayor*. Es uno de mis favoritos. Fue

comenzada por el Papa Liberio a mediados del cuarto siglo. La iglesia fue reconstruida por el Papa Sixto III y rededicada poco después de la declaración del Concilio de Éfeso en el año 431, que estableció que María es la Madre de Dios, la *Theotokos*.

Por ser dedicada a María como Madre de Dios, y porque se dice que hay una reliquia debajo del altar mayor, del pesebre en el cual colocaron a Cristo, esta basílica nos puede llevar a una reflexión sobre el misterio de la Navidad durante todo el año. Tan pronto como uno entra a esta basílica, es como si la iglesia misma invitara a uno a contemplar el misterio de la "Palabra hecho Carne", pues uno se siente atraído al altar mayor donde se encuentra el relicario del pesebre.

Aquí fue donde celebramos la Misa en nuestra última noche en Roma. La dedicación de la Iglesia a María la Madre de Dios, nos lleva también a reflexionar sobre el Anuncio del Ángel Gabriel a María en el

tores.... Al mismo tiempo, sin embargo, esta casa de Dios busca llevarnos a la respuesta de los pastores...."

Es por ser esta una iglesia navideña que les estoy escribiendo esto ahora. Es mi oración que en esta época, las Misas de Navidad y la preparación que todos debemos hacer, de cierta manera nos lleve dentro del misterio de Cristo y de la verdad de la Encarnación... incluso si hemos estado de alguna manera distantes durante este último año. La invitación está allí para entrar por completo una vez más en los acontecimientos de la historia de la salvación donde el Señor nos está esperando.

Al cerrar este capítulo sobre Santa María la Mayor, el Cardenal Ratzinger nos dice sobre esta basílica que "la verdadera consolación aparece en la imagen de la Madre del Salvador. Dios está tan cerca que lo podemos tocar, incluso hoy. Si, en nuestra vigilante estancia en esta iglesia, nos fijamos en esta consolación, entonces su mensaje salvador y transformador ha entrado en nosotros".

La celebración del Nacimiento del Salvador nos recuerda, repetidas veces, que Dios ha entrado concretamente a nuestra historia, y está, de hecho, tan cerca que lo podemos tocar, incluso hoy. ¡Que fácilmente olvidamos esta verdad y realidad! ¡Ésta también es mi oración por ustedes en este día, y época, de la Navidad, ¡pues recuerden que dura 12 días!

Les deseo a todos una bendita y santa época navideña para todos ustedes, y viajes seguros dondequiera que vayan. Gracias por todo lo que hacen por nuestra diócesis y por tantas personas. Que Dios los bendiga siempre. *¡Venite Adoremus Dominum!*

+ Kevin W. Vann

+Monseñor Kevin W. Vann
Obispo de Fort Worth

evangelio, según San Lucas: Ella sería la Madre de Dios, y no tenía por que temer, y sabría que con Dios todo es posible. Si creemos que la palabra de Dios está viva y nos habla, especialmente en la liturgia, entonces esas palabras son también para nosotros. La escena de la Anunciación en el evangelio según San Lucas nos lleva naturalmente al nacimiento de Cristo, que todos pronto celebraremos.

El Papa Benedicto XVI, como Cardinal José Ratzinger, escribió sobre esta basílica en un pequeño trabajo titulado las "Imágenes para la esperanza. Itinerarios del año litúrgico". Nos dice en el capítulo sobre Santa María la Mayor que "Hay en primer lugar algo muy notable. Esta iglesia es una iglesia navideña. Como edificio quiere extender a nosotros la invitación de los ángeles a los pas-



Los peregrinos anticipan tomar parte en la audiencia papal el 11 de noviembre, poniéndose en fila para entrar a la plaza de San Pedro. (Foto de Sr. Yolanda Cruz)



América

Obispo Raymundo Peña de Brownsville se jubila; auxiliar de Detroit obispo Daniel Flores será sucesor

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El Papa Benedicto XVI ha aceptado la dimisión del obispo Raymundo J. Peña de Brownsville, y ha nombrado al obispo auxiliar Daniel E. Flores de Detroit como su sucesor.

Los cambios fueron anunciados en Washington el 9 de diciembre por el arzobispo Pietro Sambi, nuncio apostólico ante los Estados Unidos.

El obispo Peña, quien el 19 de febrero cumplió 75 años de edad, era el obispo hispano de más largo servicio activo en los Estados Unidos. Nacido en Corpus Christi, fue nombrado obispo auxiliar de San Antonio en 1976 y había dirigido la diócesis de Brownsville desde 1995.

El obispo Flores, de 48 años de edad, ha sido obispo auxiliar en Detroit desde el 2006. Él es nativo de Palacios, en la diócesis de Victoria.

Uno de los 26 obispos católicos hispanos activos actualmente en los Estados Unidos será instalado en Brownsville el 2 de febrero.

El obispo Flores expresó su agradecimiento al Papa "por haberme dado esta señal de la providencia de Dios".

"Estoy agradecido también por la oportunidad de servir como pastor para la diócesis de Brownsville, iglesia local situada en el hermoso valle del río Grande, rico en dones de la fe, esperanza y caridad, así como en tradición y cultura", dijo en una carta abierta publicada en inglés y español, en el sitio web de la arquidiócesis de Detroit.

El obispo estaba en Brownsville para una conferencia de prensa matutina con el obispo Peña, en la catedral *Immaculate Conception*.

Como obispo auxiliar, ha supervisado siete de los 18 vicariatos de la arquidiócesis, ha asesorado la arquidiócesis acerca de inmigración y ha ayudado a establecer la *Oficina para asuntos hispánicos*.

Ordenado como sacerdote de la diócesis de Corpus Christi, el entonces padre Flores era vicario parroquial en la catedral Corpus Christi y ocupó varios puestos diocesanos, incluyendo el de rector de *St. John Vianney House of Studies* y el de vicario para vocaciones.

