

# ANGELUS

Serving the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

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### Baby in a Manger



The Gospel of Luke for the midnight Mass of Christmas tells us where we are going to find our salvation and the peace that we all seek globally and at a local level.

-- The Bishop's Desk/Pg. 3

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## Unto us this day ...



## ... a child is born



### Artist finishes work

Midland metal artist Jonah LaMonica has completed a tabernacle commissioned by Our Lady of San Juan Church. Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer will visit the church for the tabernacle's dedication Fri., December 9 at 5:30 p.m.

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## Merry Christmas 2005

## The West Texas Angelus

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Story suggestions, calendar items,  
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address and phone number when sub-  
mitting letters.



# Baby in the manger only way to lasting peace

By Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer

The Gospel of Luke for the midnight Mass of Christmas tells us where we are going to find our salvation and the peace that we all seek globally and at a local level: "and this will be a sign for you: You will find an infant wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger." The baby in the manger is the only way to lasting peace that we all seek for our individual lives, for our families, for our community, for our Church and for the world. On Christmas we celebrate the birthday of the Prince of Peace, and Christmas, his birthday, is a reminder of where true peace is found.

As we glance around our world this Christmas, and look at our own community and our families, we see how far we are from finding the peace and harmony the Christ child of Christmas wants to bring to all of us on Christmas.

Two thousand years ago many refused

to believe that tiny baby born in a cold cave in the company of oxen, donkey and a few sheep, could possibly be the Messiah-the Prince of Peace.

They could not accept that the cry of a helpless and docile baby boy was the voice of almighty God, who came into our world to show us the path to peace. At the beginning, and still today, we are often blinded and do not recognize that the infant in the manger, the eternal Word of God, is the one who called forth heaven and earth from nothingness. It seemed impossible to the people when Christ was born that the same God who had worked such great wonders in creating the universe, should humble himself, so that in an even greater miracle, the Son of God would become a man, to live like one of us here on earth.

As we once again celebrate the birthday of Christ, it seems that we still refuse to accept the fact that in the small hands of that divine infant is the only place

where we will find the secret of peace that we all want and pray for. Only in the outstretched arms of the infant in the manger is where we will find the peace necessary for human beings to live a fulfilling and meaningful life here on this earth. Instead of seeking for the peace that we all want in the infant in the manger, we often search for more modern recipes and ways for peace, which more human than divine, seem to ultimately complicate our lives and make our search ineffective.

Obviously, a world that trusts more in its own great technical accomplishments and intellectual advancements than in God is not able to understand the ways of God, the ways of the infant lying in the manger. God's ways it seems are much too simple. It is true that two thousand years have gone by since the Prince of Peace came into our world, but even

(Please See BABY/14)

## Bishop's Reconciliation Retreat set for January 7-8

### The Angelus

To celebrate the Year of Reconciliation and Healing, which began with the First Sunday of Advent, Bishop Michael Pfeifer has scheduled a special retreat on reconciliation, to be held at Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo, Jan. 7-8, 2006. The retreat will begin at 10 a.m., Sat., Jan. 7, and end with Mass at 11 am on Sun., Jan. 8, followed by lunch.

The retreat is open to all the people of the diocese from late teens and up (if accompanied by a parent), young adults, middle age adults and older.

"In a special way, I am inviting married couples to be present for this retreat," Bishop Pfeifer said. "While the presentations of the retreat will address the general theme of reconciliation and healing, special emphasis will be given to the

Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance."

The retreat will also stress the need for God's mercy and how all followers of Christ are called to be reconcilers and healers.

Four areas of reconciliation will be focused on:

- ▶ Self
- ▶ Nature
- ▶ Society
- ▶ God.

Father Cornelius Scanlan, O.M.I., and a team will lead the retreat. The team will consist of: Father Anthony Sloan, O.C.S.O., Chaplain at Our Lady of Grace Carmelite Monastery in Christoval, Texas; Aba Gayle, from Journey of Hope, Silverton, Oregon, who has conducted numerous workshops on reconciliation and forgiveness, and Deacon Bob Leibrecht, Criminal Justice Ministry

Director of the San Angelo Diocese.

The cost of the retreat for the weekend will be \$65 per person for a single room, \$60 per person double occupancy and \$100 per married couple. The fee is lower than the usual amount requested, so as to encourage more people to be present for this special reconciliation experience.

Bishop Pfeifer requests that priests, religious and deacons bring the retreat to the attention of all people and encourage as many as possible to attend. (Please note that rooms will be filled on a "first come, first serve" basis - so please have attendees directly RSVP as soon as possible to Margie Schillo, 325-651-5352).

"As we prepare for this retreat, let us pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and for a new spirit of reconciliation and healing for all the people of our Diocese," Bishop Pfeifer said.

## DIOCESAN BRIEFS

### Living Our Catholic Faith Series

MIDLAND. "Living Our Catholic Faith is presented by St. Stephen-Midland Pastoral Associate Tony Frasco **Sundays from 6:30-8 p.m.** in the Parish Hall. Bring your Bibles, pen and paper. All are welcome to attend!!!

#### The schedule:

**December 11:** Mary: Our Great Mother and Model

**December 18:** Confession: Cleansing our Souls

**January 8th:** The Eucharist: Our Spiritual Food

**January 15th:** Prayer: Conversing with God.

Any questions call the parish office at 520-7394, or e-mail Tony Frasco at tfrasco@st.wtx-coxmail.com

### Study Week 2006

**Liturgy Evangelizing Life/  
La Liturgia Evangeliza La Vida  
January 18-21, 2006 Austin**

AUSTIN. The 44th Annual Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week, Liturgy Evangelizing Life/La Liturgia Evangeliza La Vida is being co-hosted by the Diocese of Austin and the Southwest Liturgical Conference, **January 18-21, 2006** at the Doubletree Hotel at IH35 and 290 in Austin.

### Community Thanksgiving Service

WALL. The Wall Community Thanksgiving Service (20th Anniversary) will be at **7 p.m.**

### Wednesday, December 16, at the Wall High School Gym.

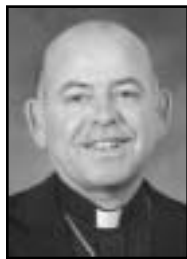
A collection is taken during the service which will go toward the Community Thanksgiving Scholarship Fund for a 2006 graduating senior at Wall High School. Everyone is welcome to attend.

### Centennial Planning Begins

ROWENA. On **Sept. 1-2, 2007**, St. Joseph's in Rowena will celebrate its parish Centennial. Plans are underway to construct a memorial to all veterans who were in the armed forces while parishioners at St. Joseph's. Please contact Pat Vancil at jvranch1880@yahoo.com or call 325-365-2525 for more information.

From the Bishop's Desk

## We begin our Year of Reconciliation focusing on God's mercy



Bishop Pfeifer

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

From much previous correspondence, all are aware that I have proclaimed a YEAR OF RECONCILIATION for all the people of the Diocese of San Angelo. In this special Year that begins with Advent, we are called to focus on God's mercy and forgiveness which we especially celebrate in the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance.

I strongly encourage all people, especially as a family, to take advantage of the many opportuni-

ties to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance as we prepare for the birthday of Christ on Christmas. Jesus is the Prince of Peace and Reconciliation who brings us God's mercy and pardon so that we can be reconciled to our God and one another.

Sin blinds us to the glory and goodness of Jesus. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation Jesus reveals to us the splendor of God's forgiveness and the life of the Spirit who is constantly working in our lives. While I strongly encourage individual confession at scheduled times in our parishes, there

will also be special Communal Penance Services during the season of Advent to celebrate this Sacrament.

The Advent Wreath also inspires us to live these special four weeks before Christmas in a spirit of repentance and reconciliation so that we can receive with new joy God's mercy and love as expressed in the birthday of the child, Jesus. Wreaths have traditionally been used on joyous occasions as symbols of victory. The wreath

(See BISHOP/14)

Del Escritorio del Obispo

## Comenzamos nuestro año de reconciliación enfocando sobre la misericordia de Dios

Por Obispo Miguel Pfeifer, OMI

Por medio de mucha correspondencia previa, todos están conscientes que he proclamado un AÑO DE RECONCILIACIÓN para toda la Diócesis de San Angelo. En este Año especial que comienza con Adviento, somos llamados a enfocarnos sobre el perdón y misericordia de Dios que celebramos especialmente en el Sacramento de Reconciliación y Penitencia. Fuertemente animo a todos los feligreses, especialmente como una familia, que aprovechen las muchas oportunidades de recibir el Sacramento de Reconciliación y Penitencia mientras nos preparamos para el cumpleaños de Cristo en Navidad. Jesús es el Príncipe de Paz y Reconciliación quien nos lleva al perdón y misericordia de Dios para que podamos ser reconciliados con nuestro Dios y con unos a otros.

El pecado nos ciega a la gloria y bondad de Cristo. En el Sacramento de Reconciliación Jesús nos revela el esplendor del perdón de Dios y de la vida del Espíritu que trabaja constantemente en nuestras vidas. Mientras fuertemente animo la confesión individual según los tiempos fijados de nuestras parroquias, habn también Servicios de Penitencia Comunales especiales durante la temporada de Adviento para celebrar este Sacramento.

La Corona de Adviento también nos inspira a vivir estas cuatro semanas especiales antes de la Navidad en un espíritu de arrepentimiento y reconciliación para que podamos recibir con nuevo gozo la misericor-

dia y amor de Dios que se expresa en el cumpleaños del niño, Jesús. Las Coronas tradicionalmente han sido usadas en ocasiones jubilosas como símbolos de victoria. La Corona nos recuerda como Cristo venció el pecado. La costumbre de la Corona de Adviento, normalmente consiste de un círculo de hojas siempre verdes, simboliza la naturaleza eterna de Dios, y la hoja siempre verde representa la vida, el amor y perdón eterno que vienen de Dios por medio de Jesucristo.

Las cuatro velas [tres moradas y una rosa] marcan las cuatro semanas de Adviento y atestiguan a la verdad de Jesús como la Luz del mundo qui en supera nuestra oscuridad y ceguera causada por el pecado. Las velas moradas indican que Adviento es un tiempo de arrepentimiento, un tiempo cuando damos la vuelta al pecado y hacia Dios. La vela rosa para la tercera semana de Adviento--nos recuerda que podemos gozar porque nos estamos acercando a La Navidad y estamos al punto de recibir el Príncipe de Paz y Reconciliación.

El Adviento es más que una conmemoración anual de un evento del pasado. El Adviento también enfoca sobre 10 de hoy. Isaías nos dice: "Dios viene para salvarte", enfatizando el amor y misericordia constante y salvadora de nuestro Dios para nosotros aquí y hoy. En esta temporada, Jesús viene con reconciliación Divina, en lugar de reprochamos y rechazamos por nuestros pecados. El of en dido por nuestros pecados, es el que viene a salvarnos y traemos la misericordia de Dios. El viene en

humildad, no en una entrada fanfarrona, ni un gran espectáculo.

El viene como un niño desconocido, nacido en un pesebre de un extraño, entrando a nuestro mundo con mucho silencio así para no avergonzarnos, sino por el contrario para hacerlos saber que somos amados por nuestro Dios y que Dios siempre está dispuesto a perdonarnos cuando fallamos y para llevarnos a nuestra verdadera casa del amor de Dios.

Durante Adviento, nuestro enfoque espiritual no debe ser excesivamente en "el otro mundo," porque podemos perder la capacidad de disfrutar de la vida y ser activos donde estamos hoy en día, y de participar activamente en hacer el Reino de Dios posible aquí en la sociedad donde vivimos. Para Juan, el Bautista, el Reino de Dios era nada menos que la llegada del Mesías en quien la presencia de Dios sería manifestada. Para Jesús, "venga a nosotros tu reino" significaba que el Reino de Dios es hoy, y no solamente en el futuro. En este caso, la tarea de cada uno de nosotros es abrazar el Reino de Dios por entregamos a la voluntad de Dios, en buscar el perdón de Dios, en compartir la misericordia y el amor de Dios con los que se sienten solos y rechazados, y en trabajar activamente por la justicia en nuestro mundo.

Esta es una manera espléndida para comenzar nuestro Año de reconciliación. El grito de Adviento es también una luz guía para nosotros durante todo el Año de Reconciliación:

"Arrepentanse, porque está cerca el Reino de los Cielos." [Mt 3:1]

## Co-workers in the vineyard of the Lord

► A resource for guiding the development of lay ecclesial ministry.

By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI

During their November 2005 meeting, the U.S. Catholic Bishops approved a statement, "Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord," which is a resource for diocesan bishops and for all others who are responsible for guiding the development of lay ecclesial ministry in each Diocese of the United States. This document is a pastoral and theological reflection on the reality of lay ecclesial ministry, and also an affirmation of those who generously serve the Church in many ministries and provides a synthesis of the best thinking and practices to support all those who take part in lay ministry for the Church.

"Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord" is a common frame of reference for ensuring that the development of lay ecclesial ministry continues in ways that are faithful to the Church's theological and doctrinal traditions and that respond to the contemporary pastoral needs and situations of the Church and our culture. In this document, the U.S. Catholic bishops stress their strong desire for the fruitful collaboration of ordained and lay ministers who, in distinctive but complimentary ways, continue in the Church the saving mission of Christ for the world--His vineyard.

I encourage all of our priests, deacons, women religious, and all pastoral leaders to study this important document and to help me, as bishop, implement what is being proposed in this document so as to better prepare and support good lay people -- women and men -- who offer their service in ministry for the Church. To help all of our pastoral leaders become more familiar with this document, I am asking the Deans of the Diocese during the next

(See VINEYARD/15)

# 'Your kindness a light of God's love in our moment of need'

Dear Bishop Pfeifer:

Thank you very much for the four donations you've sent of \$3,732.02, \$7000.00, \$7,332.04 and \$19,096.00 for a total of \$37,160.06, from the priests and people of the Diocese of San Angelo. I deeply appreciate your generosity. Your kindness is the light of God's love shining in our moment of need.

Hurricane Katrina has brought great suffering to the people of South Mississippi. The hurricane tidal surge of between 28 and 35 feet as well as winds in excess of 150 mph brought about a catastrophe in our diocese. The tidal surge devastated the entire 80 miles of our coastline and communities along bays and rivers for miles inland. Severe to serious wind damage affected every town for 100

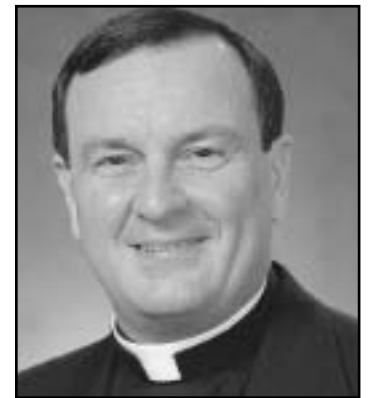
miles inland. Tragically, some have also lost loved ones. The task of rebuilding is immense, but the spirit of determination in our people is strong.

The American Red Cross has determined that 38 percent (65,000) of homes in our area have been destroyed and another 22 percent (38,000) have major damage. Thousands of jobs have been lost. Ten of the 57 churches in the Diocese of Biloxi have been destroyed or gutted. Several others were so badly damaged by flood waters and wind as to remain unusable until repairs have been completed. Five of our 18 schools have been destroyed. Nine of our rectories and two convents have been either destroyed or so badly flooded that all personal belongings of the priests and nuns have been lost. These few statistics give a glimpse of the suffering all the people of

our area are enduring. With God's help and the help of others, I know we will go forward.

Again, I thank you for your support and I ask for your prayers. I know prayer is powerful and all of us are relying very heavily on this spiritual encouragement. As people of faith we know that we are called to trust in the love of God even in the most difficult times. The faith of our people remains strong. The love of God, shining through your kindness, is further evidence of the love of God working in our midst. I pray that God will bless you, your loved ones and all the people of the Diocese of San Angelo.

Sincerely in the Lord,  
Most Reverend Thomas J. Rodi  
Bishop of Biloxi



**'I pray that God will bless ... all the people of the Diocese of San Angelo'**

-- Bishop Thomas Rodi  
The Diocese of Biloxi, Miss.

## San Angelo Diocese students chosen to sit on stage with Pope at World Youth Day

Submitted by S. Adelina Garcia, OSF

Paul Downing and Megan Crocker, two students at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth and parishioners from St. Ann in Midland accompanied Sister Adelina Garcia, OSF, from the Office of Education and Formation to join other pilgrims in Germany. They departed August 11, 2005, to Atlanta, Ga., and then continued on to Amsterdam. There they took a bus to Braunfels (Limburg Diocese) for "Days of Encounter," Aug. 12-15.

We were hosted by local families in seven communities (Braunfels, Waldsoms, Solms, Huttenberg, Greifenstein, Schoffengrund and Leun). These communities are served by two priests and one religious. We visited the local cathedral of Weztler for an ecumenical service and had a guided tour of the city followed by a picnic with a group from the Czech Republic. In the afternoon we departed for Braunfels and toured the city and local castle followed by a barbecue and games in Kurparktreff. On the 14th we participated in the

Altenberg Festival which begun with a walking pilgrimage from Solms to Altenberg for an open air Eucharistic Celebration at the Altenberg Cloister, lunch and music. In the afternoon, we processed to the tomb of the blessed Gertrud (a medieval Benedictine nun). On August 15, we departed for Limburg for a Mass with Bishop Franz Kamphaus and then on to Cologne.

The theme of World Youth Day, "We Have Come to Worship," was fitting. Over



Paul Downing, left, and Megan Crocker, at World Youth Day in Germany.

700,000 people took part in this pilgrimage to visit the Cathedral of Cologne, where the relics of the Magi are kept. Since 1049 the Pope has had a seat of honor in the staffs of the Cologne Cathedral. Bishop Zurek of San Antonio joined us. The following day we proceeded to Marianfeld for the Vigil with the Pope. This was seven kilometers with backpacks and sleeping bags. The young people of our group had been selected to sit on the stage with Pope Benedict! They were asked to wear a national costume. We wore cowboy hats and western attire and carried a Texas flag.

What an experience! This was a once in a lifetime opportunity to meet people from all over the world, to listen to cardinals lead catechetical sessions, to visit holy places and pray, to see the pope and experience our universality. We thank Bishop Pfeifer for the opportunity he gave us to represent the Diocese of San Angelo.

## Traditions of the Church

### 'He ascended into heaven ... and is seated at the right hand of the father'

"In the Gospels, Jesus often spoke about coming from the Father, and especially in John's Gospel, He talked about returning to the Father. He came from the Father in love to bring God's forgiveness, compassion and care for God's people, and through His time on earth to accomplish His mission of salvation. But Jesus also pointed out that this was just the beginning, because He promised that once He would return to the Father, He would ask the Father to send in His name the beautiful Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit would continue to be with us throughout the world and make Jesus and His message present in a way that Jesus could not have been present if He would have continued to just live on this earth.

The mystery we are talking about in this small

phrase is called the Ascension -- which is closely linked to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus not only rose from the dead to show that He was the Son of God, but to also assure us that we share in the new life of God's forgiveness, love and hope through Christ's suffering, death and resurrection as well as His Ascension into heaven where He constantly intercedes for us with the Father. His Resurrection and Ascension are a sign, promise and power of our resurrection and ascension when our bodies will also be taken into heaven. From His place in heaven at the right hand of the Father, Jesus is constantly asking the Father to help us, who are God's children, while here on life's journey on planet earth."

-- Bishop Michael Pfeifer

## John of Kanty

c. 1390 - 1473

feast - December 23

Greatly revered in his native Poland, this saint, also known as John Cantius, spent most of his life teaching at the University of Krakow, where he was a noted professor of sacred Scripture. He also spent an interval as a parish priest, reputedly forced on him because of academic jealousy. At the university, he impressed on students the need for moderation and good manners in controversy, and was famous for his boundless generosity to Krakow's poor. A personal austerity contributed to his reputation for holiness: He ate no meat and slept on the floor.



**DIOCESAN DATES****Bishop's Calendar****December**

- 11** -- San Angelo, St. Margaret - Mass at 11:30 a.m.  
**12** -- Mass of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 6:30 p.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.  
**13** -- Presbyteral Council, 11 a.m., Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo  
**13** -- Bishop's Annual Christmas Party, all priests, sisters, deacons and wives, 5:30 p.m., Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo  
**14** -- San Angelo, San Angelo Ambulatory Center - Christmas Mass, 11 a.m.  
**14** -- Bishop's Residence - Annual Christmas Party for Staff, 6 pm.  
**15** -- Advent Night of Prayer with all priests, sisters, deacon and wives of the San Angelo Deanery, Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo, 7 p.m.  
**16** -- San Angelo, Angelo Catholic School - Sacred Heart Campus - Annual Christmas Mass at 8:30 a.m.  
**16** -- Eden, Detention Center - Christmas Mass at 1 p.m.  
**17-18** -- Parish Finance Council Members, Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo.  
**18** -- Mass, St. James Church, Sanderson, 11 a.m.  
**20** -- Christmas Mass, 11 a.m., Baptist Memorial, San Angelo.  
**20** -- Penance Service, 7 p.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.  
**24** -- Mass, 9 a.m., 10 a.m., Tom Green County Jail, San Angelo.  
**24** -- Christmas Vigil Mass, midnight, Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.  
**25** -- Christmas Day Mass, 9 a.m., Goodfellow Air Force Base, San Angelo.  
**26-29** -- Rest and Prayer.

**January**

- 1** -- Mass for the Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.  
**2-6** -- Annual Region X Bishops' Retreat, Pat Guidon Center, San Antonio.  
**7-8** -- Reconciliation Retreat, San Angelo - Christ the King Retreat Center, San Angelo.  
**8** -- Reconciliation Retreat Mass, CKRC, 11 a.m.  
**11-13** -- Rest and Prayer  
**14** -- Priestly Ordination of Emilio Sosa, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.  
**16** -- Dr. Martin Luther King Ecumenical Service, Noon, Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.

- 21** -- Diocesan Schools Commission Meeting, 9 a.m., St. Mary, Odessa.  
**22** -- San Angelo, Knights of Columbus Hall - Pro Life Mass at 11:00 a.m.  
**23-24** -- MACC Executive Board Meeting, San Antonio  
**26** -- Mass celebrating the First Anniversary of Perpetual Adoration Chapel, 6:30 p.m., St. Margaret, San Angelo.  
**27** -- Mass honoring Santa Angela de Merce, 6:30 p.m., Visitors' Center, San Angelo.  
**28** -- Knights of Columbus District Council Banquet, 6:45 p.m., Holy Angels, San Angelo.  
**29** -- Youth and Young Adult Encuentro, 1-7 p.m., St. Joseph, San Angelo.  
**31** -- Personnel Board Meeting, 11 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center, San Angelo.  
**31** -- Presentation to RCIA, 6:30 p.m., Holy Angels, San Angelo.

**Christ the King Retreat Center Schedule****December**

- 8** -- Office Closed-Immaculate Conception Holy Day  
**9-11** -- Rachel's Vineyard Retreat  
**12** -- Heart of Mercy Prayer Group  
**13** -- Bishop's Christmas Party for Priests, Sisters, Deacons & Wives  
**13** -- Presbyteral Council Lunch Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament  
**13-14** -- International Priests Gathering  
**15** -- Catholic Daughters Christmas Banquet  
**17-18** -- Pastoral and Finance Council Seminar  
**19** -- **Jan. 1** Office Closed for Holidays and Vacation.

**Chancellor's Calendar****December**

- 8** -- Feast of the Immaculate Conception, DOSA offices closed.  
**9-11** -- Rachel's Vineyard, Christ the King Retreat Center (CKRC)  
**11** -- Retirement Fund for Religious Collection  
**13** -- Presbyteral Council, 11 a.m., Pastoral Center  
**13** -- Priests, Sisters and Deacons Christmas Party, 5:30 p.m., CKRC.  
**13-14** -- International Priests Gathering, CKRC  
**17-18** -- Parish Pastoral and Finance Council Workshop, CKRC.  
**23** -- DOSA offices closed, noon, Christmas holiday.

- 24-26** -- DOSA offices closed, Christmas holiday.  
**30** -- DOSA offices closed, New Year's holiday, Noon.  
**31** -- DOSA office closed, New Year's holiday.

**January**

- 2** -- New Years Day observed, DOSA offices closed  
**7-8** -- Diocesan Year of Reconciliation Retreat, CKRC  
**7** -- Basic Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Francis, Abilene  
**8** -- Encuentro, Abilene Deanery, 1 p.m., St. Francis, Abilene.  
**9-13** -- Assumption Seminary's Seminarian Retreat, CKRC.  
**10** -- Staff Mass, 8:30 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center, 8:30 a.m., San Angelo.  
**10** -- Dialogue with Christian, Jews, Muslims, 7 p.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral Gymnasium, San Angelo.  
**14** -- Advanced Formation, 8:45 a.m., St. Mary's, Odessa.  
**14** -- Priestly Ordination for Emilio Sosa, 10 a.m., Sacred Heart Cathedral, San Angelo.  
**15** -- Confirmation Retreat, 9:30 a.m., CKRC.  
**15** -- Detention Center Mass, Bronte, 10 a.m.  
**19** -- Mass, Wallace Unit Prison, Colorado City, 6:30 p.m.  
**20** -- Staff Meeting, 11 a.m., Diocesan Pastoral Center, San Angelo  
**20** -- Meeting with pastor, pastoral council, 6:30 p.m., Immaculate Heart, Big Spring.  
**20-22** -- Engaged Encounter, CKRC.  
**21** -- Youth Ministry, Justice & Service, 9 a.m., St. Joseph, Odessa.  
**22** -- Encuentro, Midland-Odessa Deanery, 1 p.m., Our Lady of Guadalupe, Midland.  
**22** -- The Church in Latin America Collection.  
**29** -- Encuentro, San Angelo Deanery, 1 p.m., St. Joseph's, San Angelo.  
**29** -- Mass, 9 a.m., St. Ambrose, Wall.  
**29** -- Diocesan Seminarian Collection.

**Necrology-December**

- 1** -- Rev. John A. Pierce (1979)  
**12** -- Deacon Nester Perez (1993)  
**12** -- Rev. James Aaron (1999)  
**20** -- Rev. John Waldron (1995)  
**28** -- Rev. Nicholas Femenia, C.M. (1999)  
**30** -- Rev. John Hoorman, C.P.P.S. (1995)

**The Sacrament of Penance****By Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI**

On the second Sunday of Easter, April 7, 2002, Pope John Paul II published a new apostolic letter on the Sacrament of Penance under the title of The Mercy of God. The stated purpose of this letter of Our Holy Father is to recall some of the canonical laws in force regarding the celebration of this Sacrament and to clarify certain aspects of these laws and how they apply to this great Sacrament of God's mercy. This papal letter brings out that in some places there has been a tendency to abandon individual confession and wrongly to resort to general or communal absolution.

In this important letter, the Pope stresses that priests are urged to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance whenever reasonably asked and at days and times set down for the convenience of the faithful, especially before Masses and even during Mass, where priests are available. The Pope points out that any practice which restricts confession to a generic accusation of sin, or of only one or two sins, judged to be more important, is to be reprovved.

In this letter the Pope clarifies when general absolution might be used. The use of general absolution is clearly defined as appropriate only when danger of death is imminent and there is not time for individual confession or in cases of grave necessity. Grave necessity exists only when first, there is a lack of confessors to hear confessions in an appropriate way and time. Second, when penitents would be deprived of sacramental grace or Holy Communion for a long time -- never to be interpreted as a period of less than a month. General absolution cannot be justified, however, simply because of lack of sufficient number of confessors at a great feast or pilgrimage, or the desire to include a longer pastoral dialogue with the penitent, or due to the penitent's preference of general absolution.

The Sacrament of Penance is the Sacrament of God's mercy and forgiveness. In this Sacrament our souls are profoundly touched by God's merciful and forgiving love.

## International/Vatican

# Vatican document on homosexuals raises series of delicate questions

By John Thavis  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY -- A long-awaited Vatican document drew a sharp line against priestly ordination of homosexuals, but in the process raised a series of delicate questions for church leaders and seminary officials.

The six-page instruction, prepared by the Congregation for Catholic Education, said the church cannot ordain men who are active homosexuals, who have "deeply rooted" homosexual tendencies or who support the "gay culture." Those who have overcome "transitory" homosexual tendencies, however, could be ordained, it said.

The document, expected to be released at the Vatican in late November, was published online Nov. 22 by an Italian news agency.

The instruction's bottom line was that homosexual men should not be accepted into seminaries or ordained to the priesthood.

In recent weeks, some reports have suggested that the document would allow homosexual men to be ordained, as long as they had remained celibate for at least three years during seminary formation.

But the document doesn't say that; there is no discussion of "celibacy" of homosexual candidates. What it

does say is that fleeting homosexual tendencies experienced in youth should not represent a bar to ordination - as long as those tendencies are clearly overcome.

In other words, a candidate would have to mature out of a homosexual inclination well before ordination.

"This part of the text refers to someone who may have had an experience tied to the process of maturing during adolescence. It does not refer to someone who is homosexual and who has refrained from (sexual) acts in a three-year period," said an official of the education congregation, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

"It is talking about a phase in which someone has uncertainty about his sexual orientation, and it says this uncertainty must be definitively overcome," the official said.

The wording of the text is significant. It presumes that homosexuality is not a permanent identity but a set of "tendencies" or an inclination that can, in fact, be overcome.

But the instruction makes no attempt to define the difference between "deeply rooted" or "transitory" tendencies. Nor does it say what criteria would be used to determine whether a candidate had overcome such tendencies.

(Please See DOCUMENT/15)



Cardinal Jose Saraiva Martins, head of the Vatican Congregation for Saints' Causes, and Cardinal Juan Sandoval Iniguez of Guadalajara, Mexico, process during the beatification ceremony of 13 martyrs killed during the anti-Catholic uprising in Mexico in the 1920s. Tens of thousands attended the ceremony in Jalisco Stadium in Guadalajara Nov. 20.

## Benedict's papacy: Running on all cylinders but still gearing up

By John Thavis  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY -- Pope Benedict XVI's pontificate was running on all cylinders in November.



Pope Benedict XVI

Seven months after the pope's election, the Vatican was humming with internal policy meetings, public conferences, document preparation and liturgical celebrations.

The pope himself, although he stayed mostly behind the scenes, held important private meetings with political leaders from Iraq, Israel and Italy. But he continued to cut back on the group meetings and speeches that consumed much of his predecessor's time and energy.

"It used to be that any group that came to Rome would have a papal audience. (Pope) Benedict has become much more selective, and I think that's a good thing," said one Vatican official.

As Pope Benedict fine-tuned the rhythm of his papacy, the curial offices and other Vatican institutions were moving ahead on agendas that, in many cases, predate the new pope.

To list just a sampling of the activity:

### Advent: Prepare with 'spiritual fervor,' pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Wearing a heavy red cape to protect him from the cold, Pope Benedict XVI encouraged Christians to prepare for Advent, which begins Nov. 27, and for Christmas with "spiritual fervor."

"I ask you all to prepare for Advent with spiritual fervor, drawing from the word of God and the Eucharist interior energy for welcoming the Lord who comes," he said at the end of his Nov. 23 general audience.

Because more than 25,000 people requested free tickets to the audience, the morning gathering was held in St. Peter's Square, where the temperature stayed below 45 degrees Fahrenheit and a cold breeze blew.

In his main audience talk, the pope focused on the hymn of blessing found at the beginning of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians.

The pope said the hymn picks up simi-

lar "blessings" found in the Jewish tradition, but praises God as the "Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ."

The central figure is Christ, "in whom the work of God the Father is revealed and accomplished," the pope said.

By professing that Christians are chosen in Christ, filled with abundant grace and are made adopted sons and daughters of God through Christ, the hymn underlines the Christian vocation to brotherhood, unity and holiness, the pope said.

The hymn, he said, emphasizes the "excess, the giving without limit or reserve" of God's grace out of love and the fact that all creation was destined from the beginning of time to be united in Christ.

Pope Benedict ended his talk by saying, "Let us pray: 'Yes, Lord, draw us to yourself, draw the world to yourself and give us peace.'"

▶ The Vatican's chief ecumenist, Cardinal Walter Kasper, traveled to Jerusalem, Turkey and Geneva in November for meetings to commemorate the Second Vatican Council's major documents on ecumenical and inter-faith dialogue.

▶ A flurry of beatification Masses were held at the Vatican and elsewhere, all for saint-

hood causes that were advanced under Pope John Paul. Unlike his predecessor, Pope Benedict has opted not to preside over these liturgies.

▶ The Congregation for Catholic Education prepared to release a document on homosexuals and seminary admission, under preparation since 2001.

▶ At the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments, a commission held another in a series of meetings on reworking liturgical translations in English.

▶ The Vatican's major pontifical academies sponsored a series of international conferences in November on a wide range of topics: the science and ethics of water distribution, globalization and education, and the concept of the human person.

▶ This year even saw "dueling conferences," when a bioethics congress sponsored by the Vatican's Pontifical Academy for Life coincided with an international conference on the human genome, sponsored by the Pontifical Council for Health Care Workers.

"It's all too much," Swiss Cardinal Georges Cottier said of the glut of meetings, speeches and reports. Cardinal Cottier, the theologian of the papal household, addressed yet another Rome conference in mid-November, this one on infinity as viewed by science and theology.

Practically all the Vatican-sponsored events were scheduled or set in motion under Pope John Paul II, illustrating why "papal transition" is a matter of many months, not weeks.

If Vatican activity was frenetic, the pope's own schedule was merely busy. Elected at age 78, he has pared back the number of audiences and activities inherited from Pope John Paul.

(See BENEDICT/15)

# Page Turners for Christmas

*If there's a Catholic reader and a stocking to be stuffed this year... you may just be in luck*

**THE MAKING OF THE POPE 2005**, by Father Andrew M. Greeley. Little Brown (New York, 2005). 254 pp., \$23.95.

**GOD'S CHOICE: POPE BENEDICT XVI AND THE FUTURE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH**, by George Weigel. HarperCollins (New York, 2005). 304 pp., \$26.95.

**Reviewed by Rachelle Linner**  
Catholic News Service

"The Making of the Pope 2005," by Father Andrew M. Greeley, and "God's Choice: Pope Benedict XVI and the Future of the Catholic Church," by George Weigel, offer two very different lenses through which to interpret the final illness, death and funeral of Pope John Paul II and the conclave that elected Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Pope Benedict XVI.

Since neither Father Greeley nor Weigel is free from the sin of polemical rhetoric, both can be stereotyped as representatives of two dueling visions of the legacy of the Second Vatican Council. It would be unfortunate, though, if their books were read only by people who already agree with them.

Instead, it is helpful to think of these books as examples of two ways of doing theology, and in a less divisive church they would be appreciated as complementary rather than competitive. Weigel writes a descending theology of church, consistent with a high ecclesiology and a focus on the teaching authority of the pope, cardinals and bishops. Father Greeley, in contrast, writes an ascending theology that begins with a decidedly low ecclesiology; he is concerned less with the magisterium (the church's teaching authority) than he is with the lived experience of laity and parish priests.

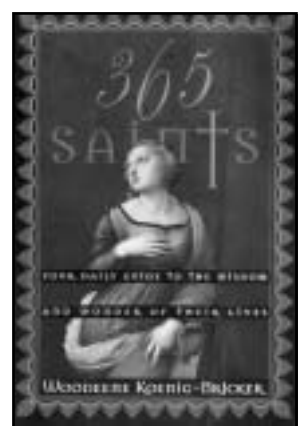
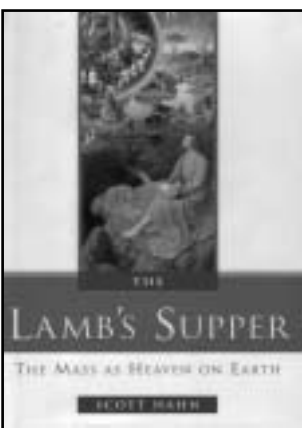
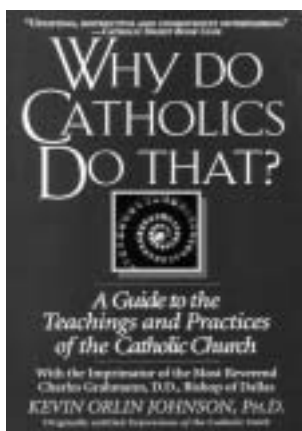
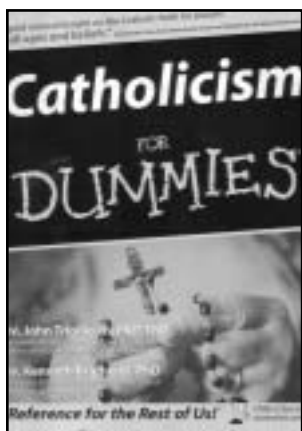
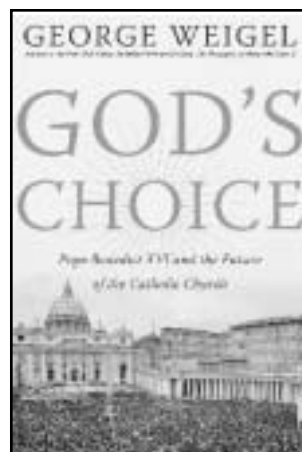
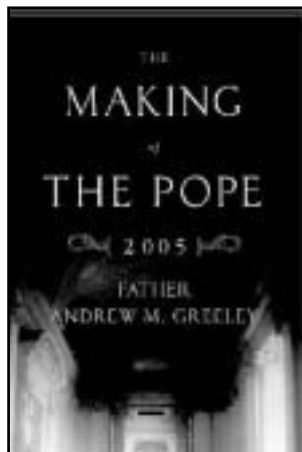
Father Greeley is an engaging storyteller with a distinctive voice and an affectionate pastoral eye. He discusses the conclave with the acute political instincts of a Chicago-born Irish-American, attitudes which some will see as irreverent.

Meanwhile, the pleasure of reading Weigel's well-crafted prose is too often marred by an unpleasant triumphalism and his disdainful dismissal of dissent.

As one would expect from the author of "Witness to Hope," Weigel gives in the first 100 pages of his book a concise and masterful appreciation of the life and papacy of Pope John Paul. Weigel writes, "One way to think of the extraordinary wide-ranging magisterium of John Paul II is to imagine John Paul's teaching as a set of keys for unlocking and understanding the teaching of Vatican II. Every item on the council's agenda ... received an authoritative interpretation in one or another document. ... In doing so, he helped rescue the genuine teaching of Vatican II from the slippery hermeneutic of the 'spirit of Vatican II' and from the crossfire of the ecclesiastical tong wars."

Father Greeley, focused as he is on the experience of American Catholics, is convinced that the encyclical "Humanae Vitae," not Vatican II,

## Gift ideas for the Catholic Reader



changed the relationship between laity and the magisterium. He writes, "The documents of the council were moderate statements, but the implications of these documents suggested that change was possible on other matters, too. The legitimacy of change in the church was the revolutionary event of the council. Moreover, matters that were once taught under pain of mortal sin were no longer considered sinful. ... Arriving on the heels of such widespread destabilization, the reaction of the laity and the lower clergy to the birth control encyclical created a permanent divide in the church between the Vatican and the lower ranks of the faithful."

Father Greeley's anger stems from a deep concern that the church's "credibility as a teacher ... has been eroding for the last 35 years." He continues, "Credibility cannot be restored by force. In our times the only appeal the church has is the rich beauty of its heritage."

Weigel's biographical chapter on the new pope opens with a lovely "verbal snapshot" — "what an exquisite person," he says — which he then goes on to prove in his careful retelling of Pope Benedict's personal and professional life. Weigel offers a helpful overview of issues that will concern this papacy; his writing on the new pope's theology of liturgy is particularly fine.

Ultimately, both books are about listening. Father Greeley believes that "church leaders must learn to listen, not only because it is sound Catholic doctrine that the Spirit speaks at every level of the church and the leaders' task is to discern the Spirit but also because if they do not listen, they and the followers will be passing one another like silent ships in the night." Father Greeley comes to this honestly — listening is at the heart of the charisma of the social scientist — and so is describing reality as it is, no matter how uncomfortable the conclusions.

As Weigel knows, listening is essential to much of the church's life, from the attentiveness of a priest in the confessional, to the solemn mystery of the Eucharist, to the pregnant silence that opens for the humble person at prayer — and the opening exhortation of the Rule of St. Benedict. Surely we can trust in the constancy and efficacy of the prayers of that great saint for the pope who has taken his name, and for the priest and scholar who, for all their differences, love and serve the same church.

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Linner, a librarian and writer, lives in Boston. She has a master of theological studies degree from Weston Jesuit School of Theology in Cambridge, Mass.

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**BOOKS FOR THE CATHOLIC READER:** Top, "The Making of the Pope," and "God's Choice," new books (reviewed on this page). Other books previously released, "Catholicism for Dummies," an excellent apologetic primer on the faith, as is "Why Do Catholics Do That?". "The Lamb's Supper," a well written tome by apologist Scott Hahn, and "365 Saints," an insightful and educational daily devotion based on the lives of selected saints. At left, a look into the ramifications of Vatican II, 40 years after it was completed, noted scholar Alan Schreck.

From the Editor

## Preparing for the coming of Christ, as though he never left

By Jimmy Patterson

During this time of Advent we are called to prepare for the coming of Christ. Not only the coming of the Baby Jesus, but for the second coming of Christ which we have all been taught and reassured through The Bible and church tradition will occur.



Patterson

As we prepare for this second coming, perhaps we should consider that while yes, Christ will return again ... maybe he is already here.

You see it everywhere. Especially in this joyous time of year, this Advent-Christmas season. We see happiness and peace in the faces of friends, family, strangers on the street and, even though it may be a little more difficult to see, shoppers in the stores.

We see Christ in the faces of children at an elementary school in Midland as all 450 of them present a program honoring veterans of the armed services. And we see it in the faces of those veterans who humbly receive the adulation directed their way.

We see Him in the faces of children gathered around the altar listening to a homily about a young boy who had tried to collect gifts to present Jesus on his second coming, only to have given those gifts away to the less fortunate he met along the way (See Pg. 14). We see that same Savior in the face of both the less fortunate helped by the young boy, and on the face of the boy who

has worried needlessly about failing to present Christ with material goods only to be told he is a living example of the Savior.

We have seen repeated examples of Christ in the aftermath of the devastation wrought by American hurricanes and an Asian tsunami. We see Him in the stories of churches that sent scores of people -- all of whom were at the ready, some of whom who even took off from work without pay, just to help others.

We see Christ in the simple act of someone holding a door open, of another person working late for someone who has left to be with a sick child.

My family saw Him on the train in Washington in the form of a woman who could obviously tell we were lost Texans and needed some help getting around and took the time to make sure we headed the right way.

We see him in the work done by the people who deliver Meals on Wheels, or who volunteer for the American Red Cross. We see him in the homeless person looking for a second chance through Salvation Army, and even in the drug addict seeking treatment to try to right what has gone so horribly wrong.

I see Jesus every day in the form of a father and a sister and a brother who devote their lives to helping my mother who has suffered with failing health every day for almost two years; people who have laid down everything to help a loved one.

I've seen it in the kindness of employers who have allowed me to battle personal health problems in the last year.

And I saw Jesus six years ago, when my wife's grandmother flew from Chicago to Midland to spend a week with us at Christmas. I remem-

ber that year we didn't really know what to expect and thought we would all sit around and smile and talk for a week while Grandma Kaspar visited with us. But the visit turned out to be so much more as this woman, 86 at the time, rallied us together for games of bingo in the evening and cooking sessions in the kitchen during the day. I saw Jesus as this woman laughed as she sat on Santa Claus' lap in our living room and as she encouraged me to "fix" a bingo game so that one of our children who had gone winless could finally experience a little joy.

I saw Jesus as our three children, 13, 10 and 5 at the time, sat at our kitchen table and laughed out loud as their Polish great-grandmother said "Youse got prizes?" and when we said no, she said, "OK then, we play for money" and she went around scraping together nickels and dimes.

I see Jesus in the forgiveness of my wife, the smiles of neighbors, the compassion of volunteers, the warmth of my son, the wisdom of my oldest daughter and the humor and love that flows from our second daughter.

I see it everywhere. Most every day. Chances are good you do, too.

So yes, I know we are told to prepare for the coming again of Jesus during this advent season. But in a lot of ways and through a lot of people ... he's never really left.

Merry Christmas to you and your family.

