Pope prays for victims of Haiti quake; archbishop’s body found

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI prayed for victims of a massive earthquake in Haiti and urged the international community to provide generous assistance to the stricken population of the Caribbean nation.

The victims included Archbishop Joseph Serge Miot of Port-au-Prince.

“The lifeless body of Archbishop Joseph Miot of Port-au-Prince was found this morning under the rubble of the archbishops’ residence,” L’Osservatore Romano said in a Page 1 story Jan. 13.

Archbishop Bernardito Auza, the Vatican’s apostolic nuncio in Haiti, told the Vatican missionary news agency Fides: “Port-au-Prince is completely devastated. The cathedral and the archbishop’s residence, all the big churches, all the seminaries are reduced to rubble.”

Pope Benedict made his appeal at the end of his general audience Jan. 13, some 12 hours after a magnitude 7 earthquake.

The victims included Arch¬bishop Joseph Miot of Port-au-Prince.

“Port-au-Prince is completely devastated. The cathedral and the archbishop’s residence, all the big churches, all the seminaries are reduced to rubble.”

Feb. 6, St. Bartholomew Church, Immigration 101:
Committee to offer training to help immigrants over hurdles to citizenship

By Juan Guajardo
Editorial Assistant

The Immigration Steering Committee will hold its first introductory meeting Saturday, Feb. 6 at St. Bartholomew Church in Fort Worth.

The meeting titled “A Journey of Hope: Welcoming the Stranger: A Call for Action,” will present Catholic Social Teaching on the topic, give information on the current state of the immigration debate, and orient parishes on how they can prepare to serve the needs of the immigrant community. An overview of what can be expected from a congressional immigration reform package will also be presented.

Deacon Len Sanchez, diocesan director of Community and Pastoral Services, said all parishes are welcome. Dcn. Len’s experience with the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 convinced him that parishes should be prepared to assist immigrants in the case of another reform.

After the enactment of the 1986 bill, Dcn. Len noticed a disturbing trend. He learned im¬

White House rally is a first for the March for Life

By Chaz Muth
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — When organizers of the 37th annual March for Life began planning this year’s event, they wanted to ensure President Barack Obama heard their pro-life message.

So, they are gathering about 3,000 activists to sing, pray, and reiterate their plea to end legal abortion in the U.S. right across the street from his home — the White House — in Lafayette Park the evening before the Jan. 22 march marking the anniversary of the 1973 decision legalizing abortion in the United States.

Participants also will be carrying flashlights in lieu of lit candles, which are not allowed in the park.

It’s the first time in the history of the march that organizers have scheduled a White House vigil the evening before the main event, even though Obama is not the only U.S. president in the past 37 years who supports keeping abortion legal.

Nellie Gray, president of the March for Life Education & Defense Fund — the group that organizes the march — said the motive behind adding the White House venue this year was to make their presence known to the president. She noted that her group didn’t do this when President Bill Clinton was in office because the main event was...
Bishop Vann, U.S. Bishops ask all Catholics to help assure our principles embodied in health care reform

Dear Friends in the Diocese of Fort Worth,

I am writing this short column as I am on retreat with the priests of our Diocese this week.

I have authorized our diocesan Communication Office to notify our parishes about the current status of health care reform legislation and the efforts of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, who have been working with other Catholic agencies as well to make sure that our voice is brought to these sometimes difficult negotiations regarding 1) Abortion funding, 2) Conscience protection, 3) Immigrants and 4) Affordability.

The bulletin inserts which you will see this weekend and prayer intentions which can be used are being sent out to all of the parishes around our country to once again ask your help and involvement in articulating our convictions in these days of final negotiation.

Please be sure to continue to study the latest developments which can be found on the USCCB Web site and then to contact, either by phone, letter or e-mail our senators and representatives in this matter. The study of these bills by the staff at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, in a letter of Jan. 8, concludes that while the conference is studying the Casey/Nelson language carefully to see if it can be improved and brought into line with the Stupak amendment, “the House version best upholds our principles on abortion funding, immigrants, and affordability.”

This is not a matter of “politics” but rather exercising our duty as Catholic citizens in light of our moral and faith-based principles to ensure the inclusion of the most foundational right of all in our legislation: the right to life for all human persons from the moment of conception to that of natural death.

Bishop Kevin Vann
Diocese of Fort Worth

This is not a matter of “politics” but rather exercising our duty as Catholic citizens in light of our moral and faith-based principles to ensure the inclusion of the most foundational right of all in our legislation: the right to life for all human persons from the moment of conception to that of natural death.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3103 • FAX 202-541-3166

URGENT: USCCB NATIONWIDE BULLETIN INSERT

Stop Abortion Funding in Health Care Reform!

• Protect Conscience
• Ensure Affordable Health Coverage
• Allow Immigrants to Purchase Private Health Insurance

As long-time advocates of health care reform, the U.S. Catholic bishops continue to make the moral case that genuine health care reform must protect the life, dignity, consciences and health of all, especially the poor and vulnerable. Health care reform should not advance a pro-abortion agenda in our country.

• On November 7, the U.S. House of Representatives passed major health care reform that reaffirms the essential, longstanding and widely supported policy against using federal funds for elective abortions and includes positive measures on affordability and immigrants.

• On December 24, the U.S. Senate rejected this policy and passed health care reform that requires federal funds to help subsidize and promote health plans that cover elective abortions. All purchasers of such plans will be required to pay for other people’s abortions through a separate payment solely to pay for abortion.

• Outside the abortion context, neither bill has adequate conscience protection for health care providers, plans or employers.

• These two bills must now be combined into one bill that both the House and Senate will vote on in final form. Provisions against abortion funding and in favor of conscience protection, affordability, and immigrants’ access to health care must be part of a fair and just health care reform bill, or the final bill must be opposed.

ACTION: Contact your Representative and Senators today by e-mail, phone or FAX.
• To send a pre-written, instant e-mail to Congress go to www.usccb.org/.
• Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at: 202-224-3121, or call your Members’ local offices.

Contact info can be found on Members’ web sites at www.house.gov & www.senate.gov.

MESSAGE—HOUSE:
“I am pleased that the House health care bill maintains the longstanding policy against federal funding of abortion. I urge you to work to uphold essential provisions against abortion funding, to include full conscience protection and to assure that health care is accessible and affordable for all. Until and unless these criteria are met, I urge you to oppose the final bill.”

MESSAGE—SENATE:
“I am deeply disappointed that the Senate health care bill fails to maintain the long-standing policy against federal funding of abortion and does not include adequate protection for conscience. I urge you to support essential provisions against abortion funding, similar to those in the House bill. Include full conscience protection and assure that health care is accessible and affordable for all. Until and unless these criteria are met, I urge you to oppose the final bill.”

WHEN: Votes in the House and Senate on the final bill are expected in January.

Act today! Thank You!

Updated 1/7/10
**Young adult Justice Rocks conference to be held Jan. 23**

By Michele Baker

Correspondent

On Saturday, Jan. 23 the Service and Justice Team of the Young Adult Council will host “Justice Rocks,” a social justice conference for young adults. The day-long bilingual event will take place at St. Vincent de Paul Church, at 8119 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd. in Arlington beginning at 11 a.m. and will include group breakout sessions, exhibition booths for community service organizations, and an evening concert.

“This event is about Catholic Social Teaching,” said organizer Brittany Caldwell of St. Thomas Apostle Parish in Fort Worth. “The Service and Justice Team of the Young Adult Ministry has done a number of service projects, but we really wanted to tie in those efforts with justice issues. That’s one of the goals of our team.”

The conference will feature keynote addresses from Ralph McCloud, director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and Heather Reynolds, president and CEO of Catholic Charities of Fort Worth. Major talks of “Justice Rocks” will be in English, but simultaneous translation with headsets will be available. Two of the breakout sessions will be in Spanish.

Austin-based folk singer/songwriter Grace Pettis will perform a concert from 8 to 9 p.m., followed by Christian band Soundwave from 9 to 10 p.m. Tejano band, juntos con Cristo will be playing in another room from 8 to 10 p.m.

“Justice Rocks’ promises to be a great day of faith and fellowship,” said Kevin Prevou, director of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministries for the Diocese of Fort Worth. “Hopefully, people will come away with a better idea of why the Church puts so much focus on social justice.”

Prevou added that the Young Adult Council has been meeting for two years, and its purpose is to be the vehicle to help Young Adult Ministries grow in the diocese.

“At the heart of YAM was to figure out an organizational model to facilitate that plan. At present very few parishes have ministry programs geared specifically to young adults,” Prevou said. “Our desire is to bring together young adults from the various parishes throughout the diocese by offering programs designed to engage young adult Catholics.”

All adults between the ages of 18 and 35 are invited to attend “Justice Rocks” Registration is free and includes lunch, dinner, the conference, and concert. Participants may register online at www.fwycam.org/justicerocks by contacting the office of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministries at (817) 560-2452, ext. 261.

AUSTIN-BASED FOLK SINGER/SONGWRITER GRACE PETTIS WILL PERFORM A CONCERT FROM 8 TO 9 P.M., FOLLOWED BY CHRISTIAN BAND SOUNDWAVE FROM 9 TO 10 P.M. TEJANO BAND, JUNTOS CON CRISTO, WILL BE PLAYING IN ANOTHER ROOM FROM 8 TO 10 P.M.

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**Responding to God’s Call**

2010 – A great destiny ahead for religious vocations

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

We begin a fresh new year in the life of our Lord Jesus Christ ready to conquer, with his Spirit, new challenges that the overwhelming majority say cannot be done. But I ask you, why not? All things are possible for God (Mark 10:27).

With almost 200 dioceses in the U.S., only a handful have growing religious communities, male or female, but some are expanding quickly. For example, the Dominican Sisters of St. Cecilia, better known as the Nashville Dominican Sisters, are the largest growing women’s community of sisters in the U.S. with more than 230 sisters and 60 percent of them under the age of 40. Since 1996 they have spread and includes lunch, dinner, the conference, and concert. Participants may register online at www.fwycam.org/justicerocks by contacting the office of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministries at (817) 560-2452, ext. 261.

All adults between the ages of 18 and 35 are invited to attend “Justice Rocks”. Registration is free and includes lunch, dinner, the conference, and concert. Participants may register online at www.fwycam.org/justicerocks by contacting the office of Youth, Young Adult and Campus Ministries at (817) 560-2452, ext. 261.

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**North Texas Catholic**

*Editorial Office: 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, Texas 76108, (817) 560-3300; FAX (817) 244-8839.*

**Circulation Office:** Rita Garber, 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, Texas 76108, (817) 560-3300.

**North Texas Catholic (USPS 751-370)** (ISSN 0889-7020) is published semi-monthly, except for the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly, by the Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, Bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth, 800 West Loop 820 South. For those who are not registered parishioners in the Diocese of Fort Worth, subscription rates are $20 per year, $40 for two years, $60 for three years. Periodical postage paid at Fort Worth, Texas. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to North Texas Catholic, 800 West Loop 820 South, Fort Worth, TX 76108.

**Deadline for information for the North Texas Catholic is noon of Wednesday of the week before the paper is published.**

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**Father Kyle Walterscheid, director of the Office of Vocations, is shown walking out of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster following his ordination to the priesthood in May 2002. Even then, he appeared to be inviting people to ask if they were being called to a vocation.**
Super Bowl Women’s Retreat to focus on dreams

A Super Bowl Women’s Retreat will be held Friday evening, Feb. 5 through Sunday evening, Feb. 7 at the Catholic Renewal Center (CRC) in Mansfield. The theme this year will be “Dreams—Parables of the Soul.”

Sister Margarita Armendariz, spiritual director and retreat leader from the Dioceses of El Paso and Las Cruces, New Mexico, will lead the retreat. Cost is $110, and includes two nights of lodging and meals. For reservations, call (817) 429-2920, by Jan. 29.

St. Peter plans events for Catholic Schools Week

St. Peter the Apostle School, 1201 S. Cherry Ln., White Settlement will celebrate Catholic Schools Week with several special events beginning Sunday, Jan. 31. Families from throughout the diocese are invited. Festivities will include a special Mass, a burrito breakfast sponsored by the St. Peter School Men’s Club, following the 9 a.m. Mass.

The school will hold an open house Wednesday, Feb. 3 starting at 6:30 p.m. The evening will include refreshments and school tours, as well as a chance to view students’ work and meet teachers.

