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# ANGELUS

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## Living the gospel of life in a presidential election year

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – This Presidential Election Year reminds us that as citizens of the United States of America, one of our greatest blessings is our right and responsibility to participate in civic life, especially by voting. In the Catholic tradition, responsible citizenship is a virtue; participation in the political process is a moral obligation. The Catholic approach to faithful citizenship begins with moral principles, and reflecting on the issues in the light of the Gospel of Life.

This election year provides many important opportunities to bring together our moral principles, our experience and teachings of the Church in effective public witness. As Catholics, we need to share our values, raise our voices and use our votes to shape a society that protects human life, promotes family life, pursues social justice, and practices solidarity.

Politics is about more than our pocketbooks or economic interests. There are major questions that need to be looked at:

- How will we protect the weakest in our midst - innocent, unborn children?
- How will we overcome the scandal of our preschoolers living in poverty in the richest nation on earth?
- How will we address the growing number of families and individuals without affordable and accessible health care?
- How will we work together to overcome poverty, racism, discrimination, and other injustices?
- How will we promote immigration legislation that favors unification of family members and legal stability for those who are already in our country?
- How will we provide housing for the poor, and in the spirit of the Church's teaching promote alternatives to the death penalty?

• What can we do to provide water and other basic services for our communities, show more care for creation, and pursue the common good?

All of these, and other life issues, demand our study, our attention, and should influence the way we vote.

Among the preeminent life issues that needs to be looked at in any election year is the right to life – the question of abortion. Human life is a gift from God, sacred and inviolable. This belief calls us to protect and respect every human life from conception until natural death.

Catholic elected officials and those pursuing a public office have a grave duty to defend human life in all its stages and in every condition. Catholic candidates and elected officials have a serious moral obligation to be guided by moral principles and not party platforms.

Catholic politicians need to be clearly informed about the teaching of the Catholic Church as given by Pope John Paul II in *The Gospel of Life*, and the statements of the U.S. Catholic bishops, *Living the Gospel of Life*, (1998), *Catholics and Political Life* (2004), *Faithful Citizenship*, and the recent statement of the Holy See, “*On Some Questions regarding participation of Catholics in Public Life.*”

Nothing in this recent Roman document is new. But it offers a vision of public service based on basic moral principles and filled with common sense. Quoting John Paul II, it reminds us that “Man cannot be separated from God, nor politics from morality.” In other words, unless our personal faith shapes our public choices and actions, it is just a pious delusion. Private faith, if it is genuine, always becomes public witness – including political witness. Democracy only succeeds to the extent

see “GOSPEL,” page eleven

## Senator Kerry, why overturn the present U. S. Policy on overseas population assistance program?

by Mr. Pete Micale, WTA

SAN ANGELO – As American citizens, as voters, and as committed Catholics, we have the right and responsibility to question our elected officials and candidates for political office about policies and programs that go contrary to our basic Catholic teaching.

During this Presidential campaign year, there are many important social issues that need to be addressed, but the right to life undergirds all other issues or groups of issues. The right to life is the foundation of all other rights. For Catholics, the defense of human life and dignity is not a narrow cause, but a way of life. A recent Vatican statement reminds

us that a well-formed Christian conscience does not permit voting for a political program or law that contradicts fundamental principles of our faith.

Many political issues have important moral dimensions that must be considered. The U.S. Catholic Bishops have pointed out in various statements that the pre-eminent life issue is respect and protection of the unborn life. Protecting human life begins with opposition to abortion and euthanasia. Threats to human life and dignity extend to our Catholic opposition to cloning, assisted suicide and the death penalty and our efforts to promote peace.

In this context of promoting and protect-

ing human life, beginning with the unborn, the publisher and editor of the *West Texas Angelus* have sought clarity from Senator John Kerry, the Democrat candidate for President, as regards his statement and proposal, that if he were elected President, he would overturn the present policy of our country that does not provide abortion assistance for overseas programs. Several weeks ago the publisher and editor sent a fax letter to Senator Kerry's Washington address, and also a hard copy to the same office asking for clarity about the Senator's position on this matter. Many calls with the Kerry staff failed to bring clarity as to whether or not the fax and letter were received,

and the initial calls from the editor of the *Angelus* were not returned. It was pointed out in later dialogue with the Kerry people that their offices are only open certain hours of the day, and that several people had been on vacation. The fact is that during “open hours” only a recorder responded at times. As of this date, no reply has been given to the basic question that was presented in the letter submitted to the Kerry campaign as regards the Senator's position on abortion assistance. We share with you here the letter that we sent to Senator Kerry on July 26, 2004.

see “KERRY” page ten



# To make such intrinsically evil actions (as abortion) legal is itself wrong

by Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

Briefly I share with you some thoughts on the legal dimension of abortion. "To make such intrinsically evil actions [as abortion] legal is itself wrong . . . The legal system as such can be said to cooperate in evil when it fails to protect the lives of those who have no protection except the law . . . Failing to protect the lives of innocent and defenseless members of the human race is to sin against justice. Those who formulate law therefore have an obligation in conscience to work toward correcting morally defective laws, lest they be guilty of cooperating in evil and in sinning against the common good. – Catholics in Political Life"



# Embryonic stem cell research exaggerated

by Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI

Briefly I share with you some thoughts on stem cell research. "Researchers now know that the apparent initial "promise" of [embryonic stem cells] was exaggerated. For example, because of their genetic instability and tendency to form potentially lethal tumors in host animals, these cells may not be ready for human clinical trials for many years, if ever. At the same time, adult stem cells and other avenues that pose no moral problem have advanced quickly toward human clinical trials to treat corneal damage, Parkinson's disease, spinal cord injury, sickle-cell anemia, cardiac damage and many other conditions. (For details see [www.stemcellresearch.org](http://www.stemcellresearch.org)) – Cardinal William H. Keeler, letter to House and Senate Appropriations Committees, July 7, 2004"

# Legalizar acciones intrínsecamente malas (como el aborto) es en sí erróneo

por el Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI

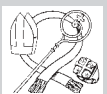
Brevemente comparto con ustedes algunos pensamientos sobre la dimensión legal del aborto. "Legalizar acciones intrínsecamente malas [como el aborto] es en sí erróneo . . . Un sistema legal como este puede decir que coopera en el mal cuando falla en proteger las vidas de aquellos que no tienen otra protección que la ley . . . Dejar de proteger las vidas de los inocentes e indefensos miembros de la raza humana es un pecado en contra de la justicia. Por lo tanto, los que formulan las leyes tienen una obligación de conciencia de trabajar para moralmente corregir las leyes defectuosas, así no serán culpables de cooperar con el mal y de pecar contra el bien común. – Católicos en la Vida Política"

# Legalizar acciones intrínsecamente malas (como el aborto) es en sí erróneo

por el Obispo Miguel D. Pfeifer, OMI

Brevemente comparto con ustedes algunos pensamientos sobre la investigación de células embrionarias. "Los investigadores saben ahora que la aparente "promesa" inicial de [células embrionarias] fue exagerada. Por ejemplo: debido a su inestabilidad genética y a la tendencia de formar tumores letales en los animales, tendrán que pasar muchos años para que estas células pueden estar listas para tratamientos humanos. Al mismo tiempo, las células adultas y otras vías que no presentan problemas morales han avanzado rápidamente hacia experimentos clínicos en humanos para tratar daños de la córnea, la enfermedad de Parkinson, problemas de la columna, células falciformes de anemia, daños cardíacos y muchos otros más. (Para detalles vea la página: [www.stemcellresearch.org](http://www.stemcellresearch.org)) - Carta del Cardenal William H. Keeler, a los Comités de la Casa y del Senado, Julio 7, 2004"

## The Bishop's Schedule



### September 2004

September 1: San Antonio - Oblate Renewal Center - Joint meeting of Texas Bishops and Bishops of Northern Mexico

September 3-5: Los Angeles - Wedding

September 6: San Angelo - Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart -

Labor Day Mass at 9:00 a.m.

September 7-9: Chicago - Catholic Church Extension Society Mission Conference

September 10: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Mass for Staff at 8:30 a.m. 9/11 Memorial Site - Ecumenical Prayer Service at 10:00 a.m.

September 11: Midland - Pro-Life Mass at Garden across from Planned Parenthood - 9:30 a.m.

September 12: Ballinger, St. Mary

- Mass 8:45 a.m.

September 13: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Staff Meeting at 11:00 a.m.

September 14: Odessa, St. Mary School - Mass for Students at 2:00 p.m.

September 15: Midland, St. Ann's School - Mass for Students at 8:30 a.m.

September 19: San Angelo, St. Margaret - Mass at 10:30 a.m.

September 21-22: Belton - Texas Conference of Churches - CJ L Retreat

September 23: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Presbyteral Council at 11:00 a.m.

September 20-24: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Visit of Auditors to the Diocese of San Angelo

September 24: Ft. Stockton, St. Agnes - Install Father Floro Hinacay as Pastor at 6:00 p.m.

September 26: Sterling City, St. Paschal - Mass at 11:30 a.m.

September 28: Abilene, Sacred Heart - Presentation to RCIA groups of the Abilene Deanery at 7:00 p.m.

September 29: San Angelo - Newman Center - Mass at 12:00 noon

September 30: Midland, St. Stephen - Presentation to RCIA groups of Midland/Odessa Deanery at 7:00 p.m.

### October 2004

October 1: Big Spring, St. Thomas - Meet with priests of the Midland/Odessa Deanery at 11:00 a.m.

October 2: Odessa, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton - Confirmation at 5:00 p.m.

