

West Texas ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
Volume XXVIII, No. 2 FEBRUARY 2008

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton hosts annual Conference Day, Feb. 23



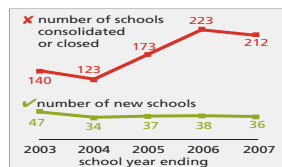
Sister Paha

ODESSA -- Dominican Sister Lois Paha, Director of Formation for the Diocese of Tucson, Ariz., will keynote this year's Diocesan Conference Day, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Feb. 23, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, in Odessa. The program, "Encountering the Living Christ Through the Sacraments," features breakout sessions "Graced Moments in our Lives," "Graced Action in Our Lives," and "Graced Expressions in Our Lives."

More/Pg. 3

U.S. Catholic Schools

The number of Catholic schools in the U.S. has fallen by more than 500 in the last four years with consolidations or closings hitting a peak in the school year ending in 2006.



* numbers include elementary and secondary schools.
Source: United States Catholic Elementary and Secondary Schools, The Annual Statistical Report on Schools, Enrollment and Staffing, NCEA 2003-2007

©2008 CNS

A Pastoral Message

Do you not know your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit?



A pastoral message on chastity for young people and for all from Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit...?" (1 Cor.6:19) These inspired words of the Holy Spirit as found in Paul's letters to the Corinthians meant for all of us give an impressive biblical reason why we should have a great respect for our bodies, and how to use our bodies, especially our sexual gifts, in accord with the design and principles that God has established for us. These inspiring and hopeful divine words about how God sees the human body challenge and contradict many present cultural views and attitudes that consider the body, especially the female body, as being an object of pleasure and sexual-commercial exploitation. Some Catholic teens persuaded by a culture saturated with a false image of sex form relationships such as, "Friends with Benefits," and promote "hooking up" as a way (Please See MESSAGE/18)

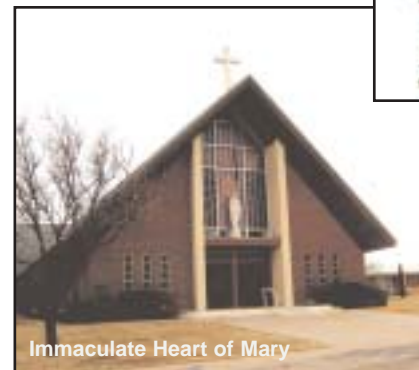
From Many, One: Holy Trinity, Big Spring



St. Thomas



Sacred Heart



Immaculate Heart of Mary



St. Joseph, Coahoma

Big Spring's three parishes and Coahoma's St. Joseph have unified and will together form one new parish: Holy Trinity, effective Feb. 15. Coverage, Pgs. 10-11.

FEBRUARY 2008						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1 2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	

THIS MONTH In the Diocese

FEBRUARY

- 15 -- CHRISTOVAL --** Election for Carmelite Sisters Superior
- 19 -- SAN ANGELO --** Sacred Heart Cathedral -- Shroud of Turin Seminar, 6:30 p.m.
- 23 -- ODESSA, St. Elizabeth --** Diocesan Conference Day

MARCH

- 2 -- BIG SPRING, Installation of Father Gully as Pastor at 10:30 a.m.**

FULL CALENDARS/Pg. 4

INSIDE THIS MONTH'S ANGELUS...

From the Bishop's Desk

The season of Lent is a time to ask myself seriously—"What is my idol today?" When we hear in Psalm 106 how the ancient Israelites "exchanged their glory for the image of a grass-eating bullock," we perhaps say how silly, who would worship a cow? Perhaps we might even pride ourselves on saying—I am glad that "I'm not like those people." Please See From The Bishop's Desk/Pg. 2



Looking at Lent

Special coverage of the Church's season of Lent, Pgs. 6-7.

The Dodds: Praying through your hectic day

How can you become better at "praying through your day"? A couple of points to consider:
▶ Ask God to help you become better at praying!

▶ Remember that prayer is a form of conversation and the best conversationalists are good listeners. See Bill & Monica Dodds/Pg. 14

From the Easy Chair

Tiny cramped loud and messy. Bring it on.

Fifteen years ago, my wife Karen and I bought our first house. A modest, three bedroom, it fit our needs perfectly and we saw it as a great place to raise our young family, which at the time consisted of two young daughters, 7 and 5. See From The Easy Chair/Pg. 14



DIocese OF SAN ANGELO
PO BOX 1829
SAN ANGELO TX 76902-1829
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE PAID
SAN ANGELO, TX
PERMIT NO. 44

Web Site: www.san-angelo-diocese.org

From the Bishop's Desk

The question of Lent: What is my idol today?



**Bishop
Michael D.
Pfeifer, OMI**

"They exchanged their glory for the image of a grass-eating bullock. They forgot the God who had saved them, who had done great deeds in Egypt." **Psalm 106:20-21**

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The season of Lent is a time to ask myself seriously—"What is my idol today?" When we hear in Psalm 106 how the ancient Israelites "exchanged their glory for the image of a grass-eating bullock," we perhaps say how silly, who would worship a cow? Perhaps we might even pride ourselves on saying—I am glad that "I'm not like those people."

However, the real question for us today is not: do we idolize a cow, or bullock, but "What is my idol today?" An idol is something that we give more time to than we give to God or the things of God. Lent is a time to seriously admit that while we do not perhaps have cows or bullocks as our idols, that we all do have certain idols that draw us away from the one true God.

Some frank questions will help me see what might be my idol today:

Where do I spend more time? —At church, at work, or at some type of entertainment? In prayer, or in front of the television? Sharing time with my family, or pursuing my

own desires or hobbies? Doing good works or surfing the internet? Helping the poor and needy, or wasting my time on so many frivolous things of life?

Most of us do not consciously set up idols in our lives to replace the one true God. We all say in word that God is Number One, but very slowly over time, we have the tendency to build into idols those aspects of our lives that waste or take so much of our time and dedication.

Lent is a time to frankly face the idols of my life; it is a time to make Christ as Number One in my life; it is a time to dedicate myself to more prayer and Bible reading, to more penance, to more works of charity and service.

DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Abilene Holy Family to host parish mission

ABILENE -- "The Wonder of God's Love" will be the theme for Abilene Holy Family's Parish Mission Feb. 17-20. Fr. Bob Weiss, C.P., will be the presenter. Fr. Bob was raised along the banks of the Mississippi. At an early age he decided to become a priest in the Passionist Congregation and was ordained in 1965. For the last 36 years he has been a full-time preacher of priest retreats and parish missions in 40 states. He is now the rector of St. Paul's Monastery-Retreat House complex in Detroit, Michigan. Fr. Bob's powerful message will help all to know God's love in a deeper way and to know better how to share and respond to the greatest gift of all: Jesus Christ.



Weiss

Sessions for the Mission last approximately 1 hr. The schedule is:

Sunday, 7 p.m.: "The Wonder of God's Love"
Monday, 10 a.m.: Mass with teaching; **7 p.m.** "How We Share God's Love With One Another"
Tuesday, 10 a.m. Mass with teaching; **7 p.m.** "Sin, Obstacles, and Forgiveness"
Wednesday, 10 a.m. Mass with teaching; **7 p.m.** "Prayer and How to Get In Touch With God"
 The Sacrament of Reconciliation will be offered after each session through Wednesday morning. Childcare will be available for all sessions. All are invited!

Flag Day poster contest

SAN ANTONIO - Catholic Life Insurance is sponsoring a poster contest to commemorate the 231st birthday of our nation's flag. The theme of this year's contest is: "America - The Land I Love."

The design of this year's poster should include a representation (drawing, painting, etc.) of the child's favorite place in America, and it must include the American flag. The place selected as the subject of the poster can either be a nationally recognized loca-

tion, such as Washington D.C.; or a place that is personal to the contestant, such as a tree house. Creativity a plus.

Elementary school students in grades K-5 may submit one original poster no larger than 20" x 20". Judges will evaluate posters based on eye appeal, originality and theme. Winners will receive cash awards.

To receive an entry form and the complete rules for the contest, contact Lorie Bledsoe in the Communications Department at (800) 292-2548 or (210) 828-9921 ext. 141. Participants in the contest do not have to be Catholic Life members or of the Catholic faith. The deadline to submit entries to the contest is April 10, 2008.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter

Worldwide Marriage Encounters' weekend is scheduled for the Midtown Hotel (old Ramada Hotel on Wall), in **Midland, Feb. 29-March 2**, and **May 30-June 1** at **Christ The King Retreat Center in San Angelo**. Both weekends are from 7:30 p.m. Friday until 5 p.m. Sunday.

The emphasis on the marriage encounter weekend is on communication between husband and wife who will spend a weekend together, away from the distractions and tensions of every day life to concentrate on each other. Worldwide Marriage Encounter is for any married couple who desires a richer, fuller life together. Marriage Encounter is designed to deepen and enrich the joys a couple shares together regardless how long they have been married.

For more information, call Valentin and Maria Gomez, 325.835.7044, or email vgomez@wcc.net.

Space is limited so reservations are encouraged quickly.

Cool Communications comes to San Angelo

SAN ANGELO -- Becky Benes with Oneness of Life Productions partners with Korona Formal Wear and Verizon to bring Andrea and Journey Henkart, authors of "Cool Communication: From Conflict to

Cooperation" to San Angelo, **March 13, 2008**. They will be the featured speakers at the **Girl Scout Women of Distinction Luncheon and will speak at the San Angelo City Hall from 6:30 to 8 p.m.** The evening event will be an hour and half of fun learning of communication skills and will serve as a fundraiser for Angelo Catholic School, Children for a Peaceful World, Girl Scouts of Central Texas, Ft. Concho Elementary PTA, and San Angelo Broadway Academy.

Cool Communications, a program designed to bring about peace in the family, schools and community by developing positive and affirmative communication skills among adults and children. Andrea and Journey, featured on the Oprah Show and several other national venues, travel the country sharing their message. They are beautiful examples of how this type of communication can develop loving and supportive relationships. They are a dynamic and fun duo and will be an inspiration.

To purchase tickets contact the organization of your choice. For information, go to www.onenessoflife.com. If you have, any questions call Becky 949-1450.

Correction

The annual Diocesan Directory published in the January 2008 Angelus incorrectly identified the pastor of St. Mary's of Odessa. Rev. Francis Frey is the pastor. The Angelus regrets the error.

Help Wanted

FORT WORTH -- St. Andrew Catholic Church, a Fort Worth parish with 3,200 families, seeks candidates for the position of coordinator of ministries with Youth and Young Adults. The coordinator will be directly responsible for coordinating the components of advocacy, community life, evangelization, leadership development, pastoral care, peace/justice, and prayer and worship in the lives of youth and young adults. The coordinator will advise and consult with already existing catechetical programming (religious education, sacramental preparation and the Catholic School). The

Natural Family Planning Classes

Helping couples to deepen conjugal love and achieve responsible parenthood is part of the Church's total pastoral ministry to Catholic spouses. Fulfillment of this ministry includes both education and pastoral care. This means "instilling conviction and offering practical help to those who wish to live out their parenthood in a truly responsible way" (Pope John Paul II, Familiaris consortio, #35). Below are scheduled seminars (San Angelo) and contact numbers for people who can help you with more information:

**San Angelo
Christ the King Retreat Center**
(325) 651-5352
2-4 p.m.

March 16, 2008
May 25, 2008
September 14, 2008
December 14, 2008

OR
Contact Amy at
amd@wcc.net

**Midland/Odessa
Our Lady of
Guadalupe**

(432) 682-2581
Christina Nevarez

**Abilene
Holy Family
Church**

(325) 692-1820
Mrs. Herman Blahak

coordinator will work with the two core groups, one for youth and one for young adults. Each core group is responsible for designing programming, events and providing youth and adult volunteers. The coordinator will support, train, and supervise the adult and youth volunteers. This is a newly created position and aspects of the position are still flexible.

Please send resume by March 1, 2008 to: Search Committee, Saint Andrew Catholic Church, 3717 Stadium Drive, Fort Worth, Texas 76109

Diocesan Conference Day in Odessa

ODESSA -- Dominican Sister Lois Paha, Director of Formation for the Diocese of Tucson, Ariz., will keynote this year's Diocesan Conference Day, from 9 a.m.-4 p.m., Feb. 23, at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, in Odessa.

The program is entitled "Encountering the Living Christ Through the Sacraments," and features breakout sessions "Graced Moments in our Lives," "Graced Action in Our Lives," and "Graced Expressions in Our Lives."

S. Paha, OP, brings more than 40 years experience in ministry to her present position. She holds a Master of Arts Degree in Theology and Liturgical Studies from the University of Notre Dame, South Bend, Indiana; a Master of Arts in teaching Religion from St. Michael's College in Winooski, Vermont and is in the process of completing a Doctor of Ministry degree from the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. S. Lois has been a member of the Board of Directors of the Southwest Liturgical Conference since 1989 and is in her second term as president of the Board. S. Lois has given numerous presentations and workshops on the topics of Liturgy, Sacraments and Prayer.

Diocesan Conference Day February 23, 2008 St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Odessa

Schedule

7:45 a.m. - Exhibits and Registration
9:00 a.m. - Welcome and Prayer
9:30 a.m. - Keynote Presentation I: Graced Moments in our Lives
10:30 a.m. - Break and Visit Exhibits
11:00 a.m. - Presentation II: Graced Action in our Lives
12:15 p.m. - Lunch (included)
1:30 p.m. - Presentation III: Graced Expressions in our Lives
2:30 p.m. - Break and Visit Exhibits
3:00 p.m. - Eucharist with Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI presiding
*Conference starts at 9:00 am.
 Registration opens at 7:45 am.
 Exhibitors from various book publishing companies will be present.*
Cost: \$20 if registration form is postmarked before February 9 (\$22 if registration form is postmarked after February 9.)
For more info: contact the Office of Education & Formation at 325.651.7500

About Each Session:

9:30 - Presentation I: Graced Moments in our Lives

Our Baptism into Christ is our call to live the life of grace in the world.

Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist are the doorways to the sacred mystery that strengthen us to announce and profess our faith. This presentation will offer some insights into our theology of initiation and the way we live that theology each day.

