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Over 650 Youth Attended *Youth 2000* Retreat At Cathedral Gym

By Pete Micale, WTA

They came from cities, towns, and rural areas of the Dioceses of Lubbock, Austin, and San Angelo. Teenagers and young adults descended upon the Sacred Heart campus of Angelo Catholic School, from January 21 through the 23rd. The weekend was a powerful spiritual experience for all who attended.

The parishes of the city of San Angelo sponsored the *RETREAT*. The *YOUTH 2000* team consisted of Frs. Bob Lombardo and Terry Messer and Br. Francis from the Franciscan Friars of Renewal of the Bronx, New York. The emcee for the weekend was Susan Brawley of Dallas, Texas along with her mother, Ann Brawley.

Everyone who attended learned that JESUS is truly present in the Eucharist and true catechesis was evidenced throughout the weekend. They learned that JESUS is always present, everywhere throughout our lives, and that our belief that he is present in a special way in the Eucharist differentiates us from practically all other Christian faiths. The



talks by the leaders got down to the very basics of our religion: why we genuflect in Church; why we make the sign of the cross with holy water; etc.

"*YOUTH 2000* gets us back to the basic catechism that we usually forget about," said Lori Hines, Youth Minister from Holy Angels parish in San Angelo. "I feel that *YOUTH 2000* has helped bring so much more to our program at Holy Angels."

The Sacrament of Reconciliation was another topic covered by the speakers. With a renewed understanding of the Sacrament, many of them took advantage of the moment and sat with a priest, not in a con-

fessional box, but in different corners and areas of the school's cafeteria. Priests were available throughout the weekend, and it was evident that

many, if not all, of the attendees received the Sacrament.

In order to properly prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the retreatants learned much more about the Ten Commandments. They learned that there was much more to each commandment, other than its simple statement. An example is the first commandment. It states: "I am the Lord

your God; you shall have no other gods before me." The youngsters learned that there is an entire area of questions that are subordinate to that one statement: "Did I fail to love God; to make God first in my life;

to thank him, trust him, love him as he deserves? Did I fail to pray? Have I doubted or denied my faith? Was I careless in saying my prayers? Do I give God time every day

in prayer? Have I been involved in magic, Ouija boards, Tarot cards, the occult?"

Each commandment was scrutinized this way. They were given a

card called, "How to go to Confession," and it contained a number of questions for each of the commandments.

The overall response by the attendees was very positive. Such comments as: "This was the best weekend of my life;" and "Now I really know what the Mass is all about." Parents also responded positively to the *Retreat*. Irma Diaz, a parishioner of the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, said: "My son thoroughly enjoyed the weekend. I was concerned that I would have a problem getting him up at 8:00 on Saturday morning. He got up all on his own and wanted to go."

Youth 2000 may have also encouraged vocations; or at least pointed some in the right direction. At the conclusion of the Sunday Mass, celebrated by Bishop Pfeifer, Fr. Bob asked those in attendance who felt a calling to a vocation to please stand up. Over 40 got up—both male and female.

There is no question that the San Angelo *Youth 2000* was a rousing success. The Diocese of Lubbock will have its own *Youth 2000 Retreat* on July 16-18. Anyone needing more information about that weekend should contact the Youth Minister of their parish.

How to Reach Inactive Catholics

by Bishop Michael Saltarelli
Wilmington, Del.

The most numerous body of Christian believers in America today is the Roman Catholic Church, numbering some 45 million believers. Recent research shows that the second largest body, some 17 million, consists of those Catholics who no

longer practice their faith. These are our sons and daughters, our spouses, our extended families, our neighbors and friends, the woman or man who works at the desk across from us — each of them a brother or sister in Christ. During this year of jubilee, we have been invited to seek a deeper level of personal conversion in our

own lives. At the same time we recall our obligation to be signs of hope and gentle invitation to our inactive brothers and sisters. Like many of you, I and my brother bishops, the shepherds of the church in America, have wondered why Catholics become inactive. Recently the U.S. bishops' evangelization committee

conducted research to find an answer to this question. I would like to share with you the results of this research. Based on this information I would also like to suggest ways you and I together might address the situation. My hope is to stimulate your own concern and creativity, and to persuade you to approach your friends who are not practicing their faith. Like St. Peter near the gate of the

temple, we might learn to say, "What I do have I give you . . . Jesus Christ" (Acts 3:6). Avery Dulles writes: "The church has become too introverted. If Catholics today are sometimes weak in their faith, this is partly because of their reluctance to share it." Each of us needs to discern with the light and fire of the Holy Spirit how

see "REACH", page five



Stand Up And Be Counted

(The Reasons Why You Should Fill Out Your Census Form)

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

The year 2000 is Census time again for the United States of America. The Census is how America knows what America needs. The information gathered by Census 2000 will help us to understand our nation, our state, and our community better.

Why should one fill out the Census form? I offer the following reasons which I hope will encourage all the people of our Diocese to participate in the upcoming Census.

The Census can help our communities to thrive. The Census numbers can help our community work out public improvement strategies. Non-profit organizations use Census numbers to estimate the number of potential volunteers in communities across the nation.

The Census is a way to get help in times of need. Many 911 emergency systems are based on maps developed for the last Census. Census information helps health providers predict the spread of disease through communities with children or elderly people. When floods, tornadoes or earthquakes hit, the Census tells rescuers how many people will need their help.

The Census makes government work for us. It is a good way to tell our leaders who we are and what we need. The numbers are used to help determine the distribution of over \$100 billion in federal funds and even more in state funds. We're talking about hospitals, highways, stadiums, and school lunch programs.

The Census helps ourselves and our families. Individual records are held confidential for 72 years, but one can request a certificate from past Censuses that can be used as proof to establish one's age, residence or relationship, information that could help one qualify for a pension, establish citizenship, or obtain an inheritance.

Because we had a Census every 10 years since 1790, we know

see "CENSUS", page nine



Levántense Y Sean Contados

(Las Razones Por Las Cuales Usted Debe Llenar Su Cuestionario Del Censo)

Por Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI

El año 2000 es otra vez el tiempo del Censo para los Estados Unidos de América. El Censo es como América sabe lo que América necesita. La información recogida por el censo 2000 nos ayudará a entender nuestra nación, nuestro estado, y nuestra comunidad mejor.

¿Por que debe uno llenar su cuestionario del Censo? Ofrezco las siguientes razones que ojalá animaría a toda la gente de nuestra Diócesis a participar en el Censo.

El Censo ayuda a la Prosperidad de nuestras comunidades. Los números del Censo pueden ayudar a su comunidad a definir estrategias para el mejoramiento publico. Las organizaciones no lucrativas usan los datos del censo para estimar el número de voluntarios potenciales necesarios en las comunidades a través de toda la nación.

El Censo es una manera de obtener ayuda en tiempos de necesidad. Muchos sistemas de emergencia 911 están estructurados en mapas desarrollados con los datos del último censo. La información del censo ayuda a los proveedores de la salud a predecir cómo una enfermedad se disemina a través de las comunidades entre niños o ancianos. Cuando ocurren inundaciones, tornadas y temblores de tierra, el censo indica al equipo de rescate cuantas personas necesitan ayuda.

El Censo hace que el gobierno trabaje por nosotros. Es una Buena manera de decirle a nuestros líderes quiénes somos y que necesitamos. Los números se usan para ayudar a determinar la distribución de mas de \$100 mil millones de fondos federales y más aún en fondos estatales. Esto incluye hospitales, autopistas, estadios y programas de alimentación escolar.

see "CENSO", page eleven

The Bishop's Schedule



February 2000

February 1: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Meeting of Presbyteral Council, 10:30 a.m.

February 2: San Angelo, Mass at 8:00 a.m. at Carmelite Monastery Diocesan Pastoral Center, Liturgy Commission Meeting at 10:00 a.m. Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart Endowment Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

February 3: San Angelo, National Prayer Breakfast at 6:30 a.m. Workshop, National Association of Church Personnel Administration at Christ the King

Retreat Center, 10:00 a.m to 3:00 p.m.

February 4: San Angelo, Go to "Jail" for American Cancer Society at 11:00 a.m.

February 5: Midland, St. Ann, Diocesan Schools Commission Meeting, 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon

February 6: Mereta, Holy Family, Mass at 10:45 a.m.

February 8: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Mass for staff at 8:30 am. Staff Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

February 10: Fort Stockton, St. Joseph, Meet with Pastor and Pastoral Councils of Fort Stockton, Sanderson, Coyanosa, and Imperial at 7:00 p.m.

February 11: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred

Heart, Mass for the World Day of Prayer for the Sick at 7:00 p.m.

February 12: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, 5:00 p.m. Scout Awards Mass.

February 13: Millersview, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mass at 9:30 a.m.

February 14: Dallas, Meeting of Texas Conference of Churches and Representatives of the Texas Baptist Convention

February 15: Odessa, St. Mary School, 2000th Birthday Party for Jesus at 7:00 p.m.

February 17-19: Mexico City
February 20: Winters, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Confirmation at 11:00 a.m.

February 21-22: Fort Worth, Texas Conference of Churches, Assembly 2000

February 24: Rankin, St. Thomas, Meet with Pastor and Pastoral Councils of Big Lake, Rankin, McCamey, Iraan and Crane at 7:00 p.m.

February 26: San Angelo, Diocesan Conference Day

February 27: Brady, St. Patrick, Mass at 10:30 a.m.

February 28-29: Rest and Prayer

March 2000

March 1: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Personnel Board, 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.

March 2: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council, 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

March 3: San Angelo, Mass at Carmelite Monastery at 8:00 a.m.

March 5: St. Lawrence, St. Lawrence, Confirmation at 10:30 a.m.

March 6-7: Little Rock, Arkansas, Installation of New Bishop

March 7: San Angelo, Holy Angels, 6:30 p.m. Presentation to the RCIA

March 8: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Ash Wednesday Mass at noon

March 9: Brownwood, St. Mary, Presentation to the RCIA at 7:00 p.m.

March 12: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Rite of Election, 1:30 p.m. and 4:00 p.m.

March 13: San Antonio, Texas Bishops' Meeting at MACC, 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

March 15: San Angelo, First Christian Church, Speak at Lenten Service at noon

March 16: Midland, Our Lady of San Juan, Lenten Night of

Prayer for the Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the Midland-Odessa Deanery

March 18-19: Dallas, Wedding

March 20-21: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center, Presentation and Reception for Diocesan Fiscal Management Conference

March 21: Andrews, Our Lady of Lourdes, Meet with Pastor and Pastoral Council at 7:00 p.m.

March 22: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center, Staff Retreat 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

March 23: Abilene, Sacred Heart, 7:00 p.m. Lenten Night of Prayer for the Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the Abilene Deanery

March 25: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, 10:30 a.m. Special Jubilee Year 2000 Mass for Women. Stanton, St. Joseph (and Lenorah), 6:00 p.m. Confirmation

March 26: Big Spring, Sacred Heart Church at 10:00 am.

