Diocese dedicates largest Vietnamese Catholic Parish in U.S.

Almost two hours before the dedication of the new Vietnamese Martyrs Catholic Church in Arlington, Mary Nguyen and her brother, James Nguyen, braved the chilly morning weather to admire the outside of their church. After taking in the 75-foot bell tower, the large marble and granite statues depicting the stations of the cross lining the sidewalks, and the elegant oriental architecture with traces of Western and Spanish design, Mary Nguyen could only summon two words to describe it: “It’s beautiful.”

Indeed, those two words could sweetly sum up the splendor of the massive 29,000-square-foot church dedicated and consecrated by Bishop Kevin Vann Dec. 10 before a gathering of more than 3,000 parishioners, benefactors, priests, religious, and Arlington city officials.

“I’m very proud of it,” said Mary Nguyen, who along with her brother has been a parishioner of Vietnamese Martyrs for 10 years and has received most of her sacraments there. “I’m excited about going to church here.”

With 2,000 seats and various offices, the $6.5 million building is the largest-capacity Vietnamese Catholic church in the United States, according to Father Polycarp Duc Thuan, CMC, who has been pastor of Vietnamese Martyrs since 2007. Built in only 15 months, it’s a space that will serve a very necessary purpose, as the parish has grown to 1,600 families and during the four weekend Masses can have attendance totaling up to 4,000 people, Fr. Duc Thuan added.

“[The parishioners] are very happy, they’re very happy to have a new church — a beautiful church,” Fr. Duc Thuan said. “They’re very surprised, they cannot imagine how it can be like this.”

Story and Photos by Juan Guajardo  ●  Correspondent

Home for former U.S. Episcopalians in the Catholic Church — Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter — established Jan. 2

Bishop Kevin Vann of Fort Worth, who serves as the Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Pastoral Provision in the United States, reads a prepared statement during a Jan. 2 press conference announcing the new Houston-based ordinariate, as Father Jeffrey Steenson, a former Episcopal Bishop, and the ordinary for the new structure, looks on.

See full story on pages 18-19
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

One of the blessings about the life of Faith here in the Diocese of Fort Worth, especially with an eye to the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity, has been the lived experience of the Pastoral Provision and the recent announcement of the establishment of the “Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter” on January 2, 2012 at Our Lady of Walsingham in Houston, Texas. As I said at the news conference, both are, I believe complementary, yet distinct expressions of the Lord’s will that “all may be one.” They are first ecclesial movements toward something — full communion with the See of Peter — and not away from something.

With this Scriptural foundation of John 17:21, we can look to Blessed John Henry Newman, the Oxford Movement, and the fruit of the dialogues that came about after the Second Vatican Council. On a local level here in Fort Worth, especially with the recent passing of Bishop Clarence Pope, we see the fruit of ecclesial relationships, friendships, and good will, that has been evidenced by the ordination of priests of the Pastoral Provision for the Diocese of Fort Worth, and more recently, the erection of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, under the patronage of Our Lady of Walsingham.

At a meeting of prayer and reflection with Episcopal priests of the Society of the Holy Cross in Fort Worth — several years before the announcement of the Ordinariate — one of the priests said that they were just waiting for someone to extend a hand. That hand had first been extended with the Pastoral Provision of Blessed John Paul II, and more recently with Pope Benedict XVI and the Ordinariate. One of the bishops of the Church of England, who was received into the Church last year and of the Anglican Church in the United States who were seeking full communion with the Catholic Church, created a Pastoral Provision to provide them with special pastoral attention. The Pastoral Provision serves as a response to the needs of a category of Christian faithful seeking full communion with the See of Peter:

In July (1980) the President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops received a letter from the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith indicating that the Holy Father, Blessed John Paul II, responding to the requests of members of the Episcopal Church to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church, decided to make the special pastoral provision for the reception of priests and laity into full communion with the Catholic Church. The decision provided for the priestly ordination of married, former Episcopal priests from his sponsoring bishop to determine suitability for ordination into the Catholic Church and receiving priestly faculties within his diocese. The Episcopal Church also established a body of theologians to provide an academic assessment and certificate of the candidates before they are approved for ordination. Last November, the Holy See appointed as the new Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Anglican Ordinariate in the United States, succeeding Archbishop Meyers. As the new Ecclesiastical Delegate, I look forward to continuing the great work of the Pastoral Provision within our diocese, and I ask for your prayers for all candidates involved in the process of seeking full communion with the Catholic Church as Catholic priests.

The Pastoral Provision was a historic moment in the Church and paved the way for many former Episcopal priests to not only enter the Church, but also be ordained as priests in the Roman Rite. The Pastoral Provision also allowed entire Episcopal parishes to enter the Catholic Church while retaining aspects of the Anglican liturgy.

The Pastoral Provision was initiated during the pontificate of Pope Paul VI and was then established and headed by Blessed John Paul II. In 1980, the Holy See, in response to requests from priests and laity of the Anglican Church in the United States who were seeking full communion with the Catholic Church, created a Pastoral Provision to provide them with special pastoral attention. The Pastoral Provision serves as a response to the needs of a category of Christian faithful seeking full communion with the See of Peter:

In July (1980) the President of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops received a letter from the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith indicating that the Holy Father, Blessed John Paul II, responding to the requests of members of the Episcopal Church to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church, decided to make the special pastoral provision for the reception of priests and laity into full communion with the Catholic Church. The decision provided for the priestly ordination of married, former Episcopal priests.

The Pastoral Provision is the Anglican Ordinariate. It is important to note that the structure was approved by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Overall, the Pastoral Provision has led to the ordination of more than 80 former Episcopal priests (and counting). The candidates involved in this process are taken on a case-by-case basis based on an exception granted under the Pastoral Provision. It is important to note that the Pastoral Provision is not a proving ground for optional celibacy in the Catholic Church but is a special invitation of the Holy See welcoming and allowing clergy of the Episcopal Church to become Catholic and continue their ministry in the Church as priests.

In order to meet the needs of these groups within the United States, the Holy See appointed as the first Ecclesiastical Delegate of the Pastoral Provision Cardinal Bernard Law, then Bishop of Springfield Cape Girardeau, Missouri, who was subsequently succeeded by Archbishop John Meyers of the Archdiocese of Newark. The Ecclesiastical Delegate is tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Pastoral Provision in the United States. Specific duties and responsibilities of this delegate include gathering candidate information for each former Episcopal priest who is sponsoring a bishop to determine suitability for ordination into the Catholic Church and receiving priestly faculties within his diocese. The Ecclesiastical Delegate also establishes a body of theologians to provide an academic assessment and certificate of the candidates before they are approved for ordination. Last November, the Holy See appointed as the new Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Anglican Ordinariate in the United States, succeeding Archbishop Meyers. As the new Ecclesiastical Delegate, I look forward to continuing the great work of the Pastoral Provision within our diocese, and I ask for your prayers for all candidates involved in the process of seeking full communion with the Catholic Church as Catholic priests.

The Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter

Now, let’s turn our attention to the establishment of the Anglican Ordinariate in the United States. As the work of the Pastoral Provision has continued over the years, there have been an increasing number of requests from several countries around the world, for former Anglican and Episcopalian communities to enter the Catholic Church corporately, or as a group, with a desire to retain many of the Anglican liturgical and pastoral traditions and structures. In November of 2009, Pope Benedict XVI promulgated the Apostolic Constitution Anglicanorum Coetibus (Anglican Body), which laid the framework for Anglican Ordinariates to be established in different countries or regions around the world that would allow former Anglicans to enter the Church corporately. Each Anglican Ordinariate, once established, has ecclesiastical jurisdiction similar to that of a diocese, but instead of having jurisdiction over a local territory, it instead encompasses entire countries or regions. This Ordinariate structure already exists in the Church in the form of the United States Military Ordinariate which has within its jurisdiction all of the United States military personnel throughout the world. The Anglican Ordinariate is different from and moves beyond the scope of the Pastoral Provision because it encompasses the entire world and not just the United States. Former Anglican clergy and entire Anglican parish communities will be able to enter the Church not through a local diocese, but through the Ordinariate structure that encompasses entire countries or regions.

Each Ordinariate once erected, would be headed by an Ordinary, who in this case usually would be a priest who was formerly of the Anglican clergy. If the Ordinary is married, he would not be a bishop, but would oversee the governance and workings of the Ordinariate in a fashion similar to that of a bishop, but would not be able to ordain deacons, priests, or consecrate new bishops. On January 15, 2011, the Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham was established in England, and Monsignor Keith Newton, a former Anglican bishop, was named its Ordinary.

Since Anglicanorum Coetibus was promulgated by Pope Benedict XVI in 2009, the process of establishing an Anglican Ordinariate was begun in cooperation with the Holy See and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Cardinal Wuerl, the Archbishop of Washington, D.C., was named to head the USCCB Commission that would work with the Holy See in the establishment of the Anglican Ordinariate in the United States, and I, along with Bishop Robert McManus of the Diocese of Worcester in Massachusetts served with Cardinal Wuerl on this Commission. The Diocese of Fort Worth played an important role in the establishment of the Ordinariate in that 26 former Anglicans from three different
A New Year, with new life in the Church

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

Bedford K of C donates sonogram machine to area pregnancy center

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

Diocese will hold its first rally geared specifically for middle-schoolers

By NTC Staff

Father Philip Brembah is redefining African ministry at St. Joseph

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

Pope announces two new American saints, including first Native American

By CNS

February 2012

Departments

4-5 Briefly

11 Catechesis

12-13 Voices

14 Features

26-27 Word to Life

28-30 Spanish

31 Calendar

The appearance of advertising in these pages does not imply endorsement of businesses, services, or products. Readers must exercise prudence in responding to advertising in all media.
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The millions of refugees and migrants in the world are not numbers but people in search of a better life for themselves and their families, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“They are men and women, young and old, who are looking for a place they can live in peace,” the pope said Jan. 15, “in peace,” the pope said Jan. 15, looking for a place they can live in peace,” the pope said Jan. 15, looking for a place they can live, young and old, who are seeking the turning of faith rooted in a personal encounter with Jesus, “and the beauty of having faith is expressed it “in a new way, in order to respond to the questions of our times,” it said. Given the “great difficulties” in producing similar colorations, it said. Some recommendations for bishops, dioceses and parishes include ensuring there be better quality catechetical materials that conform to the Church’s teaching, promoting Catholic principles and the significance of Vatican II in the mass media; hosting events that bring artists, academics, and others together to renew dialogue between faith and reason; offering penitential celebrations; and putting a focus on liturgy, especially the Eucharist, it said.

It also called for Vatican II documents, the Catechism and its Compendium to be republished in more affordable editions and to distribute the texts digitally and via other “modern technologies.”

Pope Benedict XVI said, “The Church is well aware of the problems facing the faith” and recognizes that without a revitalization of faith rooted in a personal encounter with Jesus, “and the beauty of having faith is expressed it “in a new way, in order to respond to the questions of our times,” it said. Given the “great difficulties” in producing similar colorations, it said. Some recommendations for bishops, dioceses and parishes include ensuring there be better quality catechetical materials that conform to the Church’s teaching, promoting Catholic principles and the significance of Vatican II in the mass media; hosting events that bring artists, academics, and others together to renew dialogue between faith and reason; offering penitential celebrations; and putting a focus on liturgy, especially the Eucharist, it said.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In an effort to help Catholics have a better and correct understanding of their faith and become authentic witnesses to Christ, the Vatican issued a list of pastoral recommendations for celebrating the upcoming Year of Faith.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith released a “note” Jan. 7 outlining the aims of the special year and ways bishops, dioceses, parishes, and communities can promote “the truth of the faith,” the congregation said.

It also announced that within the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, a secretariat would be set up to suggest and coordinate different initiatives. The new department will be responsible for launching a special website for sharing useful information on the Year of Faith.

Pope Benedict XVI wanted the Year of Faith, which runs from Oct. 11, 2012, to Nov. 24, 2013, to help the Church focus its attention on “Jesus Christ and the beauty of having faith in him,” it said.

“The Church is well aware of the problems facing the faith” and recognizes that without a revitalization of faith rooted in a personal encounter with Jesus, “and the beauty of having faith is expressed it “in a new way, in order to respond to the questions of our times,” it said. Given the “great difficulties” in producing similar colorations, it said. Some recommendations for bishops, dioceses and parishes include ensuring there be better quality catechetical materials that conform to the Church’s teaching, promoting Catholic principles and the significance of Vatican II in the mass media; hosting events that bring artists, academics, and others together to renew dialogue between faith and reason; offering penitential celebrations; and putting a focus on liturgy, especially the Eucharist, it said.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Education is key to the Catholic Church’s evangelization efforts among Native Americans and St. Anthony Indian Mission School in Zuni, New Mexico, is “a case in point,” said Father Wayne Payse.

Last October, the priest, who is executive director of the Washington-based Black and Indian Mission Office, visited the school in the Diocese of Gallup, New Mexico, which encompasses seven Indian tribes.

Principal Deborah Goering showed him around the elementary school. Accompanied by a reporter and photographer from Catholic News Service, Father Payse stopped in every classroom, talking to the teachers, teachers’ aides, and students.

“We feel that there is nothing greater than the positive impact on evangelization among our Catholic Indian mission schools than a good teacher,” Father Payse told CNS in an interview in his office in early December.

“Education is most important, because education is like a ladder. It gives them an opportunity to climb out of the difficult environment they’re in.”

The school, on the Zuni Pueblo Indian Reservation, is tuition-free and depends on its development office to raise money to cover salaries, operating expenses and facility upkeep.

“The children are very happy in our Catholic mission schools,” Father Payse said.

“We have wonderful, very dedicated, not only religious women and men but laity who teach in our mission schools. It’s really a ministry because believe me they’re not there because of the money.”

Goering feels the same about her job. Principal for three years, she arrived in New Mexico after many years as a principal in central New York.

“This is where God wants me.”

Giving Native Americans the best education they could receive was a priority for St. Katharine Drexel, who spent her life and wealth ministering to American Indians and African-Americans. She built mission schools and churches across the country, helped by members of the religious order she founded — the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament.

At Sts. Bonaventure School in Thoreau, N.M., also in the Gallup Diocese, Sister Consolata Beecher is “carrying forward her dream.”

Native Americans “cannot take their place in society, in levels of leadership” without education, “and the Catholic Church has to do it,” she told CNS.

A Laguna Pueblo Indian, Sister Consolata has been a member of St. Katharine’s order for 50 years.

A first-grade student works on a paper during class at St. Anthony Indian School on the Zuni Pueblo Indian reservation in New Mexico in late October, 2011.
Texas Bishops applaud Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals decision to overturn restraint of Texas enforcement of sonogram law

By Maria Huemer

Texas Catholic Conference

AUSTIN — The Catholic Bishops of Texas applauded the Jan. 11 decision of the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans to allow the state of Texas to enforce the sonogram law giving mothers access to the ultrasound images of their unborn children’s hearts beating.

The ruling overturned lower court’s temporary order, allowing the state to implement the sonogram law.

Eight men back on the front row of these 66 Pontifical North American College seminarians who are about to receive the Ministry of Reader Sunday, Jan. 15 in Rome is Fort Worth seminarian Joseph Keating.

Fort Worth seminarians Joseph Keating and Matthew Tatyrek are among 66 receiving the Ministry of Reader in Rome

ROMO — Sixty-six seminarians of the Pontifical North American College were instituted to the Ministry of Reader during a celebration of the Eucharist, Sunday, Jan. 15 in Rome. Joseph Keating and Matthew Tatyrek of the Diocese of Fort Worth, who are in their first year of theological studies, were among those seminarians instituted.

The Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio, Archbishop of the Military Ordinariate in the U.S. and an alumnus of the college, celebrated the Mass and instituted the new readers. Among the concelebrants of the Mass were the American bishops present in Rome for their ad limina visits with Pope Benedict XVI, including Cardinal Donald Wuerl of the Archdiocese of Washington, DC, and Cardinal-elect Edwin O’Brien, Pro-Grandmaster of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem and former rector of the Pontifical North American College.

Handing the book of Sacred Scriptures to each seminarian, Archbishop Broglio said, “Take this book of Holy Scripture and be faithful in handing on the Word of God, so that it may grow strong in the hearts of His People.”

By Jo Anne Flores Embliston

East Texas Catholic

Diocese announces Holy Cross Parish is forming the twentieth Catholic School in the diocese

THE COLONY — The Diocese of Fort Worth has announced the formation of a new Catholic school to open in fall of 2012. Holy Cross Catholic School will initially be located at 301 King Road in Frisco, and will welcome its first students in August.

A meeting for prospective parents was held Jan. 17. Registration for Holy Cross School began Jan. 25.

The new Holy Cross Catholic School comes as there has been a discussion among Bishop Kevin J. Farrell and the leadership of Holy Cross Parish. Fr. Holmberg is the pastor of Holy Cross Parish in the Colony.

In the Holy Cross Parish bulletin for the New Year’s week, Msgr. Holmberg recalled the parish’s desire to build a school at its then beginning 30 years ago. That dream was thwarted when it was determined there was not enough Catholic population to justify a school at the time. He goes on to say, “Approximately two years ago, another feasibility study — was conducted by Meitle Associates on behalf of the Diocese of Fort Worth and Holy Cross. The results of that study indicate that, first of all, the Catholic population is now of sufficient size to support a Catholic school, and, secondly, the existing Catholic families of Eastern Denton County desire and want a school by Meitle Associates on behalf of the feasibility study … was conducted ‘Approximately two years ago, another feasibility study — was conducted by Meitle Associates on behalf of the feasibility study … was conducted


Matthew Tatyrek, a seminarian at Pontifical North American College in Rome receives the book of the Gospels from U.S. Military Ordinariate Archbishop Timothy Broglio, symbols of his having been instituted to the Ministry of Reader, Jan. 15. Matthew is a parishioner of Holy Family Parish, Irving.

Tyler artist pencils portraits of bishops; hopes to revive tradition of bishops’ portraits

By Brian Buettner

The sixth annual Portrait Collection is open for orders. The 66 portraits are of bishops, drawn by Tyler artist Michael Lawrence, who is the portrait artist of bishops.

Former Tyler Bishop Alvaro Corrada del Rio, holds a portrait given him by "bishop artist" Michael Lawrence. (Photo courtesy of Descon Rick Lawrence)

Sister Rose Marie Pishko, a Holy Cross parishioner of St. Mark Parish, Denton.

The Ministry of Reader is one of the ministries of the Seminary, receiving the young men from the Diocese, and preparing them to receive the Sacraments of Holy Orders.

With the establishment of this new ministry – Holy Cross School – the dream, conceived years ago by the parishioners of Holy Cross is becoming a reality.

— Holy Cross Pastor

Father Michael Holmberg

Chicago Archbishop Francis Cardinal George.

The bishop has always had a great love of the arts and a desire to encourage young artists, and he commissioned the works for his private collection,” Descon Lawrence recalled.

