**All Things Possible campaign surpasses $40 million goal**

The All Things Possible campaign has generated pledges of $46.5 million, nearly $7 million more than its goal of $40 million, to be collected over the course of the four-year campaign. Of the money pledged, $9 million has been collected.

With the exception of five parishes that will run their campaigns this fall, June concludes active campaigning to raise money. Fulfillment of pledges and distribution of funds for case items outlined in the campaign will continue for the next four years.

According to Peter Flynn, diocesan director of Finance and Administrative Services, the original campaign goal was slated to be for $60 million, but because of concerns with a struggling economy, Bishop Kevin Vann decided to cut back and prioritize the needs of the diocese to be funded by the All Things Possible campaign.

“Individuals looked at the case and realized the bishop focused in on true needs to move the diocese forward, and their commitment to helping him accomplish those goals is evident by their commitment to the campaign.”

The money received is already being committed to the campaign. 

SEE ALL THINGS POSSIBLE, P. 17

**BP oil leak offers ‘lesson in humility,’ says Vatican**

By John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The “sense of powerlessness and delay” in resolving the worst offshore oil spill in U.S. history offers a lesson about the limits of technology, a Vatican official said.

Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said in a commentary June 19 that the leaking BP oil well in the Gulf of Mexico was a disaster “of enormous proportions, and getting worse.”

He compared it to the 1984 chemical factory explosion in Bhopal, India, or the 1986 meltdown of the nuclear power plant in Chernobyl, Ukraine.

“What is striking in this case is the sense of powerlessness and delay in finding a solution to this disaster faced by one of the largest and most technologically advanced oil multinationals in the world, but also by the most powerful country on earth,” Fr. Lombardi said.

“It seems incredible, but it is a fact. This is not the eruption of a volcano, but a relatively small man-made hole in the seabed. Yet, in two months, expert scientists and technicians, leaders in their field, have failed to plug it,” he said.

The Vatican spokesman said he hoped people would draw from the disaster a lesson of prudence and care in the use of the earth’s resources.

“Perhaps we can also draw a lesson in humility,” he said.

“Technology will advance. But if a relatively simple production process leaves us so helpless, what will we do if much more complex processes get out of hand, such as those affecting the energy hidden in the heart of matter or moreover in the processes of the formation of life?” he said.

Fr. Lombardino said the issue of responsible use of technology was addressed by Pope Benedict XVI in his latest encyclical, Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth).

**Cardinal DiNardo voices ‘grave concern’ over drug known to cause abortion**

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The head of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities expressed “grave concern” about a drug labeled as an emergency contraceptive and the Food and Drug Administration’s process for approving it.

He said it was misleading to call it a contraceptive, as it is also known to cause abortions.

In a June 17 letter to Dr. Margaret Hamburg, FDA commissioner, Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston criticized the advisory panel’s hearing that day on the drug. He said the hearing — held without broad public input or a full record on the drug’s safety “for women or their unborn children”— demonstrated a failure to understand the “new medical and moral issues” the drug presents.

The drug, ulipristal, is being marketed under the brand name ellaOne or ella, and would be available only by prescription. The drug is said to prevent pregnancy five days after sex — two days longer than the morning-after pill known as Plan B, which is sold over-the-counter to women 17 and older.

SEE ULIPRISTAL, P. 17
During these summer months, let us reflect on the blessings God has given us

As we move into the summer months, it is an occasion that offers for many of us a time for vacation and hopefully a few moments of relaxation and renewal away from the business and all the demands of daily life. For those of you who work and minister in the parishes, these summer months tend to be a time when things slow down as many ministries take a break for the summer. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all of you who work and minister in the parishes for all of your hard work and dedication in building up the Body of Christ, the Church.

Many of you are hard working volunteers who give generously of your time and talents working in communion for the communion of the Church. Do not underestimate your service to the Church and how Christ is using you to bring souls closer to Him. Without the gift and presence of each one of you, the Church’s mission of evangelization would certainly be diminished.

These times also afford us the opportunity to reflect on the many blessings that God has given us and to truly give our thanksgiving to Him who gives us everything that is good. In fact, part of living out our faith in Christ means living in a constant spirit of thanksgiving. As St. Paul teaches us, “Whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him” (Colossians 3:17). Sometimes we can fall into the habit of just asking God for things or for his help without taking the time to first and foremost give Him thanks for the gift of life and the gift of faith.

At the Catholic Center on some Wednesday evenings, and in Spanish usually on the last Saturday of the month. There will also be an Internet option for those who have difficulty attending classes.

The program has been a requirement for consideration for diocesan permanent deacon formation.

“The people have shown a great deal of interest,” said Father Carmen Mele, OP, the institute’s director, about the success of the first year.

Those who plan to enter the School of Lay Ministry’s first-year program in September should submit an application with their respective pastor’s signature. First-year classes in English will be offered at the Catholic Center on some Wednesday evenings, and in Spanish usually on the last Saturday of the month. There will also be an Internet option for those who have difficulty attending classes.

The academic year will begin with joint assemblies for first and second-year participants. The assembly in Spanish will take place on Saturday, Sept. 11, at St. Bartholomew Church in Fort Worth, and the assembly in English on Saturday, Sept. 25, at Holy Family Church in Fort Worth.

Parishioners looking to become lay ecclesiastical ministers or current lay ministers who desire updated training may contact Fr. Carmen Mele, OP, at the diocesan Catholic Center at (817) 560-3000, ext. 262. An information sheet and an application form have also been sent to every pastor in the diocese and are available on the diocesan webpage at www.fwdioc.org/catechesis/ ppj2_institute/school_lay_min/Pages/default.aspx.

A Note from the Bishop

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

These times also afford us the opportunity to reflect on the many blessings that God has given us and to truly give our thanksgiving to Him who gives us everything that is good. In fact, part of living out our faith in Christ means living in a constant spirit of thanksgiving. Sometimes we can fall into the habit of just asking God for things or for his help without taking the time to first and foremost give Him thanks for the gift of life and the gift of faith.

As the Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “As in the prayer of petition, every event and need can become an offering of thanksgiving. The letters of St. Paul often begin and end with thanksgiving, and the Lord Jesus is always present in it: ‘Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.’ Continue steadfastly in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving’” (2638). For us as Catholics, the attitude and virtue of thanksgiving is especially expressed in the celebration of the Eucharist. In fact the word Eucharist comes from the Greek word eucharistein meaning “thanksgiving.” The Catechism teaches us that “The Greek words eucharistia and eulogein recall the Jewish blessings that proclaim — especially during a meal — God’s works: creation, redemption, and sanctification” (1328).

This is what we do when we celebrate the Mass — we are coming together as the one Body of Christ, the Church, to give thanks and praise to God for the gift of salvation and redemption accomplished in Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit. As we say each and every Mass during the Preface of the Eucharistic Prayer: “Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. It is right to give Him thanks and praise.” Living out a Eucharistic spirituality means among other things living our lives with a constant spirit and attitude of thanksgiving to God and for his gift of salvation. Even in times of trial, we are called to be thankful for the opportunity to offer our suffering with the suffering of Christ and that Christ is ultimately victorious over suffering and death.

On a personal note, next month I celebrate my fifth anniversary of my ordination to the Episcopate and as the Bishop of Fort Worth. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude and thanksgiving to everyone in our Diocese for your faithfulness, your witness, and your love for Christ and the Church. I have said to several individuals that I am not the same person who arrived here five years ago. Thanks to all of you, who in God’s providential plan, have helped me grow into the shepherd and person the Lord wishes me to be. It has been an honor and a great gift to be your servant and shepherd. May we go forth together in our local Church with a spirit of humility and thanksgiving as we continue to follow our Lord and do his work.

+ Bishop Kevin W. Vann
Diocese of Fort Worth
June 25, 2010
USCCB launches Web site to promote vocations

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Washington has launched a new Website to promote vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life.

Thesite, www.ForYourVocation.org, is meant to help people who are discerning a possible vocation and educate Catholics about the need to encourage others to consider a vocation.

The site includes discernment resources for men and women, ideas for promoting a vocation culture within the home, and a range of tools for educators, youth leaders, and vocation directors, including prayers, videos, best practices, lesson plans, and voca tion-awareness programs. It also includes videos of priests and religious men and women talking about their vocations and testimonies from family members.

The site has links to a Facebook fan page and a YouTube vocation channel. A Spanish-language site will be available in the fall at www.PorTuVocacion.org.

Vocations

Facebook: three months in
How this new medium is helping to evangelize

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

I n recent years I have become more and more hesitant to invest my time in exploring new mediums of communication. Why? Because we barely get accustomed to one means of communication, and overnight, traffic seems to shift to another.

In the music industry, for example, I grew up with changes from record players, to 8-track tapes, to cassettes, and then to CDs. That’s about where the industry left me. I just got tired of the changes in technology, and the music industry pretty well left me in the dust a dozen years ago (though radio still works for me, and it’s free too).

Given the above example, you might get the right sense that I am not particularly technologically savvy, so when I heard about Facebook, I was not impressed. In addition, I had heard several horror stories from the evening news about teenagers using MySpace, so I was quick to resist a change to a means of communication that was already proven unhealthy for the family and community.

Early last fall I took a look at the means I had been using to advertise for the promotion of vocations to the religious life, using fliers, posters, cards, ads, bulletin inserts, pulpit announcements, etc. These methods were becoming less and less effective, but I did not know why. This downward trend continued into February of this year.

Again, for our Lenten Vocation Discernment Program, there was a sharp drop in attendance from prior years, despite spending about twice as much in advertising, I turned to an advertising agency for help.

I explained our traditional advertising efforts of the past, and asked what they thought we were doing wrong. As explained to me, a dramatic shift in advertising has happened in recent years from people searching for what they want in newspapers and magazines to companies finding their clients where people really live online on the Internet. In short, because advertisers are going out to reach their potential client, my traditional ways of advertising were becoming less and less appealing to young people as it appeared too passive and disconnected from their world. What did I need to do? Change! And change I did. I have spoken several times in past articles about the need for the Catholic Church (that means you and I) to take a more active role in our evangelization of teenagers and young adults, as well as in sharing our faith at work. Well, I threw my hat in the ring and decided the Vocations Office was going to be a contender in this battle to catch the ears, eyes, and hearts of our young people. How? I was told I must reach the millennials, the young people, where they are daily, on Facebook.

Hesitant, frustrated, and confused every day for the first month, I was eventually able to see the many advantages of using Facebook, especially as a priest who is called as a pastor to lead his flock to Christ.

What is Facebook? The best analogy I can offer is to say that it is everyone’s personal daily newspaper. If you have 200 friends, you may receive messages from half of them on any given day, telling you what is going on in their lives.

We used to call that gossip, but since everybody can see what you write, there’s no need to gossip.

But what good is it for a priest? Good question. Every day for the past two months, I have copied a passage from Scripture and made a short reflection on it for our daily lives. What’s the advantage of this? On any given day of the year, a priest may have from 10 to a hundred people come to Mass, with only a handful of young people in attendance — if any. On the other hand, using Facebook, a priest can reach out to his whole flock every day. I estimate that most of the middle-aged and young adults read my short posts every day — and another 500 adults my age and older! No, they are not going down to Mass during the week, but the Church is connecting with them every single day, so that they will be excited about their faith, live their faith, and attend Mass with more zeal on Sunday.

Although we have a long way to go to connect with more teenagers and young adults using Facebook or other similar media, we have already had some good results with great success: 30 young men attended the Breakfast at the Cathedral with Bishop Vann on May 15 (we could not have gotten 10 young men together for such an event before Facebook); we had 10 young women visit the Sisters of Saint Mary of Namur for a day retreat on May 29; and we had hundreds of young men and women attending the Holy Trinity Seminary Vocation Awareness Weekend June 25-27, which is nearly double our number from previous years. Someone can use modern technology! You and members of our Church family are welcome to “Facebook me” at kyl Walterscheid.

Father Kyle Walterscheid

Vocations

Father Kyle Walterscheid, director of the Office of Vocations, is shown walking out of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster following his ordination to the priesthood in May 2002. Even then, he had been inviting people to ask if they were being called to a vocation.

North Texas Catholic, June 25, 2010   Page 3
Icon workshop to be offered in Irving July 12-16

St. Basil the Great Byzantine Church, 1118 East Union Row Rd., Irving, will sponsor an ecumenical workshop in painting icons during the week of July 12-16 from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Participants will learn the various techniques iconographers have employed in the ancient art of icon painting through the centuries. Father Elias Rafaj, workshop instructor, will also explain the symbolism, meaning, and religious uses of icons in public services and private devotions.

Fr. Rafaj is the pastor of St. John Chrysostom Byzantine Church of Houston and assistant director of religious education for the Byzantine Archeparchy (Archdioecese) of Pittsburgh. He holds a licentiate degree in Eastern Christian studies from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome.

For additional information on the workshop, contact St. Basil Parish at (972) 438-5641 or web@stbasil Irving.org.

Knights of Columbus state golf tournament to be held Sept. 24-26

The Texas State Council and the Arlington Knights of Columbus of the State Council #6269 will host the 36th annual Johnny Lopez Memorial Golf Tournament Sept. 24, 25, and 26.