March 28-31: Bishop's Private Lenten Retreat

March 31: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center, Lenten Night of Prayer for the Priests, Sisters, Deacons and Wives of the San Angelo Deanery

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Jubilee Ad Campaign Reaches Out To Women After Abortions

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien

WASHINGTON (CNS) — When Helen Alvarez and Susan Wills of the U.S. bishops' pro-life office wanted to know how women feel after an abortion, they went to the experts.

In addition to researching the topic in some two dozen books and 150 magazine articles, they visited seven or eight Web sites dedicated to women's post-abortion experience. Even more importantly, Alvarez spent an estimated 30 hours on the phone with women who agreed to share their experiences and talk about the emotions that an abortion had left with them.

The result was a multimedia ad campaign that debuted Feb. 1 in the archdioceses of Washington and Baltimore and the Diocese of Arlington, Va., and will be made available to dioceses throughout the country. The campaign, Alvarez said, is "loaded with women's expressions of their experiences."

The program of information and outreach on post-abortion grief and healing is the bishops' pro-life committee's contribution to the jubilee year theme of reconciliation.

Under the overall theme, "Something inside dies after an abortion," the campaign includes four 60-second radio ads in English and two in Spanish that were to air 200 times a week in the three dioceses; three placards that were to be placed in 860 bus and subway locations; billboards at seven sites in the metropolitan area; and a Web site (www.hopeafterabortion.com) offering information and guidance in nearly a dozen languages.

Also available through the campaign are leaflets on "How to Talk to a Friend Who Has Had an Abortion," as well as posters and bumper stickers with the message: "Something inside dies after an abortion."

Each of the radio ads, placards or billboards gives a toll-free number that will automatically connect callers to a representative of Project Rachel in the Washington, Baltimore or Arlington dioceses, depending on where he or she is calling from. Project Rachel, the Catholic outreach program of post-abortion healing, is present under that name or another name in about 140 U.S. dioceses, Alvarez said.

More than a year in the development stage, the campaign began in the Washington-Baltimore-Northern

Virginia area with no advance publicity. "We wanted them to speak for themselves," said Alvarez.

The radio ads and placards contain direct quotes from women who have had abortions. They were chosen from among 600 to 1,000 quotes culled by Alvarez and Wills from the Web sites, books, articles and conversations.

"They tell you it's a relief," one woman says in a radio ad. "It was a relief for a while. ... But now it's been years ... years of this. I wanted a quick solution. But this isn't a solution."

"I did it to have a future," another says in the same ad. "And now I don't feel like I have a future at all."

The announcer then says, "Something inside of you dies after an abortion. If you're suffering because of an abortion, you may feel alone. But you're not. There are people who understand and can help."

"I let you convince me there was nothing good about having the baby," says one placard, signed with the name "Cathi." Another, signed "Margo," says, "Not one day goes by that I don't think of my baby boy."

Alvarez said her office made a deliberate decision not to tie the ad campaign to the 27th anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that lifted most state restrictions on abortion, Jan. 22 or the Jan. 24 March for Life.

"It's not about what we march about in the same way," she said, adding that some post-abortion counselors expressed concern about mixing the message of reconciliation with the anti-abortion theme.

In addition to offering a source of healing to women who have experienced abortions, Alvarez hopes the ads will speak to women who might be considering an abortion. Teen-agers, she found in her research, are especially likely to experience post-abortion trauma, often having emotional difficulty earlier and to a greater degree than their older counterparts.

The multimedia campaign was funded with \$300,000 from the Knights of Columbus to develop and produce it, and "at least another \$300,000" from the People of Life, a grass-roots Catholic pro-life fundraising group, to place the ads on radio and on buses and subways, Alvarez said. Another \$15,000 is available to help about 10 dioceses

— on a first-come, first-served basis — to adapt the ads with their own phone numbers and names.

One pleasant surprise during placement of the ads, Alvarez said, was that "we had no difficulty buying the media we wanted."

"We thought we would be fighting our way with every media outlet, but we didn't have to fight at all," she said. "Nobody said no."

Corpus Christi To Host State Convention in April

By Ester C. Tobin

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court of Texas is hosting its 42nd Biennial State Convention on April 27-30, 2000, at the Omni Bayfront Hotel in Corpus Christi, announced Libby Ramirez, state regent, in her official call letter to Texas members.

Corpus Christi, located on the southern Gulf coast of Texas, is known as "the sparkling city by the sea with a tropical twist." About 800 are expected to attend the four-day conference according to Marie Walsh, Convention 2000 chairperson.

"Mary, Lead Us to the Triune God" is the theme that will be stressed in all of the events.

The Most Reverend Roberto Gonzalez, bishop of the Corpus Christi Diocese, is presently scheduled to celebrate the opening mass on Thursday, April 27, 2000, at 6 p.m. Bishop Gonzalez has been officially named as the Arch Bishop of Puerto Rico by Pope John Paul II. All visiting clergymen and CDA chaplains will assist at the mass.

Taking part in the procession with Bishop Gonzalez will be the national, state, and local officers in their official robes. Members attending mass are asked to wear white dresses (a Texas tradition).

The four-day agenda includes business meetings, election of state officers, a Junior CDA presentation and JCDA mass, key-note addresses, Past Regents Club meeting, presentation of awards by state chaimen, and on the last day, a mass of installation of new officers.

On the fun side, there will be a

World Day of Prayer for the Sick

by Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

I invite all the sick of the parishes of the city of San Angelo and the surrounding area to a special Mass that I will offer on the World Day of Prayer for the Sick, the Feast of Our Lady of Lourdes, on February 11, 2000 at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart at 7:00 p.m. On this 8th World Day of Prayer for the Sick, the Christian community is asked to re-examine the reality of illness and suffering in the perspective of the mystery of the Incarnation of the Son of God, and to draw from this extraordinary event new light, strength and grace.

During the Mass that I will offer on February 11, prayers will be offered for all the sick of our diocese and the world, and I will celebrate the sacrament of the anointing of the sick with those whose health is seriously impaired by sickness or old age.

I invite my brother priests to join me for the concelebration of the Mass and to join with me in the anointing of the sick. Thank you.

Friday night 2000 Millennium party, a VIP luncheon, a clergymen and men's luncheon and fishing trip, a boat ride, door prizes, raffle drawing, and the Saturday evening formal banquet.

Present state officers are: Libby Ramirez, regent; Duchess Collins, first vice regent; Dee Sheetz, second vice state regent; Olga Samaniego, secretary; Carolyn Bachmann, treasurer; and Amy Rueda, immediate past regent. The Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer, bishop of Victoria, is state chaplain; and Rev. Donald Rupert is state clergy consultant.

State officers are elected every two years at the biennial state conventions. State courts are composed of a national regent; five state officers, the immediate past state regent, local regents, and delegates or alternates from local courts. Local regents (presidents) are automatic delegates and each court is allowed one delegate per 50 members.

The first Catholic Daughters of the Americas court was established as a branch of the Knights of Columbus in Utica, New York, with 60 members. The first court in Texas was organized in 1909 in Austin. It has grown into the largest Catholic women's organization in the world including Alaska, the Dominican Republic, Guam, Hawaii, Mexico, Puerto Rico, and Saipan.

Libby Ramirez, state regent, announced that Texas has 184 local courts with a state-wide membership nearing 17,000. Two local courts recently organized were the Court of the Holy Spirit # 2468 in Ducanville with 30 charter members

and the Court of the Sacred Heart of the Divine Mercy #2469 in Pattison with 33 charter members.

The 1998 State Convention was held in Wichita Falls, and the 2002 Convention will be held in El Paso.

"The Circle of Love" is a seven-facet program by which all charitable, spiritual, and educational projects are planned on all three levels: local, state, and national. They are Spiritual, Quality of Life, Youth, Legislation, Leadership, National Projects, and Educational. The national projects supported by all are Covenant House, the Disaster Fund, Health and Life, the Father Peyton Family Rosary, Mother Theresa, Scholarships for Teachers of Exceptional Children, and Support for Our Aging Religious. (For more information, please contact Ester C. Tobin, 956-546-6168.)



Scholastica was the first of the three daughters of St. Benedict, the founder of the Benedictine Order. She was a nun and a teacher. The illustration shows her in traditional monastic dress. Below the illustration is the logo for 'Saints & Scriptures'.



Where Were You?

by Pete Micale, WTA)

Have you ever seen 675 teenagers sitting enthralled, quiet, and practically mesmerized in a large hall? I have.

During the weekend of January 21-23, teenagers from all over West Texas descended on San Angelo and spent many hours in the gymnasium of the Angelo Catholic School. They were moved to silence and acceptance; they absorbed and took to heart and soul the religious, moral, and ethical messages delivered by three men in gray robes. When it was time to shout; they shouted: "JESUS!"

The *Youth 2000 Retreat* was the occasion for this gathering, and its theme was: "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE." This format is being repeated throughout the country during this Jubilee year. (Please see the story and photos on page 1.)

The question that came to mind to those adults who helped with the *Retreat* was: "Why don't we have more youngsters here?" At least that was the one that I asked as an interested bystander; and it begs the basic question of: "WHERE WERE YOU?"

The fact that resources around the Cathedral Church of San Angelo and at the School were stretched is beside the point. You teenagers and young adults who happen to read this column and the story about the *Retreat* on other pages of this edition need to ask yourselves that

question. You parents of teenagers who did not attend and are reading this article need to ask yourselves that same question.

Now, for two other occasions for which the same question may be asked. And I believe that this is even more important than the issue raised above. The question of abortion is beginning to make front-page news as we are exposed to the positions of the various candidates for the presidency of these United States.

We can no longer take the smug attitude of being the silent majority or being embarrassed to talk about this subject in our spheres of influence. The time is long overdue for us Roman Catholics to take a very public, visible, and peaceful stance on this bell wether issue of our faith. We cannot leave the debating field to the kooks on the extreme fringes of our society, especially those who espouse violence on the far Right. Unfortunately, because of miss-information and ignorance, too many of us have been painted with a very broad brush of extremism. And we have remained silent!

Bishop Pfeifer led two pro-life rallies on January 21 and 22. The first one was in the evening at Midland in the Convention Center, and the second was held at mid morning on the courthouse steps in San Angelo. Both of them were poorly attended and can only be classified as terrible disappointments to those of us who feel strongly that it is

about time that we all stand up and be counted.

Certainly, those who attended the three events mentioned above are to be commended for not being concerned about demonstrating their religion to apathetic friends and neighbors. Well done! This column is not aimed at them.

The line in the sand has already been drawn by the televised debates. We Roman Catholics should not allow the pundits to make the upcoming elections a one-issue contest; but we must carefully pick our champion. Our vote must be cast as a matter of principle and not simply one of party affiliation.