“Muffins with Mom” Feb. 2, and “Donuts for Dad” Feb. 4 will allow the students to bring their parents in for breakfast before class. The breakfasts will start around 7:45 a.m.

For more information, call the school office at (817) 246-2032.

Holy Spirit sisters invite women to vocations weekend Feb. 26-28

The Sisters of the Holy Spirit, a religious institute of Mary Immaculate Conception, invite you to ever wondered what life in a convent is like and how the sisters live, work, and spread the word. An evening of religious knowledge and spiritual sharing. During the weekend, the students will have the opportunity to live in a convent setting. There will be religious community prayer, small group sharing, discernment themes, a spiritual director, overnight Stay, faith practice, and other activities with the sisters.

Registration for the “Come and See” weekend is available on-line at www.shsp.org, under “What’s New?” or by contacting Sister Gabriel Hession, SSND, at (210) 533-5149 or sghession@hotmail.com.

Suicide Survivors program begins in Feb.

Suicide Survivors is a grief recovery program for family members and friends who have lost a loved one to suicide. A new group will begin in February. Groups meet for two hours for eight weeks. For more information, contact (817) 698-9955 or e-mail suicidesurvivors@myhmfc.org.

OLV to host first alumni Mass & dinner

Our Lady of Victory School in Fort Worth will host its first Alumni Mass and Dinner Feb. 6.

OLV is looking for alumni to join their club. OLV has a list and will be like to be included. Those interested should send their information to Rachael Garrett, development director, 3320 Hemphill St., Fort Worth, TX, 76110 or email olv.alumni@yahoo.com.

UD seminar to discuss identity of a Catholic university

The University of Dallas School of Ministry will host its annual Seminar Series panel discussion Monday, Feb. 1, this year. The panel will discuss the identity of a Catholic university, with a focus on the commencement address given to UD 2009 graduates by Bishop Kevin Farrell. The discussion will be held at 7:30 p.m. at the Church of the Incarnation, located at 3966 McKinney Ave., Dallas, on the UD campus. The event is open to public. A reception will be held afterward. For more information, visit the event’s Web site at www.udallas.edu/academics/ministry/someministrations.

Marriage preparation classes start new schedule in January

Classes for Pre Cana, Cate, II, and Today... Tomorrow... Forever, will no longer be held on Sundays. Pre Cana classes will be offered one Saturday a month during the months of June, July, and August when it is published monthly. The deadline to submit information is noon on the Wednesday of the week before the paper is published. Submit info to jrmaccu@fdioc.org. For the Jan. 22 issue, items must be received by noon on Jan. 20. Items for the Feb. issue must be received by noon on Feb. 5.

Ministry with gay, lesbian Catholics begins Jan. 28 at CRC

The next regular meeting of the Fort Worth Diocesan Ministry with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Catholic, Other Sexual Minorities, and Their Families will be held Thursday, Jan. 28, at 7 p.m. at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street, Fort Worth. For more information, contact Father Warren Murphy, TOR, at (817) 927-5385, Dorene Rose at (817) 325-7370, or Sister Dorothy Eggering, SSND, at (817) 283-8601.

FWB Sisters to host ‘Come and See’ weekend Feb. 27-28

The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament are sponsoring the week ends for single Catholic women up to 50 years of age Jan. 25-26, and Feb. 22-23 at the Incarnate Word Convention in Victoria. For those interested in learning more about the life of a sister or in discerning the religious life, call (361) 575-7111 or e-mail fwbsvictoria@yahoo.com, or visit the Web site at www.incarnateword.org for more information about the sisters.

Diocesan Singles Council plans Singles Mass Jan. 30

A Diocesan Singles Mass will be held at 7 p.m., Saturday, Jan. 30, at St. Joseph Church, 1927 SW Green Oaks Blvd., Arlington. All single Catholics and singles in a discerning relationship are invited to join in worship, fellowship, food, and dancing. Attendees are encouraged to bring a friend, a luck item for dinner, and/or nonperishable items for the church pantry. To volunteer with the Diocesan Singles Council, including Mass ministers, contact Rosalie (040) 564-0992.

National Catholic Youth Choir seeks members

The National Catholic Youth Choir is seeking high school singers for the 2010 season. Participants will have an opportunity to meet new friends from across the country, go on a multi-state tour with the choir, and strengthen their faith, according to press materials.

Membership in the choir is open to male and female students, the 10th, 11th, or 12th grades, and will be trained at St. John’s Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota. The choir camp and tour will be held June 15-28. The cost to participate is $900, though scholarships are available.

Application and audition materials are due March 8, and can be found at the Choir’s Web site at www.catholicchoir.org. For more information, contact Dorothy Kanor by e-mail at the choir’s Web site, or phone at (320) 363-3154.

CATH school-group invites parents to info meeting

Parents interested in learning about Catholic homeschooling are invited to an information meeting held in Arlington Friday, Jan. 22 from 7 to 9 p.m. Parents can learn different philosophies of homeschooling, Catholic curriculums available, and the legalities of homeschooling. Experienced homeschoolers will be available to answer questions and show materials.

The presentation is sponsored by Catholics Teaching at Home. CATH is a homeschool group in the Catholic Diocese in the Fort Worth area.

Reservations are required to ensure enough materials are available. To RSVP contact Joyce Yokell at (817) 292-6629 or yokell@charter.net by Jan. 20.

Courage group meets twice monthly

Courage is a spiritual support group for Catholics striving to live chaste lives according to the Catholic Church’s teachings on sexual morality, meets the second and fourth Friday evenings of each month. For more information, e-mail CourageDFW@Catholic.org or call (972) 938-5413.
St. Paul Church programs offer healing for those dealing with divorce and loss of loved ones

St. Paul the Apostle Church, located at 5508 Black Oak Ln. in Fort Worth, will offer a new Divorce Care Series and Grief Share Series, and announces the addition of two companion series, Divorce Care for Kids (DC4K) and Grief Share for Kids (GS4K) to run with them.

The Grief Share Series began Jan. 11 and is held every Monday through April 5. The Divorce Care Series began Jan. 14 and is held every Thursday through April 15 (with the exception of Holy Thursday, April 1). Both programs are held from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. and participants can still register.

The programs are distributed by Church Initiative. Facilitators and helpers in the programs have first-hand experience in their respective programs, have been trained, and have attended “Keeping children Safe.” DC4K and GS4K are geared towards children between five and 12 years of age, and the adult series are for individuals 13 and older. Each of the sessions has appropriate content for the age group.

The purpose of the Divorce Care Series is to help participants realize that it is possible to recover from separation and divorce, organizers say.

“Keeping children Safe.” DC4K and GS4K are geared towards children between five and 12 years of age, and the adult series are for individuals 13 and older. Each of the sessions has appropriate content for the age group.

The purpose of the Divorce Care Series is to help participants realize that it is possible to recover from separation and divorce, organizers say.

The Grief Share Series is to help participants understand that it is possible to recover from grief, organizers say.

“We have helped persons who have lost loved ones for more than 25 years,” Dcn. Aziere adds. “God’s healing presence is visible by the end of the series.”

Although the programs are Scripture-based, they are not Bible studies, Dcn. Aziere says. Professionals in pastoral care, entertainment, psychological, and social services will be featured in the seminars, giving their personal and professional input to help the participants focus on the job of healing.

Both programs are free, though pre-registration is preferred. For more information, contact the church at (817) 738-9925 and leave a name and number. A team member will return calls to answer questions and/or enroll participants into the programs.

Yes, you can be a priest.

Men over 30 have a valuable perspective. It’s time to respond to God’s call.

Contact your vocations director, Rev. Kyle Walterscheid
(817) 560-2452, Ext. 110
kwalterscheid@fwdioc.org

The Diocese of Fort Worth is among 34 sponsors utilizing a program specially designed for seminarians over 30 at Sacred Heart School of Theology.

Sacred Heart youth make pillows and blankets for pregnancy center

The ninth grade religious formation class at Sacred Heart Church in Wichita Falls began a service project in the fall and recently finished pillows and blankets for the mothers attending the parent classes at the Pregnancy Help Center in Wichita Falls. Fleece and stuffing was donated by the parish. Donna Ross and Lorraine Wise are the catechetes.

TRIDENTINE MASS

5:30 P.M. SUNDAY

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También podemos desarrollar programas en español
St. Rita School students celebrate parish centennial history through Christmas program

By Nicki Prevou

Photos by Donna Rykaert

Eight-year-old Rose Behan, a second-grader in Mrs. Cruse’s class at St. Rita School in Fort Worth, shyly nods when asked if she learned a great deal about the history of her parish while preparing for “A Journey Through the Decades,” a Christmas program presented at St. Rita’s parish center on Dec. 16. The program, offered by St. Rita students, was one of several ways this vibrant, multi-cultural parish community — located at 5550 E. Lancaster Ave. in East Fort Worth — has chosen to celebrate its centennial anniversary.

“I was fun,” Rose says softly. “I liked decorating our class Christmas tree with popcorn and fruit, just like they did back in 1910.”

The year 1910, as St. Rita’s school children learned, marked the first full year of life for their parish. Student speakers, musicians, and singers were ranging in ages six to 13 — told the story of their faith community through historical narrative, a slide show of historic photographs, songs, and dance. The musical selections represented the span of the 10 decades that have passed since Miss Mollie Farrell, a single dressmaker residing in what was then the small town of Handley, successfully urged Bishop Edward Dunne to establish a Catholic church for the town of Handley, successfully residing in what was then the small community of Handley.

As the schoolchildren — representing Vietnamese, Hispanic, Indian, African American, and Western European cultures — arrayed in hobble skirts, military uniforms, saddle shoes, and tie-dye shirts, sang Christmas songs from the past 100 years, their admiring parents, teachers, and friends — many of whom are longtime St. Rita parishioners — enjoyed viewing the photographs of parish buildings, landmarks, and celebrations. Memories of milestones such as the 1942 establishment of the still-active St. Vincent de Paul Society, the building of the school and convent in 1954, the 1958 move from the original church site to the current location, the 1969 construction of the parish rectory, and the groundbreaking for the present church in 1974 were creatively shared with the appreciative audience.

Special attention was paid, during the musical stroll down memory lane, to the religious orders that collaborated with diocesan priests and lay parish staff members and volunteers in offering religious education and prayerful leadership through the years, including the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, the Felician Sisters, and Vincentian priests. Father Paul Kahan, the current pastor, is a member of the missionary religious order known as the Society of the Divine Word.

The Dec. 16 program was greatly appreciated by those who support the parish and school, says St. Rita School Principal Kathleen Krick. “The musical provided our community with an opportunity to reflect on the core of who we are, where we came from, and where we are going,” she says. “The students gained a greater appreciation of the efforts of the many people who worked to form our community, especially Miss Mollie Farrell. The musical was certainly a celebration of everything that is St. Rita!”

Mary Pastusek, director of music for both the parish and school, called the long weeks of work to prepare the production “extremely rewarding” for her and for her many volunteer leaders. “This show was particularly important to me because I have spent all of my life since birth at St. Rita’s,” she explains. “I so wanted to capture some of that history. We have so much in this community to celebrate — the wonderful accomplishments of our organizations, our churches, our school, and our church staff members — and this was a fun and creative way of accomplishing that goal.”

Karen and Bill Brookman are looking for more Why Catholic? faith-sharing books. They are the coordinators of the adult catechetical and evangelization program at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller. The program has been so successful there, as in most parishes, that more parishioners are ready to participate when it restarts the first week of Lent.

Actually, Why Catholic? enthusiasm does not have to wait until Ash Wednesday. For Fall 2010, 22-29, RENEW presents, Sister Pat Thomas, OP, and Father Alejandro López-Cardinale will be giving faith formation workshops throughout the diocese. The workshops will explore two prominent themes of this year’s program: Scripture and Tradition.

The interworkshop seminars are one of the three annual series of events in which the RENEW International staff comes to the diocese to assist in the implementation of Why Catholic? Sr. Thomas and Fr. López-Cardinale will return in April for end-of-year retreats with participants and then in September for training with Why Catholic? small community leaders before the new Why Catholic? year begins. A survey that Why Catholic? diocesan coordinator, Father Carmen Mené, OP, completed after the first six faith-sharing sessions revealed that at least 7,998 people took part in 51 parishes and two university Catholic ministry centers using three languages. Actually, Fr. Mené says, the number of participants likely approached 10,000 since a few large parishes did not complete the survey and RENEW reported that it had sold more than twice as many faith-sharing books in Spanish than the number of Spanish-speaking participants reported by the parishes.

