World needs a savior despite modern advances, pope says

By John Thavis
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Celebrating Christmas at the Vatican, Pope Benedict XVI said the world still needs a savior, despite technological advances that make humanity consider itself the “self-sufficient master of its own destiny.”

At midnight Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica, the pope said the birth of Christ should focus attention on all the suffering and abused children in contemporary society.

In this postmodern age, perhaps he needs a savior all the more, since the society in which he lives has become more complex and the threats to his personal and moral integrity have become more insidious,” the pope said.

The Mass and blessing, broadcast around the world, were the public highlights of the pope’s Christmas, but the 79-year-old pontiff also marked the festivities in quieter gatherings with friends and colleagues.

An old friend drove down from Germany with three small Christmas trees — which were decorated and placed in the papal apartment — and several batches of Bavarian cookies. A separate gift of venison meat arrived from Germany in time for Christmas dinner.

On Christmas Eve, as a crowd... SEE NEED FOR..., P. 13

Vatican booklet cites ‘spiritual ecumenism’ as route to unity

By Cindy Wooden
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Every time Christians of different communities pray together, witness to the Gospel, and help people in need, they are promoting Christian unity, said the Vatican’s top ecumenist.

Joint prayer and Bible study, attendance at a major event of another denomination, and working together for justice and peace are the components of “spiritual ecumenism” suggested by Cardinal Walter Kasper, president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity.

The cardinal is the author of “A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism,” a booklet published in English late in 2006; the Italian edition will be released at the Vatican in time for the Jan. 18-25 Week... SEE BOOKLET ENCOURAGES..., P. 9

President Ford was ‘healing presence for the nation,’ says USCCB president

By Jerry Filteau
WASHINGTON (CNS) — In his brief, unelected tenure in the nation’s highest office, President Gerald R. Ford restored integrity and character to the White House and brought a measure of healing to a country badly wounded and divided by the Watergate scandal.

Ford, who had a bout with pneumonia last January and two heart treatments in August, died Dec. 26 at his home in Rancho Mirage, California. He was 93.

In a Dec. 27 statement, the president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops called Ford “a great and good man who served his country with distinction.”

“As a healing presence for the nation at a time when it was much needed, President Ford earned his country’s lasting gratitude,” said Bishop William S. Skylstad of Spokane, Washington. “We pray for the repose of the soul of our 38th president and express our heartfelt condolences to his wife and family.”

During his 30-month presidency, South Vietnam fell to the communist forces of the North, high Nixon administration officials were found guilty of Watergate crimes, a blue-ribbon commission found the CIA was engaged in illegal activities, the U.S. Supreme Court reinstated the death penalty, the United States took in more than 140,000 Vietnamese refugees, and the country celebrated its bicentennial.

He contributed to better relations between Israel and Egypt, increased U.S. food aid abroad, and reached a new nuclear arms limitation agreement with the Soviet Union. With the nation facing energy shortages in the wake of the 1973 gas crisis, he negotiated a fine line between high inflation... SEE PRESIDENT..., P. 21

POPE GIVES BLESSING — Pope Benedict XVI blesses pilgrims from the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Dec. 25 during his Christmas Day blessing “urbi et orbi” (to the city of Rome and the world). In a long Christmas message to Christians in the Middle East, Pope Benedict prayed that despite their enormous suffering they would stay in... (CNS photo/L’OSSERVATORE ROMANO via Reuters)

VATICAN officials say they found St. Paul’s tomb in Roman basilica

By John Thavis
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — After years of archaeological work, Vatican officials announced that they have identified the tomb of St. Paul beneath the Rome basilica dedicated to the apostle.

Authorities said Dec. 11 that a roughly cut marble sarcophagus was found beneath a historic inscription that reads: “Paul Apostle Martyr.” The tomb lies several feet below the main altar of the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls.

Only one end of the sarcophagus has been opened to view, and the rest is buried beneath building material. If Pope Benedict XVI gives permission, the experts may attempt to open the sarcophagus and find out whether the saint’s relics are inside.

“We can be certain that this is the tomb of St. Paul,” Cardinal Andrea Cordero Lanza di Montezemolo, archpriest of the basilica, told a Vatican press conference.

“No one ever had any doubt that the basilica was built on the site of the tomb. Now we can see it through a small window [that] we have created,” the cardinal said.

He said Vatican experts attempted to X-ray the tomb to view the contents, but it did not work because of the thick marble walls of the sarcophagus.

An “internal exploration” of the sarcophagus would pose technical problems but probably will be attempted, the cardinal said. He said it was certain that see sarcophagus..., P. 9

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Pilgrimage

Bishop Kevin Vann and a number of the local members of the papal order, the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre, traveled to the Holy Land and Rome Nov. 5-17 as part of a tour sponsored by the Southwestern Lieutenancy of the order. The pictures on this page were taken in Israel and Rome in the course of the pilgrimage.

Bishop Vann prays beside the Sea of Galilee
(Photo courtesy of Chris and Karen Hull)

In the grip of the order for their audience with the Coadjutor Bishop to the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem, Fouad Twal, many on the tour pose outside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

Bishop Vann and members of the pilgrimage pray along the Via Dolorosa.

Above:
Pope Benedict XVI greets Bishop Vann in St. Peter’s Square.

Right:
At the papal audience in St. Peter’s Square, Knight of the Holy Sepulchre and Fort Worth physician, Dr. Chris Hull reaches out to exchange hats with Pope Benedict. A longstanding tradition allows the exchange of hats with the pope.

(PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICE OF L’OBSERVATORE ROMANO, COPYRIGHT © 2006)

Bishop Vann and members of the Southwestern Lieutenancy pilgrimage make their way down the narrow streets of Old Jerusalem along the Via Dolorosa, or Way of the Cross, the path Jesus took to his crucifixion. They were in the company of Franciscans from around the world, including some associated with the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

(PHOTO COURTESY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC SERVICE OF L’OBSERVATORE ROMANO, COPYRIGHT © 2006)
HOPE is served at Catholic Charities luncheon

Story and Photos by Kathy Cribari Hamer, Correspondent

For its fifth annual Creating Hope for the Community Luncheon, Catholic Charities provided a festive, pre-holiday meal. However, the local charitable organization served more than a traditional menu — what they placed on the table were large portions of vision, resolution, compassion, and, as the theme proclaimed, hope.

The community-building fundraiser, Nov. 29 at Will Rogers Memorial Complex in Fort Worth, was attended by about 600 people, who, through the testimony of recipients, learned about the agency’s works and mission. In turn, the guests pledged some $600,000 in donations. At the first such luncheon, in 2002, just 200 people attended, pledging $350,000.

Catholic Charities in Fort Worth began on St. Patrick’s Day, 1910, at St. Patrick Cathedral, according to Trish Reeves Ritter, chair of the board of directors. “The Ladies Aid Society wanted to help women, children, and the poor,” Ritter said, “and when you look at our 26 programs now, we still help the poor, children, and women. We have been faithful to that mission for 97 years.”

The organization has branched out, however, in ways the founders might not have predicted, and into areas today’s local Catholics may not even know about. Operating from eight different Fort Worth locations, Catholic Charities provides counseling, child abuse prevention and intervention, immigration assistance, disaster relief, housing for the elderly, healthy family assistance, and more.

Ritter noted the Healthy Start Initiative has, for six consecutive years, been 100 percent effective in preventing transmission of the HIV virus from mothers to their unborn children. This success rate brings the agency’s count to 89 from mothers to their unborn HIV-free babies.

Catholic Charities also takes part in an infant mortality task force, Ritter explained, where 10 to 12 agencies meet monthly to discuss the issue. “There are three or four zip codes in this diocese where the infant mortality rate is higher than in Third World countries,” she said. “That’s horrible.”

With an operating budget of some $2 million, last year Catholic Charities served more than 73,000 individuals and families, said Heather Reynolds, Catholic Charities president, whose remarks opened the Creating Hope Luncheon program.

“To put this number in perspective, think about the size of the Dallas Cowboys stadium,” she said. “With the 73,000 we served, we could fill every seat in the stadium and still need an additional 10,000 seats.”

But it is the people not served who haunt the staff, Reynolds said; it is the people they cannot serve.

She told stories of clients, describing one she had encountered five years earlier, who had been so badly beaten by his father that he permanently shook because of the trauma his body had undergone. “I remember after meeting him that day,” said Reynolds, “[that] I had to leave the office for a few minutes, and I remember sitting in my car and just crying.” She also told of 8-year-old, Sam, who arrived at the shelter “so badly neglected by his drug-addicted mother that the staff had to give him seven baths, just to try to get rid of the smell that lingered because of the filth that he had lived in.”

Another example was Saiad, a mother from the Congo, who, when war broke out there, had seen her husband murdered and her sister kidnapped. “She came to the United States with her three children and four nieces and nephews. “Despite the tragedy she had encountered and the nervousness she had to feel starting her life completely over,” Reynolds said, “she arrived in Fort Worth and hit the ground running. She is now employed, has her own home, and her children are doing well in school. We greet families at the airport when they arrive, to help them learn English, help them find a job, and basically, help them be Americans just like you and I.”

But it is the individuals not served that Catholic Charities staff regrets, Reynolds explained. “Even though we sheltered over 250 children, I am terrified because we have 3,500 children in this community who are being abused, and there aren’t enough safe places for them to go,” she said. “And even though Catholic Charities helped Saiad, “I am concerned because we turned away 10,000 families who needed us.”

The yearly luncheon is intended to be an educational tool for the Catholic community to realize the mission this agency assumes. Also intended to teach the community is a program called “Catholic Charities 101,” a small, monthly luncheon and tour. It is hoped, Ritter said, that these vehicles will bring even more people to the table, either to donate money or volunteer time.

At this year’s fall luncheon, Heather Reynolds told Catholic Charities’ story, effectively conveying the desire and urgency of their cause. She had determination — and emotion — in her voice.

“If not us, then who?” she said, asking for help from the community. “And if not now, then when?”
Annual Catholic Schools Banquet to be held Jan. 27

The 20th annual diocesan Catholic Schools Banquet will be held Saturday, Jan. 27, at the Fort Worth Convention Center, 1111 Houston Street in downtown Fort Worth. Dr. John Staud,pastor of pastoral formation and administration for the Alliance for Catholic Educa-
tion (ACE) at the University of Notre Dame, will give the keynote address.

Each year at the event, the Diocese of Fort Worth honors outstanding men and women from the Catholic schools in the diocese for their commitment to sustaining and enhancing the mission of Catholic Schools.

The evening includes a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are $75 per person. Proceeds from the banquet will benefit the Bishop’s Scholarm Fund, a new diocesan tuition assistance program.

Everyone is invited to the cele-

NFP classes to be offered at several locations

The Couple to Couple League of Texas offers natural family planning (NFP) classes that are brief, easy to learn, and free.

For more information or to secure reservations, call the Catholic Schools Office at (817) 560-3300 ext. 200.

The Group finds Natural Family Planning a valid method of Natural Family Planning. Women and men from the Catholic community are encouraged to learn to appreciate God’s design for marriage. Those interested may register online at wmd.catholic.org.

For more information or to secure information, call Steve Kellmeyer at (817) 481-2685 or e-mail to skellmeyer@stfrancisgrapevine.org.

サービスを提供されるJan. 26

All are invited to participate in the annual evening prayer vigil led by Father Bob Thames, a missionary priest from the Diocese of Fort Worth. The gathering will be held Jan. 24. The gathering will be held in a private home in Arlington, Friday, Jan. 19, at 7 p.m. All who plan to attend any part of the evening are asked to call (817) 498-1434.

"Do you know how to read the secret codes hidden in the masterpieces of medieval and Renaissance art? Discover new insights into your personal relationships and for the children of a marriage that is ending because of separation. The next weekend ses-
tion will be offered Jan. 19-21 at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth, next to Nolan Catholic High School.

The program is designed to help those grieving the loss of a spouse to put closure on the past and to create a new beginning in the present. The ministry, although rooted in the Catholic tradition, is open to people of all faiths. For more information or to register, call the Catholic Renewal Center at metro (817) 429-2920 or visit www.catholicresource.com. (ERC), located at 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth.

Eccumenical Sunday to be observed in Lewisville

Parishioners at St. Philip Church in Lewisville will join members of five other churches in the Flower Mound and Lewisville area in observ-
ing the seventh annual Eccumenical Sunday. The event will be held Jan. 21 at 7 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 907 W. Main Street in Lewisville, the local celebration of an international event that was originally known as the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity.

The speaker for the evening prayer service will be the Rev. Randy Lee of Grace Presbyterian, who will address the group on the theme, "Open our ears, loosen our tongues.