The result was a life-like image of the Puerto Rican native, who was installed Sept. 12 as head of the Diocese of Mayaguez in his native Puerto Rico, the image was immediately adapted for use in the annual diocesan appeal. Bishop Corrada was Tyler’s bishop from January 2001 until his appointment to Mayaguez.

“The piece was reproduced to make 30,000 keepsake cards,” the artist recalled. “It was the start of the ‘Three Bishops of Tyler’ portrait collection now on display at the Tyler chancery.”

A self-taught artist who briefly attended the University of Texas at Tyler, Lawrence said he developed “my own methods” along the way, creating images primarily in graphite/pencil and some pen and ink.

Lawrence says he prefers the “simplicity” of black and white portraits. “I like the simplicity of this tool to draw something so complex as the human face — you can get such detail with a sharpened pencil that you can’t get with other mediums, like watercolor for example,” he said. “There’s a meaningfulness that doesn’t come across in color.”

His first showing was a collection titled “The Faces of America.”

“I did portraits of Rosa Parks, Abraham Lincoln, John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, Jr., the Beatle John, and the head of an American eagle.” He recalled, saying they were then made into 10-by-12-foot panels for use as a backdrop by his high school band’s music competitions throughout the state.
Sister Inés Diáz joins staff of diocese as delegate for Hispanic Ministry

By Michele Baker

Correspondent

Sister Inés Díaz, SSMN has joined the staff of the Diocese of Fort Worth as delegate for Hispanic Ministry. She comes to this position after six years in Hispanic Ministry at St. John the Apostle Parish in North Richland Hills.

“I feel challenged to work for the diocese,” Sr. Inés said in an interview. “We need to be open. We need to listen. I am trying to ask people what they want. I will need to work with all the different offices. It’s very exciting and a big challenge.”

Soft-spoken with a gentle way about her, Sister Inés isn’t afraid of challenges. Answering her call to the religious life brought her face to face with many of them, beginning with herself.

“I wasn’t thinking of the convent,” she remembers. “I had a boyfriend. I was in love. We talked about getting married and having children.”

Such plans would seem to be expected from an 18-year-old, South Central Mexican woman from a family of 10 children. Yet something was holding her back, a tiny whisper from the Lord. Even so, most of the religious sisters she’d encountered were teachers, and Sr. Inés didn’t see herself needing the religious life to follow that path.

“I thought, if I want to teach, I can go to school and become a teacher and still marry and have a family,” she explained. “But I used to think about what it would be like to be like a missionary.”

So when the whisper grew more insistent, Sr. Inés found herself visiting the sisters of the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary (known as Las Violetas). There, it became clear that she had responded to a genuine call from God.

“It was hard,” she recalled. “It was hard to leave my family and hard to leave what I thought my life would be.”

It became even more difficult when her decision to enter the convent was not received well by her father. Although Sr. Inés had nine siblings, only one of them was a girl, and her father balked at the idea of one of his precious daughters becoming a religious.

“But I told him, ‘I’m not asking for your permission. I’m letting you know what I am going to do,’” she said. “And years later, he told me that it was good that I said that because if I had asked him, he’d have told me ‘no.’”

As a Missionary Catechist of the Sacred Heart, Sister Inés traveled to Spain and Bolivia where she did ministry at parishes and at the diocesan level.

“It was a very rich experience,” she said. “A very beautiful time. It made me open and it made me grow up.”

After 18 years with Las Violetas, Sr. Inés began a discernment process that led her to the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur here in Fort Worth. In 2005, she came to the United States and began working at St. John the Apostle Parish in North Richland Hills, and in 2010 she officially changed communities, becoming a Sister of St. Mary.

“Now I am 27 years as a religious and it is a beautiful life,” Sister Inés said with a satisfied smile on her face.

And what about Daddy?

“My sister is married and she has five children,” Sister Inés explained. “So my father said that he had two daughters: one for him and one for the Lord.”

Office of Family Life hopes Natural Family Planning training weekend, offered in English and Spanish, Feb. 10-12, will help recruit and train teachers from throughout the diocese

“T he sympto-thermal method makes use of all the known signs of fertility, as opposed to just a single sign of fertility.”

—Mary Kouba, CCL instructor

The Diocese of Fort Worth hopes to be able to make Natural Family Planning a required part of marriage preparation throughout the diocese, but without an adequate number of volunteer teachers, the diocese must wait, said Chris Vaughan, diocesan director of the Office of Marriage and Family Life.

“For the demand we have for Catholic marriages, we need more teachers,” Vaughan said.

For this reason, the diocese has invited the Couple to Couple League (CCL) to offer a training session for NFP teachers in English and Spanish Feb. 10-12 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Keller. The training is free, but organizers are requesting a $40 donation to cover food and childcare costs.

“Marriage has a 50 percent divorce rate, so we’re doing as much as we can to make their marriages successful, and part of that is understanding the Church’s teachings,” Vaughan said. “The divorce rate for people using NFP is two percent.”

Vaughan said there is especially a need for teachers from outside the Tarrant County area, noting the strain attending multiple classes in Fort Worth puts on some couples preparing for marriage.

“A couple from Abbott couldn’t come up for three or four classes because it’s a two-hour drive, so we’re trying to recruit teachers, especially outside the Tarrant County area, so we can make that [diocesan goal] a reality,” Vaughan said. “We’ve made phone calls, focusing on all the parishes outside Tarrant County, asking pastors if they know of any couples who practice NFP and want to teach it.”

CCL is an international organization based in Cincinnati that teaches the sympto-thermal method of NFP. CCL has chapters spread across the country. Bill and Mary Kouba, the chaircouples for the CCL of Fort Worth, said the training is for married couples already practicing this particular method of NFP and wanting to teach it.

“The sympto-thermal method makes use of all the known signs of fertility, as opposed to just a single sign of fertility,” said Mary Kouba, explaining the difference between the sympto-thermal method and other methods of NFP such as Creighton or Billings.

Although CCL offers training online, it could take approximately nine months to complete certification. While those attending the training session will still have to complete online work, participants will still complete more than 50 percent of their certification requirements during the training.

“We’ve been teaching for 27 years, and it’s rewarding to help couples build better marriages. It’s a privilege to serve in this way,” said Bill Kouba.

Pre-registration for the training weekend is required. Interested married couples should contact Bill and Mary Kouba at (817) 370-9193, or at wmkouba@sbell.net before Friday, Feb. 3.

Married couples interested in being trained as teachers in Spanish should contact Paula Macias at (682) 502-4237, or at paterrazzas@yahoo.com. For more information about NFP in general, visit the diocesan website at www.fwdioc.org/ministries/nfp, or contact Chris Vaughan at (817) 560-2452, ext. 269, or at cvaughan@fwdioc.org, or contact diocesan NFP Coordinator Tony Abadie at (817) 560-2452, ext. 252, or at saba-die@fwdioc.org.
Bishop Vann blesses real time ultrasound machine donated to Mother and Unborn Baby Care by K of C Council 7641

Story and Photos
By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen
Correspondent

“It will show the mothers who come here God’s creation.”

That’s the impact Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann hopes a new ultrasound machine will have on women considering abortion. The state-of-the-art Acuson X3000 system, purchased for Mother and Unborn Baby Care by Knights of Columbus Council 7641 in Bedford, provides 3D/4D real-time images of a child in the womb.

Several members of the St. Anthony the Miracle Worker Council of the Knights based out of St. Michael Church in Bedford were present Jan. 13 to watch Bishop Vann bless the high-tech equipment after he celebrated Mass at the crisis pregnancy center. Purchasing sonogram machines, so abortion-minded women can view the life within them, became a goal for Bishop Vann after he celebrated Mass at the crisis pregnancy center. Watching the baby and seeing the heartbeat does change minds,” he explained. “According to our research, 80 to 90 percent of women contemplating abortion will keep the baby after a seeing a sonogram.”

Before donating an ultrasound machine, the Knights of Columbus must follow strict guidelines which include receiving approval from the bishop and diocesan pro-life director.

“It must then go to an ongoing organization that can handle it,” Miller added.

Chuck Pelletier, Mother and Unborn Baby Care director, says the gift is an extra tool volunteers can use in counseling abortion-bound women who walk through the door. In the past, these mothers were referred to a doctor’s office for their sonograms. “I think offering a free sonogram will bring more women who are considering abortion to our center,” Pelletier said.

When the crisis pregnancy center opened 27 years ago, advertising free pregnancy tests attracted people in a similar way. Abortion clinics typically charge a $100 non-refundable fee for a sonogram.

“They keep the money, even if the woman does not go through with the procedure,” he added.

The pro-life advocate calls the images produced by the center’s new ultrasound machine “spectacular.” While a trained technician is performing the scan, patients can view three-dimensional pictures of their moving baby displayed on a 32-inch monitor hung across from the examination table. Mothers receive a photo of the baby and a CD with the heartbeat to take home.

“It’s in 4-D real-time, so when the baby sticks a thumb in his mouth, the mother sees it on the screen as the baby is doing it,” Pelletier continued. “The biggest advantage of this machine is that it’s going to save more babies because more women thinking about abortion will come in to see us.”

Sandra Williams, a board certified echo cardiographer and Jessica Morgan, an emergency room nurse, both volunteers, received additional training to administer the sonograms. The equipment was installed at the center in December. “The reaction from women getting sonograms has all been positive. They’re amazed by what they see,” Williams observed. “I show them how far along (with the pregnancy) they are and, hopefully; they have a change of heart.”

Workers at Mother and Unborn Baby Care have dubbed the new ultrasound machine “Stella Maris,” which means “Star of the Sea” in Latin. “It’s a title given to the Blessed Mother,” Pelletier explained. “We purposely dedicated it to her and call on her to shed the light of Christ on these women, so they make the right decision.”

By Jerry Circelli
Correspondent

Father Tom Kennedy, pastor of Holy Angels Catholic Church in Clifton, has had to counsel the faithful through all stages of life in his calling as a priest.

One of the most challenging aspects of that counseling has involved helping families and their loved ones with critical end-of-life decisions that they must often make in hospitals with little or no time to pray, discuss, or contemplate. For that reason, Fr. Kennedy has joined with the Knights of Columbus St. Jude Council 6269 in Arlington to help people prepare now, through the thoughtful and spiritual guidance of the Catholic Church, for their final days or hours on earth.

Titled “Health Transition Workshop,” Fr. Kennedy’s insightful discussion is scheduled from 9 a.m. to noon, Feb. 25, at the Knights of Columbus St. Jude Council Hall, 2625 South Cooper St., in Arlington.

“The purpose is to help people understand health care and end-of-life decisions from the Catholic perspective,” said Fr. Kennedy. “It’s something that’s a mystery for many people.”

What do you do when someone is consciously at the end of his or her life, or is in a coma? When do we have moral obligations to accept treatments? When do we have options? Where and when can we draw the line on certain medical care? How are Catholic teachings and perspectives different from other practices that are gaining acceptance? What about leaving a hospital for hospice care at home? What should we consider? And, what are the church’s views on organ donation?

These are just some of the questions Fr. Kennedy will answer and discuss at the upcoming workshop.

“For something that lasts only about three hours, I try to make it very comprehensive,” said Fr. Kennedy. In the course of the workshop, attendees will have the opportunity to complete an Advance Medical Directive and Health Care Proxy, or they can take the documents home with valuable resource information and fill them out at a later time. The Advance Medical Directive specifies medical procedures a patient wishes to receive or avoid. The Health Care Proxy identifies an individual who can make medical decisions on behalf of a patient when that person is no longer able to do so.

Some people will leave the workshop with a set of completed and signed documents. Fr. Kennedy said, while others will come away with valuable knowledge to make future decisions. “It’s a place where people can say, ‘Well, this is where we start.’ ”

The workshop and discussion of end-of-life issues are made possible by the sponsorship of the Knights of Columbus St. Jude Council 6269 and efforts headed up by Jerry Hauck. This will be the fifth year Hauck and his fellow Knights have hosted the event, which will include refreshments, the National Catholic Bioethics Center’s A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions, related forms, and a book titled A Will To Live: Clear Answers on End of Life Issues, authored by the Archbishop Jose Gomez, archbishop of Los Angeles and former archbishop of San Antonio.

Both Hauck and Fr. Kennedy have a genuine interest in sharing Catholic teachings on these health issues with the community. Each delved into similar discussions with their own family members in years past and valued the time spent in conversations with their loved ones. They learned valuable Church teachings in the process.

“We must be guardians of our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit,” said Hauck. “Our objective is to make knowledgeable decisions based on the teachings of God.”

Fr. Kennedy added the perfect example. “Jesus was preparing his disciples constantly for the end. If we’re paying attention to our lives as Catholics, the end is what we live for. In being prepared for the end, we’re actually continuing the call of Jesus to his disciples to always think about the end of your life, because if you are not prepared, it will be like a chief in the night who will catch you unaware.”

To reserve materials and your place in the free Health Transition Workshop, contact Jerry Hauck at (817) 462-8186.

‘Health Transition Workshop’ Feb. 25 in Arlington will offer participants Catholic perspective on making end-of-life decisions
Bishop Vann asks for prayers for ‘Envisioning’ as sessions begin

The visible phase of a diocesan “Envisioning” process set in motion by Bishop Vann last May is about to begin, and he and the leadership team of diocesan leaders is asking for the prayers of all in the diocese for God’s guidance on the process.

Under Bishop Vann’s leadership, a group of diocesan and parish leaders has been working with facilitators from the Catholic Leadership Institute to lay the foundation for gathering input from all the recognized leadership of the diocese, including representatives of the Presbyteral Council, the Diocesan Pastoral Council, parish councils, parish staffs, other parish leadership (at the pastors’ discretion), and Catholic Center staff. The goal of the process is to provide Bishop Vann with a broad representation of the opinions and perceptions of the faithful in the diocese to help him formulate a mutually shared vision for the Diocese of Fort Worth.

As Bishop Vann put it in the letter of invitation to the Envisioning Leadership Team in May of last year, “After shepherding you for almost six years, I desire for us to chart a course that is hopeful, faithful, and life-giving as we journey into the future of the Diocese of Fort Worth.”

Beginning in February, the process will move forward with Envisioning sessions held in five locations, convenient to the various regions of the diocese. Invited leaders in the regions, as well as invited diocesan staff members, will offer their own prayerfully considered ideas in an open conversation of what Bishop Vann terms in his letter of invitation, seeking what the Diocese of Fort Worth “can be in service to the Kingdom of God…”

After these meetings have been completed, the input from the leadership of the diocese will be gathered and fashioned by the Envisioning Leadership Team into a report to the bishop with the goal of creating “a mutually shared vision … that is rooted in the life of the local Church.”

Bishop Vann will publish his vision for the diocese, informed by the Envisioning process in the fall of 2012, having prayerfully considered the input gathered from leaders from every corner of the 28 counties of the diocese. Bishop Vann’s articulated vision, will then be used to help guide the local Church as it moves into the future.

First diocesan Middle School Rally N01B4ME will feature music, speakers, Mass, and Perpetual Motion Ministry, Feb. 18

Larry West, coordinator of middle school ministry at Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville, says he has worked with hundreds — if not thousands — of adolescents over his past 30 years as an educator and youth minister. The married father of three especially enjoys the energy and enthusiasm of young teens, he explains, adding, “Kids in the sixth through eighth grades have a tremendous hunger to know God. The biggest mistake we adults can make is to think that they don’t want to explore their faith, to examine their Catholic identity. Our young people are hungry to know the truth, and to grow closer to Christ.”

In response to that need, West is serving as coordinator of an upcoming diocesan middle school rally for Catholic sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. The event, expected to draw approximately 700 youth and their adult leaders, will take place Saturday, Feb. 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Most Blessed Sacrament Church, 2100 N. Davis Dr. in North Arlington. The cost is $30 per person prior to the Feb. 3 early registration deadline, and $40 after that date. Participants will bring their own lunches; the evening meal is included in the price for the day.

“N01B4Me” is the theme of the event, says West, noting that the keynote presenters, music ministers, and breakout session leaders will all be focusing on the gifts — and challenges — that young people encounter in a technology-driven culture.

“Our kids need to recognize that technology and social media can be a real gift from God if utilized in the right way,” says West. “We will be offering the use of Scripture, Rosaries, knowledge of the saints, and faith journals as a ‘low-tech’ way of deepening our communication with Christ. We will also be learning about how we can use texting, the Internet, and Facebook to deepen that faith connection.”

A special feature of the rally will be the high-energy closing Mass, led by Father Jeff Poirot, pastor of Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, says Kevin Prevou, director of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry for the diocese.

“Our celebration of the Eucharist together will be the highlight of the day,” Prevou says, “and leading up to that experience, we will all enjoy great music, inflatables, games such as ‘Live Angry Birds,’ interactive presentations, and the opportunity for hundreds of Catholic youth to have fun together while growing in their understanding that our faith is not only relevant, but absolutely necessary to be successful and happy in our world today.”

“The rally will offer a tremendous amount of movement and fun, because that’s what this age group needs. We know that they will especially enjoy the activities offered by our presenters from Perpetual Motion Ministry. Together we will be building a “cell phone tower” to God, as a way of emphasizing the conversations that God wants to have with all of us.”

The rally is a way for young adolescents to see that “your faith can be a fun and enjoyable thing that you can share with others in person and through technology, too,” says West. “Our main message of the day is, ‘Don’t let technology control you. You can control technology and put your faith out there.’”

For more information about the rally, visit www.fwdioc.org or call (817) 560-2452 x 255.

First diocesan Middle School Rally N01B4ME will feature music, speakers, Mass, and Perpetual Motion Ministry, Feb. 18

Larry West, coordinator of middle school ministry at Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville, says he has worked with hundreds — if not thousands — of adolescents over his past 30 years as an educator and youth minister. The married father of three especially enjoys the energy and enthusiasm of young teens, he explains, adding, “Kids in the sixth through eighth grades have a tremendous hunger to know God. The biggest mistake we adults can make is to think that they don’t want to explore their faith, to examine their Catholic identity. Our young people are hungry to know the truth, and to grow closer to Christ.”

In response to that need, West is serving as coordinator of an upcoming diocesan middle school rally for Catholic sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. The event, expected to draw approximately 700 youth and their adult leaders, will take place Saturday, Feb. 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Most Blessed Sacrament Church, 2100 N. Davis Dr. in North Arlington. The cost is $30 per person prior to the Feb. 3 early registration deadline, and $40 after that date. Participants will bring their own lunches; the evening meal is included in the price for the day.

“N01B4Me” is the theme of the event, says West, noting that the keynote presenters, music ministers, and breakout session leaders will all be focusing on the gifts — and challenges — that young people encounter in a technology-driven culture.