The tournament will be held at Pecan Valley Golf Course, 6400 Pecan Valley Dr., Fort Worth. The tournament begins at 8 a.m. each day with the second round starting at 1 p.m.

The tournament fee is $110 per golfer. Entry fees must accompany the registration form and are limited to 220 entries.

For additional information, call Florence Marucci at (972) 291-6817 or e-mail her at marummccucci@dfgnet.com.

English Cursillo weekends scheduled for Oct. and Nov.

Have you heard about Cursillo or has someone asked you to consider attending a Cursillo Weekend? A Cursillo is a short course in Christianity, consisting of a series of talks and meditations examining one’s life in relation to Jesus Christ. Cursillo opens participants to a deeper relationship with Christ.

Separate Cursillo weekends will be held Sept. 30 through Oct. 3 for women and Nov. 4-7 for men. Both weekends will be held at the Fort Worth Cursillo Center, 2221 N.W. 26th St. in Fort Worth and these weekends will be presented in English.

Following a Cursillo experience, participants are encouraged to gather in groups on a regular basis to share with others, to pray and to offer one another encouragement. For more information, contact Florence Marucci at (972) 291-6817 or e-mail her at marummccucci@dfgnet.com.

NCIC submission deadline

The North Texas Catholic is published once a month. The deadline to submit information is noon on the Wednesday before the paper is published.

Submit items to irjones@texascatholic.org. Items for the July 23 issue must be received by noon on July 14.

People of Importance for the Church of Fort Worth

ST. JUDE CWO CELEBRATES YEAR FOR PRIEST — Mona Shipman, chair of the CWO at St. Michael the Archangel Parish, organized a committee consisting of (left to right) Claudia Livings tont, Florence Marucci, Kellen Rampey, Paulette Ueber, and Barbara Kimmel to plan a special celebration for priests of the East Deenary of Arlington and Mansfield in honor of “Year For Priests.” A biographical questionnaire was mailed to all the priests in advance of the dinner and a special program was planned to honor the priests and show appreciation for their dedication.

Natural family planning classes to be offered at two locations

The Couple to Couple League offers classes in the sympto- thermal method of natural family planning for married and engaged couples. To register for a course starting Aug. 15 at 1:30 p.m. at Sacred Heart Church, 1501 Ninth St., Weatherford, contact Jacob and Lauren Morath at (817) 544-2515. To register for a course starting Aug. 15 at 1:30 p.m. at Loreto House, 913 Avenue C, Denton, contact Tom and Laura Maisano at (713) 557-1110. Visit www.ecdlw.org for more class dates and information.

Suicide Survivors offers new support groups this summer

Suicide Survivors is a grief recovery program for family members and friends who have lost a loved one to suicide. New groups are forming this summer.

Groups of eight to 10 meet for two hours weekly for eight weeks. Group meetings are facilitated by a mental health professional and a trained survivor. There is no charge for this service. For more information call (817) 968-9955 or e-mail suicidesurvivors@myfun.org.

Participants in Ministry to present ‘Searching for God in our lives’

Partners in Ministry and Spirituality will present “Searching for God in our lives - the new old story” facilitated by Sisters Ray Kohl and Judy Miller, SSND, along with Ray and Christy Smzepnic All are invited to participate in an eight-month program of finding the Spirit of God in Jesus, in prayer, Scripture, the sacraments, revelations of today, and the liturgy of the church. The program is designed for those who are on a spiritual quest, who see the critical issues of our time, and who are open to explore their own call to discipleship in Jesus,” according to program materials.

PIMS will meet one Saturday a month, 8:45 a.m. to 3 p.m., from August through March at St. Andrew’s Pastoral Center, 5312 Dryden Drive, Fort Worth. An overnight retreat will be held in April for all participants.

The cost is $10 per session for the book. Scholarships are available. For more information call (940) 382-3594 or e-mail ministry63@yahoo.com.

Beginning Experience offers help to those grieving loss of spouse

The Beginning Experience is a ministry for those who have lost a spouse due to death, divorce, or separation. The next weekend session will be offered Aug. 6-8 in Fort Worth.

The program is designed to help those grieving the loss of a spouse to put closure on the past and to create a new beginning in the present. The ministry, although rooted in the Catholic tradition, is open to people of all faiths.

For more information or to register, call (972) 601-4951 or e-mail dfwe@hotmail.com.

Rachel’s Vineyard weekend retreat to be offered July 23-25

A Rachel’s Vineyard weekend retreat has been scheduled for an abortion will be held July 23-25. This retreat provides the tools needed to work through the dif- ficult emotions of grief, guilt, and loss that are common after an abortion.

The weekend is open to women, men, and couples — anyone hurting because of abortion. Come and experience the mercy, forgiveness, and healing love of God in the company of others who understand and have dealt with the same issues.

For more information or to register, call (817) 923-4757. All calls are strictly confidential.

TOBET will host ‘boot camp’ three Saturday’s

TOBET (Theology of the Body Evangelization Team) is hosting a three-week study of the Theology of the Body as a “boot camp.”

The boot camp will be offered three Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., June 26, July 3 and 10. For more information, contact Monica Ashour at (972) 849-6545 or mashour@tobet.org.

Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth to offer vocation retreat Aug. 21

Women interested in knowing about religious life are invited to a Come and See retreat Aug. 21 from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. The retreat will be held at Jesus the Good Shepherd Convent of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth in 1811 4th Street in Grand Prairie.

To RSVP, contact Sister Mary Pilar at 817-849-5191 or (972) 202-5137 ext. 24 by Aug. 18. More information may also be found on their Web site at www.nazarethcon.org.

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton parishioner, Dustin Wilde, earns Eagle Scout Award

Dustin Wilde, a member of the Order of Arrow, has attended Twin Arrows and is a Super Achiever award with Pack 1910. He has been with Troop 1910 for five years and has held several leadership positions in addition to completing merit badges. He has attended Twin Arrows and is a member of the Order of Arrow. He has earned the Ad Altare Dei award.

As a freshman at Keller High School, Dustin is a member of the Interact Club and the Green Cord Community Service Program in which he has com- mitted over 80 hours of community service. He and his family live in Keller and are parishioners of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish.
Christ the King and Our Lady of Fatima parishioners join together for 2,000 Rosary Rally

By Lisa Pham
Contribution Writer

A large group of the faithful filled the Queen of Vietnamese Martyrs Chapel at Christ the King Church in Fort Worth on May 15 to take part in a 2,000 Rosary Rally in honor of the 93rd anniversary of the Marian apparitions of Our Lady at Fatima. Gathering for the first time for this event at Christ the King Church, more than 200 parishioners as well as parishioners from Our Lady of Fatima Church in Fort Worth, both predominantly Vietnamese parishes, began praying at 9 a.m. after the Saturday morning Mass.

A small statue of Our Lady of Fatima wearing a white cloth shroud decorated with shining stones was placed at the center of the chapel. Her hands held a real rosary, and flowers filled the chapel. The parishioners recited Rosaries continuously with only one short break at 3 p.m. to pray the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, and pray for sinners and for the ill.

The program also included prayers for Pope Benedict XVI, local clergy, participants and their families, the youth ministry, world peace, unborn children, and peaceful death. These specific prayer requests were added to the beginning of each mystery of the Rosary and at the beginning of each set of 100 Rosaries.

Since it takes at least 10 hours to complete 2,000 Rosaries, some parishioners left early, while others took short breaks for meals before returning. However, the ongoing prayer inside the chapel did not end until 8 p.m.

“I hardly pray the Rosary each day, but today I recited almost 900 Rosaries,” said one participant. “I feel peace and blessings. Hallelujah!”

Cung Pham from Oklahoma City penned a special song dedicated to the event.

Christ the King Church hosts four group prayers every weekend. Each group, which has a dedicated traveling statue of Our Lady of Fatima, has more than 100 families. Each week, a different family hosts the prayer group and brings their group statue to their home until the next week. Each prayer group lasts about two hours. The first hour is dedicated to praying the mysteries of the Rosary. The second hour is for socializing or discussing the next week’s group or church activities.

One of the prayer groups’ leaders, Thai Tran and his wife Buoc, recently experienced God’s personal love for them. After suffering insomnia and night pains from Trigeminal Neuralgia treatment, Buoc found little help from prescription medicines, and she and her husband asked for Mary’s intercession by reciting the Rosary during the week their family hosted their group’s statue. She recovered shortly afterwards. This experience motivated them to host a 2,000 Rosary Recital in their home to thank Our Lady of the Rosary and to share the experience with their relatives and friends.

By request, the recitals will be held at the church and are open to the public under the supervision of Christ the King’s Legio Maria group, with assistance from the Trans and support from Christ the King pastor Father Louis Ha Pham, CMC.
Denton ACTS community to sponsor marriage conference

By Juan Guajardo
Editorial Assistant

The diocesan Family Life Office and the Denton ACTS community, along with Denton parishes St. Mark and Immaculate Conception, will host “The two will become one,” a marriage conference featuring well-known Catholic speakers Dr. Scott Hahn and Greg and Julie Alexander.

The conference will be held Aug. 28 at Immaculate Conception Church in Denton and will last most of the day. It will feature three talks on marriage by Dr. Hahn and two talks titled “Blessed and Broken” and “How can I serve you better, and what is it that makes you feel loved?” by the Alexanders.

“I hope they take away a better understanding of the sacrament of marriage,” Schwind said. “You know, our society seems to think that marriage is the next step in a relationship after you’ve been together for a certain amount of time. But the sacrament of marriage is a sacrament. It is a vocation. And I hope they take that understanding of, ‘Wow! We have something very beautiful and very important here. This isn’t just a contract. It’s a covenant.’ And also, I hope they take away some ideas of how to live that out, how to help them in the day-to-day life of marriage…”

Thus the conference title, “The two will become one,” she said.

“The Ephesians 5 passage that Paul writes … gives such a perfect layout of what marriage is supposed to be, the roles of husband and the roles of wife and how the two are to become one,” Schwind explained.

Scott Hahn is a world-renowned speaker and apologist who has delivered several talks on faith and Scripture topics. He has also authored many bestselling books, including The Lamb’s Supper and Reasons to Believe. A professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville, he has taught there since 1990. Once a Protestant minister, he and his wife, Kimberly, are converts to Catholicism. Their book Rome Sweet Home describes their conversion process.

Greg and Julie Alexander were close to divorce due to living a materialistic and selfish life in tune with the views of society, but, according to their Web site www.thealexanderhouse.org, when they went to a priest, prayed together and invited God back into their lives, they saved their marriage. They then went on to establish The Alexander House, an apostolate dedicated to saving marriages, enriching family life, and reducing divorce. On their Web site, they state they have helped about 900 couples save their marriages.

“Several of the men on the [ACTS community’s core] team had heard Dr. Scott Hahn and he had really moved them and inspired them in a lot of ways,” Schwind said. “I have personally worked with Greg and Julie Alexander and their ministry is specifically marriage. I’ve worked with them and heard them speak a few times…they’re a very good [team]… and they’re very relatable, and very practical.”

All married couples are invited, but so are engaged and seriously dating couples, Schwind said.

Registration is available online at www.dentonacts.org/marriageconference2010. The cost is $20 per person and includes lunch. After July 31, the cost is $25 per person. The conference begins at 8:30 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church at 2255 N. Bonnie Brae St. in Denton, and concludes at 5 p.m. with a Mass.
Cindy Cummins named new principal of St. Peter School

Dr. Cindy Cummins has been named principal of St. Peter the Apostle School in White Settlement for the 2010-11 school year. She succeeds Erin Vader who had been principal since 2005.

Cummins has a bachelor’s degree in elementary education from the University of Oklahoma, master’s degrees from Southern Methodist University and Texas A&M University at Commerce, and a doctorate in educational supervision and curriculum from Texas A&M-Commerce.

Since 2003, she has served as the principal of St. John the Apostle School in North Richland Hills. Prior to that, as a veteran Catholic school educator, Cummins had been an assistant principal at Christ the King School in Dallas, an administrative intern at Bishop Dunne High School in Dallas and taught in numerous Catholic schools in Oklahoma and Texas.

A native of Oklahoma City, Cummins and her husband Don are the parents of three adult children.

Her formal duties at St. Peter will begin on July 1.

Sacred Heart students raise money to support Our Mother of Mercy School

During the 2009 football season, the students at Sacred Heart School in Muenster had the opportunity to dress in spirit clothes every Friday, but there was a catch. In order to dress out, the students had to pay one dollar.

All of the money that was raised was given to Our Mother of Mercy School in Fort Worth. Our Mother of Mercy is a school in need of financial support, and the students were happy that they could help.

On Wednesday, May 5, the Sacred Heart senior class traveled to Fort Worth for this year’s Senior Service Day, held at Our Mother of Mercy. The seniors helped out by organizing a storage room and putting books away in the library. They also took a tour of the school and interacted with many of the young students.

“It was a humbling experience that showed me the importance of helping those in need,” said Sacred Heart senior Kevin Kulle.

The seniors felt this was a great experience for them, and many said they were glad that they could make a difference in these young students’ lives.

“It was definitely a worthwhile trip, and I loved having the opportunity to serve,” said Sacred Heart senior John Krawietz.