The evening includes a social hour at 6 p.m. followed by dinner at 7 p.m. Tickets are $75 per person. Proceeds from the banquet will benefit the Bishop’s Scholar Fund, a new diocesan tuition assistance program.

Everyone is invited to the cele-

New NFP classes are scheduled at the following times and locations: Jan. 14, 2 p.m., Sacred Heart Church, 714 N. Main, Muenster, contact Gary and Mary Endres at (940) 759-4810; Jan. 19, 7 p.m., St. Peter the Apostle Church, 1201 S. Cherry

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Support group offers help for grieving divorced, widowed, and separated

Starting a New Life, a structured, confidential support group sponsored by the diocesan Family Life Office, is available to those grieving the loss of a spouse through death or divorce. New sessions will begin Monday, Jan. 22, during which participants, supported by peers, will work through the stages of grief and pain that accompany the loss of a spouse. The sessions will take place from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth.

All faiths are welcome. For information, call Helen Engle at (817) 261-9706 or e-mail hengle@smgparish.org.

IRPS to host dinner for clergy Feb. 8

The Institute for Religious and Pastoral Studies (IRPS) at the University of Dallas will host its fourth annual Clergy Dinner, a celebration of the ministry of ordained priests in the Fort Worth, Dallas, and Tyler dioceses, Thursday, Feb. 8. The event will be held at the Haggar University Center, located on the UD campus at 1845 East Northridge Drive in Irving.

Father Jerome Walsh, who serves as the Tschoepe Chair of Homiletics at IRPS, will give a presentation entitled "Making (The) Sense of the Text," which will explore literary approaches to interpreting biblical text and how such an approach enriches one’s understanding of Scripture. His presentation will be preceded by a reception at 5:30 p.m. and dinner at 6 p.m.

Walsh was ordained in 1969 and is a priest of the Archdiocese of Detroit, Michigan. An author and professor with expertise in literary analysis of the narrative and poetry of the Hebrew Bible, Fr. Walsh holds advanced degrees in homiletics and theology, a licentiate in sacred Scripture from the Pontifical Biblical Institute, and a doctorate in ancient Near Eastern studies from the University of Michigan.

The annual event is free of charge to clergy and open to ordained clergy only in the local dioceses. Reservations may be made by calling (214) 265-5813 or by e-mailing csp@udallas.edu.

Local Knights to sponsor Youth Free Throw Championship

Boys and girls ages 10 to 14 as of Jan. 1 are invited to participate in the 2007 Knights of Columbus Free Throw Championship to be held Saturday, Jan. 20, from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. at Forestwood Middle School, located at 2810 Morriss Road in Flower Mound. The competition is sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, Subiaco Academy Council #984 of St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Lewisville.

Youth residing in Lewisville, Flower Mound, Highland Village, Coppell, Flower Mound, Double Oak, or Lake Dallas may participate in this competition free of charge. Contestants will compete in their respective age divisions.

The championship is an annual event. Winners progress through local, district, regional, and state levels. A local winner from each of the 170,000 youth participating in over 1,500 competitions across the country.

All contestants at the local competition are recognized for their participation, and trophies will be presented to the first, second, and third place winners in each age group. Entry forms will be available at the competition site; participants may register at any time between 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. A parent or legal guardian must furnish proof of age and written parental consent. Basketball rules will be enforced at the event. For more information, contact Tom Kupper at (817) 421-3945.
Catholic Scouts encouraged to take part in 2007 Ad Altare Dei Tour

The Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Diocese of Fort Worth has announced that a unique opportunity will be made available for Catholic Scouts within the Diocese of Fort Worth. The 2007 Ad Altare Dei Tour, beginning July 26 and concluding Aug. 1, will combine the opportunity to work on Catholic Scouting religious awards with a pilgrimage to religious shrines in northwest Texas and in New Mexico.

Tour highlights will include a farewell Mass celebrated July 26 by Bishop Kevin Vann at St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth; an overnight stay in Amarillo, on the way to New Mexico and on the return trip home; visits to sites within the state of New Mexico, including Loretto Chapel, San Miguel Mission, and St. Francis Cathedral in Santa Fe; the Capulin Volcano National Monument; Indian cliff dwellings at Bandelier National Monument; and time spent at Philmont Scout Ranch in Cimarron, New Mexico.

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John Ryan, vice-chairman of the diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, proposed the tour as a way of encouraging scouts to work toward achieving religious awards.

"[The trip is] a great opportunity for our young Scouts to meet inspirational religious men, [to] work on a religious award, [and] to have the experience of being a part of something that’s never been done before," wrote Ryan in a press release about the tour. Ryan noted that tour leaders hope that the group will meet with Archbishop Michael Sheehan of Santa Fe while in New Mexico, and they have already made plans to meet with Amarillo Bishop John Yanta while attending Mass at Amarillo’s St. Lawrence Cathedral, and with Bishop Gerald Geltzinger of Evansville, Indiana, while the group is at Philmont Scout Ranch.

To participate, Scouts must be Catholic, must have completed fifth grade, and must have been an active member of a troop for at least six months prior to beginning work on the Ad Altare Dei religious award.

The cost for the trip is $200; limited scholarship opportunities are available. For more information about the tour, contact John Ryan via e-mail to thexscubuy@gmail.com. Further information is available online at www.bsaccs.org. Scholarship sponsorship is sought from interested individuals, businesses, or groups.

Deacon Richard Arndt,
longtime member of Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, dies at age 79

Deacon Richard “Dick” D. Arndt, 79, died Dec. 20 in Wichita Falls, after a lengthy battle with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis (ALS) disease. The funeral Mass was celebrated Dec. 23 at his longtime parish home, Our Lady Queen of Peace (OLQP) Church in Wichita Falls. Father John Swistowski, pastor, presided at the liturgy with the assistance of Deacon Larry Bills. Internment was at Sacred Heart Cemetery in Wichita Falls.

Deacon Arndt, a native of Emporia, Kansas, was born June 4, 1927, to Alphonsum and Clara Wentworth Arndt. The oldest of three children, Deacon Arndt would later recall that he moved 17 times in his first 18 years of life. His father, an auto mechanic, would buy older homes, where his family would reside while Alphonsum made the necessary repairs in order to sell the house at a profit.

Having graduated in 1945 from Cathedral High School in Wichita, Kansas, Deacon Arndt joined the Army Air Corps the same year, and was stationed in France and Germany. Upon his discharge in 1947, he attended Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska, before completing undergraduate and graduate degrees from the University of Oregon and New York University, respectively.

The young man married his former high school classmate, Lucille Betzen, Jan. 19, 1955, and worked as a retail buyer in Dallas before moving his young family to Wichita Falls in 1959. The Arndts quickly became involved in the then-recently-established Our Lady Queen of Peace Parish, and Deacon Arndt served as a founding member and early leader of the parish’s first finance committee, parish council, and liturgy committee.

An early participant in the diocesan Lay Ministry Training Program, Deacon Arndt also became involved as an advocate for the Tribunal, a role that he maintained until recent years. He participated in the diocese’s first-ever year training program for permanent deacon candidates, beginning in 1986, and was ordained to the diaconate Aug. 19, 1989. After serving as City Purchasing Agent in Wichita Falls for seven years, he retired in June of 1989 in order to serve OLQP full time by offering marriage preparation classes and by presiding at funerals, baptisms, Communion services, and weddings; working with RCIA candidates; conducting Scripture studies; and enjoying what he later called “a warm and enthusiastic reception” from the parish community, a grateful response offered to both Deacon Arndt and his wife.

Calling Deacon Arndt “a pillar of our parish,” Sister Ginny Vissing, SSND, a longtime fellow staff member at OLQP, fondly reflected on the deacon’s close relationship with his wife, Lucille. “They worked together and were a great example, always,” said Sr. Ginny, adding that the deacon “had so many attributes. He was very intelligent, and always ready to learn; he had great dignity, and a great sense of humor.”

Dr. Stephen Arndt, Deacon Arndt’s oldest son, also recalled his father in a loving eulogy, offered at the funeral Mass. “Even in the hardest of financial times, he provided a Catholic education for his children and tithed a full 10 percent of his income to the church,” said Dr. Arndt. “My father was a great man. He was not born a saint, but, I believe, by the grace of God he became a saint. I am proud to have had him as my father, and I pray that I may do as well as he. I pray that we may all do as well as he.”

Survivors include Lucille, Deacon Arndt’s wife of nearly 54 years; his four children, Dr. Stephen Arndt, Dr. Mary Hagan, Richard Arndt, and Anne Yarmchuk; and their spouses; six grandchildren, two great-grandchildren, and his sister, Marion Whitsman. Memorial gifts may be made to the Our Lady Queen of Peace Church Building Fund, 4040 York Street, Wichita Falls 76309.

Young Serrans banquet set for Jan. 27

All are invited to attend the Young Serra Community (YSC) of Dallas 2007 Award Presentation and Banquet, to be held Jan. 27 from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. The banquet will be hosted at the parish hall at All Saints Church, 5231 Meadowcreek Drive in Dallas. Entertainment for the event will be provided by DJ Brian Kidd. The YSC is dedicated to spiritual growth and fellowship within its membership and to supporting vocations in the church. The YSC also works to foster openness to religious vocations within Catholic youth.

The banquet cost is $30 per person, or $40 per person after the Jan. 13 reservation deadline. Semi-formal attire is requested. Guests are permitted to bring their own wine.

For more information, contact Lauren Hampson at (972) 238-0601 or by e-mail to LHampson16@yahoo.com.
Mary King, former business manager for Diocese of Fort Worth, dies at age 85

Mary Nina King, former business manager for the Diocese of Fort Worth, died Dec. 22 in Fort Worth. The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth Dec. 28, with Msgr. Charles King, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Denton, presiding.

Mary King was born Feb. 1, 1921, in Franklin, Pennsylvania. She moved to Fort Worth in 1952, and was a charter member of St. Andrew Church, where she served on staff from 1953 until 1981, first as parish secretary, and then, after Msgr. King’s arrival as pastor in 1969, as business manager for the parish.

She served as an advisor to Bishop John J. Cassata after his ordination as first bishop for the Diocese of Fort Worth in 1969, assisting him as he worked to establish 12 new parishes in the diocese from 1969 until his retirement in 1980. Named business manager for the diocese by Bishop Joseph Delaney shortly after his 1981 ordination, King was later named director of Parish Services. She is remembered for her pivotal role in the design and building of the central administrative offices of the Diocese of Fort Worth, known as The Catholic Center, which was completed in 1985.

After her retirement in 1995, King continued to serve the diocese as a volunteer.

A member of the Edgewood Village City Council since 2000, she became mayor of Edgewood Village in 2004.

Harvey Leach, with whom King worked at the diocese, recalled her as a “fiery lady; indefatigable … bubbling with excitement and new ideas, all focused on her love of her church.” Noting that he had the “privilege” of being King’s supervisor from 1985 to 1994, Leach praised her work ethic, as well as her unfailing compassion, saying, “Mary never gave up.”

In his homily at her funeral liturgy, Msgr. King compared Mary King to St. Catherine of Siena.

She was preceded in death by her husband of 61 years, Paul King.

Survivors include King’s sons, Jack and his wife, Mary Ann, and Tim, and his wife, Lani; six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren and their families; and her sister, Georgine Rohrer. Memorial gifts in her honor may be made to the Nolan Catholic High School Scholarship Fund, 4201 Bridge Street, Fort Worth 76103; or to St. George School Scholarship Fund, 3508 Maurice Avenue, Fort Worth 76117.

Msgr. Larry Droll Scholarship Fund for Catholic laity now accepting applications

Catholics who wish to serve the church in a professional capacity may be interested in applying for further education through the Msgr. Larry J. Droll Scholarship Fund for Catholic laity. The scholarship, established in 2002, is administered by Catholic Life Insurance, a fraternal insurance agency based in San Antonio. The fund is designed to assist Catholic lay men and women in pursuing graduate degrees in order to qualify for professional positions in parish and diocesan ministries.

Scholarship applicants must be enrolled in Catholic graduate schools of theology or religious studies, and must have already completed an undergraduate degree. Applicants must be practicing Catholics and must reside in one of the states in which Catholic Life operates: Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico, or Mississippi. Scholarship funds are paid directly to the school where the student is enrolled.

The scholarship fund is named for Msgr. Larry J. Droll, vicar general of the Diocese of San Angelo and spiritual advisor to Catholic Life Insurance.

“Today many dedicated Catholics, who are not ordained clergy or women religious, serve parishes as parish coordinators or administrators, as pastoral associates, directors of religious education, youth ministers, liturgists, and many other roles,” said Msgr. Droll. “This scholarship can help provide the funds to earn the advanced educational degree in theology or religious studies that is often required for these positions.”