Fue a Roma en 1997 a estudiar en la *Pontificia universidad Santo Tomás de Aquino*. Terminó su doctorado en teología sagrada en el 2000 y regresó a Corpus Christi, donde fue nombrado canciller.

En agosto del 2001 fue parte de la facultad de formación en el *Seminario St. Mary* en Houston y de la facultad académica en la escuela de teología de la *Universidad St. Thomas* en Houston. Después de regresar a Corpus Christi fue rector de la catedral Corpus Christi cuando fue nombrado obispo auxiliar de Detroit en el 2006.

El obispo Peña fue ordenado para la diócesis de Corpus Christi en 1957. Además de puestos parroquiales, sirvió como director diocesano de la juventud de 1967 a 1970 y editor del *Texas Gulf Coast Catholic*, como se conocía entonces el periódico diocesano de Corpus Christi, de 1970 a 1975.



El Papa Benedicto XVI ha nombrado al obispo auxiliar Daniel Flores de Detroit como sucesor del obispo Raymundo Peña de Brownsville, cuya dimisión fue aceptada por el Papa. (Foto CNS/Michael Alexander, GEORGIA BULLETIN)

Fue obispo auxiliar de San Antonio de 1976 a 1980 y sirvió durante unos seis meses en 1979 como administrador de la arquidiócesis. Nombrado para dirigir la diócesis de El Paso en 1980, mantuvo ese puesto durante 15 años hasta su nombramiento a Brownsville.

A través de los años una principal preocupación del obispo Peña ha sido la carencia de sacerdotes para servir a la creciente población católica de la región. Como obispo de una diócesis fronteriza, también ha sido proponente durante muchos años de la

justicia para los inmigrantes. Ha hablado abiertamente sobre "el sentimiento anti-forastero" que ha visto tomar forma en la política y las actitudes públicas.

El obispo Peña es ex director de lo que eran entonces el *Comité sobre asuntos hispanos* y el *Comité para la Iglesia en América Latina* de los obispos estadounidenses. También era miembro del comité de lo que es ahora la *Campaña católica para el desarrollo humano*, del *Comité sobre migración* y el ahora desaparecido *Comité sobre la respuesta pastoral al reto del proselitismo*.

Presentadores:
Heather Reynolds
 Presidente/Directora de Caridades Católicas

Ralph McCloud
 Director de la Campaña para el desarrollo humano, USCCB

Presentando a la Banda:
Soundwave
www.myspace.com/soundwaveonline

Grace Pettis
www.gracepettis.com

Juntos con Cristo
 "JCC"

Anímate a participar en esta conferencia para jóvenes adultos. El enfoque del día será la Justicia Social: Cual es la enseñanza de la Iglesia Católica sobre la justicia social, como pueden los jóvenes vivir los valores en sus días cotidianos. Aprenderás maneras en las cuales puedes servir a otros, convivirás con otros jóvenes de nuestra diócesis, participarás en talleres, y disfrutarás de un concierto y baile.

La inscripción incluye el almuerzo, cena, el concierto, y toda otra actividad de la conferencia. La misa se celebrará a las 5:30.

¿Cuándo?: 11a.m. 23 de enero, 2010
¿Dónde?: Iglesia Católica de St. Vincent de Paul
Inscripción: \$25 (\$35 después del 4 de enero, 2010)

WWW.FWYAM.ORG/JUSTICEROCKS

Patrocinado por:
 La Pastoral Juvenil de habla Ingles

Justice Rocks

Conferencia sobre la Justicia Social para jóvenes (18-30 años)
 23 de enero, 2010
 St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church
 5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd. Arlington TX 76016

Horario

11am-12:30pm-Registro/Almuerzo/Exhibidores
 12:15pm- Salón Principal
 12:30-12:45pm- Oración inicial
 12:45-1:00pm- Bienvenida y Introducciones
 1:00-1:40- Presentadora.....Heather Reynolds,
 Presidente/Directora de Caridades Católicas

1:40-2:00- Descanso- Exhibidores
 2:00-2:45- Ronda 1 de talleres
 2:45-3:00pm- Descanso- Exhibidores
 3:00-3:45pm- Ronda 2 de talleres
 3:45-4:00pm- Salón Principal

4:00- 4:40pm-Presentador.....Ralph McCloud,
 Director de la Campaña para el desarrollo humano, USCCB

4:40-5:00pm- Anuncios:
 -Consejo Diocesano de jóvenes
 -Caridades Católicas

5pm- Descanso, prepararse para la Misa
 5:30pm- Misa
 6:30pm- Cena
 7:30pm- Iniciar Concierto/Exhibidores
 8pm- Grace Pettis
Juntos con Cristo
 9pm- Soundwave (Las exhibiciones estarán cerradas)
 10pm- Clausura

Grace Pettis
www.gracepettis.com

Grace es una joven de 20 años de Alabama que canta / escribe canciones. Finalista regional en 2008 en la competencia de "Kerrville New Folk Songwriting".
<http://www.piercepettis.com>

Soundwave
www.myspace.com/soundwaveonline

Si nunca ha escuchado a Soundwave, te encantará su presentación que llegará directamente al Corazón. La banda, dirigida por el cantante

Y escritor Jeremy Rodríguez, empezó hace algunos años en el pueblo pequeño de Lockhart, TX. La primera presentación fue en Austin. Basándose en su experiencia personal, Jeremy a escrito canciones con el propósito de llegar a otros. Nuestra visión es compartir nuestras experiencias y escribir excelente música. Hay tanta negatividad en nuestro mundo, tanto musical como lirico. Nosotros queremos animar a la gente a que tengan una vida llena y que busquen la Verdad.