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-TURKEY–St Paul, Revelation Churches –Nov 2-12 2010-$1,999
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WE’RE NOT JUST A SCHOOL. WE’RE A FAMILY.
Students and supporters of St. George School gathered on a sunny, spring Sunday morning to dedicate a new addition to the Hudgins Street campus, but one familiar face was missing from celebration.

William Pilcher, the school’s maintenance man for seven years, was too ill to attend the May 23 ceremony. He died the following day. A talented carpenter and electrician, Mr. Pilcher spent years gathering information for the building project. Though in failing health, the devoted school employee was able to visit St. George to see the completed addition.

“He worked very hard during the planning of this building and I know his heart was with us at the dedication,” said Principal Olga Ferris. “The students dedicated their yearbook to him because of all he did for the school.”

The extra space provided by new construction will make working on school projects, like the yearbook, easier. Completed in December 2009, the $1.5 million extension to the existing building includes a new gym and a science lab, music room, and art room. Students are also enjoying a combination media, library, and computer center.

“It’s definitely helped the teaching process,” Ferris said. “The children and teachers are excited. We’ve been planning this 10 years and it’s finally here.”

Money for the project came from parish donations, fundraising, grants from the Kenedy and Amon Carter Foundations and the Diocese of Fort Worth’s All Things Possible campaign.

Peter Flynn, director of finance and administrative services, said the diocese’s contribution to the building fund underscores Bishop Kevin Vann’s commitment to Catholic education in the center city.

“The improvements were necessary and in the planning stages for a long time. ‘They needed to get done,’ Flynn continued. ‘The campaign has been successful thanks to people who are supporting these efforts in difficult economic times.’

Funds from the diocesan appeal, formerly known as ‘Sharing in Ministry,’ provided new computers for the media center. A large library desk purchased at an auction for $5, square tables sold by the government as federal surplus and new chairs create an inviting place for students to study or browse the school’s inventory of 15,000 books.

“The only thing not done is the gym floor,” added Ferris who expects installation to be complete by the beginning of the new school year. “It will be nice to host basketball and volleyball games and have a real concession stand.”

Bishop Vann concelebrated the 9:30 a.m. Sunday Mass with St. George pastor Father Thu Nguyen before walking over to the adjacent school to bless the new addition. Students, dressed in their blue plaid jumpers and uniform shirts, watched as the bishop sprinkled holy water and recited prayers dedicating the space.

Fr. Nguyen said the music, art, and science classroom will give children the room to explore their talents and the availability of a gym will benefit the larger St. George community as well as the school.

“We now have the space to hold retreats, special Masses, and other functions,” the pastor said. “We also hope the improvements will attract more students to the school, which boasts an equal mix of Hispanic, Anglo, and Asian youngsters.

“St. George offers a unique multi-cultural experience,” Fr. Nguyen added. “The mission of our school is to provide a Catholic education to children and I hope more parents take advantage of that.”

LEFT: The newest addition to St. George School houses a new gymnasium and additional classroom space for science labs, music, art, and the library.

BELOW: The new fitness playground encourages exercise because its use requires children to engage in physical activity.
In its fifth year, St. Patrick Cathedral’s Corpus Christi celebration takes participants out into the street to

Share the gift of the Holy Eucharist with the world

Story and Photos by Kathy Cribari Hamer Correspondent

Corpus Christi feast celebrations are an ancient tradition, dating back to the mid-13th century. But Michael Fronk, St. Patrick Cathedral sacristan, remembers the processions from his childhood in Oregon. He participated in the tradition in Mount Angel, where his grandparents lived and his parents had grown up.

Now, for the past five years, Fronk has had the pleasure of experiencing Corpus Christi events in downtown Fort Worth, where the processions emerged locally in 2006, at the end of the year of the Eucharist. The celebration also coincided with the end of Bishop Kevin Vann’s first year in the diocese.

“They wanted to do something to mark the occasion,” Fronk said, “and I thought of the Eucharistic Procession. It reminded me of my childhood.”

Approximately 600 people yearly attend Fort Worth’s Corpus Christi event which this year began Sunday June 6 with a noon Mass at the cathedral. It was followed by an outdoor procession with singing, and Eucharistic adoration, and ended with Benediction in the church.

The bishop explained the Via Merulana is a busy street lined on both sides with shops and apartments. “It is down this big, busy street in Rome, where so much life is, that this Eucharistic procession would go, with the Holy Father carrying the Blessed Sacrament.

And the times I was able to be in that procession, whole families would be leaning out the windows of their apartment buildings to catch a glimpse of that procession. There would be flowers and candles, and people would be hanging out of the windows of their apartments, to give honor to the Eucharistic Lord as he passed by.

“It became an image for me,” Bishop Vann said, “something that I carry with me, of life itself, and life itself that is not far from God, where God dwells in our midst. Just as the Eucharistic Christ was carried in the lives of all those people in Rome on the Via Merulana, so too is he with us.”

When he was a child, Fronk said, “For that day it seemed the whole town was centered around the Holy Eucharist. The whole day of festivity made an impression on me, that for that one day our Lord in the Eucharist was the center of our faith and our lives, “And we wanted the whole world to know it and see it.”
For María Galván, renewing her faith is an act of great spiritual importance.

For a second year, she decided to attend the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Congress, so that she might move closer to God.

“I came because I participated last year, I liked it very much, and I decided to return and experience an encounter with God to renew my faith,” said Galván, who is involved in a prayer group at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine.

Galván, 31, was one of a total of 1,400 parishioners who went to the event that took place from June 12-13, in the gymnasium at Nolan High School.

This is the third year this organized event has managed to unite people of different churches within the Diocese of Fort Worth.

“We organize this congress because the necessity exists (of doing it), and because it has had great success within the Spanish community; they come to have an encounter with God, and they return to their parishes feeling renewed,” said Andrés Aranda, diocesan delegate for Hispanic Ministries.

Aranda mentioned that the Catholic Charismatic Renewal Congress, whose theme was “Jesus’ love heals my heart,” has become so successful that he could organize something similar in the rural areas of the diocese.

During the conference that began on Saturday morning, hundreds of people of varying ages heard the anticipated blessing from Bishop Kevin Vann, who, in Spanish, expressed his happiness at being part of this diocese.

“Your presence is a sign of many blessings; you are my family,” said Bishop Vann, who added that his vocation has been strengthened during these last five years that he’s led the diocese.

The bishop commented that he would like to see the number of participants increase each year.

After giving his blessing he left, since he had other pending commitments.

Father Ángel Infante celebrated the welcoming Mass and spoke of the journey the Virgin Mary made to Jerusalem, next to St. Joseph of Nazareth, when they realized that their son, Jesus, had not traveled back with them to Nazareth but had stayed in the temple, where they found him.

“Just as they traveled, today you have had to travel from your homes to find yourselves here, with Jesus, inside a temple,” said Fr. Infante.

During the conference, people had a chance to pray, sing, and dance, all in the praise of God.

In addition to the Mass, the participants attentively listened to Saturday’s guest speaker, Roberto Ramírez.

“The encounter with Christ should be something frequent, constant,” said Ramírez. He mentioned that when he was 14, he was addicted to drugs, and he even came to live in the streets of his native Dominican Republic, but his faith in God rescued him from drugs.

According to Ramírez, he found a prayer group in his country that helped him change his life, and now he dedicates himself to retelling his story and motivating others to come closer to religion.

He told the people that when they feel broken, they should think of their faith in God.

“God doesn’t care how low you have fallen, but how high he can pull you up,” said Ramírez. Galván, filled with emotion, applauded with the rest of the participants when she heard the speaker’s message.

“His’s right; our encounter with God should be constant,” said Galván.

The event concluded with Mass on Sunday, June 13.
Q. How have you experienced the gift of priesthood?
A. For me, the gift of priesthood is representing God to His people and interceding for His people before the Lord. I’ve witnessed the Lord in the celebration of the sacraments. I’ve experienced the priesthood by ministering. I became a priest because I wanted to work with people. In high school, I saw that there were many jobs in which I could work with people, but priests seemed to do it best.

Q. What part does the celebration of the Eucharist play in your fulfillment as a priest?
A. Being a pastor and working with people has experienced the priesthood by ministering. I became a priest because I wanted to work with people. In high school, I saw that there were many jobs in which I could work with people, but priests seemed to do it best.

Q. How does your interaction with God’s people make your priesthood more rewarding?
A. It is a great reward. We are learning from the people. We are receiving from the people through reconciliation and the celebration of the other sacraments. Because they come with pain, we are called to see the sufferings of Christ in them and to give Christ to them.

Q. What do you believe you are accomplishing through your priesthood?
A. I suppose what I am supposed to be accomplishing is modeling Christ for others to follow. I don’t think you’ll change their minds by telling them. Through our lives, our own relationship with Christ, we are modeling Christian values. We lead by example—not by talking. After a homily, someone might come up to me and say, “You were speaking directly to me.” And I would say, “I was talking to me but if it happens to be a benefit to you, wonderful.”

Q. What do you most want to see happen in the lives of those you serve?
A. I most want to see me being an effective instrument of Christ’s grace in their lives.

Q. How do you find Christ’s presence in your parishioners?
A. I most want to see me being an effective instrument of Christ’s grace in their lives.

Q. What do you most desire to convey to your parishioners or others you serve?
A. God loves them, and it is okay to trust—although that is one I’m working on myself.

Q. How do you nourish your relationship with God?
A. Spending time in prayer each day is important, and participating in Mass is important. As a priest, it shouldn’t be about just directing the Mass but participating in it. Going on retreat is important as well as sharing my faith with other people in faith-sharing groups. It just supports me in my faith by seeing the witness of other people in their faith. It’s love God and love your neighbor for your own benefit also.
The Vatican’s treasures can’t be sold, because to us, they are priceless

By David Mills

The line stretched about a hundred feet in front of me and around the corner, which, as I was to find out, was still 200 yards from the door. The people around me were the kind of people you might see walking around the city on a Saturday, or at Mass.

I was blessed to have a couple of days in Rome and stood in line to see the Vatican Museum. It is an amazing place. You have to walk for about twenty minutes, through some of the world’s greatest and most famous art works, just to get to the Sistine Chapel at the end. The chapel itself is amazing, of course, with Michelangelo’s famous ceiling as beautiful and overwhelming as I’d always heard.

Some people insist the Church should sell all that art and all those beautiful buildings, and use the money to feed the poor. Every few years this idea becomes the media’s Deep Thought of the day, and journalists treat it as a serious question, until another Deep Thought comes along. We endured one of those episodes just a few months ago, when a comedian declared “Sell the Vatican, feed the world” on YouTube and various columnists and web writers agreed that this is just what the Church should do. You can see why they would say that. The Church tells us we should care for the poor. We need money to do that. The Church has lots of property that must be worth a fabulous amount of money. Why should people starve just so the Vatican can keep Michelangelo’s ceiling, and Raphael’s ceilings in the old papal apartments, and Leonardo’s portrait of St. Jerome, and all the other art?

Writing in Lay Witness magazine, an artist named Michael Schrauzer pointed out that the idea is kind of dumb. How in the world would you sell the Vatican anyway? Who’s going to buy St. Peter’s Basilica? Who would buy the art works other than the rich, if even they could afford them? As Schrauzer noted, “Great historic buildings and priceless artifacts are effectively unusable — that is what makes them ‘priceless.’” Besides (this is me, not Schrauzer), even if the rich bought the art, they’d probably hide it in their private collections, so people like us couldn’t see it anymore. The Vatican spends a lot of money maintaining the world’s artistic and historic heritage for everyone, not just Catholics.

Even if the Church could sell most of its assets, the money wouldn’t do much, Schrauzer continued. Whatever the Vatican is worth, selling it won’t feed the hungry for very long (a year or eighteen months, maybe, he guessed), and once the money’s gone, it’s gone.

There’s one more problem with the idea. “Those who push this scheme onto the Church typically neglect to ask the same of other institutions or groups,” he wrote. “Why shouldn’t the Greeks be required to sell the Parthenon? What good does the Mona Lisa do for the French or a malnourished child in a developing country? How much healthcare could the United States provide by hawking the White House or the Smithsonian?”

That’s a good question. Not one the columnist telling the Church to sell what she has and give away the money is likely to see, of course, but a good one. If the Vatican must sell its possessions, everyone else must do as well. Fair’s fair.

In fact, this kind of question is one you might try to ask when someone criticizes the Church for not doing something he thinks she should do. The Church’s critics sometimes use the fact that she has such high standards to treat her with a double standard, and we shouldn’t let them get away with it.

Find a worldly parallel and point out that if the Church should do this, it should too. If the person criticizing the Church starts explaining why it shouldn’t — why the Greeks should keep the Parthenon, say — you’ll probably find that most of his reasons apply to the Church as well, and this you can point out to him. You might not convince him, but you might at least show him that the Church cannot be condemned as easily as he thought. And that’s a start to showing him what the Church has given the world, even in her real estate.

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The Gospel of Life also calls us to care for creation

By Fr. John S. Rausch

The pictures of oil seeping from the Gulf of Mexico glimpse only the surface of the death and destruction beneath the sea from the Deepwater Horizon/BP oil spill. Marine biologists fear for shrimp, oysters, crabs, and untold varieties of fish endangered by the oil assault on the fragile ecosystem. The wetlands of Louisiana, a critical spawning ground for many species, present the next worry.