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*Jimmy Patterson is the Director of Communication for the Diocese of San Angelo. You can email him at [JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net](mailto:JimmyLPatterson@grandecom.net)*



## Christmas shows us every year that we're all about making special connections

By Father William J. Byron, SJ  
Catholic News Service

This story possibly could have come from the U.S. Postal Service, Fed Ex or any one of a large number of organizations that deliver greetings and packages at Christmastime. It happens to come from United Parcel Service, the company that runs those big, boxy, brown trucks on highways and streets all over the country and around the world.

This is a Christmas story about a UPS driver, Rene D'Agostino, making her routine rounds just a day or two before Christmas on a

er called her UPS supervisor to ask if she could open the envelope to look for some clue as to the recipient's whereabouts. All she found inside was a money order and a handwritten note: "Make me happy. Come home for Christmas. Love, Mom."

The driver figured it out. The money order was there to pay for the soldier's trip home. But where was he? She drove to the on-base house of a Marine officer. He didn't recognize the name but agreed to open his office and run a computer search. Sure enough, he located the Marine and identified his barracks.

So, accompanied by a Sergeant-

videos. He turned back to D'Agostino and asked her for one more favor -- could she drop those movies off at the rec center rental counter for him? She delivered.

All of us are delivering all sorts of things to all sorts of people all of the time. Not so dramatic as this UPS delivery, perhaps, but we deliver. Sometimes it is just a smile or a word of greeting.

Each of us is a link in a chain. Christmas is a time to think of the connections, even passing connections we make with one another. Thank God for the Rene D'Agostinos of the world, who in meeting their ordinary workplace

**'Reaching out celebrates the unique and genuinely special delivery of Christ to us more than 2,000 years ago.'**

military base known as the Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland.

Michael Eskew, chairman and CEO of UPS, tells the story with pride. The base was fairly empty that day several years ago, he said, because most of the military personnel were on Christmas leave. D'Agostino found herself trying to deliver an overnight letter with no specific address, just a name on the envelope. She asked a few people on that sprawling base if they recognized the name; no one did.

Then, Eskew explained, the driv-

er entered the barracks, but her man wasn't there. One of his buddies said he had gone to the rec center on base. Off went D'Agostino to find him.

He was there, sitting on a couch, surrounded by a stack of rented movies. Apparently, a movie marathon was going to get him through a lonely Christmas.

"I've got something for you," said D'Agostino, and handed him the opened envelope. He read the note, smiled, sprang off the couch, hugged the driver and started for the door when he remembered the

responsibilities use some imagination and expend some extra effort to make the kind of connections that make Christmas the warm and wonderful experience it should be for everyone.

Reaching out or handing on to others at this time of the year is a small but not insignificant delivery that celebrates the unique and genuinely special delivery of Christ to us more than 2,000 years ago.

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*E-mail: [wbyron@loyola.edu](mailto:wbyron@loyola.edu)*



## Día de los Muertos en Odessa

At an All Souls Day Mass, Nov. 2, at St. Joseph's in Odessa, parishioners prayed for the souls of people who had passed away.



### En Espanol

La noche del 2 de noviembre en la Iglesia de San José en Odessa hubo un servicio de oración para recordar nuestros fieles difuntos tan queridos. Invitamos a la gente a traer fotos de sus queridos y ponerlas en una mesa que se convirtió en un lugar sagrado de amigos respetados. Después de cantar el Salmo 51 en que el Rey David pide perdón por sus pecados graves, y el Salmo 150 que pide a todos los instrumentos a alabar a Dios, escuchamos una lectura del Libro de la Revelación: el cielo nuevo y la tierra nueva, la nueva Jerusalén en que no habrá muerte, ni llanto, ni lamento, ni dolor. El Padre Marcos Miller, C.P.P.S. habló del gran amor de nuestro Dios hacia los fieles difuntos y de la relación continua entre nuestros seres queridos y nosotros. Estábamos celebrando la Comunión de los Santos. Entonces el Padre José Uecker, C.P.P.S. anunció, mes por mes, los que habían sido sepultados de nuestras iglesias - más de 100 personas - durante el año pasado. Después del anuncio de cada mes, se prendió una velita en memoria suya. El servicio se terminó con peticiones, el Padre Nuestro y un canto de alabanza.

### En Ingles

On the night of November 2 at St. Joseph's Church in Odessa there was a prayer service to remember our dear faithful departed. People were invited to bring pictures of their loved ones and place them on a table which became our shrine of revered friends. After singing Psalm 51 in which King David seeks forgiveness for his grave sins, and Psalm 150 in which all the musical instruments are asked to give praise to God, we heard a reading from the Book of Revelation: the new heaven and the new earth, the new Jerusalem in which there will be no more death, nor mourning, nor lament, nor suffering. Fr. Mark Miller, C.P.P.S. spoke of the great love of God for the faithful departed and the continuing relationship between our loved ones and us. We were celebrating the Communion of Saints. Then Fr. Joseph Uecker, C.P.P.S. announced, month by month, those who had been buried from our churches - more than 100 people - during this past year. After each month's announcement, a candle was lit in their memory. The service ended with petitions, the Lord's Prayer and a song of praise.

Submitted by Fr. Joseph Uecker

## Producer says 10 hours aren't enough to tell Pope's life story

By Mark Pattison  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON -- Judd Parkin, who wrote the story that forms the basis for ABC's papal docudrama, "Have No Fear: The Life of Pope John Paul II," said that even if he had been given 10 hours of TV time, it would not have been enough to chronicle the pontiff's life.

As it is, ABC gave Parkin two hours, the results of which were seen Thursday.

"We wrote it as a three-hour script and the decision was made to tell the story in two hours," Parkin said. After commercials and network promotions, the actual running time is a bit less than 90 minutes. Even "if we had 10 hours, we would have had to make some very tough editorial choices about this man's life," he added.

In a telephone interview with Catholic News Service from Los Angeles, Parkin said he was not thrilled with the idea of going up against "Survivor" and "CSI: Crime Scene Investigation," two of the top-rated shows on Thursday.

"Piece of cake, huh? What can I tell you?" he mused, but added that Lorenzo Minoli, who produced the movie with Parkin, told him: "It is what it is."

"They couldn't give us a much more difficult time than (to be up against) the

(See TELEVISION/15)

## Let us compare and prepare for the coming of our Christ

By Trudi Rutherford  
Sacred Heart -- Coleman

Have you ever wondered how it is that we Catholics have the inimitable honor of uniting with Christ in body, blood, soul, and divinity? And have you ever wondered why we have that specific honor?

I'm sure that most of us know, we just have not thought about it lately, or perhaps not for a very long time. It is so very awesome why Christ would humble Himself to come to us mere mortals, that it humbles us, shames us, even. So maybe we try not to think about it.

I know I have done that in the past, been so disbelieving, in denial, really, how a perfect God would submit to giving Himself completely to each of us coming down the aisle in line during the Liturgy to accept this gesture of total Love. So I merely went through the motions of receiving the Body and Blood of the Lord. Thanking Him, of course, but

never really thinking about the reality of it.

Lately though, I've been doing some reading about the Eucharist. The Eucharist: the Son of God. God Himself since there is only one God, subjecting His Godhead to reduce Himself to a wafer of bread, a sip of wine to come into MY lowly heart and soul.

How did I prepare to receive this Majestic God? Did I travel far and wide to find a Church that was having a Liturgy? Did I receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Did I make a perfect Act of Contrition? Or even an imperfect one? Did I bow down in worship, tell Him how deeply I desired to have Him come in my heart? Did I talk to Him and all the angels and saints, asking for their help in receiving the Most High God?

On the other hand, how did Jesus prepare to come into my heart?

We know that He prepared Mary from the beginning of time to be conceived immaculately so that she could conceive

Him properly, purely and in a virgin state. We know Jesus came to this earth from His perfect place in heaven to be born in a barn, a stable built for animals, willingly, for us. We know that Jesus grew as a human being, in knowledge and wisdom, became a man even though He was divine, working like a man, by the sweat of His brow.

We know that when He was thirty years of age, He began His public life, healing the sick, curing illnesses and preaching about the Kingdom. We know that He selected poor fishermen to be His followers so that once He was lifted up, we would have His Word still with us.

We know of His excruciating torment in the garden seeing beforehand all the agonies which He would experience for all the sins committed against Him, His heart-piercing betrayal, His unwarranted arrest, His mortifying scourging, His unspeakable humiliation and pain being mocked with a crown of thorns. We also

know of His disgraceful parading before the crowd of scandal-mongers by Pilate, so weak from loss of blood, all the while mourning, but forgiving us all.

We know of His interminable walk to Golgotha with the weight of our sins on His back, His shoulder, the Cross.

We know of His total acceptance at whatever cruelty was thrust upon Him. We have seen statues, images of Christ which are only a depiction, a mild and bearable facsimile of the grotesque tortures inflicted upon Him.

Then we crucified Him, where He hung for three endless hours before He finally expired.

This is how Jesus prepared Himself to come into our hearts. He wanted this much to be with us, for us to be with Him, united in the Sacrifice of the Cross through time.

Can we receive Him with less than an iota of such preparation?

# Financial Report for the Diocese of San Angelo

## Year Ending June 30, 2005

November 30, 2005

*Dear sisters and brothers in Christ:*

I am happy to present to you in an abbreviated form the Diocese of San Angelo's financial report for the most recent year ending June 30, 2005 as prepared by our outside auditors, Carneiro, Chumney & Co., L.C. This audit has been carefully studied by the Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Finance Council, the Diocesan Finance Officer and myself.

I want to express my sincere appreciation for your generous financial support upon which our church ministries depend. Your material generosity continues to keep a spirit of hope alive in the diocese.

I invite any of you who would like to receive the full audited financials to contact our Diocesan Finance Officer, Les Maiman, who will be happy to provide a copy to you.

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

### THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM OFFICES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

#### STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

JUNE 30, 2005

#### ASSETS

<b>Assets:</b>	
Cash and cash equivalents	2,586,884
Cash investments restricted for bene fund	1,287,878
Accounts receivable	590,578
Grants receivable	175,000
Parish notes receivable	2,899,678
Prepaid benefit cost	319,085
Other prepaid assets	27,584
Property and equipment, net	3,896,355
Intangible asset	312,286
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>11,231,150</b>

#### LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS

<b>Liabilities:</b>	
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	318,886
Accrued pension plan liabilities	142,259
Collections	15,784
Parish savings deposits	5,086,859
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>5,563,888</b>
<b>Contributions - Note 12</b>	
<b>Net Assets:</b>	
Unrestricted	3,448,676
Temporarily restricted	943,616
Permanently restricted	1,287,878
<b>Total Net Assets</b>	<b>5,680,162</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>	<b>11,231,150</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

### THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND PROGRAM OFFICES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

#### STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

YEAR ENDED JUNE 30, 2005

	Unrestricted	Temporarily restricted	Permanently restricted	Total
<b>Revenues, Gains and Other Support:</b>				
Contributions	203,634	77,344	20,458	301,436
Parish assessments	1,842,553	88,000	--	1,930,553
Interest and dividends	167,356	32,283	--	199,639
Grants	--	357,050	--	357,050
Other income and fees	334,003	32,567	--	366,570
Cemetery	78,109	17,455	--	95,564
Health insurance premiums	1,523,134	--	--	1,523,134
Amounts released	693,953	(693,953)	--	--
<b>Total Revenues, Gains, and And Other Support</b>	<b>4,842,742</b>	<b>(89,254)</b>	<b>20,458</b>	<b>4,773,946</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
<b>Program:</b>				
Seminarians education	126,160	--	--	126,160
Vocations	11,157	--	--	11,157
Clergy medical and assistance	323,856	--	--	323,856
Continuing education of clergy	89,964	--	--	89,964
Permanent diaconate	41,452	--	--	41,452
Women religious	1,138	--	--	1,138
Christ the King Retreat Center	419,110	--	--	419,110
Religious education and formation	273,491	--	--	273,491
Communications and paper	134,723	--	--	134,723
Contributions and assessments	263,925	--	--	263,925
Tribunal	135,300	--	--	135,300
University Apostolate (Newman Center)	89,591	--	--	89,591
Liturgy office	15,184	--	--	15,184
Superintendent of schools	12,774	--	--	12,774
Prison ministry	6,715	--	--	6,715
Victims assistance	97,078	--	--	97,078
Leadership	29,408	--	--	29,408
Parish insurance	1,115,662	--	--	1,115,662
Cemetery	85,544	--	--	85,544
<b>General and Administrative:</b>				
Administrative office	413,303	--	--	413,303
Business services	494,167	--	--	494,167
Bishop's residence	25,372	--	--	25,372
Capital renewal and replacement	5,411	--	--	5,411
Interest	158,877	--	--	158,877
Other	333	--	--	333
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>4,369,695</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>4,369,695</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>473,047</b>	<b>(89,254)</b>	<b>20,458</b>	<b>404,251</b>
Net assets, as previously stated	3,011,022	1,032,870	1,267,412	5,311,304
Prior period adjustment	(35,393)	--	--	(35,393)
<b>Net Assets, as Restated</b>	<b>2,975,629</b>	<b>1,032,870</b>	<b>1,267,412</b>	<b>5,275,911</b>
<b>NET ASSETS, END OF YEAR</b>	<b>3,448,676</b>	<b>943,616</b>	<b>1,287,870</b>	<b>5,680,162</b>

The accompanying notes are an integral part of these financial statements.

**FAMILY**

From the Easy Chair

**Like 'Oz,' Harry takes us to a mystical (and harmless) place**

I am not much on media manipulation. In this business, you keep a keen eye out for it and frankly it irks me to see someone try to sway the masses in the name of the almighty dollar. You see it with all the major talk radio heads from Rush Limbaugh to Al Franken. It is everywhere, and I remain convinced that most of these people don't necessarily have convictions that they hold to hard and fast, they just want your money.



Patterson

When I am told I am ignorant for not believing a certain way, it rubs me the wrong way. Which is why I do a lot of channel flipping on my car radio, mostly away from whomever is trying to get me to buy their politics.

I do not think J.K. Rowling is guilty of media manipulation, though there have been those who believe that is exactly what she is doing.

The brilliant author of the Harry Potter series has just given us another installment

of her series and while she will ultimately get rich off our desire to behold fantasy (just as L. Frank Baum, C.S. Lewis, Lemony Snicket and others have done throughout time), I do not believe she is secretly trying to sell me or our son witchcraft and wizardry or lure him into the occult. I wrote a children's Christmas story several years ago, and homelessness and poverty were a part of the story, but that does not mean I was espousing them.

Our 11-year-old son James has read every Harry Potter book that has been written. Most of them multiple times. He read Book 5, *The Order of the Phoenix*, all 893-pages of it, in three days. And he was 9 at the time. James wants to be a Major League Baseball player when he grows up. He does not want to be a wizard. He does not want to practice magic. He does not pretend to carry a wand around and he does not try to put people under spells, although frankly sometimes he can leave his mother and me in a trance when he asks us to help him with his math.

In July, the media raised interest in a letter that Pope Benedict XVI had written

in 2003 as Cardinal Ratzinger. In it, he expressed concerns about the books and movies' subtle seductions that can arouse children's interests in the occult. And I think Cardinal Ratzinger voiced legitimate concerns. If entered into unaware, perhaps children could take it that way. Mass media is open to all sorts of interpretation. Had my parents not taught me the difference between reality and fiction, there's no telling how I would've turned out after watching -- and loving every minute of -- "The Wizard of Oz," a movie that is so much a part of our culture it is simply part of who we are. Yet it contains witches, wizards, fantasy lands, flying monkeys and munchkins. Thirty-five years after my initial viewing, I'm still not real nuts about flying monkeys, not to mention the witch's evil soldiers who paraded around to that scary cadence, but I know for a fact that I was not wooed into the occult after watching 'Oz.' It was fantasy, like Harry Potter, and if our parents do a proper job of raising us, they'll teach their children about reality and fantasy and children will be properly

equipped, just like most children born since the 1945 birth of 'Oz.'

I would venture to speculate that most children whose parents don't care enough about them to teach them that difference aren't the kind of kids who would be giving time or money to see the movies, much less take the time to read the books. Reading is such a scarcity in today's world that I'll go out on another limb and say those who would devote the time to the now over 3,000 pages that have been devoted to Harry are intelligent, well-educated and likely well-adjusted children who won't mistake Harry for reality.

It's a good a story. A wonderful story. And that is all it is. We should avoid alarmism. There are far too many realities out there that are much scarier and more real to children than a story of a boy wizard (who incidentally kicks evil's rear end every single time out, which is another reason to be wild about Harry.)

---

*Jimmy Patterson is Editor of The Angelus.*

**Your Family****When a family member is homebound**

By Bill and Monica Dodds  
Catholic News Service

A family is wise to have a plan in place to make sure an aging parent remains safe when a winter storm hits. Here are some suggestions:



Bill &amp; Monica Dodds

▶ Get current emergency information from the Red Cross. If at all possible, arrange for help before bad weather arrives. If you can't get to your parent's home, have a neighbor, a member of the parish or a volunteer do some grocery shopping for Mom. Even if she doesn't need anything from the store, ask that person to stop in and make sure she's doing all right.

▶ Have emergency supplies ready, and be sure those items are stored in a place that's easily accessible for Dad. These include a flashlight with fresh batteries, transistor radio, non-electric clock, hand or battery-operated can opener, water and nutritious food that doesn't need to be cooked.

▶ If Mom is taking medication, be sure there's enough on hand to last through any emergency period. Remember that though she might not be able to get out, others may be able to come to her. Check with her pharmacy for suggestions in cases like this. If she's on some type of life-support system, such as oxygen, contact her doctor and the local electric company ahead of time to see what they recommend.

▶ After the storm hits, encourage your father to stay indoors. Falls lead to broken bones. It's better that he suffers a little cabin fever than spends weeks or months laid up in bed.

▶ Stay in touch. After the phone systems are back up and running, a simple daily call can work wonders in providing needed reassurance.

▶ If your parent's gas or oil furnace has gone out but the electricity is still on, make sure he or she doesn't try to heat the place with an appliance (such as an oven, with the door wide open).

▶ Remind your dad that a key to staying warm in an unheated house is wearing layers of clothing (underwear, pants, T-shirt, light shirt, heavy shirt, sweater, jacket, heavy

coat, hat, gloves) rather than one bulky winter coat.

▶ If the fireplace is to be used, be sure the chimney has been cleaned recently and a screen is in place. Remind Mom not to try heating a room with a barbecue, hibachi or other type of grill that emits carbon monoxide.

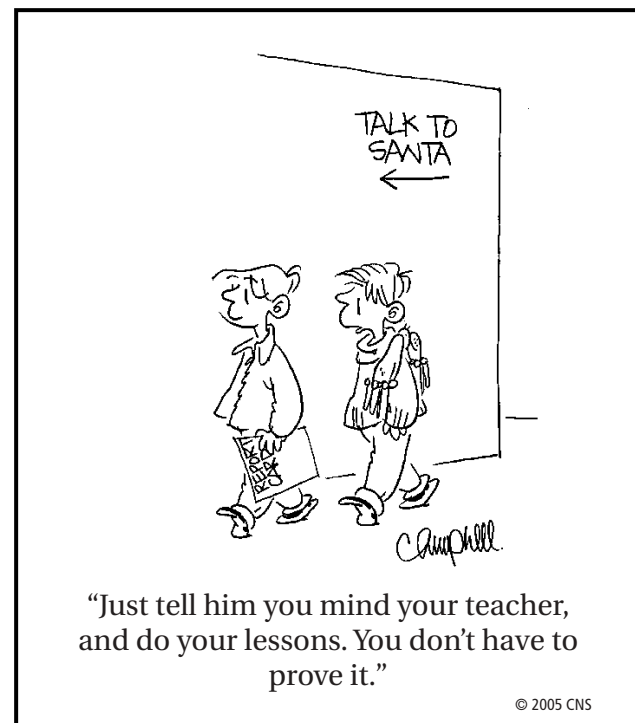
And four items on a "don't" list for your parent are:

1. Don't overload an electrical outlet or extension cord with an electric heater.
2. Don't have anything near an electric space heater. (And don't sit too close, either.)
3. Don't use candles for heating or for light.
4. Don't shovel snow or worry about cleaning up debris. Someone will take care of that later.

**Getting Emergency Help**

Remind your parent it's all right to call 911 if he or she isn't able to stay warm or fix meals and no one else is available to help.

If you lose contact with your parent you also can call 911 and ask a police or community service officer to do a well-person check on Mom or Dad. Better still, you can ask that your parent be placed on an official list of individuals in the community who are to be contacted if a storm hits.



"Just tell him you mind your teacher, and do your lessons. You don't have to prove it."

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## JUST 4 KIDS

# Jesus Christ Is Coming to Town

The people of the village were all excited. In just a few short weeks Jesus of Nazareth was coming there. Most had never seen or met Jesus but through the stories of travelers they heard of the many signs and wonders that Jesus had performed in other towns: healing the sick, raising the dead, walking on water, etc.



So the village elders decided to welcome Jesus in a special way. "We should prepare gifts for this Son of David," they said. "Every man, woman and child, get ready for the Messiah is coming."

Now James was a boy of 10, the only son of a widowed mother. He had sat at the feet of many travelers that had come through the town telling the exciting stories of Jesus of

Nazareth. "Now what can I give to Jesus?" James pondered.

Even though they were poor, James had collected many things that he treasured through the years: a boat that had been carved out of wood by his father, a few silver coins that he had earned, and of course his blanket sewn out of lamb's skin that his mother had made for him when he was an infant. So James began thinking long and hard of what he could give Jesus.

James decided to go with his Uncle Joseph into Jerusalem and perhaps buy something special with his money. There were many markets there and surely something grand could be bought for Jesus. As he roamed the streets with his uncle he discovered so many wonderful items to buy. The air was full of the sounds of the sellers urging people to buy was especially exciting to him. He wandered a short distance from his uncle and as he rounded the corner, he was stunned by what he saw. Two armed men were attaching chains to a man. The poor man was crying and pleading with a well-dressed man. The rich man ignored his pleas but stood with a look of disdain on his face. The chained man's wife and children were begging with the wealthy man to not take him away. "Lazarus, you have not paid back what you owe. I warned you over a week ago what would happen to you. Now you will be taken to prison until you pay back your debt to me."

Without thinking James came forward and showed the wealthy man his silver. "Will this be enough to release him?" cried James. Everyone stopped what they were doing and were stunned. The wealthy man paused and then answered angrily as if he were disappointed that suffering would not happen this day. He grabbed the money and went off.

They released Lazarus while his whole family



smothered him with hugs and kisses. Meanwhile, James had slipped away before they could thank him.

The walk back to his village was long and James pondered his predicament on the way home. He felt good about what he had done but still he had no gift for Jesus.

Two more weeks went by and although James begged and appealed for odd jobs to be done to earn money nothing came about. One morning Uncle Joseph stopped by their small home. "James, go to Cleopas's farm before sunrise. They will be choosing young boys at daybreak to prune trees. Perhaps you can make some money for your project." Of course James was overjoyed.

He had a hard time sleeping that night. At the third watch, he decided to slip away and make sure that he would be there on time. The night was cold so he wrapped his lambskin blanket around him and headed to the farm.

As he made his way through the village the night air was especially crisp and cold. James stopped dead in his tracks. He had heard someone moan. He looked to his left and in the doorstep lie a gray-haired woman shivering in the cold. He took off his blanket and lay it on her. Her gray eyes looked up at him as she struggled to crack a smile. "Bless you my child, bless you."

"Why are you out here? Where is your home?" whispered James.

"My only son died and I have no place to live. Please do not leave me," begged the woman. James sat down beside her getting as close as he could to warm her body as well as his.

"My name is Ruth. My son and I were on a

journey. We had stopped here to rest because of my health. He died suddenly and now I have no place to live." She went on to tell James her whole life story. He could tell that the warm conversation meant more to her than the comfort of the blanket. Daybreak came and suddenly James realized where he needed to be. "I have to go, but I will return later this evening."

"Bless you my child, you go on your way. You have no idea what gift you have given me today." James gave her a warm embrace and left. Within the hour the woman died in peace.

James ran as fast as he could to the farm. He went exactly where Uncle Joe had told him to be but there was no one there. He was too late. The walk home seemed to take forever. He wrestled in his mind what to do now. James went looking for the old woman but she was nowhere to be found and neither was his lambskin blanket. James was crushed more from the loss of his new found friend than of the blanket.

"Well, at least I may have a few more days before Jesus arrives. Perhaps something will turn up," pondered James as he fell asleep at home. Fortunately, his mother did not ask as to what happened to his blanket...

The next morning, James awoke with a start. There was commotion all around him. A neighbor popped her head in and exclaimed "Jesus of Nazareth and his disciples are here. They are in the town square. Hurry, hurry!" Jesus had come earlier than expected.

James quickly put on his clothes all the while looking at his last and only possession -- the  
(See **KIDS/14**)



## KIDS: Be alert for the coming of Jesus!

(From 13)

wooden boat his father had carved for him. He grabbed the boat and headed for the square. The crowd was huge and James tried to make his way through them. He ran into his 6 year old cousin, Jacob. Jacob was sobbing uncontrollably. "What's the matter?" James asked. He realized that Jacob had nothing to give. "Look, Jacob, I want you to have this boat. I have outgrown it and now I want you to have it. If you want, then you can give it to Jesus. Jacob looked up to see if James was teasing him "REALLY?" Jacob asked. James thrust the boat into Jacob's hands and left him before Jacob thought twice about it.

James trudged to the back of the crowd. He could hear the oohhhs and aahhhs as each person brought

forth a gift to Jesus. James could not even see Jesus. He had no idea what he looked like yet he didn't dare go forward without a gift.

James sat on the ground with silent tears rolling down his face. Without realizing it, everything became quiet. James with his face to the ground now noticed a pair of sandaled feet in front of him. He looked up and saw a bearded man, with piercing eyes and a warm smiling face. It, of course was the Christ.

James hadn't noticed that all the townspeople were surrounding the two looking on with amazed and puzzled looks. Jesus sat next to him. Everything and anything around James was a blur. He could only gaze upon the face of Jesus.

"I have nothing to give you, Jesus" cried James. Jesus pulled him closer to Himself and sat him on his lap,

wiping away the tears.

"Why, James you have been giving me gifts your whole life. And these past few weeks have been the most precious of them all.

"Jesus, I have never seen you before, how can this be?" quizzed James.

Jesus' face was beaming as he answered him. "Yes you have ... in the faces of Lazarus, Ruth and Jacob ... when you have helped the least among us ... you have helped me. You have borne so much fruit. And for this, I give you the name Polycarp. Someday you will be a great fisher of men.

Someday I will return for you, and take you to my father's house. It will be a time when you least expect it. Until then, prepare for my return.

"Be watchful! Be alert! You do not know when the time will come (Mark 13:33)."

-- Author Anonymous

## BISHOP: Share God's love and mercy this year

(From 3)

reminds us of how Christ overcame sin. The custom of the Advent Wreath, normally consisting of a circle of evergreens, symbolizes the everlasting nature of God, and the evergreen represents continued everlasting life, love and forgiveness that comes from God through Jesus Christ.

The four candles [three purple and one pink] mark the four weeks of Advent and attest to the truth as Jesus as the Light of the world who overcomes our darkness and blindness caused by sin.

The purple candles are to show that Advent is a time for repentance, a time when we turn away from sin and toward God. The pink candle -- for the third week of Advent -- reminds us that we can rejoice because we are nearing Christmas Day and about to receive the Prince of Peace and Reconciliation.

Advent is more than just a yearly com-

memoration of a past event. Advent also focuses on the now. Isaiah tells us: "God comes to save you," stressing the constant saving love and mercy that our God has for us here and now. In this season, Jesus comes with Divine reconciliation, rather than reproaching and rejecting us for our sins. The one offended by our sins, is the one who comes to save us and bring God's mercy. He comes in humility, not a blustering entrance, no big show. He comes as an unknown infant, born in a stranger's stable, slipping into our world as quietly as he can so as not to shame us, but rather to let us know that we are loved by our God and that our God is always willing to forgive us when we fail and to take us into our true home of God's love.

During Advent, our spiritual focus should not be excessively on the "other worldly," because we may lose the capacity to enjoy life and to be active in life

where we are today, and to be actively involved in making God's Kingdom happen in the society where we live. For John the Baptist, the Reign of God meant nothing less than the coming of the Messiah in whom the presence of God would be manifested. For Jesus, "thy Kingdom come" meant that God's reign is now, and not merely in the future. As this is the case, the task facing each one of us is to embrace the Kingdom by surrendering to God's will, by seeking God's forgiveness, by sharing God's mercy and love with those who feel alienated or rejected, and by actively working for justice in our world.

This is a splendid way to begin our Year of Reconciliation. The cry of Advent is also a guiding light for us as we go through the Year of Reconciliation: "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." [Mt 3:1]

### EDICTAL SUMMONS

#### MEAD-MOORE

The Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo to Shirley Lee Moore and her whereabouts unknown. You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of December, 2005, to answer to the Petition of Darwin Inglas Mead, Jr., now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, "DARWIN INGLAS MEAD, JR. VS. SHIRLEY LEE MOORE. Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage," said Petition being identified as MEAD - MOORE Protocol No.: SO 05/31, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.

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

Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 1st day of December, 2005.

-- Reverend William R.  
DuBuisson  
OMI, MCL, JCL  
Judicial Vicar

## BABY: Peace of Christ child in the manger is a paradox

(From 2)

today the entrance to the Bethlehem cave can only be crossed by bowing one's head. I have personally visited the spot where it is claimed that Christ was born, and the only way you can enter it is by bowing your head to walk through the entrance. On this Christmas, we humbly need to bow our heads and bend our knees before the infant in the manger in whom dwells the fullness of the God head and sincerely admit we need help and that we humbly recognize our total dependence on our loving God whose way is still the best way.

But perhaps we ask what is the peace that the Christ in the manger offers us. It means opening our hearts and minds to Christ. It means working for justice, being people who forgive and reach out in service. Without a

doubt, as it seems to be with everything in life, the plans of God are unlike our way of doing things. And for that reason, we do not easily accept God's plan of peace.

The peace of the Christ child in the manger is a paradox. Instead of imposing himself, Christ simply looks to do the will of the father. He is not satisfied with peace alone, He wants forgiveness as well. Instead of making a public stand he works in silence without looking to draw attention. How different Christ's way to peace is! It is simpler than our way of thinking but at the same time it is more demanding. The infant lying in the manger, the Prince of Peace, reveals a great secret to all of those who search for peace. He reminds us that peace begins with an "h", for humility not with "p" which stands for power. The world when it thinks of peace thinks of power.

The secret to truly celebrating Christmas is to become children again in our hearts with Christ, and to go before

the infant lying in the manger and to let him enter our hearts.

The divine child born in Bethlehem, lying in a manger, brings in his little hands as a gift the key to peace for all human beings. May we let the words of the Angel of Christmas truly enter our hearts so that we can receive the message of the prince of peace of Christmas- "I bring good news of great joy which will come to all people: For to you is born this day in the City of David a savior, who is Christ the lord." (Luke 2:10-11) Christ is our peace!

My brothers and sisters of the third millennium, we who hunger for justice and peace accept the message of Christ, which rings out on Christmas throughout the world: My peace I leave with you, my peace I give you. A blessed and joyful Christmas for all with the Prince of Peace.

## VINEYARD: Lay minister needs stated

(From 3)

year to select pertinent passages of this document to be studied by our priests and all those who gather at the monthly deanery meetings. I also ask our Pastors to discuss with our Pastoral and Finance Councils and other parish leaders pertinent passages from this landmark document. The Office of Education and Formation of the Diocese will send to each Pastor questions for reflection that can be used with leadership groups.

While there are many dimensions to this document, I share here reflections from the U.S. Catholic bishops as regards the effective formation methods that are necessary in preparing our lay people for ministry. An effective formation method addresses the whole person: emotions, imagination, will, heart and mind. It is the whole person who ministers, so the whole person is the proper subject of formation.

In this document, the Bishops point out that there are four areas of formation -- "human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral"-which

is the same framework for the formation of deacons and priests and provides a framework for lay ecclesial ministers as well.

In the document, the bishops state that "lay ecclesial ministers need:

- ▶ human qualities critical to form wholesome relationships and necessary to be apt instruments of God's love and compassion;
- ▶ a spirituality and practice of prayer that roots them in God's Trinitarian life, grounding and animating all that they do in ministry;
- ▶ adequate knowledge in theological and pastoral studies, along with intellectual skills to use it among the people and cultures of our country;
- ▶ the practical pastoral abilities called for in their particular ministry."

Although the four elements of formation -- human, spiritual, intellectual and pastoral -- are addressed separately in the document, they must be integrated as a unified whole in the person of the well-formed lay ecclesial minister, which happens best if these elements are integrated in the formation program itself.

As we consider the formation

and preparation of lay people for ministry, we need to develop the best academic, theological, and pastoral programs, but we need to remember that the principal agent of formation and ministry is the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of Jesus, sent by the Father, given in Baptism, poured out anew in Confirmation, bestows personal gifts and charisms on each of the faithful, to be developed and used in the service of others. When lay ecclesial ministers cultivate a special devotion and complete openness to the Holy Spirit, the power of Pentecost will be alive in their hearts and at work through their ministry.

This document, "Co-Workers in the Vineyard of the Lord," should not be placed on a bookshelf, but needs to be studied carefully by all priests, by all deacons, women religious and pastoral leaders, and needs to be incorporated in the preparation and formation of the laity for lay ecclesial ministry. I am deeply grateful to Sisters Hilda Marotta and Adelina Garcia and their staff of the Office of Education and formation for all that they are doing to help me implement this document.

## TELEVISION: Two events spread over week tell story of Pope's legacy

(From 10)

No. 1-rated show on television," said Parkin. Currently, "CSI" is No. 1 in ratings.

"In an ideal world we'll bring people to the evening who don't normally watch. That's the idea," he said. "Given the multiplicity of choices, viewership rises for one night."

That's what happened five years ago, when Parkin penned the miniseries "Jesus" for CBS, which edged out ABC's "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire." "Millionaire" didn't lose that many viewers, but CBS reached people who did not ordinarily tune in.

In 2000, "Jesus" was competing -- although not head-to-head -- with an NBC made-for-TV movie, "Mary, Mother of Jesus." ABC aired a European clay-animation feature, "The Miracle Maker."

This year, ABC's "Have No Fear" beats CBS' miniseries, "Pope John Paul II," by three days.

"There was always that discussion" of being first to have a film about the late pope, Parkin said. "In some ways, it's more important to the network than it was to the producers; it's important to be the first ones out of the gate." He added, "You sort of forget about it. You become focused on the film at hand."

At a couple points Parkin was offered a look at the other network's script, but "I had to say no," Parkin said. "I'll watch it with interest when it airs. I know the director -- John Kent Harrison is a nice man. I feel a sense of camaraderie with him."

Cable's Hallmark Channel beat ABC and CBS to the punch in August with "A Man Who Became Pope," which did not deal with events surrounding his death but focused on his pre-papal life in Poland. Parkin said seeing other films and scripts would have blurred what he had set out to do with "Have No Fear."

## BENEDICT XVI: New pope often gets right to the point

(From 6)

For example, Pope Benedict has dropped private audiences with most of the apostolic nuncios in various countries. Instead, he chats with them for a minute or two at the end of his Wednesday general audience.

The pope meets with political leaders and religious representatives, but they are usually brief encounters. He generally leaves policy details to officials of the Secretariat of State.

His audience with Francis Rooney, the new U.S. ambassador to the Vatican, was typical: The pope gave a speech about one page long, underlining a few key principles. Two days

later, Rooney had a more detailed follow-up meeting with Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo, the Vatican's foreign minister.

When he wants to, however, the pope will take a more personal interest in the details -- as demonstrated by his half-hour meetings in November with Israeli President Moshe Katsav and Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi.

For months, the Roman rumor mill churned out reports of an impending shake-up in the Roman Curia. It was to be Pope Benedict's "tsunami," the wave of appointments that would clear the deck and put his own definitive stamp on Vatican affairs from that moment on.

The curial tsunami did not appear in September, or

October, and as November drew to a close there was palpable disappointment among some Vatican watchers. It seemed to aggravate journalists that not much news was emerging about the pope's plans or projects.

In late October, Marco Politi, a veteran Vatican reporter for Italy's La Repubblica newspaper, wrote that Pope Benedict had introduced a new and "solitary" style to the papacy.

"He doesn't have friends in the Curia. He doesn't associate with fellow Germans, he doesn't invite anyone to lunch or breakfast, and he doesn't allow groups of Catholics to attend his morning Mass," Politi wrote. "He lives, thinks, plans and makes decisions in the tower of his aloofness."

## DOCUMENT: Who determines tendencies remains unclear

(From 6)

Further, the text does not spell out who should determine whether a candidate for the priesthood has homosexual tendencies. It says not a word about psychological testing of seminary applicants, which is another key and controversial issue at the Vatican.

In fact, in late 2002 the education congregation was concluding work on a separate document on psychological testing in seminaries. But that text disappeared from the radar, and congregation officials today refuse to comment on its status.

The new instruction does mention the seminarian's spiritual director and confessor as people who should dissuade a homosexual man from pursuing ordination. That presumes, as the

document states, that a spiritual director would "ascertain that the candidate does not present sexual disturbances incompatible with the priesthood."

But according to canon law experts in Rome, that could raise potential issues regarding the relationship of confidentiality between the seminarian and his spiritual director.

According to Msgr. Gerard McKay, a member of the tribunal of the Roman Rota, a spiritual director could ask a seminarian about sexual problems, but he could not then use that information to have the seminarian removed.

The idea that the instruction contains "nothing new" is not really accurate. A 1961 Vatican document on religious order priests said homosexuals should be excluded from religious vows and ordination, but that was one line in a lengthy document.

The new text addresses exclusively the question of homosexuality. That bothered some people even inside the Vatican.

"They should have written a more general document on self-control or on chastity," said one bishop who advises the Vatican on doctrinal and other issues.

"This instruction says very valid things, but there are many temptations or instincts that need to be controlled before ordination," he said. "Instead, they have written an instruction that singles out homosexuals, which can create misunderstandings."

The bishop said it was clear the Vatican was not taking a "don't ask, don't tell" attitude on homosexuality. The document urges bishops and seminary officials to "be vigilant" in applying the norms, which underlines that the Vatican is serious about this, he said.

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# Lessons between right, wrong prevail in 'Goblet'

By David DiCerto  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK — Harry Potter is back, and his new adventure, "Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" (Warner Bros.), conjures enough movie magic to cast a satisfying spell over audiences.

"Goblet of Fire" is the fourth movie adapted from the hugely popular fantasy novels by British author J.K. Rowling.

Directed by Mike Newell, the film is entertaining, intelligent and visually delicious, but despite considerable plot-pruning, at an unwieldy two hours and 37 minutes this "Goblet" runneth over a bit long.

Continuing the moodier tone set by 2004's "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," the new installment — the darkest thus far — is the first in the franchise to be rated PG-13.

From its spooky opening image, the film is probably too scary for young children, who might have nightmares, precisely what's plaguing the bespectacled hero (a more grown-up Daniel Radcliffe) at the story's outset. This is especially true for the scenes involving the "Death Eaters," agents of the evil Lord Voldemort (Ralph Fiennes in fearsome face makeup), who finally makes his much-anticipated appearance in the series.

But for most of "Goblet of Fire," the story revolves around a three-task, interscholastic competition known as the Triwizard Tournament to be hosted at Hogwarts.

Rooted on by Ron (Rupert Grint) and Hermione (a blossoming Emma Watson), Harry is chosen to compete

along with Hogwartsian upperclassman Cedric Diggory, French enchantress Fleur Delacour, and a Bulgarian bruiser named Viktor Krum.

The dangerous trials pit them against fire-breathing dragons, menacing mermaids and a sinister hedge-maze. But to bashful Harry, those perils pale compared to the harrowing ordeal of finding a date for Hogwarts' annual Christmas ball, injecting some lighthearted teen romance into the abracadabra action mix.

The onset of awkward adolescence adds an interesting new emotional dimension to the relationships of the three young leads, who continue to mature along with the story. (The film could have done without an eyebrow-raising scene in which a frisky girl ghost cozies up to a thoroughly embarrassed Harry while bathing.)

Dependable support is provided by returning British stalwarts Michael Gambon, Maggie Smith, Alan Rickman and Robbie Coltrane, as well as by newcomers Frances De La Tour, Miranda Richardson and Brendan Gleeson.

Like past "Potter" films, "Goblet" is a treat for the eyes. But after three films, it's getting harder to impress viewers with Quidditch matches and swooping shots of Hogwarts' candlelit banquet hall. And though exciting, the action sequences including a requisite Play Station-ready aerial broom chase feel a bit *deja vu*.

As with the magical elements in its predecessors, those in "Goblet of Fire" should be viewed as time-honored storytelling devices, like those employed throughout the history of Western fantasy literature from childhood fairy tales (Cinderella's pumpkin being turned into a car-



"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" is open in wide release.

riage) to Arthurian legends and Shakespeare.

"Goblet of Fire" presents the clearest delineation between "right" and "wrong" in the series thus far, even introducing moral imperatives into the students' hocus-pocus curriculum.

Despite lots of wand-waving, the real victories are won through self-sacrifice. As Gambon's Dumbledore counsels, "We must face the choice between what is right and what is easy." Such life lessons would support the contention of Father Peter Fleetwood, a Vatican official formerly of the Pontifical Council for Culture, that "the chief concern of ... (Rowling) is to help children understand the conflict between good and evil."

# 'Beyond Narnia' explores Lewis' imagination

► "C.S. Lewis: Beyond Narnia," Dec. 9, Hallmark Channel

By David DiCerto  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK -- Walt Disney's highly anticipated screen adaptation of "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" -- the first book of a seven-part fantasy series known collectively as "The Chronicles of Narnia" -- should swell the already legion fan base of C.S. Lewis' beloved, Christian-flavored children's tales.

But many of those thronging to theaters, or for that matter reading the books, may know little about Lewis himself, or the events and experiences in his life that inspired and gave shape to his magical stories.

To coincide with the film's release, a one-hour docudrama, "C.S. Lewis: Beyond Narnia," will debut Friday, Dec. 9, 7-8 p.m. CST on cable's Hallmark Channel and take a look at the man behind the enchanted wardrobe.

Produced for Faith & Values Media, the family-oriented and exceptionally well-made program examines Lewis' personal and spiritual life, interweaving theatrical-caliber dramatizations with commentary from Lewis scholars and others, including an interview with Lewis' stepson, Douglas Gresham.

Filmed on location in England, with Lewis (soulfully portrayed by Anton Rodgers) serving as a tour guide of sorts, the special traces the author's life from his idyllic childhood in Northern Ireland, to his student days at



"The Chronicles of Narnia" opens this holiday season at theaters everywhere.

Oxford, his combat experiences during World War I, and distinguished academic career at Oxford, where he taught literature until his death one week shy of his 65th birthday in 1963.

But the real arc charted is that of Lewis' circular spiritual journey from cradle Christian, to avowed atheist, to staunch defender of Christian orthodoxy, and how he struggled to reconcile his faith -- especially his belief in a benevolent, omnipotent God -- with the existence of pain and suffering.

"Beyond Narnia" details how, when he was a young boy, the trauma of his mother's death and his father's subsequent emotional remoteness effected a seismic shift

in Lewis' soul, leading him to feel that God had abandoned him.

Dispatched to boarding school, the Anglican lad who would become arguably the greatest Christian apologist of the 20th century increasingly sought escape from "a meaningless and nonsensical faith," confessing complete atheism by adolescence.

Not even the Great War could make him recant his hardened apostasy, with Lewis recalling how, despite the horrors of the trenches, he "never sunk so low as to pray."

Upon returning to Oxford, Lewis would find his skepticism challenged by his colleagues, a close-knit storytelling circle that included fellow fabulist J.R.R. Tolkien. After much soul-searching, this most "reluctant convert in all England" took the leap of faith, acknowledging that "God was indeed God, whether I wanted him to be or not."

Lewis believed "imagination reflects heavenly truths," a contention that found its purest expression in the imaginative terrain of Narnia, a storybook realm populated by a fantastic bestiary culled from Lewis' lifelong passion for fairy tales and mythology.

Published in 1950, "The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe" was originally conceived earlier as an amusement for children evacuated to his Oxford home during the German air raids on London. It tells the story of four siblings who happen upon an enchanted wardrobe that serves as a portal to a magical world held under the wintry spell of an evil witch.