11:00 am - Presentation II: Graced Action in our Lives

Our Baptism into the community of believers doesn't stop there! We are sent forth from the Eucharist to bring Christ and to be Christ in the world. This presentation will explore the relationship between our life of prayer and the ways we live the spirit of the liturgy and the sacraments in the world today.

1:30 pm - Presentation III: Graced Expressions in our Lives

Our creedal statements in liturgy and prayer are expressed with rituals of our faith. "We remember, we celebrate, we believe" these words remind us of the heart of our liturgical prayer and the symbols with which we pray. This presentation will invite us to remember the Easter Vigil as we prepare to celebrate what we believe in our lives of faith in the liturgy and in the world.

From the Editor

The Jesus Mission: Love without borders

God shows no partiality. Whatever the nationality, whoever fears him and practices justice is accepted. -- Acts 10:34

Folks are fanatic about setting boundaries. They want to distinguish between near and far; ours and theirs; known and foreign. Conditions are created to keep people in their place. Rich is kept away from poor, north separated from south, and black divided from white. We draw lines on a map to distance these from those, mine from yours, and friends from everyone else.

We invent titles, degrees and categories, under the impression that if you manage to climb your way through the labyrinth, you can earn enough prestige to compensate for utter lack of meaning. All in vain, of course. The only passport of any worth before God is the body you received in your mother's womb. He gave you a permanent visa for the dream of a world made new at the baptismal font.

God has no distinguished guests. He accepts anyone who dares to love him and do the right thing. Your country of origin doesn't matter. There are no tests, rankings or pedigree in his borderless Kingdom. Image and likeness of the Creator are enough to start. Through the waters, you become an adopted son or daughter of the Father, brother or sister of Jesus. By merit of human dignity, you have what it takes to become a member of his body. The distinctive Jesus gesture is his inclusion of the excluded. He comes to open the eyes of the blind, bring the captives out of prison, and be the light of the nations, unto the ends of the earth, without exceptions.

The Israelites crossed the river with Joshua, long ago, and came into the Promised Land. Jesus crosses the Jordan from the inside outward. When he gets baptized, he comes across to the other side. The seed planted in Israel has come up to be planted in foreign lands. There it will bear much fruit. When Jesus leaves his homeland, he's making a promise to foreigners.

This is my beloved Son, we hear the Father say, because he has crossed over, moved by the power of the Holy Spirit. This is the Kingdom without borders, where there are no favorites and no preferred customers. If that is true, then let our obsession for dividing and separating be healed. Jesus will make all lands flow with milk and honey. His Spirit will live in your tent, if you dare to take up his cause. His love will conquer you, if you learn to practice justice.

If you have been formed to make alliances, why do you make wars? If he builds bridges, why do you build walls? If he wets his back in the river to save you, why do you persecute those who get wet to feed their families? If he frees the captive, why are there so many in locked up, without recourse to justice?

The Jesus mission is love without borders. He has come, not to demand, but to gather. He has come, not to control, but to rescue. He has come, not to colonize, but to redeem. Let's go with him. Be baptized in the spirit of his compassion.



Rev. Nathan Stone

Del Escritorio del Obispo

La pregunta de cuaresma -- ¿que es mi idolo hoy en dia?



"Cambiaron al Dios glorioso por la imagen de un buey que come hierba. Olvidaron a Dios, su salvador, que habia hecho grandes cosas en Egipto."
[Salmos 106:20-21]

por el Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

La temporada de Cuaresma es un tiempo de preguntarme seriamente—"¿Que es mi ídolo hoy en día?" Cuando escuchamos en Salmo 106 como los Israelitas antiguos "cambiaron al Dios glorioso por la imagen de un buey que come hierba," quizás digamos que absurdo, ¿Quién podría adorar una vaca? Quizás nos sintamos orgullosos en decir—"Doy gracias que "Yo no soy como esas gentes."

Sin embargo, la verdadera pre-

gunta para nosotros hoy no es: si idolatramos una vaca, o buey, pero "¿Que es mi ídolo hoy en día? Un ídolo es algo a que le damos más tiempo de que le damos a Dios o las cosas de Dios. Cuaresma es un tiempo para seriamente admitir que aunque no tenemos vacas ni bueyes como nuestros ídolos, que si tenemos todos nosotros ciertos ídolos que nos alejan del único Dios verdadero.

Algunas preguntas francas me ayudaran ver que podría ser mi ídolo hoy: ¿Dónde paso más el tiempo?--¿En la iglesia, en el trabajo, o en alguna forma de entretenimiento? ¿En oración, o en frente de la televisión? ¿Compartiendo tiempo con mi familia, o llevando a cabo mis propios deseos o aficiones? ¿Haciendo trabajos de caridad o

explorando la Internet? Ayudando a los pobres y necesitados, o malgastando el tiempo en muchas de las cosas frivolas de la vida.

La mayoría de nosotros no conscientemente establecemos ídolos en nuestras vidas para reemplazar al único Dios verdadero. Todos decimos en palabra que Dios es el Numero Uno, pero muy lentamente con el tiempo, tenemos la tendencia de construir en ídolos esos aspectos de nuestras vidas que malgastan o toman mucho de nuestro tiempo y dedicación.

Cuaresma es el tiempo para francamente enfrentar los ídolos en mi vida; es un tiempo para hacer a Cristo el Numero Uno en mi vida; es el tiempo para dedicarme a rezar y leer más la Biblia, a más penitencia, y a más obras de caridad

DIOCESAN DATES**Bishop's Calendar****FEBRUARY**

9 -- IMPERIAL, Our Lady of Lourdes – Rosary at 4:00 p.m. and Mass at 5:30 p.m.
10 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Rite of Election at 2:00 p.m.
11 -- ANDREWS, Procession and Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes, Andrews at 6:00 pm
13 -- SAN ANGELO, Newman Center – Mass at 12:00 noon
15 -- CRISTOVAL – Election for Carmelite Sisters Superior
16 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – 5:00 p.m. Mass and Scout Awards
19 -- SAN ANGELO, Liturgy Commission Meeting -10 a.m.
19 -- SAN ANGELO -- Sacred Heart Cathedral – Shroud of Turin Seminar, 6:30 p.m.
20 -- SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center – Region X Vocation Conference – Mass at 5:15 p.m.
23 -- ODESSA, St. Elizabeth – Diocesan Conference Day
25-29 -- Private Lenten Retreat

MARCH

1 -- MIDLAND, Golf Tournament for Schools
2 -- BIG SPRING, Installation of Father Gully as Pastor, 10:30 a.m., location TBA.
4 -- MIDLAND, St. Ann- TCC Legislative Conference
5 -- SAN ANGELO, First United Methodist Church – Speak at Lenten Service at noon
7 -- SAN ANGELO, Rio Concho Manor – 11:30 a.m. Speak to the Tom Green Co. Coalition Against Violence
8 -- ODESSA, St. Mary – Diocesan Schools Commission Meeting at 9:00 a.m.
9 -- EDEN, St. Charles – Mass at 11:00 a.m.
12 -- SAN ANGELO, Meeting of Coalition C.A.R.E.S. at Goodfellow AFB
13 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.
13 -- SAN ANGELO, Presbyteral Council Meeting at Cathedral – 1:30 p.m.
14 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Mary – Soup and Sermon at 12:00 noon
16 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Palm Sunday Mass at 9:45 a.m.
18 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Lenten Penance Service at 7:00 p.m.
20 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Holy Thursday Mass at 7:00 p.m.
21 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret's – Way of The Cross at 1:00 pm.
21 -- St. Joseph – Good

Friday Service at 7:00 p.m.
22 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Easter Vigil at 8:00 p.m.
23 -- SAN ANGELO, St. Mary- Easter Sunday Mass at 10 a.m.
24 -- SAN ANGELO, Bishop's Residence – Easter Dinner for the Staff
25-27 -- Rest and Prayer
29 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Confirmation at 5:00 p.m.
30 -- ABILENE, Holy Family – Mass at 10:30 a.m.
31 -- SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral – Mass for the Unborn (delayed Feast of the Annunciation) at noon

Christ the King Retreat Center**FEBRUARY**

11 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
12 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6
12 -- Deacon Quarterly Meeting
14 -- Valentine's Day
15-17 -- Engaged Encounter
18 -- President's Day
18 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp
19 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6
20-22 -- Region 10 Vocation Conference
22-23 -- Southland Baptist Church
25 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
26 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 5-6 p.m.

MARCH

13-16 -- Women's ACTS Retreat-Rowena
16 -- Natural Family Planning
16 -- Confirmation Retreat
17-Heart of Mercy Prayer Grp.
18 -- Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, 5-6 p.m.
21-23--Holy Week office closed
24 -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Gr.
25 --Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament 5-6 p.m.
27-30--Men's Walk to Emmaus
31 --Heart of Mercy Prayer Gr.

NECROLOGY March

11 -- Rev. Leopold J. Bujnowski (1976)
11 -- Deacon Albert Libertore (1977)
17 -- Deacon Frank Trudo (1992)
26 -- Rev. Serran Braun (1999)
26 -- Deacon Audon Saldivar (2000)

ETHICS WORKSHOP

Feb. 11 -- St. Stephen, Midland, 7:00-10:00 pm
Feb 19, Tuesday, St. Mary School, Odessa, 6:30-9:30 pm

Answers to concerns about artificial means of nutrition, hydration supply

(Responses from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith)

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Recently the Bishops' Conference of the United States requested from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, clarification on the teaching of the church concerning the provision of nutrition and hydration by artificial means to patients in a vegetative state. I submit here the answers given by this Congregation to two major questions:

FIRST QUESTION: Is the administration of food and water (whether by natural or artificial means) to a patient in a "vegetative state" morally obligatory except when they cannot be assimilated by the patient's body or cannot be administered to the patient without causing significant physical discomfort?

RESPONSE: Yes. The administration of food and water even by artificial means is, in principle, an ordinary and proportionate means of preserving life. It is therefore obligatory to the extent to which, and for as long as, it is shown to accomplish its proper finality, which is the hydration and nourishment of the patient. In this way suffering and death by starvation and dehydration are prevented.

SECOND QUESTION: When nutrition and hydration are being supplied by artificial means to a patient in a "permanent vegetative state", may they be discontinued when competent physicians judge with moral certainty that the patient will never recover consciousness?

RESPONSE: No. A patient in a "permanent vegetative state" is a person with fundamental human dignity and must, therefore, receive ordinary and proportionate care which includes, in principle, the administration of water and food even by artificial means.

The Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, at the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, approved these Responses, adopted in the Ordinary Session of the Congregation, and ordered their publication.

Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, August 1, 2007.

**William Cardinal Levada
 Prefect
 Angelo Amato, S.D.B.
 Titular Archbishop of Sila
 Secretary**

Here follows the official information that I have received which gives more explanation on how these two

answers are to be understood:

"Therefore, the Responses now given by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith continue the direction of the documents of the Holy See cited above, and in particular the Address of John Paul II of March 20, 2004. The basic points are two. It is stated, first of all, that the provision of water and food, even by artificial means, is in principle an ordinary and proportionate means of preserving life for patients in a "vegetative state": "It is therefore obligatory, to the extent to which, and for as long as, it is shown to accomplish its proper finality, which is the hydration and nourishment of the patient". It is made clear, secondly, that this ordinary means of sustaining life is to be provided also to those in a "permanent vegetative state", since these are persons with their fundamental human dignity.

When stating that the administration of food and water is morally obligatory in principle, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith does not exclude the possibility that, in very remote places or in situations of extreme poverty, the artificial provision of food and water may be physically impossible, and then ad impossibilia nemo tenetur. However, the obligation to offer the minimal treatments that are available remains in place, and

(Please See **HYDRATION/17**)

Padre Nathan Stone

Cruzando fronteras

Dios no hace distinción de personas, sino que acepta al que lo teme y practica la justicia, sea de la nación que sea.
 -- Hechos 10:34

El hombre se afana por fijar fronteras. Quiere distinguir lo lejano de lo cercano, lo propio de lo ajeno, lo conocido de lo extraño. Se inventan condiciones para poner a las personas en su lugar. Se separa al rico del pobre, el norte del sur, y el negro del blanco. Se dibujan líneas en el mapa, para distanciar los unos de los otros, los míos de los tuyos, y los amigos del montón.

Se idean títulos, grados y categorías

bajo la ilusión de que escalando por el laberinto, se pueda alcanzar un prestigio suficiente para compensar la falta de sentido. Todo en vano, pues, el único pasaporte que vale ante Dios es el cuerpo que te dio en el seno materno. Te entregó la visa para el sueño de mundo nuevo en la pila bautismal.

Dios no hace diferencia de personas; acepta a quien lo ame y obre bien, sea de la nación que sea. No hace falta prueba, rango o linaje para el Reino sin fronteras. Basta con la imagen y semejanza del Creador. Por las aguas, eres hijo adoptado del Padre de Jesús. Por la dignidad de

ser humano, reúnes las condiciones para ser miembro de su cuerpo. El gesto distintivo de Jesús es la inclusión del excluido. Viene para abrir los ojos de los ciegos, sacar a los cautivos de la prisión, y ser luz de las naciones, hasta los confines de la tierra, sin excepciones.

Cuando llegaron los israelitas de antaño, cruzaron el Jordán con Josué y entraron a la Tierra Prometida. Jesús cruza desde el interior hacia fuera. Al ser bautizado, sale al otro lado. La semilla sembrada en Israel ha brotado, y ha sido plantado en tier

(Mira **FRONTERAS/17**)

Black History Month: 'One single bracelet does not jingle alone'

By Michael D. Pfeifer
Bishop of San Angelo

February, Black History Month, reminds us of the African Family Tree in which all people are rooted. Black History Month is a special moment for "Celebrating the African Family Tree," and to act in solidarity with Africa today, and with those of African descent.

This solidarity calls us to stand with the people of Africa who are working to bring peace in the face of raging conflicts, healing in the midst of the HIV/AIDS pandemic, comfort and welcome to the orphaned and the displaced wanderer, to bring food to the hungry and to celebrate the

sacred God-given dignity of each human person.

Africa has been called "the cradle of humanity," because it is there that the oldest fossils of human-like species have been found. Scientists can trace a common human ancestry originating in Africa to be between 5 and 3 million BC. The United States and the world community owe much to the peoples of Africa. One of the United States' worst legacies, slavery, a system fundamentally evil and base, stole from the African continent many of its most precious resources: Men, women, and children. The United States' own responsibility to overcome the legacy of slavery and racism left to Africans and African-Americans should be reflected today in our domestic and international programs and policies.