Our addiction to oil keeps 7,000 oil platforms with 35,000 wells in the Gulf dumping crude to fuel our lifestyle of mobility and convenience. Yet, federal statistics reveal 172 spills of more than 2,100 gallons in the Gulf over the last decade. The effects of the Exxon Valdez spill still linger in the coastal habitat two decades later along the Alaska shoreline. Our petroleum economy with its drilling, shipping, refining, and burning oil is killing the planet locally with poisoned water and air and globally with accelerated climate change.

While secular publications raise the issues of economic impact and legal liability, people of faith are reflecting on phrases like “common good,” “solidarity,” and “care of creation.” The National Catholic Rural Life Conference (NCRLC) issued a statement encouraging people of faith to “ask for the wisdom to live in harmony with God’s plan and the means to serve God’s creation.” The statement implies our ordinary economic ways disregard God’s plan, especially when we disregard God’s plan, especially when rural residents and the environment pay the price. (Disclosure: as a board member, I contributed to the statement.)

Carelessly we ignored essential moral principles and consequently invited disaster. All workers have a right to a safe workplace, yet we complacently allow workers to risk their lives to supply our energy from oil rigs and coal mines. Eleven men died in the Gulf rig explosion when only two weeks before 29 miners died in West Virginia’s Upper Big Branch Mine. The global economy demands productivity and profits, producing a corporate culture that occasions short-cuts and negligence. Regulations go unenforced and workers give their lives for a paycheck. Bishop Michael Bransfield of the Wheeling-Charleston Diocese in his pastoral letter, “On My Holy Mountain,” asks: “Why is it safer to travel in space than to work in a West Virginia mine?”

Exusive industries, now virtually controlled by giant corporations, operate for the enrichment of their stockholders. With a “least cost” incentive, frequently their methods reduce the rural area to a sacrificial resource colony. In the Gulf those whose livelihoods revolve around fishing or tourism just got sacrificed. In Appalachia community people whose lives and well-being depend on their well water and forests just lost to mountaintop removal.

Care of creation comes directly from the Book of Genesis when God put humanity in the garden “to care and cultivate it” (Gen. 2:15). God’s garden, i.e. creation, needs attention because it possesses inherit worth. God found it “very good” (Gen. 1:31), and not just “useful.”

The NCRLC statement recommends that “we reflect about our own lifestyles that make undue demands on nature.” The U.S. with 4.5 percent of the world’s population uses 33 percent of all electricity generated each year and consumes 42 percent of gasoline refined. How many vacant parking lots are illuminated all night, and how many computers are on “sleep mode” all weekend?

“In these days of anxiety, we encourage people of faith to assemble for prayer and sharing,” says the NCRLC statement. The Gulf folks need one another’s support, but the whole Church needs to ratchet up care of creation to a higher ranking in the Gospel of Life.

Father John S. Rausch is a member of the Glenmary Home Missions and director of the Office of Peace and Justice for the Diocese of Lexington, Kentucky.
Promoting Women’s Health:
Beyond the Fine Print

By Mary E. McClusky

Catholic teaching calls on medical professionals to consider fertility as the healthy, natural, God-given state of a woman’s body in her child-bearing years, and to treat a pregnant woman and her unborn child equally as patients.

Today we are rightly concerned about damage to women and children from environmental toxins, yet many ignore the health risks and consequences of flooding a woman’s body with hormones from the birth control pill or chemical abortions.

As advocates of so-called “reproductive health services” celebrate the 50th anniversary of the pill, and the new law allowing federally subsidized health plans to treat abortion as “health care,” it’s time again to break through the catch phrases and examine the fine print. Doing so reveals the unpleasant truth that advocates of contraception and abortion frequently undermine women’s health by trading their consciences for cash registers.

Why else would Planned Parenthood recently reveal plans to implement “tele-med” abortions in all its clinics by 2015? Implemented in Iowa two years ago, “tele-med” abortions allow doctors to forgo a physical exam, counsel pregnant women by teleconference, and press a button to remotely dispense the drug RU-486. A group of pro-life obstetrician-gynecologists has filed testimony to block its approval.

Product information from the recently-developed contraceptive product “Essure” reveals contradictory information and physical risks and problems not mentioned in the slick new ad campaign. Wire coils are inserted into the fallopian tubes through the cervix, expanding and causing tissue to grow around them over the next three months. Flaunted in ads as “permanent,” the fine print reveals that “you can become pregnant every year after the Essure micro-inserts are placed” and “very little is known about how well the Essure micro-inserts work beyond the first 5 years.” Only two clinical trials have been conducted involving 745 women. Thirty percent of them experienced cramping, 13 percent pain, 11 percent nausea/vomiting, 9 percent dizziness/lightheadedness, and 7 percent bleeding/spotting. The inserts can get in the way of reading MRIs, making nearby organs harder to see. In fact, any pelvic procedure near the inserts could cause complications.

Catholic teaching calls on medical professionals to consider fertility as the healthy, natural, God-given state of a woman’s body in her child-bearing years, and to treat a pregnant woman and her unborn child equally as patients. Critics incorrectly argue that the Catholic Church just wants to oppress women. On the contrary, the Church has a long history and a vast array of teaching documents exalting the unique gifts and contributions of women, denounces their exploitation for profit, and calls for “a renewed commitment by all to the well-being of all the world’s women” (Pope John Paul II, “Address to the International Meeting on Promoting the Well-Being of Women,,” 1996).

May both men and women alike respond to this call by educating themselves on the risks to both body and soul of contraception and abortion, and opening themselves to God’s plan for love, life, and marriage. Let all Catholics pray for increased respect for the bodily integrity of women and their gift of fertility and motherhood.

Mary McClusky is Special Projects Coordinator at the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. To learn more about the bishops’ pro-life activities, go to www.usccb.org/prolife.
Three men were ordained to the diaconate last month, and that liturgy, celebrated on the feast of the Visitation of Mary, emphasized similarities among their routes to Holy Orders.

“Each of your journeys was different,” Bishop Kevin Vann told the men. “And it is on this day, the feast of the Visitation of Elizabeth, that your journeys end, and you will say yes, giving your lives to the Lord in service as a deacon.”

One of the new deacons had traveled from the Methodist faith to Anglican, and then Catholic. “I have been confirmed three times!” Philip David Petta said. “I converted to Catholicism eight years ago. And it was the best decision I ever made in my life.”

One man had moved from a successful business career in Kansas, ending up in a seminary in Texas. Richard Ward Kirkham was single and working 12 to 14 hours a day, he said, when he realized his parish offered 6:30 a.m. daily Masses, and started attending. “I realized all work and no time for prayer was beginning to make me a dull boy.”

The third man crossed the Pacific Ocean — on a small boat — to get to the Diocese of Fort Worth. “August 15, 1982, I went to Mass in the morning,” Khiem Van Nguyen said, “and that night I escaped and was free from Vietnam. On the ocean, I talked to Heavenly Mother that I would become a priest if I might come to America.”

None of the paths were completely smooth, and neither was that of Mary the mother of God, Bishop Vann said, when she crossed hills and valleys to get to her cousin Elizabeth’s home.

The diaconate ordination took place at Deacon Petta’s longtime parish, St. Mary of the Assumption, where he was a parishioner when he discerned his calling to serve God. “There’s total evidence of God intervening,” Deacon Kirkham said.

One day I told him, ‘I think I have a vocation to the priesthood.’ He encouraged me and helped me every way he could through the whole process.”

But that wasn’t Dcn. Petta’s first “call.” “I knew I was supposed to be a Roman Catholic priest before I was a Catholic,” he said.

He was in Phoenix working for an insurance company, and one day saw a TV program about the Church. “Suddenly I had the conviction that someone was telling me I needed to be a priest, and not Anglican, but Roman Catholic. I dismissed it as my imagination.”

“It was between jobs and wanting to get back to Fort Worth. So that night I prayed — and I wasn’t much into prayer then.”

“A few days later a friend in Fort Worth called and said ‘There’s a guy I’ve given your name to—he needs somebody just like you.’ The guy flew to Phoenix and hired me.”

Dcn. Petta came home, and a few years later entered the seminary.

“Deacon Kirkham made a habit of attending daily Mass. Then, ‘One week I prayed a novena to St. Paul, and on the ninth day is when it hit me: the thought of the priesthood. It scared me to death.”

“I did all that I could to ignore the idea of the priesthood, and tried to put it out of my mind, because my career was going so well. For several years I began making deals with God. ‘Leave me alone this year, and I’ll think about it next year.’

“But as became more involved in my parish,” Dcn. Kirkham said, “the parish community and my pastor began to recognize something within me, and they encouraged me to enter the seminary.”

“Finally one of the older ladies said, ‘It’s time you shut up and listen to what God is telling you instead of making excuses.’ That was God speaking through the community to me. I was approaching 40, and I asked myself, what do I want to be doing when I die? My answer was that I wanted to be serving God.”

“I had no more excuses,” Dcn. Kirkham said.

“Deacon Nguyen got to America from Vietnam, but did not enter the seminary, as he had promised on the boat. ‘I wanted to enjoy life as other young men.”

Then, in April 1987, he had a car accident, lay in the hospital for one month and seriously rethought his vocation. In July, 1989, he was accepted and joined the Congregation of the Mother Co-Redemptrix in Missouri, and took his final vows in 1999. “I finished philosophy in 2001 with a BA at Conception Seminary,” he said. In 2005, I asked to transfer to the Fort Worth Diocese, and I began to study theology in the fall of 2006.”

There were coincidences in Dcn. Nguyen’s journey: “The feast day of the Co-Redemptrix province order is Assumption,” he said, “and the founder of the order in Vietnam who gave the feast day to my group is also Assumption.”

“The feast day of the seminary where I’m living right now is Assumption in San Antonio. And the church I was ordained is also Assumption. Is it coincidence?” the deacon asked.

St. Mary of the Assumption, Bishop Vann said in his homily at the ordination, “has been a full journey of faith for more than 100 years. And the stories of the people who have come here and those who have served here, still echo from the walls.

“Your ‘yes’ is echoing against the countless men and women of faith who have prayed here and still pray here — pray that their lives will be strengthened and nourished by the word of God, the bread of life, which you will minister.”
New priests ...

From Page 24

“One is a priest ... at every moment of his life. The priesthood is one’s whole life.”

— Fr. Amado Vallejo

I hear God’s call, and once again I said, “Yes, Lord, here I am to do your will.” That moment was the gratifying moment of my call to the priestly vocation.

Fr. Amado’s first Mass, Corpus Christi Sunday, took place at Immaculate Conception, and, “If the cathedral was full, this was even fuller. I was a little nervous, because it was the first time that I celebrated Mass, but I celebrated it with great devotion, knowing what I have received, and what I am — a priest.”

“Today I am celebrating every moment that I feel, as St. Paul, ‘who am I, but Christ who is acting on me.’

“My father told me, the Church needs priests who give it life,” Fr. Fernando said. “These words rattled in my heart and I thought I could be one of them. Today as a priest, I ask God to help me really live as a priest for those who need it most. And I’m also sure that I could not do it just with me, but it is with God and spiritual support of the people, their prayers, that I can accomplish this.”

“I believe in living each day on the path to holiness,” Fr. Amado said. “I believe this journey is a challenge for every priest and every Christian. It is important that we fully live the Gospel every day, and that we move closer to the life of Christ.

“One is a priest not only as a priest and every Christian. It is important that we fully live the Gospel every day, and that we move closer to the life of Christ.
After more than 25 years as permanent deacon formation director, and teaching four classes in the diocese, Ann Healey retires from her service to the Servants of God

By Michele Baker
Correspondent
Photos by Donna Ryckaert

W ell-wishers from all over the diocese gathered at Most Blessed Sacrament Church in Arlington June 6 to congratulate Ann Healey as she retires. Healey, who has served as director of Permanent Deacon Formation with the Diocese of Fort Worth since 1984, helped to create and execute the comprehensive formation course used here for four classes of deacons.

“Ann Healey is known nationally for her work in this field,” said Bishop Kevin Vann, who attended the celebration. “She’s been a good friend and advisor. I have a great deal of respect for her knowledge of diaconate formation.”

And yet, 26 years ago, Ann Healey simply answered an ad.

“They wanted someone with spiritual formation experience who could speak Spanish,” Healey recalls with a smile. “I’m sure I’m not what they had in mind!” she said with a laugh. But the fair-haired, forty-something Anglo, who just happened to have been born in Havana, Cuba, and raised in South America as a result of her father’s business dealings, followed the Holy Spirit and made her home in Fort Worth. Of course, 20 years of social work in inner city Chicago, five years of formation as a spiritual director, and several post-graduate degrees in pastoral ministry — including certification as a hospital chaplain — didn’t hurt.

Healey finally found a place where her varied gifts and experiences could come together. As Deacon Raymond Lamarre of St. Philip the Apostle Parish in Lewisville described it, “From the beginning, Ann told us we were learning to put this program in place together.” His class, ordained in 1989, was the first in the diocese. “I’ve watched over the years and the program she initiated has undergone few changes. It was solid from the start.”