Students may apply for any Catholic graduate school in one of the states in which Catholic Life operates, or applicants may also be enrolled in an extension program or in The Catholic University of America School of Canon Law.

To obtain an application, call Catholic Life Insurance at (210) 694-0121 or 800-292-2548 ext. 141. Applicants may also download an application online at www.clic.org. The deadline to apply is Feb. 15.

Life Revival Youth Rally to be held Jan. 12-13 at St. John’s

The Youth Ministry of St. John the Apostle Church will host its annual Life Revival Youth Rally Jan. 12-13 at the church, located at 7341 Glenview Drive in North Richland Hills. The doors will open at 6 p.m. on Friday evening, and the rally will conclude at 9:30 p.m. on Saturday. The theme for the two-day event is “Life Revovation! It’s More Than You Know. It’s Deeper Than You Think. It’s Now!”

Tarek Saab, a contestant from NBC’s television program “The Apprentice,” will speak at the event. Other speakers will include Father Bernard Murphy, CFR, and other members of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal; Carol Everett, a former abortion clinic owner; and Anthony Meyers, a youth pastor from the Potter’s House in Dallas.

Live music will be featured, including The Remnant Band, Daniel diSilva of the Crispin Band, the Joe Languell Band, John Flynn of the John Flynn Band, Jessica Volcansek of Entertaining Angels, and the teen “Landmark Band.”

Mass will be celebrated Jan. 13 at 6 p.m. with Bishop Kevin Vann presiding.

All high school teens and their parents are welcome to attend the rally, which is geared toward helping youth understand the dignity of every human life, including their own. Admission is free. Food, drinks, T-shirts, CDs, and more will be available for purchase.

For more information, contact Suzette Chaires by e-mail to schaires@statham.com or call (817) 284-4811 ext. 209, or e-mail to Sue Laux, Youth For Life, at lauxlife@yahoo.com.

Cardinal Newman Institute to offer series on ‘Catholic Theological Tradition’

“Catholic Theological Tradition,” a 10-session course on the growth and development of Catholic doctrine in the first 1,000 years of the church, will be offered Saturday mornings, beginning Jan. 13 and concluding March 31. Each class will be held from 9:45 a.m. until noon in the conference room at St. Mary the Virgin Church, located at 1408 N. Davis Drive in Arlington. Dr. Paul Menge will be the course instructor.

Presented by The Cardinal Newman Institute, this course is the second series within a six-course sequence leading to a certificate in theological studies. The certificate will be issued jointly with the College of St. Thomas More in Fort Worth.

No previous studies are required. The cost for the entire 10-session course is $200. For more information or to register, call (817) 277-4859; e-mail to smatuszak@juno.com or visit the College of St. Thomas More Web site at www.cstm.edu.
**Diocesan / National**

**Educational grant assistance available to those in active ministry in diocese**

Deadline for applications is Jan. 16

Persons actively involved in ministry within the Diocese of Fort Worth for two years or longer and planning study programs that are in service of that ministry are invited to apply to the diocese for educational grant assistance.

Made available through the generosity of the people of the diocese, a sum of $20,000 is allotted for distribution again this year. Applications must be submitted to Dr. Dan Luby, director of the Division of Christian Formation at The Catholic Center, and must be received or postmarked no later than Jan. 16.

Applicants will be asked to specify their intended course of study, its place and cost, and any financial aid they expect to obtain. The pastor’s (or supervisor’s) signature is required, as is information that will help establish financial need.

The applications will be processed through the Division of Christian Formation by the Committee on Continuing Education Grant Disbursement. Determinations of aid will be made by late February. At that time, successful applicants will receive a “Letter of Intent” indicating subsequent steps of the process. That letter must be returned by April 1, and checks will be sent out between May 1 and May 15.

To receive an application, contact The Catholic Center by phone at (817) 560-3300 ext. 254, or by e-mail to bquast@fwdioc.org. Forms also can be downloaded from the diocesan Web site at www.fwdioc.org, by clicking on “Ministry Preparation,” and then choosing “Continuing Education Grants.”

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**STATE SOCCER CHAMPS** — Flower Mound residents Cole Hanson (left), 10, and Brandon Austin, 11, display their prizes — trophies, commemorative soccer balls, and embroidered caps — following first-place wins in their respective age categories at the second annual Knights of Columbus National Soccer Challenge, held in San Antonio Nov. 18. The boys had advanced to the state level after winning the local challenge conducted by Lewisville Knights of Columbus Council #9884 of St. Philip the Apostle Church. National winners will be determined by comparing total scores among the winners of all 50 states and will be announced after the first of the year.

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**EWTN to air pro-life events in January**

Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN), available on many local cable and satellite services, has announced that it will provide extensive live coverage of the 34th annual March for Life rally in Washington, D.C., and San Francisco’s “Walk for Life West Coast.”

Other special pro-life programs will be aired on EWTN throughout the month of January “to celebrate life and to fight the culture of death,” according to an EWTN press release. Jan. 22 marks the tragic anniversary of Roe vs. Wade, when abortion became legal in the United States, resulting in the deaths of more than 47 million unborn babies.

EWTN will provide coverage of the “Walk for Life West Coast” from San Francisco Jan. 20 at 1:30 p.m. and will rebroadcast the day’s events Jan. 20 at 8 p.m., Jan. 22 at 5 p.m., and Jan. 25 at 1 p.m.

Then EWTN will travel to the Basilica of the Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington, D.C., for the Vigil Mass for Life and the Annual Mass for Life, followed by live coverage of the Rally for Life and the 34th annual March for Life. The Washington coverage will be aired Jan. 22 at 11 a.m. and encored Jan. 22 at 10 p.m., Jan. 23 at 9 a.m. and Jan. 27 at 1 p.m.

For more information on EWTN’s pro-life coverage, visit the EWTN Web site at www.ewtn.com.

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**TRIDENTINE MASS**

**Latin Indult Mass**

5:30 p.m. Sundays

St. Mary of the Assumption Church

509 W Magnolia, Fort Worth

High Mass Second and Fourth Sundays

Low Mass First and Third Sundays

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**CATHOLIC PILGRIMAGES**

**11 Days Pilgrimage to Poland and Prague, Aug 27-Sep 6, 2007** $2950 pp. Includes 2 nights in Warsaw, 1 night Czestochowa, 3 nights each in Krakow & Prague. Fr Oswalt from OKC.

**11 Days Ireland, Sep 10-20, 2007**, $2650 pp. Includes 3 Nights each in Galway & Dublin, 1 night in Limerick, 2 nights Killarney, Fr Crone from Atlanta.


**12 Days Fatima & Spain, Oct 8-19**, $2750 pp. Includes 3 nites each Fatima & Madrid, 2 nites Santiago de Compostela, 1 nite each in Burgos & Avila. Visit Toledo. Fr That Son from WV

includes air from DFW, OKC, TUL. Call John Tagnesi at 1-888-544-4461.

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**LEGACY SOCIETY**

Leave your legacy…

The Legacy Society acknowledges and honors individuals who make a permanent gift to the Diocese of Fort Worth, including its parishes, schools, agencies or other ministries, by establishing an endowed fund or making a planned gift.

Become a member today.

More information is available at www.fwdioc.org Under “Foundation”

Catholic Foundation of North Texas

Diocese of Fort Worth

Patricia A. Miller, CFRE

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pmiller@fwdioc.org
Sarcophagus of St. Paul discovered at Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—After centuries of allowing themselves to grow apart, Roman Catholics and Greek Orthodox must seek forgiveness and learn to work together for the good of the world, said Pope Benedict XVI and Orthodox Archbishop Christodoulos of Athens and all Greece.

The pope formally welcomed the primate of the Orthodox Church of Greece to the Vatican Dec. 14, solemnly signing with him a commitment to preaching the Gospel together and to working for full communion.

“We want to live more intensely our mission of giving an apostolic witness, of transmitting the faith to those who are near and those who are far,” said the joint declaration, written in Greek and in French on a large piece of parchment.

In their speeches to each other and in their declaration, the pope and the archbishop acknowledged how far apart their communities had grown over the centuries and how difficult their relations were, even as late as the 1990s.

Pope Benedict said Catholics and Orthodox should have learned from what the New Testament describes as the situation of the early church in the Greek city of Corinth, which knew “the difficulties and serious temptations of division.”

“In effect, a real danger appears where persons want to identify themselves with one group or another,” rather than with Christ, the pope said.

Through increased contacts and formal dialogue, the pope said, Catholics and Orthodox have come to value each other’s spiritual, liturgical, and theological traditions and to see them as gifts from God.

Pope Benedict and Archbishop Christodoulos vowed to use the newly rediscovered fraternity of their churches to ensure the future of Christianity in Europe and to address a host of modern challenges facing society.

The archbishop told the pope that “in our role as spiritual fathers of the pious members of our churches” the two of them must raise an alarm about “all that threatens the values and structures of European civilization deeply impregnated by the Christian faith.”

The “progressive de-Christianization of Europe,” attempts to exclude faith-based speech to the public arena, “religious fanaticism,” and attacks on human life, including research on embryos, call for religious leadership and moral guidance, Archbishop Christodoulos said.

In their joint declaration, the pope and archbishop also pledged to work for peace in the world.

“We believe religions have a role to play in spreading peace throughout the world and that they must by no means sow intolerance and violence,” the declaration said.

“As Christian religious leaders, we ask all religious leaders together to continue to pursue and strengthen interreligious dialogue and to work to create a society of peace and brotherhood. This is one of the missions of religion,” they said.

Archbishop Christodoulos also thanked Pope Benedict for deciding to give a very important relic to the Greek church: links from the chain venerated as that of St. Paul during his imprisonment in Rome. The Vatican said church documents from as early as the middle of the third century spoke of the chains kept at the Basilica of St. Paul Outside the Walls, the site of St. Paul’s burial.

The gift to Archbishop Christodoulos consisted of two of the remaining nine links, each of which is about two and a half inches long.

Booklet encourages praying for Christian unity

By Cindy Wooden

The most Reverend Bishop Kevin W. Vann, invites you to celebrate As a community our commitment and support of Catholic schools. Please join him at the 20th Annual Catholic Schools Banquet For the Diocese of Fort Worth Saturday, January 27, 2007 Fort Worth Convention Center Ballroom Social Hour 6:00 p.m. Dinner 7:00 p.m. Keynote Speaker: Dr. John Staud, Alliance for Catholic Education (ACE) University of Notre Dame $75 per person — RSVP by January 19, 2007 Please call 817-560-3360, x-258 for reservations or for additional information.

FROM PAGE 1

Prayer for Christian Unity.

In fact, participating in eumenical prayer services and discussions during the Christian unity week is encouraged throughout the booklet.

In the introduction, Cardinal Kasper said the booklet was the result of a discussion by members of the pontifical council focusing on the need for prayer and conversion in the search for Christian unity.

Council members also felt Catholics should benefit from practical suggestions for preparing spiritually for the gift of restored unity, the introduction said.

Even attending another’s eucharistic celebration and feeling the sorrow of not being able to share the sacrament can contribute to eumenism, the booklet said. “The way toward reconciliation and communion unfolds when Christians feel the painful wound of division in their hearts, in their minds, and in their prayers,” it said.

The booklet focuses on what bishops, priests, religious, and laity can do to promote closer relationships with their fellow Christians while the official theological dialogues continue to deal with issues that keep the Christian community divided.

Prayer should be Christians’ first response, it said.

“It is significant that Jesus did not primarily express his desire for unity in a teaching or in a commandment to his disciples, but in a prayer to his father,” it said.

“Since unity is a gift, it is fitting that Christians pray for it together,” the cardinal wrote.
Let’s be Catholic

By Sue Stanton

Let’s be Catholic. For me, that’s what being Catholic means. I am part of a community that cares for others. I have the freedom to choose how I want to live my life. I have the opportunity to help others in need. I have the chance to make a difference in the world. I have the chance to grow in my faith. I have the chance to become a better person.

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The impact of one little life

By Tom Grenchik

The innocence of this child affected everyone involved that day. And the sufferings of this child must now compel each of us to redouble our efforts to end the hopelessness that allows abortion to continue.

Just a few days before Christmas, a tragic event occurred at a local Catholic pro-life agency.

This program is strategically located next door to one of the busiest abortion centers in the region. A young mother, on the third day of her late-term abortion procedure, was lying in tremendous pain throughout the night, she arrived too early for the final part of her “procedure.”

When the religious sisters and staff arrived to work at the pro-life agency that morning, they immediately offered her help, and she asked to use their bathroom. Then in agonizing pain, she delivered her 19-week-old baby, dead.