The next president will have the opportunity to make three or four appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court. The activist and aggressive judiciary at all levels of our government has twisted, distorted, and miss-interpreted the basic tenants of our Constitution to satisfy the political Left. We are sliding ever dangerously into an abyss of a new federalism. This fragile democracy of ours is still an experiment in the annals of history. Only a vocal, visible, educated, and committed presence at all levels of the political debates throughout our country, will right our badly listing ship of state.

Do not be cynical! Your educated vote will count! Let no one look back and say to us in the future: "WHERE WERE YOU!"

Courts Not Impartial On Partial-Birth Abortion

FRC Calls It A "Crisis In Law And Medicine"

Washington, D.C. – on the 27th anniversary of the *Roe vs. Wade* decision, Family Research Council's (FRC) Chief Spokesperson Janet Parshall took aim at partial-birth abortion as a "crisis in law and medicine" and challenged the Supreme Court to "erect a wall of separation between the abortion lobby and the judiciary" when it reviews the Nebraska partial-birth abortion law this year. Parshall said that in the litigation surrounding such laws, "Segments of the legal and medical professions have laid bare their unabashed commitment to abortion and their callous disregard for the will of the American people. It's time the Supreme Court disentangle the abortion lobby from the courts and let genuine law and real medicine, not raw politics, guide its judgments."

"As the American Medical Association has stated, there is no medical justification for partial-birth

abortion – a grizzly procedure in which the child's skull is punctured and his brains suctioned out," Parshall said. "If we call ourselves a civilized society, we cannot tolerate this brutality any longer."

"In fact, when it comes to partial-birth abortion, the American people have worked over time to ban the procedure from the face of the earth. However, like a slap in the face, numerous state partial-birth abortion laws have been struck down one-by-one. These cases reminded all citizens that black robes and white coats do not confer automatic moral authority," Parshall said. "It takes a hardened heart to coolly describe dismembered arms, disarticulating legs, crushing heads and tearing up torsos. But that's exactly what some lawyers and doctor's participating in these cases have done."

"The Supreme Court's task is to see through the legal citations and the medical euphemisms to recognize abortion for what it is: the violent and unjust destruction of human beings."

Pondering RU-486

by Fr. Frank Pavone
National Director, Priests for Life

It is not likely that those who are pushing the chemical abortion technique RU-486 will be any more eager to fully educate the public about this procedure than they are in regard to surgical abortion. Let's take a moment, then, to pick up the slack.

It is not completely accurate to call RU-486 an abortion "pill." It is, rather, a technique involving a combination of powerful synthetic steroids and arrangements for possible back-up surgery. RU-486 is taken in conjunction with prostaglandins, which induce uterine contractions.

In countries where it is used, women must agree to have a surgical abortion in the cases where this drug technique does not succeed in aborting the baby.

* If RU-486 is permitted, it will increase the numbers of abortions and of abortion providers. The

American people believe there are too many abortions as it is.

* RU-486 has been known to harm and kill women. Its long-range effects on women and their born children are still unknown. They won't be known until at least a generation has passed. The *New Republic* in a 1986 article said that the entire first generation of users will be the guinea pigs. We may be dealing with a chemical time-bomb.

* RU-486 has no proven purpose or benefit except to kill a developing child in the womb. Dr. Bernard Nathanson, upon investigating other claimed benefits of the drug, has said that those claims are built on very shaky scientific ground.

* RU-486 does not privatize or simplify abortion. In countries where it is used, multiple visits to the facility are required. The drug is not taken home, but administered only on the premises, where emergency medical equipment is ready

to deal with side-effects. The woman must return 48 hours later to take the prostaglandin. Another visit is required to verify that the child is in fact gone.

* Where does the child go? The RU-486 process makes this an open question. The child may be expelled at any time, any place, and the mother is more likely to see her tiny, dead baby. Edouard Sakiz, as president of the Roussel-Uclaf company that made the drug, says that using it is "an appalling psychological ordeal . . . It is not at all easy to use."

* RU-486 will not and cannot replace all surgical abortions. One reason is that it can only be used in a small window of the pregnancy (5-7 weeks, or at most 5-9 weeks). In France, furthermore, only 25-30% of women seeking abortion choose the RU-486 method.

Let us make it clear to physicians who are willing to prescribe this technique that cases in which chil-

dren are born with deformities because of failed RU-486 abortions will not go unnoticed.

One nurse who took part in RU-486 testing saw the surgical dishes with the expelled embryos, and said, "It was like looking at a little row of people . . . It was very upsetting . . .

I hope I never, never have to do it again." Don't we all?

Contact Priests for Life at PO Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314; Tel: 888-PFL-3448, 718-980-4400; Fax: 718-980-6515; email: pfl@priestsforlife.org; web: www.priestsforlife.org

**St Stephen's
Midland, TX
Parish Mission
March 25-26, 2000**

**Guest Speaker:
Tim Staples
Director of Evangelization,
Catholic Resource Center
Author; "Nuts and Bolts: A Practical,
How-To Guide For Explaining
and Defending the Catholic Faith"
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Our Lady of Suyapa

by Msgr. Larry J. Droll

Until the Diocese of San Angelo adopted the Diocese of San Pedro Sula in Honduras, I had never heard of Our Lady of Suyapa. So, I was surprised to learn that she is the patroness of the Republic of Honduras, having been declared so by Pope Pius XI in 1925. February 3 was chosen as her feast day.

The tiny statue of Our Lady of the Conception of Suyapa was found on a Saturday in January, 1747. Alejandro Colindres and Lorenzo Martinez, an eight-year old boy, were returning to the village of

Suyapa after gathering corn all day. They were half way there when night fell as they approached the Piligüin ravine. This seemed to them like a good place to spend the night, and they lay down on the hard ground. Alejandro felt that something, apparently a stone, was preventing his finding a comfortable position. In the dark, he picked it up and threw it far away. On lying down again, he felt the same discomfort, but this time, intrigued, he did not throw it away, but put it in his knapsack. At daybreak, he discovered that the mysterious object was a

charming, small image of Our Lady carved in cedar wood.

Our Lady of Suyapa is only 6.5 centimeters tall. It is a very old carving, evidently an amateur work done with touching devotion. Her angelic face reflects the nobility of the native race. It is a dark image with an oval face and shoulder length straight hair. The original painted color of her robe is light pink, which can now be seen slightly. It is covered with a dark cloak trimmed with golden stars and adorned with valuable jewels. The statue is an object of great veneration on the part of the Honduran people. The image rests on a solid silver sphere and is sur-

rounded by a circle of silver rays and twelve stars, which evoke "the woman clothed by the sun" of the Book of Revelations.

The first shrine of Our Lady of Suyapa was blessed in 1780, and the first notable attested miracle occurred in 1796. The present enormous church, with space for the multitude of pilgrims who visit Suyapa, was visited by Pope John Paul II in 1983. It is appropriate that in this land of so many poor, the sanctuary of Santa Maria de Suyapa is located in one of the humblest parts of the city.

As we get to know our Catholic brothers and sisters in Honduras, it



Our Lady of Suyapa

is fascinating to learn of their Marian patroness: Our Lady of the Conception of Suyapa.

REACH

from page one

we are to share our faith. Our faith inevitably grows and deepens when we do share it. The U.S. bishops' evangelization committee diagnosed in their research reasons why Catholics become inactive. I have selected nine of the reasons; I then reflect on how the church can respond.

Why Catholics Become Inactive

Reason 1: "Some did not experience the power or presence of God in Catholicism or in the Catholic community of which they were a part." People are hungry and thirsty for signs of intimacy with Jesus Christ. They want to see evidence that people know and love Jesus Christ personally. They want to see a Catholic faith that reaches every part of a person's being and that is manifested in one's words, actions, manner, smile and friendships. Avery Dulles issues this challenge: "Too many Catholics of our day seem never to have encountered Christ. They know a certain amount about him from the teaching of the church, but they lack direct personal familiarity. The hearing of the Gospel, personal prayer and the reception of the sacraments should establish and deepen that saving relationship." Each year time itself is made holy by our celebration of the liturgical year, that rhythm of prayers, feasts and celebrations that make present to us on a continuing basis the life, death and resurrection of our Savior. Each year we are invited to enter into the spirit of these moments to experience on an ever deepening level the significance of the saving actions of Jesus Christ for us personally. Perhaps in the past year we have experienced the birth of a child, the death of a loved one or a broken relationship. These experiences change us in subtle ways and open us to a new awareness of the ways in which the experience of Jesus can give new meaning to our own. Our experiences are the soil in which our Christianity, watered by faith,

grows. But Catholic faith that only goes through the motions year after year does not grow. This lack of growth is obvious. It often reveals a faith that has not been fully internalized. Our lives need to reflect the love of Jesus growing in us. Our lives need to raise "irresistible questions" in the hearts and minds of those who are searching for the way home to Catholic truth and authenticity. Fundamental to our faith is the reality that Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, today and forever." He is the mystery that invites us to eucharistic faith. He is the one who awaits us in our neighbor, the sacraments and the poor. He is the redeemer who has made his church the sign of God's universal love and welcoming.

"These experiences change us in subtle ways and open us to a new awareness of the ways in which the experience of Jesus can give new meaning to our own. Our experiences are the soil in which our Christianity, watered by faith, grows. But Catholic faith that only goes through the motions year after year does not grow. This lack of growth is obvious."

Reason 2: "Some did not experience warm, personal, caring relationships in their encounters with Catholics. To them the people seemed cold, the services boring." The primary point of contact between God and ourselves, and between ourselves and our neighbors in faith, is when we gather for the celebration of the eucharist. Yet our eucharistic celebrations follow a certain pattern. There is an order to our worship that brings familiarity but can also produce the deadening effects of routine. We know the importance of order and routine in everyday life. They are necessary to a good, productive life. And we have all experienced using the same words or phrases over and over even in our most intimate relationships. How often have we spoken or heard an "I love you" or a "thank you" in conversation with a spouse or a child. Yet, at times, we recognize that we or they are merely go-

ing through the motions, that the words are being used from habit. The same may become true of our participation in worship. Each of us has to take seriously our baptismal commitment to participate fully, actively and consciously in our Catholic liturgies with attentive minds and hearts. Our authentic participation in the Mass, the Liturgy of the Hours and our traditional Catholic devotions will extend to our attitude as a community that lives the faith it celebrates. Our public worship nourishes our private prayer; our private prayer leads us back to Christ, who always leads us to our brothers and sisters. We need to reach out to new parishioners, visitors and those who are taking another look at the church. Paulist Father John Hurley recently said: "Many drop away with the hope that someone will notice, and with large congregations in many parishes, often no one does. Would you want to join a church that doesn't care when you fall away?" We need to ensure that our local parishes are welcoming communities for all of God's people. Our communal worship must lead to apostolic works of mercy and love, especially on behalf of the marginalized.