October 3: San Angelo, Holy Angels - Mass at 11:00 a.m. and bless new education centers immediately after Mass

October 4: San Angelo, Holy Angels - Mass and Bless Animals at 8:30 a.m. for Students of Angelo Catholic School

October 5-6: Rest and Prayer

October 7: San Angelo, Cathedral

Church of the Sacred Heart - Living Rosary at 7:00 p.m.

October 9: San Angelo, San Angelo Convention Center - Jr. High Diocesan Youth Event. Mass at 4:00 p.m.

October 10: Houston - Meeting of the Holy Sepulchre

October 12-15: Guadalajara, Mexico - Eucharistic Congress

October 16: Odessa, St. Mary - Confirmation at 6:00 p.m.

October 17-18: San Antonio - MACC Board Meeting

October 19: San Angelo, Diocesan Pastoral Center - Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m. Christ the King Retreat Center - Mass at 5:00 p.m. for the Prison Ministry Conference

October 19-20: San Antonio - Meeting of Texas Bishops

October 21: Abilene, Sacred Heart - Confirmation at 6:30 p.m.

October 22: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center - Seminar

see "SCHEDULE" page eleven

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# Obituary for Fr. Sam Homsey, C.P.P.S.

by Peter Micale, WTA

SAN ANGELO – Fr. Sam Homsey, C.P.P.S. died as a result of an automobile accident near Coleman on Sunday afternoon, August 15, 2004.

Fr. Sam was born to Lebanese parents in Missouri on September 14, 1910 and grew up in the Catholic faith. He began his vocation toward the priesthood at the age of 13. He attended Cathedral and St. Francis Xavier elementary schools in St. Joseph, Missouri and St. Joseph Academy High School in Rensselaer, Indiana. He graduated from St. Joseph College in 1932 and entered St. Charles Seminary in Carthagen, Ohio. Fr. Sam was ordained on May 10, 1936 into the order of the Society of Precious Blood (C.P.P.S.).

He spent his first summer as a priest in Vinita, Oklahoma replacing vacationing priests and also serving at the resort of Spavinaw. For the next six years Fr. Sam served as pastor of

two African American parishes in Nashville, Tennessee and taught medieval and modern European history at the Father Ryan High School. In 1942 he was sent to Brunnerdale Minor Seminary in Ohio to be the Spiritual Director and teacher. In 1950 he was sent to Chile as a missionary after studying Spanish for six weeks at Collegeville. Spanish was not the only other language he mastered; as a child he heard his parents speaking Arabic and English and sometimes French. In the early evening he liked to read books in Hebrew, Greek and German. He always enjoyed celebrating the Mass in Latin.

In Chile he was first assigned to Rio Negro, about 500 miles south of Santiago, and he was later sent to Santiago to help start a new school.

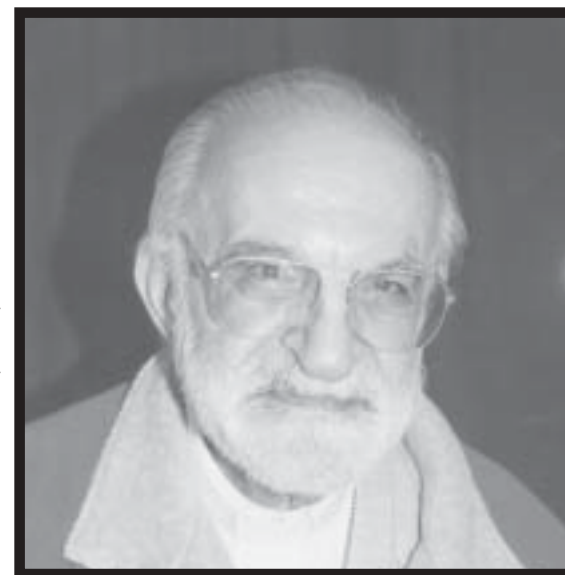
Fr. Sam returned to the United States in 1956 and served as a chaplain at St. Joseph Hospital in Fort Wayne, Indiana. From 1958 to 1968

he was the pastor at St. Anthony's Church in Linton, North Dakota and he also taught in the Catholic High School. From 1968 to 1970 he was the chaplain at Sacred Heart College in Wichita, Kansas and he also taught college courses. He became pastor of St. Agnes Church in Fort Stockton in 1970 and was there until July 31, 1980 when he was assigned as pastor of St. Mary, Star of the Sea in Ballinger. From 1990 to 1996 he was the pastor at St. Francis Church in Abilene, and his last assignment as pastor was at the Mount Carmel Catholic Church in Winters. On July 1, 2000 he started his final assignment as a Pastor Emeritus of Holy Family and Immaculate Heart of Mary Churches in Sweetwater and Our Mother of Mercy in Merkel and St. Albert in Roscoe.

In a twist of fate, Fr. Sam served as an assistant at Holy Family Catholic Church to a priest, Fr. Mark Goode, he influenced to at-

tend seminary in the 1970's while he was the pastor in Fort Stockton. Fr. Goode was a student at the University of Texas in El Paso in the summer of 1970 when Fr. Sam moved to Fort Stockton.

The Wake and Rosary Service led by Fr. Michael Rodriguez was at Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Sweetwater on Tuesday evening at 7:00 pm, August 17<sup>th</sup>. Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, was the main celebrant of the Funeral Mass on Wednesday, August 18<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 am at the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church, and Fr. Rodriguez was the homilist. Fr. Sam was buried in the family plot next to his parents at Mount Olivet-



Fr. Sam Homsey, C.P.P.S. (File photo from Diocese of San Angelo.)

Calvary Cemetery in St. Joseph, Missouri. Fr. Sam presided over the funerals of all his family—his parents, David and Mary; one brother, Joseph; and two sisters, Frieda and Hattie Kalaf.

“You are a priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek... Well done, good and faithful servant.”



Father Obioma Desmond Obi's (l) 20th anniversary of Priestly Ordination, concelebrated with Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI (r). (Photo by Cindy Torres.)

## Christ the King Retreat Center to promote natural family planning

by Fr. John Castro, OMI

SAN ANGELO – To underscore the importance of Natural Family Planning (NFP) in the lives of Catholic families in the modern world, Christ the King Retreat Center will hold a four-day NFP workshop September 17-20, 2004. The Department of Family Life of the Diocese of San Angelo will sponsor the event.

NFP representatives from the Bill-

ings Ovulation Method (BOM) will conduct NFP training for nine participants representing parishes from Abilene, Brady and San Angelo. Most Reverend Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, O.M.I., bishop of San Angelo, will present an overview on the papal encyclical “Humanae Vitae,” “On Human Life,” during the symposium. At the termination of the sessions the students will be certi-

fied to teach BOM to interested couples throughout the diocese, according to Fr. John Gonzales Castro, O.M.I., director of Family Life.

Diocesan NFP programs are the vehicles through which the Roman Catholic Church helps married couples to live out their conjugal love responsibly. These programs provide classes for the engaged and

see “FAMILY” page nine

## Evangelization Workshop

### Share Your Faith

A workshop for “everyday Catholics” who want to know how to Share Their Faith.

**Saturday Sept 18, 2004:**

Holy Angels, San Angelo, 9:00 am - 11:30 am

St. Vincent, Abilene, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

**Sunday Sept 19, 2004:**

Our Lady/San Juan, Midland, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

The workshop will be presented in English & Spanish.

Presenters are S. Louise Alff, FMDC and Alma Garcia from RENEW International.

### Comparte Tu Fe

Un taller para católicos que desean saber como Compartir Su Fe.

**Sábado -18 de septiembre de 2004:**

Holy Angels, San Angelo, 9:00 am - 11:30 am

St. Vincent, Abilene, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

**Domingo -19 de septiembre de 2004:**

Our Lady of San Juan, Midland, 2:00 pm - 4:30 pm

Este taller será presentado en inglés y español.

Los presentantes son S. Louise Alff, FMDC y Alma Garcia de RENACER Internacional.



# Pastoral application of the bishops' statement on Catholics in political life

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – In the July edition of the *West Texas Angelus*, I published a summary of the statement of the U.S. Catholic Bishops on *Catholics in Political Life*, which was approved by the U.S. Bishops at their June meeting in Denver. This statement on *Catholics in Political Life* gives us the principles and basic Catholic teaching on this critical issue. In the same edition of the *Angelus*, I published how I plan to implement in a pastoral manner in our Diocese the U.S. Catholic Bishops' statement.

So that there is clarity as regards how I and most Bishops of Texas plan to implement the U.S. Catholic Bishops' statement, I am once again publishing the pastoral application statement.

**A pastoral application of the statement of the U. S. bishops on Catholics and political life, July**

1, 2004.

The United States Conference Of Catholic Bishops meeting in Denver (June 14-19) addressed the question of the whether the denial of Holy Communion to some Catholics in political life is necessary because of their support for abortion on demand. In acknowledging the complexity of the issue, the bishops referred to the appropriate theological and canonical principles which, when applied to this question, can legitimately admit to different pastoral judgments. While it is not necessary that Holy Communion be denied to Catholic politicians who support abortion legislation, some bishops have reached a decision that the denial of Holy Communion to these politicians is warranted.

Most of the Texas Bishops have decided that at this time in our prudential judgment we will not di-

rect our parishes and institutions to deny Holy Communion to politicians who support litigation that favors abortion. However, we ask Catholic politicians to examine their consciences in the light of the clear and certain teaching of the church, which has always condemned abortion as the killing of an innocent human life, and to reflect on their grave moral obligation to do whatever they can to promote legal protection of human life from conception to natural death. Failing to protect the lives of the innocent and defenseless members of the human race is to sin against justice. This is not only a religious belief but the common good of society requires that human life be defended and have legal protection.

