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**VOLUME XXI
NUMBER 5**

**MAY
2000**

NONPROFIT ORG.
PRESORTED
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US POSTAGE PAID
SAN ANGELO, TX

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ANGELUS

NEWSPAPER OF THE DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO PMangelus@aol.com • www.san-angelo-diocese.org

DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO
PO BOX 1829

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Pope Concludes Holy Week, Calls For New World Order Of Peace



Photo by CNS.

By *Benedicta Cipolla*
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Surrounded by an explosion of springtime color and a multitude of jubilee year pilgrims, Pope John Paul II celebrated the holiest day of the Christian calendar with a call for a new world order.

“The risen Christ signals the paths of hope along which we can advance together toward a world more just and mutually supportive, in which the

blind egoism of the few will not prevail over the cries of pain of the many,” the pope said in his traditional Easter address April 23.

Eclipsing all turnout predictions, a cheering crowd of 150,000 people packed St. Peter’s Square for the “urbi et orbi” message, Latin for “to the city and to the world.”

The pope expressed his wish for a resolution to conflicts in Africa and Latin America and an end to “the persistent tensions affecting the Middle East, vast areas of Asia, and some parts of Europe.”

He made an impassioned appeal that the Easter message of life’s victory over death would lead to cross-cultural dialogue, the acknowledgment of the value of

human life and “effective responses to the increasingly felt demand for justice and equal opportunity in all areas of society.”

Despite a grueling Holy Week schedule, the 79-year-old pope sounded energetic amid the veritable garden of 50,000 flowers and bulbs from the Netherlands that adorned the altar.

Under a bright sun that fought its way out from behind morning clouds, he imparted Easter greetings in 61 languages, wishing English speakers “a blessed Easter in the joy of Jesus Christ, the risen Lord and savior of the world!”

This jubilee year, the traditional open-air Easter Mass marked a return to a tradition of medieval origin.

For the first time since the Holy See moved from Rome to Avignon in 1309, the Mass began with the rite of the Resurrexit, the pope’s witness to Christ’s resurrection before the Acheiropita icon of the Most Holy Savior.

Thought to have been brought to Rome from the East sometime during the early Middle Ages, the icon, which is kept in the Shrine of the Holy Stairs, originally depicted the enthroned Christ painted on cloth and then applied to a wooden tablet. All that is visible today is Christ’s face; the rest of the icon is covered with silver.

The pope broke with a more recent tradition Good Friday by writing the meditations for the annual Way of the Cross procession at the Colosseum.

While since 1985 he had invited other people to offer their **see “POPE,” page nine**

Temporary Guidelines For The Weekday Celebrations In The Absence Of A Priest For The Diocese Of San Angelo

By *Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI*
May 1, 2000

Introduction

In recent years in our Diocese, as well as in most parts of the Church in the United States of America, there has been a reduction in the number of priests available to celebrate Mass on a daily basis in our parish communities. Indeed, in some places, one priest is assigned as pastor of several parishes and is barely able to provide Sunday Mass in each of these communities. In some instances, even the Sunday Mass is not possible each week. For this reason, the Ritual Book, “Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest,” was developed. Guidelines for these Sunday celebrations have been issued for our Diocese based

on directives from the Holy See as well as from the National Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Importance of Daily Mass

Any discussion of weekday liturgical worship must begin by recalling the importance and normative character of daily Mass in the life of every Catholic community. Daily Mass is normative for priests and should have great importance for all the faithful. Pope Paul VI recommended that priests “worthily and devoutly offer Mass each day in order that both they and the rest of the faithful may enjoy the benefits that flow so richly from the sacrifice of the cross. [Encyclical Letter, *Mysterium Fidei*, number 33] Pope John Paul II echoes these words in recalling that the celebration of the

Eucharist be the “most important moment of the priest’s day, the center of his life,” and urging that “priests should be encouraged to celebrate Mass every day, even in the absence of a congregation, since it is an act of Christ and the Church.” (Ad Limina talk to bishops of Michigan and Ohio, May 21, 1998 and *Code of Canon Law*, c.904)

Elsewhere the Holy Father encourages seminarians to “take part every day in the eucharistic celebration, in such a way that afterwards they will take up as a rule of their priestly life this daily celebration” [Apostolic Exhortation, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*] Quoting the Cure of Ars the Holy Father also exhorts, “How well a priest does, therefore, to offer himself to God in sacrifice ev-

ery morning!” [1986 Holy Thursday letter to Priests] Following from

these papal exhortations, I ask that **see “GUIDELINES,” page eleven**



Prayer Leader Bill Gigl gives Holy Eucharist to Joan Richling and others in a Weekday Celebration in the Absence of a Priest at Holy Angels Church, San Angelo. (Photo by WTA: Peter Micale.)



Mary – The Perfect Disciple

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the mother of God and our mother. However, we always need to see her as a woman, a sister, and a disciple of Jesus, and we must look at her life in relation to our own experience – what we share, or should share with her. Like us, Mary was a follower of Christ, and she is His perfect disciple.

Mary is a believing, trusting and hope-filled Christian who remains down through the centuries as a perfect example for all of us to imitate. The foundation of her discipleship is her faith and trust in the Lord. Mary, the first and most faithful disciple of Christ, teaches us three powerful lessons in discipleship:

- She teaches us to be docile. Mary was obedient and completely surrendered to God's will, like her son, Jesus. Mary realized that the grace and greatness that was hers was a total gift from God. With great humility, she recognized her dependency on God. Mary was completely docile, open, to what God wanted of her.

Like Mary, we need to be willing to be taught by our lived experience of God's presence in us and with us. With her, we need to respond constantly to Christ – here is your servant, whatever you want, let it be done to me.

- Mary teaches us to dwell on the Word of God, to contemplate and treasure this Word, and from it to find meaning and direction for our life. We need to dwell with the Word by slowly savoring the words of Scripture and the writings of the spiritual masters. We need to pray with the mind and heart lifted to God in an eternal embrace of love that grants us at once deep peace and the courage to act as other Christs to transform the world.

- Mary teaches us to not only be receivers of the Word, but to be doers. She not only heard, but she acted on the Word of God. Mary was there when God most needed her.



see "MARY" page ten

María – El Discípulo Perfecto

Por Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI

La Santa Virgen María es la madre de Dios y nuestra madre. Sin embargo, siempre necesitamos verla como una mujer, una hermana, y un discípulo de Cristo, y necesitamos ver su vida en relación con nuestras propias experiencias – lo que compartimos, o lo que debemos compartir con ella. Como nosotros, María era una seguidora de Cristo, y ella fue su discípulo perfecto.

María es una Cristiana creyente y confiable y llena de esperanza quien por los siglos sigue permaneciendo como un ejemplo perfecto para que todos nosotros poderla imitar. María, el discípulo de Cristo primera y más fiel, nos enseña tres lecciones poderosas tocante al discipulado. La fundación de su discipulado es su fe y confianza en el Señor.

- Nos enseña ser dócil. María era obediente y completamente se entregó a la voluntad de Dios como su hijo, Jesús. María realizó que la gracia y la grandeza que era de ella fue un don total de Dios.

Con gran humildad, ella reconoció su dependencia en Dios. María era completamente dócil, abierta, a lo que Dios le pedía.

- Como María, necesitamos estar dispuestos ser enseñados por medio de nuestras experiencias vividas de la presencia de Dios en nosotros y con nosotros. Con ella, necesitamos responder constantemente a Cristo – aquí esta tu siervo, lo que quieras, deja que se haga en mí.

- María nos enseña a ponderar la Palabra de Dios, a contemplar y dejar entrar en nuestros corazones esta Palabra, y de ella hallar significado y dirección para nuestra vida. Necesitamos ponderar la Palabra por medio de saborear despacio las palabras de la Escritura y los escritos de los maestros espirituales. Necesitamos rezar con la mente y el corazón elevado a Dios en el abrazo de amor eterno que nos da a la vez una paz profunda y el coraje de actuar como otros Cristos para transformar el

see "MARÍA" page ten

The Bishop's Schedule



MAY 2000

May 1-5: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center, Annual Priests Retreat

May 5: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

May 6: Midland, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Confirmation at 5:00 p.m.

May 7: Andrews, Our Lady of Lourdes, Confirmation at 10:30 a.m.

May 8: Wall, St. Ambrose, Confirmation at 7:00 p.m.

May 9: Abilene, Sacred Heart, Confirmation at 7:00 p.m. (candidates from Sacred Heart, and Holy Family in Abilene and Sts. Joachim and Ann in Clyde)

May 10: San Angelo, Dioc-

esan Pastoral Center, 8:30 a.m. Mass for staff. Staff Meeting and luncheon at 11:00 a.m. Sonora, St. Ann, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

May 11: San Angelo, Convention Center, Confirmation for St. Joseph at 6:30 p.m.

May 12: Fort Stockton, St. Agnes, Confirmation at 7:00 p.m. for St. Agnes and St. Joseph in Fort Stockton and St. Isidore in Coyanosa

May 13: Odessa, Holy Redeemer, Confirmation at 5:30 p.m.

May 14: Odessa, St. Anthony, Confirmation at 10:00 a.m. for St. Anthony and St. Joseph

May 15: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., Meet with Presbyteral Council and Dioc-

esan Finance Council. St. Mary, Confirmation at 6:30 a.m. for St. Mary and St. Margaret

May 16: Midland, St. Stephen, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

May 17: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Liturgy Commission meeting at 10:00 a.m. Junction, St. Therese, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m. for Junction and Menard

May 18: Rankin, St. Thomas, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m. for Rankin, Crane, McCamey, Big Lake and Iraan

May 19: Coleman, Sacred Heart, Confirmation at 7:00 p.m.

May 20: Abilene, St. Vincent Pallotti, Confirmation at 5:30 p.m.

May 21: Brownwood, St. Mary, Confirmation at 12:30 p.m.

May 22: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Meeting of San Angelo Ministerial Association at 11:30 a.m.

May 23: Abilene, St. Francis, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

May 24: Mass for Carmelite Sisters at 8:00 a.m.