This mother will never be the same. The sisters and staff members who held her and prayed with her, will never be the same. The nurse who ran praying with her, will never be the same. The nurse who accompanied her in the ambulance, with her dead child, will never be the same. The hospital staff who received her, will never be the same.

And the homicide police who were called to investigate the death, will never be the same.

The policemen, after confering with headquarters, had to report back that no “death” occurred, only a “legal” abortion. They quietly voiced their opinion that while the abortion may have been legal, it was still not moral. The young mother revealed that she had no idea that on the TCU campus there is a lot of construction going on, as we watch the progress of our Vision in Action campaign. In fact there is so much construction outside my building, it has covered every place our cars used to park, taken away our beloved Frog Fountain (just on sabbatical — not gone permanently) and even obstructed the view of Amon Carter Stadium.

Not that I could ever see the stadium, even though my office is located in the student center across the street. I don’t have a windowed, corner office. In fact my office is in the basement, where bricks and sticks and stones and, yes, cement, block my own, personal, vision in action.

There is a Web-cam on the construction site, however, with constant video that shows, as I write this, there are three, huge backhoes digging big holes, but just one cement mixer turning. Sounds like my laptop is less likely to be encased in concrete than to return to dust.

It’s immaterial, anyway. Cement mixer or not, I’m probably doomed. Fired for Faking Fantasy Football.

Last month some people in our department sent out an e-mail about playing an on-line college bowl fantasy game. They challenged everyone to compete — no money involved. So I did.

But the funniest thing happened. I won. Except it really wasn’t me who won. Lord. And for that, I can’t “Mea Culpa” enough.

Lost my job, it would be caused by incompetence of some kind.

Not knowing how to create a yearbook index. Photography an ordinance with the lens cap on. Dropping the laptop into a cement mixer. That kind of thing.

Now it turns out I’ll probably get the “pink slip” because of sports. It will say: Fired for Faking Fantasy Football.

I guess dropping my laptop into a cement mixer might seem outrageous, at first reading, except in the context that on the TCU campus there is a lot of construction going on, as we watch the progress of our Vision in Action campaign. In fact there is so much construction outside my building, it has covered every place our cars used to park, taken away our beloved Frog Fountain (just on sabbatical — not gone permanently) and even obstructed the view of Amon Carter Stadium.

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Msgr. King marks his 50th anniversary of ordination with fellow jubilarians of diocese

**STORY AND PHOTOS BY KATHY CRIBARI HAMER**

**Left:** Msgr. King addresses the congregation at his anniversary Mass Dec. 2.

**Below:** Msgr. King's nephew, Bill Kayser presents his uncle with a framed family photo.

**Right:** Wearing golden stoles, eight 50-year jubilarians surround the altar at a jubilee Mass Dec. 13.

**Below:** Msgr. King greets guests at his anniversary reception at Immaculate Conception Parish Dec. 2.

**Above:** At the Dec. 2 jubilee Mass, (l to r) Msgr. Charles King, Bishop Kevin Vann, Msgr. Thomas Weinzapfel, and Father James Flynn pray the Eucharistic Prayer.

It was a snapshot of history, taken from the pew, through the lens of the faithful.

Concelebrating Mass, praying the Eucharistic Prayer were an assembly of diocesan clergy, with eight of them, all jubilarians, wearing gold stoles to signify 50 years in the priesthood. The presider, Bishop Kevin Vann, wore a similar stole, fashioned in silver, commemorating his own 25-year anniversary.

The stoles were gifts from Msgr. Charles King, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Denton, and custom-made by parishioner Sue Burt. The stoles were embroidered with each priest's name and ordination date.

The jubilarians had been invited to celebrate together Dec. 13 at Immaculate Conception, where Msgr. King was marking the week of his own ordination, Dec. 16, 1957.

"It was Monsignor’s idea to host the jubilee," said Mary Wolffe, his secretary for 19 years. "He wanted to celebrate all of their vocations, not just his own." The reception and dinner after the Mass were provided by Immaculate Conception’s Home and School Association. "It was fitting," Wolffe said, "because this is Msgr. King, who loves Catholic education!"

The gathering of notable priests was an awesome sight in itself, but the reality of their combined history seemed remarkable. These were men who had impacted the lives of thousands of families, in dozens of parishes, and helped with the formation of enough adults and children to populate a city.

Ordained in 1956-1958, the priests included Father Jack Vessels, SJ; Msgr. King; Father Lambert Leykam, OFM; Father Walter McCauley, SJ; Father Ronald Scheible, OSA; Father Leo Schloemer, Glenmary Home Missioners; Msgr. Joseph Schumacher; and Father Robert Wilson.

Not present for the Mass was Father Severius Blank, who had traveled to Holland to be with his family.

Standing together praying the words of consecration, the jubilarians represented a touchstone to nearly every person in the diocese.

Msgr. King was homilist for the Mass, and traced the history of events in the world and the church, starting at the beginning of his years as a priest, when he said, "The war of wars was over … there was the Communist threat in North Korea … but the Catholic Church in the United States was powerful, strong, a bastion of stability."

He told of how priests were held in high esteem, thought of as true representatives of Christ. "If you wanted to help people, to do something for people, what better way was there to do that than as a priest?"

In seminaries they taught dogma and spiritual theology, and some modern seminaries were teaching in English. In Europe, Americans were considered stupid, he said, because they did not understand and speak the mother tongue — Latin. "The question," he said, "was ‘Would there ever be another council of the church? The answer was ‘Why would we ever need one?’"

"In 1958, Pope Pius XII died and the cracks in the foundation began to appear…. John XXIII was elected, and then big changes came."

Concluding, he asked, "What else has changed? We’re older! We’ve made mistakes — sometimes big ones. The church, like us, is still there — she has replicated herself, and after 2,000 years is still the church. God has covered us."

"The opportunity to do something for God and to help people is still there — Jesus Christ is still the Good Shepherd."

Msgr. King enjoyed two other celebrations of his own anniversary — one Mass Dec. 2, celebrated by Bishop Vann, with guests and friends invited from all his former parishes, and anther jubilee Mass Dec. 16, with the Immaculate Conception community; Msgr. King’s sister, Mary Kayser, along with her husband, Don, and son, Bill, were present for the Dec. 2 celebration.

All three events were planned by Wolffe, who said it was “a real joy” for her to plan the celebrations, “because God knows he deserves it. It was wonderful just seeing how many people were there. The high moment for me was his pleasure at seeing everyone.”

In his homily at the Dec. 2 Mass, Bishop Vann called it an occasion to celebrate Msgr. King’s life, and thank him for the years of ministry he brought to North Texas. The bishop also thanked Msgr. King’s father, Charles Bernard Sr., who died in 1980, and his mother, Jean Leahy King, who died in 1992, on behalf of all the people whom Msgr. King had served, “for helping the broken-hearted…helping so many come to the Lord…. and finding a place for ministry in the Body of Christ."

“And thank you,” the bishop said to Msgr. King, “for your work in formation, including me, for forming me into a Texan — no easy feat."

The bishop closed by reciting the song lyrics, “May you live, may you live, may you live.” The Latin words of the song, sung at alumni meetings, Msgr. King said, are “Ad multos annos, vivas, vivas!”

Reflecting on his 50 years in the priesthood, Msgr. King noted his work in ecumenism, which went back to 1963 when he was asked to speak at a potluck dinner which included people from his parish, Dallas’ St. Pius X, and St. Stephen United Methodist in Mesquite. That led to “Living Room Dialogues,” and the “Cattle Country Clerics,” an interfaith organization founded in 1972 and still active today.

He is proud of his work in the Interfaith Disaster Relief Organization, which helped distribute funds after the 1979 Wichita Falls Tornado; the Tarrant Area Community of Churches; and Allied Communities of Tarrant. He is currently chair of the Diocesan Ecumenical Commission.

About retirement, Msgr. King said he would never quit “while he is having so much fun,” and about the jubilee celebrations, he said “I was woed by the number of people, and disappointed that I couldn’t visit individually with each one of them.”

“I guess a big joy for me was that about when we were having these celebrations, a lot of scandals were coming out, and people were able to see, ‘We do have some priests who are making it,’” he said.

“I like to think that the celebrations came at a very good time, because we gave people cause for hope. Is the church going to make it? It was encouraging that so many people have made it. That is not to say that all of us were perfect — far from it. But we made it."

“I’m still having fun. Why quit while you’re having fun? Folks have been very forgiving and supportive. I would hope most of my work has been helpful,” Msgr. King concluded. “This is all the Lord’s work."

“Lord, if I’m not making it, you’ve got to make up for what I’m not making.”

Immaculate Conception Parish builds Habitat home in honor of Msgr. King’s 50th jubilee

**By Kathy Cribari Hamer**

**Correspondent**

He said that he became a priest because he wanted to help people, but after 50 years, it turned out what he really wanted to do was build a Habitat for Humanity house.

“I had always wanted to do this,” said Msgr. Charles King, who celebrated the 50th anniversary of his priestly ordination Dec. 16. “I had first heard about these at the Rotary Club, where I talked with another member about building one as a parish project…. But at the time, the project never got off the ground."

This time it did. More than 40 parish volunteers began what they called “an amazing labor of love” Sept. 9, 2006. The home, on Ulani Street, was the 69th Habitat for Humanity home built in Denton County. More than 300 people helped build the home for the Luna family — Estella, Constantino, and 4-year-old Karen. The Luna family put in 250 hours on other Habitat homes to qualify for one for themselves.

“People got out there every week,” said Msgr. King, who made frequent visits of support and “worked a little bit, too. It was mostly parishioners, but other groups as well — fraternities and sororities from the University of North Texas, and Starbucks of Denton. There were donations of materials and contractor employees who

See story, next page
Need for Christianity’s saving message is evident, says pope

Gathered for the unveiling of the Vatican’s own larger-than-life Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square, the pope made his way to the packed basilica for midnight Mass.

Young children from five continents brought flowers to a statue of the baby Jesus in front of the altar, a moment that highlighted the liturgy’s international atmosphere.

In a sermon, the pope said the meaning of Christmas was quite simple: God “makes himself small for us.”

“This is how he reigns. He does not come with power and outward splendor. He comes as a baby — defenseless and in need of our help,” he said.

“The way God teaches us to love the little ones. In this way he teaches us to love the weak. In this way he teaches us respect for children,” he said.

The pope said Christmas should draw people’s attention to all children who suffer and are abused in the world, “the born and the unborn,” particularly those who are hungry, unloved, forced to beg, or “placed as soldiers in a violent world.”

He emphasized that the sign of Christmas — a newborn baby lying in a manger — corresponds with the essentially straightforward message brought by Jesus: to love God and love one’s neighbor.

“This is everything — the whole faith is contained in this one act of love which embraces God and humanity,” he said.

He said this core message has sometimes been turned into something long and complex, especially by Scripture experts who “became entangled in details and in particular problems, almost to the extent of losing an overall perspective.”

In the season of giving at Christmas, the pope encouraged people to reflect the spirit of Jesus’ selfless love.

“When you give gifts for Christmas, do not give only to those who will give you in return, but give to those who receive from no one and who cannot give you anything back,” he said.

At noon the next day, in an event broadcast to some 60 countries, the pope offered his blessing and pronounced Christmas greetings in 62 languages, including Chinese, Arabic, and Latin.

“May the birth of the Prince of Peace remind the world where its true happiness lies; and may your hearts be filled with hope and joy, for the Savior has been born for us,” he said in English.

Speaking from the central, outside balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica, the pope asked whether the idea of a savior still has meaning “for humanity that has reached the moon and Mars and is prepared to conquer the universe; for humanity which knows no limits in its pursuit of nature’s secrets and which has succeeded even in deciphering the marvelous codes of the human genome?”

“It is a savior needed by a humanity which has invented interactive communication, which navigates in the virtual ocean of the Internet; and, thanks to the most advanced modern communication technologies, has now made the earth, our great common home, a global village,” he asked.

Yet despite these advances, he said, the need for Christianity’s saving message is also evident: Many people continue to die of hunger, disease, and poverty, even in an age of unbridled consumerism; some are enslaved and exploited; and some are victims of racial or religious hatred and discrimination.

“Others see their own bodies and those of their dear ones, particularly their children, blemished with weaponry, by terrorism, and by all sorts of violence, at a time when everyone invokes and claims progress, solidarity, and peace for all,” he said.

The pope said the catalogue of suffering includes those misled by “false prophets of happiness,” who struggle with relationships, loneliness, alcohol, and drugs, and who “choose death in the belief that they are celebrating life.”

All this adds up to a “heart-rending cry for help,” he said. It illustrates that despite humanity’s material progress, it always needs a savior to help choose between good and evil.

The pope then turned his attention to areas of conflict throughout the world.