If after a careful examination of conscience, Catholic politicians admit to the subjective guilt of supporting abortion legislation, they

should on their own, refrain from receiving Holy Communion. It should be noted, there could be grave circumstances, e.g. persistent support for partial birth abortion, when an individual bishop, after consulting with a politician, and as a last resort, will give a directive to deny Holy Communion to the politician.

Abortion has a unique status among pro-life issues because it is the violation of the most fundamental human right, the right to be born. We urge Catholic politicians to be completely pro-life, and protect human life and dignity on all issues, which embrace the human right to food, healthcare, decent housing, and other moral issues in which human life is endangered, such as the death penalty, war and the environment. These issues do not have the same moral weight as abortion and euthanasia, but they

relate to very important aspects of the Church's social teaching, and cannot be disregarded in forming a pro-life approach to political issues.

The Catholic Bishops of Texas believe strongly that moral convictions about political issues are not a threat to democracy. In fact, the opposite is true. Political decisions devoid of a moral content are a danger to the common good of society. Politicians do not violate the separation of Church and state when they bring their faith convictions into the debate on public policy. It is always in the best interest of a democratic state to allow moral convictions which defend human life and dignity to be heard. Catholic politicians should not hesitate to bring their faith values in to the public square. The Second Vatican Council reminds us that the split between the faith which many profess and the practice of their daily lives is to be counted among the more serious errors of our age. (The Church in the Modern World, 43)

## Family day

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – FAMILY DAY is held on the fourth Monday in September every year, and this year, it falls on September 27. On FAMILY DAY, parents are encouraged to have dinner with their children as a symbol to energize parents and to make family dinners a routine part of their lives. Dining together routinely is one way to facilitate parental engagement.

The survey done by the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University points out that the more often children eat dinner with their families, the less likely they are to smoke, drink, or use illegal drugs. Further, research shows that frequent family dinners reduce stress among teens, decrease boredom and increase school performance. This pattern holds true regardless of a teen's sex, family structure, and family socioeconomic level.

While one day a year is designated as FAMILY DAY, parents and children should make a better effort to try to come together as often as possible during the week for family sharing, praying, and to enjoy a meal together. The family that prays together stays together. With so many demanding schedules for parents and activities for children, fewer families are making time to eat together. Every day in some way should be a FAMILY DAY.

Hopefully FAMILY DAY will inspire our families to make more time to share a meal together, and while at the table, to share and discuss items of the greatest importance for all family members. FAMILY DAY embodies the values and teachings of our beautiful Catholic Church. Starting a Sunday ritual of attending Mass and sharing a meal as a family is a beautiful tradition that will increase parental engagement and communication with children.

I encourage our parishes to promote FAMILY DAY, and to often stress the importance for the family to come together for sharing and to enjoy meals together. God's peace.

## Stewards of God's creation

(Catechetical Sunday, September 19, 2004)

by Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

SAN ANGELO – The theme for this year's Catechetical Sunday, which will be celebrated on September 19, 2004, is "Stewards of God's Gifts – Corresponsables de los Dorios de Dios." This theme reminds us that we are called to work unselfishly, using the gifts God has given us, to help safeguard our faith and enable it to grow and flourish in all of our communities.

Catechetical ministry is a real opportunity to act as a steward of the gifts that God has given each of us. Catechists not only share their own gifts with those they teach, but also help others recognize the gifts that God has given to them. The annual celebration of Catechetical Sunday is a way for parishes and missions of our Diocese to recognize and thank all those who give generously of themselves in the work of catechesis.

On Catechetical Sunday, I ask our pastors and pastoral coordina-

tor to recognize our catechists in a public way, and to express gratitude to these generous people who offer their gifts for this important ministry for the people of our Diocese. I also ask that we offer prayers on this Sunday for all of those who are involved in the catechetical ministry of the Church.

I am deeply grateful to Sisters Hilda Marotta and Adelina Garcia who, with their staff, of the Office

of Education and Formation, provide training and formation for hundreds of people who are involved in the catechetical ministry of our Diocese.

As we celebrate Catechetical Sunday in our Diocese this year, let us pray that the Lord will pour out new and abundant blessings on all those who share in this essential work of the Church.

**St. Mary's Star of the Sea**  
**Annual Festival 2004**  
**Sunday, September 12**  
**608 N. 6th St., Ballinger, TX**  
**Fancy Stand - Bingo - Games**  
**Auction 1:00 pm**  
**Fajitas, Beans, Rice Meal: Adults \$6 – Child \$3**  
**Served from 11:00 am - 1:30 pm**  
**Drive Through**



# Asistencia a misa

por Padre Angel Villallreum

SAN ANGELO – Venía discutiendo este tema con algunos yo con el grupo que opinaba que la asistencia había bajado con el otro que, basado en su propia experiencia, pensaba lo contrario cuando me llega la revista AMÉRICA con un artículo de Andrew M. Greeley, gran escritor y sobre todo profesor de ciencias sociales en las universidades de Chicago y Arizona. El artículo lo titula *Hijos del Concilio* en el cual me inspiro.

El Clero de la Iglesia Católica informa que sus iglesias, antes llenas hasta los topes los domingos, ahora se hallan medio vacías. Algunos lo atribuyen a las reformas del Concilio Vaticano Segundo. Pero ello no tiene en cuenta el hecho de que muchos que no atienden a misa regularmente – los que todavía no llegan a 40 años – no iban a misa antes. Los católicos americanos cambiaron su mente asociando la asistencia a misa al control de la natalidad y concluyeron que si la no asistencia a misa dominical no les iba a llevar al in-

fierno, el control de la natalidad tampoco.

Las moderadas reformas del Concilio – viendo a la Iglesia como el pueblo de Dios, mejores relaciones con los judíos, la liturgia vernácula, no parecen haber hecho impacto en la asistencia a misa de los católicos americanos.

Parece que la asistencia a misa los domingos decayó por tres razones: 1a) La terminación de la vida por la edad que cuenta como un quinto % de asistencia dominical en los 1970-s. 2a) Actitudes hacia el control de la natalidad cuenta en mucho. 3a) Cambios de actitud referente a la autoridad de la Iglesia; por ejemplo, cambios en la convicción de que Jesús pasó a Pedro y sus sucesores la autoridad que ostenta la Iglesia y cambio en la creencia de que Dios condena a los pecadores a la eternidad del infierno.

Las actitudes frente al sexo, la autoridad de la Iglesia y el pecado parecen estar relacionadas a la hora de explicar el descenso de la asistencia a la misa dominical. Al mis-

## Ethics and Integrity Workshop Dates

Deanery	Place	Date	Time
Abilene	Holy Family, Abilene	Sept. 18, 2004	10:00 am - 1:00 pm (Eng)
	Holy Family, Sweetwater	Oct. 11, 2004	7:00 - 10:00 pm (Eng)
	St. Francis, Abilene	Oct. 14, 2004	6:30 - 9:30 pm (Eng)
	St. Mary, Brownwood	*Nov 9, 2004	6:30 - 9:30 pm (Eng)
	<i>(Date Corrected from original date of Nov. 4)</i>		
Midland/Odessa	St. Ann, Midland	*Sept. 28, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)
	<i>(Rescheduled from original date of Sept. 21)</i>		
	Sacred Heart, Big Spring	Oct. 4, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)
	St. Anthony, Odessa	Oct. 18, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)
San Angelo	Our Lady of Guadalupe, Midland	Nov. 8, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)
	St. Mary, San Angelo	Sept. 14, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)
	Our Lady of		
	Perpetual Help, Ozona	Sept. 27, 2004	6:30-9:30 pm (Eng)
	St. Margaret, Big Lake	Oct. 5, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)
St. Margaret, San Angelo	Oct. 12, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)	
Cathedral Church of the			
Sacred Heart, San Angelo	Nov. 15, 2004	7:00-10:00 pm (Eng)	

mo tiempo la asistencia de los protestantes a sus servicios dominicales permaneció estable.

Permítanme añadir algo personal que no veo en lo que motiva la asistencia a misa o aleja a uno de

ella. La comodidad del templo, asientos, temperatura, eco, luces; misalitos litúrgicos bilingües y que el que preside la liturgia tenga buena voz y buena dicción y sobre todo que el mensaje sea claro y atracti-

vo. Cuando esto ocurre, luego corre la voz de la misa y hora en que el templo está abarrotado de fieles. “No te la pierdas” . . .

## San Angelo – San Pedro Sula partnership

by Msgr. Larry Droll

ABILENE – Pope John Paul II, in the apostolic exhortation *The Church in America*, 1999, reminded us that the Catholic Church in America – North, Central and South – can be seen as a single entity. We are called upon – together – to encounter the living Jesus Christ in the encounter with one another, through conversion, communion and solidarity.

He called for new efforts to be made to express and foster this

unity. Dioceses of Texas and Honduras have taken up the call to action and developed partnerships between the various dioceses. These partnerships were facilitated by Catholic Relief Services in a process during 2000-2001; CRS continues to assist as requested.

The Diocese of San Pedro Sula in Honduras has entered a partnership with the Dioceses of Tyler and San Angelo in Texas. A Covenant of Partnership, signed September 11, 2001, forms the foundation of

various activities meant to develop the relationship among the people of the dioceses. The basic relationship is between the San Angelo and Honduras dioceses, with the cooperation of the other Texas diocese.

### 1. Diocese to Diocese Partnership

• Diocesan Partnership Teams meet at least annually to foster the relationship

• Team Members facilitate encounter or immersion visits, exchanges, retreats, etc.