May 25: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Graduation for Angelo Catholic School at 8:30 a.m. Brady, St. Patrick, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m. for Brady, Eola and Eden

May 26-28: Baltimore, Maryland, Priestly Ordination

May 29: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Mass for Memorial Day and Jubilee Day for the Military at 9:00 a.m.

May 30: Big Spring, Immaculate Heart of Mary, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

June, 2000

June 1: Sanderson, St. James, Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

June 2: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center, Media Luncheon at 11:30 a.m.

June 3-4: Dallas, Wedding

June 4: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Marriage Jubilee Mass at 3:00 p.m.

June 5-6: San Antonio

June 7-8: Dallas

June 8: San Angelo, Bishop's Residence, Outdoor Dinner for Women Religious, Priests of the Diocese and Diocesan Pastoral Staff at 6:00 p.m.

June 9: San Angelo, Blessing for the Cancer Drive at 6:00 p.m.

June 10: San Angelo, Holy Angels, Wedding at 7:30 p.m.

June 11: Austin, Diocesan Confirmation

June 12: Christoval, Hermitage, Vows of Brother David at 5:00 p.m.

June 13: Miles, St Thomas

Church Hall, meet with Farmers and Ranchers of Area at 8:00 p.m.

June 14-17: Milwaukee, Meeting of National Conference of Catholic Bishops

June 18: San Angelo, Roy Robb Post Adjudication Facility, Mass with Youth at 10:30 a.m.

June 19: San Angelo, Dinner with Healthy Families of San Angelo at 7:00 p.m.

June 20: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council Meeting at 10:30 a.m.

June 21: Carlsbad, St. Therese, Confirmation at 7:00 p.m.

June 22: San Angelo, St. Margaret, meet with Pastoral Council at 7:00 p.m.

June 23: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Mass at for Staff at 8:30 a.m. Staff Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

June 25: San Angelo, Coliseum, Diocesan Jubilee 2000 Celebration, Mass at 11:30 a.m.

June 27-28-29: Rest and Prayer

June 30: San Angelo, Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart, Mass for the Sacred Heart at 7:00 p.m.

The West Texas Angelus
Official Newspaper of the Diocese of San Angelo

POSTMASTER: Send all Changes of Address to:
WEST TEXAS ANGELUS
P.O. BOX 1829
SAN ANGELO, TX 76902-1829

Publisher	Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Editor	Peter N. Micale (PMangelus@aol.com)
Layout	Stephen Talley
Production	Kenneth Grimm

Automatic circulation to parishioners in the Diocese of San Angelo
Subscription rate for all others: \$10.00 per year
THIRD CLASS POSTAGE PAID AT SAN ANGELO, TEXAS
Printed by the San Angelo Standard-Times
A Scripps-Howard Company



The Vocation Circle

My name is Father Larry; some people call me Monsignor Droll.

Actually, monsignor is an honorary title; what I enjoy most is being a parish priest. A pastor has the opportunity to proclaim the Good News of Jesus Christ by preaching and teaching. By leading a congregation in the worship of God through the sacraments, and by serving parishioners every imaginable way. I have also served as Chancellor of the Diocese of San Angelo for twenty years.

It's hard to put my finger on why I became a priest. When I was little, I just always wanted to be a priest — even played "saying Mass" at home. When I was in junior high, I attended some week-long visits to a seminary in Amarillo that I really enjoyed. Then as a teenager I went to seminary in San Antonio where I learned that priesthood is about serving God and our neighbor.

From first grade through my sophomore year, I attended St. Joseph Catholic School in Rowena. I liked to study and did well in my classwork. I was involved in the school play and sang in the church choir with lots of other classmates. The big news during high school was the building of the gymnasium; now I could actually play basketball on a real court! I enjoyed dancing at the local dances and running around with my friends, especially to the big city of San Angelo. I lived on the farm with my family and helped with the work there.

But I had the desire to go to the seminary to become a priest. And so I went to St. John's Seminary in San

Antonio for my Junior and Senior years. There I met a whole new group of friends and got to experience life in a bigger city. In the classroom there were new things to study, like Latin and physics. On the sports fields, I played soccer and tennis for the first time. On the radio, the Beatles were the big thing. I had leading roles in a couple of plays and directed the senior play, Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar*. I was Student Council President during my senior year, which also entailed assigning all the seminarians to our weekly chores. In those early days of the civil rights movement, I represented our school in Project Equality meetings.

The most profound event to take place during this time was the assassination of President John F. Kennedy. The day before he went to Dallas, he was in San Antonio and we saw him in his motorcade. When he was killed, we had a Mass for him and watched the whole sad funeral on television.

During my college years, I attended St. Mary's University in San Antonio, while living at Assumption Seminary. My BA (1969) was in sociology.

For theology studies, I went to St. John's Seminary in Collegeville, Minnesota. Through all these seminary days, I enjoyed playing guitar and singing with various groups, participating in prayer groups and serving God's people in one way or another.

When I was nearing the end of seminary studies, I looked carefully at celibacy to see if it was "normal."

Could a person be happy giving up wife and family? The answer is "yes" if it is to be a sign for the Kingdom of God and is chosen as a positive life style. A sign of the Kingdom? It means that people in our world notice someone who hasn't married, ask why, and learn that serving in the Kingdom is so urgent and important one would even give up getting married to pursue this goal. Hopefully, this is a sign leading others to see the importance of Christ in their lives, even if they are not celibates.

Bishop Stephen A. Leven ordained me as a priest at St. Joseph's in Rowena on June 15, 1973. Since then, I have served in parishes in San Angelo, Ozona and Wall.

Like any career, priesthood has its ups and downs. What a joy it is to celebrate with parishioners, to visit in their homes, to be with them Sunday after Sunday! There are also times when the work load is demanding, people aren't getting along or a stalled project just won't get finished. But, on the balance, there is a deep contentment and satisfaction in my experience of being a priest.

Would I invite others to consider this vocation in life? Yes, indeed. Every young Catholic man should check out this lifestyle and pray about whether God might be calling him to this life of serving others. The best way to check it out is to talk to a priest about it.

Msgr. Larry J. Droll

If you have been around the Diocese of San Angelo for more than a few years and been active in the Church, there is a good chance you have seen or met Msgr. Larry Droll.

see "VOCATION", page nine

An Ecumenical Christmas In April Day



BEFORE

Photo by Deborah Michalewicz

On Saturday, April 8, 2000, ecumenism happened in a big way in the North Concho Valley.

It all started with Breakfast Burritos at the Grape Creek Baptist Church. Then teams of volunteers traveled to their Christmas in April projects: St. Therese Catholic Church in Carlsbad to a home on Mason St. in Carlsbad and to a house on Second Street in Sterling City to join the Sterling City Lions; Carlsbad Baptist Church worked on another home on Mason St. in Carlsbad; Carlsbad Church of Christ assisted with both of the Mason St. homes; and the Grape Creek Baptist Church worked on a home on Concord Loop in Grape Creek.

Then at 6:30 p.m. all the team members gathered for a covered dish supper at the St. Therese Catholic Church Hall for a feast headed up by brisket and beans cooked by Lynn and Bubba Jonas and provided by Carlsbad Baptist Church.

Thanks to coordination by Christmas in April and numerous team members from these small rural churches, four houses belonging to elderly or disabled folks were repaired and made weather-tight.

J.D. Gould, CIA Co-Team Captain for St. Therese, said, "We didn't all get to meet our homeowner this year because she recently tripped on a piece of torn vinyl in her kitchen and was recovering in rehabilitation. We carpeted her kitchen. I just wish we could have been there before she hurt herself."

Gene Franke, Carlsbad Baptist Church, observed, "It was fun. A good day. The best part was working together with all the people."

Some other comments of the volunteers were "This was great on several levels. It was so good to get the churches together." "It was good to see some of the rural churches of North Concho Valley come together." Deborah Michalewicz, CIA Secretary for St. Therese, and Lane Hutchins, St. Therese and 5th grader at Water Valley Elementary School, said respectively: "The people just came together in the spirit of a Gospel message everyone could agree upon — 'Love your neighbor' — and had an exciting time doing it," and "It was cool. It was cool because we helped someone."

Harold Lemley, CIA Co-Team Captain for St. Therese, perhaps summed it up best: "Christmas in April is one of my favorite ways to pray."

Next year, each team plans to do a house, and all hope the Brisket and Covered Dish Gathering will become the annual finale.



AFTER

Photo by Deborah Michalewicz

Remodelación del Vestíbulo de San Jose en Odessa

Por Padre Gilbert P. Rodriguez, Pastor.

Al finalizar el año 99, se dio casi por terminado el trabajo de remodelación en su primera fase, Los Parroquianos de la Iglesia de San Jose han estado trabajando muy duro para hacer posible este trabajo, para el bien de la comunidad. Pero también le estamos infinitamente agradecidos a los de la Extension Society, quienes nos enviaron ayuda para este proyecto. Nuestro Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI, de la Diócesis de San Angelo, vino para inaugurar dicho trabajo en su primera fase, develando una placa en donde aparecen los nombres de los bienhechor. Ahora nuestro

vestíbulo cuenta con aseos y a la vez con regaderas, tanto para hombres como para mujeres. En esta Parroquia se celebran continuamente eventos espirituales como Cursillos de Cristianidad, etc. Ahora contamos con todo lo necesario para nuestros eventos.

Próximamente esperamos continuar con la Segunda Fase, que consistirá en construir un edificio para dar cavida a nuestros niños, jóvenes y adultos, ya que actualmente se están quedando muchos de nuestros



niños sin su instrucción religiosa por no tener cupo para ellos. Una vez mas agradecemos a nuestro Obispo el empeño que tiene para sus feligreses que se alimenten de la palabra de Dios; teniendo lugares apropiados para impartir la palabra de Dios. Por ahora los parroquianos están trabajando hombro con hombro para lograr dicho proyecto.



Our Carmelites Are Moving!