— He made an “appeal to all those who hold in their hands the fate of Iraq, that there will be an end to the brutal violence that has brought so much bloodshed to the country, and that every one of its inhabitants will be safe to lead a normal life.”

— He said he was deeply apprehensive about the continuing crisis in the Middle East, but expressed hope at recent signs of a resumption of dialogue between Palestinians and Israelis. In a separate Christmas message to Middle East Catholics, he also said he wanted to visit the Holy Land as soon as circumstances permitted such a pilgrimage.

— He lamented the destruction and uncertainty in Lebanon, where a war last summer left many victims, but said he was confident that a democratic Lebanon would survive.

— He urged an end to civil strife in Sri Lanka, and prayed that fratricidal conflicts in Darfur and other African areas would cease.

The pope then explained why Christmas should stimulate the church in its evangelizing mission.

The belief that “our Savior is born for all” must be proclaimed in word and deed by Christians everywhere, he said.

The church evangelizes with passionate enthusiasm, in joy, and with full respect for all cultural and religious traditions, he said.

He ended his talk with a direct appeal to the millions watching and listening around the world to “open your hearts” to Christ as the savior of the world.

On Dec. 26, the pope recalled the feast of St. Stephen, the first martyr, and prayed for Catholics who are persecuted today because they show fidelity to the Vatican “without accepting compromises, sometimes at the price of serious consequences.”

The pope appeared to be referring to China, where a government-approved Catholic association rejects Vatican ties, and where underground Catholics loyal to Rome have been the targets of discrimination.

“The entire church admires this example and prays so that they have the strength to persevere,” the pope said.
Cardinal Keeler of Baltimore condemns 'revisionist history' of Holocaust

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Cardinal William H. Keeler of Baltimore condemned "revisionist history" of the Holocaust, the systematic efforts by Nazis during World War II to do away with Jews also known as the Shoah, a Hebrew word meaning devastation or catastrophe.

The cardinal in a particular exception to a Dec. 11-12 conference in Iran during which speakers "sought to diminish the scope of the Holocaust."

Speakers at the conference in Tehran included David Duke, former U.S. leader of the Ku Klux Klan, and several authors who have been sued or arrested in Europe for denying the Nazis' mass murder of European Jews. Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has in the past denied the Holocaust ever happened.

"The Catholic bishops of the United States stand in solidarity with the universal church in condemning revisionist history that seeks to minimize the horror of the Holocaust," said Cardinal Keeler in a Dec. 14 statement, "We Must Remember the Shoah."

Cardinal Keeler is apostolic administrator for the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs entitled "Catholic Teaching on the Shoah." It "stated two major reasons why grappling with the history and significance of the Shoah should be part of the central curriculum of Catholic education," he said.

"First, the Holocaust was not a random act of mass murder but 'a war against the Jews as the people of God, the first witness to God's revelation and the eternal bearers of that witness through all the centuries,'" the cardinal said. "Second, future generations need to be ever vigilant so that 'the spoiled seeds of anti-Judaism and anti-Semitism [will] never again be allowed to take root in the human heart.'"

The Vatican issued its own statement Dec. 12 on the Iranian government-sponsored conference, which was entitled "Review of the Holocaust: Global Vision."

"The past century witnessed the attempt to exterminate the Jewish people with the consequent killing of millions of Jews of all ages and social categories simply for the fact that they belonged to that people. The Shoah (the Holocaust) was an enormous tragedy, before which one cannot remain indifferent," the Vatican said.

"The memory of those terrible facts must remain a warning for consciences with the aim of eliminating conflicts, respecting the legitimate rights of all peoples, and calling for peace and truth in justice," the Vatican added.

"Let us take this occasion," Cardinal Keeler said, "to renew our commitment both to remember the great irruption of evil into human history that was the Shoah and to use that memory to fight the evils that led to it."

He referred to a 2001 document of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs entitled "Catholic Teaching on the Shoah." It "stated two major reasons why grappling with the history and significance of the Shoah should be part of the central curriculum of Catholic education," he said.

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Pope welcomes new year, urges respect for dignity, human rights

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Welcoming in the new year at the Vatican, Pope Benedict XVI said a world suffering from wars and terrorism can find peace only through respect for human dignity and human rights.

The pope celebrated Mass in St. Peter's Basilica Jan. 1, which the church marks as World Peace Day, and quoted from his peace day message that was sent to governments around the globe. The theme of the message this year was "The Human Person, the Heart of Peace." In order for peace agreements to last, the pope said, they must be based on respect for the dignity of the human being created by God. This dignity is the foundation of peace and cannot be viewed as something subject to popular opinion or majority action.

"In the name of God a world is built in which essential human rights are respected by all," every Christian has a special vocation as a peacemaker, he said.

Florida bishops challenge Catholics to act on behalf of farmworkers

TALLAHASSEE, Florida (CNS) — Challenging Catholics and all people of good will to "see where love is needed and act accordingly," Florida's bishops urged consideration of how everything — from consumer decisions to government policies affect the state's most vulnerable workers.

The bishops' new pastoral letter, entitled "Honoring the Dignity of Work: A Call for Solidarity With Florida's Farmworkers," explores one of the most pressing issues facing the state today and calls for specific actions by individual Catholics and families, parishes, Catholic institutions, government agencies, and others.

"This is an appropriate time to call attention to the human dignity of people from many backgrounds and nations — particularly people from Mexico and Central America, but also Haitians, African-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Vietnamese, and others — who have come to Florida to work in agriculture, our second-largest industry," said Bishop John H. Ricard of Pensacola-Tallahassee at a Dec. 11 press conference in Tallahassee. The document — a publication of the Florida Catholic Conference, the bishops' lobbying arm — was written in response to situations affecting farmworkers identified at an October 2005 Farmworker Forum.

Bay State bishops land Legislature's approval of marriage amendment

BOSTON (CNS) — The Catholic bishops of Massachusetts thanked state legislators Jan. 2 for "living up to their oath of office" by voting on a constitutional marriage amendment initiative before ending their legislative session.

On the last day in its 2005-06 session, a reluctant Legislature narrowly approved the initiative, which would amend the state's constitution to ban same-sex marriages.

Then it voted to reconsider the measure again — also narrowly — to approve the measure. The state's bishops, strong advocates of the initiative, said, "Today the constitutional rights of the citizens of the commonwealth have been upheld. The democratic process and the right of the people to have their voices heard were affirmed." If the 2007-08 Legislature gives the amendment its second approval this year, it would appear on the November 2008 ballot.

Xavier University president receives Presidential Medal of Freedom

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Norman Francis, the president of Xavier University in New Orleans for 39 years, was given the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor, during a Dec. 15 White House ceremony. During the presentation in the East Room, where Francis sat on the platform alongside nine other medal recipients, the longtime president of the nation's only historically black Catholic university was praised for being "a man of deep intellect and compassion and character." In his remarks, President George W. Bush praised Francis as the longest-serving university president in the United States and someone who has dedicated his life to education.

He noted that Francis, who received his undergraduate degree at Xavier, earned his doctorate at Fordham University in New York and his law degree at Loyola University College of Law, also in New Orleans. Bush remarked that, after Hurricane Katrina's damage to the Xavier campus, Francis "vowed the university would overcome and reopen its doors by January — and he kept that pledge." He also noted that Francis continues to help the people of his state as chairman of the Louisiana Recovery Authority formed by Gov. Kathleen Blanco.
New Parish Hall is testimony to abiding faith of Vernon Catholic community

Story and Photos by Mary E. Manley Correspondent

On a bright Sunday morning, Dec. 10, Holy Family of Nazareth Church in Vernon brimmed with some 300 people who took part in a landmark Mass preceding the dedication of a new parish hall. Bishop Kevin Vann presided at the Mass, with Holy Family of Nazareth pastor Father Oren Key, SJ, concelebrating, and Deacons Art Casias and Len Sanchez assisting.

The bilingual Mass began with Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus representatives from Vernon, Wichita Falls, Burkburnett, and Iowa Park leading the way for celebrants, liturgical participants, and several young parishioners. Religious education students brought up multicolored roses to a side altar dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe.

In his homily, Bishop Vann spoke of the lasting relevance of the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, which was to be celebrated only two days later, Dec. 12. The feast commemorates the appearance of Mary to St. Juan Diego in 1531. The miracles that took place led to an openness among Mexico’s indigenous people in accepting Jesus as the son of God.

Bishop Vann also spoke of the connection of the Advent Sunday’s Gospel message of St. John the Baptist preparing the way for repentance, forgiveness, and conversion in a challenging, often-dark world, not unlike the current culture. He emphasized that the Messiah’s light prevails in the pre-Christmas season of hope, anticipation, and fresh beginnings. And tying this hope, anticipation, and fresh beginnings. And tying this expectation to the reason why they were assembled that morning, the bishop said that the new parish hall itself gave testimony to the community’s faith.

After the homily, Fr. Key, who had enthusiastically welcomed the bishop earlier, introduced the presentation of a monetary gift to the bishop from the parish pastoral council. Bilingual music was provided by the English choir, comprised of Veritas, the youth praise band, along with adult choir members; and Coro Guadalupe, the Spanish praise group. During the rousing recessional, the choir loft organ accompanied the community in singing, “Lift High the Cross.”

Following Mass, participants were encouraged to proceed to the new parish hall, a 6,000-square-foot building that can serve up to 300 people. Awaiting them was a large and varied feast prepared on-site by volunteers in its spacious kitchen. The eager crowd gathered to witness Bishop Vann dedicate and bless the hall and kitchen.

Earlier at the Mass, Bishop Vann had reflected that he was gratified to be present for the “great accomplishment of bringing living stones together” — as symbolized in these facilities — through God’s grace, skillful planning, hard work, and the love of the parish.

Bishop Vann also blessed the connected hall, which had been built four decades earlier. It now serves as the new religious education building.

Soon after the dedication and blessings, the bishop mingled with those present. A special highlight occurred when he shared his musical talents on the piano, playing, among other tunes, a classic duet, “Heart and Soul,” with a young parishioner.

Among those attending were Holy Family building committee representatives, headed by co-chairs Louis Kajs and Howard Ferrich, along with Fr. Key and Deacon Casias. Other members included David Littken, Miguel Haro, Travis Taylor, Gary Tatryke, Pat Matus, and Johnny and Hazel Kajs.

Doug Matthews has served as finance committee head, with the $350,000 project funded by donations from congregation members.

Holy Family of Nazareth Parish was established in Vernon by Bishop Thomas F. Brennan, first Dallas prelate, in 1891. The church was comprised of parishioners from all of Wilbarger County, including the towns of Tolbert, Oklaunion, and Harrold. Later, Quanah and Crowell mission churches were created as well. The original church edifice was built in 1907, with the first resident pastor appointed in 1928. In 1937, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth came to Vernon to operate a small hospital. They remained until 1965.

Fr. Key is among several pastoral leaders through the decades who have nurtured a Catholic presence in the area. For more than 20 years, Fr. Key has been serving three Catholic communities in Vernon, Quanah, and Crowell. The pastor said that he has seen many positive developments in these communities as he has conducted regular Masses and offered other services — all of which have involved extensive driving. In addition, he has made himself regularly available to the area’s two state hospitals and its youth correctional facility.

In spite of an often-demanding schedule, the octogenarian said that, “I can only thank God for the many blessings I have received.” As a strong devotee of Our Lady, he also expressed appreciation for her assistance.

Hazel Kajs, a 32-year parishioner, said the Kajs family helped build the present Holy Family Church in 1950. Her devotion was similar to that expressed by elder parishioner Madelyn Matus, whose late husband helped build the church 56 years ago. Matus is now matriarch of two generations. Both women have seen the positive results of an evolving, active parish community, which is about half Anglo and half Hispanic, with a small number of Filipino members.

During interviews with parishioners, the names of Deacons Casias and his wife Margaret; Sherri Lawrence, longtime volunteer music coordinator; and Bryan Webb, the church’s first official youth minister, were mentioned as among those who have helped enliven the parish through their support of various multicultural and multigenerational programs and events. Parishioners listed such community-building events as being the Cultural Fiesta, ACTS retreats, religious education, Bible studies, weekly fellowship meals, and youth rosary nights.

Webb says the parish’s youth ministry involves a core group of 40 to 60 regular youth, demonstrating a “very successful rural youth ministry.” Webb sees the parish, over all, as one “in the process of revival.” He credits “a lot of people who have been helpful and open to new ideas and to change in our parish. Our Holy Family of Nazareth’ name is truly symbolic of a community living out our faith.”
Pope says secret to living full life is opening up to baby Jesus

By Carol Glatz

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The secret to living a life full of peace, joy, and love lies in opening up one’s heart to the baby Jesus, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“Everyone discovers in the baby of Bethlehem [that he or she] is freely loved by God” and sees “God’s infinite goodness,” the pope said in his first general audience of 2007.