• Partnership Days Celebrations are planned for September 10-12, 2004

• Team Members are committed to pray weekly for the three dioceses

• Team Members promote the partnership through publicity and presentations

• Clergy Exchange: Fr. David Herrera

### 2. Parish to Parish Partnership

• People and parish staffs pray, communicate, visit, work and share

• St. Ambrose, Wall & Holy Trin-

ity, Chamelecon

• St. Vincent, Abilene & Our Lady of Mount Carmel, Cofradia

• St. Therese, Carlsbad & St. Michael the Archangel Chapel, La Lima

• St. Agnes, Fort Stockton & (in process)

• St. Ann's, Midland & (in process)

### 3. School to School Partnership

• Students and teachers pray, communicate, visit, work and share

• St. Ann's, Midland & La

Milagrosa, Tela

• St. Mary's, Odessa & San Vicente de Paul, San Pedro Sula

• Angelo Catholic & (in process)

### 4. Campus Ministry Partnership

• Diocesan campus ministers facilitate the relationship

• Students and professors pray, communicate, visit, work and share

• The Partnership is experienced in the context of studying the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church

• Retreats for students are offered

St. Therese (Carlsbad) - St. Paschal (Sterling City)

### Annual Festival

Sunday, September 19th

KC Hall, 3636 N. Bryant Blvd., San Angelo

BBQ Brisket / German Sausage Dinner

served 11:00 am - 2:00 pm, Adults \$6.50 – Child \$3

Plates To-Go (Drive thru available) \$6.50

Bingo • Game Booths • Silent Auction

Country Store • Live Auction 1:15 pm

### St. Ann's Catholic Church

56th Annual Family Fair 2004

Midland, TX

Theme: “Capturing the Spirit of Faith”

Saturday, September 25

Carnival Rides - Thurs. - Sunday

Food & Game Booths

Bingo on Sat. 12:00 pm until 8:00 pm

For more information call: 432-684-5969



# Welcome Back St. Ann's Students!

by Sador and Becky Sotelo

MIDLAND – It's Monday morning, the doors are open, the bell has rung and there are children walking past each other in the hallway, smiling as they begin their day. It's a brand new school year and with a new year, there are new challenges for students. St. Ann's Catholic School has been educating students since 1950.

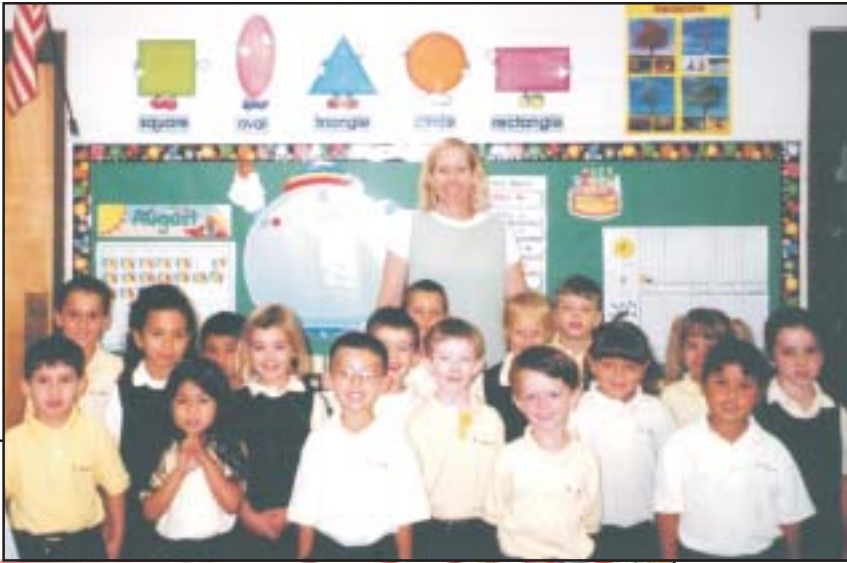
New teachers, new seating assignments, and new friends are a part of the new school year for St. Ann's Students. To help ease a student's first day jitters, the school held a meet the teacher day on Friday, August 13, 2004. Students had the opportunity to meet their teacher, see their new classrooms and check out who their classmates would be. New families gathered to meet other parents involved at St. Ann's School. These families were assigned a mentor family who will stay in contact throughout the year. Parents will have the opportunity to visit with the teachers on August 31 at "Back to School Night" Open House to learn more about this year's educational cur-

riculum.

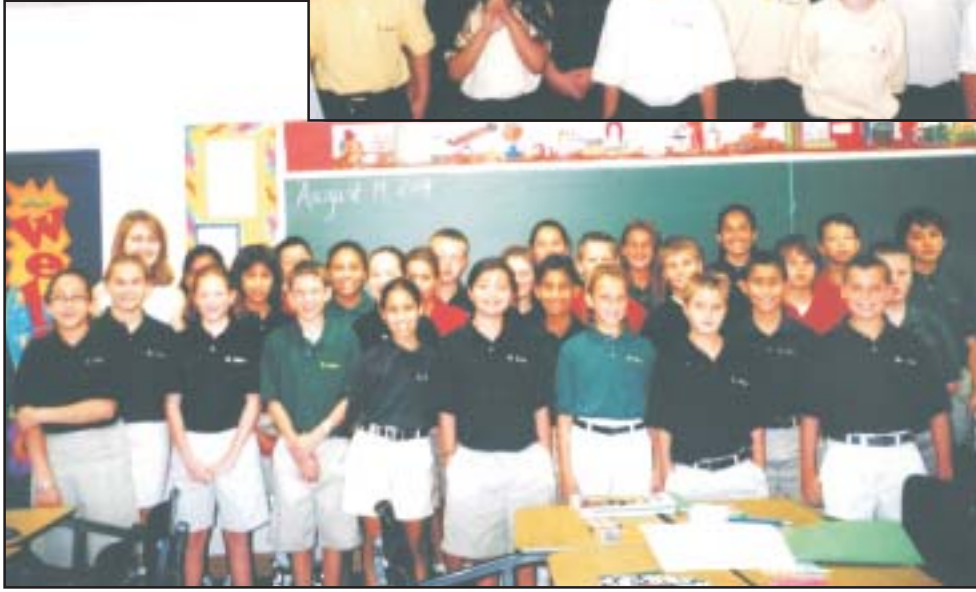
This year's service projects for St. Ann students include aiding volunteers with Habitat for Humanity and adopting a park near the school. Middle school students will also have the opportunity to help at a local soup kitchen and other organizations that provide for the needs of the poor. Our sixth graders will participate in a Toastmaster Junior class, which is designed to help students practice public speaking. To gain a better understanding of the justice system, seventh and eighth grades will have an opportunity to volunteer at Teen Court. Through our religion program, first grade through eighth grade will participate in preparing the liturgy for weekly masses. With projects like these a student is well prepared to become a part of our giving society. There are hundreds of children who have attended St. Ann's that have become responsible contributing members of our society.

For over fifty years St. Ann's School has been providing quality Catholic education in Midland. Our mission at St. Ann's School is to

provide Catholic teaching, academic growth and Christian values in a positive, nurturing environment. We will communicate openly and honestly with parents and encourage involvement in their child's learning process. St. Ann's School will provide the community with competent, socially skilled responsible leaders and citi-



Above: Mrs. Menzel's Kindergarten class.



Left: Mrs. Jones' 6th grade class. (Photos by Sador and Becky Sotelo.)

zens. In order to maximize all students' potential, the St. Ann's staff will foster loyalty and cohesiveness among themselves, pursue ongoing

professional development and strive to be living examples of the Catholic Faith. To learn more about St. Ann's Catholic School visit us

at our website: [www.stanns.us](http://www.stanns.us) or contact St. Ann's School at 432-684-4563.

# McGreevey, Kerry and the Church

by Paul Kengor, Ph.D.

WASHINGTON D.C. – The recent news of a homosexual affair by Democratic Governor James McGreevey of New Jersey is a stunning revelation. We are not accustomed to this kind of thing in America. The British find it quite familiar. Indeed, in Britain, when a story breaks of a sexual scandal involving a male MP, the first question often asked is: was it with another man? That's not a standard assumption in American politics.

Though he clearly has his failings, there's something impressive about McGreevey: He has the integrity to discipline himself for moral misconduct; in this case, he is resigning. Yet, one of the more impressive displays by McGreevey took place weeks ago, and went almost

unreported outside New Jersey, possibly because sympathetic journalists in the national media feared its repercussions on John F. Kerry:

Governor McGreevey is a pro-choice Catholic, in stark opposition to Church teaching. In June, Archbishop John J. Myers of the Newark diocese released a five-page statement titled, "A Time for Honesty," in which he wrote that Catholic politicians who support abortion rights should not seek communion. In response, New Jersey's pro-choice governor said he would respect the archbishop's request and not seek the Eucharist at Mass. Oddly, McGreevey said he would accept communion in private (whatever that means) but not in public, even though Myers made no distinction. Still, unlike most pro-choice politicians,

he was willing to accept Church authority, on an issue the Church understands as a matter of literal life and death.

McGreevey's response begged the question, or at least should have begged the question, if anyone at CBS Evening News or the New York Times cared to ask: Would John F. Kerry do the same?

Kerry, also a Catholic, is not just passively pro-choice; he is a champion of the cause. At the 2003 NARAL Pro-Choice America Dinner, where he described pro-lifers as "the forces of intolerance," Kerry boasted that his maiden speech as a freshman senator had been in support of Roe v. Wade. On the floor of the U.S. Senate on August 2, 1994, he staked a frightening position: "The right thing to do is to treat abortions as exactly what they are – a medical procedure that any doctor is free to provide and any pregnant woman free to obtain. Consequently, abortions should not have to be performed in tightly guarded clinics on

the edge of town; they should be performed and obtained in the same locations as any other medical procedure . . . [A]bortions need to be moved out of the fringes of medicine and into the mainstream of medical practice."