Why Catholic? is the adult catechetical and evangelization program that Bishop Kevin Vann has made available to every parish in the diocese. It is a special initiative, started during the diocese’s 40th anniversary year, to enhance the understanding and the living of the faith so that Catholics might spread the faith to others. The major part of Why Catholic? funding comes from the diocesan All Things Possible campaign.

Fr. Mele says that the door is always open for parishes which did not begin Why Catholic? with the rest of the diocese in October of last year. One of the advantages of this program, he said, is its open-endedness. By that, he means that a parish can find its own rhythm in implementing the program. If it chooses to cover two parts of the four-part program in one year, he says, it may do so. Or, he adds, if it wishes to change the order of parts, which are meant to summarize the contents of the Catechesis of the Catholic Church, the parish can also do that.
Celebration to honor SSMN Western Province March 6

By Nicki Prevou
Correspondent

"A Celebration of Gratitude," a one-hour event designed to honor and assist the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, will be held from noon to 1 p.m. on Saturday, March 6, at Nolan Catholic High School, at 4501 Bridge St. in Fort Worth. Bishop Kevin Vann will make opening remarks at the program, which will include brief presentations from other community leaders. Lunch will be provided; there is no admission fee. Participants are asked to register between 11:30 a.m. and noon.

Hundreds of local Catholics are expected to gather in order to visit with the sisters and to pay tribute to the services of education and pastoral ministry provided by the religious congregation — founded in Namur, Belgium — since their arrival in Texas in 1873.

"There is no way to repay the debt of gratitude that is owed to these strong, visionary women," said retired Fort Worth businessman John Unsworth, a member of the congregation’s development board. “And yet, at this point in time, their needs for assistance with medical care and housing expenses are urgent. The March 6 event is an opportunity for their many friends and supporters to gather and to pledge their ongoing financial and emotional support to the congregation.”

Adjacent to St. Patrick Cathedral in downtown Fort Worth is the three-story, French Empire building known as St. Ignatius Academy, established by the Sisters of St. Mary in 1889 as a boarding school for young ladies. Our Lady of Victory Academy, the first racially integrated school in the Fort Worth area, and also a boarding school, was established as a high school for older girls. OLV Academy was built south of downtown in 1910, in an area that was at the time on the edge of Fort Worth. While the OLV Academy building, designed by the Fort Worth architectural firm Sanguinet and Staats, was sold in 1992, the neighboring elementary school, Our Lady of Victory School at 3320 Hemphill Street, is celebrating its 100th anniversary in April of this year. The sisters’ residence, Our Lady of Victory Center, on the same property, adjacent to Our Lady of Victory School, is the motherhouse of the Sisters of St. Mary’s Western Province of the United States.

"The sisters co-founded the University of Dallas and Bishop Dunne High School in Dallas, Notre Dame High School in Wichita Falls, and Nolan Catholic High School and Cassata High School in Fort Worth," said development board member and Texas Christian University professor Dr. Toni Craven. "These women are aging and diminishing in numbers, but they are still a vibrant presence in our community. They are inspiring models of what it means to live fully and generously. We are hoping that those who benefited from their ministry will respond in kind."

For more information about the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur or the luncheon, call the provincial office at (817) 923-8393, e-mail to ssmn137@gmail.com, or visit the sisters’ Web site at www.ssmnwestern.com.

Discernment of Spirits Outside the Abortion Mill

Fr. Michael Kmiotek, CFR

There will be a short break after Mass for refreshments in the Parish hall. Fr. Michael’s talk will be in the Church after the break.

Prayer and Sidewalk Counseling Seminar
February 6, 2010
8:00 A.M till 12:00 Noon
St. Peter the Apostle Church
1201 S. Cherry Lane, White Settlement

Start with the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass 8:00 a.m.
Celebrated by Fr. E. James Hart
Chancellor and Moderator of the Curia
Diocese of Fort Worth

Chuck Pelletier will speak after Fr. Michael on the topic: “Why Sidewalk Counseling? How do you do it?”

Followed by Commissioning of Sidewalk Counselors and closing prayer. This seminar is for those who intend to pray at abortion centers on a regular basis. This seminar is not appropriate for those under 18 years of age, no child care will be available during the seminar.

RSVP to Catholic Respect Life Office: cruth-killgore@fwdioc.org

Catholics United for Life of North Texas, Inc. | 3704 Myrtle Springs Road | Fort Worth, Texas 76116 | (817) 738-1086
Catholic artist John Michael Talbot to perform at St. Francis, other parishes in region

World-renowned Catholic Christian singer John Michael Talbot will be ministering and performing at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine Saturday, Feb. 20 from 7 to 9 p.m.

John Michael Talbot is the founder and minister general of the Brothers and Sisters of Charity at Little Portion Hermitage in Arkansas. The Brothers and Sisters of Charity is an integrated monastic community that includes celibate brothers and sisters, families, and singles.

Talbot was one of the pioneering artists of what has become known as Contemporary Christian Music. He has received awards from the National Academy of Recording Arts and Sciences, the Gospel Music Association, Mercy Corps, and recently, he received the Mother Teresa award. He is the most successful Catholic music recording artist, with 52 albums and sales of at least four million records worldwide.

Talbot is currently touring to raise funds for the rebuilding and maintenance of Little Portion Monastery, which was destroyed by a fire in May of 2008. A “love offering” will be requested. Any checks should be made out to Little Portion.

Talbot will also perform at parishes near the diocese, including Mary Immaculate Church in Farmers Branch on Friday, Feb. 12 from 7 to 9 p.m. and again for a three-evening series Monday through Wednesday, Feb. 22-24, from 7 to 8:30 p.m. each night; St. Ann Church in Coppell Thursday, Feb. 11 from 7 to 9 p.m.; St. Patrick Church in Denison Saturday, Feb. 13 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.; and St. Jerome Church in Waco for a three-evening series from Sunday through Tuesday, Feb. 28-March 2.

For information on these concerts, contact the host parishes.
Diocesan parishes celebrate feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Room at St. George dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe

More than 1,000 people attended a two-day celebration of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. George Church in Fort Worth. Festivities began with a vigil from 11 a.m. Friday, Dec. 11 to 5 a.m. Saturday, Dec. 12. The Dec. 12 feast day celebration began with the singing of Las Mifianitas to Our Lady, and ended Saturday evening with a re-enactment of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Matachines dancing, followed by a procession and 7:30 p.m. Mass inside the church.

After Mass, Father Thu Nguyen, pastor of St. George, blessed and dedicated a recently renovated room inside the church that features a panoramic, hand-painted mural of St. Juan Diego and Our Lady of Guadalupe at dawn in the mountains of Mexico. The mural depicts Juan Diego on his knees adoring Our Lady surrounded by a circle of cherubs and roses. In his tilma is a cluster of roses spilling onto the ground near his hat.

At the entrance of the room is an oversized frame which captures Our Lady’s words to Juan Diego in English and Spanish. Hanging above the frame is a cross that was touched to the missionary image of Our Lady of Guadalupe when it was in Texas in November.

The three-month project was completed by Anita Allen at the request of Fr. Thu, who wanted to honor Our Lady of Guadalupe, patroness of the Americas, and the church’s Hispanic culture in a special way. The room was primarily unused in its former state but now gathers frequent adorers who stop in to light a candle and spend a few minutes alone with Our Lady of Guadalupe. The new room was planned and decorated with the assistance of the Guadalupanas, a Catholic women’s group that honors the Blessed Mother.

Churchgoers proceeded outdoors to enjoy the festivities, including Mariachis, Matachines’ dancing, and an array of Mexican pastries and food.

Fr. Thu Nguyen and artist Anita Allen (left) look at the mural of St. Juan Diego she painted in St. George’s room dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe. (Photo by Tim Boyd)

Rhineland, Knox City Catholics honor Our Lady together

Father Charles Gorantla, HGN, (center) sacramental minister for St. Joseph Parish in Rhineland and Santa Rosa Parish in Knox City, and Matachines from the two parishes pose in front of St. Joseph.

St. Joseph Church in Rhineland held its second annual “Matachines Danza” in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe on Dec. 12, 2009. Parishioners from Santa Rosa Church in Knox City joined in the festivities. Father Charles Gorantla, HGN, serves as sacramental minister for both parishes.

The celebration started at 5 p.m. a.m. with dances, Las Mifianitas and a Rosary. Many gathered for a daylong menu of matachines dancing, folklorico dancers, and Mexican food.

The day ended with a musical procession to the church and a Mass at 5 p.m. A dinner reception, more dances, and a skit portraying the Virgin appearing to Juan Diego followed the Mass.

Catholics Respect Life Office announces events to coincide with Roe anniversary

The Catholics Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth wishes to announce several events to coincide with the 37th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court’s Roe v. Wade decision legalizing abortion.

In addition to a Respect Life Mass held at St. Patrick Cathedral Jan. 9, and a March for Life in Dallas Jan. 16 from the Cathedral Plaza to the Earle Cabell Federal Courthouse, where Roe v. Wade was first filed in 1970, there will also be a Roe Memorial Mass at St. Michael Church in Bedford Friday, Jan. 22, and a Hike for Life in Weatherford Saturday, Jan. 23.

Father Tom Kennedy, associate pastor of St. Michael, will preside over the Jan. 22 liturgy of the Holy Innocents at 7 p.m. in memorial of the Supreme Court decision. There will be a tolling of the bells and placing a rose on the altar for each year since the Roe v. Wade decision became law on Jan. 22, 1973.

St. Stephen Church in Weatherford will host a Hike for Life Jan. 23. All proceeds will go to local crisis pregnancy center, The Grace House. Registration will be from 1:30 to 2 p.m., followed by a beginning ceremony at 2 p.m., and a kickoff at 2:30 p.m. Participants are asked to meet at St. Stephen Church, located at 1802 Bethel Rd. in Weatherford.

People of all faiths and beliefs are encouraged to join in the hike, a peaceful way to defend life, organizers say. Posters and signs are encouraged, though participants are discouraged from displaying graphic images.

For more information, to register, or to donate, visit the hikers’ Web site at www.hikeforlifetexas.com.

Pregnant mothers, unborn children blessed at Loreto House

Monseignor Charles King blesses Viri Garcia (left, in black), a pregnant mother, along with her unborn child, and Loreto House Executive Director Lori Bollig (far left, in blue) during the feast day of Loreto House celebration held Dec. 10 at the Loreto House pregnancy help center in Denton. For half the day, local priests blessed pregnant mothers. The feast day is also celebrated in Loreto, Italy in remembrance of the overnight translation of the Holy House from a region of Croatia to Loreto, Italy. According to tradition, the house was moved by angels (according to catholicculture.org and newadvent.org).

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North Texas Catholic, January 15, 2010 Page 9
Jesus reveals himself and calls us to live in his image through his public ministry

By Lucas Pollice

Happy New Year! As we anticipate the beginning of the next six sessions of Why Catholic? during the holy season of Lent, we continue to go deeper with Why Catholic? with the topic The Public Life of Jesus.

While we know little of his childhood and youth, all four of the Gospels resume the story of the life of Christ at the beginning of his public ministry, which is marked by his baptism by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. It is during these years of ministry that Jesus communicates both the revelation of the Father, as well as reveals and teaches what it means to, and to live, as the image and likeness of God.

The Baptism of Jesus

Many ask the question, why did Jesus need to be baptized? After all, He had no sin. That is a very good question. But what we discover is that Jesus’ baptism in the Jordan is one of the more crucial events in his life. It marks the beginning of his public ministry, but it also had much deeper meaning.

First, Jesus’ baptism is a powerful revelation of his identity and mission as the Son of God. In a sense, it is his commissioning by the Father, revealing that He is truly the “anointed one” who is filled with the Holy Spirit.

Second, it was the will of the Father that baptism become the ordinary and necessary way in which we are literally and totally cleansed of sin and filled with God’s grace. Although Jesus was free of sin and not in need of baptism, his acceptance of the Father’s will elevates baptism to the level of a sacrament. Like Christ, when we come up out of the waters of baptism, we are also anointed with the Holy Spirit, and the Father looks down upon his new son or daughter in Christ with whom He is very pleased. So while Christ’s baptism was not necessary, it does inaugurate his public ministry and also establishes the sacrament of baptism through which we are cleansed of sin, filled with God’s grace and love, and become his sons and daughters.