With his birth, Jesus “abundantly spread among all people the gifts of goodness, mercy, and love,” the pope said.

“Only the baby that lies in the crib holds the true secret of life,” the pope said. The Christ Child wants everyone to welcome him and “make room for him in our homes, our cities, and our society,” the pope added.

“Ananctaince and I were discussing the relative merits of parishes in our part of the city. We compared music ministries, hospitality, size of the assembly, and other characteristics. Ultimately, though, he decided that for Sunday Mass he liked “parish X” the best “because the pastor there gives the shortest homilies.”

He certainly wouldn’t have liked the Liturgy of the Word described in this week’s first reading. Ezra was leading the people of Israel in a celebration of covenant renewal with Yahweh, which required the reading of the entire Law so that those who had not been present with Moses at Sinai could commit to it anew. But “from daybreak to midday?” With children? I can’t fathom all of those people sitting still that long, much less “listening attentively.” And yet they acknowledged God’s covenant love for them, responding with tears, worship, and joyful feasting, considering the day as holy, as time well spent.

The Gospel gives us another Liturgy of the Word, this time in a synagogue in Galilee. It was on a “Sabbath,” the day they were commanded to set aside for the Lord. From the scroll of Isaiah, Jesus read aloud a prophetic promise of incredibly good news — prisoners set free, sight restored, oppression ceasing. Then he claimed that this promise had already been fulfilled in their hearing. Not your ordinary Sabbath service in the local synagogue!

But the truth is, every Sabbath celebration, every “Lord’s Day,” is extraordinary, whether the homily is long or short, the music sublime or simply tolerable. It’s extraordinary because it is the opportunity for us to reflect as a people on the great things our God has done for us. It is a time to renew our covenant relationship with the Lord who committed himself to us at creation, at Sinai, at Calvary — and who commits himself to us anew in every eucharistic celebration. While it is tempting to check our watches and think about how many obligations we have that day, it is important to remember that even God rested on the seventh day of creation. The third commandment is to “keep holy the Lord’s day.” God did not ordain a Sabbath for his benefit, but for ours.

In our hectic, demanding lives, let us remember that Sabbath, the day devoted to the Lord and to our relationship with him, is time well spent.

QUESTIONS:

How have you ignored the Lord’s command to observe the Sabbath? What is one small change you can make to keep the Lord’s day holy?

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It is in these times alone that I find myself kind of longing for silence. A typical pattern of my life really slowed down. There were no distractions, no TV, no radio, no erudite company, no commandeering of the books I brought along. Then as the trip goes on, the books do not open as much, and the silence becomes a comfort. Next time I know the trip is coming to a close, and I begin to dread the noise that awaits back home.

In the past I have tried to convince myself that silence is not all that necessary. Yet, the truth of our need for it always breaks through, often in the words of Scripture. Genesis tells us that even God takes a day off (Genesis 2:2). Isaiah says: “By waiting and by calm you shall be saved, in quiet and in trust your strength lies” (Isaiah 30:15). And Jesus was always going off to a quiet place to pray (Matthew 14:23). The saints too call us to silence. This is intensified when we remember that most of them lived before electricity. They did not have an endless array of modern devices blaring at them. When the sun set life really slowed down. There were no iPod ear buds lulling them to sleep. It was just silence and the music of creation. I can imagine that their “noisy” times might seem rather quiet to us. This being true, their idea of silence might render our eardrums useless.

In this New Year my resolution is to look for ways to be quiet. Maybe I’ll spend a day with the radio off in my car, or have an evening with no TV. Perhaps I’ll forgo the newspaper in the morning for some quiet time. I might even occasion- ally wander over to the chapel for the Blessed Sacrament. I find that when I make a blanket statement as a resolution, like: “This year I will turn the TV off early every night and sit quietly for 15 minutes,” my good intentions will take me through the first week. But then there is that one night, when I fudge a bit, and before I know it I am back to falling asleep in front of the TV with that silent sleep the only quiet time I’ve found.

There are so many opportunities to find silence each day; I’m going to shoot for a variety and see what happens. It is my hope that the experience of finding silence in the midst of a crowd in a foreign land will translate into quiet times during a busy day in a place called home.

Join me for some alone time in 2007.

Jeff Hedglen, youth minister at St. Bartholomew Parish in Southwest Fort Worth, is the principal organizer of Camp Fort Worth each summer. Readers with questions can contact Jeff at jeff@stbartsfw.org.
Algunas agencias tratan de ayudar a familias separadas por redadas de inmigración

Por Patricia Zapor

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Algunos inmigrantes cuyas familias fueron separadas en las redadas de inmigración llevadas a cabo el 12 de diciembre en plantas procesadoras de carne, en seis estados del país, están recibiendo ayuda de programas católicos de servicio social en por lo menos tres diócesis.

Entretanto, grupos de derechos de inmigrantes y grupos latinos se contaban entre las organizaciones que publicaron declaraciones en las que censuraban las redadas.

El obispo Bernard J. Harrington de Winona, Minn., le pidió a la gente de su diócesis que aliviaran algo del peso con el que se quedaron la familia después de las más grandes redadas de inmigración en la historia de los Estados Unidos, que duraron todo el día, y que incluyeron una planta de Swift & Co. en Worthington, Minn. Agentes de inmigración arrestaron a 1,262 personas en seis plantas de Swift en Minnesota, Colorado, Iowa, Nebraska, Texas y Utah.

“Las familias han sido separadas, los niños han quedado sin padres y los hogares se han quedado sin la persona que sostiene a la familia”, dijo el obispo Harrington en una declaración del 21 de diciembre. “Las familias que han perdido a la persona que les trae de comer se tienen que enfrentar ahora a un invierno de incertidumbre sin tener ninguna idea de cuánto tiempo las personas aprehendidas permanecerán detenidas”. El obispo dijo que la gente de la diócesis podría aliviar algo de la carga con donaciones de alimentos, medicinas y dinero para cuentas de electricidad y renta. Y les pidió a las parroquias, a personas individuales y a negocios que añadieran dinero a los $10,000 con que la diócesis contribuyó.

La Oficina de Respeto a la Vida de la diócesis de Amarillo, Texas, reunió rápidamente un envío de artículos para bebé destinado a las familias de Cactus, Texas, que fueron afectadas por los arrestos en la planta Swift del lugar. Un número menor a 300 personas fue arrestado en la pequeña población del “Panhandle” texano.

El obispo John W. Yanta y cerca de 15 sacerdotes de la diócesis visitaron Cactus el 14 de diciembre. Y entre otras preguntas que tenían, una destacó: “¿Por qué hacen esto en la festividad de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe?”

“Una impresionante cantidad de personas se encuentra terriblemente consternada por eso y disgustada de que las autoridades hayan escogido el día más sagrado de la cultura mexicana para llevar a cabo las redadas”, informó “El West Texas Catholic”, citando esas palabras atribuidas al obispo Yanta.

En Denver, Cardéridas Católicas pidieron ofrecimientos monetarios para ayudar a una cantidad calculada en 700 a 1,000 personas que fueron afectadas por los arrestos en la planta de Greeley, Colo. “Las redadas llevadas a cabo la festividad de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en la planta procesadora de carne Swift & Co. en Greeley … pudieron haber sido legales y un acto de aplicación de la ley, pero no tenían en cuenta a la gente,” decía en la carta avalada por la diócesis.

Por otro lado, la “League of United Latin American Citizens” (Liga de Ciudadanos Latinoamericanos Unidos), la “Mexican-American Legal Defense and Education Fund” (Defensa Legal Mexicanoameriana y Fundación de Educación), la “National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials Educational Fund” (Fondo de Educación de la Asociación Nacional de Latinos Electos y Funcionarios Elegidos) y el “National Council of La Raza” (Consejo Nacional de La Raza). Y sin embargo, las redadas no han reducido en forma significativa la cifra de la población de inmigrantes sin documentación, y no han exterminado a patrones sin escrúpulos que les dan trabajo y explotan a los trabajadores inmigrantes”, se decía en la carta.

Se hacía notar que la empresa Swift & Co. había estado intentando obtener las leyes sobre la manera de contratar a inmigrantes, pero que el programa piloto básico de la agencia de Coacción de Inmigración y Acción Aduanal que la compañía utilizó no era el adecuado. Los grupos demostraron su preocupación de que se haya utilizado la aparición personal y racial para interrogaciones, y que las autoridades les hayan impedido a los familiares, clérigos y representantes legales que hablaran con los que habían sido detenidos.

El Papa lamenta muertes por enfermedades curables, ve derecho a tratamiento

CEDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS)— Los enfermos incurables y terminales tienen derecho a tratamiento médico y a ayuda espiritual para aliviar su sufrimiento y ayudarles a morir con dignidad, dijo el papa Benedicto XVI.

En su mensaje anual para el Día Mundial de los Enfermos el Papa también denegó el hecho que demasiada gente pobre y gente en naciones subdesarrolladas están muriendo de enfermedades que son curables.

“La iglesia desea apoyar al enfermo incurable y terminal haciendo un llamado a políticas sociales justas que puedan ayudar a eliminar las causas de muchas enfermedades y pidiendo un cuidado mejorado para los moribundos y para aquellos para los cuales no hay remedio médico disponible”, dijo el Papa en el mensaje publicado el 13 de diciembre.

El Día Mundial de los Enfermos es celebrado el 11 de febrero, la fiesta de Nuestra Señora de Lourdes. En el 2007 la conferencia y la Misa especial por el Día Mundial de los enfermos en Port Jefferson, New York, el 11 de febrero, 2006. (CNS foto Gregory A. Shemitz, LONG ISLAND CATHOLIC)

El papa dijo que los profesionales del cuidado médico y los parroqueles católicos desean ayudar a los enfermos y “estar a su lado ayudándole en su momento de necesidad y haciendo así presente la propia misericordia caritativa de Cristo por los que sufren”.

Una mujer recibe los Santos Obispos durante la Misa especial por el Día Mundial de los enfermos en Port Jefferson, New York, el 11 de febrero, 2006. (CNS foto Gregory A. Shemitz, LONG ISLAND CATHOLIC)

Empezando una vida nueva

Programa para Separados, Divorciados y Viudos

“Empezando Una Vida Nueva” un programa para personas que están pasando por el dolor de una separación, un divorcio, o muerte de su cónyuge. El grupo se reúne una vez por semana por diez semanas y su propósito es de compartir destrezas de superación que otras personas han aprendido, encontrar nuevos amigos/as que caminaran con usted hacia el futuro, perdonar, adquirir aceptación y más. “Empezando Una Vida Nueva” comenzará el lunes, 15 de Enero, 2007 a las 7 p.m. en la Iglesia de Todos los Santos (en el salón nuevo), 214 N.W. 20th St. en Fort Worth. Si desea registrarse o quiere más información favor de hablar con Carmen Zacarias al 682-472-8517.
Mensage papal de paz enfatiza derechos humanos aun cuando terrorismo azota

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Los derechos humanos básicos deben ser respetados aun cuando enfrentemos potencialmente un ataque terrorista o en medio de la guerra, dijo el Papa Benedicto XVI en su mensaje para el Día Mundial de la Paz 2007.

“La paz está basada en el respeto por los derechos de todos”, dijo el Papa en su mensaje para la conmemoración del 1 de enero.

El mensaje, “La persona humana, el corazón de la paz”, fue enviado a los jefes de estado de todo el mundo y emitido el 12 de diciembre en conferencia de prensa en el Vaticano.

El mensaje del Papa incluyó oraciones por la paz para países devastados por la guerra tales como El Líbano, preocupación especial por las víctimas infantiles de la violencia, condenación de la continua proliferación nuclear y preocupación por el potencial de conflictos violentos por los recursos de energía.

La base de cualquier esperanza de paz, dijo el Papa, es un reconocimiento de que cada persona humana es creada a imagen y semejanza de Dios y, por lo tanto, está dotada con una dignidad y con derechos que no pueden ser usurpados por nadie.

La mayoría de los países de todo el mundo han adoptado los principios de la ley humanitaria internacional, reconociendo que esta aplica en situaciones de conflicto así como en tiempos de paz, dijo el Papa.

“Desdichadamente, no hablamos de casos pasados, ésta no ha sido implementada considera- do en ciertas situaciones recientes de guerra”, dijo el Papa.

Citando específicamente la guerra de julio en El Líbano entre las milicias de Hezbolá e Israel, el Papa dijo que el deber de proteger, ayudar y evitar involucrar la población civil “fue en gran parte ignorado”.