Like Al Gore, John Kerry is one of those shameless (mostly Democrat) politicians who says he is personally against abortion and that abortion should be rare but legal, all the while doing absolutely nothing to make it rare – quite the contrary. Perhaps we could take these assurances more seriously if these men gave just one hour or one dollar to a crisis pregnancy center or devoted a single speech to alternatives to abortion.

In Kerry, Democrats are nominating the most fiercely pro-choice individual ever to receive a major party nomination for president. This greatly disturbs the Catholic Church, which has worked as steadfastly to slow abortion as any institution. To the Church, nothing would

be more aggravating than to watch its progress on abortion reversed by no less than a Catholic president.

Support of "abortion rights" is a family affair for the Kerrys. Despite agreeing with her husband that abortion ends the "process of life" (as she put it), Teresa Heinz Kerry (also a Catholic) likewise remains pro-choice, recently telling Newsweek: "I ask myself, if I had a 13-year-old daughter who got drunk one night and got pregnant, what would I do. Christ, I'd go nuts." Kerry's daughter Vanessa and two sisters joined him at the April "March for Women's Lives" in Washington, DC, where he gave the keynote speech.

Ironically, as Kerry addressed the rally, Cardinal Francis Arinze, speaking from the Holy See, presented Redemptionis Sacramentum, a Vatican declaration stating that priests must deny communion to unrepentant pro-choice Catholic politicians. Arinze

see "CHURCH" page ten



# Youth missionaries evangelize in the diocese

by Fr. Bob Bush

ABILENE – Six college-age young people spent seven weeks of their summer dedicated to the Lord in the work of evangelization. They worked with youth who finished the 7, 8, and 9 grades. This event, called the *Summer Catholic Missionary Experience for Youth*, began with two weeks of training at Sacred Heart Church in Abilene. This team, composed of two men and four women, worked in parishes in Abilene, Sweetwater, Brownwood and Big Lake. They stayed mostly in parish halls or homes, and each week visited homes, put on two youth rallies, and conducted a weekend retreat. The participants Nancy Aguirre and Nicole Madero from Odessa, David Duarte and Faustino Rodríguez from Midland, Felicia López from Andrews and Cora Márquez from San Angelo came to a pre-training Discernment Weekend in which they first determined their readiness and willingness to serve in this capacity this summer.

One of them, looking back on the summer, said it was “one of the smartest things I ever did.” As she prayed about her decision, a lot of things came into focus. The training helped her feel like she was “part of the family”. Another felt that God had been calling her to this ministry for some time before

she actually applied. At the Discernment Weekend, she bonded with the team and grew in her relationship with Jesus. Another said she didn’t know all the reasons why she was applying, but just that she knew she loved young people and loved Jesus. She had to decide to leave her family structure and walk into a whole new world. This made her grow in her trust in the Lord. Prayer became vital for her and for her life decisions. Another said that this has been the most fulfilling experience of her life. Another said this was a life-changing experience for him. And another said that it was like “our Lord was calling me just like he called his fishermen” to “drop their nets” (their security). This missionary dropped his nets, not knowing what to expect – the nets of family, friends, work, school and home to “go forth and be his witness – even to the ends of the Diocese.”

The two-week training offered much teaching from which this team drew for ministry. The experiences they had together bonded them ever more closely to each other as brothers and sisters in a close family. They had differences (like any family) but these hardships brought them closer together.

The training prepared them for the fruitful ministry to follow. Visits in the homes of the middle

school youth were difficult for some at first, but gave them the opportunity to know most of the youth and their families. It became the favorite part of the week for some. They found that the youth felt special because of having received a visit.

On one visit, a mother shared how she desired to become a religious sister, but ended up getting married and is now happily married with two children. Upon reflection on this, one missionary has an even greater desire to serve the Lord, knowing that God’s will is his ultimate happiness. On another visit one adult was very impressed to see young Catholic adults visiting their youth and sharing Jesus with them.

All in all, important support through trials and struggles came from the adults in the communities they visited: host families, parish representatives, rally/retreat sponsors, parents or other adults met at home visits. One said “through our parent’s meetings, youth rallies and weekend retreats I could see how people hunger for Jesus and to know they are loved and accepted.”

A highlight of their summer was their visits to a youth Detention Center, the Brownwood State School, where youth ages 12 to 21 are incarcerated. They were warmly welcomed by the staff and inmates alike. The first night they minis-



Youth missionaries, left to right: David Duarte, Faustino Rodríguez, Cora Márquez. Bottom row: Felicia López, Nancy Aguirre, Nicole Madero.

tered to a group of females. The second night it was to a mixed group of boys and girls. They were welcomed with open arms by the Chaplain and Superintendent of the State School. The Chaplain has a heartfelt belief that these youth can be touched by the Gospel and change the course of their lives. Over 120 youth came to the rally this second night, making it by far the largest youth rally of the summer. The youth were some of the most receptive they met during the summer. The team was at their finest, sharing their faith stories. As one put it, “I had such an awesome time getting to know them (the inmates)” and discovering that “they were just awesome children of God!”

The group that impacted them the most was, of course, their own fellow missionary brothers and sisters. They helped each other keep focus on the Lord and their mis-

sion this summer. They experienced much personal and spiritual growth, building a structured prayer life and sharing beautiful gifts, talents and wisdom. They grew in their love, patience, and learning how to be gentle with each other. When they worshipped at the weekly Holy Hour before the Blessed Sacrament, they felt the comfort and warmth, love and healing from the Lord. One learned that even when there is no divine consolation he should tell our Lord that he loves him – even when he doesn’t feel it.

One of them believes that even though her mission here is ended it doesn’t mean her missionary life is over. She wants to help needy youth who are hungry for Christ as well as others who need a friend, advice. She is ready just to minister when God calls her to do so.



(L) Estella De La Cruz from St. Vincent, Abilene, (C) Mary Reichley, RENEW International and (R) Ana Galindo from St. Anthony, Odessa participated at the RENEW International Institute 2004 in East Rutherford, New Jersey on July 8-11.

## “For I Was Hungry” addressed by agricultural leaders

by Deacon Beck Knox, Coordinator of Rural Life Ministry, Diocese of San Angelo

WALL – Twelve men and women in the Diocese of San Angelo who work in the field of agriculture met with Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, O.M.I. at St. Ambrose Parish, Wall, Texas, July 14, 2004, to discuss topics of concern in agricultural and rural life ministry. Questions of interest were drawn from the document of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “*For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food: Catholic Reflections on Food, Farmers and*

*Farm Workers.*”

The document addressed the fact that there is enough food produced to feed all the people of the world but the problem in distribution and ability to purchase food are obstacles to feeding the world. Discussion of the subject brought forth many ideas and opinions about how to address these problems and obstacles both in the world and in our area of West Texas.

Much discussion focused on the problems of producers of agricultural products, the rising cost of equipment and expenses of producing a crop and

the relative stable price the crops produced.

Appreciation was expressed to Bishop Pfeifer for his special concerns for all the people of our diocese and especially for the rural and agricultural workers and the many problems they face in today’s world of producing products to feed and clothe the people.

Those attending were Glen Smetana of Eola, Joseph Beach of Millersview, Erwin Swartz, Charlene Wilde, Chico Denis and Jerry von Multer, all of Wall. Also attending were Fr. Tom Barley,

see “HUNGRY” page ten



# Missionary's fight against Mexican drug dealers made into film

by Georgina Stark  
Catholic News Service

CORPUS CHRISTI (CNS) – Prayer was often all Oblate Father Ted Pfeifer could fall back on while working as a missionary among poor communities in the mountainous state of Oaxaca in southern Mexico.

When he arrived in 1963, he never imagined the area would be taken over by gun-toting drug traffickers, who forced his dirt-poor parishioners to grow heroin poppy and marijuana.

His defiance of their violence and manipulation eventually led to the drug traffickers, known as “narcos,” turning their AK-47s on him.

He survived the attack. “Only the Eucharist and prayer are what kept me going. I had nothing else,” Father Pfeifer, now 71, told the Southern Texas Catholic, newspaper of the Corpus Christi Diocese.

Father Pfeifer's story has been made into an independent film, “The Oath,” which was shown in a private screening Aug. 6 at the Texas Independent Filmmakers Festival in San Antonio.

Father Pfeifer – born one of 11 children to a migrant farmworker family in Alamo, Texas – began working with the poor Zapotec Indians in the town of San Pedro Martir di Quiechapa in Oaxaca a few years after his 1959 ordination in San Antonio as an Oblate of Mary Immaculate priest.

The area was home to around 25,000 Catholics, scattered in small villages across a large mountain range. The villagers had never seen electricity or running water, and had not had a priest in more than 40 years.

More than 30 missions “needed to be visited, by mule or on foot because there were no roads at that time and they were scattered,” said Father Pfeifer.

The residents had no health care facility or doctors, so he became a paramedic and set up a clinic. He eventually lost count of the hundreds of babies he delivered and baptized.

“We saved a lot of lives, especially infants who often suffered from diarrhea which could kill them in

hours,” he said.

In 1975, the priest started noticing visits from northern Mexicans looking for a good place to grow the red heroin poppy.

“They would go to the villages, befriend the people and give them a lot of beer and large sums of money” to encourage them to grow drug plants, he said.

The priest said the families did not know what they were involved in by growing the drugs, except that it paid them 10 times what they could make from their vegetables and beans.

The traffickers had confiscated the Indians' choicest lands, leaving them little acreage to grow the food they subsisted on. The traffickers used violence against those who complained, whose drug crop was not up to par or who disagreed over payment.

In an area with no police force and no telephones, they abused the women and started assassinating the local people.