“Our kids need to recognize that technology and social media can be a real gift from God if utilized in the right way,” says West. “We will be offering the use of Scripture, Rosaries, knowledge of the saints, and faith journals as a ‘low-tech’ way of deepening our communication with Christ. We will also be learning about how we can use texting, the Internet, and Facebook to deepen that faith connection.”

A special feature of the rally will be the high-energy closing Mass, led by Father Jeff Poirot, pastor of Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, says Kevin Prevou, director of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry for the diocese.

“Our celebration of the Eucharist together will be the highlight of the day,” Prevou says, “and leading up to that experience, we will all enjoy great music, inflatables, games such as ‘Live Angry Birds,’ interactive presentations, and the opportunity for hundreds of Catholic youth to have fun together while growing in their understanding that our faith is not only relevant, but absolutely necessary to be successful and happy in our world today.”

“The rally will offer a tremendous amount of movement and fun, because that’s what this age group needs. We know that they will especially enjoy the activities offered by our presenters from Perpetual Motion Ministry. Together we will be building a “cell phone tower” to God, as a way of emphasizing the conversations that God wants to have with all of us.”

The rally is a way for young adolescents to see that “your faith can be a fun and enjoyable thing that you can share with others in person and through technology, too,” says West. “Our main message of the day is, ‘Don’t let technology control you. You can control technology and put your faith out there.’”

For more information about the rally, visit www.fwdioc.org or call (817) 560-2452 x 255.

First diocesan Middle School Rally N01B4ME will feature music, speakers, Mass, and Perpetual Motion Ministry, Feb. 18

Larry West, coordinator of middle school ministry at Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville, says he has worked with hundreds — if not thousands — of adolescents over his past 30 years as an educator and youth minister. The married father of three especially enjoys the energy and enthusiasm of young teens, he explains, adding, “Kids in the sixth through eighth grades have a tremendous hunger to know God. The biggest mistake we adults can make is to think that they don’t want to explore their faith, to examine their Catholic identity. Our young people are hungry to know the truth, and to grow closer to Christ.”

In response to that need, West is serving as coordinator of an upcoming diocesan middle school rally for Catholic sixth, seventh, and eighth graders. The event, expected to draw approximately 700 youth and their adult leaders, will take place Saturday, Feb. 18 from 10:30 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Most Blessed Sacrament Church, 2100 N. Davis Dr. in North Arlington. The cost is $30 per person prior to the Feb. 3 early registration deadline, and $40 after that date. Participants will bring their own lunches; the evening meal is included in the price for the day.

“N01B4Me” is the theme of the event, says West, noting that the keynote presenters, music ministers, and breakout session leaders will all be focusing on the gifts — and challenges — that young people encounter in a technology-driven culture.

“Our kids need to recognize that technology and social media can be a real gift from God if utilized in the right way,” says West. “We will be offering the use of Scripture, Rosaries, knowledge of the saints, and faith journals as a ‘low-tech’ way of deepening our communication with Christ. We will also be learning about how we can use texting, the Internet, and Facebook to deepen that faith connection.”

A special feature of the rally will be the high-energy closing Mass, led by Father Jeff Poirot, pastor of Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, says Kevin Prevou, director of Youth, Young Adult, and Campus Ministry for the diocese.

“Our celebration of the Eucharist together will be the highlight of the day,” Prevou says, “and leading up to that experience, we will all enjoy great music, inflatables, games such as ‘Live Angry Birds,’ interactive presentations, and the opportunity for hundreds of Catholic youth to have fun together while growing in their understanding that our faith is not only relevant, but absolutely necessary to be successful and happy in our world today.”

“The rally will offer a tremendous amount of movement and fun, because that’s what this age group needs. We know that they will especially enjoy the activities offered by our presenters from Perpetual Motion Ministry. Together we will be building a “cell phone tower” to God, as a way of emphasizing the conversations that God wants to have with all of us.”

The rally is a way for young adolescents to see that “your faith can be a fun and enjoyable thing that you can share with others in person and through technology, too,” says West. “Our main message of the day is, ‘Don’t let technology control you. You can control technology and put your faith out there.’”

For more information about the rally, visit www.fwdioc.org or call (817) 560-2452 x 255.
Nolan Catholic Mardi Gras at Cowboys Stadium Feb. 11 to be a highlight of 50th Anniversary observance

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen Correspondent

It promises to be a celebration worthy of Nolan Catholic High School’s 50 years of success in education.

This year’s golden anniversary Mardi Gras dinner and auction is set for Saturday, Feb. 11 at Cowboys Stadium in Arlington. Festivities begin at 3:30 p.m. with $25 stadium tours and will continue with a 5:30 p.m. Mass. Dinner is served at 7:15 p.m. The evening includes a silent auction, live auction, and dancing until midnight to the sounds of Canta Rhythm & Brass.

Guest parking at Cowboys Stadium is free courtesy of Allen Samuels Dodge, Chrysler Jeep RAM.

Individual reservations are $85 and table sponsorships are available.

The annual Mardi Gras fundraiser is part of a yearlong calendar of activities marking the 1961 opening of Nolan Catholic High School. Founded by the Marianist Brothers and the Sisters of St. Mary of Namur, the 4501 Bridge St. campus has served more than 9,000 students during its history and remains Tarrant County’s oldest and largest Catholic college preparatory school.

Proceeds from Mardi Gras ticket sales and auctions are used to support a variety of vital needs at Nolan, including academic programs, campus improvements, and financial assistance for families in need.

“It’s a grand venue for a grand event,” says coordinator Jana McWilliams, describing the selection of Cowboys Stadium as one of the special touches chosen to reflect the campus improvements, and financial Nolan, including academic programs, campus improvements, and financial assistance coordinator, Judy Locke.

“It’s an exciting time for our school,” says Annette Kearns, the school’s communications director. “Everyone is invited to participate in the online auction for ‘all things Nolan’ beginning Jan. 20. Reserved parking spots, choose your locker, and water boy duties during Viking football games are some of the more popular items up for bid.

“Mardi Gras is a special way to celebrate our 50 years so we’re looking forward to a lot of alumni joining us for the evening,” says Annette Kearns, the school’s communications director.

To donate auction items or make a reservation call the school at (817) 457-2920 or visit www.nolancatholichs.org and click on the Mardi Gras link.

She was the single, working mother of two young children, both with special needs. "Mary," a client of Catholic Charities’ Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, earned less than $35,000 a year, and was grateful for the cost-free help in preparing her 2010 income tax.

“Her two sons both have muscular dystrophy,” recalled Cindy Casey, Volunteer Manager for the VITA program. "She couldn’t believe it when our volunteers helped her to prepare her taxes, then gave her the news that she qualified for a $7,500 refund. She was absolutely ecstatic. She told us that she was now going to be able to purchase an electric wheelchair for her sons.”

VITA, an IRS-supported, free income tax preparation program for qualifying families throughout Tarrant County, is part of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) and United Way’s effort to assist families in becoming financially self-sufficient. Many working individuals and families are unaware of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which can mean up to an additional $5,751 in tax refunds for families earning less than $49,078 a year.

During last year’s tax season, the VITA program prepared 2,816 tax returns, refunding $5 million and $1.77 million in Earned Income Credits, noted Lauren King, CCFW Director of Programs. “While helping clients to prepare their taxes, we also referred over a thousand households to other resources, such as assistance

With housing, financial education, career development, food stamps, and medical needs,” she added. “This kind of comprehensive approach to helping families to achieve financial stability is unique to our Catholic Charities and United Way partnership.”

Empathetic, trained volunteers are the key to the success of the VITA effort, said Casey, noting that in addition to skilled tax preparation and review, free-on-site childcare is offered by appointment.

“Our volunteers know that they are part of a program that prevents people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said.

She was the single, working mother of two young children, both with special needs. “Mary,” a client of Catholic Charities’ Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, earned less than $35,000 a year, and was grateful for the cost-free help in preparing her 2010 income tax.

“Her two sons both have muscular dystrophy,” recalled Cindy Casey, Volunteer Manager for the VITA program. "She couldn’t believe it when our volunteers helped her to prepare her taxes, then gave her the news that she qualified for a $7,500 refund. She was absolutely ecstatic. She told us that she was now going to be able to purchase an electric wheelchair for her sons.”

VITA, an IRS-supported, free income tax preparation program for qualifying families throughout Tarrant County, is part of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) and United Way’s effort to assist families in becoming financially self-sufficient. Many working individuals and families are unaware of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which can mean up to an additional $5,751 in tax refunds for families earning less than $49,078 a year.

During last year’s tax season, the VITA program prepared 2,816 tax returns, refunding $5 million and $1.77 million in Earned Income Credits, noted Lauren King, CCFW Director of Programs. “While helping clients to prepare their taxes, we also referred over a thousand households to other resources, such as assistance

With housing, financial education, career development, food stamps, and medical needs,” she added. “This kind of comprehensive approach to helping families to achieve financial stability is unique to our Catholic Charities and United Way partnership.”

Empathetic, trained volunteers are the key to the success of the VITA effort, said Casey, noting that in addition to skilled tax preparation and review, free-on-site childcare is offered by appointment.

“Our volunteers know that they are part of a program that prevents people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said.

She was the single, working mother of two young children, both with special needs. “Mary,” a client of Catholic Charities’ Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, earned less than $35,000 a year, and was grateful for the cost-free help in preparing her 2010 income tax.

“Her two sons both have muscular dystrophy,” recalled Cindy Casey, Volunteer Manager for the VITA program. "She couldn’t believe it when our volunteers helped her to prepare her taxes, then gave her the news that she qualified for a $7,500 refund. She was absolutely ecstatic. She told us that she was now going to be able to purchase an electric wheelchair for her sons.”

VITA, an IRS-supported, free income tax preparation program for qualifying families throughout Tarrant County, is part of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) and United Way’s effort to assist families in becoming financially self-sufficient. Many working individuals and families are unaware of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which can mean up to an additional $5,751 in tax refunds for families earning less than $49,078 a year.

During last year’s tax season, the VITA program prepared 2,816 tax returns, refunding $5 million and $1.77 million in Earned Income Credits, noted Lauren King, CCFW Director of Programs. “While helping clients to prepare their taxes, we also referred over a thousand households to other resources, such as assistance

With housing, financial education, career development, food stamps, and medical needs,” she added. “This kind of comprehensive approach to helping families to achieve financial stability is unique to our Catholic Charities and United Way partnership.”

Empathetic, trained volunteers are the key to the success of the VITA effort, said Casey, noting that in addition to skilled tax preparation and review, free-on-site childcare is offered by appointment.

“Our volunteers know that they are part of a program that prevents people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said.

She was the single, working mother of two young children, both with special needs. “Mary,” a client of Catholic Charities’ Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, earned less than $35,000 a year, and was grateful for the cost-free help in preparing her 2010 income tax.

“Her two sons both have muscular dystrophy,” recalled Cindy Casey, Volunteer Manager for the VITA program. "She couldn’t believe it when our volunteers helped her to prepare her taxes, then gave her the news that she qualified for a $7,500 refund. She was absolutely ecstatic. She told us that she was now going to be able to purchase an electric wheelchair for her sons.”

VITA, an IRS-supported, free income tax preparation program for qualifying families throughout Tarrant County, is part of Catholic Charities Fort Worth (CCFW) and United Way’s effort to assist families in becoming financially self-sufficient. Many working individuals and families are unaware of the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), which can mean up to an additional $5,751 in tax refunds for families earning less than $49,078 a year.

During last year’s tax season, the VITA program prepared 2,816 tax returns, refunding $5 million and $1.77 million in Earned Income Credits, noted Lauren King, CCFW Director of Programs. “While helping clients to prepare their taxes, we also referred over a thousand households to other resources, such as assistance

With housing, financial education, career development, food stamps, and medical needs,” she added. “This kind of comprehensive approach to helping families to achieve financial stability is unique to our Catholic Charities and United Way partnership.”

Empathetic, trained volunteers are the key to the success of the VITA effort, said Casey, noting that in addition to skilled tax preparation and review, free-on-site childcare is offered by appointment.

“Our volunteers know that they are part of a program that prevents people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said. “Some preparers are people from being taken advantage of,” she said.
Diocese

Formation Day for RCIA and RCIA Adapted for Children, Jan. 28 at Immaculate Conception in Denton, will offer English and Spanish presenters, workshops

Michele Baker Correspondent

On Saturday, Jan. 28, the Diocese of Fort Worth will host an RCIA and RCIA Adapted for Children Diocesan Formation Day. Sponsored by the Pope John Paul II Institute School of Catechumenal Ministry, the day-long event will be held at Denton’s Immaculate Conception Church.

The Pope John Paul II Institute is a vehicle for adult catechesis in the Diocese of Fort Worth. The Institute is comprised of three schools: A School of Catechesis, the School of Lay Ministry, and the School of Catechumenal Ministry which provides training for those involved with the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults (RCIA) and RCIA Adapted for Children.

Now in its third year, the annual RCIA Formation Day grew out of training days that were formerly held throughout the year.

“The Institute, though still in its infancy, has offered a number of opportunities for training,” said Martha Tonn, director of catechesis at Immaculate Conception, which is hosting this year’s event. “And when you see the scope of the RCIA program, it’s easy to see why there’s an entire school devoted to this. In my parish we have RCIA programs in English and Spanish, for adults, teens, and children; each program has a team of 8 to 12 members.”

Lucas Pollice, diocesan director of Catechesis said, “Every member of the RCIA team, from parish directors to sponsors, would benefit from participating in the Formation Day. And even though attendance is not mandatory, we always have a strong turnout.”

Which is as it should be. The General Directory for Catechesis issued by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Clergy in 1997 states that the catechumenate is the model form of catechesis for all the faithful.

“You have a microcosm of the parish represented in the program,” explains Tonn. “And numerous studies have shown that the more faithfully your process of catechesis for the catechumenate reflects parish life, the more likely the people who experience the process are going to stay involved in the parish and their faith.”

This year’s RCIA Formation Day will feature keynote addresses in English and in Spanish with breakout sessions on a variety of pertinent topics. Cost is $15 and includes all materials and lunch. Registration deadline is Monday, Jan. 23.

For more information or to register, contact Lucas Pollice at 817-560-3300 Ext. 260 or at lpollice@fwdioc.org.

The Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation hosts an evening dedicated to “giving wings” to the students and young cancer patients that it serves.

Please attend as our guest.
February 23, 2012
Thursday, 6:30pm

Botanical Research Institute of Texas
(Next to the Botanical Gardens)
1700 University Drive
Fort Worth, Texas 76107

Please confirm your reservation by contacting:
Jacquelyn Batson
817-269-4452
sbreenfdn@gmail.com

KEYNOTE SPEAKER:
CATHY RUSH

Cathy Rush was the head women’s basketball coach at Immaculata from 1972-1977. She led Immaculata to three consecutive AIAW national titles from 1972-1974. She led the Mighty Macs to six consecutive Final Four appearances in her six seasons with the school, attaining a 149-15 record. Rush was inducted into the Basketball Hall of Fame on April 7, 2008.

The Mighty Macs, a movie about the season leading to Cathy’s team’s first women’s national basketball championship in 1972, was just released in October. Cathy is a breast cancer survivor and a spokesperson for the American Cancer Society.

But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Isaiah 40:31

Business casual.

©2012 Stephen Breen Memorial Foundation
Catechesis

Open Wide The Doors To Christ

By Lucas Pollice

One of the great challenges that face us as Catholics as we move forward with the New Evangelization is witnessing and teaching the proper relationship between faith and reason. As our culture becomes increasingly secular, more and more people rely purely on science and reason as the source of truth, and not Christ and the Church. Anything proposed from a position of science or reason is readily accepted as true with little reflection or questioning. On the other hand, anything that is proposed from a religious standpoint is oftentimes immediately questioned and is seen as opposed to reason and therefore, not true.

However, God is the only genuine source of truth, and what God has revealed to us through Christ and entrusted to the Church fully reveals to us who God is and who we are as human beings created in the image and likeness of God. Faith, rather than being opposed to reason, allows our reason to achieve a level of knowledge and understanding of truth that goes far beyond its own natural capacities.

How then, do faith and reason work together? The great early Church Father St. Anselm defined theology, the study or science of God, as “faith seeking understanding.” How we come to know God and ultimately how we come to share in his life is indeed through first accepting in faith what God has revealed to us and then seeking to further understand his truth and plan for us. Mary gives us a perfect example of this faith seeking understanding faith at the Annunciation. Mary demonstrates great faith, but a faith that was seeking understanding. When the angel told her that she was going to conceive a child, she accepted with faith what God was revealing to her in this mysterious event. She clung to his words; she believed them even though she did not fully understand them.

But Mary’s faith did not stop there. She sought to more deeply understand what God’s word meant so that she could more deeply know, love, and serve Him. So Mary pondered God’s word in her heart and mind and asked questions. “How will this be if I do not know man?” (Luke 1:34). Asking questions is not doubting! Mary’s question does not show doubt, but rather shows that she believes God’s revelation and desires to know his will even more profoundly, so that she will be able to more perfectly cooperate with his plan. We should always seek to know more deeply who God is and who we are and what God’s plan and will is for us.

The reality is that our relationship with God is like any relationship. Whether it be with a spouse or a friend, we seek to know ever more deeply who they are, and the more we come to truly know them, the more we can grow in love and friendship with them. The same applies with our faith in God and our relationship with Him. We certainly do not know everything about God. But that does not mean we stop learning. And just because God’s revelation can sometimes be difficult to understand or difficult to live does not mean we just reject it or give up. It is at those times in particular that like Mary we cling with faith to what God has revealed to us, and we surrender our intellect and will to what He has revealed.

But then we ponder it, we ask questions, we read the Scriptures, study the teachings of the Church, and we pray about it. What if Mary had not understood at first what the angel was telling her, and she thought it was just too hard to accept or live without pondering in her heart God’s word, asking the questions, and praying for the grace to live faithfully according to God’s will? Our faith in God requires that we always seek to more deeply understand God’s revelation, so that we may more deeply love and serve Him.

Therefore, not only does faith not contradict reason, but faith actually builds upon and perfects our reason. Faith takes what we can know through our reason alone and enables us to understand the truths about God and ourselves on a completely new level. We see this profoundly with Mary and the Annunciation. It seems “unreasonable” that Mary could be with child since she had never had relations with a man. However, because of Mary’s faith and her desire to further understand God’s revelation and plan, God reveals to her that her child is not conceived through a man, but rather through the power of the Holy Spirit. There is no way that Mary could have come to know this through her reason alone. But through her faith in God’s revelation, she comes to know that her Son will be conceived through the Holy Spirit and truly be the Son of God.

Is this unreasonable or is God’s plan simply beyond Mary’s natural reason? This is the crucial point. We call what we do not know about God “mysteries” not because the truths about God are unreasonable, but because they are simply beyond the capacity of our reason that is currently limited by space and time and our finite nature here on earth. In addition, just because something is beyond our reason does not mean that it is not true. We see this in our everyday lives! For example, if I ask my four-year-old what eight times eight is, he would have no idea. It is simply beyond his reason at this point in his human existence. Does this mean that “eight times eight equals 64” is not true? Of course not! It just means that this truth is simply beyond his reason, not contrary to it or non-existent.