Jesus battles and destroys the Kingdom of Satan

Immediately after his baptism in the Jordan, Jesus is led by the Spirit into the desert where He prays and fasts for 40 days. This is the time in which Jesus prepares Himself spiritually for his work and mission that is yet to come. But after this time of prayer and fasting is over, Jesus is confronted and tempted by Satan. This is where the battle between the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Satan begins. Satan comes to tempt the New Adam just as he came to tempt the first Adam. However, the circumstances are a little different.

When Satan came to tempt Adam, he was in a paradise in which he enjoyed an abundance of pleasure and joy. He was lacking nothing. However, Jesus is tempted by Satan in a desert after not eating for 40 days. Jesus is hungry and tired. Satan tempted Adam once; and through Eve’s influence, he fell into sin. Jesus is not tempted once by the devil, but three times! However, Jesus resists all three of the temptations perfectly, thus reversing the sin and disobedience of Adam.

While the temptation in the desert is the time that we most powerfully see Jesus battling and overcoming the Kingdom of Satan, Jesus continues to battle the powers of evil and evil spirits throughout his public ministry. We see Him performing numerous exorcisms, commanding the evil spirits to be quiet and leave. Satan has no power over Jesus. However, Jesus resists all three of the temptations perfectly, thus reversing the sin and disobedience of Adam.

The miracles of Jesus

The miracles of Jesus also play a very important role in his life and ministry. They signal the arrival of the Messiah and his Kingdom. The miracles are mighty works and signs of God that accompany the words and teachings of Jesus. They are an important aspect of the mission and the identity of Christ, and show that He was truly sent into the world by the Father. For those who witness Jesus’ power, the miracles offer proof and reveal his identity as the Messiah and Son of God. The miracles of Jesus have two purposes, both of which are to invite belief in Him as the Son of God, and to strengthen the belief of those who have already begun to follow Him. The first purpose is to reveal Jesus’ divinity, that He is truly “God with us.” These miracles are largely miracles in which Jesus is able to manipulate or change nature, an ability only God would have. Examples are: the calming of the storm (Mark 4:35-41), the multiplication of the loaves and fish (Matthew 14:13-21), and the changing of water into wine (John 2:1-11).

We also see miracles that not only clearly reveal Jesus as divine, but also have a second purpose: to restore and heal humanity and to defeat Satan’s kingdom. These would include the numerous miracles of healing such as: the healing of the paralyzed (Luke 5:18-25), the healing of the man born blind (John 9:1-41), and blind Bartimaeus (Mark 10:46-52), the many miracles of exorcism, and above all the miracles of resurrection from the dead, in the case of Jairus’ daughter (Mark 5:35-43), and Jesus’ good friend Lazarus (John 11:3-44).

Jesus as the New Moses

One of the more powerful images of Jesus in all the Gospels is the one portrayed by Matthew in chapters five through seven of his Gospel. These chapters are traditionally called the Sermon on the Mount. Matthew begins chapter five with Jesus going up the mountain. Then we have Him giving a long teaching on the law. However, Jesus’ teaching is based on the Mosaic Law, but he also expands it greatly and calls the children of Israel to a new and more radical way of love and living out the covenant with God. Then Matthew begins chapter eight with Jesus coming down from the mountain. What is significant here is Matthew is presenting Jesus as the New Moses who has come as the Messiah not to abolish the Mosaic Law, but to fulfill it and to establish the law of the Kingdom of the Messiah.

How is Jesus the New Moses? We have to go back to the book of Exodus in the Old Testament. When the Israelites came to the foot of Mount Sinai, God called Moses to the top of Mount Sinai where he spent 40 days there before God. Then Moses came down the mountain with the Ten Commandments, which became the foundation of the Mosaic Law. In Matthew’s Gospel, we have Jesus, the New Moses, going up the mountain teaching and presenting the New Law of the Everlasting Covenant to the people of Israel.

Jesus establishes his Church

Finally, we clearly see in Jesus’ public ministry that He sets forth to establish a visible, institutional Church which will be, until the end of time, the visible manifestation of the Kingdom of God on earth. Christ did not leave us a book of instruction, or merely a set of teachings, but He established a Church founded upon the 12 apostles who would faithfully hand on to each and every generation the fullness of all that Christ is and has revealed to us.

Jesus begins the work of establishing his Church when He immediately calls the 12 apostles at the beginning of his public ministry to accompany Him throughout his ministry so that He may teach, train, and prepare them in a unique way to carry on his mission and work through the Church. Christ also appointed Peter to serve, not only as the head of the body of the apostles, but also as the “Rock” of his Church. He gave the Apostle Peter the authority to teach and govern the Church in a special way as the head of the Church. Thus, Peter’s successors and the successors of the apostles, since the very beginning, have been the visible head of the Church, tending and caring for Christ’s sheep until the Shepherd returns at the end of time. Christ does not just leave for us his example for a way of life, but He leaves a visible, living, tangible Church which will guide us as we follow Christ, Himself.

As we move from the celebration of Christ’s birth at Christmas toward the beginning of the penitential season of Lent, may we, like Mary, continue to ponder within our hearts the words and deeds of Christ so that we may be his instruments and witnesses of love, justice, and peace.

Lucas Pollice is director of Catechesis and Adult Faith Formation and RCIA for the Diocese of Fort Worth, and holds a degree in theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville and has a master’s degree in theological studies from the Institute for Pastoral Theology of Ave Maria University. He is an adjunct professor of theology with the Cardinal Newman Institute in Fort Worth. Lucas and his wife, Mary, have five children, Cecilia, Nicholas, Timothy, Christian, and Julia.
If abortion provisions in the recently passed Senate bill make it into the final “melded” bill, health care reform could die in the House or, surviving, could usher in the most massive expansion of the abortion license since Roe v. Wade.

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According to an essay on abortion authored by Daniel Pruitt, there's never a good reason to terminate a pregnancy, but when the life at stake belongs to a handicapped child the act is especially cruel.

The teenager wrote down his thoughts with an insight and perspective far beyond his 17 years. Born with cystic fibrosis, a genetic disease, he's grown up hearing the argument that abortion is better than giving birth to a child with a mental or physical disability like his. The active, high school athlete has a different viewpoint.

“People think the quality of life won’t be normal,” says Pruitt, whose essay earned him a ticket to the March for Life set for Jan. 22 in Washington, D.C. “But take me for example. I look normal. I’m happy. Being born with a health problem doesn’t have to be such an awful thing.”

The Cistercian Preparatory School junior was one of 22 students who participated in the Youth for Life Essay contest. This year, enough money was raised to offer a scholarship for every teen submitting an entry to attend the national pro-life rally in the nation’s capital.

The top five essays were written by Madelynn Schwind of Lady Margaret Roper School and Our Lady of Lebanon Maronite Catholic Church in Lewisville; Christine Aubert of Our Lady of Grace High School in Roanoke and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller; Pruitt, a member of St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine; Brandon Golhofer of Our Lady of Grace and St. Elizabeth and Michaelaeh Assini of Our Lady of Grace and St. Elizabeth.

The topic for the essay contest was announced at the 10th annual Lock-In for Life sponsored by Youth for Life Dec. 4-5 at St. Andrew School. More than 140 middle and high school students gathered for the event, which included Mass, celebrated by Father Gerald Gordon, TOR, several pro-life speakers, a concert, and late-night basketball games.

The 12-hour stretch of presentations and activities is intense but effective, says Sue Laux, director of Youth for Life, an extension of the diocese’s Catholics Respect Life Office.

“It strengthens young people to know there are others who share their interests, even if those interests are counter-cultural,” she explains.

Adding elements of fun, like music and sports, while delivering a pro-life message, encourages participation. Most teens who come to events like the Lock-In are already concerned about life issues. The goal is to reinforce their beliefs and give them the information needed to promote a culture of life with their peers.

“One young woman I know always considered herself pro-life, but the Lock-In strengthened her resolve,” Laux continued. “She told me most of her peers don’t think a lot about abortion, fetal development, how abortions are performed, or how it damages the mother. Now she has a better understanding of the issue and she’ll be able to share that with her friends.”

Adeline Arth, a sophomore at Carroll High School in Southlake, says most teens would probably say abortion is “OK,” but it’s a topic not brought up on campus.

“It’s one of those discussions no one wants to have because it’s too controversial,” explains the 16-year-old who attends St. Elizabeth Parish.

The first-time Lock-In for Life participant says the all-night event was tiring but worthwhile.

“It was a great faith experience,” Arth adds. “I learned a lot and feel I’m more ready to stand up for life.”

Proceeds from the Lock-In provided airfare scholarships for essay winners to attend the March for Life. Additional funds were raised from tamale sales and donations from the Knights of Columbus and from individuals. The pilgrimage will include Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, evening prayers with Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann, and visits to the Pope John Paul II Cultural Center and Washington’s Holocaust Memorial Museum, just off the Capitol mall.

Pruitt, who is looking forward to the pro-life rally on the steps of the Capitol, will have to make the trip with his medications, inhalers, and other medical equipment he needs to treat his disease. His struggles are something he doesn’t mind sharing with classmates and other friends. Instead of being a liability, he says, in some ways cystic fibrosis has enhanced his life.

“I don’t take things for granted like my friends do,” says the high school cross-country runner who also plays baseball.

“I appreciate even the little things in life. I’ve learned those are the things that matter most.”
Deacon Amado Vallejo looks forward to growing in holiness

Story and Photos by Kathy Cribari Hamer

Correspondent

Amado Vallejo Garcia was ordained to the diaconate on the feast of the Immaculate Conception, the patronal feast of the United States of America, and Bishop Kevin Vann called that a fitting day. “Since, by the Lord’s providence and guidance, you are here to become part of our local Church in the United States.”

“You are called to minister here to us, and with us, indeed as a missionary,” Bishop Vann said to the seminarian who had emigrated from Mexico a year-and-a-half ago. “That means new culture, new surroundings, new language, all of which are challenges which you have had to undertake and embrace,” the bishop added during his homily at the Dec. 8 ordination liturgy, at Denton’s Immaculate Conception Parish.

“Yet the words of Gabriel to Mary, ‘Be not afraid,’ and her response, ‘May it be done to me according to your word,’ should be the conversation at the start of each day with the Lord,” Bishop Vann said.

Deacon Amado’s ordination liturgy was distinguished by traditional touches from Oaxaca, including the elaborate procession of the lectionary, under a velvet, fringed canopy, carried by youth from the parish’s confirmation class. There were also young people in native attire participating in the offertory procession.

Bishop Vann addressed the new deacon during the ordination homily. “As a deacon, and later on as a priest, God willing, you will be able to grow in that holiness through the ministry of word and sacrament. Most importantly, your response to that desire will have an impact on the quest for holiness for all who come your way.”

“The peak of this celebration was the imposition of the bishop’s hands on my head,” Dcn. Amado said. “This is the only way, from the apostles, you can receive the same Spirit they received from Christ. Bishop Vann was pushing his hands strongly on my head, so I couldn’t avoid the tears, thinking he really wanted to communicate this amazing grace.”

The day before Dcn. Amado’s ordination to the diaconate, his friend Fr. Alfredo returned from Mexico City where he had celebrated Masses in his hometown of Tlaxcala.

When he arrived, mid-afternoon Dec. 7, the two friends spent the day together to prepare him for the ordination.

“I felt very happy and nervous before receiving this sacrament,” Dcn. Amado said. “Even when I was preparing everything inside and outside of me. I had many times where I kept myself quiet; indeed, I was repeating some words like ‘God has called me because of his grace and love.’ I did that repetition in order to focus my attention on this event for which I was waiting a long time.”

Fr. Alfredo had not celebrated Mass in Mexico on the day before the ordination. So he and Amado celebrated Mass together that night at 10 p.m. in the main sanctuary of ICC.

“Nobody was there — just he and I,” the young priest said, “and we took the readings of the day — of the Immaculate Conception.”

Deacon Fernando Preciado ordained as missionary to North Texas

Story and Photos by Joan Kurbkowski-Gillen

Correspondent

When Martin Muñoz began dating his future wife, Maria’s nuptials, but he will have the opportunity to marry her children.

The native of Zacatecas, Mexico, was ordained to the transition diaconate by Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann during a Dec. 3 Mass at St. Francis Cabrini Church in Granbury.

Dcn. Fernando Preciado performs his duties alongside Dcn. Jim Fuller (left) and Don. Len Sanchez (right) at St. Frances Cabrini Church in Granbury.