Father Pfeifer began keeping a record of his murdered parishioners – up to 150 names in 10 years.

Father Pfeifer turned in the names, dates and places of the murders to the attorney general in Mexico City and the district attorney in Oaxaca. He even turned in the names of traffickers believed to be responsible, but complained that officials did little.

The army came, but the traffickers went into hiding.

“They go into caves in the mountains, they know all the trails and come back out when (the army) leaves,” he recalled.

In 1987, six traffickers attempted to assassinate the priest on a mountain road. Word had already gone around the villages that the “narcos” had a contract out on the priest.

Father Pfeifer wondered how the townspeople would react to the shooting. His answer came when the parish called a meeting to ask their priest what they could do for him. He offered to leave, knowing that they might also be targeted just to get to him. But they begged him to stay. So he stayed another eight

years.

The violence continued, along with Father Pfeifer's efforts to bring the perpetrators to justice.

After he administered the last rites to a trafficker who was killed, he asked the man's brother, one of his parish's catechists, to bring all his late brother's weapons to the church.

At the next Sunday Mass, Father Pfeifer told the 800 parishioners to gather outside in the plaza for a penitential rite, where they found two drums filled with burning firewood, sledgehammers and big rocks on the ground.

“I told them as a sign of protest against violence we are going to destroy these arms,” said Father Pfeifer. “To my surprise a lot of grandmothers came up and started beating on the weapons with rocks.” But he also saw little being done to bring the traffickers to justice. He suspected many of the officials to whom he turned in names were involved in the drug trade or had been bribed.

The stress, paranoia and lack of sleep from living in fear took its toll on Father Pfeifer's health. “My blood pressure shot way up and I'm like a walking pharmacy with all the stuff I have to take,” he joked.

Maria Luisa Zapata, the director and writer of the film, “The Oath,” said she was inspired after hearing



Priest dedicates life to defending against violence of drug traffickers in Mexico – Oblate Father Ted Pfeifer, 71, is one of three priests serving a parish of around 200,000 members in the Archdiocese of Mexico City. The native of Alamo, Texas, has spent 33 years as a missionary priest in Oaxaca, southern Mexico, dedicating 20 years to defending his people from the violence of drug traffickers. (CNS photo by Georgina Stark, South Texas Catholic)

him give an account of his missionary work in San Antonio. Plans for release of the movie are still in the works.

“It's an exciting story of someone who truly believes in the Gospels, of God working through a dedicated missionary,” said Father Pfeifer's brother, Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer of San Angelo.

## Announcements in Brief

Franciscan Father Charles (Chuck) Gunti will present parish missions at Miles on September 18, and Rowena and Olfen on September 19. FMI Joan Schwertner (325) 468-3461.

Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament are hosting a Discernment Weekend for single Catholic women on October 9-10 in Victoria, Texas. FMI (361) 771-3325.

Lay Carmelite Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary (The Third Order of Carmel) is holding information sessions for those interested in joining at St. Mary's Church, 1103 Main Ave, Brownwood, TX on September 19, October 17 and November 21. FMI (325) 643-2188 or (817) 457-1746.

**Immaculate Conception Church  
Fall Festival  
Sunday, September 26th  
Knickerbocker, Texas**

**BBQ Brisket & German Sausage Dinner**

**11:00 am - 4:00 pm, Adults \$6 – Childs \$3.50**

**Auction • Bingo • Washer Pitching • Games**

**Music by Old Dog New Lick (Formally the Old Hat Band)**

**St. Joseph's Catholic Church  
Annual Fall Festival  
17th and Bryant, San Angelo, TX**

**Sunday, October 3**

**Turkey & Dressing Meal**

**Served from 11 am - 2 pm**

**Adult Plate \$6 - Child's \$3**

**Silent Auction • Games • Bingo • Country Store**



# With some innovations, 2004 audits of diocesan sex abuse policy begin

by *Agostino Bono*  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) – With a few innovations, the 2004 audits to measure compliance with sex abuse prevention policies by U.S. dioceses and Eastern-rite eparchies started in late July.

A new question this year is the number of allegations received by dioceses and eparchies since their 2003 audit, said Sheila Horan, deputy director of the U.S. bishops' Office of Child and Youth Protection.

The answers will establish a statistical base line needed to measure the success of prevention policies by showing whether future accusations will rise or fall, she said.

"Are we reducing cases?" she said.

The child and youth protection office is responsible for conducting the on-site audits and has contracted the Gavin Group, the same organization that did the 2003 audits, to do this year's audits.

The 2003 audits, the first to be conducted, showed 90 percent compliance with the policies contained in the bishops' "Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People," approved in 2002.

Other 2004 innovations include:

- Provisions that allow individuals or groups with information that a diocese or eparchy may not be in compliance with policies to forward such information directly to the Gavin Group.

- Giving dioceses and eparchies the audit results within two weeks of the completion of their individual audit rather than waiting for all audits to be completed, as was done in 2003.

Regarding allegations, Horan told Catholic News Service that each diocese and eparchy will be asked the number of allegations it received during the approximately 12-month period since its last audit.

The 2003 audit did not ask about allegations. However, a church-ap-

proved national study on the sex abuse crisis conducted by the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York gathered data on sex abuse allegations during the 1950-2002 period.

The John Jay study released in February said that dioceses and eparchies received credible allegations of abuse against 4,392 clergymen – almost all priests – involving 10,667 minors during the period.

Regarding possible noncompliance data, a child and youth protection office fact sheet on the audits said that people with information that "indicates that a particular article, or articles, of the charter are not being complied with" in a diocese or eparchy can mail the data to: Gavin Group, P.O. Box 520162, Winthrop, MA 02152.

The fact sheet was posted in mid-August on the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Web site and is available at: [www.usccb.org/ocyp/compliance.htm](http://www.usccb.org/ocyp/compliance.htm).

Horan said that victims' advocacy groups have been advised of the provision. For the 2003 audit, people with information about possible noncompliance had to contact the child protection office, which then passed the data to the Gavin Group, she said.

Giving dioceses and eparchies their audit findings within two weeks will provide them with more time to digest the report and make it public locally, said Horan.

According to the fact sheet, the final report will be completed next February and posted on the USCCB Web site along with the individual reports.

Horan said that the 2004 audits will continue not asking dioceses and eparchies the amounts of money they spent in settling cases with accusers.

"This is not a charter issue," she said of settlements.

The 2004 audits are taking place after controversy surfaced among the bishops on whether to postpone this year's audits. At a June meeting, however, the bishops decided to approve the 2004 audits and to discuss the audit procedures during their overall review of sex abuse prevention



Catholic Life Insurance has given a grant of \$1000 to begin a Catholic Student Association at Midland College. Presenting the check to the students is Msgr. Larry Droll (far left), Spiritual Advisor of Catholic Life Insurance. All four Catholic parishes in Midland, through their Coordinators of Youth Ministry, will sponsor the Catholic Student Association. The students are (left to right) Tim Wiggins, Michael Friday, Chelsea Frederickson and Rachel Earl. (Photo by Lucie Valles.)

policies to be done at their November meeting.

Prior to the June meeting, several bishops questioned whether annual audits were required by the charter as the charter mentions only "an annual report on the progress made" in implementing the charter.

The child and youth protection office fact sheet said that "the compliance audits are authorized by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops pursuant to the 'Charter for the Protection of Children and Young People.'"

## FAMILY

from page three

married. In addition, diocesan NFP programs also serve as resources for information on issues affecting human sexuality such as infertility, sexually transmitted diseases and

contraception.

The September workshop will be the second diocesan NFP program to be offered at Christ the King Retreat Center this year. "The Five Ws of Natural Family Planning, Explaining the Who, What, When, Where and Why of NFP," February 20-21, 2004 attracted over fifty parishioners who highly praised the two-day sessions.

In his Letter to Families (1994), Pope John Paul II cited ministry to the family as one of the Church's essential duties. The family is the place where husband and wife love each other. It is also the place where children are welcomed and nurtured. As part of the overall programs that the Church provides to support marriage and family life, Natural Family Planning holds a foundational place in the diocese.

## Diocesan Jr. High Event (Grades 7-8 only) San Angelo Convention Center Saturday, October 9, 2004

10:00 a.m. - 7:00 p.m.

Theme: Living Justice, Proclaiming Peace  
Schedule

10:00 am	Sign In / Community Building
10:30	Welcome
10:45	Prayer
11:15	Keynote: Do It Justice!
12:15	Lunch ( <i>Bring a sack lunch</i> )
1:00 pm	Two Feet of Social Justice: YNIA
2:00	Keynote: Power of Peace
3:00	Let Us Come To Be One Body: Partnership with Honduras
4:00	Mass - Presider: Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI
5:00	Supper
6:00	Dance
7:00	Departure

### Cost

\$15.00 (postmarked by Sept. 22, 2004)

\$18.00 (postmarked after Sept. 22, 2004)

(Fee includes: Registration, Supper, T-shirt and Dance.)

## St. Lawrence Catholic Church Fall Festival 2004

Sunday, October 3

Garden City, TX

Bingo - Kountry Kitchen - Games

BBQ Brisket & German Sausage Lunch

Auction 2:00 pm



**KERRY**

from page one

July 26, 2004

Dear Senator Kerry:

We write you as concerned American citizens, as leaders, as fellow Catholics, and as the Publisher and Editor of the Catholic newspaper, the *West Texas Angelus* of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, Texas. We strongly encourage the candidates for the highest political office of our beautiful country to share with our readers their views and positions on critical issues that are of the utmost importance for all of us, like respect for human life at all stages of life, war and peace, racism, poverty, education, employment, insurance, hunger, housing and health care. We want to be in dialogue with you about how we can work together on these important issues for our country, our state and our local area, and we ask God's Holy Spirit to give guidance to all.