Banda "JCC"
Juntos con Cristo

Patrocinado por la Diócesis de Fort Worth Young Adult Council and Office of Young Adult Ministry



LOGOTIPO OFICIAL PARA JORNADA MUNDIAL DE LA JUVENTUD 2011 — Los jóvenes son representados en una gráfica en forma de "M" debajo de la cruz de Cristo en el logotipo oficial para la *Jornada mundial de la juventud 2011*. Los organizadores emitieron el logotipo este verano. La "M" representa a ambos, María y Madrid. El creador del logotipo, el artista gráfico español José Gil-Nogues, usó los colores rojo, anaranjado y amarillo para significar el calor de España y el amor por Dios. La reunión juvenil católica internacional se llevará a cabo en Madrid del 16 al 21 de agosto de 2011. (Foto CNS/cortesía de JM2011)

Amor por Dios, prójimo es fuerza impulsora del espíritu humano, dice el Papa

Por Sarah Delaney
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO — Escoger amar a Dios y a los compañeros seres humanos es la única opción que da significado a las vidas de la gente, dijo el Papa Benedicto XVI, revisando las enseñanzas de un monje del siglo 12.

Durante su audiencia general semanal del 2 de diciembre en una soleada Plaza de San Pedro, el Papa explicó los escritos de William de St. Thierry, teólogo monástico que creía que el amor por Dios es "la máxima vocación y la fuerza impulsora del espíritu humano".

El Papa Benedicto ha estado analizando las vidas y los trabajos de figuras eclesiásticas importantes de la Europa de la Edad Media durante su catequesis semanal, extrayendo ideas que pueden ser relevantes a los hombres y las mujeres contemporáneos.

El Papa llamó a William "un cantante del amor y la verdad", cuyas escrituras "nos enseñan a escoger la opción fundamental de nuestras vidas, aquello que da sentido y valor a todas las otras opciones: el amor por Dios y por nuestro prójimo". Solamente escogiendo esta opción, el Papa dijo, "podemos tener alegría y beatitud verdaderas".

Para William, el Papa explicó, "este impulso humano natural encuentra la perfección en el amor

por el Dios trino, fuente y meta de todo el amor".

William, nacido en la actual Bélgica aproximadamente en 1075, sirvió como abad del monasterio benedictino de St. Thierry, cerca de Reims, Francia, donde intentó emprender reformas, dijo el Papa. Encontró mucha resistencia al cambio y eventualmente entregó su puesto por una vida más contemplativa y estudiosa en la abadía cisterciense de Signy, donde murió en 1148.

William creía que el hombre tiene solamente una tarea verdadera que realizar durante su vida, aquella de "aprender a amar sincera, auténtica y libremente", dijo el Papa.

El teólogo escribió que esta educación en amar es una empresa ardua que dura toda una vida pero trae serenidad y conocimiento de que "todas las facultades del hombre — inteligencia, voluntad y afecto — están en Dios, quien es conocido y amado a través de Cristo", dijo el Papa.

William enseñó que el amor verdadero es posible mediante la reciprocidad o intercambio de afecto, los cuales permiten un conocimiento más profundo de Dios y otras personas, dijo el Papa.

"Sin cierto sentido de compasión no conocemos a nadie y esto es verdad también para el amor por Dios. ... No podemos conocer a Dios si no lo amamos", dijo.

La presencia de la iglesia en medio de los pobres puede ayudar a proteger la vida humana, dice el Papa

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — La iglesia debe aumentar su presencia en medio de los pobres y en la sociedad para que pueda defender mejor la vida humana, desde su concepción hasta su término natural, dijo el Papa Benedicto XVI.

En su mensaje del 11 de febrero para el año 2010, celebración del *Día mundial de los enfermos*, el Papa enfatizó el papel importante que tiene la iglesia al llevar el amor de Cristo y el alivio a todos los que sufren: sea por pobreza, opresión, remordimientos o enfermedad.

Dado el contexto cultural e histórico actuales, escribió el Papa, hay una necesidad creciente "de una presencia atenta y amplia en medio de los enfermos". Hay también una necesidad de tal presencia dentro de la sociedad "para poder transmitir de una

manera efectiva los valores del Evangelio de salvaguardia de la vida humana, en todas sus fases, desde la concepción hasta su término natural".

El Vaticano dio a conocer el mensaje del Papa el 3 de diciembre.

El *Día mundial de los enfermos* se celebra cada año en la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes. En el año 2010 también se celebrará el 25° aniversario de la institución del *Consejo pontificio de ministerio de cuidado de la salud*.

En su mensaje, el Papa Benedicto decía que la finalidad de la celebración del *Día mundial de la salud* era la de recordarles a los católicos lo importante que es que la iglesia dispense servicio pastoral a los enfermos y a los que los atienden.

"Cada cristiano está llamado a

volver a vivir, de diferentes modos y siempre en diferentes contextos, la parábola del Buen Samaritano", que fue quien le dispensó cuidado y compasión al hombre que había sido dejado medio muerto por los ladrones, a mitad del camino, decía el mensaje del Papa.

Así como Jesús les dijo a sus oyentes que les ofrecieran a otros la misma clase de misericordia y cuidado, los cristianos de hoy están llamados a atender "las heridas del cuerpo y del espíritu de tantos de nuestros hermanos y hermanas que encontramos en los caminos del mundo", escribió el Papa.

Y haciendo mención del *Año sacerdotal*, el Papa hizo mención especial dirigida a los sacerdotes del mundo para que vayan en ayuda de las personas marcadas por el sufrimiento.

La Diócesis Católica de Fort Worth presenta el...