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March for life adds White House demonstration; Gray says they'll bring their own light

FROM PAGE 1 closer to his Pennsylvania Avenue residence during the week.

The March for Life used to begin on the Ellipse, located between the White House and the Washington Monument, but starting in 2006, because of construction, the starting point for the event was changed to a spot on the National Mall not visible from the president’s home.

During the years President George W. Bush was in office, no special White House rally was organized because he already supported the pro-life position.

“President Bush was also very nice to us and would invite us in for breakfast before the march,” Gray said. “President Obama hasn’t extended us any such invitation.”

A White House official contacted for this story was not able to say if the president would be at the White House during the flash light rally, or if the White House had any comment about the scheduled vigil.

Tens of thousands from all over the U.S. travel each year to Washington Jan. 22. This year’s rally and march will be the 37th since the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion across the nation. Gray is a founder of the annual event. (CNS photo/Bob Roller)

People pray around a cross during the European Meeting of Young Christians in Poznan, Poland. (CNS photo/Kacper Pempel, Reuters)

Pope urges young Europeans to deepen their trust in God

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta will be among the subjects depicted on U.S. stamps debuting in 2010, the U.S. Postal Service announced Dec. 30.

The 44-cent stamp, bearing a portrait of Mother Teresa painted by artist Thomas Blackshear II in 2005, will go on sale on what would have been her 100th birthday, Aug. 26.

“She was awarded honorary U.S. citizenship in 1996, by the U.S. Congress and President Bill Clinton. Mother Teresa was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2003.

Her humility and compassion, as well as her respect for the innate worth and dignity of humankind, inspired people of all ages and backgrounds to work on behalf of the world’s poorest populations,” said the Postal Service news release on its 2010 commemorative stamp program.

Other stamps to be issued during the next year will honor actress Katharine Hepburn; “distinguished sailors” William S. Sims, Arleigh A. Burke, John McCloy, and Doris Miller; cartoonist Bill Mauldin; 10 abstract expressionist artists; “cowboys of the silver screen” William S. Hart, Tom Mix, Gene Autry, and Roy Rogers; entertainer Kate Smith; and filmmaker Oscar Micheaux.

U.S. postage stamps in 2010 also will depict the Winter Olympic Games in Vancouver, the Chinese lunar new year, the Mackinac Bridge in Michigan, the Bixby Creek Bridge in California, the Negro Baseball League, and characters from “the Sunday funnies” — Archie, Beetle Bailey, Dennis the Menace, Garfield, and Calvin and Hobbes.

In 2010, the Postal Service will issue the first stamp designed especially for oversized or odd-sized greeting cards. The 64-cent stamp will depict a monarch butterfly, and an illustration of a generic butterfly will appear on cards or envelopes requiring the additional postage.

The U.S. Postal Service will honor Mother Teresa with a stamp in 2010. She was awarded honorary U.S. citizenship in 1996, by the U.S. Congress and President Bill Clinton. Mother Teresa was beatified by Pope John Paul II in 2003.

Postage Service to produce Mother Teresa stamp in 2010
Immigration Steering Committee to prepare parishes to help immigrants

FROM PAGE 1

migrants were especially having difficulty preparing the required documents due to limited English reading and writing abilities. He also learned that people were often taking advantage of these immigrants.

So in late 2008, when immigration reform made headlines after becoming a key issue in the presidential campaign, and after meeting with Bishop Kevin Vann, he and other diocesan leaders partnered with Catholics from the diocese and Catholic Charities to form the Immigration Steering Committee. Its purpose: to provide parishes with information and preparation needed in the case of another major reform.

“One of the promises that the Democratic Party made was that

“ We want to be ready. The effect on parishes is going to be tremendous.”

—Deacon Len Sanchez director of Community and Pastoral Services

[Obama] was going to try and pass an immigration reform act,” Dcn. Sanchez said. “We formed a task force, so we could form groups within the community to help in this venture. Just as the Holy Family was an immigrant family, so we all are immigrants. We should welcome each other.”

Presenters will include Father Carmen Mele, OP, diocesan director of Hispanic Adult Catechesis, Father Stephen Jasso, TOR, pastor of All Saints Church in Fort Worth, Dcn. Sanchez, and representatives from Catholic Charities. Immigration experts will also be on hand to give out information on gathering and preparing documents required for obtaining citizenship.

Dcn. Sanchez hopes that each parish will send two or three parishioners to the meeting since they will be oriented on what they will need to form a small support group at their own parish to deal with the effects of a possible immigration reform. Those parish groups will be given information and training to adequately assist immigrants seeking help.

“We are certainly called to help each other and to come to the aid of others,” Dcn. Sanchez said. “This is one of the ways we could do it. Some [people] give clothing, visit with prisoners, or visit hospitals, this is an extension of our call.”

With the recession and health care reform becoming the focus of the Obama Administration, little attention has been given to immigration reform. In December, Rep. Luis Gutierrez, D-III., introduced the Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America’s Security and Prosperity Act of 2009 (CIR ASAP). The bill would give millions of undocumented immigrants a path to citizenship if they met certain requirements, among them things like paying a $500 fine and learning English, but President Obama has remained silent on the bill. Still, Dcn. Len says there is a possibility for reform after healthcare is dealt with.

“We want to be ready,” Dcn. Sanchez said. “The effect on parishes is going to be tremendous.”

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has pushed for immigration reform to be enacted this year. On June 6, the USCCB launched a nationwide postcard campaign and a new website (justiceforimmigrants.org) to push lawmakers and educate parishes about immigration reform.

The number of unauthorized immigrants has continued to grow steadily for the past several years, reaching an estimated 11.9 million according to a Pew Hispanic Center 2008 report. Almost 76 percent of immigrants are Hispanic according to the report.

For additional information, or to register, please contact Patricia Gonzales at (817) 560-2452, ext. 254. All parishes are invited.

House kicks off push to move comprehensive immigration bill

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In a packed House hearing room Dec. 15, nearly two dozen members of Congress, flanked by dozens of kids wearing T-shirts reading “Future Voter” opened the push for a new comprehensive immigration reform bill. The legislation — called Comprehensive Immigration Reform for America’s Security and Prosperity Act of 2009, or CIR ASAP — was unveiled before a roomful of advocates from churches, community groups and others with interests in fixing the current immigration system.

Rep. Luis Gutierrez, D-III., who has shepherded the process of drafting the bill, said the bill would carry the name of Rep. Solomon Ortiz, D-Texas, founder of the Congressional Hispanic Caucus.

Ryan Dywer, immigration policy adviser for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, outlined for Catholic News Service some of the differences between the new legislation and previous immigration reform bills:

— New standards for immigrant detention.
— No “touchback” provision, which in previous bills would have required undocumented immigrants to return to their home countries to apply for legalization in the U.S.
— The end of a program that gave local law enforcement agencies the authority to enforce federal immigration laws.
— A prohibition on creating a national identification card.
— Provisions allowing spouses and minor children to continue with their applications for naturalization or status adjustment even after the death of the family member that is a U.S. citizen or legal resident.

The bill also calls for a new independent federal commission on immigration and labor markets. This commission would be charged with setting levels of immigration based on employer needs.

A 12-page summary of the bill, which had not yet been formally introduced, includes points on border security, detention standards and employer verification in its enforcement sections.

Once the bill is introduced, it will be submitted to a committee for markup, then moved on to the House floor for consideration. Neither was expected until after the Christmas recess.

A new postcard campaign in early 2010 will urge Congress to take it as its next priority comprehensive immigration reform that would reunite families, regularize the status of an estimated 12 million people in this country illegally, and restore due process protections for immigrants.

“We want to increase Catholic grass-roots support for immigration reform, but we also want to show members of Congress a strong Catholic voice and strong Catholic numbers in support of immigration reform,” Antonio Cube, national manager of the U.S. bishops’ Justice for Immigrants project, told reporters in November, when the campaign was announced.

Pope lauds North American College on its 150th anniversary

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI marked the 150th anniversary of the Pontifical North American College, and said the seminary deserves thanks for “training generations of worthy preachers of the Gospel and ministers of the sacraments.”

The pope met at the Vatican Jan. 9 with the institution’s students, superiors, faculty, and alumni. The college, the U.S. national seminary in Rome, was concluding a reunion and other events to commemorate the anniversary of its founding in 1859.

The pope said he was confident the college would continue to produce “wise and generous pastors capable of transmitting the Catholic faith in its integrity, bringing Christ’s infinite mercy to the weak and the lost, and enabling America’s Catholics to be a leaven of the Gospel in the social, political, and cultural life of their nation.”

Repeating a point he made during his visit in 2008 to the United States, the pope said the church in America is “called to cultivate an intellectual culture which is genuinely Catholic, confident in the profound harmony of faith and reason, and prepared to bring the richness of faith’s vision to bear on the pressing issues which affect the future of American society.”

He said the Pontifical North American College was “uniquely prepared to help meet this perennial challenge.”

“In the 150 years and a half since its foundation, the college has offered its students an exceptional experience of the universality of the church, the breadth of her intellectual and spiritual tradition, and the urgency of her mandate to bring Christ’s saving truth to the men and women of every time and place,” he said.

Pope Plus IX inaugurated the college on Dec. 8, 1859, having donated the site on Via dell’Umiltà in downtown Rome. In 1953, the college moved to a larger new facility on the Janiculum Hill, not far from the Vatican.

Pope meets, forgives Christmas Eve attacker

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As a sign of his forgiveness, Pope Benedict XVI met with the woman who had knocked him down during a Christmas Eve Mass, a papal spokesman said.

The pope met with Susanna Maiolo after leading his weekly general audience Jan. 13 in the Vatican’s Paul VI hall. Father Federico Lombardi said in a written statement.

In a private room of the audience hall, the pope held a brief meeting with Maiolo and members of her family in order to “demonstrate his forgiveness,” to see how she was doing and to “wish her good health,” the statement said.

Maiolo told the pope she was sorry for the Christmas Eve incident, the Vatican said.

She had faced a security barrier at the start of the Dec. 24 liturgy as Pope Benedict processed into St. Peter’s Basilica. As Vatican guards tackled her, she was able to grab the pope’s vestments, causing him to stumble to the floor.

She was taken for mandatory psychiatric evaluation to a hospital in Subiaco outside of Rome and released Jan. 9. Father Lombardi said Jan. 13 that the legal proceeding against Maiolo, being carried out by the Vatican’s judicial system, would continue until it came to a conclusion.

North Texas Catholic, January 15, 2010  Page 15
Church teachings reflect harmony of God’s plan, says pope

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Taken all together, the teachings of the Catholic faith are “a marvelous symphony that sings of God and his love,” Pope Benedict XVI said.

In a world where people tend to pick and choose what to believe, what to study, and what to specialize in, the church must help people see how all of its teachings about the Trinity, creation, redemption, the sacraments, and morality reflect “the harmony of God’s plan of salvation,” the pope said Dec. 30 at his weekly general audience.

Before expressing his hope that friendship with Jesus would accompany each of his visitors throughout 2010, Pope Benedict delivered another installment in his series of audience talks about the Latin text of St. Thomas Aquinas’ Summa Theologiae, like the Catechism of the Catholic Church, demonstrates how individual church teachings are linked to one another and must be taken together if one is to have a full understanding of the faith, he said.

Pope Benedict said Peter Lombard is still remembered for providing “the definitive definition” of a sacrament as “an outward sign and cause of grace.”

The sacraments are not simply rituals or symbols of God’s action in people’s lives, but “they really have the power to communicate divine grace,” the pope said.

“The sacraments are the great treasure of the church,” he said. The celebration of the sacraments “is always a surprising event; they touch our lives. Christ, through visible signs, comes to meet us. He purifies us, transforms us, and makes us participants in his divine friendship.”

Pope Benedict said Peter Lombard raised questions that could interest modern readers, including why God created Eve from the rib of Adam instead of from his head or his feet. He said the 12th-century theologian explained that God formed woman not as “one who would be his slave, but one who would dominate man, nor one who would be his slave, but one who would be a companion.”

The pope encouraged Catholics to read The Sentences, but even more to study the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which is a modern systematic presentation of Christian faith.

Scripture Readings

January 24, Third Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle C: Readings:
1) Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10
   Psalm 19:8-10, 15
2) 1 Corinthians 12:12-30
   Gospel (Luke 1:1-4, 14-21)

By Jean Denton

For the third time in a year, a small group of medical students from Vanderbilt University held a public meeting in a remote, impoverished Appalachian coal mining town to explain the services they could provide, free of charge, if invited to run a weeklong health fair in the community.