As the U.S. Catholic bishops, collectively and individually, have done with the Bush Administration, on issues of great importance for our country and where there might be differences, like the war in Iraq, we also need to address with you the vitally important issue about which there is much contention and difference – that is, your position on abortion at home and abroad.

Because life is the first principle given by the Declaration of Independence, we believe that the preeminent life issue that is before our candidates at this time is abortion, the protection of the unborn. As a professed Catholic, you are well aware of the clear teaching of our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, on this fundamental life issue, and of the position of the U.S. Catholic bishops, especially in their recent statement,

“Catholics in Political Life.”

From your many public statements and especially from your voting record, it is clear that you strongly favor “legal” abortions at any stage of pregnancy, and that you support even the barbaric practice of Partial/Birth Abortion; and that you are closely associated with the National Abortion Rights Action League. You have stated that your abortion position is based on the Supreme Court's decision which made abortion legal.

It is encouraging to read that recently you have stated; “I believe life begins at conception.” However, just a few days ago, you stated during a public television interview that in the first trimester, the unborn is not a person. On what do you base this frivolous statement? The teaching of our Catholic Church, and even research in science and medicine, clearly contradict your unfounded statement. Where human life is at stake, and there might be a doubt about life, common sense and our Catholic religion tells us that we are morally obliged to always take the safest position – not to destroy a precious unborn. As you know, it is the crystal clear and constant teaching of our beautiful Catholic Church, based on clear references from Sacred Scripture, that the precious unborn is made in the very image and likeness of God, and is human life from conception, with a complete genetic code. Can you prove that this is not a person? You vote constantly “to kill” this unborn life.

Your position puts you in a strange ethical paradox – you acknowledge that life begins at conception – a child is there but you embrace legal abortion. In effect, you have put yourself in a moral and political mine field. You state that you are personally against abortion but

that you can't legislate your Catholic belief on Protestants, Jews or atheists; but many Protestants and Jews are also opposed to abortion. Remember, Catholic opposition to abortion doesn't flow just from our unique beliefs about revelation as regards the human person, but from the natural law. We believe abortion is wrong because killing is wrong, not primarily because the Church says so, but because the natural law says so. Our unique belief about the reality and sacredness of human life from conception is confirmed almost every day by research in medicine and science. It is definitely not a Catholic view to have two sets of morals - one that you pick up when you go home and another set that you pick up when you go to the office. We can separate religion from politics, but we can never separate faith from life.

You insist that your abortion position is based on the law of the land – that your hands are tied by the Supreme Court. You have also been outspoken in your opposition to the present administration's overseas population assistance programs – which forbid funding for abortion. You have publicly stated that if elected President, that your first executive order would be to overturn that policy. This can hardly be the position of someone who feels his hands are tied by the Supreme Court at home, but not abroad, and who holds that life begins at conception. If you were to undo the present policy, as you know, you would be giving governments and agencies, especially of Third World countries, the right to force abortion on poor women taking away their right to choose which you hold very highly. What a terrible way to control population – by destroying the unborn.

So our question for you is, if you admit that life begins at conception, which our beautiful Catholic Church teaches, and if your hands are not bound by the Supreme Court as regards funding federal programs outside the country, why would you, if elected President, overturn the present policy of our country that does not provide abortion assistance? Does your conscience not tell you that there is a clear moral obligation to not provide funding to destroy the unborn? There is no “law” obliging you to do this. Why would you want to export the abortion ideology?

Your answer to this fundamental question is of the greatest importance for all Americans, but especially for those who are pro-life people, regardless of their religious affiliation, and in a particular way for your sister and brother Catholics. We ask you to please state in writing your answer to this critical question that we will publish in our Catholic paper, the *West Texas Angelus*, so as to inform all people of West Texas in the clearest manner about your position on this critical issue. I remind you that collectively and individually, we bishops have also asked the Bush Administration to bring clarity to positions to policies that we feel are not in accord with our Catholic teaching.

May God's Holy Spirit guide us all with truth, wisdom and courage as we deal with the critical issue of abortion and so many other issues of life - that are important for respecting life at every stage of life, from conception until natural death as determined by God. God's peace.

Sincerely in Christ, Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, Publisher of *West Texas Angelus*

Mr. Pete Micale (Col. Ret), Editor of *West Texas Angelus*.

**HUNGRY**

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pastor of St. Ambrose, Wall, Sr. Mary Kay Bailey, O.P. of Carlsbad and Sterling City, Deacon Leroy Beach of Millersview, Deacon Victor Belman of Eldorado, Deacon Clemente Villa of Stanton, Deacon Beck Knox of Coleman. St. Ambrose hosted the meeting.

• “*For I Was Hungry and You Gave Me Food: Catholic Reflections on Food, Farmers and Farm Workers.*” United States Conference of Catholic

Bishops Statement approved November, 2003, can be found on the internet at <http://www.usccb.org/bishops/agricultural.htm> .

**CHURCH**

from page six

said that “unambiguously pro-abortion” Catholic politicians are “not fit” to receive the sacred elements – the bread and wine that Catholics consider the body and blood of Christ.

A number of Catholic archbishops have suggested or stated that if John Kerry presents himself for communion in their diocese he will be turned away. These include Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis, Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes of New Orleans, and even Archbishop Sean O'Malley of Boston – Kerry's home diocese. Bishop Michael J. Sheridan of Colorado Springs went further, issuing a stern pastoral letter saying that Catholics who vote for politicians who advocate legal abortion should be denied communion.

That brings us full circle to McGreevey. Around the same time as Sheridan's bold letter, Archbishop Myers of Newark released, “A Time for Honesty,” to which McGreevey complied. And that again begs the question:

Could just one person in the national media ask John F. Kerry if he will follow McGreevey's example? At the very least, it's an interesting question that seems newsworthy – surely, worth a single headline. Please? Someone?

Paul Kengor, Ph.D. is author of *God and Ronald Reagan*. He is also a professor of political science at Grove City College and a visiting fellow with the Hoover Institution. Contact Kengor at [pgkengor@gcc.edu](mailto:pgkengor@gcc.edu).

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**

First Fall Festival

Saturday, October 9, 10 am - 7 pm

1110 Main St., Brownwood, TX

Spaghetti Dinner 11:30 am - 1:30 pm

Silent and Live Auctions! • Live Music

Washer Tournament • Games • Arts & Crafts

Food Booths • Petting Zoo • Clown-Magician

“Hole-in-one wins a new car” Golf

**St. Elizabeth Catholic Church**

82nd Annual Fall Harvest Festival

Sunday, October 10

Odessa, Texas

12:00 noon - 5:00 pm • Free Admission

Great Food • Terrific Booths • Friendly Smiles

All profits go toward Parish debt.

See you and your family!!

FMI call Alan P. Torre (432) 366-2611



# Bishops' official blames Roe v. Wade for new ruling against partial-birth abortion ban

by Sr. Mary Ann Walsh

WASHINGTON – A federal judge in the Southern District of New York found August 26 that partial-birth abortion “is a gruesome, brutal, barbaric, and uncivilized medical procedure,” but said that the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act must be struck down under the dictates of Roe v. Wade.

“Today Roe v. Wade once again made the unthinkable constitutional,” said Cathy Cleaver Ruse, Esq., spokesperson for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities. “Because of Roe, killing a child in the process of being born is called a constitutional right rather

than an act of barbarism.”

New York Judge Richard Conway Casey ruled against the Act because it did not include a health exception as required by Roe. The government argued that the abortion method was never medically necessary, a conclusion shared by the American Medical Association.

“The crucial question of medical necessity was never answered in this trial,” said Ruse. “At every turn where medical records were sought, the medical institutions refused to produce them. In essence, the abortion doctors said ‘just trust us,’ and no hard evidence was considered,” Ruse said.

“The ‘health exception’ is a

farce,” said Ruse. “As created by the Supreme Court in Doe v. Bolton, the health exception is ‘all factors – physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman’s age.’ It’s the quintessential exception that swallows the rule – so broad that you could drive a truck, or a fully-formed unborn baby, right through it.”

The case was brought by the American Civil Liberties Union on behalf of the National Abortion Federation and several individual abortion doctors. Earlier this month the Department of Justice appealed an adverse ruling in a similar case in California; a third case is still pending in a Nebraska federal court.

The bishops’ 1998 statement says Catholic candidates and elected officials are seriously mistaken when they claim that though they personally oppose such evils as abortion, but they cannot force their religious views on others. The statement notes, “Most Americans would recognize the contradiction of this statement, ‘While I am personally opposed to slavery or racism or sexism, I cannot force my personal views on the rest of society.’”

Being guided by moral principles and not party platforms, helps one to avoid the very elementary fallacy of confusing a pro-choice position on abortion with the simple affirmation of freedom of the will. Yes, we are all free to choose, we are capable of choosing both good and evil. That doesn’t mean evil is just as good as good is. God gave us free will in order to have us choose the good freely. Yes, we have to celebrate choice, but we don’t celebrate choices to violate other people’s rights; and that is what abortion is.

I strongly urge all citizens to register, vote, and stay involved in public life and discussion of issues, seeking the common good and renewing our democracy. As Catholics, we

## Intentions of the Holy Father for September

*General* - That old people may be considered an asset for the spiritual and human growth of society.

*Mission* - That in Africa a true brotherly cooperation may develop among all those who work for the growth and development of ecclesial communities.

court.