“She wrote the book on diaconate formation,” said Sharon Blackmore, wife of the late Deacon Jim Blackmore. “What was so special about our program is that we, as wives, had our own formation process as well. We were encouraged to be completely involved.”

Deacon Lamarre agreed, saying, “Having our wives involved has made our program well-rounded. The process strengthened our marriage and our family. It drew us together because it acknowledged the integral role of wives. That kind of perspective is not true of every program but it was always important to Ann.”

Healey readily concedes the joy her work has brought her. “I have loved every minute of it,” she said. “Even the tearful moments. Working in formation with men in mid-life is wonderful!”

Healey’s compassionate care for her charges.

Deacon Pat Lavery, ordained in 2009 and now serving at Good Shepherd Parish in Colleyville said, “As you go into the diaconate, you have this picture of Ann as a stern teacher, but as the years go on, you realize that she epitomizes caring. She feels very close to the ups and downs that we candidates go through. We needed to be listened to and cared for.”

“When you start this process,” added Deacon John Kergan, also of St. Philip, “you’re not really sure if you’re being called to the diaconate at all. Then, as time goes on, Ann helps you peel away the layers to reveal your relationship with God so that you see your gifts.”

“This is absolutely not my program,” Healey insists. “I’m very proud of the work I’ve done for the diocese and nationally. I got to work with great people. There are priests, deacons, and lay people who gave, untold hours of time, teaching and mentoring. “All of these people came together to make this successful.”

While she may be embarrassed to take the credit she deserves for her years of service, Healey readily concedes the joy her work has brought her. “I have loved every minute of it,” she said. “Even the tearful moments. Working in formation with men in mid-life is wonderful!”

Still, the work of the Permanent Deacon Formation director is not all structure and paper-work. The men who have been through the process speak of Healey’s compassionate care for her charges.

Deacon Pat Lavery was taken in 1987, several years after she started working for the diocese. (NTC File Photo)

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Deacon Lamarre agreed, saying, “Having our wives involved has made our program well-rounded. The process strengthened our marriage and our family. It drew us together because it acknowledged the integral role of wives. That kind of perspective is not true of every program but it was always important to Ann.”

Their work is not all structure and paperwork. The men who have been through the process speak of Healey’s compassionate care for her charges.

Deacon Pat Lavery, ordained in 2009 and now serving at Good Shepherd Parish in Colleyville said, “As you go into the diaconate, you have this picture of Ann as a stern teacher, but as the years go on, you realize that she epitomizes caring. She feels very close to the ups and downs that we candidates go through. We needed to be listened to and cared for.”

“When you start this process,” added Deacon John Kergan, also of St. Philip, “you’re not really sure if you’re being called to the diaconate at all. Then, as time goes on, Ann helps you peel away the layers to reveal your relationship with God so that you see your gifts.”

“This is absolutely not my program,” Healey insists. “I’m very proud of the work I’ve done for the diocese and nationally. I got to work with great people. There are priests, deacons, and lay people who gave, untold hours of time, teaching and mentoring. “All of these people came together to make this successful.”

While she may be embarrassed to take the credit she deserves for her years of service, Healey readily concedes the joy her work has brought her. “I have loved every minute of it,” she said. “Even the tearful moments. Working in formation with men in mid-life is wonderful!”

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Early evidence of devotion to apostles found in Rome catacombs

By Cindy Wooden

FROM PAGE 1

Ulpiustal...

FROM PAGE 1

The drug, manufactured by a French chemical company, is currently available in 22 European countries.

In his letter, Cardinal DiNardo raised concerns that the new drug is more similar to the drug RU-486, which can cause abortions several weeks into pregnancy — than to its emergency contraceptive, which are believed to have no effect on a fertilized egg after the first two weeks into pregnancy. The Vatican opposes any and all forms of abortion.

“Millions of American women, even those willing to use a contraceptive to prevent fertilization in various circumstances, would personally never choose to have an abortion,” said Cardinal DiNardo.

“Plan B, approved by the FDA in 2003, contains a combination of its high doses of a hormone that mimics prostaglandin. Although the drug works primarily by stopping the ovaries from producing eggs, it can also prevent a fertilized egg from implanting in the womb,” he added.

Cardinal DiNardo noted that for many years, “Congress has acted to ensure that the federal government does not fund abortion, does not endorse or destroy the early human embryo even in the name of important medical research.”

He also said the current administration has similarly “voiced support for federal laws to ensure that no one is involved in abortion without his or her knowledge or consent.”

“Plans for approving a known abortifacient drug as a ‘contraceptive’ for American women is not consistent with the stated policy of the administration on these matters,” he added.

The FDA is scheduled to make a decision on the drug by late July.
Sacred Heart in Seymour celebrates 100 years of faith

By Jenara Kocks Burgess

As Sacred Heart Church in Seymour celebrated its 100th anniversary with a Mass on the Feast of the Sacred Heart, June 11, as well as with a dinner afterward and many activities on June 12, parishioners and priests reflected on how the faith of their ancestors brought the parish into existence.

“The work began years before in the 1880’s when your forefathers brought the faith even before there was a church. The map of Czechoslovakia on your faces is still very strong,” said the Very Rev. Steve Berg, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Worth, during his homily.

Fr. Berg celebrated the Mass with Fathers Charles Gorantla, HGN, Sacred Heart’s sacramental minister; Richard Eldredge, TOR, former Sacred Heart Church pastor; Raymond McDaniel, pastor of St. Peter Church in Lindsay and former sacramental minister of Sacred Heart; and Jack McKeon, pastor of Holy Family of Nazareth in Wichita and the present church was built across the street in 1950, according to Thornhill.

The official beginning of the Seymour Church was in March 1910 when Father Paul A. Mosler was sent to Baylor County, an area predominately settled by people from Czechoslovakia, because he spoke Czech. Since the community did not have a church building, Fr. Mosler and other priests who came to the area before him celebrated the Holy Mass in homes and the school auditorium.

Fr. Mosler is considered a legend to the Catholic people of Baylor County because he was known to walk as many as 30 miles to say Holy Mass for his people not only in Baylor but the surrounding counties of Archer, Young, Haskell, Foard, and Jones.

“He’s the one who started it all — the (parish) hall is named after him,” said longtime Sacred Heart parishioner, Janice Thornhill, as she looked at two pictures of him on a partition wall that they used to display historical pictures for the anniversary in Mosler Hall.

“I don’t remember Fr. Mosler like this,” said longtime parishioner Julie Sosolik Hostas, 85, pointing to a picture of him. “This is how I remember him,” she said pointing to an older picture of him.

When she was young, Hostas was a member of St. John of Nepomucene Church in Bomanon, where Fr. Mosler first lived and which he called the “Mother Church.” She said her parents moved to Texas from Europe in 1906, and eventually they moved closer to Seymour and attended Sacred Heart.

“When I was little, he (Fr. Mosler) used to come by the house in a horse and buggy. We couldn’t wait for him to come. These pictures bring back a lot of memories,” she said.

After the Mass, parishioners and visitors enjoyed a treasure trove of old pictures in the Mosler Parish Hall. Janice Thornhill said they asked parishioners in December 2009 to bring old pictures for the anniversary celebration. Parishioners were also asked to bring smaller boards or scrapbooks of their family histories to be displayed in the parish hall.

Thornhill pointed to three young girls in their white communion dresses and veils in a picture of a first Communion at Sacred Heart. All three, Thornhill, Arlene Hajek DeYoung, and Rose Lee Sumbera Kajs attended the anniversary Mass and dinner.

“This is my home. This is where I made my first Communion,” said Thornhill, who has been a member of Sacred Heart since she was an infant and now lives in Seymour with her husband, Charles. Seymour’s Catholics’ first church was originally the First Baptist Church, located on the northwest corner of Cedar and Morris streets, which they bought and renovated in 1915.

The first Mass was celebrated there on Jan. 16, 1916. Later, that building was converted into a parish hall, and the present church was built across the street in 1950, according to a detailed history of Sacred Heart written by parishioners.

In 1957, Cornelia Marie Knezek, the church’s organist at the time, became the first parishioner to answer the call to religious life by entering the convent of the Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus as a novice when she was 16 years old.

Sister Knezek, who has now been a professed sister for 51 years, said sisters from that convent taught catechism to the children of Sacred Heart Parish in the summer when she was a young child.

“One of the sisters, Sister Marie Gerard, asked me what I was going to be when I grew up, and I told her, ‘a sister like you.’ She’s still alive, and she still reminds me of that,” she said.

Gerald Knezek, Sr. Cornelia’s brother who introduced himself as number seven of the 10 children born to the late Ernest and Marie Knezek, said that even though many of his classmates were very smart and successful — Gerald Knezek and Jim Novak were two of the seven valedictorians of their graduating class — several of them such as Novak came back to their hometown to live and work.

“I love this community that raised us,” said Gerald Knezek, a professor at the University of North Texas.

Novak, who was ordained as a deacon in 1995 and became the church’s administrator in 2007, said his parents Lillie Mae and Henry Novak were married at Sacred Heart Church, where he received all of his sacraments except for ordination.

“To be serving here — to be raised in your own parish and then to serve as deacon and administrator ... is kind of a unique experience. Many people go off and end up serving in a different parish,” he said.

Deacon Novak and his wife Rilda have been married 38 years, and have three children and four grandchildren with one more grandchild on the way.

Fr. Richard Eldredge, who was pastor of Sacred Heart from 1998-2007, joked during the dinner that he attended the event for the food — especially the homemade kolaches, a traditional Czechoslovakian pastry made by parishioners, but then he became more serious.

“What an inspiration you’ve been to me tonight and over the years. Your faith is really a rock solid foundation. I brag to all people at my new parish and to others about you,” said Fr. Eldredge.

Some men enjoy a game of horseshoes during festivities on June 12 to celebrate Sacred Heart’s 100th anniversary. Other activities included volleyball, polka dancing, and Mass. (Photo by Charles Thornhill)
Christ comes to us though the Eucharist

By Lucas Pollice

The Catholic Church teaches and believes that the bread and wine are literally changed into Jesus himself. At every Mass Jesus makes himself really and totally present to us in this Most Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is not a symbol of Christ but IS Christ!

The Catholic Church teaches that when the priest says the words of institution over the bread and wine, “This is my Body,” and “This is my Blood,” the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ. This is the real presence of Christ and the real communion of the Body and Blood of Christ. Through the Eucharist all the members of the Body of Christ are united to Christ, but through this union, are also intimately united to each other as brothers and sisters in Him. With Christ as the Head, the Body of Christ makes our human heart the heavenly home.

The Eucharist augments our union with Christ

The Eucharist is often called the Blessed Sacrament, or the Sacrament of Sacraments, because in it, we literally have communion with Christ himself. Each time we receive his Body and Blood we literally welcome Jesus into the very depth of our being; into our hearts. This union is so profound that it cannot help but be efficacious in transforming us to be more like Christ. The more we receive Jesus in the Eucharist, the more we become like Him and mirror his virtues, his wisdom, and his strength.

The Eucharist augments our union with Christ

The Eucharist is truly at the very heart of Catholicism and sets it apart from all of the other Christian denominations. In fact, it is so important in the life of the Catholic Church that it is called the “source and summit of the Christian life.”

Why is it so important, so adored, and so central to what it means to be a Catholic? It is because the Catholic Church teaches and believes that the bread and wine are literally changed into Jesus himself. At every Mass Jesus makes himself really and totally present to us in this Most Blessed Sacrament. The Eucharist is not a symbol of Christ but IS Christ!

The word Eucharist means “thanksgiving” because it is in and through this sacrament that we give thanks to God for the gift of salvation. The thanks that we ultimately give Him is the gift of ourselves to Him. Herein lies the true beauty of this Sacrament of Sacraments. Jesus gives himself totally, completely, and unconditionally to us in the Eucharist. His gift to us is so profound that He desires to literally and physically enter into our being. Our response in return is the very gift of ourselves as well.

We surrender ourselves to God so that He may heal and transform us in order for us to become his instruments of grace and love. This is why we also call the Eucharist “Communion,” because it is literally and profoundly the communion of God and man. It reaches even beyond our individual communion with Christ. It also brings about the communion of the whole Church, which is the Mystical Body of Christ on earth. Through the Eucharist, we are not only united to Christ, but are also intimately united to each other as brothers and sisters of Christ.

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The Eucharist separates us from sin

Since the Eucharist transforms us to become more like Christ, it can’t help but to separate us from sin. The more we receive Jesus in this sacrament, the easier it is to avoid sin. First, it cleanses us from all venial sins, and heals the wounds caused by them. We are also given grace by Christ to transform our desire for sin into our dislike and hatred for it. The Eucharist heals our intellect and strengthens our will so that, literally, it becomes harder for us to sin. It enables us to see how sin both offends God, and also wounds us.

The Eucharist is like medicine for our souls and food for our journey to heaven. In the same way that the manna came down from heaven and nourished and sustained the Israelites as they journeyed toward the Promised Land, this heavenly food of Christ’s Body and Blood nourishes our souls and protects us from sin as we journey toward our heavenly home.

The Eucharist unites the Church

Through the Eucharist, all the members of the Church are not only united to Christ, but through this union, are also intimately united to each other as brothers and sisters in Him. With Christ as the Head, the Body of Christ makes our human heart the heavenly home.

The Eucharist commits us to evangelization and service

Finally, the Eucharist, by its very nature, heals, prepares, and strengthens us for evangelization and service. The entire goal and purpose of the Mass is so that we can come and be fed and transformed; so that we can then be sent out into the world to be Christ’s instruments, especially to those who are most in need, vulnerable, alone, and desiring God’s love and mercy. In fact, the word, Mass, comes from the Latin word missio, which means “to be sent.”

Through the Eucharist we are intimately united with Christ our Savior, and we are then called by Him to continue his mission of building the Kingdom of God. We are his hands, his voice, and his instruments in a world that is crying out for the message of the Gospel. The Eucharist is truly the source of our mission of evangelization and service.

Although there are many ways for the Christian to worship and come into union with Christ, there is no union on this earth that brings us as close to Christ as when we receive him in Holy Communion. He comes to us as the “bread from heaven,” the manna in the desert which gives us strength for our journey. It unites us to Christ in the deepest sense and gives strength and unity to his Mystical Body, the Church, through which He sanctifies the world. The Eucharist is truly the source and summit of all that we are as Catholics, an “inexhaustible richness” given to us by Christ himself.

Lucas Pollice is director of Catechesis and Adult Faith Formation and RCIA for the diocese. Lucas holds a degree in theology from the Franciscan University of Steubenville and has a master’s degree in theological studies from the Institute for Pastoral Theology at Ave Maria University. He is an adjunct professor of theology with the Cardinal Newman Institute in Fort Worth. Lucas and his wife, Mary, have five children, Cecilia, Nicholas, Timothy, Christian, and Julia.
Pope Benedict XVI said.

... of Catholics because they are a community, and motivate charity, sacrifice of Christ, they create a clear expression of belief in the... 

By Cindy Wooden

Pope Benedict XVI adores the Eucharist during exposition at Mass on the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome June 3. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Pope says Sunday Mass essential to Catholic life, charity

ROME — Participation at Sunday Mass and reception of the Eucharist are central to the life of Catholics because they are a clear expression of belief in the sacrifice of Christ, they create community, and motivate charity, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“In our day, people don’t love the word ‘sacrifice,’ which seems to belong to another age and another way of understanding life. However, when it is properly understood, it remains fundamental because it reveals how much God, in Christ, loves us,” the pope said June 15 in an address to the Rome diocesan pastoral conference.

With an evening speech at Rome’s Basilica of St. John Lateran, the pope opened the diocese’s three-day conference, which focused on finding ways to help Catholics understand the importance of the Sunday Eucharist and the essential role of charity in Catholic life. Parishes, the priests’ council, lay groups and special ministries throughout the diocese held preparatory listening sessions and conferences to draw up recommendations for the 300 delegates attending the June gathering.

While the majority of Rome’s citizens are baptized Catholics, “faith can never be assumed because every generation needs to receive this gift through the proclamation of the Gospel and knowledge of the truth which Christ has revealed to us,” the pope said.

Even among practicing Catholics, he said, there is a lack of understanding about the real presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and about the fact that receiving Jesus in the Eucharist must lead people to witness to God’s love by being welcoming to all, even those who are confused or prejudiced.

“A eucharistic celebration that does not lead to encountering people where they live, work and suffer in order to bring them the love of God does not demonstrate its truth,” the pope said.

“Charity is able to generate an authentic and permanent change in society, acting in the hearts and minds of men,” he said.

Pope Benedict told the diocesan delegates the best way to teach people the truth about the Eucharist and about the charity that flows from it is to have “prayerful, well-prepared Masses.

When Catholics receive Jesus in the Eucharist, they are no longer isolated individuals, but members of a community committed to one another and to bringing God’s love to the world, he said.

“The world and men and women do not need another social organization, but they need the church,” which can unite them in Christ, the pope said.

QUESTIONS:

Is there an issue of faith or morality in which you feel particularly passionate? How can you invite conversion of mind and heart, so you can be a witness of Christ’s peace and not simply a voice of dissension?

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Scripture Readings

June 27, Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.

By Sharon K. Perkins

“The world and men and women do not need another social organization, but they need the church,” which can unite them in Christ, the pope said.

Psalm 16:1-2, 5, 7-11

Galatians 5:1, 13-18


But they would not welcome him because the destination of his journey was Jerusalem.” — Luke 9:53

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Pope Benedict XVI adores the Eucharist during exposition at Mass on the feast of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Basilica of St. John Lateran in Rome June 3. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
Scripture Readings

July 4, Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle C. Readings:
1) Isaiah 66:10-14c
Psalm 66:1-7, 16, 20
2) Galatians 6:14-18

By Jeff Hensley

I was leaving the administrative offices of the Salvation Army in Fort Worth late one afternoon as we finished a major capital campaign. We had raised $7.5 million, primarily to build a new shelter for homeless families and individuals, and I had headed the second half of the campaign. I had helped keep the campaign alive in a rough economy, an economy in which local banks were losing value drastically. They were rough economic times locally, not unlike our current national recession.

As I closed the door and put my key in the lock, I was basking in the glory of “my” accomplishment. As I silently thanked the Lord for allowing me to lead this campaign, I gradually worked my way backwards until I had reached the more realistic point of being grateful for having been a part of the team God used to accomplish his goal of serving the poor.

It was a good and useful lesson I have never forgotten. Even though I may temporarily drift into the area of the ego trip, God always brings me back around to see that I am merely a member of the team, one of his servants being allowed to witness and participate in his work.

In the Gospel for this week, Jesus cautions his followers who have just returned jubilant from a successful mission. He says he has observed Satan fall in defeat like lightning from the sky. But he goes on to say, “Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven.”

The Scriptures from Isaiah 66 and Psalm 66 invite us to rejoice in the prosperity of Jerusalem and, “Shout joyfully to God, sing praise to the glory of his name,” to “proclaim his glorious praise,” to, “Say to God, ‘How tremendous are your deeds!'”

So even though Jesus warns us against dwelling too much on our own accomplishments, Scripture places no such restriction on our praise of God for his glorious deeds. As the Psalm reading puts it: “Let all on earth worship and sing praise to you, sing praise to your name!”

QUESTIONS:
What successes have you experienced that you realized came, ultimately, from God’s grace? Is praise of God for his presence in your life, for his creation, and simply for who he is, a part of your prayer life?

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Word to Life

By Jeff Hensley

Recently at a young adult Bible study I saw a 2009 graduate. I asked him how he was doing and he kind of stretched and said he was doing great; he was on his first ever paid vacation.

He was simultaneously proud of his accomplishment, exhilarated at the prospect of not being at work and overjoyed at a week off to do whatever came across his mind, all while getting paid. It is exactly this type of feeling I think God had in mind when he took a day off after creating the world.

I remember, as a school kid, longing for summer vacation. Sometimes on the first day of school I would begin the countdown. I would log, first months, then weeks, then days, and finally hours until freedom was mine again. Then would begin the days either packed from sun up until well after sun down with activities or painfully void of any activity at all and me following my mom around the house saying I was bored. She always had very unappealing ways to remedy my predicament.

O how I long for those days of boredom. These days it feels like if I am going to find a moment of leisure I have to put it on the calendar weeks ahead of time. It is actually not that bad; in fact most Sunday afternoons in the summer I can be found taking full advantage of a friend’s invitation to float in their pool with a swim-up snack station. These Sundays at the pool have become mini-vacations for me and they are truly refreshing.

The ideas of relaxing, having time for self, partying with friends, and honoring the Sabbath are all over the Scriptures. Jesus’ first miracle was at a huge party so we know he liked to hang out with his friends and have a good time. He also was always going off to a quiet place to pray. When questioned about his disciple’s observation of the Sabbath he said “The Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath” (Mark 2:27).

I think what He is trying to say is that yes, there are rules and obligations attached to keeping the Sabbath, but the rules are not the point, what is the point is that God knows we need time off, time away from normal daily life, time to rejuvenate, time to be recreated.

Once we graduate, very few of us get the summer off from work and most jobs only offer two weeks of vacation. On top of this we, as a society, are busier than ever. I hate to fall into “good ole day’s” syndrome, but when I was a kid sports had seasons, they were not year-round activities. If we were playing sports during the summer it was a neighborhood wiffle ball game. Add to this the reality of modern technology that makes it so we are seldom more than an arm’s reach away from our phone, e-mail, and Internet.

This reality can make it hard to find time of true rest. A time of being truly away from it all, a time to catch our breath, relax our brains, rest our bodies and have a little fun. Leisure time doesn’t have to be spent on a hammock reading a book with a cool beverage within arms reach (though it is not a bad idea). Full or mini vacations should be filled with the types of activities that re-create you.

The long hot summer is upon us. You may not have a lot of vacation saved up or in these tough times it might be hard to afford an exciting trip to Yellowstone or the Cayman Islands, or even Six Flags, but it is still possible to grab a slice of leisure.

Think of something you or your family love to do, but just have not made time to do in a long time. Now look at your calendar and schedule a mini-vacation. It is as simple as that. Kick back, relax, and enjoy a day off like God did after creating the world.

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What successes have you experienced that you realized came, ultimately, from God's grace? Is praise of God for his presence in your life, for his creation, and simply for who he is, a part of your prayer life?

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By Jeff Hedglen

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Jeff Hedglen, youth minister at St. Bartholomew Parish in Southwest Fort Worth, is the principal organizer of Camp Fort Worth each summer. Readers with questions can contact Jeff at jeff@stbartsfw.org.
Durante estos meses de verano, reflejemos en las bendiciones que Dios nos ha dado

Estimados Hermanos y Hermanas en Cristo,

Al entrar en los meses de verano, es una ocasión que nos ofrece a muchos de nosotros una oportunidad para las vacaciones y, si Dios lo permite, algunos momentos de relajación y de renovación lejos de los asuntos y exigencias de la vida diaria. Para aquellos de ustedes que trabajan y ejercen sus ministerios en las parroquias, estos meses de verano tienden a ser una época en que el trabajo va disminuyendo por la pausa de algunos ministerios por el verano. Quiziera tomar esta oportunidad para agradecerle a todos los que trabajan y sirven en las parroquias por todo su esmero y arduo trabajo en fortalecer al Cuerpo de Cristo, la Iglesia.

Muchos de ustedes son voluntarios muy trabajadores que dan generosamente de su tiempo y talento, trabajando en comunión por la Iglesia. No subestime su servicio a la Iglesia, ni cómo Cristo los utiliza para acercar las almas a él. Sin el don y la presencia de cada uno de ustedes, la misión evangelizadora de la Iglesia ciertamente sería disminuida.

Estos tiempos también nos dan la oportunidad para reflexionar sobre las muchas bendiciones que Dios nos ha dado, y en verdad darle nuestra acción de gracias a Aquel quien nos da todo que es bueno. De hecho, vivir nuestra fe en Cristo significa vivir en un constante espíritu de acción de gracias. Como San Pablo nos enseña, “Y todo lo que puedan decir o hacer, hágáno en el nombre del Señor Jesús, dando gracias a Dios Padre por medio de él” (Colosenses 3:17). Podemos caer a veces en el hábito de solo pedirle a Dios cosas, o su ayuda, sin tomar un momento para, sobre todo, darle gracias por el don de la vida y el don de la fe. Como el Catecismo nos indica: “Al igual que en la oración de petición, todo acontecimiento y toda necesidad pueden convertirse en ofrenda de acción de gracias. Las cartas de san Pablo comienzan y terminan frecuentemente con una acción de gracias, y el Señor Jesús siempre está presente en ella. ‘En todo dado gracias, pues esto es lo que Dios, en Cristo Jesús, quiere de vosotros’; ‘Sed perseverantes en la oración, velando en ella con acción de gracias’. (CIC 2638).

Para nosotros como católicos, la actitud y la virtud de la acción de gracias se expresa de manera especial en la celebración de la Eucaristía. De hecho, la palabra Eucaristía nos llega de la palabra griega eucharistia que significa “acción de gracias”. El Catecismo nos enseña que “Las palabras eucharistie y eulogein recuerdan las bendiciones que “Las palabras eucharistie y eulogein recuerdan las bendiciones judías que proclaman — sobre todo durante la comida — las obras de Dios: la creación, la redención y la santificación” (CIC 1328).

Estos tiempos también nos dan la oportunidad para reflexionar sobre las muchas bendiciones que Dios nos ha dado, y en verdad darle nuestra acción de gracias a Aquel quien nos da todo que es bueno. De hecho, vivir nuestra fe en Cristo significa vivir en un constante espíritu de acción de gracias. Por Cindy Wooden Catholic News Service

El papa dice que la participación en la Misa dominical es esencial para vida, caridad católicas

Por Cindy Wooden Catholic News Service

ROMA — La participación en la Misa dominical y la recepción de la Eucaristía son centrales en la vida de los católicos porque son una expresión clara de la creencia en el sacrificio de Cristo; éstas crean comunidad y motivan la caridad, dijo el papa Benedicto XVI.