By Peter Micale

In late 1988, Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, sent a message to a little town in North Dakota. He asked the Sisters of the Carmelite Monastery in Wahpeton, ND, would the Sisters consider opening a Carmel in the San Angelo Diocese? After a long period of prayerful discernment by the community, which is always their proper preparation for seeking direction, the answer was an echo of Mary's "Fiat."

On February 2, 1989, a humble

came extinct, apostles would not preach the Gospel and martyrs would not shed their blood. I understood that love comprised all vocations; that Love was everything; that it embraced all times and places. In a word, that it was eternal! Then I cried out, O Jesus! My vocation is Love. In the Heart of the Church, My Mother, I shall be Love" (St. Therese).

The Carmelite Constitutions defines the mission of the Carmelite Nun, "... to live in the presence of

lays and was not too long to answer. A non-stop river of charity flowed through the hearts of hundreds and hundreds of people in San Angelo and outside the city. It all began with a donation of land, south of Christoval, and with the donation of architectural services by a firm in Dallas. Benefactors, engineers, contractors, laborers, suppliers, friends helping to raise funds, friends volunteering time and transportation and labor – generous hearts all, witnessing to the love of God and the joy of the Holy Spirit.

Now the time has come for the Sisters to move into this dwelling place of solitude. "I will lead her into

vigorous becomes the life of the Church and the more abundantly her apostolate bears fruit" (Decree on Religious Life #1).

Carmelites, and their Monasteries, serve God and Church by being centers for prayer. A place where and through which God can draw His beloved children – that is all of us – into His Presence. "However quietly we speak He is so near that He will hear us; we need no wings to go in search of Him, but have only to find a place where we can be alone and

Please call for Holy Mass times and more detailed directions if needed, after the move. The Sisters will have an E-mail address and a Home Page at the new Monastery.

Construction will be completed while the Sisters are there, with the intention of having a Dedication Service sometime in the fall. There will be an opportunity at that time to walk through the completed Monastery and to participate in the ceremonies of blessing the religious house.



Walkway Near Courtyard

ranch house on the Eastern outskirts of San Angelo was dedicated as the home for six Carmelite Sisters. Tears of joy from the Angels in Heaven poured down upon the assembled in the form of a pouring rain. The power of prayer and love was experienced by the assembled that evening, foreshadowing the many graces that would rain upon the Diocese through the presence of the Carmelite Monastery. "Prayer is an art of love, it is the means which



Carmel Monastery of Our Lady of Grace (Under Construction)

the desert, there I shall speak to her heart" (Hosea). Yes, they will make haste into the Hill country on May 31st, the Feast of the Visitation of Mary to Elizabeth. As Mary's visit to Elizabeth was the beginning of something great, so too this move is the beginning of something great, not only for the Carmelite Sisters, but for all the faithful. "The more ardently they unite themselves to



View of Back

The Carmelites extend their gratitude to us all and entrust us into the Hearts of Jesus and Mary that we may receive all the tender love God has for us. "He never tires of giving; may we never tire of receiving" (St. Teresa of Avila).



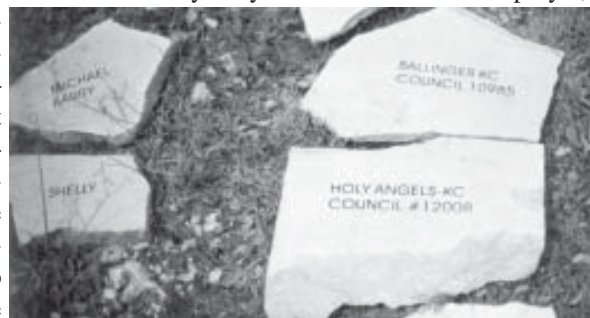
Sisters' Individual Cells

makes everyone capable of loving his neighbor, or personally participating in the grand cause of the Kingdom of God" (Pope Paul VI).

For the past eleven years the Carmelites, living in God's presence, have prayed, loved, and served, fulfilling their mission to all God's people. St. Paul describes the Church as the Body of Christ in which each member has a function for the building up of the whole Body. A Carmelite lives at the Heart of this Body, which needs to beat with love and prayer before the Heart of God. "I understood it was Love alone that makes the Church's members act; that if Love ever be-

Glory in imitation of the prophet Elijah and in intimate union with Our Most Pure Mother. A Carmelite strives to prolong on earth the filial love of Jesus towards His Mother." Thirsting to live this call more fervently the Sisters decided it was time to build their permanent Monastery somewhere within the Diocese of San Angelo. They desired to make it a gift to Jesus during the Jubilee Year.

As always, the Sisters prayed for direction and they fervently knew that God knows no de-



Memorial Paving Stones Awaiting Sidewalk Construction

Christ through a self-surrender involving their entire lives, the more



Courtyard View. (Photos by Carmelite Sisters, Charles Ahern and WTA: Peter Micale.)

Teresa of Avila). The Sisters tell us this Monastery is ours; "Come to assist at daily Mass, spend time in prayer, and share your lives with the Sisters who pray for your intentions."

The address will be:

Carmel Monastery of Our Lady of Grace, 1 Via Maria, Christoval, TX 76935

The telephone number will be: 915-853-1722.

Via Maria is off Rudd Road (CR 339) about 4 miles from the intersections of Rudd Road with FM 2084 (Toe Nail Trail).

*Flower of Carmel,
blossom-laden vine
Splendor of Heaven,
the Virgin with Child
The one peerless maiden,
yet Mother mild,
All pure and undefiled,
on all Carmel's children
Thy favors bestow,
Thou Star of the Sea.*

St. Simon Stock



The Church And The Crisis In Rural America

(The Economy Must Serve Life)

A Pastoral Message by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

Crisis In Rural America

Rural America is on the verge of economic collapse. The current crisis in rural America is not just something farmers and ranchers are facing, but the whole of society. The reason for this is that this crisis has to do with the source of our life and the sustenance of our life in food. Beneath the current crisis lies a deeper reality – a crisis of our food production, consumption, and distribution systems. Rural America is being left behind during a time of general prosperity in our country. The dawn of a new millennium requires greater vision and energy to be given to solving the rural life crisis.

Because all segments of society are affected by the fam/ranch crisis, the Church must be involved. This crisis is not just an economic issue but a moral and justice issue that should concern everyone. The Church as an educator in the faith, seeks to relate religion to the rural world and serves as a prophetic voice and a convener of social justice. During the great Jubilee Year 2000, the Church asks all people to stand up for justice in rural America.

The rural crisis in Texas is compounded by the drought that the state has been experiencing during the past few years. Recently the Texas Farm Bureau President Donald Patman told members of the National Drought Policy Commission that the combined effect of the 1996 and 1998 droughts caused more than \$4 billion in direct losses to Texas farmers and ranchers with an impact on the state's economy close to \$11 billion.

Today rural poverty wears a subtle face etched with the lines of personal struggle and the wrinkles of an economic system indifferent to the needs of the poor. Our culture in many ways is fundamentally alienated from our sources of food

and fiber. Many people think milk comes from cartons, or meat comes from vacuum-packed packing, not realizing all the basic efforts that go into making these items available. We are in a culture where life more and more is made to serve the economy, and not the economy serving life. The capital sins of greed and pride are two of the major moral factors that underlie the present crisis in rural America. It should be remembered that people are more important than profit. In their pastoral letter on Catholic social teaching and the U.S. economy, the U.S. bishops remind us that "economic decisions have human consequences and moral content; they help or hurt people, strengthen or weaken family life, advance or diminish the quality of justice in our land."

its goods. In Genesis 1:28, God tells Adam, his new creation, to have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth. This dominion is not meant to be domination or exploitation, but an exercise and care that are to be guided by natural and moral laws of God's dominion, the dominion of a God – Creator and Father – who loves everything that God has made. The critical issue of rural America deals with our life support system and requires us to express our faith in action as a community under God.

Low Commodity Prices and Globalization

One of the many problems facing farmers and ranchers is the fact that commodity prices are at an all-time low. Most of the commodities,

be they cattle or hogs, sheep or goats, grain, wheat or cotton and many other farm products and many vegetables are relatively low. A fair and competitive marketplace is fundamental to providing economic opportunity to farmers and ranchers of all sizes, and every effort must be made by government and policy makers to uphold market conditions.

While commodity crop prices flirt with record lows that will not recover the cost of production, bankers have to be paid. Seed and fertilizers must be purchased. Equipment must be bought or repaired. The children of farm families need shoes and school clothes, and a chance at higher education. Farm and ranch families have countless bills that need to be paid. The economic state of many farm families is too focused on surviving today to plan for the future.

A basic issue for consideration in the present crisis in rural America is globalization. On the positive side,

see "CRISIS", page eleven

Nearly Three-Dozen Bishops Challenge Defense Budget

By Lou Panarale Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) – Bishop Pfeifer and thirty-three other U.S. Catholic bishops have called for reductions in the U.S. military budget and for redirecting the funds to health care, education and tax relief for the nation's poorest citizens.

The bishops and members of several Catholic organizations launched "Bread Not Stones: A National Catholic Campaign to Redirect Military Spending" at a March 23 news conference in Washington.

Represented by Bishop Walter F. Sullivan of Richmond, Va., and Auxiliary Bishop Thomas J. Gumbleton of Detroit, the 34 bishops urged the nation's 64 million Catholics to take an active part in the campaign.

"In our country alone, 35 million people live in poverty and 31 million people report not having enough to eat, including 12 million children," said Bishop Sullivan.

In a statement, participants in the campaign said the United States "has the highest rate of childhood poverty in the industrialized world and the lowest adult literacy rates" and many working poor have no family health care or child care benefits.

"This is a tragic consequence of a nation which chooses to spend only 6 cents on education and 4 cents on health care for every 50 cents which it spends on the military," the statement added.

The campaign, initiated by Pax Christi USA, has received support from Network, a national Catholic social justice lobby; the National Black Sisters Conference; the Leadership Conference of Women Religious; the Conference of Major Superiors of Men; the Maryknoll Office of Global Concerns; and the Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace.

Bishop Gumbleton said his experience as a pastor in Detroit's inner city brought him face to face with the poverty of so many, "something you would not expect to find in the richest country of the world."

see "CHALLENGE", page ten

Bishops Who Signed Statement On Military Spending

Editor's Note: Here is a list of bishops who signed the "Bread Not Stones" statement.

Bishops Walter F. Sullivan of Richmond, Va., John J. Snyder of St. Augustine, Fla., Robert M. Moskal of St. Josaphat in Parma, Ohio, James R. Hoffman of Toledo, Ohio, Arthur N. Tafoya of Pueblo, Colo., Raymond A. Lucker of New Ulm, Minn., Michael D. Pfeifer of San Angelo, Texas, Victor H. Balke of Crookston, Minn., Lawrence J. McNamara of Grand Island, Neb., Joseph L. Imesch of Joliet, Ill., Frank J. Rodimer of Paterson, N.J., Donald E. Pelotte of Gallup, N.M., Kenneth E. Untener of Saginaw, Mich., Edward J. O'Donnell of Lafayette, La., Michael J. Kaniecki of Fairbanks, Alaska, Ricardo Ramirez of Las Cruces, N.M., Dale J. Melczek of Gary, Ind., Norbert L. Dorsey of Orlando, Fla., and John Michael Botean of the Romanian Diocese of St. George in Canton, Ohio.

Auxiliary Bishops Thomas J. Gumbleton of Detroit, Gabino Zavala of Los Angeles, Joseph Sullivan of Brooklyn, N.Y., and Peter Rosazza of Hartford, Conn.

Retired Archbishops Raymond G. Hunthausen of Seattle and Robert F. Sanchez of Santa Fe, N.M.

Retired Bishops William A. Hughes of Covington, Ky., Edward D. Head of Buffalo, N.Y., Nicholas D'Antonio of New Orleans, John R. McGann of Rockville Centre, N.Y., Joseph A. Ferrario of Honolulu, Charles A. Buswell of Pueblo, Colo., Francis A. Quinn of Sacramento, Calif., and Leroy T. Matthiessen of Amarillo, Texas.

Rural Life Themes for Jubilee Year 2000

Let the Land Lie Fallow: stop the loss of farm land, end environmental abuse and restore an ethic of stewardship, end the concentration and consolidation of food production throughout the food chain.

Atonement/Reconciliation: heal the broken relationships in our food system, work in a spirit of cooperation and not simply economic competition.

Liberty and Freedom: free farmers, ranchers, and workers from exploitative contracts and agreements; promote open and fair markets.

Forgive Debts: reverse the trend of famers, ranchers and rural communities bearing increased burdens in the stewardship of our natural resources and in the foundation of our food system.

Stewardship

We all depend upon the work of agriculture for food and fiber. Agriculture is not just a business, but is first and foremost stewardship. The famer and rancher are stewards who have received from their Divine Master the care of creation. Each of us stands not just on our own little piece of the world, but on common ground granted to us by a loving Creator. Caring for this common ground is not just a social but a religious act.

The Church's responsibility for being involved in the agriculture/ranching crisis comes from Scripture where people are told to be responsible stewards of the earth and



Bishop Pfeifer Leads Annual Way of the Cross on Good Friday



All Photos by WTA: Peter Micale.



So Your Joy May Be Complete

by Mary Ann Lewis, CKRC

The Engaged Encounter (EE) program is back in full swing in the Diocese of San Angelo. This weekend of marriage preparation is provided for the couples of the diocese who are planning to be married. Couples are asked to make the weekend at least 60-90 days prior to their wedding date.

The program follows the national Catholic Engaged Encounter outline for the weekend. Each weekend is facilitated by two married couples and a priest. Talks are presented to those attending. The engaged couples then get the opportunity for individual and shared time to

respond to questions which pertain to the talks given. The weekend is enhanced by being held at Christ the King Retreat Center (CKRC) where the setting is large enough for a group, quiet and private enough for the couples to be able to get away from their busy lives to share some quality time together in preparation for marriage.

The EE team is made up of couples, priests and staff of CKRC. There are

two "senior" couples, Maureen and Vincent Priestner of Abilene and Kathy and Charlie Keane of San Angelo, and two "junior" couples, Gail and Mike Wheeler of Abilene and Becky and Lonnie Benes of San

Angelo. The team priests are Msgr. Larry Droll, Fr. Tom Barley, Fr. Joe Uecker, Fr. Hugh Wade, Fr. Mike Goode, X.X. and Fr. Andy Wueste, O.M.I. Candi Rasberry, CKRC secretary, handles registrations and preparations and Mary Ann Lewis helps coordinate the weekend. This year we also have an added dimension. Couples who have made the EE weekend have volunteered to help by being at the retreat center to greet those com-

ing in for the weekend and to help the staff with registration. At the end of the weekend, the couples are given the opportunity to respond to the weekend. Many of the couples leave the weekend with a very different view of their relationship and the relationship they have as a couple with God. Following are some excerpts of what some of the couples have written.

"This is one of the greatest weekends we've had. We heard about marriage in a positive way."

"This weekend gave us a head start in our marriage."

"We've grown to love each other more, yet when we arrived on Friday night, we hadn't thought that would be possible."

"We thought we knew each other so well, and this weekend we found there is so much more."

"Tying spiritual and physical aspects of marriage together was difficult . . . you clarified these questions quite well for us."

Contact Christ the King Retreat Center, 802 Ford St., San Angelo, TX 76905, phone (915) 651-5352 for more information.



Photo by Mary Ann Lewis.

Angelo. The team priests are Msgr. Larry Droll, Fr. Tom Barley, Fr. Joe Uecker, Fr. Hugh Wade, Fr. Mike Goode, X.X. and Fr. Andy Wueste, O.M.I. Candi Rasberry, CKRC secretary, handles registrations and preparations and Mary Ann Lewis helps coordinate the weekend. This year we also have an added dimension. Couples who have made the EE weekend have volunteered to help by being at the retreat center to greet those com-

Catholic Communications Campaign

My dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

This year marks a special time for Catholics and people of the Christian faith throughout the world – the 2000 Jubilee of Our Lord's birth.

That's why I come to you today with this special appeal on behalf of the Catholic Communication Campaign, whose programs keep His Word alive – especially in these challenging times.

The Catholic Communication Campaign serves millions of Catholics around the world with values-based programming that help us all lead better lives and build stronger communities. These include: Public Service Announcements in English and Spanish promoting stronger family ties, the need for reconciliation and the benefits of regular church attendance; documentaries that inspire and inform on subjects ranging from the missions of the Southwest to the murders of Jesuit priests in El Salvador; award-winning animated and live-action TV specials for children and adults; a new toll free telephone number (1-800-MASS-TIMES) and Web site (www.masstimes.org) to help Catholics traveling in the U. S. attend Mass wherever they may be; and the Movie Review Line (1-800-311-4CCC) to help parents choose the best movie for every member of the family.

In addition to these national projects, the annual Catholic Communications Campaign collection helps to support the *West Texas Angelus* and other communication efforts of our diocese.

To continue this good work, we need you. So when your parish takes up the collection for the CCC on May 21, 2000, please give generously. And spread the Good News of God's love in your home, our diocese and throughout the world.

Thank you for your past assistance and may God bless you.

Your servant in Christ and Mary,
Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo



Pope Leads Way Of Cross At Rome's Colosseum



Pope John Paul II leads the Way of the Cross around Rome's ancient Colosseum on Good Friday, April 21. (CNS photo from Reuters)



Catholic Pilgrims Touch Anointing Stone

Catholic pilgrims touch the Stone of Anointing on Easter morning at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem April 23. The stone is traditionally believed to be where the body of Jesus was anointed before his burial. (CNS photo by Debbie Hill)

VOCATION

from page three

He is well known and well liked. He has served at several parishes throughout the Diocese and is currently the pastor at St. Ambrose in Wall and at Holy Family in Mereta. As he states in the article, he has been the Chancellor for the Diocese for the past twenty years. Not only has he been involved in many of the big and complex projects of the Dio-

cese, he has had the opportunity to help guide many people in their spiritual lives and to comfort them in times of need. Often when he is out for dinner or just to relax away from the rectory, he meets people he knows from all over the Diocese. He not only remembers their names, but them as persons. We ask that you keep the priests, women religious, deacons, and lay ministers of our Diocese in your prayers. We all need them.

Church Welcomes Tens Of Thousands Of New Members At Easter

By Nancy Hartnagel
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — At Easter Vigil services around the country, the Catholic Church welcomed tens of thousands of new members.

In the 90 U.S. dioceses for which Catholic News Service obtained figures, approximately 63,000 people became Catholic April 22 at solemn Holy Saturday vigils that mark the high point of the church's liturgical year.

This figure includes nearly 24,000 catechumens who had never been baptized in any Christian denomination and who were baptized, confirmed and received first Eucharist, as well as some 39,000 candidates, or baptized Christians who were initiated fully as Catholics through the sacraments of confirmation and Eucharist.

If the balance of U.S. dioceses — roughly half — report similar numbers, the total of new Catholics likely would be well over 100,000.

The numbers cited were provided by individual diocesan newspapers and the U.S. bishops' evangelization office in Washington.

The Archdiocese of Los Angeles reported a high of 3,271 new members, with the Archdiocese of Chicago next at 2,507 new members.

Nearly 20 other dioceses welcomed more than 1,000 new members. They include: Diocese of Phoenix, 1,967; Diocese of Galveston-Houston, 1,905; Archdiocese of Indianapolis, 1,870; Archdiocese of Atlanta, 1,709; Archdiocese of Cincinnati, 1,706; Diocese of Dallas, 1,700; and Diocese of San Diego, 1,661.

Also in this category are: Archdiocese of New York, 1,458; Diocese of Orange, Calif., 1,450; Diocese of Lansing, Mich., 1,378; Archdiocese of St. Louis, 1,328; Archdiocese of Philadelphia, 1,262; Diocese of Austin, Texas, 1,211; Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, 1,195; Diocese of St. Petersburg, Fla., 1,100; Diocese of Providence, R.I., 1,089; Archdiocese of Washington, 1,074; Archdiocese of Miami, 1,069; and Diocese of Cleveland, 1,000.

In addition, more than 500 new Catholics were received into the church in the Archdioceses of Dubuque, Iowa; San Francisco; Baltimore; Louisville, Ky.; Milwaukee; Santa Fe, N.M.; Oklahoma City; New Orleans; and Omaha, Neb.

Also, in the Dioceses of Portland, Maine; San Bernardino, Calif.; Harrisburg, Pa.; Orlando, Fla.; Wichita, Kan.; Joliet, Ill.; Manchester, N.H.; Charleston, S.C.; Nashville, Tenn.; Kansas City-St. Joseph, Mo.; Arlington, Va.; Trenton, N.J.; Boise, Idaho; Tulsa, Okla.; Little Rock, Ark.; Brook-

lyn, N.Y.; Springfield, Ill.; Fort Wayne-South Bend, Ind.; Rochester, N.Y.; St. Augustine, Fla.; Toledo, Ohio; Grand Rapids, Mich.; and Raleigh, N.C.

Most of these new Catholics entered the church through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, a revival of the ancient catechumenate, or period of religious preparation, that was introduced in the United States in the early 1970s.

They expressed a variety of reasons for becoming Catholic.

Laura Viets, a candidate at St. Norbert in Florissant, Mo., told the St. Louis Review archdiocesan newspaper that Pope John Paul II's 1999 visit to St. Louis influenced her.

She was "surprised to find Jesus and the Gospel really at the center of his message," and also was intrigued by the pope "urging everyone to become the light of the world ... especially the young people."

Before her scheduled baptism at the Easter Vigil at St. Clare Church in Berea, Ky., Annette Overlock talked about becoming a Catholic in an interview with Cross Roads, newspaper of the Diocese of Lexington.

Raised a Congregationalist in Maine, Overlock said she believes God guided her journey to Kentucky, where volunteering with the Christian Appalachian Project led to the Catholic faith.

She said she looked forward to worshipping and studying with friends at Our Lady of Good Hope in Camden, Maine, when she returned there in May.

Jody Anderson, who participated in the RCIA at Our Lady, Queen of Apostles in Council Bluffs, Iowa, said she always had been "pretty vocal about not buying into organized religion."

But, she told The Catholic Mirror, newspaper of the Des Moines Diocese, that she ultimately found the Catholic faith "more comforting and more supportive than anything else in my life."

In Pocahontas, Ark., 19-year-old Ethan White said his decision to become Catholic was influenced by attending a parish religious education class with friends and viewing a video on Marian apparitions.

His Methodist family is supporting his decision, he told the Arkansas Catholic, Little Rock diocesan newspaper. "As long as I go to church, they're happy," he added.

After attending Catholic services for nearly 20 years with his wife, Peter Heintzeleman became a Catholic himself at Easter services at Our Lady of Good Counsel in West Boylston, Mass.

Son of a Congregational minister and grandson of a Baptist minister, Heintzeleman told The Catholic Free Press, newspaper of the Worcester Diocese, that an invitation to help the parish raise funds led to an invitation to become a member.

His father "would be proud," he said, and he took his father's name, David, as his confirmation name.

A former deacon in the United Church of Christ, Joanne Anderson said lack of spiritual fulfillment led her to participate in the RCIA at St. Rose of Lima Parish in North Wales, Pa.

Anderson told The Catholic Standard and Times, Philadelphia archdiocesan newspaper: "When I went it just opened up a whole world for me" and "felt quite fitting." She said she felt almost like "a latent Catholic," because she had a lot of the same beliefs but never practiced them.

In Dallas, Bishop Charles V. Grahmann presided at two pre-Easter liturgies in the Cathedral-Santuario de Guadalupe during which a record 1,700 people were received into the church.

The diocese's jubilee year goal was 2,000. "We fell slightly short of our goal," Franci Nussbaum, associate director the liturgy office told the Texas Catholic diocesan newspaper, "but still it was a very impressive number."

Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart Church Festival

Sunday, May 21, 2000

11:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.

Turkey & Dressing plates with all the trimmings

Cake Walk, Raffle, Games, Etc.

San Angelo Convention Center



Court Finds Ten Commandments Unfit for Baseball Field

FRONT ROYAL, VA – "This year during Holy Week, we should take the time to reflect upon the walls that are being built to keep faith out of the public square. In the United States, we have seen freedom of religion slowly evolve into freedom from religion, to the point where people of faith are no longer permitted to worship as they please. Instead, we are hemmed in on every side by the doctrine of separation – the idea that religion cannot and should not be allowed to have any place in our public lives," commented Fr. Richard Welch, CSSR, JCD, President of Human Life International, the world's largest pro-life, pro-faith, pro-family apostolate. "The Ten Commandments have now been labeled 'disruptive' to education and redefined as a form of advertising. Have we really sunk so far that God's law is regarded in the same light as toothpaste and breakfast cereal?"

On 17 April, the United States Supreme Court let stand an appeals court decision allowing a California school district to reject an advertisement that included the Ten Com-

mandments from being posted on the fence of a high school baseball field. Edward DiLoreto, a local businessman, had paid for the ad as part of a booster club fundraising effort. The ad in question listed the Ten Commandments beneath the statement: "Meditate on these principles to live by." The 9th Circuit Court of Appeals denied that DiLoreto's First Amendment rights had been violated and claimed that the school district was permitted to censor ads that "would be disruptive to the educational purpose of the school."

"It is stunning that the Supreme Court could consider moral truth a disruptive influence for students. We should all pray that students everywhere will find their lives 'disrupted' by the need to examine the principles by which they should live. The most 'disruptive' influence on schools today is not the viewing of the Ten Commandments, but the terrible consequences of ignoring them. People of faith cannot allow themselves to be swept aside and harassed by these dogmatic relativists. Otherwise, we will be forced to sit by and watch in situations like

this—where our most faithfully followed laws and commandments are reduced to ten mere opinions and suggestions. Imagine telling Moses that the Ten Commandments are unfit to appear on a ballpark wall," concluded Fr. Welch.

Founded in 1981, Human Life International (<http://www.hli.org>), 1-800-549-LIFE is the world's largest pro-life, pro-faith, pro-family educational apostolate, with chapters in the United States and a network of international branches and affiliates serving 90 countries.



Priest Prays While Supreme Court Hears Arguments

Maryknoll Father Martin Keegan holds up a large crucifix as he prays outside the Supreme Court building April 25 in Washington. He was among 100 people demonstrating against abortion as the court heard arguments in a case challenging a Nebraska law prohibiting partial-birth abortion. (CNS photo by Martin Lueders)

Scholarships Now Available

SAN ANTONIO – Catholic Life Insurance is now accepting applications for its 2000 Leadership Scholarship Program. The program will award scholarships to Catholic Life Insurance members who attend any private or public college or university in the fall 2000.

Due to high demand from our members for financial assistance to help pay for college, the Leadership Scholarship Program now of-

fers 10 non-renewable \$500 college scholarships. To be eligible, students must be a Catholic Life Insurance member for at least one year before the application deadline and be attending any private or public college or university beginning in the fall 2000. Scholarship selections will be based on scholastic achievement, leadership qualities and community service.

Scholarship recipients will be announced in August. Interested in-

dividuals may call the Catholic Life Communications Department at (800) 262-2548 or (210) 828-9921 for an application form. All applications must be postmarked July 11, 2000.

Founded in 1901, Catholic Life Insurance offers life insurance, IRAs and retirement annuities to businesses and individuals living in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma and New Mexico.

Abandoned Babies

by Richard Daly

Stories of abandoned newborn babies being found in dumpsters and trashcans in Texas and elsewhere have shocked people from coast to coast.

Some high profile cases, notably in Delaware and New Jersey became big news, but the fact is that we have had a rash of similar incidents here in Texas.

In 1997, there were 11 documented incidences of abandoned babies in Texas. Reacting to that, the Legislature passed a bill sponsored by Rep. Geanie Morrison of Victoria and Sen. Jane Nelson of Flower Mound, that makes it possible for desperate young parents to hand the child over to an emergency medical service provider and not face prosecution for abandonment.

Unfortunately, the law, which went into effect September 1, is not very well known.

One factor no doubt is that young desperate parents are a hard audience to contact through the media and other means.

In Houston, where there have been more reported incidents than

elsewhere in Texas, a group of concerned citizens is beginning a public awareness campaign to make the law better known. Unfortunately, some misinformation is being provided. Desperate parents are being told to leave the baby in a hospital emergency room while the law clearly applies only to emergency medical service providers.

Most people see this kind of behavior, abandoning ones newborn infant, as absolutely incomprehensible.

Maybe the behavior isn't so incomprehensible after all. The fact is that just a few weeks before the birth of the child it is perfectly legal to terminate its life.

Unfortunately, we can expect more of this type of incomprehensible behavior until society in general comes to understand that all human life is sacred from conception until natural death. There is no such thing as a "throw away" human life, be it an infant or any other person.

For now, we can only hope that the Morrison-Nelson bill will save a few innocent lives.

Graduation Day

by Fr. Frank Pavone
National Director, Priests for Life

My high school graduation is one of my most pleasant memories. It was a bright, sunny day in 1976. We were the "Bicentennial" class. I was privileged to address my fellow graduates, and I had been advised not to speak of any "controversial" issues. I didn't. Though it was a public school, I spoke of God, faith, and service in my remarks.

But that was also the year I became more aware of the "controversial issue" that had exploded just three years earlier with the Roe vs. Wade abortion decision. If I knew then what I know now, my speech would have been about abortion, no matter what "advice" anyone may have given me.

Several years ago, I came across a story of a graduating class which dedicated its yearbook to all the students who would have been graduating that year had they not been killed — by abortion. How fitting a tribute that is! Other graduating classes have paid tribute to their abortion victims by a moment of

prayer at the Baccalaureate mass or at the graduation ceremony.

And why not? Suppose that a tragedy took the lives of some of the graduating class just days or weeks before graduation. Would there not be a mention or a tribute at the ceremony? Why, then, should the victims who died longer ago be forgotten? It is not, after all, the timing of the death that matters, but the value of the life.

If you look at the website of the Alan Guttmacher Institute, a research division of Planned Parenthood, you will see its report of 1.37 million abortions in a single year in the United States. If you find another single act or disaster that claims that many lives in our country alone in a single year, please let me know about it.

It's graduation time again. I'll be happily recalling my own, and I'll be praying for all graduates at all different grade levels in the Class of 2000. It is my fervent hope that students everywhere will take the initiative to remember aborted classmates.

Some, of course, will object to

inserting such a "negative" theme into a happy day.

Yes, life is tough, isn't it? It's all mixed up with happiness and sadness, joy and tragedy. Are significant moments in our lives supposed to be insulated from all awareness of injustice? Are we to rejoice with those who rejoice, but not weep with those who weep?

To be willing to face sadness when the victims were born, but unwilling to do so when the victims died before birth, is another sign of the deep-rooted prejudice against the unborn in our society. But a new generation of young people who have survived that prejudice are now taking their places and preparing to be the future leaders. That gives us hope. Isn't that what Graduation Day is all about?

Contact Priests for Life at PO Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314; Tel: 888-PFL-3448, 718-980-4400; Fax: 718-980-6515;

email: pfl@priestsforlife.org; web: www.priestsforlife.org



Kansas City Holocaust Survivors Praise Pope

By Monte Mace
Catholic News Service

KANSAS CITY, Mo. (CNS) — Holocaust survivor Boris Segelstein's admiration for Pope John Paul II runs deep.

"I love that magnificent man," he says, and he believes the pope should be awarded a Nobel Peace prize.

Another Holocaust survivor, Zdenko Bergl, called Pope John Paul II a "visionary who surprised the human race."

Segelstein and Bergl made the comments in interviews in mid-April with *The Leaven*, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Kansas City, Kan. They were reacting to the pope's visit to the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Jerusalem and his earlier unprecedented apology for the sins of Christians through the ages, including hostility toward Jews.

"I had no faith in humanity until this magnificent specimen of a human being came on the scene," Segelstein said. "It's unreal, his act of contrition."

"Of course, it was Pope John XXIII who debunked the dogma that caused so much suffering," he added. "But this pope went one important step further. He asked for forgiveness."

Said Bergl, "This man, despite his very delicate health condition, extended the hand of love and friendship to everybody. People of vision appreciate the significance of this move."

A Kansas City rabbi said the sentiments of the two men are not isolated and that support in Kansas City's Jewish community for Pope John Paul II's overture has been "absolutely



Zdenko Bergl, a Holocaust survivor living in Kansas City, Mo., looks over one of the false identification cards that was given to his family during World War II. They fled to Italy from Yugoslavia in 1941 and were given safe haven in Florence. (CNS photo by Monte Mace, *The Leaven*)

overwhelming."

Rabbi Michael Zedek of Temple, Congregation B'nai Jehudah said the pope's pilgrimage to the Holy Land was "a very moving and exceptional journey" and in the local Jewish community "there's nothing but praise, applause and maybe even an element of awe in the pope's journey."

Segelstein, 78, was born in the eastern part of Czechoslovakia. As a teenager, he ended up in a concentration camp — he doesn't want to say where because the memory is too painful.

"All I can tell you is my father was taken away in 1941, shipped off to the Ukraine and was executed by the so-called Einsatzgruppen (SS mobile

killing units)," Segelstein said.

"My mother and three of my five brothers were shipped off in 1944 to a concentration camp," he continued. "My mother and youngest brother were taken straight from the train to the gas chamber. One brother died of dysentery in the camp. That's all I'm going to say."

Following the war, Segelstein stayed in an Italian displaced persons camp until 1948. Relatives in the United States located him and he emigrated to New York where he studied fashion design for women's clothing. He came to Kansas City in 1953 where he worked as a designer until 1987. He is a member of Beth Shalom Congregation.

Segelstein said his horrible experiences during the war caused him to question whether there is a "merciful God," but Pope John Paul II's actions have had a "mitigating effect on my doubts."

Bergl, a native of a Yugoslavia, and his family fled to Italy in 1941 when he was 13 years old because at that time "no country in Europe accepted the Jews except Italy."

A Catholic priest found the family an apartment in Florence — the apartment of an Italian Nazi officer who volunteered for duty on the Russian front. It was a safe haven because the Germans marked the apartment as off limits to looting soldiers.

"The housing administrator had a key to the back door," Bergl said. "We stayed nine months in that apartment and we felt safe."

His mother contracted typhus during their hiding in Florence and the family asked for help from a monastery outside Rome, and the nuns brought them an Italian Army doctor.

thousands of candles and torches billowing into the night sky, the pope urged the 50,000 people gathered at the Colosseum to find hope in Jesus' suffering.

"Thus the sorrowful event of the Crucifixion, which we have just meditated upon, will become for each of us an eloquent lesson," he said.

Having suffered on the cross, said the pope, Christ can understand "the pain of those unjustly condemned ... of the countless men and women who live without hope or dignity."

On Holy Thursday, the pope presided at two Masses, the Chrism Mass in the morning and the commemoration of the Lord's Supper in the evening, at which he washed the feet of 12 priests.

Recalling his March pilgrimage to the Holy Land, the pope said this

year's Mass of the Lord's Supper carried deep personal significance, "because fresh in my mind and heart is the image of the Upper Room, where I had the joy of celebrating the Eucharist."

On Good Friday, the pope donned a purple stole and entered St. Peter's Basilica to hear the confessions of 10 people, a personal tradition he began in 1980.

Later that afternoon, he celebrated the liturgy of the Lord's Passion, listening to a homily by the papal household preacher, Capuchin Father Raniero Cantalamessa.

After his busy Good Friday schedule, with the Way of the Cross ending well after 11 p.m., the pope rested on Holy Saturday before leading the Easter Vigil.

Moved this year from St. Peter's Basilica to the square outside to

Pope Says Christ At Work Throughout History, Even In Worst Events

by John Norton Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Christ is always at work in history, even in the worst of human events, Pope John Paul II said.

"The Holy Year we are celebrating underlines in a special way the fact that Christ is the center and meaning of all that happens, even when, humanly speaking, events seem to elude the rule of his providence," he said.

The pope made his remarks April 17 in an address to 5,000 students and professors — representing more than 60 nationalities — from 400 universities. The students were participating in an annual UNIV Congress in Rome sponsored by the personal prelature of Opus Dei.

Noting that their gathering focused on Christ in history, the pope told the students that "the centrality of Jesus is not just a question of measuring the passage of time.

"The Word made flesh is the true protagonist of history, and the redemption, always at work in the often intricate flux of human events," is the key to interpreting history, he said.

"Every moment of time belongs completely to" Christ, the pope said, because by his death he "conquered evil once and for all."

The efforts of Christians are "never in vain," the pope said, because Christ works in them to complete his plan of salvation.

"Never forget this! Each believer is an instrument of God," he said.

The pope urged the students to let themselves be "conquered" by Christ, and to pass Christ on to other young people.

"May you be profoundly convinced that society needs to find in your coherent witness as young Christians an important stimulus for a strong spiritual and social renewal," he said.

Founded by Blessed Josemaria Escriva de Balaguer in Spain, Opus Dei is a lay Catholic organization with a rigorous program of spiritual formation. In 1982 it was made a personal prelature — a church structure that functions somewhat like a dispersed diocese — and today it has 82,000 lay members around the world.

To allow the Bergl family to survive the rest of the war, the Catholic Church in Florence issued false identification cards showing the Bergls to be Bianchis.

Bergl met his wife, an Austrian, in

the displaced persons camp in Rome where they both spent three years. He came to Kansas City in 1949, along with his parents, where he made a career as a heating and air conditioning specialist.

POPE

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contributions, among them Ecumenical Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople, the pope penned the reflections for the jubilee year event.

The pope was scheduled to carry the cross for the first and last of the 14 stations but, after losing his balance three times throughout the service and appearing fatigued, a refugee boy from Angola slated for stations 12 and 13 bore the cross for the final station as well.

For the other 10 stations, the cross was carried by an Orthodox bishop, a laywoman from China, a family from Rome, an Indian nun, a Brazilian woman and a nun from Ecuador.

Delivering his concluding message, with smoke from the

make room for 20,000 pilgrims, the vigil began with the pope lighting the Easter candle, inscribing on it the Greek letters Alpha and Omega and the year 2000.

During the Mass, he baptized eight catechumens: three men from Cameroon, Albania and Italy, all in their early 30s; a man and a woman from China, ages 22 and 29 respectively; and a family from Japan, comprised of a 39-year-old woman, her husband, 40, and their 4-year-old daughter.

Their diversity, said the pope, "points to the universality of the salvation brought by Christ."

Playful interaction between the pope and the young Japanese girl, who returned his affectionate smile with a shy one of her own, her hands clasped in prayer, provided some of the most touching moments of Holy Week.

Pilgrims were moved by the chance to celebrate Easter with the pope, even if the vigil and Easter Sunday Masses were predominantly in Latin, making it hard for some to follow along.

Fred Fox, on a trip to Italy with Jesuit High School of Tampa, Fla., said, "I couldn't understand anything, but being here with the pope and everything, it's an experience."

"A once in a lifetime experience," interjected his classmate, Daniel Hater.

After the Easter Monday Regina Coeli prayer, the pope departed by helicopter for his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo for a few days of rest.

Pray Today



National Student Pro-life Movement Launched At Notre Dame

by Gene Stowe Catholic News Service

NOTRE DAME, Ind. (CNS) — A national student pro-life movement launched in April at the University of Notre Dame will spread its message through a Web site and an annual conference.

A dozen students from Notre Dame and nearby St. Mary's College, starting with a large donation from a Kansas couple to bring in pro-life speakers, drew 200 leaders from across the country to a meeting April 7-9.