For the third time, the university program director asked if the local residents were interested. Everyone had listened intently, but, for the third time, they responded with silence.

In two previous meetings they had also remained silent when asked about their health care situation, but the persistent director asked one more time: Could the medical students provide some needed services here in Lee County, Virginia?

Silence again. Then one woman, a mother and wife who had lived there her whole life, stood and said in a soft, steady voice, “I think if we’d just had one doctor here in town, it would’ve saved a lot of lives in the accident at the mine (that happened a few years earlier).” One could’ve heard a pin drop as she sat down.

“Then it was like a flood as one by one people began telling their personal stories about the lack of health care,” explained the religious sister who was at those meetings nearly 40 years ago and later told me the story.

So they held a health fair. Soon the community formed a health council, eventually establishing a network of clinics that today serves low-income people of the entire region.

This week’s Scriptures show how powerfully God’s word enlivens his spirit in the hearts of his people. As Israel began returning from captivity, Ezra was sent to teach the new generation. He rose to proclaim God’s covenant and laws, and the power of his words brought all present to their knees.

The Gospel reveals the covenant fulfilled in Jesus: good news for the poor, sight for the blind, freedom for the oppressed. Jesus stood, proclaimed the truth, and his spirit transformed those to whom he came.

Centuries later in Appalachia, when one woman finally spoke, everyone in the room knew the truth was out. A spirit of courage was unleashed as they gave it voice and were emboldened to act on it for the sake of their entire community. The truth again set the captives free.

QUESTIONS:
When was a time recently when the word of God inspired the Spirit in you? How can you act this week to help free someone who is oppressed?

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Pope Benedict XVI touches the face of a child during a Dec. 27 visit to a soup kitchen and language school run by the Sant'Egidio Community in Rome. (CNS/courtesy of Sant'Egidio Community)
Word of Life

January 31, Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle C. Readings:
1) Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19
Psalm 71:1-6, 15-17
2) 1 Corinthians 12:31-13:13

By Jeff Hedglen

“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous...” These words from the First Letter to the Corinthians, Chapter 13, in this week’s readings have to be some of the most loved and remembered words in the Bible. They certainly are the most definitive Scripture on what real love is. This New Testament passage is used to set the tone for weddings every Saturday across the globe because it is the standard for how we should look at one another and how we should treat one another.

But the meaning of this Scripture changed for me one day during a retreat. Instead of being an altruistic measuring stick for love of others, it became a mirror to my soul. The retreat master asked us to read the Scripture, replacing the word “love” with our own name. In so doing, the famous text became:

“Jeff is patient, Jeff is kind. He is not jealous, he is not pompous, Jeff is not inflated, he is not rude, he does not seek his own interests, he is not quick-tempered, Jeff does not brood over injury, does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. Jeff bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, and endures all things. Jeff never fails.”

Wow, these beautiful words from St. Paul had just become evidence that could indict me on numerous violations of the law of love. In truth, more times than I care to admit, I am not patient or kind. Too often, I am jealous, pompous, rude, inflated, and quick-tempered. I lose faith, fail to hope, and quit. And I certainly fail much of the time.

The retreat master asked us not to get too down on ourselves; rather we were to use this as fodder for self-reflection, growth, and the sacrament of reconciliation. Since that day I have often used this passage for my examination of conscience before the sacrament.

It is often said that people will rise to the expectations you set for them. Based on this passage from Scripture, God must really think we are capable of greatness. We may never live these words to perfection, but the one who is their perfect incarnation is offering us the challenge to at least attempt to never fail.

QUESTIONS:
Have you ever thought of 1 Corinthians 13 in this way? How does this view of the passage impact you? What are some ways you can strive to love like this?

Invest in Your Relationships?

By Jeff Hedglen

Last year at this time I decided that in 2009 I was going to spend more time with my dad. He lives a mere 45 minutes away, but we seem to rarely see each other. My unsung resolution was to have lunch with him at least once a month. Well, as the new year turned, I realized that we had lunched together a grand total of three times. The last time we met, it had been so long since we had seen each other that he pulled out a list of things he wanted to discuss with me. I vow before all of you that 2010 will be better!

Relationships are an integral part of our human experience. Family is what we are born into; friends walk with us through life; and we share most of our waking hours with coworkers or fellow students. These human connections are not things to take lightly; rather they are treasures to be guarded.

My relationship with my dad has had some ups and downs over the years, but these days we get along great and can even have conversations about faith and politics and stay friends. The days of misunderstandings and “if onlys” are in the past (I hope).

Dad often e-mails me wondering what I am up to. He always says his best days are days he sees one of his kids. He loves me and is proud of me; even says these things out loud, a feat rarely seen in a man from his generation. All the things that would normally keep a son from his father are absent. The only obstacle between me and a lunch with dad is my schedule.

So this week I went into my boss’s office and let him know that once a month I will be taking a half-day vacation to visit with my dad. He thought it was a great idea. I have the vacation time, so I might as well use it.

It is so easy to let relationships fade or slowly end up in disarray. Whether it is scheduling conflicts, a past hurt, physical distance, or ideological differences, relationships can quickly move from vital to strained or even dissolve altogether. The only real way to stop this from happening is to make a conscious decision to work on the relationship.

A friend of mine has had the same best friend since childhood. After high school they made a pact: They would not let a month go by without them sharing a meal together. Now, for most of this time they have lived almost five hours apart, but very few months have gone by that they have not met and spent time together. Sometimes they would spend a weekend together, but there have been months when the best they could manage was to meet half way for a burger and fries.

I used to kind of joke with him about how extreme that was, but then my dad pulled that list out of his pen-filled shirt pocket, and I realized that my friend was onto something I had lost sight of.

It is my guess that pretty much everyone has some person in their lives they have either lost touch with, are not so good terms with, or wish they would spend more time with. This is a perfect time of year to make a plan to change these relationships.

Very few people, on their deathbed, lament the money they could have made or the trips they could have taken or the things they could have owned. Rather it is the relationships they wasted, the years of conversations not shared, the hugs not given, and the love neither given nor received, that are regretted.

I resolve to not regret time missed with my dad. I encourage you to resolve something similar with a relationship in your life. It is not an accident that loving each other is the second commandment according to Jesus.

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El obispo Vann piden a todos los católicos que ayuden a asegurar que nuestros principios estén incorporados a la reforma de salud

Estimados amigos en la Diócesis de Fort Worth,

Esta no es una cuestión de “política”, sino de ejercitar nuestro deber como ciudadanos católicos, a la luz de nuestros principios de fe y moral, para asegurar la inclusión del derecho más fundamental de todos en nuestra legislación: el derecho a la vida para todas las personas humanas a partir del momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

— El Obispo Kevin Vann
Diócesis de Fort Worth

Vaticano dice que más de 2.2 millones asistieron a eventos papales en 2009

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Más de 2.24 millones de peregrinos y visitantes fueron, en el 2009, a ver al Papa Benedicto XVI en persona, en el Vaticano o en la villa papal en Castel Gandolfo.

Las multitudes incluyeron personas que asistieron a audiencias generales semanales, audiencias especiales con el Papa, liturgias que celebró por él o reuniones papales del Papa. Otras 115,600 personas fueron parte de grupos que tuvieron una audiencia especial con el Papa. Las Misas y los servicios de oración del Papa Benedicto atrajeron a 470,800 personas y su recitación del Ángelus atrae al 1.12 millones de personas a la Plaza de San Pedro.

Según las estadísticas del 2009, un total de 537,500 personas asistieron a las 44 audiencias generales semanales del Papa. Otras 115,600 personas fueron parte de grupos que tuvieron una audiencia especial con el Papa. Las Misas y los servicios de oración del Papa Benedicto atrajeron a 470,800 personas y su recitación del Ángelus atrae al 1.12 millones de personas a la Plaza de San Pedro.

Vesalius no se cura, ni cuando la conciencia es clara

Ésta no es una cuestión de “política”, sino de ejercitar nuestro deber como ciudadanos católicos, a la luz de nuestros principios de fe y moral, para asegurar la inclusión del derecho más fundamental de todos en nuestra legislación: el derecho a la vida para todas las personas humanas a partir del momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

— El Obispo Kevin Vann
Diócesis de Fort Worth

immigrantes y 4) asequibilidad. Los volantes en el boletín que verán este fin de semana, junto con las peticiones que pueden ser utilizadas en la Misa, se están enviando a todas las parroquias alrededor de nuestro país para pedir de nuevo su ayuda y colaboración en la articulación de nuestras convicciones en estos días de las negociaciones finales.

Por favor asegúrense de continuar estudiando los últimos progresos—que pueden ser encontrados en la página web de la Conferencia de obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos—y después de entrar en contacto con nuestros senadores y representantes por teléfono, carta o email sobre estos asuntos. El estudio de estos proyectos de ley por el personal de la Conferencia de obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos, en una carta del 8 de enero, concluye que mientras la conferencia está cuidadosamente estudiando el lenguaje del proyecto de ley Casey/Nelson para considerar si puede ser mejorada y ser alineada con la enmienda de Stupak, “la versión que mejor promueve nuestros principios sobre subvención para abortos, protección de la conciencia, inmigrantes y asequibilidad es la de la Cámara de representantes”.

Esta no es una cuestión de “política”, sino de ejercitar nuestro deber como ciudadanos católicos, a la luz de nuestros principios de fe y moral, para asegurar la inclusión del derecho más fundamental de todos en nuestra legislación: el derecho a la vida para todas las personas humanas a partir del momento de la concepción hasta la muerte natural. El cuidado médico genuino, sobre toda las cosas, debe proteger y defender este derecho fundamental.

Como el Papa Juan Pablo II nos enseña: Se ha hecho habitual el hablar, y con razón, sobre los derechos humanos; como por ejemplo por el derecho a la salud, a la casa, al trabajo, a la familia y a la cultura. De todos modos, esa preocupación resulta falsa e ilusoria si no se defiende—con la máxima determinación—el derecho a la vida como el derecho primero y fontal, condición de todos los otros derechos de la persona.

— Vocación y misión de los laicos en la Iglesia y en el mundo, 38

Pronto llegará el aniversario de la decisión de la Corte Suprema de Roe v. Wade. Estará presente en la Misa del sábado, 16 de enero, en la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón en Dallas. También les animo a seguir la Misa anual de vigilia y la Marcha por la vida en Washington D.C., mientras nos esforzamos por construir en nuestra nación una verdadera cultura de vida.

Dios los bendiga siempre.

Kevin Vann
Obispo de Fort Worth

édito: ecclesia@north-texascatholic.org
Nota de la redacción: El obispo Vann ha pedido que la información en
el inserto del boletín distribuido en las parroquias de todo el país por La
conferencia de los obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos sea publicada
en este número de NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
3211 FOURTH STREET NE • WASHINGTON DC 20017-1194 • 202-541-3103 • FAX 202-541-3166
URGENTE: VOLANTE DE USCCB PARA BOLETINES EN TODA LA NACIÓN
¡Detenga el financiamiento de abortos en la reforma del sistema de salud!
Proteja la conciencia
Garantice una cobertura asequible
Permita a los inmigrantes adquirir seguros de salud privados
Como promotores durante largo tiempo de la reforma del sistema de salud, los obispos católicos de los Estados Unidos continúan sosteniendo, desde el punto de vista moral, que una verdadera reforma debe proteger la vida, la dignidad, la conciencia y la salud de todos, especialmente de los pobres y vulnerables. La reforma del sistema de salud no deberá avanzar una agenda que promueva el aborto en nuestro país.

• El 7 de noviembre, la Cámara de representantes aprobó una importante reforma del sistema de salud que reafirma la política esencial, de amplio respaldo desde hace mucho tiempo, de rehusar fondos federales para abortos electivos; el proyecto incluye medidas positivas en cuanto a la accesibilidad y sobre los inmigrantes.
• El 24 de diciembre, el Senado rechazó esta política y aprobó una versión del proyecto que autorizaría fondos federales para ayudar a subsidiar y promover planes de salud que cubran abortos electivos. Quienes adquieran esos planes tendrán que pagar por los abortos de otros, mediante un aporte separado destinado solamente para financiar esos procedimientos.
• En otro contexto, ambos proyectos carecen de adecuada protección de la conciencia para los prestadores de cuidado de salud, planes o empleadores.
• Ahora ambos proyectos deberán combinarse en uno solo sobre cual la Cámara y el Senado votarán: disposiciones contra el financiamiento del aborto y a favor de la protección de la conciencia; accesibilidad — incluyendo a los inmigrantes — debe formar parte de un proyecto de reforma de salud justo; de lo contrario, el proyecto final debe rechazarse.