Reason 3: "Others did experience the complex religious system that seemed to lack relatedness to their lives and, for many, a lack of ministers appreciating their language and culture." Each week as we worship we pray together the creed crafted by the fathers of the church at Nicea. We say, "I believe in one, holy, Catholic and apostolic church." These four descriptive words – one, holy, Catholic, apostolic – are sometimes referred to as marks of the church. The word catholic comes from two Greek words meaning worldwide or universal. The Catholic Church is the one worldwide or universal family of God. When you see the Holy Father celebrating Mass outside St. Peter's Basilica, you notice the Bernini columns on St. Peter's Square which symbolize the arms of the church

Men's Retreat To Begin A New Year

Friday, February 25 to Sunday, February 27

This retreat for men as we begin a new year, a new century, a new millennium will blend the old with the new in such a way that we will know what to do about the fire of desire within us. We will reflect on how the paschal mystery plays out in our lives, with special emphasis on the Eucharist, the source and summit of Christian holiness. Fr. Andy Wueste, OMI, will direct the retreat beginning with registration on Friday at 7:30 pm and ending Sunday with Mass at 11:00 am followed by lunch. Preregistration required by Thursday, February 24. Donation: \$89. For information call: (915) 651-5352.

reaching out to the whole world. All of us need to support the church in all its cultural and linguistic contexts, always realizing that our experience of distinct cultural expressions of the faith – when rooted and balanced – helps to expand and enrich our own faith.

Reason 4: "Some were hurt in some way by Catholics – clergy or laity – and have not been reconciled." Sometimes an inactive Catholic simply needs a practicing Catholic to listen attentively and empathetically to the hurt in his or her past. It may be a difficult Catholic school experience. It may be a story of a priest who was insensitive to them at the funeral of their mother or father. It may be a story about disillusionment with the behavior of a Catholic layperson. Whatever the story – and we know there are many – we need to listen well. Your simple listening, your gentle apology on behalf of the church, is part of the reconciling ministry of Christ. You become an instrument of grace. Such a moment can result in the person going to the sacrament of reconciliation the following Saturday night and returning to Mass and receiving communion on Sunday for the first time in many years. The National Conference of Catholic Bishops' 1992 statement "Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States" described the refined sensitivity that is necessary: "We want to let our inac-

tive brothers and sisters know that they always have a place in the church and that we are hurt by their absence as they are. We want to show our regret for any misunderstandings or mistreatment. And we want to help them see that, however they feel about the church, we want to talk with them, share with them and accept them as brothers and sisters. Every Catholic can be a minister of welcome, reconciliation and understanding to those who have stopped practicing their faith."

Reason 5: "Some are in conflict with the teachings of the church on . . . matters of faith and morality." We mentioned above that the church is one, holy, Catholic and apostolic. Being apostolic means that the belief of the Catholic Church is founded upon the words and witness Jesus Christ left with his apostles. It is his teachings that we profess. We call this the *deposit of faith*, which makes up the moral and doctrinal teaching of the Catholic Church. We cannot "spin" these truths to satisfy polls or the contemporary American cultural myopia. But what we can do is improve the way we communicate the truth of our church's teaching. Catholic truth will always find a home in a heart that is sincerely searching for the truth. As a church, we still need to absorb the teachings of our Holy Father's "The Splendor of Truth" and "On the Relationship

see "INACTIVE", page ten

The Vocation Circle

By Fr. Tom Barley

Greetings from the Vocations Office! After leaving my beloved parish and mission, St. Lawrence near Garden City and St. Thomas in Midkiff, I have been settling into the Vocations Office at the Diocesan Pastoral Center. While the job of the Director of Vocations involves many duties, activities, and concerns, let me address the issue of qualities that we look for in candidates for the diocesan priesthood.

While it is difficult to get young men to be open to the idea of studying for the priesthood for whatever reason, we have to set standards that will help us accept the applicants who have the characteristics that can be developed into a good priest. While some people say if only the Church would let ___ be priests, we would have plenty. The Church may change its mind someday. I have to deal with the reality of today. Instead of just lots of priests, we need good priests. Applicants must be males. When he is ordained he must be at least 26 years old.

The applicant must be a person who has an active love of God, an openness to the Holy Spirit, and a dedication to the Catholic Church of today as envisioned by Vatican II. He must show the ability to be collaborative with other clergy, women religious, deacons, and the laymen and women in the ministry of the Church. He must be willing to minister in obedience to his diocesan Bishop or his religious order.

He must be willing to model his priestly ministry on the discipleship

of Mary and the saints. He must have a deep love of the Eucharist and a willingness to share this with others. This is based on a commitment to growing spiritually as his formation and ministry unfolds. He should have a developed understanding of the Catholic Faith.

The applicant must be willing to live a life of service to all segments of the Church including the poor and the marginalized. Service may be in ways that are considered traditionally "the work of priests" or it may be in ways that simply involve developing beneficial pastoral relations with the faithful, people seeking God's healing and comfort, and members of other churches.

The applicant must be willing to live a simple and humble life-style that is modeled on the simplicity of Jesus that allowed him to focus on following the Father's will. This requires an attitude of sacrifice of material concern, of personal ambition, of time, energy, and effort, of love and self. He must be willing to live a celibate life that will free him to be "priest" to everyone in his parish.

The applicant must have good physical and psychological health, at least average intelligence, a willingness to mature, a sense of humor, and patience. He must be honest, compassionate, sensitive, and at the same time strong enough to challenge people in his pastoral care. He must be willing to grow through experience and evaluation in faith, virtue, and grace. He must be willing to commit himself to the discern-

ment, formation, and study process required in the years of seminary training to become a priest. He must be willing to grow in his understanding of and commitment to the Church and theology. His formation will take five to seven years after college. Any day he can choose to leave the seminary. Each day he has the opportunity to affirm his decision to become a priest and serve God's people in the Church. This requires endurance, the ability to deal with frustration, and a strong prayer life.

This is asking a lot of someone who will be giving his life to the Church. It is. However, many of these qualities are the same you would want from your own spouse or that of your child. Instead of celibacy, you would want the spouse to be faithful, compassionate, and attentive. Of course, few, if any, applicants come with all of these qualities. So we simply work with the applicants to move them towards developing themselves into good Catholics and good priests. Since the ultimate and universal vocation and the ultimate goal for all Christians are holiness and salvation through loving and faithful service, we should never shrink from taking the road less traveled to fully live out the gifts that God has given us.

While many are called and few are chosen, remember – nothing is impossible with God. We just have to cooperate with his will and live one day at a time.

prayer and social gathering.

About fifteen young men from six different Pemian Basin parishes have been participating since the group's establishment last September. Several are in high schools, several are in college, and several have completed their college education. The priest moderators of the group are Father Tom Kelley of Our Lady of San Juan Parish in Midland, and the reporter of this story.

The group's primary purpose is prayer for vocations in general, but each participant also prays for direction about God's will regarding his particular vocation in life.

The group uses the format of the Jesus Caritas Fraternity of Priests. Each meeting includes scripture

sharing and reflection, adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and joint prayer. Those attending also share an evening meal. On occasion the priest-moderators have cooked, and volunteers from St. Ann's Parish in Midland have prepared other meals.

Meetings of the "Seminaristas en familia" have been held at Our Lady of San Juan Parish in Midland, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Odessa and St. Lawrence Parish in Garden City. The latter parish was the site of the group's Day of recollection in early January. A number of Diocesan seminarians on Christmas vacation met with the "seminaristas" at the Day of Recollection to share information about life in the seminary and the courses

Diocesan Catechetical Leaders Meet



By S. Joan Markus

Thirty-two Diocesan Catechetical leaders from the fourteen dioceses in the state of Texas met for three days at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo. Participating from the Diocese of San Angelo were Sisters Joan Markus and Hilda Marotta. The major focus for the three days was the **General Directory for Catechesis** and the recently published Pastoral Plan for Adult Faith Formation. Dr. Jane Regan from Boston College challenged the participants to implement the vision and principles set forth in the Directory. Joanne Sanders from

the Diocese of Austin, Texas walked the group through the pastoral plan, **Our Hearts Were Burning Within Us**. Both publications emphasize adult catechesis as primary in all catechetical efforts.

Initial efforts to implement the **General Directory for Catechesis** in the diocese began last May when Joanne Sanders presented an overview of the document to parish leaders. Ongoing study of this document continues at sessions with catechetical leaders. A plan of implementation for the pastoral plan on adult faith formation will be created and implemented.

Young Men Meet for Vocation Prayer and Discernment

By Father Mark Woodruff

Pastor, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Odessa, Texas

To paraphrase Hamlet, "To be or not to be . . . a priest?" That is the question many a young Catholic man has asked himself.

By the time a young man enters a Diocesan seminary or a religious order, he has behind him years of prayer, discernment and decision-making.

To lend support to young men asking themselves this question, a unique program has begun in the Midland-Odessa area. Called "Seminaristas en Familia, (Seminarists at Home)" the program invites young men, juniors in high school and older, to attend a once-a-month

Bishop's Appointments To Commission On Orders And Ministries (Priests' Advisory Vocation Team)

Msgr. Larry J. Droll

Rev. William Dubuisson, OMI

Rev. Joe Vasquez

Rev. Terry Brenon

Rev. Tom Barley, Director Of Vocations
And Director Of Seminarians

they study.

Not all the members of the "seminaristas" are heading for the seminary. A few have discerned they are not being called to the priesthood, but still participate in the group's prayer. One member expressed it this way: "I want to support the rest of you in your journey with my prayers."

Membership in the group does not imply an acceptance by the Diocese of their status as "seminarians." Each young man discerning a vocation to the priesthood is required to make an application to the Director of Vocations of the Diocese, Father Tom Barley, or with the religious order the young man feels called to serve. Members of the group are

encouraged to participate in their own parish's young groups, the Diocesan Search Program, and any activities sponsored by the Diocesan Office of Vocations.

Young men wishing to attend regularly and seriously in "Seminaristas en familia" are invited to contact Fr. Mark Woodruff at St. Elizabeth's Church, 7601 N. Grandview, Odessa, Texas 79762 (915-367-4657).

*Pray for
Vocations*



Diocesan Conference Day Scheduled



ology from the Gregorian in Rome and did doctoral work in Scripture at St. Louis University. He has served as a teacher of scripture at high school and university levels since 1966. He is a priest who loves, teaches and lives the word of God.



celebrated by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, will follow. After lunch, there will be two additional presentations. The focus of the first presentation will be "Eucharist, an Overwhelming Gift that is God's Self." The last presentation will explore the "Relationship between

Liturgy and Other Devotions." The day will conclude with a short prayer.

Father Karban will offer three major presentations on the Eucharist based on 1Cor 11, the first written account of the Last Supper. The first presentation is entitled "From Passover to Eucharist." A liturgy,

The annual Diocesan Conference Day is an opportunity for adult education and formation for all interested persons. Displays of the latest



Sparse Turnout For Annual Right To Life March And Mass On January 22, Anniversary of Roe vs. Wade. (See "Editorial" page 4.)