"We made this into a national pro-life leadership conference," said St. Mary's senior Emily Moriarty, one of the organizers. "The goal was to bring student leaders from the pro-life movement all over the country."

Students attended from more than 30 colleges from as far away as California, Texas and New York.

Speakers included U.S. Rep. Chris Smith, R-N.J.; Father Matthew Habiger, president emeritus and chairman of the board of Human Life International; Father Joseph Howard, president of the American Bioethics Advisory Commission; John Crosby of Franciscan University at Steubenville; Charles Rice of Notre Dame; and Janet Smith of the University of Dallas.

Father Habiger told the students they face two tasks: promoting a true sense of Christian humanism, and shaping the culture of our country.

"Important things come from the bottom up," he said. "Give truth a moment in the sun."

In his talk on "Pro-life Leadership and Legislative Issues," Smith said pro-lifers often are not prepared for the opposition's tactics used in defending Roe vs. Wade. Among these methods are the wholesale media censorship of the pro-life perspective, the apathy of people in strategic positions of leadership and their success in "selling the unsellable, such as partial-birth abortion."

Smith warned that the future of the population control movement was already visible in China's forced-abortion policy. Smith turned hopeful, however, recalling English politician William Wilberforce's 47-year crusade to end the slave trade, and insisting that "politics can be a ministry."

In her April 8 talk on "Abortion, Contraception and Our Culture," Janet Smith, professor of philosophy at the University of Dallas, said the "right to privacy" found in Griswold vs. Connecticut, and the populace's reliance upon contraception, were the precedents used to justify abortion and assisted suicide.

She also noted that Pope Paul VI's predictions that contraception would lead to a general lowering of morality, less respect for women, oppressive family planning programs and lack of respect for the

human body have all come to pass.

Rice, professor of constitutional law at the University of Notre Dame, spoke on "Law, Politics and the Right to Life."

"The law is settled on the life issues," he said. "Don't kid yourself that reversing Roe vs. Wade will end abortion. Even the four justices opposed to Roe think abortion's up to the state legislature."

Rice instead proposed changing the culture. "Our country is at the dying end of the Enlightenment, which was the effort to build a state that did not acknowledge God. It's time to realize we are not going to change this by law, and just concentrate on speaking the truth."

Father Howard, in a talk on "Fetal Experimentation and Bioethics," outlined the various methods of genetic research going on at this time, including the international Human Genome Project, which seeks to map the genetic code to allow us to predict diseases with accuracy.

"Note that each of us has five to 50 genetic defects at birth. Not one human is conceived with perfect DNA," he said.

Father Howard warned that genetic knowledge can be used for good or for evil. He also spoke about the death involved in the now-accepted practice of in vitro fertilization, which "has a low success rate in leading to live births."

Crosby, professor of philosophy

at Franciscan University of Steubenville, Ohio, said that appealing to man's common rational human nature is an insufficient strategy to defend young children and the unborn. Instead, Crosby said anti-life forces cannot argue against the fact that person is unique irreplaceable.

Meanwhile, society needs to turn back from an attitude that another's fate is "none of my business," he said. Only valuing human irreplaceability and human solidarity can protect the unborn, the less gifted or any group society wishes to do away with.

Moriarty said officers of campus groups at the meeting decided to make the conference an annual event and to use the Internet to keep the work going year-round.

"We're going to build a national student pro-life network on the Internet," she said. "It will be a forum for ideas."

Moriarty, a biology major from Kansas, started working with Right to Life at Notre Dame and St. Mary's when she was a sophomore.

She was among some 250 people from the schools who attended a March for Life in Washington last year.

"We got together and started brainstorming about what we could do at our school," Moriarty said. "We formed a club, and it all took off from there."

EARTH

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munity than "Earth-Keeping" and "Earth-Healing" are concerns of justice and reconciliation. Reconciliation with God includes the dimension of reconciliation of people with one another through the overcoming of systems of oppression and the establishment of a just social order in this world. Efforts to alleviate environmental damage is a reconciling activity in the sense that it is a matter of setting priorities straight and stopping abuses. The ecological crisis is also closely linked with the question of social justice and economic oppression, since so much devastation affects the poorest of the people most directly. The more sophisticated and scientifically aware of subduing the natural resources of this world humankind has become, the more reckless we have become in their exploitation and abuse.

An Eco-theology extends the model of the Church as the body of Christ to be seen as embracing all creation, the human and natural. Human beings and the earth with all its creatures are intrinsically related as companions in the community of life. The unity or community of creation must not be the concern just of mystics and theologians but also of modern scientists, astronomers and physicists. The universe seen as a communion of subjects is the concern of all. Human well being cannot be achieved by diminishing the well-being of the earth. The question we ask on Earth Day is: What can you and I do to assume better stewardship over God's gift of the earth?

CHALLENGE

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"Very clearly, this is a moral issue," Bishop Gumbleton said. "We as a nation have extraordinary resources but we are misusing them instead of using them for the purpose God has given them to us."

"I intend to do everything I can to bring this to the attention of the people in our churches, in our schools and throughout our nation," he said. "We are not only causing the poor to be killed by the misuse of our resources, but we are dying spiritually."

Sister Patricia J. Chappell, a Sister of Notre Dame de Namur and president of the National Black Sisters' Conference, said African-Americans have suffered unspeakable poverty brought on largely by racism.

"For too long African-Americans

have been handed the stone of racism, which plays out in economic inequality, eroding safety nets, inadequate health care, education and the lack of affordable, decent housing."

Mercy Sister Anne Curtis, a lobbyist for Network, asked, "Where is the justice in using our nation's considerable resources for U.S. military dominance while millions of people are suffering?"

Tom Cordaro, Pax Christi's national council chairman, said, "It's not that we don't know how to solve these problems. It's that we don't have the political resolve to do so."

"Whether we're in a time of deficit spending or in a time of budget surpluses, the response from the political establishment is always the same," said Cordaro, who is justice and outreach minister for St. Margaret Mary Parish in Naperville, Ill.

"They say, 'We just don't have the money' or 'We have to go slow

in incremental, measured kinds of ways' or 'We just need to study the problem a little bit more.'

"Our challenge is to break the spell of the military industrial complex that it has cast over the American people," Cordaro said. "We need to get beyond our pious, patriotic platitudes to justify all these new weapons systems, which are depleting our resources while at the same time making the world a much more dangerous place."

MARÍA

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mundo.

• María nos enseña ser no solamente recibidores de la palabra, pero ser hacedores. Ella no solamente escuchó, pero actuó en la palabra de Dios.

María estaba allí cuando Dios mas la necesitó. Ella estaba con Dios en su consentimiento inicial

de ser la Madre de Dios, nuestro Señor y Salvador, Jesucristo. Ella estaba con Cristo en todos los momentos más grandes de su vida. María es en todos los sentidos la compañera más cercana de Jesús en todo su obra de la redención.

• Como María, debemos escuchar la palabra, pero entonces debemos ser hacedores de la Palabra. Nuestra creencia necesita ser expresada en amor y servicio.

María es nuestra madre, pero también es nuestra hermana en la fe y nos enseña como ser discípulos fieles de Cristo por medio de su ejemplo. Mayo es el mes para renovar nuestra devoción a María, y darle a ella y a todas nuestras Mama's gracias por todo lo que hacen por nosotros.

MARY

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She was with God in her initial consent to be the Mother of God, our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She was with Christ in all the great moments of His life. Mary is in every way the closest associate of Jesus in His whole work of redemption.

Like Mary, we are to listen to the Word, but then to be doers of the Word. Our belief needs to be expressed in love and service. Mary is our mother, but she is also our sister in faith and teaches us by her example how to be faithful disciples of Christ.

May, dedicated to Mary and mothers, is a time to renew devotion to Mary, and to thank her and all mothers for all they do for us. Happy Mother's Day for all the mothers of our diocese.



Petitions for Christian Unity for the Feast of Pentecost, June 11, Jubilee Year 2000

That, through the action of the Holy Spirit, God will bless us with concrete signs of growth in Christian unity in the Jubilee Year 2000.

That God's grace might open our minds and hearts to our sisters and brothers in Christ throughout the world that we might know, embrace and foster the unity which the Holy Spirit brings to us.

That, as we celebrate with all Christians the second millennium of our redemption, God will prepare our hearts and our churches to be transformed by the Holy Spirit for the sake of the Gospel in the world.

The Central Committee for the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 has designated Pentecost Sunday in the year 2000 a special day for Catholics to reflect and pray for our relations with people of other religious traditions. An additional petition for Pentecost 2000 is recommended:

That God will open our hearts and minds to the presence and activity of the Holy Spirit among all peoples, for an increase in understanding among all believers and an end to conflicts, especially those aggravated by religious differences.

CRISIS

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globalization promotes worldwide communication and the idea that we all live on the same planet and need to cooperate to survive and thrive. However, uncontrolled globalization has many negative consequences even on the local level. It ignores moral rules and spiritual values, can bring about unemployment, the reduction and deterioration of public services, the destruction of the environment and natural resources. It fosters the idea of survival of the strongest. It also causes a growing distance between the rich and the poor, unfair competition which puts poor communities and even nations in a situation of ever increasing inferiority. We urgently need a full and complete examination of our national agricultural policy. Immediate federal assistance is needed. In the new century and millennium, long-term, meaningful agricultural policy is needed that addresses market reality.

Global economic justice focuses on improving equity for all people, respects the constraints of a finite

and fragile environment, promotes diversity and creativity and functions in a manner that is participatory.

We Care Through Prayer

The Church has the responsibility to call its members to be attentive to the plight of farmers and ranchers, to support a safe and clean environment for all, to advocate for humane treatment of animals, to seek respect for the dignity of farmworkers and immigrants who work in the fields and in food processing plants, and to support healthy local communities. This concern of the Church is expressed primarily in the slogan, "We care through prayer." The Church's role is to help us see the connection between the prayer of Christ Jesus, "Give us this day our daily bread," and the statement, "The food business is far and away the most important business in the world."