“La situación en El Líbano que desgarga el corazón y la nueva forma de conflicto, especialmente desde que la amenaza terrorista desató totalmente nuevas formas de violencia, exigen que la comunidad internacional reafirme la ley humanitaria internacional y la aplique a todas las situaciones actuales de conflictos armados”, dijo el Papa.

Aunque reconociendo las dificultades presentes por la amenaza del terrorismo, el Papa dijo que los países deben realizar “una reflexión profunda sobre los límites éticos del uso de métodos modernos para garantizar la seguridad interna”.

El cardenal Renato Martino, presidente del Consejo Pontificio para Justicia y Paz, dijo a reporteros en el Vaticano el 12 de diciembre que la lucha global contra el terrorismo puede ser vista como “la Cuarta Guerra Mundial. La Guerra Fría fue la tercera”.

El cardenal continuó: “Pero esta guerra no tiene los parámetros de las guerras que experimentamos en la historia. Esto debe empujar a los países a preguntar ‘¿qué debemos hacer? y a desarrollar regula-cliones’ que provean seguridad internacional”.

El Papa también condenó como violación de la dignidad humana, y como amenaza contra la paz, las situaciones en las cuales los individuos no están en libertad de practicar su fe religiosa, sea porque un régimen nacional o una sociedad decide que puede determinar quién goza de cuáles derechos, ambas, la dignidad humana y la paz, son amenazadas, dijo el Papa.

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El mensaje, “La persona humana, el corazón de la paz”, fue enviado a los jefes de estado de todo el mundo y emitido el 12 de diciembre en conferencia de prensa en el Vaticano.

El mensaje del Papa incluyó oraciones por la paz para países devastados por la guerra tales como El Líbano, preocupación especial por las víctimas infantiles de la violencia, condenación de la continua proliferación nuclear y preocupación por el potencial de conflictos violentos por los recursos de energía.

La base de cualquier esperanza de paz, dijo el Papa, es un reconocimiento de que cada persona humana es creada a imagen y semejanza de Dios y, por lo tanto, está dotada con una dignidad y con derechos que no pueden ser usurpados por nadie.

La mayoría de los países de todo el mundo han adoptado los principios de la ley humanitaria internacional, reconociendo que esta aplica en situaciones de conflicto así como en tiempos de paz, dijo el Papa.

“Desdichadamente, no hablamos de casos pasados, ésta no ha sido implementada considerados en ciertas situaciones recientes de guerra”, dijo el Papa.

Citando específicamente la guerra de julio en El Líbano entre las milicias de Hezbolá e Israel, el Papa dijo que el deber de proteger, ayudar y evitar involucrar la población civil “fue en gran parte ignorado”.

“La situación en El Líbano que desgarga el corazón y la nueva forma de conflicto, especialmente desde que la amenaza terrorista desató totalmente nuevas formas de violencia, exigen que la comunidad internacional reafirme la ley humanitaria internacional y la aplique a todas las situaciones actuales de conflictos armados”, dijo el Papa.

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Los obispos de Florida estimulan a los católicos a que actúen a favor de los trabajadores agrícolas

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (CN$) — Con estímulo para los católicos y toda la gente de buena voluntad a fin de que “se vea en dónde se necesita el amor y se actúe acorde”, los obispos de Florida exhortaron a que se considere cómo todas las cosas, desde decisiones del consumidor hasta acciones políticas del gobierno tienen efecto sobre los trabajadores más vulnerables del estado.

En la nueva carta pastoral de los obispos, titulada “Hona a la Dignidad del Trabajo: Un Llamado a la Solidaridad con los Trabajadores Agrícolas de Florida y Otros Trabajadores Vulnerables”, se hace una mención hacia acciones específicas que puedan poner en práctica los católicos personalmente y su familia respectiva, las parroquias, las instituciones católicas, las agencias de gobierno y otras entidades.

“Este es un momento adecuado para llamar la atención hacia la dignidad humana de personas que tienen diferentes antecedentes y pertenecen a diferentes países; especialmente personas de México y Centroamérica, pero también haitianos, afroamericanos, puertorriqueños, vietnamitas y otros, que han venido a Florida a trabajar en la agricultura, nuestra segunda más grande industria”, dijo el obispo John H. Ricard de Pensacola-Tallahassee en una rueda de prensa el 11 de diciembre en Tallahassee.

El documento, publicación de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Florida, que es el medio de cabildo de los obispos, fue escrito como respuesta ante situaciones que afectan a los trabajadores agrícolas y que fueron identificadas en el Foro del Trabajador Agrícola del mes de octubre del año 2005. Al foro de discusión pública asistieron unos 50 expertos del estado y del país y compartieron su respectiva perspectiva sobre la agricultura y el trabajo agrícola.

“Fue una verdadera reunión de compañeros. El comisionado de agricultura y representantes de los trabajadores agrícolas no solamente se conocieron, sino que se sentaron a la mesa juntos. El foro proporcionó la base para un respeto y dignidad mutuos”, dijo Nancy Powers, coordinadora del Proyecto de Solidaridad con los Trabajadores Agrícolas que depende de la Conferencia Católica.

Aludiendo a una cita del papa Juan Pablo II, en el primer párrafo del documento se decía: “El trabajo es bueno y necesario para la dignidad humana. El trabajo existe para la persona humana. La persona no existe para el trabajo”. Y seguía colocando los asuntos dentro del marco de las enseñanzas de la Iglesia Católica.

En la tradición católica, los cuatro principios de justicia son: la dignidad dada por Dios a cada persona humana, el bien común, la subsistencia (principalmente por el que se emana que las cosas deben ser hechas a un nivel el más simple, más descentralizado y más local posible) y solidaridad.

Si se dejan guiar por estos principios, se dice en la carta pastoral, los habitantes de la Florida no tolerarían el estado de cosas reinante. “Entraríamos en acción en situaciones en las cuales, como lo dijo Juan Pablo II, ‘estemos en posición de evitar, eliminar o al menos limitar ciertos males sociales’”.

La Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de la Florida publicó su primer documento sobre trabajadores agrícolas en 1977. En el nuevo documento se dice que se han logrado avances significativos en las tres décadas que han transcurrido “sin embargo, los problemas de pobreza y falta de poder descritos en ese documento continúan siendo familiares”.

Y haciendo un llamado para que el gobierno intervenga, en la carta pastoral se aboga por fondos para habitación de inmigrantes, reglamentos más estrictos sobre seguridad en el lugar de trabajo, aplicación de las leyes de trabajo existentes, entrenamiento para patrones y trabajadores sobre derechos laborales y seguridad en el lugar de trabajo, compensación extendida a través de los juzgados por violaciones de salario y seguridad, reglamentos más estrictos para subcontratistas, y ajustes que permitan que los trabajadores de temporada califiquen para compensación por falta de empleo.

Durante la rueda de prensa, Michael McCarron, director ejecutivo de la Conferencia Católica de Florida, dijo: “Los obispos de la Florida han estado involucrados desde hace mucho tiempo en la defensa de los trabajadores agrícolas, remontándose a su primer informe mayor de 1977 sobre las condiciones en las que laboran los trabajadores agrícolas”.

Sheila Hopkins, adjunta de la conferencia para asuntos sociales, añadió: “Trabajamos para asegurar que en las prioridades legislativas se incluyan medidas de vivienda segura y asequible, justos salarios y acceso al cuidado de salud y educación”.

Burritos para el alma: Estudiante convierte en ministerio ganancias de competencia

DAYTON, Ohio (CN$) — Algunos estudiantes universitarios apenas saben cómo se alimentan a sí mismos durante el año, ni imaginen a otros 801. El estudiante Joe Melendrez, codirector de Movimiento Marianista para la asociación gubernamental estudiantil de la Universidad de Dayton reza, en un restaurante cerca del campo universitario de Ohio, durante un almuerzo para extender su misión católica de ser líder sirviendo.

“El trabajo es bueno y necesario para la dignidad humana. El trabajo existe para la persona humana. La persona no existe para el trabajo” — El Papa Juan Pablo II

Joe Melendrez, codirector de Movimiento Marianista para la asociación gubernamental estudiantil de la Universidad de Dayton, oye a una canción de Chipotle — tres burritos al día durante un año y, además, 20 burrito fiestas — para extender su misión católica de ser líder sirviendo. (CN$ photo/Larry Burgess, University of Dayton)
President Ford’s pardon of President Nixon seen as healing act

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and recession.

He liked to describe himself as “a moderate in domestic affairs, a conservative in fiscal affairs, and a dyed-in-the-wool internationalist in foreign affairs.”

In his 1979 autobiography, *A Time to Heal*, he said he regarded healing the country after Watergate as his greatest accomplishment.

The single most important act in that effort, taken a month after he was sworn in, was to pardon his disgraced predecessor, Richard M. Nixon, of any crimes he may have committed in the Watergate cover-up. It was an action that provoked far wider and deeper anger than he had expected, but it prevented a lengthy trial that almost surely would have hied the nation in deeper divisions and bitterness.

He said he pardoned Nixon for the nation’s sake, not Nixon’s.

The first president to take office after the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court decisions requiring states to allow abortion virtually on demand, Ford favored a constitutional amendment prohibiting abortion on the federal level was needed so that all states would have to ban the practice.

Ford, who was Episcopalian, won some favor from Catholic officials because of his support of federal aid to parochial schools, his increase of U.S. food aid in the face of widespread famine in 1975, his welcoming of Vietnamese refugees, his support for immigration reform that made family reunification easier, and his efforts at detente with the Soviet Union.

But the bishops opposed his domestic policies of reducing the food stamp program and other areas of social welfare. He was criticized by religious leaders for vetoing a public works program that would have created 600,000 new jobs and for supporting covert CIA operations that involved using missionaries as information sources—a policy seen as undermining missionary activity.

Against arguments from church leaders that in vetoing several social welfare bills he was not sensitive to the needs of the poor and unemployed, he said in a 1976 interview, “If I approved every bill that Congress enacted, we would impose the cruelest tax of all on all our people, which is inflation.”

In fact, he lowered the rate of inflation from about 9 percent at the start of his term to less than 6 percent by the end; under his successor, President Jimmy Carter, inflation zoomed into double digits, peaking at 13.5 percent in 1980 and contributing significantly to a long-term rise in conservative influence in U.S. politics.

In a speech at the 41st International Eucharistic Congress, held in Philadelphia in 1976, Ford expressed concern about the “growing irreverence for life” in the United States. A month later, in a letter to a delegation of U.S. bishops that was released following an hourlong meeting with them in the White House, he spelled out his convictions on a number of issues of concern to the bishops, including abortion.

“Abortion on demand is wrong,” he said, adding that every state should have a constitutional right to control abortion and expressing his belief that such laws need to “recognize and provide for exceptional cases.”

After the Vietnam War ended, he established a Clemency Board that included two nationally known priests—the Notre Dame University president, Holy Cross Father Theodore M. Hesburgh, and the U.S. bishops’ secretary for social development and world peace, Msgr. Francis Lally—to deal on a case-by-case basis with Vietnam War opponents who had resisted the draft or deserted the military for reasons of conscience.

He met with Catholic leaders on several occasions to discuss issues the country faced, including abortion, domestic health and welfare policies, Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees, immigration law reform, and issues of humanitarian aid and human rights in U.S. foreign policy.

In 1975, during a trip to Europe, he met with Pope Paul VI. In August 1975, as thousands of refugees from Indochina were pouring into the country, he visited the resettlement offices of the U.S. Catholic Conference (now U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops) at Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, to pay tribute to the contributions of the USCC, which was then resettling over half the refugees.

He nearly doubled funding for the U.S. Food for Peace Program and in a 1975 speech at Notre Dame warned against letting in smoking and economic problems at home lead to withdrawal from U.S. responsibilities toward poorer nations. “There is no safety for any nation in a hungry, ill-educated, and dangerous world,” he said.

Gerald Rudolph Ford was born July 14, 1913, in Omaha, Nebraska, and was named Leslie King Jr. When he was 2, his mother divorced his abusive husband and moved to Grand Rapids, Michigan. There she met and married Gerald R. Ford, who adopted Leslie and gave him his own name. The future president did not learn until he was 17 that his stepfather was not his biological father.

Ford graduated from the University of Michigan in 1935 and Yale Law School in 1941. He served in the Navy, 1942-46, and joined a law firm in Grand Rapids following his military service. In 1948 he was elected to the House of Representatives, where he served for the next 25 years, the last eight as Republican minority leader.

In October 1973, when Nixon’s vice president, Spiro T. Agnew, resigned after pleading no contest to tax fraud charges, Ford became the first U.S. vice president chosen under the 25th Amendment’s provisions for filling a vacancy in that post by presidential nomination and congressional confirmation. Congressional leaders on both sides of the aisle had urged Nixon to nominate Ford because of his personal integrity and reputation for bipartisanship.