Primer Congreso Católico de Hombres

"Jesús Sanando El Corazón del Hombre"

16 de Enero 2010

de 8:00 am a 6:00 pm

Conferencistas

Fr. Valdemar Gonzáles de México

Fr. Angel Infante de Fort Worth, TX

José García del Comité Diocesano

Costo: \$10.00 por persona

"El mismo, subiendo a la cruz, cargó con nuestros pecados para que, muertos a nuestros pecados, empecemos una vida santa. Y
^por sus llagas fueron ustedes sanados^"

1 Pedro 24

Más Información

Carlos Espinoza (817) 807-6762

Pedro Santa Cruz (682) 229-7188

Reynaldo Herrera (817) 437-7918

Andrés Aranda (817) 560-2452 Ext. 258

Lugar: Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe
4100 Blue Mound Rd.
Fort Worth, Tx 76106



Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada

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

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

jlocke@fwdioc.org

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

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

Mecanismo para reportar abuso

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

Diocesan

Guadalupe...

FROM PAGE 28
and vocal ensemble that serenaded the Blessed Mother from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m., and led the music at the morning liturgy.

Before sunrise, on the sidewalk outside the cathedral, were the Matachines of St. Peter Church in Fort Worth, dancing for Mary, outwardly honoring her through dance.

At the liturgy offertory procession, representatives brought up gifts ranging from flowers to a piñata, hardhat and sledge hammer, and even a saddle, signs of the people they represented and of their praise for the Mother of God. The saddle came from the Asociacion de Charros Herencia Mexicana, who later would entertain the crowd with lasso feats, during an outside reception.

Ballet Folklorico de Fort Worth and Matachines Danza Guadalupe danced in honor of



These members of the group Matachines Danza Guadalupe, parishioners of St. Peter the Apostle Church in Fort Worth, danced in the pre-dawn hours on Dec. 12 in front of the cathedral in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

the patroness of Mexico, performing choreographies learned and practiced year-round with the purpose of presenting them to the Blessed Mother beginning Dec. 8-12.

"I personally have been dancing since I was 10 years old," said Yajaira Lopez, who learned the dances in Mexico and directs her family's matachines, the Danza Guadalupe. "I am 29 now and I'm still dancing for the Virgin. My mom, my sister, and cousins, we all love and enjoy being part of the matachines. I personally believe dancing to the Virgin of Guadalupe has brought us blessings, and every year, with God's permission, we will be dancing to the Virgin of Guadalupe on Dec. 12."

The matachines, also called soldiers of the Virgin, dress in Aztec-inspired costumes and dance in Mary's honor, Lopez said. Dancers range from toddlers to the elderly, many of them having danced as long as they can remember.

The dance, performed in split skirts with Christian images, bells, and noise-making beads, is a morality play depicting the triumph of good over evil and of Christianity over pagan beliefs. Matachines dance to traditional tunes played on drums, with violins, or without other instruments, which allows the sound

of beads to become a rhythm accompaniment.

The Danza Guadalupe has three *tamboreros* (men playing the drums) and 16 *danzantes* (dancers). "The matachines can be as many as you want," Lopez said. "But you really have to be a believer to feel the blessings that you are getting at that time."

Bishop Vann, who gave his homily in Spanish and English, said he was giving a personal testimonial, reflecting constant belief in Mary the mother of God "and her role in our own salvation."

The bishop described a time during his years in Fort Worth, when, "there were some big decisions to make," and the time for making those decisions was short. At the same time, he had a chance to go to the Basilica in Mexico City on the actual Guadalupe feast day, and spent time near the tilma.

"We were kneeling there, praying," Bishop Vann said, "and I was thinking of what was to follow, and I heard the words of Our Lady of Guadalupe to [St.] Juan Diego, 'Do not be afraid. Am I not here as your mother?'"

"It seems to me that there she was, and there she is for all of us, showing us the way to her Son, showing us the way that in all moments of life God is here, and we are not forgotten."

Josefina Villarreal, cathedral administrative assistant, chaired the Guadalupe feast and



Bishop Vann prays during the consecration of the wine, joined on the altar by Fr. Joy Joseph, TOR, parochial vicar at St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth, and by Deacon Len Sanchez.

oversaw all events. Equally pleased with each participant, Villarreal lauded matachines from Decatur, and from San Mateo Mission and St. Rita Parish in Fort Worth, St. John the Apostle Parish in North Richland Hills, and St. Ann Parish in Burleson. Music through the day was provided by Native Nahuatl Language Rosary and Hymns by Roberto and Marta Cruz; Becky Hernandez, Jesus Montejano, and Luz Elena Zeglam; Mariachi Girasol, (an all female mariachi group); and Los Sembradores de La Palabra.

"My mom's deep sense of spirituality and my father's great passion for music and for serenading Our Lady with Las Mañanitas, made my experience of Guadalupe truly mys-



Families walk together through the streets of downtown Fort Worth in the afternoon procession on Dec. 12, following a horse-drawn carriage bearing an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

tical," Villarreal said.

"On a personal level, I love her message of 'fear not...' That, to me, is what we all yearn to hear and know, that our crippling fears are banished in her love and care.

"Also, her message given to Juan Diego, an indigenous man, member of a people in bondage, is liberating and uplifting."

"María de Guadalupe is with us still today," Villarreal said, "calming our fears, so that we may know the power of God is available to each and every one of us, no matter our status."

St. Mary's parishioners lead OLG parade through downtown Gainesville

The community packed St. Mary's Church in Gainesville at a 6 a.m. Mass Saturday, Dec. 12, to celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. After the Mass, many gathered at Los Mariachis Restaurant for *menudo*, a traditional Mexican breakfast dish.

The next day, a beautiful warm day of 70 degrees after a week of temperature ranging from the 20s to 40s, a group of 600 parishioners prayed and danced in a parade from St. Mary's Church to downtown Gainesville around the courthouse to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe and to express their devotion to her role in helping millions of indigenous Americans

convert to Christianity. The Mass of Our Lady of Guadalupe began at 1 p.m.