ACCIÓN: Contacte a su representante y senadores hoy, por e-mail, teléfono o FAX.
• Para enviar un correo electrónico instantáneo con un mensaje ya preparado al Congreso, vaya a www.usccb.org/action.
• Llame a la central del Capítulo: 202-224-3121, o a las oficinas locales de su congresista. La información de contacto se halla en el sitio web de los miembros del Congreso en www.house.gov y www.senate.gov.

MENSAJE—CÁMARA:
“Me complace que el proyecto de reforma de salud aprobado por la Cámara mantenga la política contra el financiamiento federal del aborto que se ha venido respaldando por mucho tiempo. Le pido que trabaje a favor de mantener estas disposiciones esenciales contra el financiamiento de abortos, por incluir plena protección de conciencia y garantizar que los servicios de salud sean accesibles y asequibles para todos. Le exhorto que — a menos que se reúnan estos criterios — se oponga al proyecto final”.

MENSAJE—SENADO:
“Estoy profundamente decepcionado que el proyecto de reforma de salud aprobado por el Senado no mantuviera la política aceptada por mucho tiempo contra el financiamiento federal del aborto ni incluyera adecuada protección de conciencia. Le pido que apoye disposiciones esenciales contra el financiamiento de abortos, similares a esas contenidas en el proyecto aprobado por la Cámara. Incluya la plena protección de conciencia y garantice que los servicios de salud sean accesibles y asequibles para todos. Le exhorto que, a menos que se reúnan estos criterios, se oponga al proyecto final”.

¿CUÁNDO?: La votación sobre el proyecto final en la Cámara y en el Senado se espera para enero.

¡Actúe hoy! ¡Gracias!

Karen y Bill Brookman están buscando más folletos del programa ¿Por qué ser católico!. Son los coordinadores del programa catequético y de evangelización de adultos en la parroquia del St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, en Keller. El programa ha sido exitoso allí, como en la mayoría de las parroquias, y más Parroquianos están listos para participar cuando recumene la primera semana de Cuaresma.

Realmente los entusiastas de ¿Por qué ser católico! no tienen que esperar hasta el Mánito de diciembre. A partir del 22 de enero hasta el 29 de enero, los presentadores de RENOVAR, la hermana Pat Thomas, O.P., y el padre Alejandro López-Cardinal, darán talleres de formación en la fe, situados en la diócesis. Los talleres explorarán dos temas prominentes del programa relativo a este año: escritura y tradición.

Los talleres interinos son uno de las tres series anuales de eventos en los cuales personal de RENOVAR internacional viene a la diócesis para asistir en la imple-
mentación de ¿Por qué ser católico!. La hermana Thomas y el padre López-Cardinal, darán talleres de formación en la fe, situados en la diócesis. Los talleres explora-
larán dos temas prominentes del programa relativo a este año: escritura y tradición.

¿Por qué ser católico? es el programa catequético y de evangelización para adultos que el Obispo Kevin Vann ha puesto a disposición de cada parroquia en la diócesis. Es una iniciativa especial, comenzada durante el cuadragésimo aniversario de la diócesis para realizar la compren-
sión y la vida de fe, de modo que los católicos puedan compartir su fe con otras personas. Las mayor parte de la subvención de ¿Por qué ser católico! — la financiación — viene de la campaña diocesana Todo Es Posible.

El Padre Mele dice que la puerta está siempre abierta para las parroquias que no comen-
zarán ¿Por qué ser católico! con el resto de la diócesis en octubre del año pasado. Uno de las ventajas de este programa, dijo el padre, es que es un programa flexible que permite que una parroquia pueda encontrar su propio ritmo en la ejecución del programa. Si la parroquia así lo desee, puede elegir cubrir dos porciones del programa de cuatro partes en un año. O, agrega él, si desea cambiar el orden de las partes — que busca resumir el contenido del Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica — la parroquia también puede hacer eso.

Profundización de fe en español

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Por que ser católico se está siendo financiado por la campaña de Todo es posible
**Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José expande sus servicios a través de la diócesis**

**Elegibilidad para el Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José**

Clientes potenciales deben tener necesidad de cuidado médico que no ha sido realizado y que esté dentro del alcance de los servicios ofrecidos por el Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José, incluyendo necesidades tales como ayuda auditiva, cuidado dental, consejería, ayuda con recetas, mercancía médica, lentes, y exámenes de diagnóstico.

- **Clientes potenciales** deben vivir dentro de uno de los veintiocho condados servidos por la Diócesis de Fort Worth.
- **Circunstancias individuales** pueden ser consideradas al determinar la elegibilidad para servicios. Si un cliente potencial tiene cobertura de cuidado médico, debe demostrar que la necesidad médica no es cubierta por un programa de cuidado médico y que el costo del cuidado creará una dificultad financiera indebida para el individuo o la familia.
- **Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José no restringe servicios en vista de afiliación religiosa, raza, etnicidad, género, o incapacidad**.
- **Identificación con fotografía** (se permiten excepciones).
- **Últimos dos talonarios** de su cheque de trabajo para comprobar sueldo; carta de de elegibilidad de estampillas/cupones de alimentos; TANF — o de la Administración de seguro social — de todos los miembros del hogar que reciben ingresos. Ingresos deben estar en o por debajo del 300 por ciento del nivel de pobreza federal para las normas, compruebe en www.povertyguidelines.org.
- **Verificación de domicilio** (por ejemplo, contrato de arrendamiento, comprobante de pago de electricidad, agua, gas o teléfono residencial, documento de contribución sobre la propiedad).
- **Si el cliente potencial tiene seguro médico debe someter prueba de que el seguro médico no cubrirá el servicio de cuidado médico solicitado.**

El alcance de los servicios proporcionados por el Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José incluye ciertos servicios que serían contrarios a la doctrina social y moral católica, tales como abortos, contraceptivos artificiales, ligaduras tubáricas y vasectomías.

**Por Nicki Prevou**

La mujer que se acercó recientemente a Jackie Gordon, del personal de Caridades católicas, tuvo una historia muy triste, recordó Gordon. La mujer, madre de un pequeño niño, había sido la víctima de un fuego en su casa y fue quemada sobre la mayor parte de su cuerpo. Había pasado largos meses lejos de su hija durante su hospitalización, y luchaba por volver a una vida normal y productiva.

“Un oído fue destruido totalmente”, dijo Gordon, un facilitador para el Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José — un fondo monetario administrado por Caridades católicas en la Diócesis de Fort Worth. “Aunque ella podía conseguir la ayuda de Medicaid para pagar sus cirugías, no estaba en la protección para su oído — no tenía como pagar por los iones que eran necesarios para atar el oído protésico al lado de su cara”.

Como el costo total de los dispositivos necesarios era menos de $1,000, el Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud San José podía pagar por los iones, así ayudando a disminuir el trauma de una situación de tanto estrés, explicó Gordon. “Este es el propósito del fideicomiso”, agregó. “No sólo fuimos capaces de resolver la necesidad inmediata, sino también ofrecimos consejería para la niña y para la mamá. La mamá sabía que realmente nos iba su situación y la de su familia”.

El Fideicomiso del cuidado de salud, establecido después del cierre del Hospital de San José — un hospital de Fort Worth en 1995 — tiene una misión simple y profundamente importante, según Lori Kennedy, quien sirve como la coordinadora del programa del fideicomiso para Caridades católicas.

“El fideicomiso existe para promover una comunidad más sana, aumentar el acceso al cuidado y, en las oportunidades cada vez mayores, promover la educación sobre la salud”, dijo Kennedy. “Nosotros, por otro lado, consideramos esa ayuda como una manera de compartir la esperanza. Algunas agencias no pueden proporcionar el cuidado personal ni atención individual. Hay muchos servicios que no podemos proporcionar — por ejemplo, no podemos cubrir los costos de hospitalizaciones o de cirugía — pero si ofrecemos ayuda con servicios de cuidado primario y ofrecemos atención individual y ayuda personal, también”.

Otra novedad es que el fideicomiso de ofrecer una nueva tarjeta de descuentos para compras medicas a todos los clientes elegibles, Kennedy agregó. “Esta tarjeta permitirá que los clientes puedan ir a la mayoría de las farmacias y que reciban un descuento significativo”. Los que no tienen seguro médico pueden utilizar la tarjeta y recibir un descuento de un 10 a un 40 por ciento en sus prescripciones.

Para más información sobre el fideicomiso y los servicios disponibles, llame a Caridades católicas al (817) 920-7733. Residentes del decanato del noroeste pueden contactar a Stella Centeno, del equipo de trabajo de Caridades católicas, en su oficina en la Iglesia Sagrada Familia en Vernon, al (940) 552-0347.

**Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada**

Si usted o alguien que conozca es víctima de conducta sexual inapropiada por parte de cualquier persona que trabaje para la iglesia, sea voluntario, empleado, o miembro del clero, puede reportarlo de las siguientes maneras:

- **Llamar al Ministro de familias de Texas, Servicios de protección (Servicios de protección de niños)** al número:(800) 252-5400.
- **Llamar al número de emergencia para el abuso sexual:** al número: (817) 560-2452, Ext. 102 y preguntar por el encargado moderador de la curia, el padre James Hart.

**Mecanismos para reportar abuso**

Por Nicki Prevou

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Caritas moves to respond to Haiti’s catastrophic earthquake

By Judith Sudilovsky
Catholic News Service

JERUSALEM — Auxiliary Bishop Giacinto-Boulos Marcuzzo of Jerusalem said the Christian community in Nazareth was joyful at the recent discovery of the first-century dwelling. “This belongs to the time of Jesus and we can now see how Jesus and we can now see how Jesus spent the majority of his life in Nazareth, preaching throughout the Galilee region.”

The building that we found is ascribed as the house of Jesus’ infancy. The building, no evidence of a human settlement had been uncovered.

The structure was found next to the Basilica of the Annunciation, where the floor of a former convent was being removed in a salvage excavation conducted by the antiquities authority to prepare for the construction of the International Marian Center of Nazareth. The Association Mary of Nazareth said it would incorporate the archaeological remains inside its planned center.

Nazareth is where Mary received the revelation from the angel Gabriel that she would conceive a child. Jesus spent the majority of his life in Nazareth, preaching throughout the Galilee region.

According to written sources archaeologists know that in the first century Nazareth was a small village, located in a valley, said Alexandre.

“The discovery ... reveals for the very first time a house from the Jewish village of Nazareth and thereby sheds light on the way of life at the time of Jesus. The building that we found is small and modest and it is most likely typical of the dwellings in Nazareth in that period,” said Alexandre.

She told the Associated Press it could be concluded that, as a child, Jesus may have played near the structure and that, as an adult, he may have been familiar with the building.

The uncovered building consists of two rooms and a courtyard with a rock-hewn cistern used to gather rainwater. A few artifacts — mainly fragments of pottery vessels from the first and second centuries — were recovered from inside the building.

Franciscan Father Jacques Icaram looks over the excavation site of an ancient house in Nazareth, Israel, Dec. 21. The remains of a house from the time of Jesus have been found at the site located near the Church of the Annunciation. (CNS photo/Eric Chaussepied)

The uncovered building was not immediately known, but local officials called it a major catastrophe.

Pope Benedict said he wanted to highlight the dramatic situation in Haiti following the “devastating earthquake, which resulted in serious loss of human life, a great number of homeless and missing, and enormous material damage.”

“I appeal to the generosity of everyone, so that our brothers and sisters receive our concrete solidarity and the effective support of the international community in this moment of need and suffering,” he said.

He said the Catholic Church’s charity organizations would immediately move into action to assist those most in need.

“I invite everyone to join in my prayer to the Lord for the victims of this catastrophe and for those who are mourning their loss. I assure my spiritual closeness to people who have lost their homes and to all those affected in various ways by this calamity, implored from God consolation and relief of their suffering,” he said.

Archbishop Azuza said he had toured the capital on the morning after the earthquake and found the country’s ministry buildings, schools, and supermarkets destroyed. He said the headquarters of the U.N. stabilization force in Port-au-Prince had completely collapsed, reportedly trapping hundreds in the debris.

“I found priests and nuns on the street, who no longer have homes. The rector of the seminary survived, and so did the dean, but the seminarians are under the rubble. Everywhere there are cries coming from under the rubble,” he said.