As we remember our roots in the African Family Tree, we are reminded that we are family to each other, we are guided by the African proverb: "We are fingers of the same hand; that is why we should never ball that hand up into a fist and use it to hurt each other. We are fingers of the same hand."

Like our African ancestors on whose shoulders we stand, may our little lights shine so that others may come to know and love God and the goodness that God has placed in each one to be a shining light of hope and encouragement for each other, and to stretch out hands and hearts in serving each other remembering the old African proverb: "One single bracelet does not jingle alone."



Pictured left to right are: Priscilla Salazar, mother; Brianna Boy, daughter and winner; Father Mark; Jose Martinez; Fabian Martinez, winner; and Lalo Martinez, father.

Odessa KC Substance Abuse poster winners announced

ODESSA -- The K of C Substance Abuse Awareness Poster Contest was held this month in Odessa. Council 10404 of the Catholic Churches of South Odessa sponsored the program. Sixteen entries were judged by seven judges selected from various walks of

life. Two firemen, one policewoman, two teenagers (and future K of C squires), one deacon, and a visitor from San Antonio participated. The winners were Fabian Martinez, age 12-14 category and Brianna Boy, age 10-11 category. The targeted partici-

pants were CCD and RCIA class members of San Jose, San Antonio, and San Marin churches.

A Gatti's gift card was presented to Fabian and Brianna at the 9:45 mass, Sunday Jan. 20, by Jose Martinez, Grand Knight and Father Mark Miller.

Bishop's Taskforce hears efforts that are underway at Midland College health center

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / *The Angelus*

MIDLAND – Prominent community members attended the sixth meeting of the bishop's Communitywide Drug Taskforce in January at Midland College.

Chesley Hurd, development coordinator of Midland College's ADAC, or Alcohol and Drug Abuse Center, explained to the audience the effectiveness of neurofeedback in treating substance abuse-related illness.

Several members of the gathering offered sugges-

tion on how the group should proceed, including partnering with a taxi company to offer rides to teens unable to attend support group meetings at the local Palmer Drug Abuse Program because of no transportation, and studying the feasibility of advocating for an ordinance that would make it a misdemeanor if children consume alcohol that is in a parent's house and the alcohol is consumed in the absence of the parent.

The taskforce planning committee will meet in February with the large group scheduled to come together again in April.

Pope: Youth not being well educated in values of life

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — In a letter to the faithful of the Diocese of Rome, Pope Benedict XVI said today's younger generations are not being well educated in the fundamental values of life.

The result is an "educational emergency" that has left many young people unhappy and disoriented, he said. The letter was made public at the Vatican Jan. 23.

The papal text touched on a sensitive issue in Italy, where the school system has been the focus of political battles and student protests in recent years.

"Educating has never been easy, and today it seems to be increasingly difficult. This is well known to parents, teachers, priests and all those who have direct educational responsibilities," the pope said.

It's unfair to blame the children, but blaming today's adults doesn't tell the whole story either, he said. The problem involves the per-

sonal responsibilities of young people and adults, but goes beyond that, he said.

At the root of the problem, he said, is "a widespread atmosphere, a mentality and a form of culture that lead people to doubt the value of the human person, and the very meaning of truth and goodness."

Values cannot be inherited but must be taught to every new generation, he said, and when such "essential certainties" are ignored, there are bound to be problems.

That's why parents today are so worried

about the future of their children, why some teachers are distressed at the degradation of their schools, and why young students feel anxious when faced with life's challenges, he said.

He encouraged educators to take heart, however, and said the problems were solvable.

The pope listed some requisites of an authentic education. For one thing, he said, teachers need to recognize that true education must provide more than superficial facts or information. It should provide a sense of empathy and trust that comes from love, he said.

Lent 2008

Why I see Lent as a love story



By **Antoinette Bosco**
Catholic News Service

Last winter I was asked by Sister Madonna Ratliff of the Daughters of St. Paul, the acquisitions editor at Pauline Books and Media in Boston, to write a book about Lent. I had written a children's book for them about Easter called "The Jesus Garden, an Easter Fantasy," and she thought I should now focus on how we prepare for the great celebration of the rising of Jesus from his tomb.

I immediately came up with all the reasons I couldn't write another book at this time -- too busy, but mainly too preoccupied with serious illnesses of loved ones, especially my son Sterling, who needed a heart and kidney transplant to survive. Sister Madonna didn't want to accept a no from me.

I talked to Sterling every day and told him about sister's invitation. He was a devout Catholic, devoted husband of Bernadette, loving father of their seven children and proud grandfather of 13. We talked about what Lent meant to us, and to our surprise discovered how our thoughts about this season before Easter had changed as we got older.

Sterling and I could agree on a lot, particularly that Lent was never the season that won a popularity contest. It was thought of as a time of deep purple when Christians focus on uncomfortable sacrifices, remembering that we are made of dust and on and on. It was tolerable, though, because it was in preparation for the wonderful event of Easter.

That very word -- "Easter" -- had a mysterious tone to it. It came from the Germanic "Eostre," meaning the dawn of



a new day. It was chosen by the early Christians, who saw the rising light of a new day as a symbol of Jesus rising from the dead.

Sterling commented that the word itself was a tremendous expression of hope. In our talks we began to take a new look at Lent. We talked of Jesus in the desert being tormented and tested by Satan, but clearly seeing his choices. He could say

(Please See LENT/19)

Guidelines for Lent

By **Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI**

With Ash Wednesday, February 6, 2008, we begin the Lenten season, which prepares us to celebrate the greatest feast of Christianity, the Resurrection of Jesus Christ on Easter Sunday, March 23, 2008.

The time of Lent is to be observed by Catholics as a special season of prayer, penance and doing works of charity. I share with you here the pastoral guidelines that hopefully will assist us during the season of Lent.

Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, in particular, are the most important penitential days of the liturgical year. They are days of both fast and abstinence. All Fridays in Lent are days of abstinence.

The rule of fasting states that only one full meal may be taken per day. Two small meals, "sufficient to maintain strength," are allowed but together they should not equal another full meal. Eating between meals breaks the fast but drinking liquids does not. The rule of fasting obliges all Catholics from age 18 through 59.

Abstinence refers to the eating of meat of warm blooded animals (e.g., beef, lamb, chicken, pork). Under the present law, it does not include egg or milk products, meat broth or gravies. The rule of abstinence binds all Catholics 14 years of age or older. On days of abstinence, those who are eating in a school cafeteria may eat meat if it is served to them and there is no other main dish to choose.

The substantial observance of the laws of fast and abstinence is a serious obligation. Those whose work or health impairment make the observance difficult would be excused from fasting and abstinence. The individual conscience can decide if there is a proper cause to excuse. For

more pastoral guidance on this point one may contact the local pastor. A more serious reason should be present to excuse from the Ash Wednesday and Good Friday penance.

Self-imposed fasting on the other weekdays of Lent is recommended. Abstinence on all Fridays of the year is also highly recommended. The Peace Pastoral of the American Bishops, stating that prayer is incomplete without penance, urges Friday abstinence as something all American Catholics should offer for the sake of world peace.

Parents and teachers should see to it that even those who are not bound by the laws of the fast and abstinence because of age are brought up in an atmosphere that is conducive to a sense of penance.

The faithful should be clearly and positively encouraged to receive the Sacrament of Penance during Lent. There should be adequate time scheduled for Confessions before Easter. Communal penance services should not be scheduled for the last days of Holy Week.

All the faithful, after they have been initiated into the Most Holy Eucharist, are bound by the obligation of Receiving Communion at least once a year, ordinarily during the Easter Season.

Funeral and Nuptial Masses are not allowed on Holy Thursday, Good Friday or Holy Saturday. The Funeral Rite outside of Mass, however, can be held either in church or at the chapel on those days, with a memorial mass later.

A Special Collection is taken up on Ash Wednesday to aid the Church in Central and Eastern Europe which continues to rebuild after decades of communist domination. Please be generous and offer prayers for these churches.

The liturgical directions of the Sacramentary and the Lectionary must be faithfully observed regarding all the

special Holy Week Liturgies

PALM SUNDAY

It is strongly recommended that the Blessing of the Palms with procession be celebrated at least once at the principal Sunday liturgy.

HOLY THURSDAY

The Mass of the Lord's Supper must be celebrated in the evening with procession to the altar of repose. Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament continues until midnight. For pastoral reasons, one other Mass may be celebrated during the day.

GOOD FRIDAY

The Liturgy of the Lord's Passion should be celebrated around 3:00 p.m. For pastoral reasons, this celebration may be moved to a later time.

Other paraliturgical celebrations are suggested and recommended at the discretion of the pastor (Viacrucis, 7 Palabras, Pesame a maria, etc.)

HOLY SATURDAY

The entire celebration of the Easter Vigil takes place at night. It should not begin before nightfall; it should end before daybreak on Sunday.

According to the rubrics for the Easter Vigil, no Eucharist may be celebrated prior to the Easter Vigil. If a pastor feels that pastoral reasons an additional Mass is needed AFTER the vigil, he may consult the Bishop for permission.

Lent 2008

Cardinal's Lenten YouTube vids wildly successful

By Christie L. Chicoine
Catholic News Service

PHILADELPHIA -- Who's that you're seeing on YouTube?

Yes, it is really Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia.

The cardinal is providing video reflections for each Sunday of Lent, as well as for Holy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter on the free, video-sharing Web site, which allows users to upload, view and share video clips.

Once on the site, www.youtube.com, visitors can easily find the reflections by typing "Cardinal Rigali" into the search area.

"YouTube is a place where people communicate a multiplicity of things, and certainly, from the viewpoint of the church, we have a desire to communicate Christ," Cardinal Rigali said recently. "We have the message in the Gospel -- the uplifting message of Jesus, a wonderful message of hope ... of love ... of faith."

The cardinal said he hopes his contribution will be of help to people who are reflecting on God and Christ, and on the meaning of life and love.

Through the years, the church has shown tremendous commitment to social communications, the cardinal said.

"Communicating the uplifting message of Christ is just a blessing," he added.

Clearly, Cardinal Rigali is a hit on the video site, where contributions may be rated, and the number of times they have been viewed are also made public.

According to the archdiocesan Office for Communications, on Ash Wednesday, the day the Cardinal's first Lenten reflections were posted, his video was one of the top-linked videos in the category "People and Blogs."

By the afternoon of March 12, the cardinal's first posting had received almost



17,000 views.

Here is a sampling of the responses to the cardinal's reflections posted on YouTube:

"Cardinal Rigali -- you are the man. Thanks for keeping it real."

"Another amazing message! ... The messages are helping me to reflect during the holy season of Lent. I ask you, my brothers and sisters in Christ, to pray that I may go

the extra mile during this season and really help bring a bit more light to people who are still in darkness."

"What a beautiful meditation on the importance of truly listening to God in our times of prayer, lest they become episodes of fruitless, one-way babble. Thank you, Cardinal Rigali!"

"I think this is s-o-o-o cool."

"Cardinal Rigali, thanks for doing this. I



set up a YouTube account just to be able to post a response."

"Keep 'em coming, Cardinal Rigali. ... proud to be Catholic."

"This is super. It makes me feel good to know that our church is reaching out to God's children through modern technology."

"Excellent idea to make use of 'YouTube' to console, comfort and encourage Christians and others to see the whole point of living a Christian life."

"I, too, thank God for this to be on YouTube. May the Lord bless all who see Cardinal Rigali's messages and the cardinal as well, but also those who run YouTube for letting this be on the site!"

"With increased attacks on human life, the pope is urging us all to speak up for the truth. We all need dedicated people like Justin Cardinal Rigali to deepen our faith."

"Inspired by the Holy Spirit, Justin Cardinal Rigali went to the spiritual desert, where the people are. 'This man eats and drinks with sinners' -- such was said of our Lord Jesus. Praise God that the Word has reached the tube! The love of God, the peace of Christ, the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with all."

The communications office has received e-mails from Italy, Spain and Australia, among other points around the globe, from people commending the cardinal's debut on YouTube.

The one question we must ask before Ash Wednesday

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Father Craig was the pastor at my parish a few years ago, but I still remember him well for the focused little sermons he gave.

His homilies were among the shortest and best I've ever heard. He didn't waste time in repetition or pious verbiage. He used simple, declarative sentences that got right to the point.

And the point was always a good and true one -- something I'd often take home and chew on during

the week. How many homilies can you honestly say that about?

There's one homily Father Craig gave that I still remember and think about now and then. As Lent approaches, it nags at me with the fundamental question: What am I looking for?

Father Craig's sermons would always begin with a personal vignette, usually humorous, sometimes more sobering. Once he told us that his grandfather was hanging on during a terminal illness, waiting for Father Craig, on loan to us from a Midwestern diocese, to come home.

But the homily I remember best began with Father Craig telling us about the day he and his cousin were out playing basketball. They were teenagers then, and in the course of their game one of the cousin's contact lenses was knocked out of his eye.

Remember the old days of "hard" contact lenses? If you're old enough to remember, you know they were not disposable. You bought a pair in the hopes it would serve you for a year or two, just like a pair of glasses, because a replacement would set you



Caldarola

(Please See CALDAROLA/12)

Our Catholic Faith

The biggest challenge facing the priesthood in 2008

By Father Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service

Last year I met with priests from a large diocese to discuss the challenges they face in 2008. We began with the problem of fewer priests, pastors responsible for several parishes, and how to stay healthy in these situations.

Several pointed to the need to cluster priests, allowing them to live together for support while ministering at various parishes. To my surprise, they also said the time has come to let go of "my" parish and "my" individual needs -- to think of serving the universal church as a team.

I say "to my surprise" because priests are



Hemrick

parochial and normally consider the parish the "be-all" and "end-all" of their life.

Also discussed was the need to understand how best to minister in a multicultural parish. Some priests complained they already had too much on their plate and didn't need all the paperwork that comes from diocesan offices. Others wanted more personal communication with the bishop in addressing future challenges.

Suddenly one priest asked, "What are we really all about? Isn't it about Christ as the center of our work and of our people?"

His question turned the discussion from "What about us?" to "What about who we are supposed to be?"

That priest hit the nail on the head in determining where to begin in responding to the 2008 challenges facing the priesthood: How can the priesthood make Christ better known?

Where does the priesthood start to accomplish this?

Is it not with the liturgy where priests and people come in contact the most? Isn't the priesthood's biggest challenge celebrating liturgies that reflect that God is among us?

We live in a wired, overstimulated, hyperactive age that makes the practice of stillness extremely difficult. Peaceful stillness is at the heart of prayer and union with God. It is also at the heart of wholesome sanity.

Our overstimulated culture, and its need for prayerful stillness, raises major questions: What more must we priests do to create a sacred hush at Mass that gives the sense of being in a holy temple? When people enter the church, its doors symbolize shutting out the distractions of the world. How might we better celebrate the liturgy so that it is truly other-worldly?

What more needs to be achieved to create sacred liturgical music that doesn't mimic secular music?

How do we better sanctify the symbols of the Mass -- its processions, gestures and handling of sacred vessels -- so that they are truly symbolic of the divine?

What more needs to be done to the spoken word so that it connotes heartfelt union with God?

What more needs to be accomplished to create a wholesome spirit of being part of a faith community in which we share each other's joys and sorrows?

Whenever we speak of a myriad of challenges, it's always wise to start with the challenge that most speaks to our meaning. For the priesthood, that challenge is sacredly celebrating the liturgy.

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys a truly remarkable woman of the Church

By Antoinette Bosco
Catholic News Service

January 12 was the memorial of St. Marguerite Bourgeoys, a remarkable woman who made a difference for God and the Catholic Church in her lifetime. I would guess that very few people in the United States would know her name, let alone her remarkable story.

Born in France in 1620, Marguerite had a spiritual experience at a young age that shaped her life. In her own words, then and there she had "chosen God's cause," which brought her to Canada in 1653 to teach children of the colonists and to serve the needs of "God's people" in a strange country then called "New France."

One can only imagine the incredible hardships she faced from illness, bad weather, hunger, Indians and at times even "loss of faith." Yet, on Oct. 31, 1982, she was proclaimed a saint by Pope John Paul II.

In all honesty, back then I was unaware of her until her name became a byword in the town where I lived nearly two years later.

I had moved to Brookfield, Conn., in

late 1981 to become the editor of a new secular weekly paper. I belonged, happily, to St. Joseph Parish. But the area was growing rapidly, and almost immediately many of my Catholic neighbors and I were informed that in order to accommodate the many new Catholic families moving into this town, the diocese had decided it was necessary to have two parishes there.

My house was located within the boundary of the new parish, which, we were told, would be named after St. Marguerite Bourgeoys. I had actually never heard of this holy woman, but found out very soon that she also had founded a religious order, one that I had at least heard of: the Congregation of Notre Dame.

I wanted more information about St. Marguerite Bourgeoys and got it the way editors do: I assigned a story about it -- then wrote it myself. I came away with enormous respect for this amazing, brave French woman who was also remarkably humble.

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys told the women who joined her order that they were "a small plot in the garden of the church." But an amazing "flowering" has come from that small plot!

At the time of the 25th anniversary of St. Marguerite's canonization last October, Sister Martha Bowes of the

Congregation of Notre Dame came to our parish to tell us a bit of the amazing life of her order's foundress.

I was struck by the willingness of the saint to follow a priest who said he needed a teacher in Montreal. She found that she first had to be a nurse when the black plague broke out on the ship!

Then, in Montreal, "there were no children to teach, all had died from the severity of the winter. She worked for five years as a seamstress, housekeeper, cook, laundress -- and then, finally, there were children to teach," said Sister Martha.

St. Marguerite Bourgeoys' story is one of amazing spirit and torment too, particularly when the structure housing her nuns burned, killing two them, one her niece. She blamed herself and later asked to resign. The bishop said no. She and her daughters were needed "to answer the needs of the poor" and maintain the hospital.

She worked until her death at age 79. If ever there was a woman of courage, it would be this young French girl, who had such unbelievable bravery and courage to leave her home to bring God to a new world across the sea.

I am proud that my parish is in her very good hands!

Saving Tony Soprano

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

If Tony Soprano, the fictional TV Mafia boss, came to me for help in overcoming his anxiety attacks, I would try to explain that a life of thievery and murder was not very conducive to attaining peace of mind, and he would have to change.

More likely than not, he would be polite, but inwardly scoff at the idea. He once rebuked his wife who was trying to get him to change, saying, "I'm like Popeye the sailor man, I am what I am what I am."

His chances for attaining peace and spiritual joy at this point are rather slim. I wouldn't give up right away.

If he stayed around long enough to listen I would tell him, "Tony, God is just. You can't steal and murder and still expect to have a peaceful conscience. There will be a day of reckoning. God is sending you these anxiety attacks to awaken you to the fact that life is short and eternity is forever. He wants you to change your evil ways. To attain the peace and joy you crave so much, you will have to repent and firmly resolve to sin no more!"

Even if he agreed, he would still need some training in mental discipline. A truly joyful life is only possible when people are able to control their thoughts.



Catoir

(Please See SOPRANO/12)

Making Sense of Bioethics

Feeding our loved ones: Living with brain damage

By Fr. Thad Pacholczyk

Many families are faced with decisions about what to do when their loved ones suffer serious brain injury. When individuals are unlikely to come out of so-called "vegetative states," should we discontinue nourishing them by tube feeding? Is there anything wrong with causing patients in compromised states to die from starvation and dehydration under these circumstances? We all lived through such a decision when Terri Schiavo died in 2005 in Florida. Her death raised disturbing ethical questions which continue to reverberate in society today.



Pacholczyk

I remember discussing her situation with somebody who remarked, "Well, I wouldn't want to live the way Terri did, with such poor quality of life." My response was, "Nobody would want to live the way she did - yet we all face deficits and disabilities that we have to live with. The bigger question is whether other people should be taking it upon themselves to remove feeding tubes that are effectively nourishing individuals who are compromised or disabled."

Oftentimes people fail to grasp several of the key factors regarding Terri's condition. First, they may mistakenly assume that she was actively dying from something, that she was hanging onto life by a mere thread. But Terri was not dying of any particular disease; she was living with a disability, surrounded by the love of her parents, siblings and friends. She had been living reasonably well with her disability for nearly 15 years, before her estranged husband made the decision to stop feeding her.

Terri was an otherwise healthy young person who suffered under the burden of a serious brain injury, which left her unable to do many things on her own. In many ways, she was like a young, helpless child because of her injury. But she was not actively dying from anything.

A second error that is sometimes made is to imagine that Terri was brain dead. I once did a segment for a national news program where the reporter asked me why Catholics were required to do everything in their power to keep people alive who were basically brain dead, like Terri Schiavo. I had to spend a moment explaining how Terri was not even close to being brain dead, and that she had significant brain function. This was evident from her ability to initiate movement, her ability to breathe on her own (she was not on a ventilator), and her ability to pass through sleep-wake cycles. Brain dead individuals can never perform these kinds of activities because the organ of the brain has died, and such individuals are, in fact, dead.

A third error that is made in analyzing Terri's situation is to suppose that tube feeding would be required only if it might improve or cure her vegetative state. Some bioethicists, including sadly some priests, seem to pursue this erroneous line of thought. One of them has written:

"Even though her parents disagreed, her spouse... asked that life support in the form of ANH [artificial nutrition and hydration] be removed. Was it ethical or sound? It seems it was. First of all, he maintained that this was her wish. Moreover, given the history of the case and sound medical opinion, he would be on sound ethical grounds if he requested that ANH be removed because it did not offer her hope of benefit."

Tube feeding, of course, cannot offer

hope of benefit or cure for the vegetative state. Tube feeding is not meant to be a therapy for brain damage. Rather it offers a different kind of benefit, namely, the very real benefit of preventing dehydration and starvation, which nobody ought to die from. Generally speaking, we ought to die from a particular pathology or a sickness, not from a state of dehydration or starvation that could easily be prevented by tube feeding. Thus, tube feeding was very effective for Terri, and did offer her benefit. In fact, it enabled her to be nourished for 15 years before being disconnected on March 18, 2005, resulting in her death nearly two weeks later.

A Commentary issued by the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith in 2007 describes the benefits of tube feeding in this way:

"It does not involve excessive expense; it is within the capacity of an average health-care system, does not of itself require hospitalization, and is proportionate to accomplishing its purpose, which is to keep the patient from dying of starvation and dehydration. It is not, nor is it meant to be, a treatment that cures the patient, but is rather ordinary care aimed at the preservation of life."

Sometimes patients suppose that tube feeding can be generically declined, by specifying it beforehand in a living will. It would never be ethical, however, to decline an ordinary or proportionate means that is oriented towards preserving life. We are morally obligated to use all such ordinary means, because we must take care of the life we have received as a gift. It is not ours to dispose of or act against, and we cannot ever ethically engage in suicide or euthanasia, nor specify such actions beforehand in written instruments, like living wills.

(Please See **BIOETHICS/17**)

Follow up**Pope says in praying for unity, Christians identify cost of divisions**

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- In praying for Christian unity, those who follow Jesus recognize their divisions prevent others from believing in the Gospel message of peace, love and salvation, Pope Benedict XVI said.

"In common prayer, Christian communities place themselves together before the Lord and, becoming aware of the contradictions arising from their divisions, they demonstrate their desire to obey his will, relying on his almighty assistance," the pope said Jan. 23 at his weekly general audience.

As is customary during the Jan. 18-25 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, the pope dedicated his entire audience talk to ecumenism.

Pope Benedict said that common prayer is not a strategy for publicizing the need for Christian unity, "but is an expression of the faith that unites all the disciples of Christ," who had prayed that his followers would be one.

"It is the awareness of our human limits that leads us to abandon ourselves with trust into the hands of the Lord," he said.

At the Last Supper Jesus prayed that his disciples would be one so that the world might believe, Pope Benedict said.

"That the world might believe -- today we strongly sense the realism of these words. The world suffers from the absence of God, from the inaccessibility of God. It wants to know the face of God. But how can it recognize the face of God in the face of Christ if we Christians are divided, if one teaches against another, if one stands against another?" the pope asked.

While dialogue, meetings and planning are necessary, he said, "it is also evident we cannot obtain this unity through our own efforts. What we can obtain is our own openness and capacity" to welcome the unity which God will give."

Pilgrim Journeys – Regina Tours

Alexandra Morris, CDS
International Specialist

October 2008 ... come with hosts Karen & Jimmy Patterson on a pilgrimage to Lourdes (150th Anniversary), and continuing on to Rome, seat of Latin Rite Catholics. Remember, for each 10 paid, one goes free, so "Dream about where you would like to go, then get in touch and we will go there."

alessandra0416@yahoo.com

www.pilgrimjourneys.joystar.com

Trudo's

Religious Store



624 West Avenue N
San Angelo, TX 76903

Over 70,000 items in stock!
Celebrating **25 years** serving
West Texas Catholics!

Mon.-Fri.
9 a.m.—6 p.m.
Saturday
9 a.m.—5 p.m.

Out of Town? Call 800-759-1807

325-653-8011
trudosrs@wcc.net

Rosaries, Jewelry, Statues, Crosses, Bibles, Books,
Quinceanera, Wedding and Confirmation items.
First Communion Dresses, Veils and gifts.
Habla Espanol - Phone orders are welcome!

From Many, One

Big Spring Catholic parishes become one; to be known as Holy Trinity

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor
The Angelus



Fr. Jim Plagens, left, outgoing pastor at Sacred Heart and St. Thomas, and Fr. Bernard Gully, pastor of the new Big Spring community.

Mass Schedule -- Big Spring Community

Saturday, 5 p.m.: Sacred Heart.
Sunday, 7:30 a.m.: Sacred Heart--Spanish
Sunday, 9:30 a.m.: Immaculate Heart of Mary
Sunday, 11:30a.m.: St Thomas.

Total (Families):
Immaculate Heart of Mary: 330
Sacred Heart: 525
St. Thomas: 181
St. Joseph (Coahoma): 26

BIG SPRING - Fr. Bernard Gully likes to joke about the time a West Texas reporter interviewed an old-timer, hoping the old-timer would look back on his fascinating life and tell him everything. The reporter, leading off the interview, asked the man, "Have you lived here all your life?" The old-timer chuckled, rubbed his chin, looked at the reporter and said, "Well ... not yet."

The story comes to mind again when Gully is asked if leading the Big Spring Catholic community in the coming months and years will be the most challenging task of his priestly career. He laughs, a gleam in his eye growing brighter, shakes his head and says, "It may well be. But who knows, there may be another one to come along."

The task at hand for Gully and newly named associate pastor Rev. Ariel Lagunilla is to move a community of over 1,000 Catholic families from four separate parishes to a single, unified parish. In the beginning, the biggest job will be to guide the faithful through a new Mass schedule as well as to get Catholics here accustomed to a new name for what will become that one parish on Feb. 15. What had been eight Masses offered between the four churches will now number four. Parishioners will continue to be able to celebrate Mass at the church building of their choice.

The names of the four parish church buildings -- Sacred Heart, Immaculate Heart of Mary, St. Thomas and St. Joseph in Coahoma -- will continue to be used, however collectively the entire community will be known as Holy Trinity, the new name bestowed on the Big Spring Catholic community Wednesday by San Angelo Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer.

Suggestions for the name of the new parish were submitted by outgoing pastors Rev. Jim Plagens and Rev. Richard Regan, and Gully, who was recently appointed pastor of the unified Big Spring community. Plagens has been transferred to St. Ann's in Midland where he will be designated a senior pastor. Regan will begin an extended medical leave.

Lagunilla, ordained 18 months ago, will be transferred to Holy Trinity from St. Ann's in Midland.

Eventually, the goal at Holy Trinity will be to build one single location and one church in which all members of the newly created parish can celebrate together. At this

point, little more than discussion has been held regarding where the location for the new church will be.

"We can at least go with the unity of our office space," Fr. Gully said. "All of our records will be centrally located. Some say we will not achieve true unity until we are all worshipping in one church."

That unity will also allow all 1,000 Catholic families to work as one on community efforts presenting a unified front as never before.

"Granted, this has been driven by the scarcity of priests," Gully said. "But the bigger motivation, as I see it, is to have the unity of the Catholic community, and what can happen with that unity is that we can be of better service to the whole community of Big Spring."

Admitting he and others are traversing uncharted waters, Gully said he will "do a lot of listening to the hurts and pains of the people" and try to empathize with them.

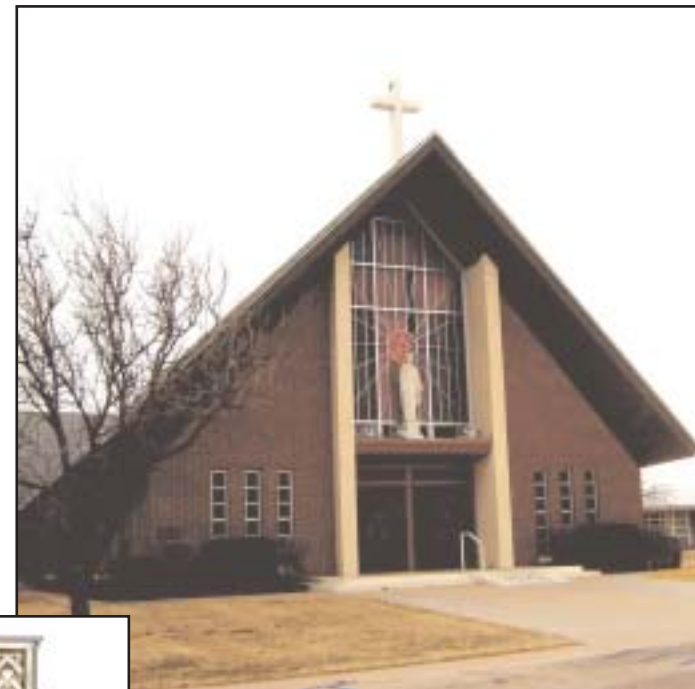
"It will be tough. It's not easy," he said. "But I will say that I think we can move forward and try to respect the sacrifices made. In time we will see benefits. It may take a while. But we will see them."

"Some of the things I've read have talked about closing churches. We're not closing any church, and the Bishop and I are very concerned about Coahoma and how to work with that. But we are not literally closing any church."

Sunday Mass at St. Joseph in Coahoma will be discontinued under the new schedule, but a weekday Mass will begin. Currently, about 26 Catholic families attend the tiny Coahoma parish.

One female parishioner in Big Spring was quoted as saying she didn't care where she went to Mass, where the records were located or where the office was.

"As long as we get to celebrate the Eucharist," she said, "That's what is most important."



Church's Big Spring history includes segregation, an asterisk on the sale of land for St. Thomas and a Novena miracle

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / *The Angelus*

BIG SPRING -- As so many things are, the history of the Catholic community in Big Spring could easily be seen as a microcosm of America itself. Not all of its history is pleasant or memorable, but it is a history that has helped form the patchwork of what the Church is today.

That history, according to parish workers and longtime parishioners Teresa Rocha and Isabel Escovedo, includes the painful segregation of Hispanics as late as 1962 when Sacred Heart Church was built after Mexican American faithful were relegated to seats in the rear, looked down upon and would often give up their seat when a white parishioner would come in late.

The history of the Church in Big Spring, though, also includes fascinating moments such as the time during World War II when 45 organizations vied for occupancy of a chapel on the grounds of the old Big Spring Air Base. Catholic Faithful in the community began a Novena, and on the ninth day of the prayer, officials called and informed Church representatives that they had been awarded the building for the chapel. And there is the story of how St. Thomas Church, on the city's north side, was established in the late 19th century and eventually closed down

after several decades. It reopened in the early 1960s out of concern that the land on which the church sat would be taken from them. St. Thomas was built following the donation of land by a property owner who insisted when the sale was made that the site would always contain a Catholic Church and if it didn't the sale was null and void and the property would be returned to the donor.

With the establishment of Sacred Heart to meet the needs of Hispanic parishioners and ultimately the establishment of Immaculate Heart of Mary on the city's southside, the town grew to three parishes with St. Thomas, a mission church in Coahoma, just a few miles east down Interstate 20, widely considered a part of the Big Spring Catholic Community.

Following several years of study and discussion originated by the community's most current pastors, Rev. Richard Regan and Rev. Jim Plagens, the decision was made to consolidate. After much has been endured the three Big Spring churches and St. Joseph will unify and become one officially on Feb. 15.

The fitting name given to the new parish community by Bishop Michael Pfeifer is Holy Trinity, symbolic of course of what the faith is all about.

"I chose this name because this is the central mystery of our faith,

and we are called through our baptism and other sacraments of the Church to form together a community modeled after the Blessed Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit." Pfeifer said. "As I announce the name of the new parish, I want to congratulate the priests and people of the Big Spring area who have become members of this new parish, and thank them for the dedicated and prayerful process they have been in for the past several years to bring about this newly formed parish. Modeling our efforts on the unity of the Blessed Trinity my wish and prayer is that all the people of the Big Spring area who previously belonged to Sacred Heart, St. Thomas, St. Joseph (Coahoma) and Immaculate Heart of Mary will now continue to work together in a spirit of cooperation and coordination with the new priests who are being assigned to this newly formed parish.

"I thank the two outgoing Pastors, Rev. Richard Regan and Rev. James Plagens, for the good service they have given to the people of the Big Spring area in recent years. May our kind God pour out many new blessings upon all as we begin this new spirit of cooperation united in God's love."

According to Rev. Plagens, "When Richard Regan and I realized we shared a lot of common visions about ministry and about (Please See HISTORY/17)

SOPRANO: Whatever's wrong could be solved by a little happiness and joy

(From 8)

Removing your toxic thinking and tapping into God's joy is the most challenging part of the spiritual life. In order to do it correctly, you have to clear your mind of all kinds of toxic thinking, such as fear, resentment, hatred, vindictiveness and on and on.

Fear is the enemy of joy. Jesus said, "Do not be afraid." Learning how to reduce fear will take time and training of the will. Grace builds on nature. It takes a strong will, a grateful heart and a clear mind to remove the built up toxicity.

In my book, "Enjoy Your Precious Life," and on my Web site, www.messengerofjoy.com, I try to get into this in more detail.

The words "happiness" and "joy" are closely related but they are not exactly the same.

In the strict sense, we tend to think of happiness as coming more from the gratification of our senses than anything else. We crave good food, music and the smell of fresh air. These all bring sensual gratification and contentment.

The fullness of happiness requires something deeper, however, something that arises in the soul: joy. The inner life of joy completes our happiness.

Joy is the simplest form of gratitude and the greatest honor we can give to almighty God.

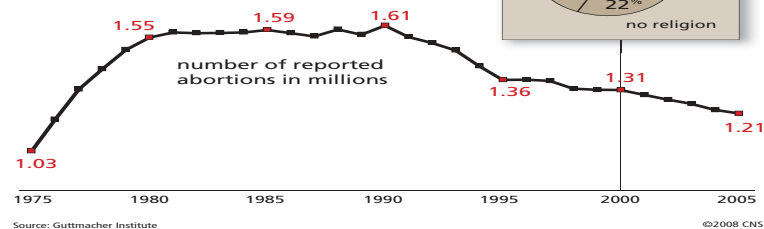
Spiritual joy is a gift that comes from the inner presence of divine life. Abiding in God, we touch his life, and this fills us with spiritual joy and happiness.

There's hope for Tony Soprano, but he has to get to the point where he is able to accept these ideas. He is too habituated in a way of life that has left him spiritually blind, deaf and mute. He killed off his conscience years ago, justifying murder as a matter of justice and seeing himself as the chief of police, the judge and the jury.

St. Paul wrote: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace" (Gal 5:22). In order to cultivate a joyful spirit we all need to invoke the Holy Spirit right from the beginning, because above all joy is a gift.

Abortions Decline

The number of reported abortions began to gradually decline in 1991 and continued to fall.



CALDAROLA: What am I looking for?

(From 7)

back quite a few bucks. Some people even took out contact lens insurance.

I remember searching the bathroom vinyl for my own lens. Once I even retrieved one from the bathroom drain with a straw covered in nylon and a vacuum hose. Soccer games were even halted while both teams searched for one kid's fallen lens.

So when the cousin's contact fell out, Craig's basketball stopped bouncing and both boys were on the ground, carefully maneuvering their hands and knees as they searched for the tiny lens. At last they gave up and went in the house, where they got something to drink and told Craig's uncle what happened.

"My uncle immediately went outside and started to look for that lens," said Father Craig, "and he kept looking and looking."

And he didn't stop looking until, remarkably, he found the lens.

Why, asked Father Craig, did the uncle find the lens but the teenage boys didn't?

"We didn't find it because we were looking for a lost contact," said the priest, "but my uncle was looking for a hundred dollars."

I'm not sure if the Gospel reading that day was the lost sheep or the lost drachma, but Father Craig made his point: We'll truly search and we'll not stop searching for what we really want to find, for what truly holds value for us.

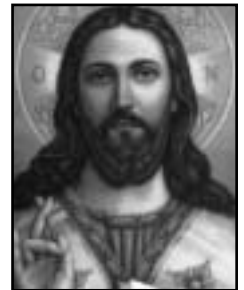
I see that story as a metaphor for the Lenten journey that lies ahead. I can approach it casually, with the self-help kind of resolution that might net me a five-pound weight loss. I can show up at a few extra Masses or the weekly Stations of the Cross.

But am I doing these things because I'm on a quest for the central value of my life?

What we are searching for motivates how hard we search, how long we stay on our hands and knees until we find it.

The question to ask before Ash Wednesday: What am I looking for, and how will I try to find it?

Our Holy Father's Monthly Intentions 2008



February

MENTALLY HANDICAPPED: That the mentally handicapped may not be marginalized but respected and lovingly helped.

INSTITUTES OF CONSECRATED LIFE: That the Institutes of Consecrated Life in mission countries may rediscover the missionary dimension and generously proclaim Christ to the ends of the earth.

March

FORGIVENESS: That all may understand the importance of forgiveness and reconciliation between individuals and peoples and that the church may spread Christ's love.

THE PERSECUTED: That Christians who are persecuted because of the Gospel may be sustained by the Holy Spirit and continue to bear witness to the Word of God.

Daily Offering Prayer: *O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day in union with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass throughout the world. I offer them for all the intentions of Your Sacred Heart: the salvation of souls, reparation for sin and the reunion of all Christians.*

I offer them for the intentions of our bishops and of all Apostles of Prayer, and in particular for those recommended by our Holy Father this month.

Loved One In Jail / Prison? "Let us help you"

Criminal Justice Ministry
Diocesan Office
325-651-7500



www.san-angelo-diocese.org/cjm.html

Mystical Rose Catholic Books and Gifts

1317 N. 8th Street, Suite 100
Abilene, Texas
(325) 829-8512



Our sole purpose is to bring Jesus and Our Blessed Mother to Catholics in West Texas by offering Catholic gifts, books, statues, rosaries and other sacramentals. All of our profits are donated to Catholic causes.



Hours - MWF - 2:00-5:00
Sat. - 12:00-5:00

mysticalrosefloral@hotmail.com

Midland golf tournament to help raise money for St. Ann's School

The Angelus

MIDLAND -- The 2nd Annual Bishop's Golf tournament was established two years ago to benefit Catholic education in the Diocese of San Angelo.

Proceeds from the tournament are divided with 90 percent going to the three Catholic schools and 10 percent going to the adult faith formation (LIMEX) for the diocese.

The golf tournament enables the schools to acquire curriculum materials, supplement teacher salaries, and upgrade technology in the classrooms.

The Bishop's Golf Tournament will be held on Saturday, March 1, at Hogan Golf Course in Midland. Players in the four-person scramble will check in at 12 Noon. Prizes for the tournament will be given to the top 3 net teams, closest to the pin, and

longest drive. Mulligans and birdies will be sold at check in. After the tournament, a barbeque dinner will be served.

Organizers are reaching out to local business in the community for hole sponsorships, donations of product, service or financial contributions.

Sponsorships are still available. Please contact your local representative for further information or go to www.bishopgolf.gol

freg.com.

In Midland, call Brad Gibson, (432) 559-3532; in Odessa, call Joe Salmon (432) 638-2883, and in San Angelo, call Raul (325) 223-9422.

We would encourage everyone to come out and participate in what should be an enjoyable afternoon of golf and fellowship.

Deadline nears for Msgr. Larry Droll scholarship

SAN ANTONIO—Catholic laymen and women pursuing a graduate degree in theology or religious studies in order to serve their church in a professional capacity must submit applications for a renewable \$2000 scholarship by February 15, 2008.

The Rev. Msgr. Larry J. Droll Scholarship will be awarded to two candidates in need of tuition assistance for additional education who serve or want to serve his or her parish as an Administrator, Youth Minister, Parish Coordinator, or other role.

This is a newly developed scholarship geared towards those who have already obtained their bachelor's degree and who are either enrolled or wanting to enroll into any Catholic graduate school in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma or Mississippi. Applicants may also be enrolled in an extension program or in the Catholic University of America School of Canon Law.

Applications may be obtained by contacting the Communications Department at (210) 828-9921 or 1-800-292-2548 or by writing to Catholic Life Insurance, attn: Communications Department, P.O. Box 659527, San Antonio, TX 78265-9527. Also, applications can be downloaded from our website: www.cliu.com.

Otteman named Agent of the Year in W. Texas

MIDLAND -- Eric Otteman of Midland has been named 2007 Agent of the Year for Jim Seideman's West Texas Agency.

Otteman earned the Knight Club honor for Top 75 and the Kinane Award for top volume agent in Texas. He was honored as the Agent of the Year and is a 2007 Million Dollar Round Table Aspirant.

Eric services Knights of Columbus families in councils 3071, 5096, 6204, 8773, 9641, 9701, 10129, 10404 and 12657.



Otteman



An invitation

to attend, or help others to attend,

the International Eucharistic Congress, held in the beautiful North American city of Quebec - June 15th-22nd, 2008

Dear Friend in Christ,

This coming June of 2008, the Church in North America will celebrate a great event for the Faith, an event that is being watched with great anticipation.

The Holy Father has given me the privilege of leading this event, the International Eucharistic Congress, in Quebec City.

And I, in turn, have invited the Holy Father to celebrate our final Mass of the Congress.

Would there be a possibility that you and your family and friends might be able to join us in Quebec in June, and even to send us your support today?

The International Eucharistic Congress is a great opportunity for the new evangelization of North America. It is an occasion to rekindle the flame of the Catholic faith in our countries, where in the past there was a deep unity between the culture and the Faith.

Now, the urgency of Faith is obvious for an increasingly secular and materialistic world. It is not too late to regenerate Christian culture.

Each day, catechesis and testimonies will be offered to the thousands of participants—the present and the future leaders of the Church—and a solemn Eucharistic liturgy will be celebrated. There will also be processions of the Blessed Sacrament, as well as special religious events for young adults and families, and activities to promote brotherhood.

We hope that the International Eucharistic Congress will bring about a greater emphasis on the sacred character of the Eucharistic celebration, a deepened understanding of its sacrificial dimension, and a renewal of Eucharistic adoration, prayer, and good works.

This theme, the Eucharist as "Gift of God for the life of the world," will begin with Sunday's invocation of the Holy Spirit, who reminds the Church of all that Jesus did and then left in our care.

Monday will focus on Jesus' institution of the New Covenant, completed by the offering of His own blood, while the following day concentrates on the sacrificial dimension of the Eucharist. Wednesday invites us to explore the first result of this gift of God; in giving Himself and in being received in the faith of the Church, the Eucharistic Christ founds the Church and opens up the communion of divine persons for the communion of human persons.

The Eucharist gives life to worship, which embraces all of life, prayers and ritual gestures, but also gives life to human relationships, work, joys and sorrows, sufferings and hopes. Thus, Thursday focuses on adoration, as the evening concludes with a public procession with the Blessed Sacrament in the heart of the city.

The theme of Friday is the Eucharist and mission: it emphasizes charity and engagement for peace and justice.

Finally, the week concludes with teaching on "ordinary" holiness at the heart of the world, inspired and nourished by the Eucharist.

At this great gathering, which will be closely watched and reported by the news media around the world, public testimonies for the essential role of the Faith and witness to the centrality of Jesus in our lives will give us an unparalleled opportunity to evangelize millions upon millions of people, and especially those in our troubled countries—for example, perhaps your own neighbors, family and friends!

First, by your fervent prayers to Almighty God that the Congress will reawaken the faith and ecclesial life of the people of Canada, especially the people of Quebec. For many dioceses throughout North America, there is a direct link to Quebec, which gave birth to the Church on our continent.

Second, the Eucharist is the source and summit of the Christian life, as Pope John Paul II, and now Pope Benedict XVI, have repeated so often in their magnificent teachings. We are invited to celebrate this Congress together.

Third, I invite you to help me to make this Eucharistic Congress a possibility, a reality, and a blessing for many people in Latin America and in the Third World who might never have the opportunity to experience the graces and blessings of the International Catholic gathering without your generosity and financial assistance.

There will also be a myriad of other costs associated with an event of this magnitude – yet our budget is modest, and we seek only to cover what is necessary.

Without the support of our brothers and sisters in the Faith from the United States, our effort cannot be called a complete success.

We must not fail, with the eyes of a skeptical secular world and the media upon us. On the contrary, together, united with the Holy Father himself, we must show even the doubters the way to Christ!

I need your assistance, and I thank you in advance for your generosity in helping to make the International Eucharistic Congress accessible to many people.

Yours in the Eucharistic Jesus,

Marc Cardinal Ouellet

Marc Cardinal Ouellet
Archbishop of Quebec
Primate of Canada
President, 49th International Eucharistic Congress



INTERNATIONAL EUCHARISTIC CONGRESS 2008 Response/Reservation Form

I have enclosed a donation to help promote the International Eucharistic Congress in the amount of:
 \$10,000 \$1,000 \$100 \$ _____

Please charge my credit card (information below)

I will also photo-copy the Message from Cardinal Ouellet, and it will be distributed to Catholics in my parish. I will make a total of _____ copies.

For information about attending the International Eucharistic Congress personally or with my parish group or other Catholic organization, please see our website, www.cei2008.ca.

Print: _____
 Name: _____
 Address: _____
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
 Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please charge my VISA MasterCard Please enter your Security Code below. Your Security Code is the last 3 digits on the back of your credit card on the signature panel.
 # _____ Exp. _____

Signature: _____ Security Code: _____

If you wish a tax-deduction, please send your check and make it payable to our U.S. address:
 Archdiocese of Philadelphia, c/o Bishop Joseph Cistone • 222 North Seventeenth Street, Philadelphia, PA 19103-1299
 Your donation will be forwarded to the International Eucharistic Congress.

International
Eucharistic Congress
1073, boul. Rene-Levesque Ouest
Quebec G1S 4R5
Canada
www.cei2008.ca
Toll free: 866-436-2008

Family

Tiny, cramped, loud and messy. Bring it on

By Jimmy Patterson

Fifteen years ago, my wife Karen and I bought our first house. A modest, three bedroom, it fit our needs perfectly and we saw it as a great place to raise our young family, which at the time consisted of two young daughters, 7 and 5.

Three months after we signed the contract and moved in, the shower in the master bathroom broke. I unscrewed the fixture, forgetting just how important it was to turn off the water at the curb before attempting any repairs. The water shot out at me, hurling me against the back shower wall, kind of like the flooding surge that once soaked Larry, Moe and Curly, except that on this day there was just the one stooge.

I finally had the presence of mind to walk out with a wrench and close the stream off at the source. When I returned inside,



Patterson

Karen was sitting on the edge of our bed, crying.

"What?" I said. "It's just a leaky faucet. If I can't fix it -- and I'm pretty sure I can't -- we'll just call a plumber. It's nothing to cry about."

"I'M PREGNANT!" she said and we hugged and became emotional and I got her wet and greasy and we shared in the moment and realized our family would soon number five.

In a few short months, our comfortable, warm little home became a tiny, overcrowded house, a place in which we would regularly swear to each other through the years that we would leave in favor of something larger and more accommodating of our needs. Time, schedules, activities, responsibilities all got in the way and, to make a long story short, we remain where we have been for so many years: in that tiny, overcrowded house. Except that as of last week, it is no longer tiny and overcrowded. It has become comfortable and roomy again.

Our second child moved out last month, opting instead for independence and adulthood. I hear it happens to most all of them,

but that fact makes it no easier to accept. Cold hard reality is seldom warm and fuzzy.

For 15 years, we led the life millions of other parental teams lead. Busy every day; three children who kept us running at all hours and to all ends and sides of town; kids that remembered they needed mechanical pencils and \$40 calculators at 11 at night and 6 in the morning; kids who have sprung on us that it is in fact our turn to drive the car pool five minutes before we need to be wherever it is we need to be; arguments on both sides of a door to a bathroom that somehow met the needs (not always well) of two teenage girls and one poor boy who has heard and seen far more than I had ever hoped.

Forgive my maudlin moment, but I remember clearly snapping a photo of two young girls standing next to a real estate sign with a SOLD sticker slapped across it, both girls smiling at the thought that they had their very own house and would now have their very own rooms. And then The Boy came along, forcing them to share a bedroom for several years. Ultimately we would convert a living area into a bedroom

so the children could have their space and their mother and I could have what passed for sanity.

Our oldest moved out about two years ago, headstrong and head smart. I knew from the moment she came home from a Midland College field trip to Austin and told us that she had engaged the Speaker of the Texas House of Representatives in some verbal sparring about the excessiveness of college tuition that she would be just fine on her own, thank you very much. Had I ever developed any doubts about her ability to make it, I knew I could pick up the phone and call Tom Craddick himself just as a reminder. Somehow, because she always seemed so independent and sure of herself I was comfortable with her making it.

But last week, when our second one packed up, it was a different feeling. The feeling in the house is one of emptiness. The Boy is there every day and he remains as active as his sisters were combined, but strangely, we lack people. The complete family is no longer there. It is there, scattered, but it is not there, where I want it.

(Please See PATTERSON/19)

Bill & Monica Dodds

Praying through your hectic day

By Bill and Monica Dodds
Catholic News Service

As if your day isn't hectic enough, now some fool columnists want to begin their piece with a pop quiz on prayer!

1. In the Catholic tradition, there are four kinds of prayer: adoration, contrition, thanksgiving and:

- Supplication.
- Non-Catholic.
- Sneezy.

2. Speaking of sneezes, the custom of saying

"God bless you" after someone "achoo":

- Dates back to the Middle Ages.
- Is grounds for arrest in any U.S. federal building.
- Is better than saying what you're really thinking: "I'm not shaking your hand at the sign of peace after that!"

3. In Germany, when someone sneezes, a polite response is "Gesundheit." This means:

- "(Good) health."



Bill and Monica Dodds

- "Earthquake!"
- "Next time you do that, please cover your suntheit."

4. Hmm. We seem to have veered a little off track here. When it comes to praying:

- Sometimes it's easy to veer off track.
- It's best to go where the Spirit leads you.
- Everyone, on occasion, starts saying the Nicene Creed and at some point wanders into the Apostles' Creed.

5. Scripture says Jesus taught the apostles the Lord's Prayer. It was:

- In response to their asking him to teach them how to pray.
- Taught to them in Latin.
- Originally called the Hail Mary.

The correct answers? Always "a" and, in the case of 4, all three answers are true.

So how can you become better at "praying through your day"? A few points to consider:

- Ask God to help you become better at praying!
- Remember that prayer is a form of conversation and the best conversationalists are good listeners. What that means is, if you want to pray more throughout your day, it helps to work at developing a greater awareness of the presence of God in your life. Pause, take a breath, and realize you're

not in this (whatever "this" happens to be at the moment) alone. Listen.

--Get in the habit of reading the Bible every day, even if only for a few minutes. As the Catechism of the Catholic Church says, it is "strength for ... faith, food for the soul and a pure and lasting font of spiritual life" (No. 131, quoting the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation).

Start with a Gospel, the Acts of the Apostles or one of Paul's letters. Or examine the readings from the Mass for the day even if you can't get to church. (It can help to use a Bible that includes footnotes, such as the New American Bible, because sometimes what's being taught, said or done can be hard for us to understand.) --Use a daily devotional, a periodical that includes a prayer and meditation for each day. (We recommend "My Daily Visitor," but then, we are the editors of it.)

--Imitate the saints. Check out the life of a saint on the Web. Not surprisingly, saints can have a lot of great advice when it comes to praying, both by what they said and by how they lived. -- Make "become better at praying" a Lenten resolution. This year Ash Wednesday is Feb. 6!



Answer:
(From 15)
Jesus said, "Follow me."



Jesus calls apostles, spreads good news

When Jesus learned that John the Baptist had been arrested, he left Nazareth and moved to Capernaum, a city on the sea. By doing this, he fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah that said, "Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, the way to the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles, the people who sit in darkness have seen a great light, on those dwelling in a land overshadowed by death light has arisen."

From that moment, Jesus knew he had to continue to preach the message of John: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

John said he had been chosen to prepare the way of the Lord. Jesus was the Lord, and his message and ministry would be much more powerful than that of John.

Jesus knew he would need men to help him and learn from him, men he knew he could trust. He went out to find the right men.

As he walked along the shore of the Sea of Galilee one afternoon, he saw two men casting their fishing nets into the water. They were brothers, and their names were Simon and Andrew.

Jesus called out to them, "Come after me, and I will make you fishers of men."

Even though fishing was the only way they could support their families, the two brothers immediately left their work and followed Jesus.

As Jesus walked further along the shore with his new friends, they saw two other brothers, James and John, who were fishing from a boat with their father. Jesus called them, and they, too, left their work to follow Jesus.

Having selected the first of his apostles, Jesus traveled throughout the region of Galilee. He preached everywhere he went, spreading the good news of the kingdom of God, and he healed people who were sick with many different kinds of diseases and ailments. People who had been in pain or were paralyzed or tormented by spirits were cured and made whole.

Word of the wonders performed by Jesus spread as far away as Syria, and crowds from Galilee, Jerusalem, Judea and beyond the River Jordan formed around him.

JUST 4 KIDS

READ MORE ABOUT IT

Matthew 4

Q&A

1. What was the first message Jesus wanted to preach?
2. What did Jesus say when he called Peter and Andrew?

BIBLE ACCENT

Jesus called his first disciples to be with him while he traveled and taught and to prepare them for the ministries he had planned for them in the future. Instead of finding scholars of the law and religious leaders, Jesus called men who worked in a variety of occupations.

Among these disciples were apostles Peter and his brother Andrew, who were fishermen, and Matthew, a tax collector. Tax collectors were considered no better than thieves by the average citizen, but Matthew became the author of one of the four Gospels.

Jesus did not have to plead or beg his followers. He often simply said, "Follow me," and the men left what they were doing to go with Jesus.

The Book of Acts tells us about the ministries of some of the apostles and other Christians after Jesus ascended into heaven.

We can be disciples of Jesus today by following his commandments.

SPOTLIGHT ON SAINTS

St. Eystein Erlandsson

Eystein Erlandsson (d. 1188) was appointed the second archbishop of Nidaros in Norway. He also served as chaplain to King Inge.

Eystein wanted to build a church community in Norway that followed the same guidelines as the churches in the western part of the world. One of the building projects he worked on was the enlargement of the Christ Church cathedral.

Eystein performed the first royal coronation in Norway, established a code of laws of conduct for the church and founded several religious communities.

Eystein was devoted to St. Thomas Beckett, and he wrote a book called "The Passion and Miracles of the Blessed Olaf." We remember him on Jan. 26.

BIBLE TRIVIA

Can you name all 12 of Jesus' apostles?

Answer: Peter (also called Simon), Andrew, James, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Matthew, Thomas, Thaddeus, Simon the Cananean, James, the son of Alphaeus, and Judas Iscariot.

PUZZLE:

Cross out the following letters to find a hidden message:
B N C G H K

B J G G E H S K U K S H B S N K N A B B B I C D B
B C C F H O H L K G L O N B W
M B K N H C G C G N H B K E

(Answer Page 14)

Culture

'Bucket List': Unremarkable, formulaic and only mildly entertaining



IN SHORT

"The Bucket List" (Warner Bros.)

Unremarkable, formulaic, only mildly entertaining story of two cancer patients — a wealthy, womanizing tycoon (Jack Nicholson) and a middle-class garage mechanic (Morgan Freeman) — who decide to hit the road and experience all their wildest dreams in the time they have left, that is, until they "kick the bucket." We've seen all this before, and except for seeing the two stars in standard reliable form, director Rob Reiner's film is predictably routine, though some problematic elements aside, imparting a positive message about finding the joy in life and bringing joy to others.