Can we possibly completely know and understand the many mysteries concerning the universe, the natural world, the complexity of the human person? How many complex truths are there out there that many of us are unable to understand at this moment? That does not mean they are false, or non-existent, or contradict our reason, those complex truths are just simply beyond our understanding.

The same applies to the mysteries of God. They are true because God has revealed them to us, but many of them are beyond our reason, which is limited in many ways while we are in this world. In fact not only is God’s revelation not unreasonable, but we can even come to a limited and imperfect understanding of revelation through our reason alone, such as in our understanding of the natural law. However, through God’s revelation and our faith seeking understanding, we can continue to ponder the mysteries of God so that we may come to know them more deeply until the fullness of time when we see God face to face.

Thus, the dual and inseparable relationship of faith and reason are the two irreplaceable and indispensable means through which we come to know God and enter into the profound depths of his mystery and also come to know who we are as children of God created in his image and likeness. As Blessed Pope John Paul II powerfully states:

Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth — in a word, to know himself — so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.

— Fides et Ratio, (Faith and Reason) 1

Therefore, the mysteries of our Catholic faith should never be roadblocks to our faith, but should always call us to a deeper understanding and a deeper communion with God who is continuously calling us to Himself. This is why life-long catechesis is not only important but should be an essential and indispensable part of the Christian walk. As we see in the great story Luke tells of the two disciples encountering Christ on the Road to Emmaus in his Gospel, Christ is always walking with us on the journey, answering our questions and fulfilling our deepest longings. All we need to do is open our hearts and minds without fear to his truth so that our hearts may indeed burn with love for Christ and we may become his powerful instruments of love and truth. Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors to Christ!

Lucas Pollice is director of Catechesis and Adult Faith Formation and RCIA for the diocese.
**Sex as God intended it:**
The Church has a treasure to offer

By Glen Argan

Asilian Father Jack Gallagher has written an important book that challenges both Church and society. The challenge to society is to overcome its individualistic approach to sexuality and morality that has separated procreation from marriage. The challenge to the Church is to be more forthright in presenting its teaching on sexuality and marriage that is the only real hope for society to avoid collapse and ruin.

Fr. Gallagher doesn’t mince words in his book, Human Sexuality and Christian Marriage: An Ethical Study. Evidence abounds, he says, indicating that the direction in which society is moving regarding sex and marriage is disastrous for both individuals and society itself.

In its increasing acceptance of cohabitation prior to marriage and of widespread divorce, society is undermining its own ability to raise children who have the sense of personal security and self-worth to develop into mature adults.

Along with society’s acceptance of contraception comes a social norm that says marriage is not about openness to new life, but about the parents’ right to decide the number of children they will accept. From there, it has not been a large step to a notion of “family diversity” in which any relationship among sexually active adults is seen as “equivalent to marriage.”

Forgotten are the children. Children are the main victims when marriage and cohabiting relationships break up. The future of society is the victim when the number of offspring does not even maintain the current population. Schools are closed; streets are silent; the dwindling number of the young bear the burden of caring for the increasing number of elderly.

and self-fulfillment are the primary values.

The way out of this morass, Fr. Gallagher says, is through Catholic teaching on marriage and sexuality. God created man and woman, not for themselves, but for each other. The family is the foundation of society because marriage is oriented towards the common good.

However, just at the time when Catholic teaching in this area is most needed, Catholics have abandoned that teaching in droves. Fr. Gallagher cites a 1992 survey that showed that in the U.S. moral acceptance of premarital sex and contraception is actually higher among Catholics than in the general population.

The Catholic Church is sometimes accused of talking too much about sex. The reverse is true. The Church does not talk about its teachings in this area anywhere near enough. We have a treasure to offer society, a way out of its current crisis. It is past time that we proclaimed that teaching with much greater fervor. Society’s future depends on it.

Glen Argan is the editor and general manager of the Western Catholic Reporter, the official newspaper of the Archdiocese of Edmonton, Alberta.

**The consubstantial mystery**

New wording helps us appreciate Trinity

By David Mills

When you’re young, you think you understand people.

When I was 13, almost everyone I knew explained everyone else with a simple word like “insecure.” (Which was probably true, actually.) As we got older, we explained each other in slightly more complicated ways, drawn from the kind of psychology you pick up from Time magazine and intro to psych classes in college, often tracing whatever behavior we wanted to explain by the poor target’s childhood.

It’s a hard habit to break, but as you get older you begin to see that people are mysteries, even to themselves. You’d think that of all people St. Paul understood himself, but even he threw up his hands and admitted to the Christians in Rome that for some reason he didn’t do the good things he wanted to do but kept doing the bad things he didn’t want to do. You simply can’t describe anyone adequately in a few words or even in a long psychological report.

If we are mysteries, God is infinitely more mysterious than we are. We know God is a Trinity of persons, but what could that possibly mean? How do the persons relate to each other? What does it mean to say that the Father has a Son?

I bring this up because it helps explain why the new translation of the Mass uses “consubstantial” instead of “one in being with the Father.” In this column we’ll look at why the translators of the Creed used such an odd and unusual word when they could have used much simpler language.

The old wording certainly sounds better and seems (on the face of it) a lot easier to understand. The new wording is what my grandfather used to call a “twenty-dollar word.” (As you’ll guess, he grew up when $20 was a lot of money)

It sticks out like a man in a tuxedo at the beach. It makes you feel like you’re listening to some really smart computer geeks who uses a language you will never, ever understand. It can make you feel you’re reading from a script written for someone else — particularly some gray-haired, tweed-jacketed, balding guy with a theology degree.

And this, I think, actually helps us think more deeply about what we’re saying when we pop up at Mass and start reciting the words of the Creed. The unusual word tells us that we are speaking of a great mystery, something that’s way, way above our pay grade. We’re speaking of the relation of the Father to the Son, which is sort of like the relation of a human father to a human son — that’s why Scripture gives us these names and not others — but in other ways not like it at all.

We need to be reminded that we can’t talk about the relation of the Father and the Son the way we talk about anything else. To put it simply, God has revealed this to us, but that doesn’t mean we’ll understand more than a tiny part of its meaning.

Think of trying to describe a beloved grandmother. You can tell people that she was this and she was that, and she did this and she did that, and tell a bunch of great stories about her. You could write out her history. But you wouldn’t be able to capture who she really is. You wouldn’t be able to describe her personality in a way someone else could with certainty pick her out of a group of sweet little old ladies like her.

If grandma can’t be described very well, God can’t be either, especially when we try to talk about the inner relations of the Trinity, and about what it means for the Father to have a Son and for the Son to be the Son of the Father. No matter how good you are with words, there’s a sharp limit to what you can do in this case. When we’re confidently reading through the Creed, we ought to slam on the brakes and remember that we’re talking about a great mystery. That odd twenty-dollar word “consubstantial” tells us to hit the brakes.

David Mills is the executive editor of First Things. He and his family attend St. Joseph’s Church in Conoapolis. He can be reached at catholicsense@gmail.com.
Grandma’s little black skirt
became a guide that taught her (and us) to be self-giving

By Denise Bossert

In the summer of 2009, my husband and I went to a reunion on his side of the family. Aunt Lucia told a story about John’s grandmother. I never met Grandma Bossert. She passed away long before I married into the family. But Aunt Lucia said Grandma had a little black skirt. She’d owned it for as long as Aunt Lucia could remember. Grandma used the skirt as a kind of measuring tape to monitor weight gain. When she couldn’t get the side zipper to zip, she would cut back on what she ate until it fit her again.

I’ve seen pictures of Grandma Bossert. She looked like a Hollywood star even when she was well into her sixties, thanks to that little skirt and constant vigilance.

Our Church calendar is like Grandma’s skirt.

On Fat Tuesday, we try on our spiritual skirts, and we realize that we have gotten a little out of shape. Our baptismal vows aren’t fitting like they should. And for 40 days, we submit to the process of self-denial and service to others. We ask for the grace to reorder our disordered lives, so that on Easter morning, we are ready to meet the Risen Lord.

We have ways of measuring our progress just as Grandma Bossert had her side zipper. We know what to do when things are out of control. Oh, we don’t have to put on sad faces and act sullen about the self-denial. Even Grandma Bossert could put on a thirty-dish meal for family while simultaneously keeping her eyes on that little black skirt. In fact, she let the season of self-denial turn her focus outward. Her attention went to those around her. Did they have enough to eat?

Her focus was on the needs of those around her, even as she quietly modified her own habits.

That’s how we should be during Lent.

We make progress in personal sanctification by actively engaging the season of Lent. The spiritual equivalent to a little black skirt and an act of the will.

Go ahead. Do some self-assessment. Does the skirt fit? There are so many ways to learn to be holy — as many ways as there are Lenten promises. Pick one. Keep your promise. Turn your energy outward to those in need. Eventually your spiritual skirt will fit like a glove.

And just like Grandma Bossert, you will move about your kitchen with grace and dignity, asking everyone around you, “Have you seen the Spätzle? I made it just for you.”

Denise Bossert is a convert to Catholicism. She lives in near St. Louis and is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in New Melle, Missouri. Read more of Denise’s writing at www.catholicbygrace.blogspot.com.
Cleaning out our souls requires us to fill our lives with Christ
By Jeff Hedglen

This year promises to be full of new beginnings and fresh challenges. January 1 launched a new chapter in my life. For the past 25 years I have worked as the Coordinator of Youth Ministry at St. Bartholomew. I am now working for the Diocese of Fort Worth as the Campus Minister at UTA and Associate Coordinator of Young Adult Ministry. But before the new beginnings could begin, I had to clean out my office where 25 years of stuff had piled up. It was an arduous task on many levels. The sheer volume of items to be gone through was intimidating. Deciding which things were my personal stuff that needed to be packed up and what needed to stay in the office and what needed to be thrown out was exhausting. The process was quite emotional yet surprisingly freeing. It was certainly hard to go through 25 years’ worth of memories knowing I was leaving a job I have loved, but it was also a good feeling to make a clean and fresh start.

The cleaning out of my old office had a strange effect on me, because after I finished with that chore I tackled a job I avoid at all costs: cleaning out my garage at home. We have a two-car garage that most of the time is effectively a one-car garage because the other side is full of things that need to be put up in the attic, moved to the shed, taken to Goodwill, or taken to the Environmental Collection Center for hazardous waste.

Every year or so I return the space to its two vehicle capacity, but it seems like in no time it is reduced in size once again. It was certainly hard to go through 25 years’ worth of memories knowing I was leaving a job I have loved, but it was also a good feeling to make a clean and fresh start.

I have often heard it said, “If nothing changes, nothing changes.” If we want to grow in holiness, we have to start with the person who stares back at us in the mirror. One small decision can start a spiritual revolution in your life. Read one chapter of the Bible a day, visit a nursing home once a month (take some friends with you), make a sandwich and hand it to that homeless person you pass every day, attend one daily Mass a week (or even month). The options are endless; all we have to do is choose one.

jeff Hedglen, campus minister at the University of Texas at Arlington and associate coordinator of Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Fort Worth, is the principal organizer of Camp Fort Worth each summer. Readers with questions can contact jeff at jhedglen@fwdioc.org

Cross-Words
By Mark Simeroth

Across & Down:
1. Bulbous is traditionally considered one of three 3. Not once
2. Lifelike a camel’s back? 4. Ms. Garbo
5. The last may break

1 2 3 4 5

Umbert the Unborn by Gary Canegi

via its umbert: noon tomorrow! spread the word!

Elwood the rally is set for tomorrow! pass it on!

The Flock by Ivan Deaton

What’s in the bucket? Ashes. For Lent.

Let’s see. Ashes! Right–like they have special qualities to take away our sins.

No, they just remind us of our sins. My church. sins aren’t that bad.

Forget wall street were occupying wombs street!

Will do. thanks vita!

Ideas by the bethre life conference participants. process of retrenchment.

www.sheepdotcom.com
As he ministers to African Catholics living in North Texas, Ghanian priest Fr. Philip Brembah is as 
A gift among God's people

**F**ather Philip Brembah’s brown eyes brighten, and a smile blankets his face as he describes Christmas in his native Ghana. Exchanging expensive gifts is not part of the celebration for residents of the West African country.

“People travel from the cities to the villages to be with family. The holiday is about eating together, talking, and catching up on the latest news,” says the young priest from the Archdiocese of Kumasi. “The greatest gift you can give is to be physically present.”

For the growing number of African Catholics who now call North Texas home, Fr. Philip’s presence in the Diocese of Fort Worth is a gift that keeps their ties to the Church and homeland strong.

At the invitation of Bishop Kevin Worth, Fr. Philip worked in the Archdiocese of Kumasi before being selected by Archbishop Peter Kwasi Sarpong to bring his ministry to the Ghanaians living in the Fort Worth area. Today, the 43-year-old cleric officiates at St. Joseph Church for Mass in the Akan language, Twi. The Arlington parish also hosts a quarterly African Mass in English for Catholics from the Congo, Ivory Coast, Togo, Kenya, and Nigeria who move here to study at local universities and then settle in the area.

“Fr. Philip brings the African community together so we can worship as we used to back home,” says Thierry Kalubi, a native of the Congo who plays the keyboard at the African Mass. “Before he came, we had to search for an African priest for our Masses.”

It’s important for the new arrivals to build a faith community where familiar hymns are sung and treasured customs maintained.

“Many Africans, after moving here, are drawn to other denominations. That’s really sad because many of them were Catholic,” the musician points out. “Maybe their faith just wasn’t strong enough or maybe they didn’t find the same traditions so they went somewhere else.”

Choir member Michelle Ebambi says the number of Africans attending Mass has grown since Fr. Philip began ministering to the immigrant community. The unity demonstrated by the devout congregation contrasts with what many members experienced in their own countries.

“Africans are known to be divided along tribal lines so it’s rare to see them come together for one cause,” she says, explaining how the spiritual leader encourages them to pray for peace and prosperity in Africa. “As Catholics, it shows the universality of the Church. We pray as one people.”

While many Africans relocated to the U.S. for schooling, some left their homelands to escape war and persecution, Fr. Philip is a sounding board for their personal tragedies.

“That’s especially true for people from the Congo who have stories to tell about the war,” he confides. “Life’s been difficult and that’s one of the reasons why we try to worship together and pray for the continent — especially troubled areas.”

Growing up the oldest of five children in the heavily populated Ashanti Region of Ghana, Philip Kofi Brembah’s childhood was never marred by war or violence but had its own challenges. His father died when he was a teenager, and the overwhelming responsibility he felt for his mother and siblings almost prompted him to leave the minor seminary — 0 the equivalent of our Catholic high schools for boys.

“We didn’t own a piece of land for farming, so education was a priority for my mother,” the priest says, recalling the family’s struggle. “She knew educating her children would help us survive.”

Despite the emotional and financial hardships pulling him away from his vocation, he chose to continue his studies and live up to the example set by Father Philip Kofi Boateng. The older priest, a close friend of his parents, had blessed their marriage. His mother and father named him after the pastor. Both Fr. Philip’s share the name Kofi because they were born on a Friday and in Ghanaian culture, the day of the week a child is born, determines the middle name.

“I got to know him pretty well. He was a hard-working priest who traveled a lot to villages for Mass and to bring the sacraments,” Fr. Philip says, praising his mentor who died when he was a first-year student in minor seminary.

Ordained on July 18, 1998, Fr. Philip worked in the Archdiocese of Kumasi before being selected by Archbishop Peter Kwasi Sarpong to bring his ministry to the Ghanaians living in the Fort Worth area. Today the 43-year-old cleric officiates at deeply rooted cultural rites observed by the community, rites like the naming ceremony for newborns. Seven days after a birth, people gather at the family’s home for the announcement of the child’s name. The morning ritual is followed by an “adoring” celebration in the evening.

“We believe raising a child is not just the responsibility of the mother and father but society,” says Fr. Philip, explaining how the local priest offers prayers for the baby and is an integral part of the occasion. “Ghanaians always want to celebrate — especially when it’s about life.”

Funerals are also steeped in tradition. During the first week, people visited the grieving family, and no immediate plans are made for a viewing or burial. Gatherings are also held at 40 days and then one year after the death of a loved one.

“It’s a way to celebrate the life of the person who has passed and offers an opportunity to be around the bereaved family. It’s a support system so they don’t feel isolated or alone.”

The priest visits frequently to pray with the mourners.

“It means a lot to people,” he says, referring to his role in the lengthy process. “People are very conscious of time in America. For Ghanaians, time is not as important as family.”

Fr. Philip’s contributions to the diocese redefine the concept of African missionary. Instead of Westerners traveling overseas to evangelize, “priests and religious from Africa are now moving to other parts of the world to help,” he explains.

Since his arrival here, the former hospital chaplain spent three years ministering to the sick in Fort Worth hospitals and was assigned as parochial vicar at St. Joseph Church last October.

Father Charles Addai-Kanham, who has served parishioners at St. Vincent de Paul Church in Arlington for three years, is returning to Ghana at the end of January.

Living so far away from family — especially during the Christmas season — is difficult, Fr. Philip admits, but he has found a new home at the Arlington parish.

“But the way people love, care, and show concern for your welfare and well-being makes you feel comfortable,” the assistant pastor says. “You know you’re not missing anything because you still find yourself in a family.”
All Things Possible Campaign Update

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

This fourth report of the All Things Possible Campaign provides an update on pledges and payments as of December 31, 2011. Since June of 2010, we have been reporting semi-annually to you on the needs being met with the proceeds of the campaign. This report is focusing on the realities and the goals of pledge redemption.

Each donor to the campaign is an investor in the future of this diocese. The vital parish and diocesan projects and programs identified for funding by campaign contributions will ultimately be accomplished through successful redemption on pledges.

At this halfway point in the campaign, pledges have exceeded $55 million with $25.9 million — 46.8 percent of total pledges, being paid. It is our hope and our prayer that we will attain more than 90 percent redemption by the end of the campaign in 2013-2014. I ask that each of you continue to fulfill your pledges in support of the campaign to the best of your ability.

The All Things Possible Campaign has been a historic undertaking for the Diocese of Fort Worth—a tremendous platform to advance our mission and to make our parish and diocesan plans a reality. It is woven into the fabric of the future. Thank you for your prayers, your sacrifice and your generosity—truly a witness that with God, all things are possible.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

† Kevin W. Vann
Most Rev. Kevin W. Vann, JCD, DD
Bishop of Fort Worth

A Look at Pledge Redemption

What does pledge redemption mean for each of us? A pledge is our promise, made in good faith, to donate money. To redeem a pledge is to fulfill our promise.

What helps each of us to fulfill our promise? There is a system established within the campaign period of four years to provide us with pledge payment reminders, credit card charges or bank debits on a monthly, semi-annual, or annual timeline.