The annual Diocesan Conference Day will be held on February 26, 2000 at the San Angelo Convention Center. The theme for the Conference is Eucharist, the sacramental focus for the jubilee year 2000.

The featured speaker for the day is Reverend Roger Karban from the Diocese of Belleville, IL. Father Karban earned a Licentiate in The-

catechetical resources from a dozen or more exhibitors offer a good opportunity to interact with the publishers and review available resources. Registration begins at 7:45

a.m. The day concludes at 3:45. For more information, contact the Office of Education and Formation at 651-7500.

Bishop Makes Special Appeal For "Most Important Leadership Ministries"

By Father Mark Woodruff
St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish
Odessa, Texas

(San Angelo) – Providing leaders for the Diocese's future – priests, deacons and laity – is a top priority with Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI. To meet the extraordinary expenses involved in forming such ministers, he is asking the special assistance of the laity of the Diocese of San Angelo.

In times past, the annual parish assessments (the monies each parish and mission pays for the funding of Diocesan activities) and special grants from outside the Diocese have paid for most ministry training. An increased number of seminarians and the beginning of an intensive new diaconate program have strained our Diocese's resources.

Gifts over and above one's regular donation to the parish are urgently requested.

In teaching proper Stewardship, pastors generally urge parishioners to **TITHE**, that is, give 10% of their income to charity. Half – 5% — usually goes to one's parish, while the balance goes to special parish projects and other charitable organizations appealing for funds. Bishop Pfeifer hopes the members of the Diocese of San Angelo will consider giving a portion of that sec-

ond 5% — and even more — to the **Diocesan Leadership Ministries Fund**.

Catholics in the Diocese are well-known for giving generous and extraordinary gifts to Catholic and secular institutions in West Texas and elsewhere, but their own Diocese and its very critical needs have a particular claim on them. Gifts given in response to this Special Diocesan Appeal will be dedicated to providing leadership in their own parishes and missions for years to come.

Bishop Pfeifer has set a number of goals:

Seminary Burse – goal \$500,000. The cost of training men for the Catholic priesthood is considerable. Seminarians attend Catholic universities and seminaries whose tuition, room and board is now about \$18,000 per year for each seminarian. Donations to the Seminary Burse are invested and only the interest is used to fund seminarian education for each year. The Seminary Burse of the Diocese of San Angelo is currently just over \$1 million. It needs to be upwards of \$4 million to pay the costs of the current number of seminarians. Any donation to the Seminary Burse is greatly appreciated.

Adopt-a-seminarian – goal

\$18,000 per year or \$1,800 per month. Bishop Pfeifer would be happy to supply donors with the name of a seminarian they could adopt for the year.

Diaconate Formation Program – goal \$250,000. The Diocese of San Angelo is launching a new diaconate program. A part-time director and co-director and professors coming from the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio will provide the pastoral and spiritual formation of the candidates. The candidates will be spending one weekend a month in San Angelo preparing over a period of four years for this valuable service. It is estimated that the cost of educating one deacon for this time period will be \$16,000.

The bishop asks, "Perhaps someone might want to sponsor an individual candidate for the diaconate for a year by making a gift of \$4,000."

Evangelization Retreats and Programs at Christ the King Retreat Center – goal \$200,000. A recent evaluation of Christ the King Retreat Center called for developing a weekend retreat experience for Catholics similar to the Cursillo or Walk to Emmaus. It will take some significant resources to develop the teams to accomplish this purpose. In addition, funds will be needed for schol-

arships to help defray the expenses of those who might find it difficult to attend for financial reason. Gifts of any size would be helpful in sponsoring participants on this or other Parish Retreat Center activities such as Engaged Encounter Weekend, Cursillo, and youth program.

Parish Leadership Fund – goal \$150,000. In these days of decreasing supply of resident priests, many small parishes and missions must hire non-priest Pastoral Coordinators to conduct the day-to-day business of the parish while bearing the expense of a sacramental minister ("priest") on the weekends. For

most, meeting these new expenses is costlier than paying the salary of a resident priest, and many parishes and missions lack the resources to bear this extra expense. The Parish Leadership Fund seeks to provide grants to help parishes and missions meet these needs. You could sponsor a "sacramental minister" for \$150 a week or for an entire year for a gift of \$7,800. Any gift to the Parish Leadership Fund will help.

Donations to the Bishop's Special Appeal should be sent to: Leadership Ministries Appeal, P. O. Box 1829, San Angelo, Texas 76902.

Please enclose the following with your donation:
Leadership Ministries Appeal

Dear Bishop Pfeifer,

To help fund the formation of leaders for the future, please accept my donation of _____.

Please use it for:

- _____ Seminary Burse
- _____ Adopt-a-Seminarian
- _____ Diaconate Program
- _____ Sponsor-a-Deacon Candidate
- _____ Evangelization Retreat Support
- _____ Parish Leadership Fund

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

_____ Please send me more information about financial ways to help provide leadership for the Diocese.



Have We Made The Social Teachings Of The Gospel Too Much An Option? Why Do Catholics Do The Things They Do?

Fr. Timothy Guthridge CPPS

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus begins his public ministry by entering the synagogue in Nazareth, unrolling the scroll, and proclaiming to the people that he is the anointed one sent by God to bring glad tidings to the poor, proclaim liberty to the captives, recover the sight of the blind, let the captives go free, and proclaim a year of favor to the Lord. By the way many Catholic Parishes proclaim the social justice teachings of Jesus, one could get the idea that Jesus was kidding.

Last November, the Society of the Precious Blood, held a Jubilee Justice Conference as a way of preparing for the Jubilee Year. All of us who attended the conference were called to reflect upon how we have incorporated the Social Teachings of the Church into our everyday spirituality. One of the questions that we were asked was, whether we have turned the social teachings of Jesus into an option? In all honesty, I had to answer yes.

The Roman Catholic Church has a great treasury of social justice teaching. Unfortunately, at the parish level, too often this great treasury of wisdom is not used adequately. In too many religious education programs, the social justice section gets added as an appendage that is taught only if the other 'important' material gets taught first.

Too many priests shy away from preaching about social justice matters out of fear of being perceived as some left wing wacko who has confused the Gospel with Socialism. Some priests and Catholic educators shy away from the social justice teachings of the church because they feel if they focus more on the development of personal holiness, then social justice concerns will take care of themselves. Personal holiness is important, but human beings are social beings who live in very complex social and economic structures, and the social moral ramifications of these structures cannot be ignored.

During the last 100 years, our popes have taken very courageous stands on the social teachings of Jesus. From *Rerum Novarum* in 1891 through *Evangelium Vitae*, there are more than 14 papal encyclicals from five different popes that have championed the dignity of the human person and challenged the social structures of our times. "*The Challenge of Peace*" and "*Economic Justice for All*" from the U.S. Catholic Bishops are not bad either.

Our God is a God of justice. Justice issues are not peripheral to the Gospel message. If we are to be true to the Gospel, then we must find ways to put justice at the center of our preaching and teaching and not use the social teachings of Jesus as a once or twice a year addition to the religious education curriculum.

In Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells us that he has come to bring glad tidings to the poor, proclaim liberty to the captives, and let the oppressed go free. As baptized Christians, who have dedicated ourselves to the mission of spreading the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, the blood of Christ compels us to share in this same mission.

Catholic TV And Movie Reviews

There are several ways for interested people, especially Catholics, to get current movie reviews. You can get capsule versions of the reviews by calling 1-800-311-4222, or you can look at the U.S. bishops' Web site, nccbuscc.org.

There are also subscription publications that are available. One publication is the TV and Movie Guide, which contains full reviews of current films and also capsule reviews of videos plus TV material. It is a weekly publication and the subscription rate is \$51 a year. The other publication is the Movie Guide Monthly, which contains only capsule reviews, but costs only \$15 a year. Either publication can be obtained from the Catholic News Service by calling 1-202-541-3291.

Scripture and Tradition vs. Sola Scriptura

By Cindy Brewer

Has your faith ever been questioned by non-Catholic Christians with comments like, "Show me that belief in the Bible; if it's not in the Bible it's not a valid Christian teaching"?

Most Protestants believe that the Bible alone is the sole rule of faith - even when taken out of context. Catholics read the Bible contextually (in context) and believe that both the Bible and Church Tradition are authorities in matters of faith.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church explains that Tradition comes from the apostles who handed on what they received from Jesus' teaching and example and what they learned from the Holy Spirit.

"Tradition is to be distinguished from the various theological, disciplinary, liturgical, or devotional traditions, born in the local churches over time. These are the particular forms . . . in which the great Tradition is expressed. In the light of Tradition these traditions can be retained, modified or even abandoned under the guidance of the Church's magisterium." (CCC 83)

Remember the first generations of Christians had only Sacred Tradition to teach them. There was no written New Testament. The first book of the New Testament was not written until about 50 A.D., 1 Thessalonians, and the last book between 90-100 A.D., Revelation. The New Testament canon of books was not even given final approval until 405 A.D. by Pope St. Innocent I. These first generations of Christians received the teachings of Christ through oral preaching from the apostles.

Common sense as well as scripture tells us, "There are also many other things that Jesus did, but if these were to be described individually, I do not think the whole world would contain the books that would be written." (Jn 21:25) And, "Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples that are not written in this book." (Jn 20:30)

But of course, many non-Catholic denominations have objections to the following of any traditions not recorded in the Bible. They will quote Jesus in Mt 15:3, "Why is it that you yourselves violate the commandment of God with your traditions?" and Paul, "Take care not to

let anyone cheat you with his philosophy, with empty fantasies drawn from human tradition, from worldly principles; they were never Christ's teaching." (Col 2:8)

Again, "So by these traditions of yours you have made God's laws ineffectual . . . " Mt 15:6-9. But Jesus was not condemning all tradition, only those traditions or customs that voided God's law.

These verses denounce mistaken human traditions, not the truths taught by Jesus and the Holy Spirit to the apostles who handed them down orally to be entrusted to the Church.

The Protestant doctrine of Sola Scriptura, the Bible alone, denies Sacred Tradition and the authority of the Church. But nowhere does the Bible teach this - it only states all scripture is useful for teaching, not that it alone is useful. (2 Tim 3:16) It actually teaches the opposite. This demonstrates why we should read the Bible contextually.

The scriptures teach us that Sacred Scripture is to be followed alongside Sacred Tradition, "Therefore, brothers, stand firm and hold fast to the traditions that you were taught, either by an oral statement or by a letter of ours." (2 Thes 2:15, as well as in 2 Thes 3:6, 2 Tim 2:2 and 1 Cor 11:2) The Catholic Church still holds to these oral traditions.

But how do we know that what the Church has handed down is correct doctrine and practice? In the Gospels Jesus teaches that he left the Church divine authority to govern in His name (Mt 16:19,20, 18:18; Lk 10:16). And he promised that the Church would last to the end of time (Mt 16:18, 28:19-20; Jn 14:16). Christ gave his own teaching authority, which is infallible, to the Church through Peter. (Mt 16:19, 28:18-20)

Peter warns that scripture can be difficult to understand, implying the need for an authoritative interpreter - the Church, "In them (Paul's letters) there are some things hard to understand that the ignorant and unstable distort to their own destruction, just as they do the other scriptures." (2 Pet 3:15-16). Jesus commissions his apostles as authoritative teachers in his Church when he says, "He who listens to you, listens to me; he who despises you, despises me." (Lk 10: 16) And 1 Tim 3 15 declares that the Church is "the pillar and foundation of truth."

When the 'reformers' rejected the

authority of the Church as the pillar and foundation of truth and declared that the Bible alone is the sole authority on faith, Protestantism splintered into pieces.

There are now over 25,000 Christian denominations all believing that the Bible, with the Holy Spirit's guidance, is their authority. The divisions among the denominations come from disputes about biblical interpretations that are supposedly guided by the same Spirit. Would the true Spirit give different interpretations to the same verses?

Jesus prayed that his followers would remain one. (Jn 17:20-21) Obviously he meant it when he gave his Spirit of Authority to the Church through Peter (the Bishop of Rome) and the apostles who handed down their governing leadership to all the bishops of the future. Christ taught one teaching for His one Church to rule and sanctify in His name until the end of time.

For more scriptural teachings on this topic, please read *Catholicism and Fundamentalism* by Karl Keating and *Beginning Apologetics I*, by San Juan Catholic Seminars.

EDICTAL SUMMONS

The Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo to **James Valenzuela**, whereabouts unknown:

You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before, February 22, 2000, to answer to the petition of **Lera Lopez**, Petitioner, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "Lera Lopez. vs. James Valenzuela, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage," said Petition being identified as LOPEZ-VALENZUELA, Protocol No. SO 00/03, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 25th day of January 2000.

Rev. William R. DuBuisson,
OMI, MCL, JCL.
Judicial Vicar



The Journey Jubilee Day For Of Diaconate Permanent Deacons

By Deacon Audon Saldivar

I had just finished my night prayers and was getting ready to go to sleep when I received a phone call from Deacon Bitoni. A lady from Freer had called him and wanted her home blessed because there were evil spirits and she could not go to sleep. Deacon Bitoni asked if I would go and bless the home, I said "yes" and got ready to go.

When I got to the home, I was told the rest of the story. Her two sons had been taken away by the police on drug charges. The bedroom the boys lived in was painted black with 666 painted on the walls with bright red paint. There were books about satanic rituals and witchcraft on the nightstand. The mother had not been in the room because she did not want to upset the boys. The boys wanted their privacy and they wanted to be trusted. Well it turned out that the decision she made was not a very good one.

I blessed the house and talked to the mother and her boyfriend. Even though they were catholic by name, they had not practiced their faith in a long time. It was now past midnight and I had to get up early the next day to go to work.

As I drove back home, I remembered what they had told us during our diaconate formation classes about a deacon being a servant of the people. It was late at night and I was tired, but I had a feeling I had accomplished something that night.

As we come to the first phase of the diaconate program, we are beginning to focus on how our aspirants are involved in their parishes. In the structure of the Church, the diaconate is an office and in the home of the needy it is a blessing. The permanent diaconate, like the Church, is many things, but most of all it is service. We have been overjoyed by the diversity of ministries that these men and their families are already involved in. We have men already being involved in prison ministry, Men who are bringing Christ not only to our brothers in prison, but also to the families who are left behind. We have an applicant who gathers medicine, food and clothing to take to the people in the poorest parts of Mexico. It is especially heart warming when he has donated toys and is able to take them to children in Mexico, who many times do not even have running water. These are only a few of the areas where our deacon aspirants are

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

In the great Jubilee Year, February 20, 2000 has been designated by the Church as a **Jubilee day for Permanent Deacons**. This day is a reminder of the importance of the ministry of our deacons and a day to express our thanks and appreciation for the fine service they give the Church. I take this occasion to express my gratitude to our deacons and their wives for the generous and dedicated ministry that they offer to so many communities of our Diocese. As we begin this Jubilee Year and enter into the new millennium, I am very happy to announce that our Diocese is taking the first actual steps to begin a new diaconate training program.

The call to the Order of Deacon is a call to a ministry of service. The service ministry of a deacon may take many forms. Most deacons serve in parish ministry, but some have additional duties outside the parish. Like the priest, the deacon should call others to ministry by his witness and his example.

The diaconate was restored as a permanent ministry by Pope Paul VI, on June 18, 1967, upon the recommendation of the Fathers of the Second Vatican Council. The first deacons in the United States were ordained in 1971. During the 70's, our Diocese had two deacon formation programs, and we are happy that we can begin a new program of training as we begin the new century and new millennium.

A Prayer For Deacons

Lord God,
In your loving kindness
You sent your Son to be our shepherd and guide.
Continue to send workers into your vineyard
To serve your people.
Bless the Deacons who serve us.
Renew within them your Spirit's seven gifts,
that they may be strengthened
to carry out faithfully their ministry of service.
May they love sincerely,
show genuine concern for the sick and the poor,
and live holy lives.
May they always be faithful in
believing what they read,
teaching what they believe,
and practicing what they teach.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

already working.

After having their application accepted, the aspirants will have a team visit them at their home and go through the first initial interview. To be a deacon, one must fit the New Testament reference:

In the same way deacons must be serious, straightforward, and truthful, they may not overindulge on drink or give in to greed. They must hold fast to the divinely revealed faith with a clear conscience. They should be on probation first; then, if there is nothing against them, they serve as deacons. (1 Tim. 3:8-10)

Deacons may be married but once and must be good managers of their children and their households. Those who serve well as deacons gain a worthy place themselves and much assurance in their faith in Christ Jesus. (1 Tim. 3:12-13)

We currently have over forty men

who have submitted their applications. The Deacon Committee will soon start the evaluation process. The applicants who are accepted will then be advised of the first meeting for their discernment process. The selection process many times may seem arduous, but it is necessary in order to find the attributes required by a deacon. We look forward towards having a great diaconate program, which will be run by the Oblate School of Theology and Fr. Tom Kelley.

CENSUS

from page two

how far America has come, and the Census helps us to know how many we are now and where we will go in the future. Taking part in the Census is in everyone's

Diá Jubileo Para Los Díaconos Permanentes

por Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

En el gran Año del Jubileo, el 20 de Febrero de 2000 has sido designado por la Iglesia como un Día Jubileo para los Diáconos Permanentes. Este día es un recuerdo de la importancia del ministerio de nuestros diáconos y un día para expresar nuestra gratitud por el buen servicio que dan a la Iglesia. Tomo esta oportunidad para expresar mi gratitud a todos nuestros diáconos y a sus esposas por el ministerio generoso y dedicado que ofrecen a muchas comunidades de nuestra diócesis. Ahora que empezamos este año Jubileo y entramos en el nuevo milenio, me da gusto anunciar que nuestra Diócesis esta tomando los primeros pasos para empezar un nuevo programa de formación de diáconos en nuestra Diócesis.

El llamado a la Orden de Diácono es un llamado al ministerio de servicio. El ministerio de servicio de un diácono puede tomar muchas formas. La mayoría de los diáconos sirven en el ministerio de la parroquia pero algunos tienen responsabilidades pastorales adicionales fuera de la parroquia. Como el sacerdote, el diácono debe llamar a otros al ministerio por medio de su testimonio y ejemplo.

El Diaconado fue restaurado como un ministerio permanente por el Papa Pablo VI, el 18 de Junio de 1967, por recomendación de los Padres del Consejo Vaticano Segundo. Los primeros diáconos en los Estados Unidos de Norteamérica fueron ordenados en 1971. Durante los 70's nuestra Diócesis tuvo dos programas de formación de diáconos, y ya estamos empezando un nuevo programa de entrenamiento como empezamos el nuevo siglo y milenio.

Oración Por Los Diáconos

Señor Dios,
en tu amorosa bondad
tu enviaste a tu Hijo para ser
nuestro pastor y guía.
Continúa mandando trabajadores a tu viña
para servir a tu pueblo.
Bendice a los Diáconos que nos sirven.
Renueva en ellos los siete dones de tu Espíritu,
que sean fortalecidos
para llevar a cabo fielmente su ministerio
de servicio.
Que amen sinceramente,
que muestren genuina preocupación por
los enfermos y los pobres
y que vivan vidas santas.
Que sean siempre fieles y
crean en lo que leen,
enseñen lo que creen,
y practiquen lo que ensañen.
Te pedimos esté por Cristo Nuestro Señor.
Amen.

best interest. People who answer the Census help their communities obtain federal funding and valuable information for planning hospitals, roads and more. Census information helps decision-makers understand which neighborhoods need new schools and which ones need greater services for the elderly. The only way to make sure people like ourselves are represented in the Census is to fill out the form and to encourage others to do so.

The Census Bureau goes all out to protect our privacy. The Census Bureau's dedication to confidentiality plays an important

role in everything it does. By law, the Census Bureau cannot share your answers with the IRS, FBI, Welfare, Immigration – or any other government agency. No court of law, not even the President of the United States, can find out your answers. And the same laws that keep our answers out of the hands of these agencies, prevents the Census Bureau from selling or giving away your address to people who want to send you mail.

Now is the time to stand up and be counted. I encourage all to cooperate with the United States Census.



The Time Of Their Lives

If hectic days disturb your faith life, these people are in your prayer corner.

Edwin and Eldoris Zly have an award-winning family.

The most important thing the Lord has done for me and my wife, Eldoris, is to give us the time and ability in our retirement to attend daily Mass and receive the sacraments regularly. But He didn't just give us the gift of time for ourselves. When the Lord gives you that sort of gift, you've got to do something with it. If you listen, He'll tell you what He wants you to do.

I always worked jobs that took up a lot of my time, even on Saturdays. First, I was road salesman, providing

fuel for farms and homes that weren't connected to public gas lines. Then, I was in charge of keeping production rolling at a sheet metal company. My wife also put in her share of long hours, working twenty-five years for a surgical supply company that makes sutures. Our reward for that work was eight beautiful children, and the ability to provide for them and give them the educational opportunities we didn't have growing up.

For a long time, I had the notion that I'd like to go to daily Mass and Communion. But, given all we had going on, our Sunday obligation was the best Eldoris and I could do.

Then, in 1992, we got the chance to retire: happy and healthy. It became



clear to us that the Lord had given us the ability to retire that way so that we could do things for Him. So, we followed up on that notion of daily

Mass and Communion. We prayed, asking Him what He wanted us to do with His gift of time. He soon showed us many things we could do: everything from singing in the church choir, to joining an effort that helps people who can't afford to fix up their homes, to helping out with the local Meals on Wheels program, to doing various jobs around our parish church.

Another thing we've been called to is some work we do in association with my fellow Knights of Columbus. The Knights are helping to provide for young men who are studying for the priesthood. We don't have many young priests in our area, or many priests at all. The ones we have need to travel from one place to another in order to provide Mass for

people.

One of the most important things we do is pray. We pray for people who are in the situation we were once in; people who don't have the time to visit with the Lord as often as they'd like or should, who don't have the time to listen for what He wants them to do for Him. We pray that they'll someday get that time and that, when they have it, they'll understand what the Lord wants of them.

You may not understand what the Lord wants from you the first time you ask. But if you trust enough in Him, you'll find out eventually. There's definitely a lot of important work that needs doing.

A lot of people may not be noticing the Lord's call simply because

see "TIME," page eleven

INACTIVE

from page five

Between Faith and Reason," which not only diagnose the destructive influence of moral relativism and the culture of death but show beautifully the consistent Catholic belief that faith and reason are designed to work in harmony. Each of us needs to work on understanding the faith and being able to give a reason for the faith that is within us. Often faith is effectively shared over a cup of coffee or during a long walk with a good friend. That's the way friendship works. We discuss our experiences. We reveal our deepest convictions about life. We influence the choices and life direction of others. Witnessing to Christ to our friends and neighbors in a way that is bold and natural is like any skill. We need to develop it. We not only live our Catholic faith vibrantly, we also reflect on our personal faith experiences so that we can verbally share them with others. We study the marvelous logic and reasoning behind our Catholic teachings so that we can communicate the truth that will set people free.

"Often faith is effectively shared over a cup of coffee or during a long walk with a good friend. That's the way friendship works. We discuss our experiences. We reveal our deepest convictions about life."

Cardinal Newman put it well more than a century ago: "I want a laity . . . who know their faith, who enter into it, who know just where they stand, who know what they hold and what they do not, who know their creed so well that they can give an account of it and who know enough of history to defend it. I want an intelligent, well-instructed laity."

Reason 6: "Others never knew their faith well and were ignorant of basics. They were easily misled in their lack of understanding, exploited by those who attack Catholic beliefs and practices for their own pur-

poses." Often there is a lack of formation in the Catholic philosophy of life. The connections between the word of God, Catholic worship and a Catholic way of life have not been made. The joy of discovering the way each mystery of Catholic faith is grounded in Scripture, centered in Christ and proclaimed in the liturgy has never been experienced. This lack of integral faith formation leaves a vacuum. An obvious sign of a vacuum is our culture's obsession with television programming which appeals to the cruel and violent side of human nature. Talk shows that encourage a public confession of sins and indiscretions in a crazed Roman Colosseum-type atmosphere only leave the vulnerable victims more wounded. In contrast, the sacrament of reconciliation allows Christ's peace to enter our hearts. We verbalize our sins and come to grips with them in private with the complete assurance of confidentiality through the seal of the confessional. Whereas the talk-show confession falsely confirms that we are "all right" in our sinfulness, the sacramental reconciliation reminds us that our sinfulness is a wound – but that we are made whole in Christ Jesus. We are liberated from our sins and renew our confidence and hope in God's mercy and strength. Another sign of a vacuum is vulnerability in faith. Often our secular education far surpasses our Catholic faith education. A typical example of this is when first-year Catholic college students in secular universities are shaken by their Philosophy 101 course. We need to remember that we have access to the richest intellectual tradition in the world with minds as brilliant and diverse as St. Augustine, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Teresa of Avila, Avery Dulles and Pope John Paul II. We cannot forget or neglect this intellectual tradition. We need to learn it. We need to teach it. We need to support parents, the primary catechists in the family, and

catechetical programs so that our Catholic children can grow in the faith from an early age. We need to prune what might not be authentic from our catechetical programs and nurture those things that promote and serve a Catholic way of life and belief. We need to continue to promote effective adult education experiences. Adult education needs to become a primary ministry in our parishes, not an afterthought." We need to be attentive to the opportunity to reach out to inactive Catholics in our sacramental programs and in every sacramental moment, whether it be a wedding, a funeral, midnight Mass on Christmas, Palm Sunday, Ash Wednesday or Easter Sunday. We want "ashes and palm" Catholics to become "eucharistic" Catholics. As in all education, we need to stress the fundamentals of our faith.

Reason 7: "Some have been kept from full communion with the church because of a marriage outside the church." One of the doctrinal treasures of the church is the doctrine of the indissolubility of marriage. When Catholic couples reverence God and each other through fidelity to their wedding vows, they discover what authentic Christian freedom in the Holy Spirit actually is.

We do need to be sensitive to those who have had difficulties in their marriages. Very often we may know a friend who may have had no personal responsibility for the breakup of a marriage. In some cases it is possible to seek a declaration of nullity (annulment). Contact your priests, lay advocates or our marriage tribunal. In situations where Catholics have been married outside the church after the breakup of the initial marriage, we encourage them to come to Mass even if they cannot receive communion. We encourage them to pray, to seek spiritual direction and to be open to God's grace.

Reason 8: "A significant number of the inactive simply got lazy and stopped going. They may have got-

ten busy with their jobs and families, and through their own fault didn't find the time. In a recent survey of young-adult Catholics published in America magazine, 35 percent of the inactive simply got too busy and were lazy and didn't find the time to be involved." We may have battled this phenomenon ourselves. Faith is never static; it is growing or fading. Time is so precious these days that we can easily begin to slide. We decide there is just too much to do on a particular weekend so we miss Mass. The culture tells us we must work harder and play harder – but nowhere does it acknowledge that, for the sake of truly human development, we must also rest better and pray better. The reasoning continues to the point where church attendance is no longer an issue. Through friendship and casual conversation we can help our friends and family members to begin to practice the faith again. Invite someone to church!

"Often your adult child's inactive faith can be a difficult subject for you to broach. Defensive reactions can be quick. You may have a tendency to lecture or to nag. . . . Still, never give up."

Reason 9: "Others moved to new locations and never got around to finding a church in their new city or neighborhood. The America survey noted that 19 percent of the inactive young adults fell into this category." These people work with us. We can easily work into our conversations information and enthusiasm about local parish life. Our parish welcoming committees have a special role here. So does eucharistic adoration – holding up before the real presence the physical and spiritual needs of our friends and neighbors.

A Special Word to Parents of Inactive Catholics

I know how painful it can be for you when your children stop practicing their faith. You wonder where you went wrong, what you failed to emphasize, what you failed to explain.

Instead of dwelling on what went wrong, take that energy and apply it to your prayer life. Often your adult child's inactive faith can be a difficult subject for you to broach. Defensive reactions can be quick. You may have a tendency to lecture or to nag. Often the issue of Catholic practice may be tied up with delicate emotional issues between you and your children. Still, never give up. Pray for your inactive children and model more vibrantly your own Catholic faith for them. There can be opportunities for you to talk empathetically with your children about the benefits of returning to the church. It requires a great deal of emotional calm, a supernatural spirit, and an intuitive sense of diplomacy and timing! Remember St. Monica, who never gave up on St. Augustine. She prayed for Augustine for over 30 years. During this period he restlessly tried a number of intellectual philosophies and engaged in self-centered, manipulative relationships. How painful it must have been for Monica to watch her talented son walk this self-destructive path. It was through Monica's prayer that Augustine came home. We lift up our sons and daughters to the intercession of St. Monica and St. Augustine. We never give up on them.

Pray and Take Action

Having reflected with you briefly on the need of our outreach to 17 million inactive Catholics, I encourage you to continue with your own reflection. Think of your friends, your family, those in your sphere of influence in this Diocese of Wilmington and elsewhere. Think about how you can tactfully speak with them and invite them back to the church. I will be praying for your efforts and will look forward to hearing about your experiences and benefiting from your own insights.



EWTN's Fr. Groeschel to Give Annual Priests' Retreat

By Father Mark Woodruff
Pastor, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish, Odessa

(San Angelo) Father Benedict J. Groeschel, C.R.F., the well-known preacher on the Etemal Word Television Network, will be the retreat master at the biannual Clergy Retreat for priests working in the Diocese of San Angelo.

The retreat will be held on Monday through Friday, May 1 through May 5, 2000, at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo.

Father Groeschel is a member of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal. He is a well-known author and speaker and served as the Vicar for Priests in the Archdiocese of New York.

About 30 priests of the Diocese of San Angelo attend the biannual retreat.

Father Ruhnke Gives Marriage Training

ODESSA – How can parishes best prepare engaged couples for the Sacrament of Marriage? That was the topic of a two-day seminar given at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish here on Dec. 4-5.

Making the presentation was Father Robert A. Ruhnke, C.S.S.R., author of *For Better And For Ever*, a sponsor-couple training program. He has given a number of presentations in the Diocese of San Angelo on sponsor-couple training since the publication of his first sponsor-couple manual in the 1980's.

For Better And For Ever is a newly-revised and expanded edition of his earlier pre-marriage training programs. It is published by Marriage Preparation Resources of San Antonio and succeeds his previous writings published by Liguorian Press.

Sponsor-couple training forms the core of many parishes' pre-marriage preparation classes. Engaged couples preparing for marriage are assigned a sponsor-couple who walks them through the manual over five weekly sessions.

The newly-revised version of his manual calls for extra sessions by the engaged couples themselves before they begin their work with the sponsor couple. Studies show that a more intense pre-marriage preparation period leads to healthier and often life-long marriages.

Seven couples from the Odessa-Midland area attended Father Ruhnke's presentation, along with a pastor and a parish counselor. The parishes represented were St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and Holy Redeemer of Odessa and St. Stephen's and Our Lady of Guadalupe, Midland.

The workshop was under the general direction of Tom Burke, pastoral associate at St. Elizabeth's. Father Burke handles the pre-marriage training for his parish.

Father Ruhnke is a member of the Redemptorist Order of Priests and Brothers and lives in a Redemptorist community in San Antonio. He is available for similar parish-level workshops and also offers on-line assistance at ruhnke@flash.net.

TIME

from page ten

they don't go to church. They're interested in doing other things instead of asking the Lord for help. But we've got to ask Him for help. We've always said, around our house, that you've got to put God first in your life. If you put yourself first, you're trying to take His role. If you do that, you'll see how far you get: not very far, at all. Our prayer is that the Lord will guide more people to His will, and give them some of the

same chances He's given us to help Him and His people.

None of this is meant to brag about the things Eldoris and I do. Anybody with the time can do them. It's all a matter of realizing that time is a gift from God, and that there are things He wants us to do, things He needs us to do. If I'm bragging about anything, it's about the great favor the Lord has done for us.

Statewide Public Awareness Campaign Aimed At Troubled Youth And Families

AUSTIN On Tuesday, January 11 the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services (TDPRS) launched a statewide public awareness campaign for the Texas Youth Hotline aimed at troubled youth and families, according to Hotline Director, Jay Smith.