Martha Rodriguez led a committee of 20 people who planned the day's celebration. Olivia Cervantes played the part of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Juan Salinas took the part of Juan Diego on the parade float. Salvador Huerta and Ricardo Mendez carried the image of Our Lady in the procession.

The Matachines Dancers from Immaculate Conception Church in Denton participated in the procession downtown and at the dinner reception, they did several prayer dances honoring Our Lady of Guadalupe.



Salvador Huerta and Ricardo Mendez, members of St. Mary's Parish in Gainesville, carried the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in the procession. The image was miraculously imprinted on the tilma worn by St. Juan Diego, as a sign to the bishop in Mexico that a church was to be built on the spot of the apparition in 1531.



The float with Olivia Cervantes as Our Lady of Guadalupe and Juan Salinas as Juan Diego leads the procession to downtown Gainesville and leading the large crowd of parishioners who came to celebrate Our Lady's feast.

Cardinal Foley decides to step down as Vatican's 'voice of Christmas'

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — After 25 years doing the English-language commentary for the pope's Christmas midnight Mass, U.S. Cardinal John P. Foley is stepping away from the microphone and hanging up the headphones.

"I guess I'm truly the Ghost of Christmas Past now," he told Vatican Radio Nov. 24.

The cardinal, grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher, was first asked by the U.S. television network NBC to do the broadcast in 1984. He continued guiding U.S. audiences through the service and, eventually, other

media outlets began getting his commentary as well.

His voice was heard in the Philippines, Nigeria, Uganda, Trinidad and Tobago, Ghana and occasionally some Scandinavian countries, he told Catholic News Service Dec. 2.

"For a while, the Australians would not take me because I had an American accent," he said, but eventually his commentaries were broadcast there as well.

Cardinal Foley noted that his absence is not the biggest change broadcasters and viewers will notice with Pope Benedict's Christmas Eve Mass this year. The Vatican announced in late

November that the pope would begin his "midnight" Mass at 10 p.m. Rome time.

Looking back on 25 years of midnight commentary, the cardinal said, "It was quite an honor and a thrill to bring so many people around the world together in prayer."

Doing the commentary was not a matter of taking a cushy, front-row seat in St. Peter's Basilica and telling people what was happening. In fact, during the Mass the cardinal wasn't in the basilica at all.

The various commentators watch a closed-circuit video feed of the Mass from the Braccio Carlo



In this file photo Cardinal John P. Foley celebrates Mass at the Basilica of St. Mary Major in Rome on Nov. 26, 2007. His family and friends were present at the service held a few days after he became a member of the College of Cardinals. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Hamer...

FROM PAGE 11
home that night.

My son John pointed out one of the lambs looked like an armadillo, and one of the animals was a poodle. Andrew spotted a buffalo and a coyote. Meredith loved the fact that none of the figures had faces — they were just balls of clay. Jesus, she noted, was exactly the size of a small marble, lying under a blanket, in a manger the shape of a sardine can.

And Julie pointed out there was a cow that looked exactly like a coffee table. (Julie grew up to be a sculptor.)

When I found that nativity scene last week, we had already put up our decorations, which is why the attic was empty, allowing me to notice the crumpled bag.

So, after the find, I had to rearrange things to find the perfect spot for it. (The prodigal clay people return.) I put the terracotta manger scene in an honored place in the dining room, where it unseated a nativity much more Hallmark-esque.

But Jesus shows himself to us in that clay nativity scene, I think, like he showed himself as a carpenter and called himself a shepherd.

It is said that the mother of Jesus Christ, as Our Lady of Guadalupe, is everywhere. Last weekend on her feast day,

she was present downtown, in embroidered jackets and skirts, and in an image nearly six feet tall. The image, framed in flowers, held carefully in a carriage, was paraded around some four city blocks, then respectfully carried into the cathedral, and placed at a side altar.

Bishop Kevin Vann had spoken of Our Lady of Guadalupe in his homily that morning, Dec. 13, telling of a time when he visited the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, and prayed near the tilma, a hemp cloak on which Mary had left her image for Juan Diego in 1531.

At the time, the bishop was struggling with an important decision, and while praying there, he said, "I heard the words spoken to Juan Diego, 'Do not be afraid. Am I not here as your mother?'"

A few days later the bishop returned home, went about his daily duties and, thinking about the coming decision, went into his chapel to pray. "There on the altar was a statue of Juan Diego that had not been there before," Bishop Vann said.

"Where had it come from?" He remembered the time in front of the tilma; he remembered his concerns, and he remembered the words Mary spoke to Juan Diego.

"I found out this statue was bought at the same time I was at the basilica in Mexico City," he said.

The Bishop knew when he returned from Mexico City and found Juan Diego with the tilma in his house, in his chapel, Our Lady was saying to him that she had not forgotten, that she was there.

"And in the days that followed," Bishop Vann said, "whenever I would be in a certain place, places that were not necessarily religious, I would turn around and there was some image of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It seemed to me that wherever I went, there she was, and I had a sense that yes, she was there to show me the way."

Baby Jesus was waiting for me last week in the attic. As I was preparing for the celebration of his birthday, he was already there, and had been waiting for years until I came looking for him. Like his mother, perhaps he was there to show me the way. "Do not be afraid."

I won't lose him again.



Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. Andrew Parish, has five children, Meredith, John, Julie, Andrew, and Abby.

Last May, her column received the second place award for best family life column by the Catholic Press Association of the U.S. and Canada at the Catholic Media Convention in Toronto. In 2005, Kathy's column was recognized with the first place award in the same category.

Magno, an unheated exhibition space at the end of the colonnade in St. Peter's Square. But Cardinal Foley, who trained as a journalist and for years edited the Archdiocese of Philadelphia's Catholic newspaper, would go into the basilica before Mass and find any English-speakers who were serving, reading or receiving Communion from the pope. He'd share their names and stories with

viewers during the broadcast.