In addition, a system of acknowledgement, thanks and reporting lets us know our participation and our money is important to the campaign and that it is being used to meet the needs outlined.

Why is it so important for us to redeem our pledge? Our pledge is counted toward the goal of meeting the needs outlined in the campaign. The parishes and the diocese have begun to accomplish great things with our money, but the work will not be completed unless we fulfill our promise.

What happens if we cannot fulfill our promise to the campaign? Our personal circumstances can change over the campaign period of four years. Illness, job loss, moving from the area, death or other reasons might mean we cannot fulfill our promise. Two things will happen:
Parish Status Report

JANUARY 2012

CAMPAIGN GOAL
$40 million

PLEDGED TO DATE
$55.3 million

% OF GOAL PLEDGED
136.2%

PAID TO DATE
$25.9 million

% PLEDGES REDEEMED
46.8%

NUMBER OF GIFTS/PLEDGES
19,735

AVERAGE PLEDGED
$2,800

Of the fourteen parishes given approval to conduct their own local capital campaigns during the active phase of All Things Possible, thirteen have now completed their piggyback campaign efforts.

1. Our parish and the Diocese of Fort Worth will remain grateful for our participation in the campaign.
2. Our pledge will be “written-off” or reduced, either to $0, if nothing has been paid toward our pledge or to the amount paid-to-date on the pledge.

Who should we contact to discuss our pledge payments? Call 817-560-3300 Ext. 172 or email donate@fwdioc.org.

All Things Possible Campaign
PLEDGE REDEMPTION

Parish, City  Pledges to Date  Paid to Date
St. Joseph Parish, Decatur  $164,640  $55,789
St. Joseph Parish, Cleburne  $160,860  $31,780
St. Joseph Parish, New Canaan  $61,617  $33,670
St. Joseph Parish, Willsboro  $107,020  $50,118
St. Jude Thaddeus Parish, Farmington  $105,165  $47,445
St. Maria Goretti Parish, Arlington  $91,340  $709,262
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Fort Worth  $310,412  $290,058
St. Mary of the Assumption Parish, Mansfield  $54,100  $4,983
St. Mary Parish, Dublin  $37,265  $12,651
St. Mary Parish, Gainesville  $10,620  $485,821
St. Mary Parish, Henrietta  $13,255  $9,020
St. Mary Parish, Jacksonville  $28,350  $12,680
St. Mary Parish, Grand Prairie  $8,110  $16,722
St. Mary Parish, Windthorst  $151,012  $84,738
St. Mary of the Virgin Parish, Arlington  $110,215  $54,658
Matthew Parish, Arlington  $1,467,773  $289,562
Michael Parish, Bedford  $1,026,074  $741,700
St. Paul Parish, Electra  $28,800  $14,224
St. Paul Parish, Fort Worth  $18,473  $38,980
St. Philip the Apostle Parish, Lewisville  $580,837  $476,625
St. Rita Parish, Fort Worth  $356,673  $118,879
St. Rita Parish, Ranger  $39,800  $17,089
St. Rose of Lima Parish, Glen Rose  $45,846  $21,656
St. Thomas Aquinas Parish, Pilot Point  $152,454  $65,157
St. Thomas the Apostle Parish, Fort Worth  $430,040  $252,956
St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Arlington  $568,892  $451,390
William Parish, Montague  $51,725  $14,987

10 million of the overall $40 million goal for All Things Possible was designated to be available to parishes to support local needs.

Former Episcopal bishop to head new U.S. ordinariate for former Episcopalians

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
Catholic News Service

HOUSTON — Pope Benedict XVI established a U.S. ordinariate for former Anglicans who wish to become Catholics Jan. 1 and named a married former Episcopal bishop to head it.

The Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter — functionally equivalent to a diocese, but national in scope — will be based at a parish in Houston. It will be led by Father Jeffrey N. Steenson, who was bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande, based in Albuquerque, New Mexico, for three years before leaving to become a Catholic in 2007 and to be ordained a Catholic priest for the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, in February 2009. He and his wife, Debra, have three adult children and one grandchild.

“Particularly in the area of worship and liturgy, Anglicans have a goodly heritage and the Catholic Church has always understood and appreciated that Anglican heritage,” Fr. Steenson said. “We hope the personal ordinariate can bring this Anglican literary culture into the life of the Church.”

In the Jan. 2 press conference, Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann said Fr. Steenson brings to the position of ordinary “the desire to connect with that apostolic rock that will make a person make sacrifices.”

Fr. Steenson will be installed as the ordinary Feb. 19 in Houston. Because he is married, the 59-year-old Fr. Steenson will not be ordained a bishop and will not be able to ordain priests. He will, however, otherwise function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, making him the only married member of that body.

More than 100 former Anglican priests have applied to become Catholic priests in the ordinariate and 1,440 individuals from 22 communities have expressed interest in joining. In fall 2011, the members of the St. Peter the Rock Community in Fort Worth and St. Luke’s in Bladensburg, Maryland, were received into the Catholic Church with the intent of joining the ordinariate.

It is the second such jurisdiction established under the provisions of Pope Benedict’s 2009 apostolic constitution Anglicanorum coetibus. The first was the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, created for England and Wales in January 2011; others are under consideration in Canada and Australia.

The U.S. ordinariate will include parishes, groups, and individuals of Anglican heritage, which in the United States can include Episcopalian individuals and parishes. Parishes will be fully Roman Catholic, while retaining elements of the Anglican tradition in terms of music, liturgy, structure, and prayers.

The day after the announcement in Rome, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo introduced Fr. Steenson at the news conference at Our Lady of Walsingham Church in Houston, which will be the principal church for the U.S. ordinariate.

“In particularly the area of worship and liturgy, Anglicans have a goodly heritage and the Catholic Church has always understood and appreciated that Anglican heritage,” Fr. Steenson said. “We hope the personal ordinariate can bring this Anglican literary culture into the life of the Church.”

In the Jan. 2 press conference, Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann said Fr. Steenson brings to the position of ordinary “the desire to connect with that apostolic rock that will make a person make sacrifices.”

Fr. Steenson will be installed as the ordinary Feb. 19 in Houston. Because he is married, the 59-year-old Fr. Steenson will not be ordained a bishop and will not be able to ordain priests. He will, however, otherwise function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, making him the only married member of that body.

More than 100 former Anglican priests have applied to become Catholic priests in the ordinariate and 1,440 individuals from 22 communities have expressed interest in joining. In fall 2011, the members of the St. Peter the Rock Community in Fort Worth and St. Luke’s in Bladensburg, Maryland, were received into the Catholic Church with the intent of joining the ordinariate.

It is the second such jurisdiction established under the provisions of Pope Benedict’s 2009 apostolic constitution Anglicanorum coetibus. The first was the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, created for England and Wales in January 2011; others are under consideration in Canada and Australia.

The U.S. ordinariate will include parishes, groups, and individuals of Anglican heritage, which in the United States can include Episcopalian individuals and parishes. Parishes will be fully Roman Catholic, while retaining elements of the Anglican tradition in terms of music, liturgy, structure, and prayers.

The day after the announcement in Rome, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo introduced Fr. Steenson at the news conference at Our Lady of Walsingham Church in Houston, which will be the principal church for the U.S. ordinariate.

“In particularly the area of worship and liturgy, Anglicans have a goodly heritage and the Catholic Church has always understood and appreciated that Anglican heritage,” Fr. Steenson said. “We hope the personal ordinariate can bring this Anglican literary culture into the life of the Church.”

In the Jan. 2 press conference, Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann said Fr. Steenson brings to the position of ordinary “the desire to connect with that apostolic rock that will make a person make sacrifices.”

Fr. Steenson will be installed as the ordinary Feb. 19 in Houston. Because he is married, the 59-year-old Fr. Steenson will not be ordained a bishop and will not be able to ordain priests. He will, however, otherwise function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, making him the only married member of that body.

More than 100 former Anglican priests have applied to become Catholic priests in the ordinariate and 1,440 individuals from 22 communities have expressed interest in joining. In fall 2011, the members of the St. Peter the Rock Community in Fort Worth and St. Luke’s in Bladensburg, Maryland, were received into the Catholic Church with the intent of joining the ordinariate.

It is the second such jurisdiction established under the provisions of Pope Benedict’s 2009 apostolic constitution Anglicanorum coetibus. The first was the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, created for England and Wales in January 2011; others are under consideration in Canada and Australia.

The U.S. ordinariate will include parishes, groups, and individuals of Anglican heritage, which in the United States can include Episcopalian individuals and parishes. Parishes will be fully Roman Catholic, while retaining elements of the Anglican tradition in terms of music, liturgy, structure, and prayers.

The day after the announcement in Rome, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo introduced Fr. Steenson at the news conference at Our Lady of Walsingham Church in Houston, which will be the principal church for the U.S. ordinariate.

“In particularly the area of worship and liturgy, Anglicans have a goodly heritage and the Catholic Church has always understood and appreciated that Anglican heritage,” Fr. Steenson said. “We hope the personal ordinariate can bring this Anglican literary culture into the life of the Church.”

In the Jan. 2 press conference, Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann said Fr. Steenson brings to the position of ordinary “the desire to connect with that apostolic rock that will make a person make sacrifices.”

Fr. Steenson will be installed as the ordinary Feb. 19 in Houston. Because he is married, the 59-year-old Fr. Steenson will not be ordained a bishop and will not be able to ordain priests. He will, however, otherwise function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, making him the only married member of that body.

More than 100 former Anglican priests have applied to become Catholic priests in the ordinariate and 1,440 individuals from 22 communities have expressed interest in joining. In fall 2011, the members of the St. Peter the Rock Community in Fort Worth and St. Luke’s in Bladensburg, Maryland, were received into the Catholic Church with the intent of joining the ordinariate.

It is the second such jurisdiction established under the provisions of Pope Benedict’s 2009 apostolic constitution Anglicanorum coetibus. The first was the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, created for England and Wales in January 2011; others are under consideration in Canada and Australia.

The U.S. ordinariate will include parishes, groups, and individuals of Anglican heritage, which in the United States can include Episcopalian individuals and parishes. Parishes will be fully Roman Catholic, while retaining elements of the Anglican tradition in terms of music, liturgy, structure, and prayers.

The day after the announcement in Rome, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo introduced Fr. Steenson at the news conference at Our Lady of Walsingham Church in Houston, which will be the principal church for the U.S. ordinariate.

“In particularly the area of worship and liturgy, Anglicans have a goodly heritage and the Catholic Church has always understood and appreciated that Anglican heritage,” Fr. Steenson said. “We hope the personal ordinariate can bring this Anglican literary culture into the life of the Church.”

In the Jan. 2 press conference, Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann said Fr. Steenson brings to the position of ordinary “the desire to connect with that apostolic rock that will make a person make sacrifices.”

Fr. Steenson will be installed as the ordinary Feb. 19 in Houston. Because he is married, the 59-year-old Fr. Steenson will not be ordained a bishop and will not be able to ordain priests. He will, however, otherwise function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, making him the only married member of that body.

More than 100 former Anglican priests have applied to become Catholic priests in the ordinariate and 1,440 individuals from 22 communities have expressed interest in joining. In fall 2011, the members of the St. Peter the Rock Community in Fort Worth and St. Luke’s in Bladensburg, Maryland, were received into the Catholic Church with the intent of joining the ordinariate.

It is the second such jurisdiction established under the provisions of Pope Benedict’s 2009 apostolic constitution Anglicanorum coetibus. The first was the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, created for England and Wales in January 2011; others are under consideration in Canada and Australia.

The U.S. ordinariate will include parishes, groups, and individuals of Anglican heritage, which in the United States can include Episcopalian individuals and parishes. Parishes will be fully Roman Catholic, while retaining elements of the Anglican tradition in terms of music, liturgy, structure, and prayers.

The day after the announcement in Rome, Cardinal Daniel DiNardo introduced Fr. Steenson at the news conference at Our Lady of Walsingham Church in Houston, which will be the principal church for the U.S. ordinariate.
Bishop Vann, as Ecclesiastical Delegate for the Pastoral Provision in the U.S., delivers statement at press conference announcing ordinariate

Editor's Note: The following is Bishop Kevin Vann's opening statement to the press conference announcing the formal establishment of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter and the appointment of Father Jeffrey Steenson as the first Ordinary of the new ordinariate at Our Lady of Walsingham Anglican Use Parish in Houston, Jan. 2.

Good morning all, dear brothers and sisters and friends, present here today. Happy New Year!

I'm very grateful to be present here at Our Lady of Walsingham today, at this historic moment for the announcement of the establishment of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter under the Patronage of Our Lady of Walsingham Anglican Use Parish in Houston. Not long after my appointment to Fort Worth, I was appointed as Vice Delegate for the Pastoral Provision with special responsibility for Texas. Now, as the Delegate of the Holy See for the Pastoral Provision, I am here to offer my personal support to Fr. Steenson and the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter; and to offer my promise to continue to work together, and pray with and for the Ordinariate and Fr. Steenson, in the calling to help build up and strengthen the life of the this new Ordinariate. At the same time, I will continue the work of the Pastoral Provision for those Episcopalian priests who wish to become members of a Latin Rite Diocese.

Anglicanorum Coetibus brings to the entire Church the reality of Faith that has been the lived experience of the Pastoral Provision in the Diocese of Fort Worth. Indeed, today is a day of rejoicing as we begin in this New Year, and a new chapter in the life of the Church in the United States.

Thank you and God bless you.
With the construction of the new building, the previous sanctuary — a 900-seat converted Food Lion grocery store that sits on the same 12-acre property — will serve as a parish hall, auditorium, and classrooms for the 1,100 students attending religious education classes at the parish.

“We just needed more space,” parishioner Johnson Le, 26, said. “We needed more space, and now we actually have a real church, a real sacred place to worship, whereas the old building was a renovation from a supermarket.”

Le, a youth group leader and parishioner for 15 years, says he is proud that the new church gives the Catholic Vietnamese community more visibility.

“It means a lot for the Vietnamese community not just here but across the U.S. saying that we have a place to worship, we have a place to come together, to celebrate, to worship God and to give thanks — especially leaving the homeland from Vietnam and then coming over here, and yet we're still able to come together and celebrate and worship,” Le said. “And it shows that… the faith is not dead…. And you can see it with this new structure here; you show people that ‘Hey, the faith is alive and it continues to grow throughout the generations.’”

On the day of the dedication, thousands of parishioners waited excitedly outside the church in the chilly weather as a long procession of parishioners dressed in traditional Vietnamese dress, diocesan and visiting priests, deacons, altar servers and Bishop Vann and Bishop Dominic Mai Thanh Luong, auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Orange in Orange County, California, proceeded through the crowds. Bishop Vann blessed the statue of Our Lady of La Vang, the shrine of St. Joseph, and various other statues — statues that took Vietnamese craftsmen up to two years to carve. He then proceeded to cut the ceremonial ribbon with other representatives of the community amid fireworks and applause.

Parishioners gasped audibly in awe as they followed Bishop Vann and the procession into the new building built with 750,000 pounds of marble and granite cut in Vietnam, and into the nave filled with pews made of American oak expertly crafted in Vietnam, and lined with stained glass windows depicting the 117 Vietnamese Martyrs canonized by Pope John Paul II in 1988.

“St. Paul speaks of the living temple of God, in this temple of God he is present right now and forever after,” Bishop Vann said. “We lay a foundation for our lives now and into the future, and each stone in this house of God, each statue, each sacred object, each piece of stained glass — everything — is a reminder of each of you here today, of your love, of your sacrifice, and of your generosity, without which this would not be possible.”

He continued, “We rejoice in the Lord today, we give glory to God for the vision and generosity of the Vietnamese families who came here to Arlington years ago to begin this parish family, to begin this community of faith, and for you whose faith and love and vision have made this house of God
possible. You brought them with you from Vietnam, your faith, your love, and your strength and your courage — they live here today.

Bishop Vann proceeded to pray the dedication and then anointed and incensed the altar and church to consecrate the building to God. The congregation burst into applause as ministers turned on the lights in the church for the first time in the ceremony. Near the end of the ceremony, relics of the Vietnamese Martyrs were placed in the chapel.

The pride and gratitude of the parishioners for their new church shone through at the reception, during which parish representatives gave thanks to God, Bishop Vann, benefactors, and all those in attendance.

The now-thriving community — composed of three generations of parishioners — began with only about a dozen families who came to the U.S. sponsored by Catholic Charities after fleeing the communist Vietnamese regime after the Fall of Saigon in 1975, said Joe Nguyen, vice chairman of the pastoral council.

“When Vietnam fell, nobody know where to go, so we jumped on a boat and went to the ocean,” Fr. Duc Thuan said, telling how he and other refugees on that packed boat were later rescued by an American ship, taken to the Philippines and eventually brought to the U.S. “It was very dangerous. No water, no food; we left everything behind.”

Shortly after being relocated, many refugees became parishioners of St. Matthew Church in Arlington. There they found a home where they could thank God, grow in faith, and stabilize their lives, helping each other overcome language barriers and cultural differences. As more than half a million refugees escaped Vietnam, many were relocated to North Texas and the small Vietnamese Catholic community at St. Matthew continued to grow.

By 1998, the community — numbering 514 families — with permission from the diocese, bought the former Food Lion store at 801 E. Mayfield Road and was established as a parish by the late Bishop Joseph Delaney in June 2000.

Hung Nguyen, a member of the parish since it was based in St. Matthew, expressed gratitude for the new church and for the help the community received from the very beginning — when they left Vietnam “with empty hands.”

“Day by day we [had] each other and we grew up everything, and now we have 1,600 families over the span of 36 years…. Now we’re very happy with the new church,” Nguyen said.

By 2008, Vietnamese Martyrs parish had grown to 1,250 families. Responding to that growth, the community began to plan and raise money for the new building that same year, said Joe Nguyen. With $1.5 million already saved, an additional $3.5 million raised by parishioners and businesses in the community, and with a now-$1.5 million loan from the diocese, construction began in July 2010, he said.

“Everybody wanted to get a new church and everything, so everybody was very excited [to donate],” finance council member Hoc Pham said. “So today we see everybody coming out and showing up. Everybody loves it.”

Pham said many families gave a $3,000 donation through a five-year payment plan. Additionally, the parish raised money by hosting Vietnamese New Year’s fundraisers and participating in cookouts at Marian Day in Missouri at the campus of the Congregation of the Mother Co-Redemptrix. Through a one-day fundraiser in September 2010, the parish raised $750,000, Fr. Duc Thuan said.

Father Louis Nhien, provincial superior of the Congregation of the Mother Co-Redemptrix and former parochial vicar of Vietnamese Martyrs, said the contributions from so many people show the unity of the church. “So that unity built up that church,” he said. “Not only is that a sign of physical unity but spiritual unity too. I think that is a great sign to show the Catholic faith.”