He said a study institute for men and women religious had collapsed, with many students inside as they attended a conference. The nunciate witnessed the quake, and there were no injuries there, he said.

“We cannot enter or stay inside for very long because the earth continues to tremble. So we’re camped out in the garden,” he said.

Caritas Internationalis, the Vatican-based umbrella organization for Catholic charities, said it was mobilizing to provide immediate assistance to Haiti. On Jan. 13 it had already assembled an emergency relief team to fly to Haiti to assist Caritas members already working in the country. It said there had not yet been contact with the Haitian Caritas office.

Caritas Internationalis humanitarian director Alistair Dutton was leading the emergency relief team, Caritas said in a statement.

“There is a strong Caritas presence in Haiti. We already know that Caritas staff will be providing support to survivors of the earthquake, such as food, shelter, and comfort through churches and parish networks,” Dutton said.

“A priority for Caritas will be to assess the damage and our local capacity to provide aid to survivors of the quake. Caritas runs more than 200 hospitals and medical centers in Haiti. It is experienced and prepared to respond to humanitarian disasters there as a result of the frequent hurricanes,” he said.

“Communication with our staff on the ground is difficult, but we are piecing together a picture of desperate need. Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere. Conflict, recent natural disasters, and poverty have left Haitians with weak infrastructure. Working in that environment will be difficult,” he said.

In its statement, Caritas said the cathedral in the Haitian capital of Port-au-Prince was badly damaged.

Caritas also said the U.S.-based Catholic Relief Services had been in communication with its staff in Haiti. The local CRS office was still standing and CRS staff present at the time of the quake were safe, it said. CRS staff described the quake as a “major hit ... a direct hit.”

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Bishop says Nazareth Christians joyful about find of Jesus-era house

By Judith Sudilovsky
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The financial hump. We're filled—to get them over the financial hump. We're filled—$500 needed to get them over the financial hump. We're filling a niche that no one else is doing.

The Leitos were instrumental in starting the foundation and have remained tireless workers since then, according to Jim Brown. "Along with many others, it's been their vision, determination, expertise, and knowledge that have enabled Stephen's foundation to help over 500 children in our diocese," he explained. "Over the past 20 years, they have taken on the most demanding volunteer roles at both Nolan and St. Andrew's. I can't think of a couple more deserving of the Diocesan Leadership Award."

Asked to remember watershed moments from their own Catholic education, the Leitos draw from an abundance of classroom experiences. Both members of the student council in high school, the Leitos recall the quiet leadership of the group's moderator, Brother John Rohr.

Calling the advisor a "guiding force," Carol says he taught the fledgling student government leaders how to think.

"He kept an eye on us, but had a good way of letting us make our own decisions," Jim agrees. "He was a good mentor."

Joe Kuban was another teacher with lasting influence. Better known for his ecology classes, the Nolan instructor, who died last year, taught anatomy and physiology in the early days of his career. Carol says Kuban's course factored into her decision to become a physical therapist.

"He was one of the best teachers I ever had," she says, with enthusiasm. "I went into a medical field and his class had something to do with that because I found it so interesting."

Through the years, the Leitos maintained friendships with former teachers and classmates, and those connections have enriched their lives. Blessed with successful careers and an accomplished family, the couple credits a strong academic foundation, imbued with faith, for much of their good fortune. They feel that "giving back," so others have the same chance in life, is the best way to express gratitude.

"I firmly believe that each person has a responsibility to leave a place better than they found it," Jim explains. Nolan has better campus facilities and programs than when he and his wife were students there in the 1970s.

"That's because someone gave his or her time, talent, and treasure to make Nolan what it is today," he adds. "That goes for any school. It's important to give back so the next generation has the same opportunity. I'm just thankful somebody did that for our kids.”
Catholic Homeschooling
Parents interested in learning about Catholic homeschooling are invited to attend a informational meeting held in Arlington Friday, Jan. 22 from 7 to 9 p.m. The presentation is sponsored by Catholics for Choice, a local homeschool group for Catholics in the Fort Worth Diocese. Reservations are required to ensure enough seating. For reservations, call or email: RVSP, contact Joyce Yekel at (817) 292-6692 or yekel@charter.net by Jan. 20.

Gabriel Project
Gabriel Project is a national and diocesan, parish-based ministry reaching out to women experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. Gabriel Project volunteers, Gabriel Angels, are those trained to help women in their time of need, proclaiming the Angel Gabriel’s message of good news that God is with them. Become a Gabriel Angel and offer hope and compassion to women on Saturdays in a row and an Angel Commit- 

PASTORAL CARE TRAINING
St. Michael will be offering training for new extra- 

UD SEMINAR
The University of Dallas School of Ministry will host its annual Seminar Series panel discussion Monday, Feb. 1. This year, the panel will discuss the identity of a Catholic university, with a focus on the common core addresses given to UD 2009 graduates by Bishop Richard W. Holley. The series will be held in the chapel at 7:30 p.m. at the University of Dallas, Texas

MINISTRY FOR GAYS, LESBIANS, AND TRANSGENDERED
The next regular meeting of The Fort Worth Monthly Catholic Gay/Lesbian Group (NTC) will be held at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth.

DISCOGENE SINGLESS
A Diocesan Singles Mass will be held Saturday, Jan. 30, at St. Joseph Church, 1927 SW Green Oaks Blvd., Arlington. All single and single-minded individuals are invited. Bring the cup of tea that you will always set aside; the welcome will be warm, the fellowship rich, the faith grounded. All are invited to pray, worship, fellowship, and dance, and to bring a friend. So mark your calendars. The event begins at 6:30 p.m. and will continue through midnight.

UNBORN BABY MEMORIAL
St. Andrew Adult Faith Formation and Outreach Ministries will offer a Memorial Service for Unborn Babies Friday, Jan. 22, at 7 p.m. at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth. Those interested in participating in the service will have their names added to a list of parents who have lost a child due to miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion, and are invited to come forward in the Mass. A Naming Ceremony will take place prior to the service in the chapel at 6:30 p.m. Those wishing to take part in the Naming Ceremony are asked to indicate their intention when making a reservation. A reception will follow in the church center. To make a reservation or for more information, contact Alice Curran at (817) 587-5383. Childcare will be available.

SUMMER BREAK
Catholic Schools throughout the Diocese are offering summertime programs for students in kindergarten through twelfth grade. Inquiries concerning any of these programs should be directed to the Director of Catholic Schools, Nancy MacNeill, at (817) 587-0956.


caltemp@charter.net. For more information, visit www.nd.edu or call (574) 523-3526.

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ST. AUGUSTINE GUILD
The St. Augustine Men’s Prayer Group, a support group for men who struggle with issues of sexual impurity such as those who attend the Diocesan Men’s Retreat, held the first Saturday of each month at 9 a.m. in the chapel of Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave. in West Fort Worth. The prayer meetings began at 9 a.m. with a rosary and are followed by eucharistic adoration and a time for sharing and prayer. Sister Virginia Mulholland, S.C., director of Respect Life Office for the Diocese of Fort Worth, addressed the group on the third Thursday of each month. The hour probably concludes with a rosary and is followed by Eucharistic adoration and a time for sharing and prayer. The next meeting will be held on Friday, March 5, at 9 a.m. in the chapel of Holy Family Church. Anyone interested in attending is invited to contact Sister Virginia Mulholland, S.C., at (817) 733-7678, or visit www.catholicsc.org.

RACHEL’S VINEYARD RETREAT
Rachel’s Vineyard Ministries will hold its next retreat Jan. 22-24 for healing following an abortion. This program helps those who struggle with grief, anger, guilt, and pain through healing and sharing in caring relationships. Those who have been hurt by abortion or who wish to help others are invited to attend. Future retreats are open to all who feel the pain of post-abortion trauma. Call for more information, or registration, call the Rachel’s Vineyard confidential helpline at (817) 923-4755 or e-mail forgress@rachelsv.org.

SUICIDE SURVIVORS
Suicide Survivors is a grief recovery program for family members who have lost a loved one to suicide. A new group will begin in February. Groups of eight to ten meet for two hours, two times per week. Group sessions are facilitated by a mental health professional and a trained survivor. There is no charge for this service. For more info, call (817) 698-9555 or e-mail suicidesurvivors@myfund.org.

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CATHOLIC HOMESCHOOLING
Parents interested in learning about Catholic homeschooling are invited to attend a informational meeting held in Arlington Friday, Jan. 22 from 7 to 9 p.m. The presentation is sponsored by Catholics for Choice, a local homeschool group for Catholics in the Fort Worth Diocese. Reservations are required to ensure enough seating. For reservations, call or email: RVSP, contact Joyce Yekel at (817) 292-6692 or yekel@charter.net by Jan. 20.

GABRIEL PROJECT
Gabriel Project is a national and diocesan, parish-based ministry reaching out to women experiencing an unexpected pregnancy. Gabriel Project volunteers, Gabriel Angels, are those trained to help women in their time of need, proclaiming the Angel Gabriel’s message of good news that God is with them. Become a Gabriel Angel and offer hope and compassion to women on Saturdays in a row and an Angel Commit-
Jim and Carol Leito attended Catholic school and sent their children to Catholic school as well; they’ve spent the last 20 years working to help other families obtain an Education based on Faith

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillegen Correspondent

D ecisions about educating youngsters can cause considerable angst for parents. That wasn’t the case with Jim and Carol Leito.

The St. Andrew parishioners, who graduated from Nolan Catholic High School and parochial elementary schools, knew exactly what they wanted for their children James, Chris, and Kelly. 

“We never even discussed where they would go to school. We just knew,” says Jim, who enrolled the children at his alma mater, St. Andrew’s.

His wife, Carol, spent her grade school days at St. Maria Goretti in Arlington.

“We felt the Catholic education in our lives laid the foundation for who we are as people,” she explains. “We wanted to give our kids the same faith-based education.”

They’ve spent the past 20 years trying to give other families the same opportunity. For their gifts of time and talent which have helped make schools in the Diocese of Fort Worth competitive and affordable, the couple will receive the Diocesan Leadership Award at the 23rd annual Catholic Schools Celebration on Jan. 30 in the Fort Worth Convention Center ballroom.

“Jim and Carol Leito have been sources of positive energy and support to our Catholic schools at all levels throughout the Diocese of Fort Worth,” said Don Miller, superintendent of schools. “The faith and commitment the Leitos have demonstrated is a legacy that continues to pay dividends to our Church, their parish, and our Catholic schools.”

The couple’s resume of Catholic school involvement is impressive.

For many years, Jim Leito helped St. Andrew and Nolan evaluate policies and map out future development plans as a member of each school’s finance committee and school board, and as a part of the NCHS board of directors.

He currently provides similar leadership on the Diocesan School Advisory Council. While her youngsters were in elementary school, Carol Leito coached boys’ and girls’ basketball, softball, and soccer.

Together the Texas Tech graduates chaired the St. Andrew Fall Festival, and organized auctions, raffles, and other projects raising thousands of dollars for tuition assistance, new technology, and other needed school improvements. In 2005, the Leitos were the first husband and wife team tapped to oversee Mardi Gras — Nolan’s major fundraiser which brought in $185,000 that year.

“It took a lot of time but we enjoyed it,” Carol says, recalling the effort it took to pull together dozens of volunteers and donations. “It was a way for us to contribute back and meet Nolan parents from other areas in the diocese.”

The only downside of the experience was the anxiety and pressure that went with raising money for a worthy cause.

“You’re always nervous that you’re not going to be as successful as you want to be,” she adds. “People are depending on you to raise a certain amount of money and you want to be able to follow through.”

Each Leito brings different skills to fundraising. Jim, a partner in the accounting firm Hartman, Leito, and Bolt, describes his wife as a “people person” who easily cajoles others into helping out.

“She’s the one who really holds it all together with the volunteers and makes them feel part of the whole thing,” he says. “I just work behind the scenes trying to get things organized.”

Their successful collaborations help generate the extra revenue needed to keep tuition costs down. The Leitos empathize with parents who struggle to send their children to Catholic schools.

“It’s a sacrifice for them, and any way you can find to help a family afford a Catholic school education, we want to be a part of that,” Carol adds. “Now, more than ever, faith is important in life. Catholic schools offer a faith-based education. You can’t put a price tag on it.”

Although their own children are now young adults, the Leitos continue to support Catholic school students through the Stephen Breen Memorial Fund.

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