Instead of doing the commentary this year, the 74-year-old cardinal plans to spend Christmas in Philadelphia, he said.

"I thought 25 years was a good time to round it out," Cardinal Foley said.

As he told Vatican Radio, and repeated to CNS, "It's better to be able to walk away than to be carried away from the job."

The FLOCK

By Jean Denton

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Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



Calendar

DEAF CHRISTMAS MASSES

Christmas Eve Mass will be interpreted for the Deaf Community on Dec. 24 at 8 p.m. at St. John the Apostle Church at 7341 Glenview Dr. in North Richland Hills. Christmas morning Mass will be interpreted at 10 a.m. at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church at 2016 Willis Ln. in Keller. Seating for the members of the Deaf Community and their families will be reserved in the front pews. Please arrive early as Mass is always crowded. Please contact Mary Cinatl at (817) 284-3019 for more information or visit the Deaf Ministry Web site for maps and directions at www.fwdioc.org/ministries/deaf.

RESPECT LIFE MASS

All are invited to participate in the annual Respect Life Mass at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton Street in downtown Fort Worth. The Mass will be celebrated by Bishop Kevin Vann, Saturday, Jan. 9, at 7 p.m. The diocesan liturgy, held each January, will mark the anniversary of the 1973 Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion. A candlelight procession will be held in remembrance of the millions of deaths that have occurred as a result of abortion. For more information, call Chanacee Ruth-Killgore at (817) 560-3300 ext. 257.

NCHS ALUMNI SOCCER GAME

All Nolan Catholic High School alumni are invited to participate in the annual men's and women's alumni soccer games on Jan. 2, 2010, at Doskocil Stadium on the NCHS campus. The women's game will start at 11 a.m. and be followed immediately by the men's game. For more information, contact the alumni office at (817) 457-2920, ext. 1670 or alumni@nolancatholic.org.

MUENSTER K OF C CENTENNIAL

The Knights of Columbus Council 1459 from Muenster will celebrate its centennial anniversary Saturday, Jan. 16, with a special Mass at 5 p.m. at Sacred Heart Parish, 714 N. Main, Muenster. A banquet will be held following the Mass at 7:30 p.m. at Winstar World Casino Global Event Center. Reservations are requested by Dec. 20. For more information visit the Web site at www.muenstercouncil.org.

NFP CLASSES

The Couple to Couple League offers classes in the sympto-thermal method of Natural Family Planning for married and engaged couples. Since the course consists of three classes at monthly intervals, engaged couples are encouraged to attend a course beginning at least four months before their wedding. To register for a course starting Jan. 15 at 6 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 1501 Ninth St., Wichita Falls, contact Jacob and Lauren Morath at (940) 544-2515. To register for a course starting Jan. 17 at 3 p.m. at Loreto House, 913 Ave. C, Denton, contact Kevin and Michele Vina at (940) 433-5664. To register for a course starting Jan. 22 at 7 p.m. at St. Peter the Apostle Church, 1201 N. Cherry Ln., White Settlement, contact Bill and Mary Kouba at (817) 370-9193. Visit www.cclfdw.org for more class dates and information.

DIOCESAN SINGLES MASS

A Diocesan Singles Mass will be held 7 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, at St. Joseph Church, 1927 SW Green Oaks, Arlington. All single and single-again Catholics are invited to join in worship, fellowship, food, and dancing. Attendees are encouraged to bring a friend, a potluck item for dinner, and/or nonperishable items for the church pantry. To volunteer with the Diocesan Singles Council, including Mass ministries, call Rosalie (940) 564-0092.

CALIX SUPPORT GROUP

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

To Report Misconduct

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

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

To Report Abuse

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

SW LITURGICAL CONFERENCE

This year the Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week will explore the theme "Many Cultures: One Church at Prayer" Jan. 13-16 at the George R. Brown Convention Center in Houston. The 48th annual conference, hosted by the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, will feature over 40 scholars, theologians, priests, religious, and professional pastoral ministers. The keynote address will be delivered by Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston. Also delivering addresses to the conference will be Father Ed Foley, OFM Cap.; Dr. Richard McCarron; Sister Catherine Vincie, RSHM; Brother Rufino Zaragoza, OFM; and Father Juan Sosa, president of the *Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia*. The event will host nearly 50 exhibitors to include Catholic bookstores, Catholic publishers, religious goods suppliers, architects, liturgical consultants and designers, artists and artisans, universities, and retreat centers. Registration for the conference is \$150 after Dec. 11. Single day registration is also available. Hotel accommodations are offered through Hilton of the Americas adjoining the conference center. The conference brochure and secure registration is available online at www.swlc.org. Information for exhibitors is also available online. For more information e-mail studyweek@swlc.org.

MOUNT CARMEL CENTER

Mount Carmel Center, 4600 W. Davis St., Dallas, will offer a two-part series entitled "*Dei Verbum*: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," presented by Father Stephen Sánchez, OCD. Part one of the conference, to be offered Jan. 16, will examine the theology of revelation as presented in the first half of the Vatican Council's document (Chapters 1-3). Part two of the conference, to be offered Jan. 23, will examine the theology of revelation in the second half of the Vatican Council's document (Chapters 3-6). Both sessions will be held from 10 a.m. to noon. Participants may bring a lunch and stay for personal prayer following the presentations. Registration deadline for part one is Jan. 9 and the deadline for part two is Jan. 16. Suggested minimum donation for each conference is \$25. For more information, contact the center at (214) 331-6224 or visit the Web site at www.mountcarmelcenter.org.

CHRISTIAN UNITY PRAYER

Holy Family Church and the Tarrant Area Community of Churches will celebrate the "Week of Prayer for Christian Unity" with dinner, prayer, and song Thursday, Jan. 21, from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. The celebration will be held at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in Fort Worth. For more information, contact the parish office at (817) 737-6768.

RESPECT LIFE HOLY HOUR

The Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth sponsors a Holy Hour from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral on the third Monday of each month. The hour begins with a rosary and is followed by Eucharistic Adoration. All are invited to come and pray for an end to abortion and all offenses to the sanctity and dignity of human life. For more information, contact Chanacee Ruth-Killgore, director of Respect Life for the Diocese of Fort Worth, at (817) 560-3300 ext. 257

CARDINAL NEWMAN INSTITUTE

The Cardinal Newman Institute will begin a 10-week course on "The Theology of the Old Testament" Jan. 9. The study will concentrate on the meaning of significant passages, events, and terms as well as God's relationship with the primary biblical characters in salvation history. It will also demonstrate how the Old Testament prefigures and establishes the foundation for the teaching of Christ and the Catholic Church. Although this course is especially appropriate for persons involved in Bible study groups, all will find this course enriching for a deeper understanding of the Old Testament as well as its relevance today. The course, co-taught by Gregory Golden and Christopher Tunnell, will be held at St. Maria Goretti Parish in the Holy Family Life Center, 1200 S. Davis, Arlington, from 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. For more information, contact the Cardinal Newman Institute at cni.info@yahoo.com or (817) 277-4859.

NTC SUBMISSION DEADLINE

The *North Texas Catholic* is published twice monthly, except during the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly. The deadline to submit information is noon on the Wednesday of the week before the paper is published. Items for the Jan. 15 issue must be received by noon on Jan. 6. Items for the Jan. 29 issue must be received by noon on Jan. 20. Send information to jrusseau@fwdioc.org.

RACHEL'S VINEYARD RETREAT

Rachel Ministries will hold a weekend retreat Jan. 22-24 for healing following an abortion. This program helps those who struggle with grief, guilt, and pain following an abortion to find hope and healing. The retreats are open to all who feel the pain of post-abortion trauma. Come and experience the mercy, forgiveness and healing love of God on a Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreat. For more information or registration, call the Rachel Ministries confidential help line at (817) 923-4757 or e-mail forgiven@racheltx.org.

ST. AUGUSTINE GROUP

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

DISCERNMENT AT OLV

Single women, ages 18 to 45 are invited to come for an evening of prayer, supper, and sharing, hosted by the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, the first Friday of each month from 4:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at Our Lady of Victory Center, 909 W. Shaw St., Fort Worth. For more information, contact Sister Yolanda Cruz, SSMN, at (817) 923-3091 or sycruz@sbcglobal.net.

GABRIEL PROJECT

Gabriel Project is a national and diocesan, parish-based ministry reaching out to women experiencing a crisis pregnancy. Gabriel Project volunteers, Gabriel Angels, are those trained to help women in their time of need, proclaiming the Angel Gabriel's message of good news that God is with them. Become a trained Angel by attending training two Saturdays in a row and an Angel Commissioning Mass at St. Michael Church, 3713 Harwood Rd, Bedford. The first training will be held Jan. 30 and the second will be held Feb. 6. The Commissioning Mass will be celebrated at the end of the second day. For more information, contact Mary Stroupe at (940) 464-3224.

MARRIAGE PREP CLASSES

Classes for Pre Cana, Cana II, and Today... Tomorrow... Forever, will no longer be held on Sundays. Pre Cana classes will be offered one Saturday a month during odd months at the Montserrat Jesuit Retreat House in Lake Dallas, and for two evenings a month during even months at the Catholic Center, 800 W. Loop 820 S. Both evenings are required. Cana II and TTF classes will also be changed to Saturdays, and will be held at either Montserrat or the Catholic Center. Dates and times will vary for month to month, and participants should consult the Family Life Office's calendar at its Web site, www.fwdioc.org/ministries/familylife. For more information, contact Family Life Coordinator Diane Schwind at (817) 560-2452, ext. 304.

MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER

A Marriage Encounter weekend will be held Feb. 12-14 at the Catholic Renewal Center of North Texas, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth. A Marriage Encounter is a weekend program for married couples led by married couples designed to help couples deepen their relationship. Marriage Encounter is centered on three principles: building communication between husband and wife, nurturing the commitment of marriage vows, and strengthening the couple's faith. Reservations are required with a \$60 non-refundable deposit, and space is limited. The balance of \$175 per couple is due at the program. In case of financial needs, scholarship funds are available. A partial deposit is still required. For more information, visit www.ntexasme.org or to make a reservation, call Kathy and Terry Telger (817) 294-2749 or e-mail meregistration@sbcglobal.net.

ST. GEORGE SCHOOL ALUMNI

Organizers for the St. George School reunion are searching for all alumni who have ever attended St. George School. All are invited to the Homecoming scheduled for March 7. In order to get information out, organizers need to update the alumni directory. All alumni are asked to contact the school at (817) 222-1221 or principalsg@charter.net.

Classified Section

IN-HOME ASSISTANCE AND SUPPORT

Homewatch Caregivers, the premier in-home care provider, offers all levels assistance to homebound individuals; seniors needing a little assistance or a lot of assistance; working mothers and fathers whose child may be sick and they can't afford to miss a day of work; recovery help to individuals who have had surgery. We provide companionship and assistance transporting individuals to doctor's appointments or chemotherapy. Let our family help your family. Call Homewatch Caregivers at (817) 283-4488.

DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

Notre Dame Catholic School is accepting applications for a full time Development Director beginning Spring-Summer 2010. Applicant must have experience in marketing, fundraising, and working with volunteers. Please submit resume and application, to Principal Cindy Huckabee @ 2821 Lansing Blvd. Wichita Falls TX 76309 or cindy.huckabee@notredamecatholic.org.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Topsoil, sand, gravel, washed materials, driveways, concrete, backhoe, and tractor services. Custom mowing lots and acres. Call (817) 732-4083.