“En nuestros tiempos, la gente no ama la palabra ‘sacrificio’, la cual parece pertenecer a otra era y a otra manera de entender la vida. Sin embargo, cuando es entendida apropiadamente, ésta sigue siendo fundamental porque revela cuánto Dios, en Cristo, nos ama”, dijo el papa el 15 de junio en un discurso ante la conferencia pastoral diocesana de Roma.

“Con un discurso nocturno en la Basílica de San Juan de Letrán en Roma, el papa abrió la conferencia de tres días de la diócesis, la cual se enfocó en encontrar maneras de ayudar a los católicos a entender la importancia de la Eucaristía dominical y el rol esencial de la caridad en la vida católica. Las parroquias, los consejos de sacerdotes, los grupos laicos y los ministerios especiales de toda la diócesis llevaron a cabo sesiones preparatorias de escuchar y conferencias para redactar recomendaciones para los 300 delegados que asistían a la reunión de junio.

Aunque la mayoría de los ciudadanos de Roma es bautizada católica, “la fe nunca puede ser asumida porque todas las generaciones necesitan recibir este regalo mediante la proclamación del Evangelio y el conocimiento de la verdad que Cristo nos ha revelado”, dijo el papa.

“Un apoyo a la participación en la Misa dominical es esencial para vida, caridad católicas. Los ciudadanos de Roma es el que en la última instancia tiene la victoria sobre el sufrimiento y la muerte.”

En una nota personal, celebró el próximo mes el quinto aniversario de su visita al Papa Benedicto Xvi en el Obispo de Fort Worth. Quiero expresar mi gratitud y mi más sentida acción de gracias a cada uno en nuestro Diócesis por su fidelidad, su testimonio, y su amor por Cristo y la Iglesia. Les he dicho a varios individuos que no soy la misma persona que llegó aquí hace cinco años. Gracias a ustedes, que en el plan providencial de Dios, me han ayudado a crecer como el pastor y como la persona que el Señor desea que sea. Ha sido un honor y un gran don el ser su servidor y pastor. Que juntos vayamos hacia adelante en nuestra Iglesia local, con un espíritu de humildad y de acción de gracias, a medida que continuemos seguimiento de Nuestro Señor y haciendo su trabajo.

El papa dice que la participación en la Misa dominical es esencial para vida, caridad católicas
1,400 hombres y mujeres de la diócesis se juntan por un fin de semana para dar gracias a Dios y

Renovar su fe

Para María Galván renovar su fe es un acto de gran importancia espiritual.

Ella acudió por segundo año al Congreso católico de renovación carismática para lograr un acercamiento con Dios.

“Vine porque participé el año pasado, me gustó mucho y decidí regresar y tener un encuentro con Dios y renovar mi fe”, dijo Galván, quien pertenece al grupo de oración de la Iglesia San Francisco de Assis, de la ciudad de Grapevine.

Galván, de 31 años, formó parte de un total de 1,400 feligreses que acudieron al evento que se llevó a cabo del 12 al 13 de junio, dentro del gimnasio de la preparatoria Nolan Catholic High School.

Este fue el tercer año que se ha organizado el evento que logró reunir a personas de diversas iglesias de la Diócesis católica de Fort Worth.

“El congreso se hace porque existe la necesidad (de hacerlo) y además por el éxito que ha tenido entre la comunidad hispana; (ellos vienen) a tener un encuentro con Dios y regresan a sus parroquias sintiéndose renovados”, dijo Andrés Aranda, delegado de los Ministerios Hispanos de la diócesis.

Aranda comentó que el Congreso católico de renovación carismática, cuyo tema fue “El amor de Jesús sana mi corazón” ha resultado tan exitoso que podría organizar algo parecido en áreas rurales de la diócesis.

Durante el congreso que inició la mañana del sábado, cientos de personas de diversas edades escucharon la esperada bendición del obispo Kevin Vann, quien, en español, expresó su alegría de ser parte de esta diócesis.

“La presencia de ustedes es una señal de bendiciones; ustedes son mi familia”, dijo el obispo Vann, quien agregó que su vocación ha sido fortalecida en los últimos cinco años que ha estado a cargo de la diócesis católica de Fort Worth.

El obispo comentó que le gustaría ver que el número de participantes incremente cada año.

Después de dar su bendición, salió, debido a otros compromisos que tenía que cumplir.

El padre Ángel Infante celebró la Misa de bienvenida y habló sobre el viaje que realizó la Virgen María a Jerusalén, junto a San José, al darse cuenta que su hijo, Jesús, no había viajado con ellos hacia Nazaret, y lo encontraron en el templo.

“Así como ellos viajaron, ustedes hoy han tenido que viajar desde sus casas para encontrarse aquí con Jesús, dentro de un templo”, dijo el padre Infante.

Durante el congreso, la gente tuvo la oportunidad de rezar, cantar y bailar con el fin de alabar a Dios.

Además de la Misa, los participantes escucharon atentamente al orador invitado del sábado, Roberto Ramírez.

“El encuentro con Cristo debe ser frecuente, algo constante”, dijo Ramírez, quien contó que a los 14 años de edad sufrió de adicción a las drogas y llegó hasta vivir en las calles de su natal República Dominicana, pero la fe en Dios lo rescató de las drogas.

Según Ramírez, encontró un grupo de oración en su país que lo ayudó a cambiar su vida, y ahora se dedica a contar su historia y motivar a los demás a que se acerquen a la religión.

“Tiene razón, el encuentro con Dios debe ser constante”, dijo Galván, quien, junto a los demás participantes, aplaudió con emoción al escuchar el mensaje del orador.

El evento culminó con una Misa el domingo 13 de junio.
Con las bendiciones del obispo Vann ante centenas de feligreses, los padres Fernando Preciado y Amado Vallejo son ordenados al sacerdocio, convirtiéndose en

Pastores del rebaño de Dios

Por Kathy Cribari Hamer / corresponsal

Desde arriba, hacia la derecha: los padres Amado Vallejo y Fernando Preciado salen de la Catedral de St. Patrick, después de su ordenación al sacerdocio. (Foto por Juan Guajardo) • El padre Amado Vallejo, recién ordenado, abraza al padre Tim Thompson de la Parroquia de St. Mark, con quien vivió mientras estudiaba en Denton. Al fondo se ve al padre Alfredo Barba, quien fue ordenado el año pasado y tomó clases intensivas de inglés con el padre Amado. (Foto por Kathy Cribari Hamer) • El obispo Kevin Vann impone las manos al padre Amado. (Foto por Juan Guajardo) • El padre Fernando recibe el sacramento de ordenación del obispo Vann. (Foto por Kathy Cribari Hamer)

El nuevo padre Fernando dijo, “Regresaba de la selva del Amazona en Perú a mi casa porque mi madre se estaba muriendo. Y Dios me concedió que ella estuviera bien en mi cumpleaños. Nací el 5 de junio de 1976, a las 10:30 a.m. “Para mí ha sido una providencia de Dios, un signo maravilloso de su bondad hacia mí. He muerto con Cristo, lo ha hecho mi madre, pero he también resucitado con Él, para hacer algo en este mundo. Ruego a todos en el nombre de Cristo, uníos y mentores prestándoles el buen servicio y también como símbolo de fraternidad. De seguido los nuevos sacerdotes fueron revestidos, según la orden de presbítero, con sacerdotes escogidos y mentores prestando asistencia. Sus vestimentas de ordenación fueron bordadas con rosas e imágenes de la Virgen de Guadalupe y San Juan Diego. Por último, el obispo ungió sus manos con el Cuerpo de Cristo, una familia de Dios. En el momento de la llamada, el comienzo del rito de ordenación, recordó el padre Amado, “estaba muy nervioso; tenía mucha alegría y a la vez es miedo. Dije, ‘Ahora sí llego el momento por cuál ha estudiado toda la vida, por el cual aquí ahora se que Dios me llama, y nuevamente Dios me llamo aquí por la voz de la Iglesia.”

Más allá de la celebración, el padre de Fernando dijo, “Es el compromiso que viene con la ordenación. Pero el momento más significativo de la ordenación fue la imposición de manos por el obispo, su testamento para el Evangelio, su entrega total. Y me dio mucho gusto que ninguno de ellos dijeron que no. Todo mundo dije que sí”.

“Todos nosotros reunidos aquí hoy, el obispo Vann dijo en su homilía, ‘todos nosotros aquí en esta Iglesia, estamos unidos con mucha alegría con sus familias y amigos, y especialmente con aquellos que están en México este día, que no pueden estar con nosotros durante este día de su ordenación sacerdotal.’

“De hecho, este día es para nosotros el día que el Señor ha hecho. Su vocación, su llamada y su respuesta nos enseñan claramente que nuestra fe no conoce fronteras o límites. Somos, de hecho como el Cuerpo de Cristo, una familia de Dios”. Desde la liturgia tradicional y solemnidad de ordenación incluye una presentación de los candidatos, una promesa de obediencia al obispo y una invitación a la oración mientras los candidatos están postrados, y la comunidad canta la Letanía de los santos.

Después de ese ritual fue la imposición de manos por el obispo, el momento específico de la ordenación. Esta acción fue seguida por todos los sacerdotes de la diócesis, imponiendo sus manos como símbolo de fraternidad.

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El padre Amado dijo que la parte más conmovedora de la Misa fue cuando sintió la imposición de manos, diciendo que sentía que su llamada al sacerdocio fue fortaleza, porque Dios lo llamaba con la voz de la Iglesia y de los apóstoles. Cuando el obispo impuso sus manos, lo demás sacerdotes llegaron para imponer sus manos, dijo el padre Amado, “venían a mi mente todos los pasajes del Evangelio, todos los pasajes de la vida de Jesús... cómo Dios nos llama, como nos ama, y cómo nos da su Espíritu Santo; cómo Jesús murió por nosotros y nos dejó la Eucaristía y el sacerdocio. (Tod) eso venía a mi mente, una infinitidad de citas bíblicas. Cada vez que un sacerdote venía a poner sus manos, me inculcaba un pasaje distinto. “Es impresionante para mi ese momento, y yo le decía a Dios, ‘Bueno, aquí estoy para hacer tu voluntad’. Y es un momento de mucha alegría, mucho gozo. Fue el momento gratificante del llamado a la vida de orden en la diócesis de Dallas, en Texas. Desde arriba, hacia la derecha: los padres Amado Vallejo y Fernando Preciado salen de la Catedral de St. Patrick, después de su ordenación al sacerdocio. (Foto por Juan Guajardo) • El padre Amado Vallejo, recién ordenado, abraza al padre Tim Thompson de la Parroquia de St. Mark, con quien vivió mientras estudiaba en Denton. Al fondo se ve al padre Alfredo Barba, quien fue ordenado el año pasado y tomó clases intensivas de inglés con el padre Amado. (Foto por Kathy Cribari Hamer) • El obispo Kevin Vann impone las manos al padre Amado. (Foto por Juan Guajardo) • El padre Fernando recibe el sacramento de ordenación del obispo Vann. (Foto por Kathy Cribari Hamer)
El cardenal DiNardo de Galveston-Houston expresa ‘seria preocupación’ por droga de la que se sabe causa aborto

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El presidente del Comité de actividades a favor de la vida de los obispos de los Estados Unidos expresó ‘seria preocupación’ con respecto a una droga llamada contraceptivo de emergencia y el proceso de aprobación seguido por la Administración de alimentos y droga (FDA).

El cardenal dijo que el título conduce a error si se le llama contraceptivo, pues se sabe que también causa abortos.

En una carta del 2 de junio dirigida a la doctora Margaret Hamburg, comisionada de la FDA, el cardenal Daniel N. DiNardo de Galveston-Houston criticó la audiencia del grupo de consejo ese día con respecto a la droga. Y dijo que la audiencia, llevada a cabo sin San Pablo, ‘que no soy yo, sino que es Cristo quien está actuando en mí’.

‘Mi padre me ha dicho que se necesitan sacerdotes que le den vida a la Iglesia’, dice el padre Fernando. Estas palabras conmovieron mi corazón y pensé que podría ser uno de ellos. Hoy en día, como sacerdote, pido a Dios que me ayude realmente a vivir como un sacerdote para aquellos que estén más necesitados. Y también estoy seguro de que no podré hacerlo sólo, sino con Dios y el apoyo espiritual de las personas, sus oraciones, que (con) ellos podrá lograrlo.

‘Yo creo en vivir cada día en el camino a la santidad’, dijo el padre Amado. ‘Creo que (este viaje) es el desafío para cada padre Amado. “Creo que (este) camino a la santidad”, dijo el padre Fernando. “Si la catedral estaba llena, “sacerdote y cada cristiano”. “Mi primera misa se celebró el mismo día que la ordenación”, Dijo el padre Fernando, “a las 7 p.m. en la Parroquia Holy Name en Fort Worth, de la comunidad donde mis hermanos comúnmente asisten a Misa. Fue muy hermosa; ofrecí la Misa por todas las personas y por mis padres. Hoy estoy celebrando cada momento, y siento, como Evangeli de forma plena cada día, y ir acercando la vida a Cristo”.