By Harry Forbes
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — "The Bucket List" (Warner Bros.) is an unremarkable, formulaic, only mildly entertaining story about two cancer patients: wealthy, womanizing tycoon Edward Cole (Jack Nicholson) and middle-class garage mechanic Carter Chambers (Morgan Freeman).

When, rather uncomfortably sharing a hospital room, they learn they are terminal, these polar opposites decide to hit the road and experience all their wildest dreams in the year or so they have left, that is, until they "kick the bucket." A less grandiose version of such a list had been Carter's brainchild in college, one abandoned when family responsibilities got in the way of his dreams.

Billionaire Edward, of course, has the bucks to make it all happen, and in locales as diverse as Africa, Egypt, France

and Hong Kong they get to experience everything from sky diving to race-car driving. These stuntman-based sequences, however, are neither particularly enlightening nor amusing.

On the domestic side, Carter must leave his frustrated wife, Virginia (Beverly Todd), and family behind, much to her understandable incredulity, and though the much-married Edward seemingly has no family ties, we eventually come to learn of an estranged daughter, Emily.

The adventurous codgers are assisted by Edward's long-suffering flunky, Thomas (Sean Hayes), who gives it as good as he takes it from his autocratic boss.

We've seen all this before. The movie's main pleasure comes in seeing the two stars in standard reliable form, with Nicholson especially shining in some later scenes when his character undergoes a turnaround.

Director Rob Reiner's film from Justin Zackham's script is predictably routine,

though imparting a positive message about finding the joy in life and bringing joy to others. This theme is sullied, though, by some problematic elements mainly having to do with Edward's hedonistic lifestyle (there's an implied encounter with a stewardess and later, in a "well-intentioned" act of generosity, he hires a call girl for Carter, who admirably declines).

Family values ultimately prevail in the film's sentimental, feel-good wrap-up.

The film contains an instance of the f-word; some crude expletives, crass expressions and scattered profanity; a vulgar gesture; an implied nonmarital sexual encounter; sexual references and innuendo; and domestic discord. The USCCB Office for Film & Broadcasting classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Author makes good case for Anglo-Saxon worldview, but doubts linger

"God and Gold: Britain, America and the Making of the Modern World" by Walter Russell Mead. Alfred A. Knopf (New York, 2007). 449 pp., \$27.95.

Reviewed by John H. Carroll
Catholic News Service

"God and Gold: Britain, America and the Making of the Modern World," an intriguing study about the continuing influence of the Anglo-Saxon nations on the modern world, stands in contrast to the many recent predictions about the coming decline of the West.

The author, Walter Russell Mead, reminds readers in his introduction that in the past three centuries of warfare the English-speaking nations have been victorious. Naturally the victors have had much to do with the development of the modern world. Still, some readers may be excused for the reaction that this sounds like a lusty rendition of "Rule Britannia" at a London Proms concert.

However, Mead wisely concedes that the term Anglo-Saxon no longer applies just to the descendants of the invaders of Britannia after the decline and fall of Rome. He notes that WASP (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant)

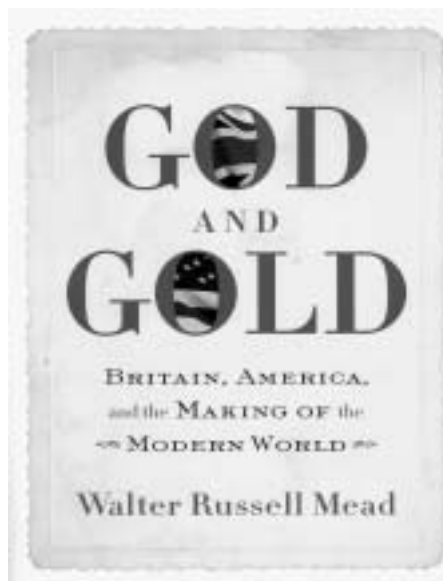
"is a state of mind today and most Americans live there."

Mead, a scholar at the Council of Foreign Relations in New York, then goes on to review the emergence and superiority of the English-speaking nations in the modern world. He attributes much of their success to their positions as mercantile sea powers. The English usually could align themselves with weaker European allies to oppose the stronger continental threat, whether it was Spain, France or Germany.

The 20-mile English Channel moat and the Royal Navy saved England during the dynastic struggles of the 18th and 19th centuries. Then the United States came to the aid of the British in two world wars. In the Cold War during the latter part of the 20th century the United States took over as the protector of Europe and the free world.

There also is a serious review of the importance of Judaism, Christianity and Islam in the modern world. Mead also takes into account the growing influence of secular modernism that he describes as "the youngest member of the family of Abraham" in the West.

There may be some dispute in religious circles about the inclusion of secularism in the Abrahamic tradition. Still, the author turns for inspiration to the "intellectual



Protestant clergyman," the Rev. Reinhold Niebuhr, and claims that he "fully and completely articulated and simultaneously critiqued the core elements of the Anglo-American worldview."

Actually, Mead has presented a good case for the defense of the WASP worldview. He concludes that "these values are leading us westward and upward." Still, on reflection, a reader may be excused for some lingering doubt.

'A History of Sin'

Reviewed Catholic News Service

With Lent rapidly approaching, a book called "A History of Sin" would seem to be timely reading. But the best of this volume by John Portmann may be its opening and concluding chapters.

Portmann is an assistant professor in the religious studies department at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville. This is his fifth book since 2000, all focused on "bad things" and sin.

He begins by telling us, "God has made a comeback, and with him, inevitably, sin." Tracing that comeback to 9-11, he says that since then "religious enthusiasts and skeptics alike have warned to the divine in a way we have not seen for decades."

He then presents definitions of sin, including what he considers the "most useful definition of sin (coming from St. Basil the Great): misusing the powers God gave us to do good."

He also offers a brief overview of sin in the Abrahamic traditions, drawing some comparisons among the Jewish, Christian and Islamic views, as well as between them and other traditions.

The outlook for the faithful isn't good: "Living in the West in the 21st century almost invariably involves scantily clad people and news of corporate tax fraud. ... The entire public sphere has become an occasion of sin, it might seem to traditional Jews, Christians or Muslims, who understandably worry about a corresponding neutralization of sin."

Unfortunately, throughout much of the book, Portmann seems to equate a theological view of sin with a legal notion of deviance. Some sins seem to take on status similar to archaic laws, such as prohibiting someone from holding office if he has taken part in a duel, or requiring people to notify police before driving a car into a city.

HISTORY: Working together, community can achieve more

(From 11)

the future of the parish and about the need to work together, that's kind of when (consolidation effort) all started. After he came, and after we had our first fight, I realized we could work together."

The two pastors realized they could better work together and have a common vision if they were able to share aspects of the faith like common baptism regulations and marriage regulations.

"We were aware that the north side and the south side were not that close," Plagens said, "but our main concern was the unification of the ministries to make everything more efficient. And then all of a sudden, we were led to conversations that asked, 'Why not unite into one parish because that's what it was here in the beginning.'"

At a unification Mass at the Big Spring High School Auditorium last year, almost 900 people gathered for the Eucharist.

"One of the most telling comments I

heard was when the bishop told me that not one person came up and complained," said Plagens, who has been assigned to St. Ann's in Midland as a senior priest.

Incoming pastor Fr. Bernard Gully and associate pastor Rev. Ariel Lagunilla, will also soon occupy a central parish office in

Big Spring.

Gully, who will become pastor of Holy Trinity effective Feb. 15 and who will celebrate his installation as pastor March 2, said the No. 1 priority will be Sunday Masses.

"That is going to be the biggest challenge; some people won't have their Mass

at their favorite time or at the place they prefer to go.

"It will be a challenge, but I think in time we will see some good fruit. It will take time, but we'll see it."

LENT: Why the season is a love story

(From 6)

no to what his Father was asking of him -- suffer and die -- and seek personal power for himself; or he could be faithful to his Father's plan that he teach all how to live as God's children should, knowing this could, would, get him cruelly executed.

Thus, Lent -- but Easter too -- began in the desert of torture.

But Jesus said to Satan "Be gone," went out to his people and spent the next three years doing nothing but showing them how much he loved them.

Sterling and I concluded I would write the Lenten book, with purple and darkness eliminated. It would be titled "Lent, an Uncommon Love Story."

Sadly, Sterling didn't survive the heart and kidney transplant. We buried him just before Palm Sunday last year. I knew I always would remember how we had concluded that Lent is a love story showing us that, for all our difficulties and sorrows, we are not alone -- we forever are linked to Jesus and with him are ever alive.

Thanks to Sterling, I wrote the book. It offers our vision of Lent as a love story.

I look upon Lent as a time to focus on our own lives and to be surprised, perhaps, to see indeed that Lent, which contains the biography of Our Lord Jesus Christ, can be nothing less than a love story.

BIOETHICS: Every life worth living, despite its imperfect qualities

(From 9)

On the other hand, we should not draw the conclusion, that tube feeding will always be required. There will be circumstances and situations where tube feeding may become extraordinary or disproportionate, as when it is no longer effective (the food is not absorbed), when it causes extreme discomfort, pain or serious infection, or when it causes other grave difficulties such as repetitive aspiration (vomiting and breathing the

vomit into the lungs, often resulting in pneumonia). Normally, however, tube feeding is not unduly burdensome and is not unduly expensive or difficult, and therefore should be presumed necessary for patients who might need it, unless and until it is shown to no longer provide the benefit of nourishment, or to cause significant complications and harmful side-effects.

Often what lies at the heart of these debates is the view that a life must have a certain

amount of "quality" or else it need not be continued. But every life has imperfect qualities, and some have more than others. It is never our place to judge whether another's life is "worth living." Our duty is to provide loving care and strong support to those whose "quality of life" may be less than perfect, including those who are sick or those who may be struggling with serious disabilities like those in Terri Schiavo's situation, rather than targeting them for an early demise through the withholding of food and

water.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org

HYDRATION: Artificial nourishment may be excessively burdensome

(From 6)

well as that of obtaining, if possible, the means necessary for an adequate support of life. Nor is the possibility excluded that, due to emerging complications, a patient may be

unable to assimilate food and liquids, so that their provision become altogether useless. Finally, the possibility is not absolutely excluded that, in some rare cases, artificial nourishment and hydration may be excessively burdensome for the patient or may

cause significant physical discomfort, for example resulting from complications in the use of the means employed.

These exceptional cases, however, take nothing away from the general ethical criterion, according to which the provision of

water and food, even by artificial means, always represents a natural means for preserving life, and is not a therapeutic treatment. Its use should therefore be considered ordinary and proportionate, even when the "vegetative state" is prolonged."

FRONTERAS

(Para 4)

ra extraña. Ahí dará su fruto. Al salir de su patria, Jesús se compromete con los pueblos extranjeros.

Éste es mi Hijo amado, dice el Padre, porque sale con el fuerte impulso del

Espíritu Santo. En el Reino sin fronteras, no hay preferidos ni favoritos. Si es así, sanemos el afán de dividir y separar. Jesús promete que toda tierra puede manar leche y miel. Su Espíritu habitará en tu tienda, si tú asumes su causa. Su amor te conquistará, si practicas la justicia.

Si te ha formado para hacer alianzas, ¿para qué declaras la guerra? Si él construye puentes, ¿para qué elevas un muro? Si él se moja la espalda en el río para salvarte, ¿por qué persigues al que se moja para alimentar a su familia? Si él libera al cautivo, ¿por qué tanto encarcelado, sin

recurso a la justicia?

La misión de Jesús es amar sin fronteras. No viene para exigir, sino para convocar. No viene para controlar, sino para rescatar. No viene para colonizar, sino para redimir. Vamos con él. Bauticémonos en el espíritu de su compasión.

MESSAGE: Sex intended by God to be life giving and holy

(From 1)

to satisfy their sexual urges.

Reflect often on this profound biblical truth—OUR BODIES ARE TEMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. In an earlier chapter to the Corinthians, Paul also states “You are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you...for the temple of God which you are is holy.” (1 Cor.3:16-17)

GOD LOOKED AT WHAT GOD HAD MADE AND “FOUND IT VERY GOOD.”

After God made the first humans and all creation, as we read in the first chapter of Genesis, God looked at what God had made and “found it very good.” To help us appreciate and respect the beauty and goodness of our bodies with all their members, including the sexual organs, God has given us the virtue of chastity, which comes from a Latin word meaning pure. Chastity is part of what we call the cardinal virtue of temperance, or self-control. It gives us the freedom, dignity and ability to face all the complexities and the pressures and all the blessings that are associated with our human sexuality. It directs our sexuality toward authentic love and away from using persons as objects for selfish pleasure. Chastity helps us to understand the meaning of our sexuality that affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of one’s body and soul. The integration of the gift of sexuality into the total person is to love and respect our bodies and the bodies of others as temples of the Holy Spirit. Chastity is a liberating and a joyful virtue. The Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us that “Chastity is a moral virtue. It is also a gift from God, a grace and a fruit of spiritual effort. The Holy Spirit enables one whom the waters of baptism has regenerated to imitate the purity of Christ.” [23] Chastity is a virtue, a gift, that guides and allows us to do what is right and good and loving in the area of sexuality. Chastity enables the full integration of sexuality within the person, in accord with each one’s state in life—married, single, professed religious or consecrated celibate. Chastity promotes, according to God’s plan, abstention from sex outside of marriage and affirms the sacredness of all relationships, especially within marriage. The chaste person, using God’s grace, strives to maintain the integrity of the powers of life and love to live happy and holy lives. The virtue of chastity does not deny the goodness of genital sex or seek to suppress one’s sexuality but assists us to lovingly and intelligently moderate our sexual behavior and frees us to live joyfully as masters, not slaves of our

natural inclinations

To live the virtue of chastity, we need to constantly call upon the precious and powerful Holy Spirit who lives in us because of our baptism and confirmation. Chastity, modesty, and self-control are fruits of the Holy Spirit dwelling within us, that teach us to respect our bodies as special gifts from God. As human beings “called to be holy as God is holy” (Lv 19:2), we need to be aware of and pray to resist temptation to engage in activities which are violations of our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit and of the virtue of chastity, such as: sexual acts with self or with others, immodesty in behavior, dress or speech, and misuse of the internet for pornography, or misuse of reading material, movies and T.V. programs that can lead us into sin.

GOD MADE US SEXUAL BEINGS — MADE IN THE VERY IMAGE AND LIKENESS OF GOD

God has made us sexual beings. We are made in the very image and likeness of God. An essential gift that God has given to our bodies is our sexuality, which is designed by God for healthy, holy and loving relationships and for bringing new life into our world. Our sexuality touches our deepest affections and our carings. As images of God, who is love, we are to express our love with our whole being, including our bodies, according to the way Christ teaches us. It is through the mediation of the body with bodily emotions, that other people attract and charm us in their bodily reality, and make us begin to love them. If we are to find the enduring and true love we need, our whole being must learn generous and unselfish love as taught by Christ; that is, we must learn to be chaste, to rule and guide our affections, desires and natural inclinations of our bodies with intelligence, respect, and honest love, as the Holy Spirit directs us.

Sexuality touches our total personhood; body, soul, emotion, intellect and will. Sex was made by God to be a pleasurable and joyful gift and to be used in accord with God’s purpose for life and love with its full expression in marriage. However, sex is far more than passing fun or seeking pleasure for pleasure’s sake. The gift of our sexuality is made to nurture love in us, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and to express a human love that lasts for a lifetime. This gift was made to bring into being children, precious beyond words, and to foster family unity and caring in the homes, which can survive and flourish only in the context of chaste and generous love.

SEX WAS INTENDED BY GOD TO BE LIFE GIVING AND HOLY

Sex was intended by God to be sacred and holy, and life giving. When shared in a loving way in marriage, sex is for Christians a sacrament—making people holy. In marriage, the act of intercourse is a unique holy, beautiful way that husband and wife make the gift of self to each other to bring new life into the world. In marriage, sexual intercourse is an encounter with the loving Christ. Considering sexual intimacy—intercourse—in such a holy and sacred way, can help us understand why Sacred Scripture and the constant teaching of the Church disapprove of premarital sex and homosexual activity, and consider them sinful because they do not fulfill the meaning of sex as determined by God.

Our society is drenched in the misuse of sex. The thoughtless and reckless abuse of sex as promoted by many people has already proven not to be the gateway to paradise as many promised, but a path to infinite pain and sorrow. Few realized how much pain and suffering can come when sex is misused and abused. No one dreamed that when we abandoned self-control, the virtue of chastity, that we would see such tragedies as AIDS, and a host of other sexually transmitted diseases, so many abortions, so many adolescent pregnancies, so many broken homes, broken lives, and broken hearts.

WHAT IS SEX REALLY ABOUT?

Extensive study confirms that teenage sex is not solely about sex at all. Adolescent sexual behavior is often a reflection of non-direct sexual factors and indicators of an attempt to fulfill unmet emotional needs. Two main factors are currently having a profound impact on teen sexual choices—popular culture and personal circumstances. First, contemporary popular culture is engaged in delivering two deceptive message which continue to barrage our youth: 1) Sex has no consequences, or any potential consequences can easily be avoided; and 2) Sex is the most important thing in life—if you are not engaging in it as often as possible—and usually with as many partners as possible—you are missing out. The terrible consequences of this propaganda and false happiness are evident in real life. Understanding the world of teens makes communication with and caring for them easier. The influence of the entertainment media in particular on youth culture is extraordinary.

Second, as well as influence from popular culture, personal life situations of youth

are also prime determinants of sexual choices. Much evidence indicates that the following factors are frequently involved with potentially perilous sexual behavior: parental divorce/separation; overly strict or permissive parenting; being raised in the absence of a loving parent; a history of drug or alcohol use; exposure to regular doses of sexually explicit material; violence or abuse in the home; lacking a relationship with Christ and low level of religious involvement and how it is to be lived; failure of parents to discuss sexuality; early dating and close friends who are sexually active, low self-esteem, and poor school performance.

A faith that addresses the place and meaning of sexuality in our total being and its expression according to norms determined by the inspired word of God, and explained by the Church, is key to a healthy sexual lifestyle. Parents also need to be fully involved in the lives and sexual education of their sons and daughters. This reality is made easier by the fact that most adolescents cite parents as preferred sources of information on issues related to sexuality. It is love and witness not just information, and it is messengers not just messages that best teach us how to live and behave. The use of technology cannot replace the importance of relationships in modeling behavior.

The true way to live happy, holy, and healthy lives is by practicing the virtue of chastity, which teaches us how to respect our bodies, and the gift of sexuality, for the purposes for which God intended. The gift of chastity helps us to understand the true purpose of sex and how sexual pleasure is to be experienced in marriage, and to respect sex as a gift from God and not something evil.

THE VIRTUE OF CHASTITY HELPS US TO APPRECIATE OUR BODIES AS TEMPLES OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

The virtue of chastity, guided by the Holy Spirit, teaches us that the practice of chastity leads us to happiness, liberation and inner peace. The virtue of chastity as inspired by the Holy Spirit helps us to live our sexuality in a way that is meaningful, enriching, and self-fulfilling. Our Catholic faith has always taught us that chastity is both a human virtue and a divine gift. We cannot practice this gift without constantly asking God for the strength and wisdom to live the virtue of chastity with courage and determination.

Just ponder—our bodies are “temples of

(Please See **CHASTITY/19**)

CHASTITY: Fully conscious and willful violations of chastity are sinful

(From 18)

the Holy Spirit.” Would we ever think of desecrating, destroying sacred buildings of worship--our churches, our synagogues? In a similar manner, we should never desecrate, injure, or defile a more sacred temple of God, our bodies, “If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy.” (1 Cor 3;16-17). To help remind us to respect the temple of the Holy Spirit that dwells in each one of us, Christ has given us all the means that we need to live our sexuality in a purposeful, meaningful, and enriching way. We need to study the truths and teachings of our Catholic faith, especially about sexuality, so that we have the knowledge, wisdom and light to live holy, happy and good, moral lives. However, we must realize that information, knowledge, alone is not necessarily effective in changing behavior. What is needed is good formation in the basic principles as given to us by Christ and our Catholic Church about how to live our lives. Where information and knowledge is integrated, it leads to formation and transformation. Values-based sexuality education programs promote and encourage behaviors reflective of these values. It is in the Gospel that Jesus models for us true love and faithfulness, and by following His lifestyle, we will have the grace to discover the meaning and purpose of life. To truly appreciate our marvelous bodies as gifts from God, we need to often reflect on pertinent passages of Sacred Scripture, and we need to pray each day for the gift of chastity, so that we can truly appreciate who we are and what God wants us to do as moved by God’s Holy Spirit. We especially need to be faithful to participating in the Eucharist, receiving Christ often in Holy Communion, and celebrating all the Sacraments, so that we will have the power of Jesus Christ alive in us to live our lives in accord with what Jesus asks us to do. In all circumstances, especially moments of temptation, we need to ask the question: WWJD? –What would Jesus do? Jesus our Good Shepherd will always be there to help

us do the right thing.

A WORD ABOUT “SAFE SEX,” BIRTH CONTROL METHODS AND CONDOMS

As regards living chaste lives, many today promote the false concept of “safe sex” which usually means how to have sex without bearing the responsibility and consequences of this sacred act, like avoiding pregnancy or sexually transmitted diseases. The surest way to have “safe sex” is not to engage in sexual activity and to reserve sex for marriage. God provided the answer millennia ago about how to live “safe sex” by giving us the 6th Commandment: “You shall not commit adultery.” Flowing from this Commandment has been the constant teaching of the Catholic community that the safest sex is to live according to the principles and values of the 6th Commandment, and the principles of good living as given to us by Jesus. In a moral and spiritual sense there is no “safe sex,” except by abstaining from sex in accord with the Commandments of God. Abstinence from sexual activity until marriage is the grace of God that is constantly offered to us and provides the safest way to have a peaceful and content conscience. While birth control devices, including condoms, may seem to provide “a quick fix” to some social problems, these devices lead to much guilt and unhappiness and false solutions about protection from sexually transmitted diseases and sometimes still lead to pregnancies. The “safe-sex” slogan is not the answer to these crises. A sexuality education campaign aimed at fostering loving commitment and social responsibility serves the goal of preventing teen pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases, and also serves the health and happiness of persons involved and society at large.

Safe sex promoters usually encourage young women who are not married to use different types of birth control, and for young men who are not married to use condoms. Flowing from the teaching of Christ, biblical principles, and the teachings of our

beautiful Catholic Church, it needs to be stated clearly that these “safe sex” methods, except abstinence, are sinful and destroy the peace of heart that God wants for us and violate many basic norms of morality and open the door to rampant sexual activity and perverts the meaning of sex and cheapens our self-esteem. The only safe sex is to live one’s life according to God’s plan of love and save sex for marriage. Abstinence is not just a no to sexual activity but a yes to one’s future and to one’s future spouse. It is a yes to one’s potential, to one’s ability to share true love, to health and holiness, to a peaceful conscience, and it is a yes to trust, faithfulness and friendship. Mainly, it is a beautiful yes to God, who as our loving Father, has given us commands and norms to live in a meaningful and loving way the gift of sex.

Fully conscious and willful violations of chastity are sinful. To die in serious sin, without repenting and accepting God’s merciful love, means separation from God forever. The inspired word of God as given by St. Paul in chapter six of 1 Corinthians tell us that neither fornicators nor idolaters or adulterers “will inherit the kingdom of God”, and that “the body however is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body.” No one lives the Christian life in a perfect way, but thank God that we have the beautiful Sacrament of Reconciliation, so that if there are failures, we can humbly receive God’s mercy and forgiveness and the grace to make a new beginning. A wonderful way to maintain respect for our bodies and to live the virtue of chastity is by celebrating often the Sacrament of Reconciliation, the Sacrament of Confession, which not only gives us God’s forgiveness, but gives us the grace and strength to overcome temptation and to live our sexuality in accord with the purpose for which God intended it.

JESUS OUR GOOD SHEPHERD IS ALWAYS GUIDING US

To help us live the beautiful gift of sexuality as given by God in our bodies, Jesus

our Good Shepherd is there each day to lead us and guide us, especially when there are temptations or moments when others might tempt us to not appreciate our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit, or who might strive to lead us into sin by using the gift of our sexuality in ways not intended by God. In the moments of temptation, call upon the Holy Spirit who is always there to help us, and also call upon Mary, our Mother, who was the perfect disciple of Christ and teaches us how to live each moment of life in a spirit of faith, in a spirit of courage, and in a spirit of love. Remember, you are temples of the Holy Spirit. Our dignity as temples of the Holy Spirit and children of God requires us to act out in a loving, conscious way our call to be disciples of Christ, and to make free choices, as guided by the Holy Spirit who enables us to always make the choices that will lead us to life and love.

VALUE CHECK

In reference to making right choices and living by the values as given us by Christ in reference to our sexuality, I offer you here a little guide called a Value Check.

Try this 4-step exercise to identify your values as regards your sexuality and the standards that you want to guide you in reference to sex:

Reflect on what matters to you most. Ask yourself how you would complete this statement: “What I want to appreciate most as regards to my sexuality is.....”

Live your answer through your choices that you make each day and the values on which you base your life and decisions—Do this honestly, responsibly, courageously, and compassionately.

Pray for the guidance and the wisdom of the Holy Spirit to help you always live according to the standards that God has established for our human sexuality and in accord with the light and guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Remember – Always as you form relationships and make new friends, “that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit.”

PATTERSON: Give me tiny, loud and mess over warm and comfy any day

(From 14)

I suppose there are advantages. The kids' bathtub will no longer clog up with our daughters' hair. I will no longer have to walk into that same bathroom and see enough bottles of shampoo and body wash that I could play chess with all of the empties. I will no longer have to buy macaroni

and cheese several times a week or smell a blow dryer on its last legs or hear the sound of a teenage girl texting her boyfriend during dinner.

No more sweaty palms as we tear open the latest report card and no more busted mom-and-dad imposed curfews and lame excuses about movies that ran late or getting so wrapped up in a video game that

they "lost track of time." No more watching "Friends" all day and all night and wondering how come our daughter isn't up at 11 in the morning, only to then see her wake up with a smile that made it impossible to be upset.

I should be -- and I am -- thankful. We have been blessed with a life that has been good beyond measure. But the adjustment to life with grown children, an unstoppable

one, is not easy.

My wife and I now have that quiet reading room we've always wanted. And trust me when I say that the wanting of it is much preferable to the having it. Be careful what you wish for.

Tiny, cramped, loud and messy. Bring it on. I'll take that over warm and roomy any day.

DIOCE-SCENES

The West Texas Angelus
Official Newspaper of the
Diocese of San Angelo, Texas
POSTMASTER: Send all address
changes to:
WEST TEXAS ANGELUS
P.O. Box 1829
SAN ANGELO, TX 76902-1829

Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Publisher

Jimmy Patterson
Director of Communications
Editor

Member
Catholic News Service
Catholic Press Association
Texas Catholic News

Published the first Monday following
the 1st Saturday of each month and
delivered to all registered parish-
ioners in the San Angelo Diocese.

Subscription rate for all others:
\$10 per year

THIRD CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT
SAN ANGELO, TEXAS

Printed by the
San Angelo Standard Times
A Scripps-Howard Company

Submissions:

Story suggestions, calendar items,
parish briefs and all other
submissions should be emailed to
JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.

COPY, PHOTO DEADLINE:
Third Friday of every month.

Photos should be in jpeg format.

Letters to the editor are welcome,
and should be emailed to
JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net.
Letters to the editor are printed at
the discretion of the editor and iden-
tities of the writer are subject to
verification. Please include name,
address and phone number when
submitting letters.



Midland-Odessa

Knights of Columbus #3071 held
its annual Clergy Appreciation
Dinner January 30 at the KC Hall
on FM 1788. Almost 30 priests,
women religious and deacons
were honored at the dinner.



Midland

Catholic recording artist David Kauffman, at
piano, sings with the St. Ann's Church Choir
during a January 26 concert in Midland.
Kauffman, who has written songs that have
ended up in K-LOVE's Top 10, pens many
contemplative-type songs commonly heard on
retreats.



Rowena

Children gather at the
crib at Christmas Eve
Mass to sing Happy
Birthday to Jesus dur-
ing Christmas Mass at
St. Joseph's Church in
Rowena