As the celebration and reception wound down several hours later, handfuls of parishioners kept returning to the new church to admire it and pray in it.

“I feel very reverent and I feel very happy when I come into church, and I also feel lifted up, so I can feel God, so it’s very nice,” said Fr. Duc Thuan while he stood in the church, as if reading his parishioners’ minds.

Blessing it.

Thuan, CMC, rubs oil on the walls of the new church, Vietnamese Martyrs pastor Father Polycarp Duc.
Clergy, laity laud naming of Archbishops Dolan, O’Brien among 22 new cardinals

“I extended my heartfelt congratulations and assured him of my prayers,” Cardinal Egan added. “This is wonderful news for the cardinal-designate and for the entire community of faith he serves so well.”

Cardinal-designate Dolan himself said in a Jan. 6 statement that he was “honored, humbled, and grateful” at the honor. “This is not about Timothy Dolan,” he added. “This is an honor from the Holy Father to the Archdiocese of New York. ... It’s as if Pope Benedict is putting the red hat on top of the Empire State Building, or the Statue of Liberty, or on home plate at Yankee Stadium.”

“This news is a wonderful recognition of both bishops and their gifts and abilities, as well as an honor for the church in the United States,” said Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington in a Jan. 6 statement. “The universal Church is well served by these faithful and dedicated leaders.”

Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston said in a Jan. 6 statement that the two new U.S. cardinals-designate “will provide the Holy Father valuable guidance and assistance through their long-standing dedication to the work of the Church. ... We join the Catholic community throughout the United States in congratulating Cardinal-designate Dolan and Cardinal-designate O’Brien and assure them of our prayers and best wishes as they prepare for the upcoming consistory,” set for Feb. 18.

“This is truly a great day for the Catholic Church in New York, and across the U.S. and, indeed, the world, and a wonderful way to ring in the new year,” said a Jan. 6 statement by Richard E. Barnes, executive director of the New York State Catholic Conference. Barnes noted that Cardinal-designate O’Brien is a native of the Bronx, one of New York City’s five boroughs, and a former priest and auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of New York. He also lauded the selection of Cardinal-designate Dolan.

“With his infectious joy, brilliant intellect and enthusiastic love of the Lord and his people, Cardinal-designate O’Brien is truly a bright light in the American Church,” Barnes said. “He already has become the face of the Church in the United States. Now as a ‘prince of the Church,’ his influence will truly extend worldwide.”

Mary Ellen Russell, executive director of the Maryland Catholic Conference, congratulated Cardinal-designate O’Brien, who serves as apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Baltimore while waiting for his successor to be named. “He has been a vocal, passionate advocate in the public square, and a highly regarded champion of the poor, the unborn, the immigrant, the prisoner on death row, the importance of marriage and the family, and the rights of students in our Catholic schools,” Russell said in a Jan. 6 statement. “At the same time, he has also strongly supported efforts to assure and encourage the Church’s pastors and other leaders, and all Catholics in Maryland, to exercise their rights and responsibilities as faithful citizens.”

Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, and former archbishop of San Antonio, praised the two U.S. cardinals-designate as “prayerful and compassionate men” in a Jan. 6 statement. “Both possess a deep knowledge of the issues affecting the Church and civil society,” he said. “I am confident that they will be very helpful advisers to our Holy Father and the universal Church in the years ahead.”

Father Jeffrey Steenson, head of the Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter, created for former Anglican parishes and individuals, said in a Jan. 6 statement, “The United States is particularly blessed to have two caring and gentle shepherds among those to be elevated in the consistory” in Cardinals-designate Dolan and O’Brien. “We will keep them in our prayers and we ask our Lord’s blessings on them.”

List of the 22 new cardinals

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Here is the list of the 22 cardinals-designate, in the order in which Pope Benedict XVI announced them Jan. 6:

- Italian Archbishop Fernando Filoni, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, 65.
- Portuguese Archbishop Manuel Monteiro de Castro, major penitentiary of the Apostolic Penitentiary, 73.
- Spanish Archbishop Santos Abril Castello, archpriest of Basilica of St. Mary Major, 76.
- Italian Archbishop Antonio Maria Veglio, president Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers, who turns 74 Feb. 3.
- Italian Archbishop Giuseppe Bertello, president of the commission governing Vatican City State, 69.
- Italian Archbishop Francesco Coccopalmerio, president of the Pontifical Council for Interpreting Legislative Texts, 73.
- Brazilian Archbishop Joao Braz de Aviz, prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 64.
- Italian Archbishop Domenico Calcagni, president of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Holy See, who turns 69 Feb. 3.
- Italian Archbishop Giuseppe Vassalli, president of Prefecture of the Economic Affairs of the Holy See, 68.
- Syro-Malabar Archbishop George Alencherry of India, 66.
- Canadian Archbishop Thomas C. Collins of Toronto, who will be 65 Jan. 16.
- Czech Archbishop Dominik Duka of Prague, 68.
- Dutch Archbishop Willem J. Eijk of Utrecht, 58.
- Italian Archbishop Giuseppe Betti of Florence, 64.
- German Archbishop Rainer Maria Woelki of Berlin, 55.
- Chinese Bishop John Tong Hon of Hong Kong, 72.
- Romanian Archbishop Lucian Muresan of Fagaras and Alba Julia, 80.
- Belgian Father Julien Ries, expert on history of religions, 91.
- Maltese Augustinian Father Prosper Grech, biblical scholar, 86.
- German Jesuit Father Karl Josef Becker, theologian, 83.
WASHINGTON — A letter signed by more than three dozen U.S. religious leaders objects to the specter of religious groups being forced to treat same-sex unions “as if they were marriage.”

“Altering the civil definition of ‘marriage’ does not change one law, but hundreds, even thousands, at once,” said the letter, “Marriage and Religious Freedom: Fundamental Goods That Stand or Fall Together,” released Jan. 12.

By a single stroke, every law where rights depend on marital status — such as employment discrimination, employment benefits, adoption, education, health care, elder care, housing, property and taxation — will change so that same-sex sexual relationships must be treated as if they were marriage,” it said.

“That requirement, in turn, will apply to religious people and groups in the ordinary course of their many private or public occupations and ministries — including running schools, hospitals, nursing homes, and other housing facilities, providing adoption and counseling services, and many others.”

Four Catholic bishops were among the 39 religious leaders signing the letter: Cardinal-designate Timothy M. Dolan, archbishop of New York and president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops; Bishop Salvatore J. Cordileone of Oakland, California, chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee for the Promotion and Defense of Marriage; Bishop William E. Lori of Bridgeport, Connecticut, chairman of the USCCB Committee on Laity, Marriage, Family Life and Youth.

Other signers included top representatives of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Assemblies of God, the Salvation Army, along with a collection of smaller Protestant denominations, seven pan-Christian associations including the National Association of Evangelicals, and two representatives of Orthodox and Hasidic Judaism.

Religious employers would “face lawsuits for taking any adverse employment action — no matter how modest — against an employee for the public act of obtaining a civil ‘marriage’ with a member of the same sex. This is not idle speculation, as these sorts of situations have already come to pass,” the letter said. “Even where religious people and groups succeed in avoiding civil liability in cases like these, they would face other government sanctions — the targeted withdrawal of government cooperation, grants or other benefits.”

The letter cited the case of Portland, Maine, which required Catholic Charities to extend spousal employee benefits to same-sex domestic partners as a condition of receiving city housing and community development funds.

“There is no doubt that the many people and groups whose moral and religious convictions forbid same-sex sexual conduct will resist the compulsion of the law, and church-state conflicts will result,” the letter said.

Because those who object to giving equality to same-sex partners have been marked as “bigots, subjecting them to the full arsenal of government punishments and pressures reserved for racists,” the letter predicted other consequences if same-sex marriage were to gain more legitimacy.

“These punishments will only grow more frequent and more severe if civil ‘marriage’ is redefined in additional jurisdictions,” it said. “Because law and government not only coerce and incentivize but also teach, these sanctions would lend greater moral legitimacy to private efforts to punish those who defend marriage.”

The push to alter the definition of marriage “warrants special attention within our faith communities and throughout society as a whole,” the letter said, because such an action would have “grave consequences,” including interfering with the “religious freedom of those who continue to affirm” traditional marriage.

“The promotion and protection of marriage — the union of one man and one woman as husband and wife — is a matter of the common good and serves the well-being of the couple, of children, of civil society and all people,” the letter said.

The value of traditional marriage transcends any society or government, is “a universal good” and is the “founding institution of all societies,” it said.
By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Pope Benedict XVI advanced the sainthood causes of Blessed Marianne Cope of Molokai and Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha.

He also formally recognized the martyrdom of 64 victims of the Spanish Civil War and advanced the causes of 18 other men and women.

During a meeting Dec. 19 with Cardinal Angelo Amato, prefect of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes, the pope signed the decrees recognizing the miracles needed for the canonizations of Blesseds Marianne and Kateri.

Before a date is set for the canonization ceremonies, there must be an “ordinary public consistory,” a formal ceremony opened and closed with prayer, during which cardinals present in Rome express their support for the pope’s decision to create new saints.

Blessed Marianne, who worked as a teacher and hospital administrator in New York, spent the last 30 years of her life ministering on the Hawaiian island of Molokai to those with leprosy. She died on the island in 1918 at age 80 and was beatified in St. Peter’s Basilica in 2005.

Blessed Kateri, known as the Lily of the Mohawks, was born to a Christian Algonquin mother and a Mohawk father in 1656 in upstate New York along the Mohawk River. She was baptized by a Jesuit missionary in 1676 when she was 20, and she died in Canada four years later. In June 1980, she became the first Native American to be beatified.

Pope Benedict also recognized miracles attributed to the intercession of five other people, who now can be declared saints. They are: Blessed Giovanni Battista Piamarta of Italy; Blessed Jacques Berthieu of France; Blessed Carmen Salles y Barangueras of Spain; Blessed Peter Calungsod of the Philippines; and Blessed Anna Schaffer of Germany.

Pope Benedict also signed decrees that pave the way for numerous beatifications and approved seven other decrees recognizing that the men and women lived the Christian virtues in a heroic way and that they are venerable. Recognition of a miracle attributed to each candidate’s intercession is needed for that person’s beatification.

Marianne Cope
1838 Born Barbara Koob in Hessen, Germany Jan. 23.
1839 Koob family emigrates to U.S., settling in Utica, N.Y.
1862 Invested as member of Sisters of St. Francis in Syracuse, N.Y.
1883 Accompanies six sisters to the Hawaiian islands as they begin assignments to minister to leprosy patients.
1884 Meets St. Damien de Veuster.
1889 Chosen to be Damien’s successor at the Boys’ Home at Kala-wao.
1918 Dies of natural causes Aug. 9.
2003 Vatican theologians declare her heroically virtuous.
2011 Pope Benedict XVI recognizes second miracle attributed to her intercession Dec. 19.

Kateri Tekakwitha
1656 Born in a village on the Mohawk River near Auriesville, N.Y. Her father was a Mohawk chief and her mother a Christian Algonquin.
1660 Orphaned at age 4 during smallpox epidemic.
1676 Baptized on Easter at the age of 20.
1677 Fled to Canada, taking refuge at St. Francis Xavier Mission in the Mohawk Nation at Caughnawaga. Reportedly made her first Communion on Christmas.
1680 Died at age 24, is buried at Caughnawaga.

Late 1800s American Indians began making appeals to the Catholic Church that she be recognized for her deep spirituality and devotion to the Blessed Sacrament.
1932 Documentation for her sainthood cause was sent to the Vatican.
1935 National Tekakwitha Conference started.
1980 Beatified by Pope John Paul II June 22.
2011 Pope Benedict XVI recognizes second miracle attributed to her intercession Dec. 19.

Our Great Catholic University

1 campus in Rome where the majority of our sophomores spend a semester

36 Fulbright Scholars in our 56-year history

60 National Merit Scholars; 22 in the 2011 freshman class

90% of pre-law graduates and 85% of pre-med students are accepted into professional schools

udallas.edu/admiss
Irving, Texas  ■  Rome, Italy  ■  1-800-628-6999
FATHER LEDOUX PASTORED HISTORIC ST. AUGUSTINE PARISH IN NEW ORLEANS FOR 16 YEARS

FROM, P. 32

venture into the state until decades later.
A generational Catholic, his priestly calling came in “drips and drizzles” he said, As his brother, Louis Verlin, and cousin, Bishop Harold Parry, before him, Fr. LeDoux entered the Society of the Divine Word’s St. Augustine Seminary in Bay St. Louis, Mississippi at age 13 and stayed there through high school.

“I was drawn there by the romance and enchantment of the seminary,” he said. “Although, when I got there it didn’t seem romantic for a while.”

Once he adjusted to his new surroundings, Fr. LeDoux found himself romping through the pine trees and swamps with the other boys hunting snakes, playing baseball, and swimming.

“It was a boys’ paradise,” he said.

But it wasn’t all fun and games. The boys started off with Latin in their first year and continued to gain proficiency in the ancient language over the next eight years.

“We had our fill of Latin, and it has stuck with me to this day,” Fr. LeDoux said. “I can read it, write it, and speak it somewhat.”

After 14 years at St. Augustine, he moved on to Techny, Illinois, for two years of spiritual training, including daily silence and loads of chores. Then it was on to Epsworth, Iowa, before returning to Bay St. Louis.

Following years of dedicated studies, Fr. LeDoux was ordained to the priesthood May 11, 1957, as a priest for the Society of the Divine Word. Four months later he was sent to Rome for four years to study canon law and subsequently was sent to the historic St. Augustine church on East Terrell Avenue.

Completion of the church, the “War of the Pews” broke out as white people in the area found out the black parishioners were purchasing pews for their families to sit on. Even with white families attempting to outbuy the blacks, in the end the church held a row of pews for blacks, a row of pews for whites and the two outer rows purchased on behalf of and for use by slaves. This resulted in the most integrated congregation in the country.

Homer Plessy attended Mass at St. Augustine. He is well known for the Plessy v. Ferguson Supreme Court case. Plessy had been arrested for riding in a white compartment of a railroad car. The court ruled in favor of the state and 58 years of legal segregation followed.

Following the ruling, all people of color began leaving Treme, and the New Orleans suburb church became predominantly Italian.

The next shift in the community’s ethnic makeup occurred in 1964 after the omnibus civil rights bill passed on June 29 that banned discrimination, ordered desegregation of public facilities, and extended voting rights to all qualified citizens. This time around whites left Treme and St. Augustine once again became a majority black congregation.

Fr. LeDoux made his mark on the historic St. Augustine church in New Orleans from 1990 to 2006. During Hurricane Katrina, he found shelter in the soon to be 170-year-old structure that had withstood many a storm.

Ultimately, Fr. LeDoux left St. Augustine and took a two-month break at the Bay St. Louis seminary before he was appointed pastor of Our Mother of Mercy on the South Side of Fort Worth.

Prior to his arrival in the Metroplex, he had never spent more than a few hours in the heart of Texas, mainly driving through toward some other destination. When he arrived on June 1, 2006, it was to make Fort Worth his new home.

He left behind the jazz music that lingered through the streets of Treme for the hum of traffic along Interstate 35 only a few blocks from the church on East Terrell Avenue.

Besides devoting his life to God, Fr. LeDoux made a major lifestyle decision in 1996. After listening to a tape left by a parishioner, he decided to become a vegan. He went in “whole hog” he said, and quit eating animal products “cold turkey.”

Even before the switch, he had made some significant changes to improve his diet like ditching salt in 1981, but felt the positive effects of veganism as prolonged health problems soon began to subside.

Starting in 1990, Fr. LeDoux experienced several occasions where his feet and legs would hurt, a few times to the point where he could not walk. Since his dietary change, he has had no pain in his legs, his regular doctor check ups include only good news and the only medication he takes is one baby Aspirin a day. His eyesight even improved.

“When I came here, I was using reading glasses at the computer,” Fr. LeDoux said. “About four years ago I noticed the glasses were interfering with my reading. I put them down and realized I could see without them.”

And he spends a lot of time in front of his computer writing, usually late into the night. That’s the time of day he said his mind is popping, and he hates to sleep.

Fr. LeDoux has published a weekly column in his church’s bulletin since June 5, 1969. Many of those columns have been compiled into books, but his first book written originally as a longer work, War of the Pews, was published in 2011 and he’s working on rewriting and completing a book he began in the 1980s.

“As I got toward the end of the book [War of the Pews] I became almost a maniac,” he said. “I would hit the computer six, eight, 10 hours a day, and keep going until the wee hours. When you see the finish line, it’s like a shark smelling blood in the water.”

And just as his first book includes detailed history of New Orleans, he promises his next piece of work will include its share of local history as well — a subject that seems to come naturally to him as he easily pulls exact dates out of the air detailing his life’s encounters.

Once he adjusted to his new surroundings, Father LeDoux found himself romping through the pine trees and swamps with the other boys hunting snakes, playing baseball, and swimming.

“It was a boys’ paradise,” he said.
February 5, Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

**Cycle B. Readings:**

1) Job 7:1-4, 6-7  
Psalm 147:1-6  
2) 1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23  
Gospel) Mark 1:29-39

By Jeff Hensley

The topic of the health trials my family had experienced in the previous five years came up in a recent conversation with a friend, a West Coast Catholic editor. He said something to the effect that, “You must think God really has it in for you.”

With two brain surgeries for myself (successful) and breast cancer for my wife (who is still doing well), I understood what he meant, but, somewhat reflexively, I said, “No, I think we’re really blessed!”

And I do. I’m now six years past my second surgery and working out at the gym at about the same level as before my surgeries. My wife continues to teach English as a second language and to assure that all the ESL students in her department are on track to graduate. We both love our jobs. By the grace of God, we are doing well. Things could be so much worse.

Job, in today’s first reading, brings to mind that all of us face the drudgery of daily life, filled sometimes with trouble and restless nights, remembering that “life is like the wind.”

“I shall not see happiness again,” the reading concludes.

But the psalm draws us back to hope, not of our own creation, but from God, “for he is good … He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds. … The Lord sustains the lowly; the wicked he casts to the ground.” And the psalm’s refrain repeats throughout the reading: “Praise the Lord, who heals the brokenhearted.”

What is asked of us but to heed God’s call for our lives? For Paul, it is the obligation to preach the Gospel, to do all in his power to win others to receive this good news of the incarnation of Jesus.

In the Gospel, Jesus is impelled by his mission to continue healing the sick and preaching, moving from village to village. Each of us is called beyond our personal trials and sufferings. Each of us is comforted by God’s goodness, our broken hearts healed. Each of us is drawn to enflesh the Gospel where God has placed us, where we live our lives in our families and work places and communities. Because of this, we have hope (and faith and love) that will endure.

**QUESTIONS:**

How have you experienced God’s solace in your own trials? How is God challenging you to live out the Gospel in your family, among your co-workers and friends?