As partial-birth abortion was debated on the national stage over the last several years, many people refused to believe it existed. But testimony from the ACLU’s team of abortion doctors about their methods for killing children in the fifth and sixth months of pregnancy revealed partial-birth abortion to be every bit as real and as horrible as the pro-life community claimed. Full transcripts of the trial are available at [www.usccb.org/prolife](http://www.usccb.org/prolife).

Stephen Chasen, MD, an ACLU witness, testified that he didn’t need to recommit ourselves to carry the values of the Gospel and Church teaching into the public square and market place.

As citizens, we can and must participate in the debates and choices over the values, vision, and leaders that will

know whether partial-birth abortion hurts the baby. When Judge Casey asked him if he had “any care or concern for the fetus whose head you were crushing,” Chasen answered, “No.” A fetal neurobiology expert testified that such abortions would cause “severe and excruciating pain” to the child.

“Partial-birth abortion promises nothing but pain, for everyone involved,” said Ruse. “We applaud the Justice Department for its vigorous defense of the Act, and encourage an appeal of this ruling,” she said.

guide our community. Our guiding light in this election year should be moral principles, not party platforms. And, we all must pray more to the Holy Spirit for God’s guidance for all elected officials and to guide our choices with truth and courage.

## SCHEDULE

from page two

for the Leadership of the Diocese given by Kathleen McChesney of the Office for Child and Youth Protection of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

October 23: San Angelo, Holy Angels Church - Liturgy Day

October 24: San Angelo, St. Margaret - Mass at 10:30 a.m.

October 26-28: Rest and Prayer

October 29: San Angelo, Christ the King Retreat Center - Retreat for Diocesan Pastoral Staff from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

October 30: Odessa, St. Mary - Catholic Schools Commission Meeting

October 31: Odessa, St. Joseph - Bless new building at 5:00 p.m.

## GOSPEL

from page one

tent that it is based on a correct understanding of the human person. Catholic lawmakers who do not vigorously seek to protect human dignity and the sanctity of human life from conception to the natural death are not serving democracy. They are betraying it. The Roman document goes on to state, “Those who are directly involved in lawmaking bodies have a grave and clear obligation to oppose any law that attacks human life. For them, as for every Catholic, it is impossible to promote such laws or to vote for them.” Politics is the exercise of power. Power always has moral implications. And God will hold each of us accountable – from the average voter to Sena-

## St. Ambrose Catholic Church 65th Annual Festival, Wall, TX Sunday, October 17

*Theme: Wall Goes Hollywood!!*

**German Sausage & Turkey Meal**

**11:00 am to 2:00 pm • Adult \$6 • Child \$3**

**Bingo 12:00 noon • Auction 1:30 pm**

**Games • The Market**

## St. Boniface Catholic Church Fall Festival, Olfen, TX Sunday, October 10

**Turkey & Sausage Meal 11 am - 2 pm**

**Adults/Plates to Go \$6, Child \$3**

**Games 12 noon • Entertainment**

**Auction 1 pm • Candy Drop 3 pm**

## Sacred Heart Catholic Church Parish Fall Festival, 11 am - 4 pm Sunday, October 17

**201 San Saba St., Coleman, Texas**

**Mexican Dinner – 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.**

**Silent Auction • Crafts & Plants • Bingo**

**Games • Horseshoe & Washer Toss**

**Cake Walk • Train Rides for Kids • Concessions**



# Extended Catholic family cheers Olympic gymnast Courtney Kupets

by *Elisa A. Kent Catholic News Service*

REPUBLIC, Pa. (CNS) – Courtney Kupets, a member of the 2004 U.S. women's Olympic gymnastics team, has always kept a low profile. Although she is a focused, driven, athletic powerhouse, she is above all a humble 18-year-old member of the Kupets family.

The gymnast, a high school senior living in Gaithersburg, Md., was born in Bedford, Texas, and baptized in Holy Rosary Parish in Republic, where several members of her extended family are parishioners.

Her father, Mark Kupets, a native of Republic, attended Holy Rosary School and graduated from Brownsville High School in 1974. He met his wife, Patti, at Indiana State University in Terre Haute, Ind.

The couple celebrated their 25th wedding anniversary by going to Athens, Greece, with their son, Mark Justin, 21, daughter Ashley, 20, and

son Christopher, 16, to cheer Courtney in the Olympic competition from inside Olympic Indoor Hall.

Members of the extended family were intently watching Courtney on television from Republic and Uniontown, Pa., Virginia, Texas and Maryland.

Martha Kupets is amazed every time she watches her granddaughter, who has been a gymnast since age 3. She gets nervous when her granddaughter performs, but she also frequently asks, "How'd she do that?" A parishioner of Holy Rosary Parish and resident of Republic since 1956, Martha attends daily Mass, serves as a eucharistic minister, and says she has all the ladies in the beauty shop cheering on her granddaughter.

Everyone in the family prays as they watch Courtney perform. The uneven bars are a family favorite, although the beam and floor exercise tie for a close second.

"It's just been her life for so long," said Joyce Kupets, Courtney's aunt and a Catholic schoolteacher in the Greensburg Diocese. "We watch it on the Internet. We are up until 3 or 4 in the morning, so if she falls, we know ahead of time," she told *The Catholic Accent*, diocesan newspaper of Greensburg.

After suffering a torn left Achilles tendon at the 2003 World Championships in Anaheim, Calif., where the team won a gold medal, Courtney returned two months later determined to get ready for the Olympic trials. The six-inch scar on her heel still reminds her of the injury. Her godfather and uncle, Dan Kupets, said the injury didn't stop his niece. "When you're in a sport like this," he said, "you have to be mentally tough, because it's just you, yourself and the apparatus." He said the members of the Kupets family are all tough athletes who recuperate and go on.

When asked about Courtney's mental toughness, her family agreed that her positive attitude and smiling face help her come out on top.

"Since she's come back, she has been first in every competition. She's not settling for anything less," said Joyce, who teaches physical education at Holy Rosary, St. John the Evangelist and St. Mary schools in Uniontown. Joyce also gives a lot of credit to Courtney's coach, Kelli Hill.

Courtney's grandmother said that even in the Olympics Courtney was "just doing what she loves." Her family encouraged her to enjoy herself in Athens, to keep smiling and stay healthy.

On Aug. 17, Courtney helped lead the U.S. women's team to a silver medal in the team final. She and teammate Carly Patterson qualified to compete in the Aug. 19 individual all-around final where Carly won the gold. Courtney, who competed with a strained right hamstring, came in ninth.

She also was scheduled to compete in the vault and uneven bars Aug. 22 and in the beam and floor exercise Aug. 23.



Martha Kupets of Holy Rosary Parish in Republic, Pa., holds a magazine showing her granddaughter, Olympic gymnast Courtney Kupets. Courtney was born in Texas but baptized at Holy Rosary Church. On Aug. 17 Courtney helped the U.S. women's team to a silver medal in the team final. (CNS photo by Tod Gombar, *The Catholic Accent*)



Pope John Paul II touches a baby on the head at the end of his Sunday Angelus prayer at Castel Gandolfo, Italy, Aug. 22. The pope sent a written message to Bishop Mariano De Nicolo of Rimini, Italy, condemning human cloning and calling for renewed respect for human life. The eastern coastal city of Rimini is hosting an Aug. 22-28 meeting of Communion and Liberation, a Catholic renewal movement. (CNS photo from Reuters)

## Altar servers commissioned

by *Becky Sotelo*

MIDLAND – On Saturday August 28, 2004, Father Tom Kelley of Our Lady of San Juan Catholic Church in Midland commissioned three new altar servers for his parish. Jacob Mendoza, Amanda Olgin and Aryanna Rameriz worked hard all summer long in preparing for their new ministry. This could not have been accomplished without the support of their families.

Aryanna, Jacob, and Amanda came before the parish community to offer their gift of service. After the homily, Father called the new servers by name as they approached the altar. He affirmed their calling by God to serve the priest and the parish community during Mass and accepted their offer to serve and then appointed them as ministers at the altar. As a symbol of their gift of dedication and service, Father Tom gave each of the new servers an altar server pin. He thanked them for accepting the role of altar server and for their faithfulness in preparing for this ministry.

Amanda, Aryanna, and Jacob have prepared all summer long for this min-

istry. They attended a three-day workshop in which they were responsible for learning about their parish, their church building, the order of the mass, and the role of the altar server during mass and their relationship with Christ as an altar server. After the workshop, they were faithful in attending weekly practices for their role during mass. During the workshop and practices, parents and other family members stayed to help.

Family members stayed during the practice to help provide a more realistic Mass celebration as the new servers trained for their role. Mr. & Mrs. Adrian Rameriz and their daughter Ariel participated in the practices by filling in as lectors, communion ministers and offertory ministers and ushers. Altar Servers Adrian Rameriz, brother of Aryanna, and Patsy Sotelo, cousin to both Amanda and Jacob, and Deacon Chano Sotelo, also helped in providing training for these young people. We are very grateful for the gift of service that Amanda, Aryanna and Jacob will provide to our parish community. I wish to thank all those that helped



Our Lady of San Juan altar servers. Back: Adrian Rameriz. Front l to r: Patsy Sotelo, Jacob Mendoza, Aryanna Rameriz and Amanda Olgin.

train these young people for their gift of service. Please pray for these young children and their families as they begin their new ministries.

## All invited to two 40th anniversaries

by *Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI*

SAN ANGELO – Mark your calendars – All are invited to a Mass of Thanksgiving that will be offered on December 21, 2004 at 6:30 pm at Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart to honor the 40th anniversary of priesthood of Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI, and the 40th anniversary of the dedication of Cathedral Church of the Sacred Heart in San Angelo.

Priests who attend are most welcome to concelebrate this Mass of Thanksgiving with Bishop Pfeifer.