"The Texas Youth Hotline is answered 24 hours a day and provides prevention and crisis intervention services to callers who are in need of a caring voice and a listening ear," Smith said. "Hotline counselors talk with callers who face a variety of issues including family conflicts, delinquency, truancy, and abuse and neglect."

Smith said television, radio, and billboard public service announcements and more than 250,000 pieces of public awareness materials for schools, social service agencies, law enforcement and youth-related organizations are aimed at bringing the troubled youth problem to wider public attention and to make youths and parents more aware of the services available.

"Many of today's youth who are lonely or angry do not have constructive ways of venting their frustrations," states Smith. "We offer a safe, non-threatening environment where callers can discuss their problems with someone who will listen and not judge them. Hotline callers are urged to seek ongoing guidance and support from trusted adults, school faculty, or local social service agencies."

"Our goal is to help minimize problems at home or school and prevent youth from becoming involved in delinquent, self-destructive behavior," explains Smith.

For additional information about the Texas Youth Hotline contact 1-800-210-2278 or visit www.texasyouth.org.

CENSO

from page two

El Censo ayuda a nosotros y a nuestras familias. Los registros individuales se mantienen confidenciales por 72 años, pero usted puede solicitar un certificado de los censos pasados para utilizarlo como prueba para establecer su edad, residencia, o parentesco, la información que puede ayudarlo a recibir una pensión, establecer la ciudadanía u obtener una herencia.

Gracias a que tenemos un

Schedule For Upcoming Men And Women's Cursillo In The San Angelo Diocese:

March 23-26, 2000 - Men's Spanish Cursillo at San Jose in Odessa, TX.

April 13-16, 2000 - Women's Spanish Cursillo at San Jose in Odessa, TX.

June 20- July 2, 2000 - Women's English Cursillo at Christ King in San Angelo, TX.

August 24-27, 2000 - Men's English Cursillo at Circle Six in Stanton, TX.

Registration starts at 6:00 p.m. on Thursday and 3-day Cursillo ends at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday. For more information, please contact your Cursillo Centers.

Schedule for Secretariat Meetings

Scheduled meetings for the Secretariat are held once a month.

Schedule as follows:

Saturday, February 12, 2000, St. Joseph's, San Angelo, TX.

Saturday, March 04, 2000, San Juan, Midland, TX.

Saturday, April 01, 2000, St. Joseph's, Coahoma, TX.

Saturday, May 06, 2000, Our Lady of Lourdes, Andrews, TX.

Meeting starts promptly at 9:00 a.m. and ends at 12:00 noon.

HISPANIC

from page twelve

Censo cada 10 años desde 1790, sabemos cuan lejos ha llegado la nación. Tomar parte en el censo es del interés de todos. Las personas que lo contestan ayudarán a sus comunidades a obtener fondos federales e información valiosa para la planificación de hospitales, carreteras y mas servicios. La información del censo ayuda a quienes toman decisiones a entender que vecindarios necesitan nuevas escuelas y cuales requieren mayores servicios para los ancianos. La única manera como podemos asegurar que personas como usted estén representadas en el censo es llenando el cuestionario y alentando a otros a hacer lo mismo.

La Oficina del Censo hace todo lo necesario para proteger su privacidad. El cuidado que pone la Oficina del Censo para mantener la confidencialidad juega un papel muy importante en todo lo que hace. Por ley la Oficina del Censo no puede compartir su información con el IRS, FBI, las agencias de asistencia social, Inmigración – o cualquier otra agencia gubernamental. Ningún tribunal judicial, ni siquiera el Presidente de los Estados Unidos, puede obtener sus respuestas. Y la misma ley que mantiene sus respuestas fuera del alcance de esas agencias, prohíbe que la Oficina del Censo puede vender la dirección de su domicilio a personas que quieran enviarle correspondencia.

Ahora es el tiempo que se levanten y sean contados. Yo animo que todos cooperen con el Censo de los Estados Unidos.

The Quince Anos celebrates the passage of a youth (usually a girl) from being a child to being an adolescent. It gives thanks to God for the gift of life and affirms the identity of the youth as a Catholic Christian. Sr. Rosa Maria announced that a special prayer of blessing will be included in the official Benedictional, the Spanish Book of Blessings. She recommended a renewal of the baptismal commitment with the assembly, dedication to Mary and to living as a Catholic Christian, and prayers and songs of thanksgiving.

The speakers referred to three elements of the customary Hispanic celebration: *misa* (a religious ritual recognizing the importance of God), *mesa* (sharing food) and *musa* (music, decorations and celebration). They encouraged creative use of preparation and planning time for the spiritual formation of the participants.

The final portions of the program dealt with sickness, death and funerals, as well as "Key Issues and Challenges in Hispanic Ministry."

This Mustard Seed Program was hosted by the Youth Group of St. Thomas Parish and their pastor, Rev. James Plagens. Msgr. Larry Droll, Chancellor of the Diocese, introduced the speakers.

The Mustard Seed program is designed to form lay leaders in the parishes and missions. The next two Mustard Seed sessions will be on the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA): on March 25, the Catechesis of the RCIA, and on April 8, the Rituals of the RCIA. Information will be sent to parishes and missions soon.



St. Louis Celebrates Again, And This Time It's Not The Pope

By Barbara Watkins
Catholic News Service

ST. LOUIS (CNS) — A year after Pope John Paul II's visit, St. Louis is celebrating again, and once again the colors are blue and gold.

But this time those colors were donned not for the pope but for the St. Louis Rams, whose Jan. 30 Super Bowl win over the Tennessee Titans ended a year that could have come straight out of a Hollywood movie — a plucky team with loyal fans that beat all odds to become champions.

St. Louis has been disparagingly referred to as "not a football town," but on Super Bowl Sunday virtually everyone in the region was a Rams fan, including St. Louis Archbishop Justin F. Rigali.

"So many wonderful things have happened in this past year," the archbishop said in his homily at a Mass in the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis marking the first anniversary of the January 1999 papal visit to St. Louis.

Calling it "a year of grace, a year of blessings," the normally reserved

archbishop said with a smile, "As a matter of fact, some people even think there is a connection between the Holy Father's visit and the Rams. I will leave that up to you to decide."

Whether or not it was cause and effect, the Rams did win the Super Bowl, 23-16. In fact, since Pope John Paul celebrated Mass in the Trans World Dome in downtown St. Louis, the Rams — who hadn't had a winning season since arriving in St. Louis — haven't lost a game at home.

Among the Super Bowl parties on game day was a gathering hosted by Archbishop Rigali for priests and seminarians at Kenrick-Glennon Seminary.

Msgr. Dennis Delaney, president-

rector of Kenrick-Glennon Seminary, said, "A great time was had by all, as we watched the football game,



Enthusiastic Rams fans along parade route.

shared conversation and good food, and enjoyed each other's company."

Among the thousands of St. Louis fans attending the Super Bowl in Atlanta was Ed Martin, director of the archdiocesan human rights office. Martin, who lucked into a

last-minute ticket to the game, made the long drive to Atlanta to attend.

"We missed most of the bad weather on the trip, although in Atlanta itself the weather was awful," Martin told the St. Louis Review, archdiocesan newspaper. "But driving down, seeing all the cars with Rams stuff and everyone waving and honking — it was amazing."

Many Catholic schools had pregame festivities coinciding with the end of Catholic Schools Week in St. Louis. After the Super Bowl victory, Catholic school students joined in with the regionwide festivities, often combining them with charitable efforts.

Bishop Healy School in

North St. Louis had a pregame pep rally led by the school cheerleaders, as the entire school, along with parents, turned out in blue and gold. Students, parents and grandparents at St. Mary Magdalen School in Brentwood spotted the team colors

at their Jan. 28 Catholic Schools Week/Rams rally in the school gym.

At St. Justin the Martyr in Sunset Hills, St. Norbert in Florissant and Bishop DuBourg High School in South St. Louis, students collected money for Rams quarterback Kurt Warner's favorite charity. St. Theodore School in Flinthill took the occasion to remind students that the first thing Warner did after the team victory was to thank God.

Students weren't the only ones infected with Rams fever. A number of Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet watched the game at their motherhouse, cheering on the home team. At St. Anthony's Medical Center in South St. Louis, both employees and patients turned out in the team colors, while blue and gold dominated balloon bouquets from the hospital's floral shop.

The postgame celebrations wrapped up Jan. 31, as 100,000 dedicated fans braved the chilling cold to cheer their team at a downtown victory parade and rally. A number of area schools, including Catholic schools, had canceled classes or let students out early to attend the event.

After a season watching the Rams live their motto, "Gotta go to work," on the day after Super Bowl Sunday, all of St. Louis took time out to play.

A Unique Meeting Location For The San Angelo City Council

(by Pete Micale, WTA)

Bishop Michael Pfeifer hosted the San Angelo City Council at Christ The King Retreat Center on January 18th. The unprecedented and unique meeting occurred after a luncheon hosted by the Bishop, for not only members of the City Council, but also the developers of land opposite the river from the Retreat Center.

The developers are seeking approval from the Council and its various planning subcommittees for a commercial project that includes a hotel, condominiums, and other ventures. The Quicksand golf course is also planning to expand by nine more golf holes.

The Diocese is very concerned about the potential disturbance to the

tranquil environment surrounding the Retreat Center by the commercial development. The City Council



Bishop Pfeifer welcomes San Angelo City Council.

members and other guests were given a tour of the facility and were able to experience firsthand the serenity and contemplative atmosphere of the location. It is safe to say, that everyone was impressed and that there was a genuine feeling of good neighborliness. The Bishop and his staff, however, will be wary of the developmental plans and will monitor its progress carefully.



Fr. Andy Wueste addresses San Angelo City Mayor Fender and Council.

Hispanic Cultural Liturgical Workshop

More than 125 leaders from parishes and missions throughout the Diocese of San Angelo participated in the Mustard Seed Workshop on January 29 at St. Thomas Parish in Big Spring. The topic for the day was "Celebrating Important Life Moments in the Hispanic Community: Quinceañeras, Weddings and Funerals."

Sr. Rosa Maria Icaza, CCVI, and Fr. Rudy Vela, SM, are both on the Pastoral Team of the Mexican-American Cultural Center. They spoke from their experience in parishes, in education, and in service on various national groups dealing with Hispanic aspects of liturgy. They distinguished between the celebrations of the Roman liturgy (sacraments) and "cultural liturgies" (sacramentals).



Sr. Rosa Maria and Fr. Rudy began with ceremonies of presentation of babies and young children for some groups of Hispanics, as well as moments of reconciliation. Fr. Rudy followed with discussing Hispanic customs which accompany the wedding liturgy. He spoke of being sensitive to these various aspects when encountered by pastoral ministers, not that these are required.

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