February 12, Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

**Cycle B. Readings:**

1) Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46  
Psalm 32:1-2, 5, 11  
2) 1 Corinthians 10:31-11:1  
Gospel) Mark 1:40-45

By Jean Denton

My first confession was probably my best. I don’t mean this as conceit. It’s just that when I went to the sacrament of reconciliation for the first time — at age 34 — I felt myself to be carrying a sizable burden of sin. I’d always believed in a loving, merciful God. But I’d never before made a conscientious examination of my sinfulness.

As I prepared to enter the Catholic Church, my understanding of my faith grew, and my relationship with Christ deepened. When I went to reconciliation that first time my belief that Jesus would forgive all my failings — including some very serious sin — was unshakable. As I painstakingly named my sins and heard the priest speak the words of absolution, I physically felt the burden lift. I felt clean.

I went into that confession with the same belief that the leper in this weekend’s Gospel had when he said, “If you wish, you can make me clean.” The Lord’s response in the sacrament also was the same: compassion and mercy. I sensed it without doubt.

The cleansing of the leper in Mark’s Gospel, of course, symbolizes Jesus’ power to remove our sinfulness. The passage from Leviticus in Sunday’s readings emphasizes that we must acknowledge it. As long as a person bears the “sore,” he must declare himself unclean, the Scripture explains, adding that the unclean one must dwell apart.

So it is that when our sin remains, it infects everything and everyone around us, isolating us from the love of God.

I have to admit that since that first time, I haven’t always prepared so well for the sacrament of reconciliation. Consequently, I haven’t felt its power so acutely. Often I avoid admitting to certain sins, stubbornly unwilling to declare that I’m unclean. However, when I open myself to truly believing that if God can make me clean if he wishes, then I have the courage to ask him to help me wish it, too.

The first step is healing my unbelief.

**QUESTIONS:**

Is there some sin in your life that you avoid admitting? What do you most need from God to help you believe he can make you truly clean?
February 19, Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time.

Cycle B. Readings:
1) Isaiah 43:18-19, 21-22, 24b-25
Psalm 41:2-5, 13-14
2) 2 Corinthians 1:18-22
Gospel) Mark 2:1-12

By Jeff Hedglen

Everyone who is reading this right now is indebted to someone and in some way owes the very fact that they are reading this to at least one person. Almost no one comes to faith and grows in faith on one’s own. We all have been influenced by people who have shared their faith with us, answered our questions about the Church or inspired us to seek God. For me the list is long.

Topping the roster are my mom and dad. Though they were not theologians, they did the most important thing: made sure I went to Mass every week. Additionally I noticed that they both did things to grow in faith, my mom reading her Bible at the kitchen table every day and my dad listening to tapes of Archbishop Fulton Sheen. Their examples deeply planted in me a realization that the Catholic faith is not a spectator sport.

Next on the list would be my pastor of 22 years, Father Richard Beaumont. He was a great preacher and teacher, and was passionate about people encountering the living Jesus. Fr. Beaumont helped me discover that God was not up in heaven watching me from a distance; rather God wanted a relationship with me and dwells within me.

From there my list expands to include friends, family, professors, other priests and religious, parishioners and the youth I served as youth minister for 25 years. I am the Christian I am today because of all of these people. Each one, in his or her own way, brought me to Jesus.

This week’s Gospel tells a story of a crippled man who was brought to Jesus by his friends. When they arrived at the house where Jesus was speaking, the crowd was so huge that there was no way to get inside. So the friends lifted the man to the roof, broke it open and lowered him into the arms of Jesus.

Jesus knew what he was doing when he created a Church. He knew that we need other people to encounter the faith and grow in it. Whether we are lowered through a roof or invited through the doors, each of us had some help getting into church.

QUESTIONS:
Who are the people who have brought you to Jesus and helped you grow in faith? Who are some people you have “brought to Jesus” and helped grow in faith?

February 26, First Sunday of Lent.

Cycle B. Readings:
1) Genesis 9:8-15
Psalm 25:4-9
2) 1 Peter 3:18-22
Gospel) Mark 1:12-15

By Sharon K. Perkins

I was baptized as an infant, making me one of those “cradle Catholics.” On the one hand, I don’t consider my baptism extraordinary, since my parents also were both cradle Catholics, as were my grandparents and great-grandparents. Many infants thus have been dedicated to Christ, in and through the Church, as a matter of course. Somewhere in their ancestry a family member consciously resolved to enter into relationship with God, and that decision to trust God began a chain reaction of faith commitments.

Nonetheless, we all know lifelong “name-only” Christians whose lives bear little witness to such a relationship. Whether through ignorance or a conscious decision, these people look pretty much like everyone else, lacking either the will or the understanding to follow Jesus and all that this entails.

Whatever “covenant” was established through their baptism has manifested itself as a rather one-sided proposition. Truth be told, the relationship between God and human beings has been mostly one-sided since the beginning of time, since no one has been completely faithful, even with the best of intentions.

For those who keep God’s covenant, as well as for those countless generations who have broken faith since the time of Noah, today’s readings hold a tremendous message of hope. The annual repetition of the Lenten season reminds us that Jesus was “put to death in the flesh” and “raised to life in the spirit” to confirm God’s everlasting covenant with us, despite our inability to remain faithful.

Does this mean that we bear no responsibility whatsoever for the relationship? On the contrary! Just as he did for our ancestors in faith, Jesus announces a “time of fulfillment,” a season of repentance, an invitation to cradle Catholics and relative newcomers alike, to “believe in the Gospel.” Our descendants are depending on our response.

QUESTIONS:
What “ancestors in faith” do you have to thank for your present covenant relationship with God? How can this Lenten season be for you a time of repentance and covenant renewal?
U na de las bendiciones sobre la vida de fe aquí en la Diócesis de Fort Worth, especialmente con vistas a la Semana de oración por la unidad de los cristianos, ha sido la experiencia vivida de la Provisión Pastoral y el reciente anuncio de la creación del Ordinariato personal de la Cátedra de San Pedro el 2 de enero de 2012 en Nuestra Señora de Walsingham en Houston, Texas. Como dice en la conferencia de prensa, ambos son complementarios, pero distintas expresiones de la voluntad del Señor que “todos sean uno”. Estos son los primeros movimientos eclesiales hacia algo —plena comunión con la sede de San Pedro —y no un movimiento alejándose de algo.

Con esta base bíblica de Juan 17,21, podemos ver al Beato John Henry Newman, el Movimiento de Oxford, y el fruto de los diálogos que se produjeron después del Concilio Vaticano II. A nivel local aquí en Fort Worth, especialmente con el reciente fallecimiento del Obispo Clarence Pope, vemos el fruto de las relaciones eclesiales, la amistad y buena voluntad, que ha sido evidenciado por la ordenación de sacerdotes de la Provisión Pastoral de la Diócesis de Fort Worth, y más recientemente, la creación del Ordinariato personal de la Cátedra de San Pedro, bajo el patrocinio de Nuestra Señora de Walsingham.

En una reunión de oración y reflexión con los sacerdotes de la Sociedad de la Santa Cruz en Fort Worth —varios años antes del anuncio del Ordinariato — uno de los sacerdotes dijo que sólo estaban esperando a alguien para extender una mano. Esa mano había sido extendida por primera vez con la Provisión Pastoral del Papa Juan Pablo II, y más recientemente con el Papa Benedicto XVI y el Ordinariato. Uno de los obispos de la Iglesia de Inglaterra, que fue recibido en la Iglesia el año pasado y fue ordenado sacerdote por el Ordinariato dijo que “lo que solía ser mencionado como "nadar el río Tiber" ... el Papa Benedicto nos ha construido un puente”.

A la luz de la reciente creación del Ordinariato anglicano en los Estados Unidos y el reciente anuncio de mi nuevo papel como el Delegado eclesiástico de la Provisión Pastoral en los Estados Unidos, es importante señalar que esta estructura fue aprobada por la Congregación para la doctrina de la fe. En general, la Provisión Pastoral ha llevado a la ordenación de más de 80 sacerdotes anteriordemente Episcopales (y seguidos contando). Los candidatos que participan en este proceso se toman caso por caso sobre la base de una excepción concedida en virtud de la Provisión Pastoral. Es importante señalar que la Provisión Pastoral no es un campo de pruebas para el celibato opcional en la Iglesia católica, pero es una invitación especial de la Santa Sede que le permite al clero de la Iglesia Episcopal a convertirse al catolicismo y continuar con su ministerio en la Iglesia como sacerdotes.

Con el fin de satisfacer las necesidades de estos grupos dentro de los Estados Unidos, la Santa Sede nombró como el primer Delegado eclesiástico de la Provisión Pastoral al Cardenal Bernard Law, entonces obispo de Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Missouri, que fue sucedido posteriormente por el Arzobispo John Meyers de la Arquidiócesis de Newark. El delegado eclesiástico se encarga de supervisar la aplicación de la Provisión Pastoral en los Estados Unidos. Deberes y responsabilidades específicas de este delegado incluyen la recopilación de información para cada candidato que es ex sacerdote episcopal de su obispo patrocinio, para determinar la idoneidad de su ordenación en la Iglesia Católica, y la recepción de las facultades sacerdotales en la diócesis. El delegado eclesiástico también establece un cuerpo de teólogos para proporcionar una evaluación académica y el certificado de los candidatos antes de su aprobación para la ordenación. En noviembre pasado, la Santa Sede me nombró como nuevo Delegado eclesiástico de la Provisión Pastoral en los Estados Unidos, sucediendo a Monseñor Meyers. Como nuevo delegado eclesiástico, espero continuar la gran obra de la Provisión Pastoral en nuestra diócesis, y le pido sus oraciones por todos los candidatos que participan en el proceso de búsqueda de la plena comunión con la Iglesia Católica como sacerdotes católicos.

La Provisión Pastoral es un momento histórico en la Iglesia y allanó el camino para que muchos sacerdotes anteriordemente episcopales, no sólo pudieran entrar en la Iglesia, sino que también pudieran ser ordenados como sacerdotes en el rito romano. La Provisión Pastoral también permitió que parroquias episcopales completas pudieran entrar en la fe católica, conservando algunos aspectos de la liturgia anglicana. Los grupos particulares que iniciaron la solicitud fueron The American Union Church y la Sociedad de la Santa Cruz en la Iglesia Episcopal. Aquí en la Diócesis de Fort Worth, habíamos varios ex sacerdotes episcopales que fueron ordenados como sacerdotes católicos, y sobre todo, a toda la comunidad de Santa María la Virgen, la Iglesia Episcopal en Arlington se convirtió al catolicismo bajo la dirección del Padre Alan Hawkins. Muchos otros sacerdotes anteriordemente episcopales, y un número de otras parroquias episcopales de todo el mundo están ahora en comunión con la Iglesia por la Provisión Pastoral.

Es importante señalar que esta estructura fue aprobada por la Congregación para la doctrina de la fe. En general, la Provisión Pastoral ha llevado a la ordenación de más de 80 sacerdotes anteriordemente Episcopales (y seguidos contando). Los candidatos que participan en este proceso se toman caso por caso sobre la base de una excepción concedida en virtud de la Provisión Pastoral. Es importante señalar que la Provisión Pastoral no es un campo de pruebas para el celibato opcional en la Iglesia católica, pero es una invitación especial de la Santa Sede que le permite al clero de la Iglesia Episcopal a convertirse al catolicismo y continuar con su ministerio en la Iglesia como sacerdotes.

Con el fin de satisfacer las necesidades de estos grupos dentro de los Estados Unidos, la Santa Sede nombró como el primer Delegado eclesiástico de la Provisión Pastoral al Cardenal Bernard Law, entonces obispo de Springfield-Cape Girardeau, Missouri, que fue sucedido posteriormente por el Arzobispo John Meyers de la Arquidiócesis de Newark. El delegado eclesiástico se encarga de supervisar la aplicación de la Provisión Pastoral en los Estados Unidos. Deberes y responsabilidades específicas de este delegado incluyen la recopilación de información para cada candidato que es ex sacerdote episcopal de su obispo patrocinio, para determinar la idoneidad de su ordenación en la Iglesia Católica, y la recepción de las facultades sacerdotales en la diócesis. El delegado eclesiástico también establece un cuerpo de teólogos para proporcionar una evaluación académica y el certificado de los candidatos antes de su aprobación para la ordenación. En noviembre pasado, la Santa Sede me nombró como nuevo Delegado eclesiástico de la Provisión Pastoral en los Estados Unidos, sucediendo a Monseñor Meyers. Como nuevo delegado eclesiástico, espero continuar la gran obra de la Provisión Pastoral en nuestra diócesis, y le pido sus oraciones por todos los candidatos que participan en el proceso de búsqueda de la plena comunión con la Iglesia Católica como sacerdotes católicos.

El Ordinariato de la Cátedra de San Pedro

Ahora, vamos a centrar nuestra atención en el establecimiento del Ordinariato anglicano en los Estados Unidos. A medida que el trabajo de la Provisión Pastoral ha continuado en los últimos años, ha habido un número creciente de ex-anglicanos de tres parroquias de todo el mundo, para que se permita a los ex anglicanos entrar en la Iglesia corporativamente. Cada Ordinariato anglicano, una vez establecido, tiene jurisdicción eclesiástica similar a la de una diócesis, pero en lugar de tener jurisdicción sobre un territorio local, abarca países y regiones enteras. Esta estructura de Ordinariato ya existe en la Iglesia, bajo la forma del Ordinariato Militar de los Estados Unidos, que tiene dentro de su jurisdicción a todo el personal militar de los Estados Unidos en todo el mundo bajo el arzobispo Broglio. Él es el ordinario. El Ordinariato anglicano es diferente y va más allá del alcance de la Provisión Pastoral, ya que abarca el mundo enterro y no sólo los Estados Unidos. Clérigos anterioer episcopales y todas las comunidades de la parroquia anglicana podrían entrar en la Iglesia, no a través de una diócesis local, sino a través de la estructura del Ordinariato, que abarca los países o regiones enteras.

Cada Ordinariato, una vez erigido, estaría encabezado por un ordinario, que en este caso por lo general sería un sacerdote que antes pertenecía al clero anglicano. Si el ordinario es casado, no sería un obispo, pero se encargaría de supervisar la gestión y el funcionamiento del ordinariato de una manera similar a la de un obispo, pero no sería capaz de ordenar a diáconos, sacerdotes, o consagrar nuevos obispados. El 15 de enero de 2011, el Ordinariato de Nuestra Señora de Walsingham se estableció en Inglaterra, y monseñor Keith Newton, un ex anglicano, fue nombrado su ordinario.

Desde que Anglicanorum Coetibus fuera promulgado por el Papa Benedicto XVI en 2009, el proceso de establecimiento de un Ordinariato anglicano se inició, en cooperación con la Santa Sede y la Conferencia estadounidense de obispos católicos. El Cardenal Wuerl, arzobispo de Washington, D.C., fue nombrado al frente de la Comisión USCCB, que trabajaría con la Santa Sede en el establecimiento del Ordinariato Anglicano en los Estados Unidos, y yo, junto con el obispo Robert McManus de la Diócesis de Worcester en Massachusetts, sirve con el Cardenal Wuerl en esta comisión. La Diócesis de Fort Worth ha jugado un papel importante en el establecimiento del Ordinariato, ya que 26 ex-anglicanos de tres parroquias anglicanas de la región del Norte de Texas fueron recibidos en la Iglesia el 25 de septiembre, formando el primer grupo en entrar a la Iglesia como parte del ordinariato anglicano. La formación de Anglicanorum Coetibus es proporcionada por el Departamento de catequesis de la diócesis, que tiene la misión de formar un modelo de formación que se utilizará para catequisar
Los obispos de Texas aplauden la decisión de la corte de conservar la ley sobre el uso de ecografías

AUSTIN, Texas (CNS) — Los obispos católicos de Texas aplaudieron la decisión de la corte federal del 50o circuito de apelaciones, que permitió a los estados aplicar una ley sobre el uso de ecografías requiriendo a los que llevan a cabo abortos que ofrezcan a las madres la oportunidad de ver las imágenes de ultrasonido de sus respectivos bebés dentro del seno materno.

“El darles a las madres acceso a ecografías les permite informarse de los riesgos y complicaciones que puede causar el aborto”, dijo el cardenal Daniel N. DiNardo de Galveston-Houston. “Estas consultas salvan vidas mediante la educación a las madres, que quizá no se hubieran dado cuenta: el bebé que está en el seno materno es exactamente eso — una vida humana única e irreemplazable”.

Sus observaciones se dieron en una declaración publicada el mismo día en Austin por la Conferencia de obispos católicos de Texas, brazo de acción política de los obispos.

El fallo pronunciado por una terna de jueces de la corte de apelaciones invalidó el entredicho temporal de un juez de la Corte del distrito federal en contra de la aplicación de la medida, que requiere que los doctores practicando abortos demuestren la ecografía a la madre, y describan las imágenes y el latido del corazón del feto.

Con el fallo de la Corte del 5º circuito, los funcionarios del estado pueden fijar la fecha para la aplicación de la ley, aunque el caso regrese a los tribunales para su decisión final.

Los obispos del estado tenían en alta prioridad la ley del ecografía durante la previa sesión legislativa, debido al pensamiento que el uso de la ecografía ayudaría que las madres reconocieran la humanidad de su respectivo bebé, dentro del claustrum materno, y así se pronunciaron a favor de la vida.

El arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller de San Antonio dijo que estaba especialmente impresionado con el reconocimiento de la presidenta del tribunal, Edith Jones, del legítimo interés del estado en la protección de la vida.

“La corte hoy se pronunció para proteger las más pequeñas voces de aquellos a quienes Dios les vocifica, que están vivos en el claustrum materno”, dijo.

Jones no estuvo de acuerdo con el argumento que la ley del ecografía infringía los derechos de expresión de doctores y pacientes. Escribió que “la requerida revelación del ecografía, el rítmico cardiaco del feto y la descripción médica eran la epíptome de una información verdadera y no mal guiada”.

El Centro de Derechos Reproductivos, que recusó la ley de la ecografía, tiene 14 días a partir de la decisión para presentar una nueva audiencia.

Varios estados requieren estudios de ultrasonido como parte del procedimiento de aborto, de acuerdo con el Instituto Guttmacher. En once estados, se requiere el uso de consejería verbal o producción de material escrito, donde se incluya información del acceso a servicios de ultrasonido. En seis estados (sin incluir a Texas), se requiere que el médico practicando abortos saque una imagen de ultrasonido para cada mujer que pida un aborto, y se le requiere al médico que le enseñe la imagen a dicha madre.

Por Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO — El papa Benedicto XVI nombró 22 nuevos cardenales, incluyendo dos de los Estados Unidos, y anunció para el 8 de febrero un consistorio para su exequial formal al colegio de cardenales. Entre los nombrados están el arzobispo Timothy M. Dolan de Nueva York; el arzobispo Edwin F. O’Brien, prograu maestre de la Orden en contra del Santo Sepulcro de Jerusalén, que todavía está administrando la Arquidiócesis de Baltimore; y el arzobispo Thomas C. Collins de Fort Worth.