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Graduates of Loyola University-sponsored ministry program honored at St. Michael

By Joan Kurkowski-Gillen

Correspondent

Before walking up to the altar of St. Michael Church in Bedford to accept well-earned academic credentials, graduates of the Loyola University Institute for Ministry Extension (LIMEX) received another special reminder of their efforts to become better lay ministers, teachers, and followers of Christ. Each member of the LIMEX class of 2010 from the Diocese of Fort Worth was handed a white minis-try towel depicting Jesus washing the feet of a disciple.

“We give these towels to our graduates as a symbol of what they are called to be,” explained Cecelia Bennett, associate director of the distance-learning program based in New Orleans. “It’s a testament to the journey they walked together as a learning group.”

Addressing worshippers attending the May 13 commencement exercise and Mass of Thanksgiving, the administrator said Loyola University likes to think of the apostles as the first LIMEX students who got their towels at the Last Supper when Jesus washed their feet. Like those early disciples, today’s LIMEX participants learned to pray, reflect, and discern together.

“Jesus at the Last Supper modeled what he wanted them to do,” she added, continuing the comparison. “He wanted to make the center of ministry service, respect, and gratitude for others. These towels symbolize what you’re taking as you move from the world of your learning group to the wider Church and marketplace.”

LIMEX students come from a variety of backgrounds and expe-riences. Graduate Monica Collins of Aledo was firmly entrenched in the world of finance when she first felt the tug to do something different.

“I was in bank management for 20 years and that’s where I thought my path was,” explained the Holy Redeemer parishioner who volunteered as a catechist and finance committee chairman. “I was at a Montserrat retreat when I felt a strong call to ministry.”

Calling the three-and-half-year effort to earn her certificate in religious education “a beautiful and spiritual journey,” Collins said her involvement with LIMEX best describes more than just an academic exercise.

“What I didn’t realize is how deeply it would affect my faith walk,” she continued. “I read some of the great authors and now have a greater understanding of our roots, where we’re headed, and what our role is in lay ministry.”

Today, Collins is the director of religious education at Holy Redeemer.

The five other LIMEX gradu-ates from the Diocese of Fort Worth include Lorraine Miller of St. Matthew Church in Arlington, Master of Pastoral Studies; Virginia Marie Rodriguez from Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Fort Worth, Master of Religious Education; Blanca Ramirez Levesque, also from St. Matthew, certificate in religious education; and Ana McBride of Holy Family Church in Fort Worth, certificate in pastoral studies; and Peter Nguyen of Christ the King Church in Fort Worth, certificate in pastoral studies.

Started in 1983 in response to the Second Vatican Council’s universal call to ministry and the changing demographic patterns in the Church, LIMEX provides Catholic lay people with the op-pportunity to pursue professional training and education within their own localities. Available in numerous dioceses across the United States and Canada, the extension program offers fully accredited graduate degrees and certificate programs in both religious education and pastoral studies from Loyola University New Orleans. A LIMEX-certified facilitator leads the 12-course curriculum and students remain with the same classmates throughout the program.

Each learning group, consisting of individuals with varied interests and goals, sets its own time and meeting schedule. Participants are required to take 10 core courses in theology, ministry, and religious education. Two additional self-study electives are chosen from a list of focus areas that include religious education, pastoral life, Christian spirituality, youth ministry, small Christian community formation, marketplace ministry, religion and ecology, and Hispanic ministry.

The challenging 36-hour cur-riculum fosters ministerial pro-ficiency by challenging students through rigorous academic study, theological reflection, and critical thinking. Depending on the learning group’s pace, courses normally take three-and-a-half to four years to complete.

Thirteen individuals initially enrolled in the latest LIMEX class in 2006. More than half the membership withdrew over the years due to family and work problems.

Those who stayed the course were exposed to up-to-date in-formation and views concerning Church matters, according to Becky Lucas, the facilitator of the Fort Worth learning group who guided participants through the process, and a LIMEX graduate from the Diocese of Raleigh, North Carolina.

“It’s all very pertinent Catholic material,” explained Lucas. “The curriculum is augmented by video-les and lectures from professors who are experts in their field.”

Lucas called the education “very broadening” with students contributing their own percep-tions and perspective to group discussions. During the years of study, participants met at St. Michael Church and later at Most Blessed Sacrament in Arlington.

“It’s a comfortable, convenient way to attain educational goals and do it in an environment with some sense of informality,” she said.

Ana McBride, who works in adult faith formation at Holy Fam-ily Church, always wanted to learn more in-depth theology.

“But the facilities weren’t avail-able to do that,” said the RCIA volunteer. “I thought I had done enough through the diocese but then I wanted to learn more. I wanted to discover what makes me Catholic.”

LIMEX reading selections and group discussions provided answers to that question and she now feels better equipped to help others on their faith journey.

“You get tired doing homework and reading, but three-and-a-half years went by quickly because it was so interesting,” she admits.

“I feel fortunate that I was given the opportunity to do this and I recommend it to others who feel God’s spirit calling them.”

After that night I got a new DVD player, but I did not take the computer out of my room. I want to talk to God as much as I can. Maybe someday He really will contact me!

Would it frighten me to receive an instant message from God? Absolutely not.

I wouldn’t miss it for the world.

Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. An-drew Parish, has five children, Meredith, John, Julie, Andrew, and Abby. In May 2009 her column received the second place award for best family life column from the Catholic Press Associa-tion for the second time in two years at the Catholic Media Convention in Anaheim. In 2005, Kathy’s column was recognized with the first place award in the same category.

Hamer…

FROM PAGE 13

writer. “I sat up and dashed open both eyes, (as though that would make me hear better). I thought—what God is telling you.’”

Father Amado Vallejo said at his ordination they called him for-ward, and he felt joy, happiness and peace. “Once again,” Fr. Amado said, “God was calling me through the voice of the Church.”

Deacon Khiem Van Nguyen escaped from Vietnam in August, 1982. He attended Mass one morn-ing and sailed away that night. “On a small boat in the ocean, I talked to Heavenly Mother that I would become a priest if I might come to America.”

Through the years I have heard of profound messages from God, and they always come to people who have prepared themselves to hear his voice, the right books, studied the right words.

Those people pray rather than spending time — even sleeping time — on activities that might not pull us away from God, but don’t do anything to push us closer to him.

Reading and movie watching are both acceptable nighttime po-tions. But there is another way we can achieve the same thing: prayer. Some people pray the Rosary at bedtime (if you didn’t finish it before. It would have been an in-teresting way for the Lord to send me a message: type a letter on my computer. Make a lot of noise.

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Deacon Joseph Petta said “I knew I was supposed to be a Ro-man Catholic priest before I was a Catholic. I was watching TV — in 1997 — and I heard a voice in my head. It said: ‘Anna M. McBride will be your Church needs you.’

Father Fernando Preciado, newly ordained priest said, “... many brothers ... since I arrived from Mexico, made me feel that the Scripture was fulfilled, ‘he was able to drop everything for the Lord, will receive a hun-dredfold.”

Deacon Richard Kirkham ac-knowledged that he did everything possible to ignore a call to the priesthood. “I began making deals with God ... if I could just have one more year in my job. ... But God speaks through the community, and his voice came through a woman: ‘it’s time ... to listen to what God is telling you.’”

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Reading and movie watching are both acceptable nighttime po-tions. But there is another way we can achieve the same thing: prayer. Some people pray the Rosary at bedtime (if you didn’t finish it the angels will) and some quietly place themselves in God’s hands. They don’t count sheep: they talk to the Shepherd.

The other night, even though I went to sleep with an old movie, I still woke up with the thought of my Heavenly Father. I remem-bered the sounds of the night before. It would have been an in-teresting way for the Lord to send me a message: type a letter on my computer. Make a lot of noise.

After that night I got a new DVD player, but I did not take the computer out of my room. I want to talk to God as much as I can. Maybe someday He really will contact me!

Would it frighten me to receive an instant message from God? Absolutely not.

I wouldn’t miss it for the world.

Kathy Cribari Hamer, a member of St. An-drew Parish, has five children, Meredith, John, Julie, Andrew, and Abby. In May 2009 her column received the second place award for best family life column from the Catholic Press Associa-tion for the second time in two years at the Catholic Media Convention in Anaheim. In 2005, Kathy’s column was recognized with the first place award in the same category.

Dioscan
Youth Ministry, the tournament will offer first, second, and third place trophies, based on Youth Ministry, the tournament will offer first, second, and third place trophies, based on

Catholic.org or call (972) 938-5433.

The Diocese of Fort Worth is seeking a full-time operations support clerk at the Catholic Center. Principal duties include providing excellent customer support for the Catholic Center. Qualifications include practicing Catholic, high school diploma, and experience in customer service (phone, e-mail, etc.). On-the-job training will be provided. Send résumé to Jessicasey@diocesefw.org or call (800) 221-1807.

To Report Abuse
Call the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services) at (800) 254-5245.

To Report Misconduct
If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct by anyone who has been accused or convicted of a sex crime, call Judy Loughlin assistance coordinator, (817) 560-2452 ext. 261 or e-mail her at joclache@nycatholic.org.

Or call The Sexual Abuse Hotline (817) 560-2452 ext. 261.

The sixth annual Catholic Pro-Life Banquet, sponsored by the St. Augustine Men’s Purity Group, will be held Saturday, Sept. 25 at 6:30 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 1118 East Bowie Blvd., Irving. There will be an auction, food, entertainment, and a raffle. More information is available from Judy Locke, victim advocate, at (817) 927-5383 or Doreen Rose at Doreenrose@diocesefw.org.

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With the blessing of Bishop Vann before hundreds of people, Fathers Fernando Preciado and Amada Vallejo are ordained to the priesthood becoming Shepherds of God’s flock

The already distinctive date of Father Fernando Preciado and Father Amado Vallejo’s ordination was uniquely important to Fr. Fernando in two additional ways. It was the 34th anniversary of his birth, and five years since the death, “rather, the resurrection” of his mother.

The new Fr. Fernando said, “I was returning from the Amazon jungle in Peru to my house because my mother was dying. And God granted me that she was well on my birthday. I was born on June 5, 1976 at 10:30 a.m.

“For me this has been a providence of God, a wonderful sign of his goodness to me. I have died with Christ, as my mother has done, but I’ve also been raised with Him, to do something in this world. I pray to God through my mother for the opportunity to get something good done.”

The two newest priests in the diocese, Fr. Fernando and Fr. Amado, came to the United States from their native Mexico (Fr. Fernando from Nochistlan, Zacatecas, and Fr. Amado from Oaxaca), and in the ordination homily, Bishop Kevin Vann invoked the Patrons of the Americas. “I pray especially, we all pray today, that the mother of the Lord — Our Lady of Guadalupe, Our Lady of the Americas — lead you always to her son, the Good Shepherd, the Great High Priest.

“I am here as your mother,” the bishop quoted Mary. “Do not fear.”

The traditional, solemn liturgy of ordination included a presentation of the candidates, a promise of obedience to the bishop, and an invitation to prayer, through which the candidates lay prostrate, while the community sang the litany of the saints.

Following that ritual was the laying on of hands by the bishop, the singular moment of ordination. This action was followed by all the priests of the diocese, laying on hands in a symbol of brotherhood.

The new priests were then vested for the order of presbyter, with honored priests and mentors assisting them. Their ordination vestments were similarly embroidered with roses, and pictures of Our Lady of Guadalupe and St. Juan Diego. Finally the bishop anointed their hands with holy chrism.

Vesting priest for Fr. Fernando was Father Juan Rivero of St. Frances Cabrini Parish in Granbury. “God placed him in my life as a teacher,” Fr. Fernando said. And vesting Fr. Amado were Monsignor Charles King of Immaculate Conception Parish in Denton, Father Hector Medina of St. Matthew Parish in Arlington, and Father Domingo Romero, OFM Cap., of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fort Worth.

“I chose these three priests,” Fr. Amado said, “because of their life witness, love of the Gospel, dedicated service and also because they can accompany and guide me,” Fr. Amado said. “I chose them because of their zeal and commitment to the Gospel. It made me so happy that none of them refused! Everyone said ‘yes.’”

— Fr. Fernando Preciado

Left to right: Newly ordained Father Amado Vallejo embraces Father Tim Thompson of St. Mark, whom he lived with while studying in Denton. Watching is close friend Fr. Alfredo Barba, who was ordained last year and took intensive English classes with Fr. Amado. (Photo by Katrin Canas Hamer) • Bishop Kevin Vann lays hands on Fr. Amado. (Photo by Juan Guajardo) • Fr. Fernando receives the sacrament of ordination from Bishop Vann. (Photo by Katrin Canas Hamer)

Good Newsmakers

Story by Kathy Cribari Hamer / correspondent

“Today as a priest, I ask God to help me really live as a priest for those who need it most.”

— Fr. Fernando Preciado

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Inside... This issue of the NTC

1,400 men and women attended a Spanish charismatic retreat hosted by the diocese and led by dynamic speakers. Find out what participants have to say about the popular retreat. 10

Ann Healey, Director of Permanent Deacon Formation for the diocese, retires after 26 years and forming four classes of permanent deacons. Read about the impact she’s had on others. 16

The parishioners and former pastors of Sacred Heart Parish in Seymour celebrate their Czechoslovakian heritage and 100 years of faith with an anniversary Mass and festivities. 18