ST. JOSEPH LITANY

To request a copy of the prayer card and litany to St. Joseph, send \$1 to St. Joseph Litany, PO Box 54642, Hurst, TX 76054.

CATHOLIC SCHOOLS BANQUET

The 23rd Annual Catholic Schools Celebration will be held on Saturday, Jan. 30, 2010, at the Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom. The evening will honor outstanding individuals from the diocesan schools whose contributions have impacted and furthered the mission of Catholic schools. Tickets are \$75 per person. For reservations, call Tessa Ross at (817) 560-2452, ext. 280 or visit the website: www.fwdioc.org.

UNBORN BABY MEMORIAL

St. Andrew Adult Faith Formation and Outreach Ministries will offer a Memorial Service for Unborn Babies Friday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at St. Andrew Church. All families who have lost a child due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion, are invited to attend this memorial service. A Naming Ceremony will take place prior to the service in the chapel at 6:30 p.m. Those wishing to take part in the Naming Ceremony are asked to indicate their intention when making a reservation. A reception will follow in the Pastoral Center. To make a reservation or for more information, contact Alice Curran at (817) 927-5383. Childcare will be provided with reservations made at least 48 hours in advance. For childcare reservations, call (817) 924-6581. The cost for childcare is \$5 per child. St. Andrew Parish is located at 3717 Stadium Dr., Fort Worth.

MEN'S / WOMEN'S DISCERNMENT

The Vocations office sponsors a Men's Monthly Discernment the second Monday of each month for single men ages 16 to 50 and a Women's Monthly Discernment the third Monday of each month for single women ages 16 to 50. The groups meet at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth, from 6 p.m. to 9 p.m., to pray together, share their vocational call, listen to God, break open the Word, and to share a meal together. For more information, contact Father Kyle Walterscheid, director of Vocations at (817) 560-3300 ext.110 or kwalterscheid@fwdioc.org.

YOUTH PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

St. Maria Goretti Church has an immediate opening for a Coordinator of our Youth Programs. This is a part-time position of 20-25 hours per week, and includes evenings and both weekday/ weekend work. Primary responsibilities include the parish Youth Group and Programs, Youth Formation for grades 9-12 (Confirmation), Quinceañera formation and Sunday Night Live. Qualifications include: must be a practicing Catholic, previous experience with youth or programs, organization and communication skills. An Application for Employment is available from our parish office, 817.274.0643, or on our website, www.smgparish.org. For more information and details contact John Cox, Director of Faith Formation, jcox@smgparish.org, or 817.274.0643, ext 226.

ADVERTISE

IN THE
NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC
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CALL

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Good Newsmakers

Diocese honors Our Lady of Guadalupe with day-long festivities in downtown Fort Worth for the

Hope she brings

Veronica Sifuentes, an escaramusa (rider) with the Asociacion de Charros Herencia Mexicana, a professional horseback riding group, accompanies an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, carried in a horsedrawn carriage, in a late afternoon procession through the streets of downtown Fort Worth.



This young mother and her son enjoy the sights and sounds of the mañanitas as they prepare to attend the Dec. 12 morning Mass in the cathedral.



Miguel Hernandez, who portrayed St. Juan Diego during the festivities, prays and sings in the afternoon procession.

Story and Photos by
Kathy Cribari Hamer
Correspondent

I was reading a book celebrating Our Lady of Guadalupe," Bishop Kevin Vann told a crowd at St. Patrick Cathedral Dec. 12, "and it said, 'she is everywhere.' And how true I have found that to be."

The bishop was preaching the homily at a dawn Mass, the beginning of the cathedral's Second Annual Celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast Day. The 16-plus hour event started with mariachis and matachines, and ended with a downtown procession during which a huge framed image of Our Lady of Guadalupe rode in a horse-drawn carriage, and later was carried into the cathedral for evening Mass.

"I was walking in Sundance Square and found this wonderful shop," the bishop told the assembly. "It has many things, with a mixture of Christian symbols and other things as well.

"One time when I was there, what did I see? I saw a pair of cufflinks with our Lady of Guadalupe, and I thought, 'Well,

what are they doing here? I should have those.' And so I bought them, and here they are." The bishop placed them on the ambo, saying, "I haven't seen a pair like that since then.

"So in one way I find her everywhere, in places you wouldn't expect her, but in another way I find her where you would expect her, and I think where all of us would find her, in moments very important in our lives."

The Guadalupe celebration provided a daylong menu of Mexican dances and music, such as the Mariachi Estampas de Mexico, a brass

Martin Carrillo, with The Mariachi Estampas de Mexico, sings and plays the violin at the 6 a.m. Mass in the cathedral.



LEFT: Patricia and Heraclio Reteguin, members of the Sembradores de la Palabra group, who sang at the evening Mass on Dec. 12, also participated in the offertory procession at the 6 a.m. Mass.



LEFT: This young Ballet Folklorico de Fort Worth dancer, Monzeratt Martinez, danced in the offertory procession in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the Americas.



Lino Fabian Sandoval, a very small vaquero, walks in the procession while performing feats with his lasso.

MAILING LABEL: Please enclose label with address change or inquiries concerning mail delivery of your paper. Thank you.

Inside... This issue of the NTC

St. Joseph Health Care Trust is expanding its reach into all corners of the diocese to help fill in the gaps in medical coverage for those in need.

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When 550 plus pilgrims from the Diocese of Fort Worth stand up to let the other 6,500 people at a papal audience know that Fort Worth is represented, even the Pope notices.

14-15

In the Christmas package Sharon Perkins, Jeff Hedglen, and David Gibson show us in fresh new ways the wonder of God with us, Emmanuel, the gift of the lowly manger.

16-19