Christian churches and communities have always prayed, "Give us this day our daily bread." Now is a time to focus our prayer more on how God gives us "daily bread" according to God's plan for us and for

GUIDELINES

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in all the communities of our diocese where a priest is available, that daily Mass be offered, and in as much as possible, adapting the hour of celebration to the needs of the faithful.

These guidelines are to be used when a priest is not available for weekday Mass. I remind all that our dedicated and hard-working priests not only have the right, but the need, to be away for proper days of rest, vacation time, study, and renewal.

Pastoral Response

When the daily Mass cannot be offered in our communities, I ask that the following temporary pastoral guidelines be followed in our diocese for the Weekday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest. I ask that these celebrations be provided at various times during the week in those communities where a priest is not available to nurture the faith of the faithful and to foster praying communities.

1. Whenever possible, daily Mass should be celebrated in each parish or mission.

2. Whenever the *Liturgy of the Word with the Distribution of Holy Communion* is scheduled on a weekday, every effort must be undertaken to avoid any confusion between this celebration and the Mass. Priests

and Pastoral Coordinators need to give clear teaching on this matter. Indeed, such celebrations should encourage the faithful to be present at and to participate in the celebration of the Eucharist, [*Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest*, number 12] and to pray and work more diligently for vocations for priesthood.

3. Whenever possible, the Mass schedules of nearby parishes should be available to parishioners. If a nearby parish is celebrating Mass on a given weekday, serious consideration should be given to encouraging people to participate in that Mass rather than the parish scheduling a Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion. I ask that the pastors of communities that are close to each other (for example in our larger cities) to discuss where and when daily Masses will be offered and if there is a need for the Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion, and to publish the Mass schedules of nearby parishes so that our Catholic people will be provided with the privilege of celebrating Mass with a priest, provided they are able to travel.

4. When daily Mass is scheduled in a parish or mission, it is usually not appropriate to schedule a Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion. This rite is designed for "those who are prevented

from being present at the community's celebration." When necessary, the scheduling of these celebrations should never detract from "the celebration of the Eucharist [as] the center of the entire Christian life." [*Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass*, number 1] Such celebrations should never be seen as an equal choice with participation at Mass.

5. The proper ritual for the Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion is found in *Holy Communion and Worship of the Eucharist Outside Mass*. (1973) The specialized provisions of *Sunday Celebrations in the Absence of a Priest* are not appropriate to weekday celebrations. Prayer presiders need to be properly trained to lead these services and need approval from the Bishop.

6. A Liturgy of the Word with Distribution of Holy Communion should never be scheduled for the purpose of 'providing a role' for deacons or lay ministers. Likewise, choosing the option of the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass solely to provide a role for the deacon is inappropriate, unless of course the priest is not available. It is also inappropriate to have the deacon preside at the Funeral Liturgy outside Mass when a priest is available to celebrate a Funeral Mass.

the world. At present, less and less is our "daily bread" given without hundreds of negative consequences. The Church has the duty to insist that quality – justice, fairness, the integrity of creation, respect for the human person – be essential elements in the future of rural America. The Church fulfills her responsibility to moral leadership by preaching, teaching, public statements, through the support of sound and just legislative policies, through the funding of pastoral remedies, and through the promotion of grassroots efforts on behalf of family-size farms.

The Common Good And Cooperative Efforts

In this crisis the Church is called to be a voice crying out for justice for the poor. The Church's commitment to social and economic justice demands we struggle together with these complex issues. The Church is always to stand in solidarity with the least ones, the marginalized. The rightful role of the Church, the community of believers, is to enter into, and to even shape the debate on issues from a moral point of view. And

the Church is to speak out for the common good and to look after the interest of all of God's children, not just a few. To overcome these economic hardships and problems, the Church encourages a spirit of cooperation rather than competition. A spirit of cooperation can best be attained when the focus is on needs, not wants; when the priority is the common good, not narrow self-interest; when interdependence is sought, not absolute independence. The simple most important principle must be the recognition that the economy is for the service of people and society.

The Church encourages cooperative efforts to solve the rural crisis and the ecological, social, and economic challenges that face our whole planet. Through cooperation and collaboration, family farmers and ranchers can themselves make many of the needed changes in agriculture. I strongly encourage our priests and pastoral leaders to bring people together to discuss and pray about these issues. As we listen, we look for common interests and try to build on these. Ongoing dialogue is essential as is unified, consistent

sustained advocacy for just policies and fairer, competitive markets, but also collective resourcefulness and a process of thinking in different terms.

The Church community needs to be on the front line of the farm/ranch crisis, ministering to families and to the whole community. In a special way our rural parishes are focal points of social and emotional support as well as spirituality. There is a need for education in our churches, civic organizations, and through the media, to reflect seriously upon the state of agriculture in our nation and local area and upon the practical ways in which to promote a sustainable form of agriculture. Education of young people in the truth about agriculture is paramount. Too many of the younger generation have experienced an alienation from the sources of their food and clothing.

Essential to all efforts to resolve the rural crisis is prayer. Prayer brings us in solidarity with one another – rural resident and urban resident. We must all come together as God's people to be renewed in faith, strengthened in hope and united in charity.



Invitation From The Bishop

My dear Sisters and Brothers of Christ,

Once again, I invite all of you to the Diocesan Celebration of the great Jubilee Year 2000, which is our special way of honoring Christ on his 2000th birthday. The highlight of our diocesan celebration will be the 11:30 am Mass, celebrated on June 25, 2000, the Solemnity Feast of the Body and Blood of Christ, at the San Angelo Coliseum. Since this is the major diocesan celebration of the great Jubilee Year 2000, it is my hope that the Coliseum will be filled so that we, as a diocesan church, can give praise and thanks to God for all that has been in Christ and for all that will be.

The Church commemorates this time as a privileged historical moment to remember and celebrate two thousand years of Christ's presence in human history. It is indeed "a year of favor from the Lord" (LK 4:19), a splendid opportunity to begin the third millennium of Christianity as a renewed people of faith, hope and love. It is a time to re-energize ourselves. It is a "once-in-a-lifetime opportunity" since only one in approximately fifty generations experiences the change of a millennium.

More than a month ago, your Pastor/Pastoral Coordinator and Jubilee Contact Person received a packet of materials explaining some of the details of this celebration. Choir members and persons with musical talent from around the diocese have been invited to join and participate in leading the music and song for the celebration. Each parish has been invited to design a parish banner that will be carried in the entrance procession, along with a potted plant that will enhance the environment. Young people have been invited to serve as candle bearers for the Eucharistic ministers. The collection during the Mass has been designated for the poor of our adopted Diocese of San Pedro Sula, Honduras in response to the jubilee plea to assist the poor and marginalized.

Special assistance will be provided for those who need it. Refreshments will be served after the mass. I hope to see all of you at this diocesan celebration of Jubilee!

Sincerely yours in Christ and Mary,
Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI
Bishop of San Angelo, TX



Deacon Ray Smith presents oil to be blessed by Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, at the recent Chrism Mass at the Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart. (Photo by WTA: Peter Micale.)

Earth Day Reminds Us Of The Connection Between Human And Natural Ecology

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

The celebration of Earth Day, April 22nd, reminds us of the connection between human and natural ecology. There is a close bond between soul and soil; between life and air and water; between human and all other forms of life on planet Earth. All share in the mystery of the web of life.

The promotion of a sound and healthy environment on earth is a sacred task, one which affects every aspect of life. Ecology and economic development are closely interrelated. Human beings, with other forms of life on earth, must be at the center of concerns for sustainable development. The centrality of the person, the dignity and rights of all persons, highlight the need for a coherent ethical vision if we are to live in harmony with the larger community of life. In this regard, Pope John Paul II has called for a new ethical vision, a planetary ethic, if we are to live in harmony with one another and with the rest of creation.

St. Paul in his message to the Romans (8:18-23) depicts "the whole created world" engaged in the travail and drama of salvation. A new ecological world view stresses the interconnection of all of life, and all of creation is seen as intrinsic to community and communion. This new view stresses the connection between human and natural ecology, and calls for an eco-theology which focuses on the universe as a communion of subjects.

An Eco-theology of creation looks upon the universe as a communion of subjects, rather than a collection of objects and gives emphasis to both "Earth-Keeping" and "Earth-Healing." An Eco-theology stresses that we are discovering a new dimension of being with, and that we are to be with not only human neighbors, but all other creatures as well.

The Earth's Eco-system is under assault from many sides. Ecological awareness has become in recent decades an area of political concern and also a topic for moral-ethical reflection. We are all to be involved in the ecclesial mission of keeping and caring for creation and earth-healing. The earth is our home, and there is an integral bond that connects us to all life on this planet.



In Celebration of Earth Day, Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI Blesses the Earth Day Tree Planted by Angelo Catholic School Students and Olive's Nursery. (Photos by WTA: Peter Micale.)



In their document, "Renewing the Earth," the U.S. Catholic Bishops recommend specific new actions that reflect an awareness that the "web of life is one," and that there are unbreakable "links—between natural ecology and human ecology." Caring for God's creation and addressing environmental concerns are an integral part of faith and the mission of the Church. The life and teaching of St. Francis shows us that our sense of community must be concerned with all of creation. St. Augustine wrote "The Church consists of the communion of the whole world." This whole world must include a concern for all life.

Christ is the creative center of the entire universe, so we can assume that His redemptive role extends beyond the human sphere. If such is

the case, then communion of creation must be an important part of the mission of the Church today. A new understanding of community of beings includes not only rationale creatures but also land, sky, waterways, plant life and animal life. Soil erosion is intrinsically related to soul erosion.

The U.S. Catholic Bishops in their document bring out that the cosmos, the whole of the natural world has and communicates some ultimate meaning. All creation reflects and imparts the presence of God. The created world can be seen as what Augustine called a sacred sign or visible word of the invisible reality and mysterious activity of God.

Seen from the dimension of com-

see "EARTH," page ten