El papa nombró nuevas naciones a los fieles en la Plaza de San Pedro al mediodía del 6 de enero, antes de rezar el Ángelus.

El cardenal designado O’Brien, quien estaba en la Plaza de San Pedro cuando su nombre fue anunciado, dijo que su vida sacerdotal ha sido “una sorpresa en cada paso. Pensaba que habiendo sido nombrado arzobispo de Baltimore sería la última sorpresa, pero estaba equivocado”.

Dijo a Catholic News Service que los ministerios a los cuales había sido nombrado, y ahora su elección a cardinal, no son cosas que podía “anticipar, navegar o manipular. Es simplemente cuestión de estar abierto en el lugar apropiado en el momento apropiado, y cosas buenas suceden”.

En declaraciones separadas, los cardenales norteamericanos estuvieron prestos a enfatizar la naturaleza colectiva, en vez de la personal, del honor.

“Este es un momento de reflexión y oración para nosotros, también sobre la misión y la llamada del cristiano en el tiempo de la llamada de Cristo y después de la muerte de Cristo”, dijo el cardenal designado Timothy M. Dolan de Nueva York.

El cardenal designado O’Brien, quien está en el abrazo amoroso de la santa madre Iglesia.

Noticias de la Iglesia

El papa nombra 22 cardenales nuevos, incluyendo tres norteamericanos

Por Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO — El papa Benedicto XVI nombró 22 nuevos cardenales, incluyendo dos de los Estados Unidos, y anunció para el 8 de febrero un consistorio para su exequial formal al colegio de cardenales. Entre los nombrados están el arzobispo Timothy M. Dolan de Nueva York; el arzobispo Edwin F. O’Brien, prograu maestre de la Orden en contra del Santo Sepulcro de Jerusalén, que todavía está administrando la Arquidiócesis de Baltimore; y el arzobispo Thomas C. Collins de Fort Worth.

El papa nombró nuevas naciones a los fieles en la Plaza de San Pedro al mediodía del 6 de enero, antes de rezar el Ángelus.

El cardenal designado O’Brien, quien estaba en la Plaza de San Pedro cuando su nombre fue anunciado, dijo que su vida sacerdotal ha sido “una sorpresa en cada paso. Pensaba que habiendo sido nombrado arzobispo de Baltimore sería la última sorpresa, pero estaba equivocado”.

Dijo a Catholic News Service que los ministerios a los cuales había sido nombrado, y ahora su elección a cardinal, no son cosas que podía “anticipar, navegar o manipular. Es simplemente cuestión de estar abierto en el lugar apropiado en el momento apropiado, y cosas buenas suceden”.

En declaraciones separadas, los cardenales norteamericanos estuvieron prestos a enfatizar la naturaleza colectiva, en vez de la personal, del honor.

El cardenal designado O’Brien, dijo que su vida sacerdotal ha sido “una sorpresa en cada paso. Pensaba que habiendo sido nombrado arzobispo de Baltimore sería la última sorpresa, pero estaba equivocado”.

Dijo a Catholic News Service que los ministerios a los cuales había sido nombrado, y ahora su elección a cardinal, no son cosas que podría “anticipar, navegar o manipular. Es simplemente cuestión de estar abierto en el lugar apropiado en el momento apropiado, y cosas buenas suceden”.

En declaraciones separadas, los cardenales norteamericanos estuvieron prestos a enfatizar la naturaleza colectiva, en vez de la personal, del honor.

“Este es un momento de reflexión y oración para nosotros, también sobre la misión y la llamada del cristiano en el tiempo de la llamada de Cristo y después de la muerte de Cristo”, dijo el cardenal designado Timothy M. Dolan de Nueva York.

El cardenal designado O’Brien, quien estaba en la Plaza de San Pedro cuando su nombre fue anunciado, dijo que su vida sacerdotal ha sido “una sorpresa en cada paso. Pensaba que habiendo sido nombrado arzobispo de Baltimore sería la última sorpresa, pero estaba equivocado”.

Dijo a Catholic News Service que los ministerios a los cuales había sido nombrado, y ahora su elección a cardinal, no son cosas que podría “anticipar, navegar o manipular. Es simplemente cuestión de estar abierto en el lugar apropiado en el momento apropiado, y cosas buenas suceden”.

En declaraciones separadas, los cardenales norteamericanos estuvieron prestos a enfatizar la naturaleza colectiva, en vez de la personal, del honor.

“Este es un momento de reflexión y oración para nosotros, también sobre la misión y la llamada del cristiano en el tiempo de la llamada de Cristo y después de la muerte de Cristo”, dijo el cardenal designado Timothy M. Dolan de Nueva York.

El cardenal designado O’Brien, quien estaba en la Plaza de San Pedro cuando su nombre fue anunciado, dijo que su vida sacerdotal ha sido “una sorpresa en cada paso. Pensaba que habiendo sido nombrado arzobispo de Baltimore sería la última sorpresa, pero estaba equivocado”.

Dijo a Catholic News Service que los ministerios a los cuales había sido nombrado, y ahora su elección a cardinal, no son cosas que podría “anticipar, navegar o manipular. Es simplemente cuestión de estar abierto en el lugar apropiado en el momento apropiado, y cosas buenas suceden”.

En declaraciones separadas, los cardenales norteamericanos estuvieron prestos a enfatizar la naturaleza colectiva, en vez de la personal, del honor.
Sor Inés Díaz, SSMN, se une al personal diocesano como delegada para el ministerio Hispano

Por Michele Baker Correspondal

Sor Inés Díaz, SSMN, se unió al personal diocesano en el Ministerio de la Diócesis de Fort Worth como Delegada para el ministerio Hispano. Ella llegó a esta posición después de seis años en el Ministerio Hispano en la Parroquia de San Juan Bautista en North Richland Hills.

"Siento el reto de trabajar para la Diócesis", dijo la Hermana Inés en una entrevista. "Tenemos que estar abiertos. Tenemos que escuchar. Estoy tratando de preguntarle a la gente lo que quieren. Tendré que trabajar con todas las diferentes oficinas. Es muy emocionante y un gran reto".

Por eso, cuando el murmullo se hizo más intenso, la hermana Inés se encontró visitando a las Hermanas missioneras catapuntas de los sagrados corazones de Jesús y María (también conocidas como Las Violetas). Allí, se hizo evidente que había respondido a un llamado genuino de Dios.

"Fue difícil", recordó. "Fue duro de estar pensando en el convento", recuerda la hermana. "Yo tenía un novio. Yo estaba enamorada. Habíamos hablado de casarnos y tener hijos".

"Se era de esperar planes de ese tipo de una joven de 18 años de edad, del sur de México, y de una familia de 10 hermanos. Sin embargo, algo la detuvo, un pequeño susurro del Señor. Aún así, la mayoría de las religiosas que había encontrado eran maestras, y la hermana Inés no veía como necesario la vida religiosa para seguir ese camino.

"Pensé que, si yo quería enseñar, pudiera ir a la escuela y convertirme en maestra y todavía casarme y tener una familia", explicó. "Pero solo pensar en como sería eso de ser misionera".

En una declaración, los obispos le han llamado al viaje "Un motivo de esperanza y confirmación de la fe en el Señor".

Enmenda a constitución mexicana levantaría restricciones religiosas

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO (CNS) — La cámara baja del congreso de México aprobó una enmienda constitucional que permitiría que los grupos religiosos realicen servicios públicos sin obtener primero permiso del gobierno. Marcando una mayor separación de los sentimientos anteriores por muchos en el sistema político del país.

Los legisladores aprobaron el 15 de diciembre los cambios al Artículo 24 de la constitución mexicana, el cual prohíbe celebrar servicios de culto fuera de las casas de adoración, sin antes recibir permiso gubernamental. El senado y 16 de las 31 legislaturas estatales todavía tienen que aprobar la enmienda para que ésta entre en vigor.

"Con esta reforma los derechos de las personas tienen a ejercer libremente la religión de su preferencia o no tener ninguna... son amplificados", dijo la conferencia episcopal mexicana en una declaración el 16 de diciembre.

Miembros del Partido Acción Nacional (PAN), que tiene buenas relaciones con el catolicismo, votaron a favor, junto con algunos del Partido Revolucionario Institucional (PRI), el cual gobernó durante 71 años comenzando en 1929 al final de la Rebelión Cristera, levantamiento contra medidas anteclericistas.

El liderato del Partido de la Revolución Democrática (PRD) acusó a los proponentes de la enmienda de cortejar falsos certezas eclesiásticos en adelanto a las elecciones presidenciales del 1 de julio de 2012. Algunos en la delegación senatorial del PRI también hablaron de no apoyar la medida.

Guanajuato, lugar que visitará el papa, es un estado de México lleno de historia católica

Por David Agren Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DE MÉXICO — En 1941, el gobierno mexicano, que estaba bajo control de un gobierno anterior dominado y que era anticlerical, llamado PRI o Partido Revolucionario Institucional, hizo las paces con la Iglesia católica, sellándose el pacto en el estado de Guanajuato.

Siete décadas después, con el PRI que aparentemente se avizora como dominador y que era anticlerical, bajo control de un gobierno anterior, el gobierno mexicano, que estaba en el Señor. Después de 18 años con Las Violetas, Sor Inés comenzó un proceso de discernimiento que la llevó a las Hermanas de Santa María de Namur aquí en Fort Worth. En 2005, llegó a los Estados Unidos y comenzó a trabajar en la Parroquia de San Juan Bautista en North Richland Hills, y en 2010 se cambió oficialmente de comunidades, convirtiéndose en una hermana de Santa María.

"Ahora tengo 27 años como religiosa y es una vida hermosa", dijo la hermana Inés con una sonrisa de satisfacción en su rostro. "Mi hermana está casada y tiene cinco hijos", explicó la hermana Inés. "Así que mi padre dice que tuvo dos hijas: Una para él y otra para el Señor".

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

El papa Benedicto llegaría a Guanajuato, lugar que visitará el papa, es un estado de México lleno de historia católica

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre

Un estudiante levanta una bandera de México mientras otros vitorean durante la audiencia general del papa Benedicto XVI en la sala Paulo VI en el Vaticano el 28 de diciembre
Events Calendar

February Dates

1
"TRANSITIONS" GRIEF SUPPORT GROUP
7:30 p.m. - First Friday of each month - St. John the Apostle Church, 7341 Glenview Dr., North Richland Hills. The group meets the first Wednesday of each month. For information, contact Kathy Campbell at (817) 870-7117.

3-5
WOMEN’S SUPER BOWL RETREAT
7 p.m. - Friday to noon Sunday - Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For information and reservations, call (817) 429-2020.

4
CALIX SUPPORT GROUP
10 a.m. - Monthly support meeting for Catholics who are alcoholic and those struggling with addiction and seeking recovery. Holy Family Church, 6108 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth. For information, contact Deacon Joe Milligan at (817) 481-5169.

6-8
PARISH MISSION
7 to 8:30 p.m. - St. Maria Goretti Church, 1200 S. Davis Dr., Arlington. For information, call (817) 276-0643.

10-12
MARRIAGE ENCOUNTER WEEKEND
Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For information, visit the Marriage Encounter website at www.northdallasmarriageencounter.org or call Terry and Kathy Telger at (817) 294-2749.

11
"LIVING WITH AN AWAKENED HEART" DAY RETREAT
9 a.m. to 3 p.m. - St. Andrew Parish, 3312 Dryden Rd., Fort Worth. For information and to register call the Pastoral Center at (817) 927-5383 or e-mail Alice-Carol at acarolan@standrewcc.org.

16
DCCW QUARTERLY LUNCHEON MEETING
9:30 a.m. - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church, 206 Wills Ln., Keller. For information and registration, contact Kathy Thome at (817) 236-8518 by Feb. 13.

17
FULLNESS OF TRUTH - "WHY BE CATHOLIC" SEMINAR
6:30 to 9:30 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Saturday - St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 861 Wildwood Ln., Grapevine. For information and to reserve free childcare, call (817) 478-8206.

18
CATHOLIC MIDDLE SCHOOL RALLY - "NO1B4ME"
10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. - Carmelite Monastery, 5801 Mount Carmel Dr., Arlington. For information, contact Kelly Alexander at (817) 503-0438.

19
EUCHARISTIC ADORATION - 40 HOURS WITH JESUS
Following 6:15 a.m. Mass Friday to 8 a.m. Sunday - St. John the Apostle Church, 7341 Glenview Dr., North Richland Hills. For information, call Mary Anne Lemmon at (817) 427-0953.

20
BREAKING FREE YOUTH RALLY
3 to 8 p.m. - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Formation Building, 206 Wills Ln., Keller. For information, contact Sue Laux at (817) 999-8199.

21-22
HEALTH TRANSITION WORKSHOP
9 a.m. to noon - St. Jude Knights of Columbus Hall, 2625 S. Cooper St., Arlington. For information, call (817) 462-8186.

26-1
PARISH LENTEN MISSION "OPEN MY HEART"
6:30 p.m. - Sunday through Thursday - St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 5819 W. Pleasant Ridge Rd., Arlington. For information and to reserve free childcare, call (817) 478-8206.

28
LENTEN QUIET DAY RETREAT
10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. - Carmelite Monastery, 5801 Mount Carmel Dr., Arlington. For information, contact Kelly Alexander at (817) 503-0438.

March Dates

3
CAREGIVER WORKSHOP - "A DAY OF RENEWAL AND SUPPORT"
9:30 a.m. to 2:15 p.m. - Holy Family Church, 6108 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth. There is no charge and lunch will be provided. For information and to register, contact Mary Pazheco at mmpazheco@hollyfamilyfw.org or (817) 531-6768.

22
FORT WORTH DIOCESAN MINISTRY WITH LESBIAN AND GAY CATHOLICS, OTHER SEXUAL MINORITIES, FAMILIES, FRIENDS
7 p.m. - Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge St., Fort Worth. For information, contact Father Warren Murphy at (817) 927-5383 or Dorene Rose at (817) 329-7370.

Classifieds

Good Shepherd Parish in Colleyville is seeking a maintenance worker. This position requires knowledge and experience with rough carpentry, painting, simple plumbing and electrical work, and basic equipment and facility repairs. The successful candidate will be self-starter and be able to troubleshoot, repair, and maintain plumbing, mechanical, and electrical systems, and conduct preventive maintenance on HVAC system with minimal supervision.

Applications are available on our website at www.gscs.net. Please return completed applications to Good Shepherd Catholic Community, Attn: Michael Vinez, 1000 Tinker Road, Colleyville, TX 76034.

General Construction Services

General construction work/repairs inside and outside including topsoil, sand, gravel, washed materials, driveways, concrete, backhoe, and tractor services. Custom mowing lots and acres. Call (817) 732-4083.

Catholic Classifieds

Mass For Families With Special Needs
Families with special needs find it difficult or uncomfortable at times to celebrate Mass together. In an effort to support these families and include those that are sometimes viewed as disruptive, Holy Family Catholic Church, 6500 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth, is now offering a monthly Mass that welcomes any and all special needs families. This Mass is celebrated the second Saturday of each month at 7 p.m. in the Holy Family Chapel. For more information, contact Robyn Flores at (817) 228-8812 or rfh665@hotmail.com.

CRS Operation Rice Bowl allows us to use our Lenten sacrifices to help relieve suffering around the world.

Ash Wednesday, Feb. 22, marks the beginning of the six-week season of Lent, a time of prayer, fasting, and sacrifice as a spiritual discipline to draw us closer to our Lord, and to offer works of charity for others.

For many Catholics, one form of Lenten sacrifice revolves around fasting from meat and other good things and donating the money saved to Catholic Relief Services through the use of those little folding cardboard boxes, vehicles for reminding us of CRS's Operation Rice Bowl campaign.

This year, once again, brightly colored rice bowls boxes are being distributed through the parishes of the diocese. By dropping our coins and bills into these little gold and blue boxes, we join in the work of Catholic Relief Services around the world. CRS is the U.S. Bishops’ poverty and food relief agency.

CRS works around the world, funding both food relief and development projects ranging from agriculture projects to help farmers improve crops, yields to water projects to bring clean water to communities to microfinance projects to encourage the growth of small businesses, Mother and Child health projects, Education projects, and HIV and AIDS projects.

The little boxes also have a Lenten calendar folded inside each of them, offering a prayer, reflection, or meditation, or information about projects funded in places like Madagascar, Vietnam, El Salvador, and Zambia. These reflections can help us personal projects grow larger, our identification with the sufferings of Jesus grow stronger.

And the link that allows us to aid the suffering poor is a little cardboard box we put a bit of money into every day of Lent.
With his spicy Louisiana background, Father Jerome LeDoux

BRINGS A BIT OF NEW ORLEANS
to Our Mother of Mercy Parish and Fort Worth’s Near South Side

Nestled into the South Side of Fort Worth near I-35 and I-30, parishioners at Our Mother of Mercy come prepared each Sunday for an upbeat and participatory Mass led by Father Jerome LeDoux. While his Gospel Masses are known to last more than two hours, the time flies by as the choir leads the congregation with clapping, hands raised high, and even a little bit of tambourine.

But it wasn’t always like this. When Father LeDoux first came to the Fort Worth church in 2006, his style took a while to catch on. It was obvious to his parish members that he was wasn’t from around these parts. No, he had come from a culture vastly different than Cowtown.

For the previous 16 years, he led the oldest black congregation in the U.S., St. Augustine in the Treme neighborhood of New Orleans.

“The kind of church music we did in New Orleans is a bit different than other places,” Fr. LeDoux said. “We had jazz bands, blues combos come in almost anytime they felt like coming in and join the choir, and we’d have a Gospel Mass. People are not used to that here, and it took some doing.”

Gospel Masses in this area of the state are few and far between. The closest church that holds anything similar is St. Joseph Parish in Arlington where the Ghanaian community celebrates a traditional African Mass each week and hosts a quarterly all-African Mass for Africans from the area (See page 15 of this issue of the NORTH TEXAS CATHOLIC).

Fr. LeDoux admits he feels a bit alone at times, so far from the familiarity of his community just one block from the French Quarter. Fr. LeDoux was born in February of 1930 in Lake Charles, Louisiana, only 34 miles from the Texas border, but he would not have been expected to settle into the South Side of Fort Worth.

Our Mother of Mercy Parish and Fort Worth’s Near South Side

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:
Father Jerome LeDoux, dressed in his vestments reflecting his African American identity, stands in front of the doors of Our Mother of Mercy Church. The smile he wears is the expression most often associated with the Divine Word priest.

TOP AND ABOVE:
Fr. LeDoux in motion, preaching the Gospel on a recent Sunday in his energetic style.

LEFT:
Fr. LeDoux greets parishioners, setting a tone of friendly welcome for the parish.