When Nixon resigned the following year, Ford became the first man to achieve the presidency without election to national office.

Carter narrowly beat Ford in the 1976 presidential race. In his inaugural address Carter paid tribute to his predecessor, thanking him “for all he has done to heal our land.”

Upon his return to private life, Ford and his wife, Betty, moved to Rancho Mirage. He is survived by her and their four children, Michael, Jack, Steven, and Susan, and their families.
The Vogels honor their family members through their gifts to Catholic schools

The Vogels never expected recognition for their altruism but are looking forward to the event as a celebration of everything they cherish in life — their children, their Christian faith, and Catholic education. Knowing their legacy will touch the lives of future generations is the reward they most covet.

We never had a lot of frills but there was never a time when we couldn’t buy a new pair of shoes when needed,” says Vogel, who formed before working his way up to the post of chief accountant for the Katy Railroad. “Money for charitable endeavors came later in life.”

Both Ruth and Bill Vogel were the youngest members of their families, and, over the years, they cared for older brothers and sisters who had no one else to look after them.

“We now feel we owe it to those family members to use their money for good causes and to perpetuate the Vogel name on their behalf,” he explains. “Trying to provide Catholic school guidance seems a logical and worthwhile endeavor they would be proud of.”

One member of the couple’s large, extended family sees first-hand the fruits of their philanthropy, Chad Riley, the principal at Sacred Heart School in Muenster, is married to one of the Vogel’s granddaughters, Caryn. The family’s endowment fund is one of several programs that provides tuition assistance to needy students at the Pre-K through 12th grade school. Selected as a Blue Ribbon campus by the U.S. Department of Education, Sacred Heart’s secondary level was named one of the top 50 Catholic high schools in the country.

“The scholarship money gives families who are struggling financially the opportunity to give their children a Catholic education,” explains Riley, a second-year principal. “It gives me a sense of pride to know I’m connected to a family committed to promoting the ideals of Catholic education.”

Riley and other members of the Vogel clan will watch as the family patriarch and his wife are honored for their generosity and dedication to others at the 20th annual Catholic School banquet Saturday, Jan. 27, at the Fort Worth Convention Center. The Vogels never expected recognition for their altruism but are looking forward to the event as a celebration of everything they cherish in life — their children, their Christian faith, and Catholic education. Knowing their legacy will touch the lives of future generations is the reward they now enjoy.

“We believe it’s important that all Catholic children have the opportunity to gain from a Christian environment and education. That’s why we started three Catholic school endowment funds,” Vogel declared. “The scholarships they will provide will grow and grow and be there forever!”

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Umbert the Unborn
by Gary Cangemi

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RESPECT LIFE MASS
All are invited to attend the annual Respect Life Mass. This year, in observance of the 40th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion, the Mass will be celebrated at the Cathedral of St. Patrick, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. For more information, contact the diocesan Family Life Office.

SCHOOLS BANQUET
Each year the Diocese of Fort Worth honors outstanding men and women from the Catholic schools, for their commitment to sustaining and enhancing the mission of Catholic schools. They will be honored at its annual Schools Banquet scheduled for Jan. 27 at the Fort Worth Convention Center, 1111 Houston Street in downtown Fort Worth. Tickets are priced at $75 per person. Proceeds will benefit the Bishop’s Scholars Fund, a diocesan tuition assistance program. Everyone is invited to celebrate with their support and commitment to Catholic education. For more information, or to register, call (800) 470-2453 or visit the Web site at www.sampg.org. All conversations will be kept confidential.

GRIEF SUPPORT
Starting a New Life is a ministry group that offers support for widowed individuals, both married and widowed individuals. The confidential support group was created to help people work through the grief process of losing someone, and to help them to move forward in their lives. The next session will be held Jan. 22 from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For more information, contact Helen Engle at (817) 374-1288 or hengle@stgabriel.org, or Kenis Gamble at (817) 626-9382. Information is also available online at www.wm.seowel.com.

WORLD MARRIAGE DAY
World Marriage Day is celebrated nationally on the second Sunday in February. This year it falls on Feb. 11. Now is the time to gather a committee to plan a celebration. The diocese encourages Deacon Dick Stojak, diocesan director of Family Life. Information packets containing ideas for programs and events for World Marriage Day are available through the diocesan Family Life Office. For a copy of the material or any additional information, contact (817) 336-2556. Materials are also available online at www.wm.wne.org.

MINISTRY FOR GAYS / LESBIANS
The Diocese of Fort Worth has offered a unique program for gay and lesbian Catholics, other Sexual Minorities, and their Families. They will offer an evening of prayer and conversation for reservations, contact the diocese of Fort Worth at (817) 560-3300 ext. 280.

RETRIEVAL WEEKEND
Retrieval is an intense, weekend retreat for couples struggling in their relationships. The next weekend program, sponsored by the Family Ministry of Diocese of Fort Worth, will be held Jan. 19-21. For information or to register, call (800) 470-2453 or visit the Web site at www.sampg.org. All conversations will be kept confidential.

LIFE AFTER LOSS
A free six-week series for anyone who has experienced the death of a loved one will be held at Harris Methodist Hospital, in the HMFW 2nd Floor Conference Room, located on the first floor of the Harris Tower on 1031 Pennsylvania Ave., Fort Worth. The program, sponsored by the Department of Pastoral Care and the American Cancer Society, will be held from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. each Thursday, beginning Feb. 15 and ending March 19. Pre-registration is required. For more information or to register, call Dora Saul (817) 250-2092.

Would the following person call (817) 560-3300 ext. 200.

EDDIE BOLE BARD

BEGINNING EXPERIENCE
The Regnum Christi Church invites all men, for those who have lost a spouse due to death, divorce, or separation. The weekend retreat provides an environment and tools to help participants put closure on the past, and to create a new beginning in the present. The next weekend will be held from Friday, 7 p.m. to Sunday, 11 a.m., at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street, Fort Worth. For more information, call metro (817) 374-1288 or the Dallas/Fort Worth BE team at dfev@hotmail.com.

NATURAL FAMILY PLANNING
The Regnum Christi Church will offer a Ministry for those who wish to have natural family planning classes. The classes include meetings at intervals, engaged couples are encouraged to participate. Participants must be married to participate. The next class will be held Feb. 25, from noon until 4 p.m. at The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 Sout in West Fort Worth. Young women, ages 15 to 24, are invited to attend this class along with their maternal grandmother, or another special woman in their lives. Pre-registration is required. Please call (817) 560-2452 ext. 201. For information about becoming a Natural Family Planning professional, call Nancy Novak at (817) 656-9833 or Kathy Stojak at (817) 773-8096.

POLKA MASS
The Czech community, along with Father Robert Thames, from Sacred Heart Parish in Seymour in the Fort Worth Diocese, will offer a Mass the second weekend of January. The Mass will be held in Arlington Jan. 26 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, contact Lisa Wynne at (817) 483-8362 or e-mail to mnalisa777@yahoo.com.

MISSIONARY REFLECTION
Father Robert Thames, a Missionary priest from the Knights of Columbus, will offer a morning of prayer and reflection Jan. 24 from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 Sout in Fort Worth. Father Thames has been a missionary in Mexico and Bolivia for over 25 years. He has attended several workshops and traveled through the Amazon. He has worked in impoverished parishes in Mexico and Central America. Father Thames is a simple, profound preacher who preaches using the words of Jesus through his example and experience. He invites and challenges others to live their lives as Jesus intended and to participate in the mission. Participants are asked to bring a Bible. For more information or to make arrangements, contact Josie Castilla at (817) 560-2452 ext. 255 or e-mail jcastilla@catholic.org.

CATECHIST PRESENTATION
Dr. Sandra Kennedy will offer a presentation entitled “What is a Catechist?” at Good Shepherd Church, 1080 Tinker Road in Colleyville, Feb. 1, from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. All catechists, directors of religious education, and others with an interest in religious education are invited to attend the free presentation. For more information, or to register, contact Kelly or Ginny Phoenix at (817) 421-1387.

HOMESCHOOLING MEETING
Parents interested in Catholic home schooling for their children are invited to an information meeting sponsored by the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., for elementary and middle school children. The meeting will be held in Arlington Jan. 26 from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. For more information, contact Lisa Wynne at (817) 483-8362 or e-mail to mnalisa777@yahoo.com.

YOUTH MINISTRY
St. Gabriel Catholic Community in McKinney is a youth parish of 2,000 plus families seeking a spirit-filled servant leader to coordinate its developed, yet quickly growing, youth ministry’s vision of “Get It Live it, Pass It On.” Primary roles include overseeing youth programming, coordination of the school comprehensive programming, directing the high school youth nights, and helping to develop events. The ideal candidate is a unified, nourishing environment, giving attention to empowering adult and youth volunteers. He or she will help to demonstrate strong leadership, communication, and organizational skills. Bachelor’s degree in theology, ministry, or related field required; youth ministry certificate preferred. Details may be found at www.stgabriel.org. To apply, submit resume to Mike Seibold, 110 St. Gabriel Way, McKinney 75071 or by e-mail to mboswell@stgabriel.org.

HR DIRECTOR
The Diocese of Fort Worth is seeking a director of Human Resources. This position has responsibility for policy development and implementation for the parishes and schools of the diocese. Participants are required to find someone who has a minimum of three years experience in human resource administration demonstrating sound judgment, ability to handle human relations, conflict management, compensation, and federal and Texas Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) matters. An understanding of the teachings of the Church is a plus. The ideal candidate will be responsible for keeping abreast of legislative changes that impact employees. For information or to apply, contact Steve Loomis at (817) 483-8362 or e-mail to sloomis777@yahoo.com.

ASSISTED LIVING ATTENDANTS
Catholic assistance in South Arlington seeks professional, pro-life, experienced attendants to join our community. This position requires a compassionate, dedicated and compassionate person eager to serve the elderly in a loving, nurturing, and respectful environment. For information or to apply, contact Carol/Linda at (817) 548-7211.

SERVICES AVAILABLE
Topsoil, sand, gravel, washed materials, and decorative rock for construction purposes. Custom mowing lots and services. Call (817) 732-4083.

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This year’s Catholic School Banquet honorees seek to give to others in a circle of blessings

by Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

Ask Bill Vogel about his selection as this year’s Catholic School banquet diocesan honoree, and the 82-year-old beams with the youthful enthusiasm of a schoolboy.

“This award gives me that same warm fuzzy feeling that I used to get when my parents or Sister Edwina said, ‘Bill, you did good!’” explains Vogel referring to the nun who taught him in the 7th and 8th grades at St. Patrick Elementary School in Parsons, Kansas. “My wife, Ruth, and I are very grateful that events such as this steer attention to the importance of education — particularly the combination of education and religion. Children are the future of the world.”

And as the parents of seven children, 23 grandchildren, and 18 great grandchildren, nothing is more important to Ruth and Bill Vogel than family, faith, and the future of both.

“As our family grew, we realized it was important that our children not only do their reading and writing, but also learn that religion was not just a bunch of dates and rules to be learned,” he says. “It’s a way of life and the key to the salvation of their souls.”

It was an ideology heeded by the couple’s offspring. Eldest son, Gary, is an ordained deacon in the Diocese of Dallas. Daughter, Mary Vogel, taught at Immaculate Conception School in Denton and is now choir director at St. Thomas Church in Pilot Point. Her sister, Susan Vogel, is also a choir director at St. Mary’s Church in Sherman. Nancy Kirk is a religious education teacher at Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls. Teri Reeves is a parishioner at Immaculate Conception Church. Joseph Vogel attends St. Louis Church in Austin, and Jacqueline Bresnahan is a member at St. Ann Church in Coppell.

Like their father, all of the Vogel children attended Catholic elementary school, first in Kansas and then in Texas. The family moved to the Lone Star State in 1957, eventually settling across the street from the old Immaculate Conception Church in Denton.

“We always lived close to the church,” says Ruth Vogel, who converted to Catholicism shortly before marrying her husband. “We wanted our children to be able to walk back and forth to the parish school, but we also liked to make short solo visits to church for quiet prayer.”

Ensuring their youngsters could easily receive a Catholic education was a priority for transplanted Midwesterners. Looking back on his own schooling, Bill Vogel still treasures the years spent under the tutelage of the Sisters of St. Joseph. Each

SEE THE VOGELS, p. 22

This photo of the Vogel clan, taken at the couple’s 60th anniversary celebration in June, went out with Bill and Ruth’s 2006 Christmas cards. With Bill and Ruth Vogel, front and center, surrounded by their seven children, the text tells us of the growth of the family to include a legacy of 23 grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren.