FDA's move toward approving over-the-counter sales of Plan B criticized
By Nancy Frazier O'Brien
WASHINGTON (CNS) — A move by the Food and Drug Administration toward making the morning-after pill available over the counter could damage women’s health and put more pressure on pharmacists conscientiously opposed to dispensing the drug, according to the U.S. bishops’ pro-life spokeswoman.

The FDA announced July 31 that it would work with Duramed, a subsidiary of Barr Pharmaceuticals that manufactures the drug marketed as Plan B, to develop a “framework for moving emergency contraception medication to over-the-counter status” for women 18 and older.

Deirdre McQuade, director of planning and information for the bishops’ Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, criticized the FDA’s decision in a July 31 statement.

“Making this powerful, abortifacient drug available without a doctor’s oversight could place women and their newly conceived children at risk,” she said.

“Women for whom the drug is prescribed will have no ready source of medical advice or support. Women for whom the drug is never intended will have easy access to a pill that protects against conception up to 72 hours after unprotected sex. But even its proponents admit that it works both before and after conception,” McQuade said, adding that many women are “unaware of [the pills’] abortifacient action.”

“As displaced Lebanese return home, CRS coordinates assistance
By Cindy Wooden
ROME (CNS) — As those displaced by the fighting in Lebanon returned to their hometowns, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and other international aid agencies were sending assessment teams throughout southern Lebanon and were meeting to coordinate their efforts.

David Snyder, spokesman for CRS in Beirut, said in a telephone interview Aug. 17 that “90 percent of the people” housed in shelters during the monthlong fighting “left within the first 48 hours of the cease-fire,” which began Aug. 14.

“Many shelters are down to a handful of people,” said Snyder. CRS is the U.S. bishops’ international relief and development agency.

After providing shelter, food, clothing, and medicine in the shelters, CRS and the other aid agencies are shifting their focus to meeting the needs of those returning, many of whom are going back to houses destroyed or damaged, without electricity and clean water.

“Everyone is trying to figure out what to do next,” Snyder said. “Close coordination is essential” so that efforts are not duplicated and “no one is left out in the shuffle.”

While CRS is working in partnership with Caritas Lebanon, the largest local humanitarian organization in Lebanon is not participating in the coordination efforts.

The Shiite Muslim movement Hezbollah, in addition to having a militia and a political wing, for see CRS has assisted…, p. 22

Pope prays that Mideast cease-fire will hold
CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI prayed that the U.N.-brokered cease-fire agreement approved by Israel and Lebanon would hold and that humanitarian aid quickly would reach those in need.

“Recent developments let us hope that the clashes will cease and that humanitarian assistance for the populations will be assured quickly and effectively,” the pope said Aug. 13, about 17 hours before the cease-fire went into effect.

The U.N. Security Council see Pope prays…, p. 22

A year after hurricanes, Southern dioceses still trying to recover
By Carol Zimmermann
WASHINGTON (CNS) — Southern dioceses from Texas to Alabama are still reeling from the swath of destruction left by last year’s hurricanes Katrina and Rita.

The Archdiocese of New Orleans and the Diocese of Biloxi, Mississippi, both hit hard by Hurricane Katrina Aug. 29, have taken steps toward recovery, but full-scale restoration is still a long way off as thousands of residents no longer have a place to live, churches and schools remain damaged, and community service programs are no longer operational.

The coastal area of the Archdiocese of Mobile, Alabama, is also in the midst of recovery. Church structures have been repaired, but residents of the small fishing village of Bayou La Batre, Alabama, are still living in trailers and trying to salvage what they can from destroyed homes and fishing livelihoods.

Farther west at the Texas-Louisiana border, the impact of Hurricane Rita, which slammed the area Sept. 24, is evident in ongoing repair work. In the dioceses of Houma-Thibodaux, Louisiana, and Beaumont, there has been a flurry of repairs of homes, schools, and churches, but in a storm-devastated area of the Diocese of Lake Charles, Louisiana, repairs are only just beginning.

“The needs are still as great as ever,” said Margaret Dubuisson, communication director for Catholic Charities in New Orleans. “If anything, the needs are greater as people come home or attempt to come home.”

The agency continues to provide immediate relief with food, medical care, and shelter, but it is also inundated with long-term recovery needs from counseling to housing. The agency has been involved in getting destroyed structures up and running.

See One Year…, p. 18

Mass at Mountain Pass

MOUNTAIN PASS — Father Patrick Hungerbuehler celebrates Mass during the annual shepherd festival on the Gemmi Pass between the Bernese Oberland and the Valais in Switzerland July 30. The annual festival is an opportunity for shepherds and farmers from both sides of the pass to meet and socialize. (CNS photo/Pascal Lauener, Reuters)
Bishop Vann announces the diocese will not appeal court decision to release portions of seven priests’ files

He characterized the decision as ‘a turning point in the journey toward healing and reconciliation’

When I arrived here in the Diocese of Fort Worth a year ago, I inherited a vibrant and dynamic local Church, a dedicated group of priests, deacons, and religious, as well as faithful parishioners. I have also encountered other people’s pain and suffering from sexual abuse that has yet to heal. That pain was endured by young Catholics years ago and exacerbated through past decisions within our Church.

I wish to begin by offering my personal and heartfelt apology to those who have suffered abuse by members of the clergy. It is a sin — and a crime. In fact, such abuse is doubly painful for anyone who serves the Church — now operating under the Charter’s stringent requirements — we could have acted more promptly, forthrightly, and with greater compassion to those who came forward with allegations. In that review it also became clear to me that any ambiguity with regard to the status of these seven priests must be resolved. That is why in one of these cases, that of Philip Magaldi, I am further announcing today that I have revoked all of his priestly faculties.

As some matters are still pending in the courts, I am prevented from commenting specifically on any of these cases or on the specific details inside these seven priests’ personnel files. However, it is my fervent hope that my decision not to appeal the Court’s ruling will mark a turning point for the Diocese of Fort Worth and for our community at large.

Now, I want to say a few words to our priests here in this diocese. You have been truly faithful to your vows and extraordinarily dedicated in your devotion to your mission. Cases such as these seven do not reflect in any way on your strength of character or your faithful exercise of priestly ministry.

Also, to Catholics throughout the diocese, I wish to express my appreciation for your faithfulness and loyalty throughout these years. I share with you the desire for justice for those who have suffered and the desire for healing and reconciliation for us all.

Finally, I again ask that anyone who has either witnessed or has suffered sexual abuse by anyone who serves the Church to come forward so that we can continue the healing process.

The Charter committed Bishops to the following:

- Zero tolerance of any sexual abuse of minors;
- The removal from ministry of a priest or deacon when even a single act of abuse of a minor has been established;
- Stringent reporting procedures to church and civil authorities following allegations of abuse;
- Openness and transparency in the Church’s response;
- A strong sexual abuse prevention program to reduce the likelihood of such abuses occurring in the future.

In the Diocese of Fort Worth have been found to be in full compliance with the Charter through three independent audits conducted by the Gavin Group.

Our diocese implemented Called to Protect, a comprehensive state-of-the-art sexual abuse prevention program that applies to children, youth, clergy, employees, and volunteers who serve in the diocese.

What our Church has learned is that we must be ever vigilant and each and every one of us must truly live our Faith. Which brings me to my decision that I am announcing today.

Several weeks ago, Judge Len Wade of the Tarrant County District Court, after carefully reviewing the personnel records of the seven priests accused of sexual abuse of minors, ordered that portions of those personnel records be released to the public.

In reading through these records it is evident to me that as a Church — now operating under the Charter’s stringent requirements — we could have acted more promptly, forthrightly, and with greater compassion to those who came forward with allegations. In that review it also became clear to me that any ambiguity with regard to the status of these seven priests must be resolved.

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Finally, I again ask that anyone who has either witnessed or has suffered sexual abuse by anyone who serves the Church to come forward so that we can continue the healing process.
The impounded prayers spoken by Father Assaad ElBacha during an Aug. 2 worship service captured just how serious the conflict between Israel and Lebanon has become for members of his congregation. Kneeling before the altar at Our Lady of Lebanon Church in Lewisville, the pastor didn’t merely ask for peace. He begged for it.

“We pray for our country here and Lebanon,” says the Lewisville resident, who moved to Texas 29 years ago. “I hope God gives the people strength. We’re praying for everybody. I hope God answers our prayers.”

To help them cope with the continuing crisis, Fr. ElBacha encourages his flock to pray, to remain tolerant of others, and to appreciate life in America. “We’re all upset about what’s going on in Lebanon, but what can we do? Nothing,” the priest says, acknowledging the frustration many in his congregation feel. “We must turn our face to God and pray.”

In his homilies, Fr. ElBacha reminds former residents of Lebanon not to bring the troubles of the Middle East to this country. “As leader of the church, I try to teach them to pray and have respect for this country,” says the pastor, himself a native of Lebanon. “As immigrant people, we left our country to seek freedom, practice our faith, and have a better life. We don’t need to bring the conflict of the Middle East to this beautiful country. The United States opened its heart and arms to us.”

When the fighting started, 25 parish families were vacationing with relatives in Lebanon. All were safely evacuated by the U.S. government. “We’re also very thankful to America for sending a ship loaded with desperately needed supplies of food, medicines, and other aid,” Fr. ElBacha added.

Described by its pastor as traditional and conservative, Our Lady of Lebanon Church attracts Christian immigrants from Syria, Iraq, Jordan, India, and South Africa, as well as some Texans who are Roman Catholic. Established in 1993, the Eastern-rite church is part of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon of Los Angeles. The Maronite Eastern Catholic Church traces its origin to the work of St. Maron who founded a monastery east of Antioch in the fourth century. Later, monks moved to the mountains in what is today Lebanon. Despite Arab invasions and persecution, Maronites have preserved the teachings of their faith without schism or heresy. Like other rites within the Catholic Church, they possess their own hierarchy, spiritual heritage, and liturgical calendar but remain in communion with the pope, the successor of St. Peter. All rites of the Catholic Church are equally valid.

Every Catholic person can participate in an Eastern or Western rite. It fulfills the Sunday obligation,” Fr. ElBacha explains. “We share the same dogma and faith.”

Today Maronites make up 17 percent of the population of Lebanon, and, by law, the president of that country is always a Maronite. Lebanon is the only Christian country in the Middle East, and church communities around the world are reaching out to help victims of the conflict.

A special collection Aug. 5 and 6 at the Lewisville parish will benefit Caritas Internationalis—a federation of 162 Catholic social service, relief, and humanitarian organizations now working in the war-torn area.

“In South Lebanon, on the [Israeli] border, we have many villages that are Catholic,” the pastors says, referring to the area hardest hit by air strikes. “Two dioceses are Catholic in south Lebanon, and those bishops have made an appeal to the dioceses here to help their people.”

In a celebration of unity and support, Fort Worth Bishop Kevin Vann visited Our Lady of Lebanon Church on July 22 where he concelebrated the Maronite liturgy with Fr. ElBacha. Bishop Vann returned again Aug. 13 to celebrate a Mass for peace on the feast day of the Assumption of Mary in the parish. Speaking of Bishop Vann’s July visit, Fr. ElBacha said, “He arrived without fanfare, a caring shepherd who came to minister to his flock and bring comfort to a worried and grieving community.”

During his July 22 homily, Bishop Vann told Our Lady of Lebanon parishioners that he was familiar with the Maronite Rite and their spiritual leader Bishop Robert Shaheen of the Eparchy of Our Lady of Lebanon.

“He also expressed an awareness and appreciation that throughout our 400-year history, Maronites always have remained faithful to Rome and the pope, and have never strayed from adherence to true Catholic doctrine,” Fr. ElBacha added.

Bishop Vann’s demonstration of concern comforted parishioners like Giro Constantine, who is the only member of his large family living outside Lebanon. The 28-year-old stays in contact with his parents and siblings through e-mail. “Coming together in prayer helps everybody,” said Constantine, after attending the prayer service. “This is what we need to do to deal with the situation.”
Rebuilding: When Your Commitment…

Bishop Vann
to celebrate All Schools Liturgy
Aug. 30

Intense planning is underway for the largest gathering of Catholic school students in the history of the Diocese of Fort Worth — an All Schools Liturgy, set for 11 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 27, at the Worth Convention Center Arena in downtown Fort Worth.

The All Schools Liturgy is a school community event in the diocese — some 6,000 students and 600 school staff members — bring together one faith community under the event’s theme, “We Are Called.” Bishop Kevin Vann will lead the special liturgy, which will be concelebrated by many of the priests of the diocese.

In keeping with the theme, each student and staff member will be asked to write down one way in which they are called to make a difference in the world. These expressions of service will be put in a common basket and offered during the Mass. “This is an excellent oppor-
tunity for our students to understand that they are a vital part of a larger Catholic com-
munity,” said Catholic Schools Superintendent Don Miller. “We want to effectively demonstrate for them the interconnectedness of their schools in the church’s mission,” he added.

The Remnant Band is to perform before and after the liturgy. For more information about this Catholic schools event, contact Tesy Ross at (817) 560-5300, ext. 280 or visit the diocesan Web site at www.fwdioc.org.

Bishop’s Pro-life Banquet to be held Oct. 21 in Grapevine

All are invited to attend the Bishop’s Annual Pro-life Banquet, an event benefiting Catholics Respect Life, a pro-life ministry in the Diocese of Fort Worth. The banquet will be held Oct. 21 at 5:30 p.m. at the Embassy Suites Outdoor World, I-20, 2401 Bass Pro Drive in Grapevine.

The featured keynote speaker will be Father Bernard Murphy, CFR, who served as the superior of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal religious order, based in New York City. Fr. Murphy, seen regularly on Eternal Word Television Network’s “Parables” program, and other members of his religious order will be at abortion centers in New York City, offering care and services to women in need. Fr. Murphy has conducted retreats and parish missions throughout the world.

A silent auction will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Tables of ten may be reserved at a cost of $3,000, with the option to become an event sponsor, with Bishop Kevin Vann, Dallas Bishop Charles Grannaham, or with Fr. Murphy. Tables also may be reserved at a cost of $400; individual seats may be reserved for $45 each.

For more information or to re-
serve seats by the Oct. 9 deadline, call (817) 623-2450.

Partners in Ministry ses-
sions beginning

Partners in Ministry, a nine-month Catholic study and spiri-
tuality program facilitated by Sisters Kay Kolb and Pat Miller, SSDN, is underway at two loca-
tions in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

The monthly sessions began Aug. 19 at St. Vincent de Paul Church, 540 S. Cherry Lane in Fort Worth.

A silent auction will be held from 5:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., dinner will be served at 6:30 p.m. Tables of ten may be reserved at a cost of $3,000, with the option to become an event sponsor, with Bishop Kevin Vann, Dallas Bishop Charles Grannaham, or with Fr. Murphy. Tables also may be reserved at a cost of $400; individual seats may be reserved for $40 each.

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Announcing special Forming

Bishop’s annual outreach to be held Oct. 21 in Grapevine

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People and Events

Rachel’s Vineyard retreat, Sept. 15-17, to offer post-abortion healing

A Rachel’s Vineyard retreat, designed to offer healing for women and men struggling with the psychological and spiritual pain of abortion, will be held Sept. 15-17 in Fort Worth.

Rachel’s Vineyard retreats offer a safe, non-judgmental, and supportive environment to those struggling with abortion’s aftermath. The retreat team provides the confidentiality needed to help participants work through feelings of anger, shame, guilt, and grief, so that they may be open to experiencing the healing love and mercy of God. Mothers, fathers, grandparents, and former participants in the abortion industry — anyone who has been hurt by abortion — are welcome to attend.

For more information or to register, call the confidential help line at (817) 924-4757; e-mail to forgive@rachelsvineyard.org or visit the Rachel’s Vineyard Web site at www.rachelsvineyard.org. All inquiries are strictly confidential.

Ministry invites those距andoned from church to ‘Come Home’

Come Home ministry extends an open invitation for Catholics who are currently disconnected from the church to consider “coming home” to their Catholic faith. Sessions will begin Tuesday, Sept. 26, in the Pastoral Center at St. Andrew Church, 3717 Stadium Drive in Fort Worth. Participants will meet from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. each Tuesday evening through Oct. 2.

The parish’s Come Home team is composed of parishioners, some of whom have themselves returned to the church, parish staff, and members of the clergy. Contact Alice Curran at 817-927-5383 oraccurate@standrew.org for more information.

Golden anniversary celebration for married couples planned

A diocesan celebration honoring couples blessed with 50 years or more of married life will be held Sunday, Oct. 15, at St. Catherine of Siena Parish, located at 861 Wildwood Lane in Grapevine. Bishop Kevin Vann will preside at the special Mass which will begin at 2:30 p.m. in the church.

Couples who have been married for 50 or more years who want to be part of this special celebration are invited to register with their parish office and to give their names, address, and date of marriage. Parishioners are asked to process with a presentation to the diocesan Family Life Office prior to Aug. 30.

For more information, contact the diocesan Family Life office at 817-360-3300 or e-mail to djohns@fwdioc.org or sorden@fwdioc.org.

Czech Heritage Day to be held, Sept. 16

The Czech Heritage Day, celebrating the 96th anniversary of the SPST Lodge #92, will be held Saturday, Sept. 16, at 4 p.m. at the National Hall, 3316 Roberts Ct. in Fort Worth.

Program highlights will include accordion music from 4 p.m. to 5 p.m.; the Memory Makers Czech Choir from 5 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.; and a Parade of Costumes at 6:30 p.m. Music will be provided by the Jolde Mikula Orchestra from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. The Youth Kitchen Club will be open from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

The cost of admission is $8; children ages 12 and under are admitted free with a paid adult. A traditional Czech dinner will be served from 4 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. for the cost of the dinner is $8 for adults, and $4 for children ages 12 and under.

For more information, call (817) 646-5198.

Tea party to celebrate gifts of being female, Oct. 8

A tea party, offered especially for girls ages 10 to 13, and their mothers, grandmothers, or other female friends and relatives, will be held Oct. 8 from noon to 3:30 p.m. at The Catholic Center, 800 West Loop 820 South in West Fort Worth.

The Sunday afternoon program, sponsored by the diocesan offices of Family Life and Natural Family Planning, is an opportunity for women across the generations to celebrate the gifts of being female. The Catholic Center will be transformed into a tea house, where tea or soda and a light lunch will be served, and female speakers will share personal stories of celebrating their femininity and the gifts received from God to function in this role. Discussion from a faith-based perspective will concentrate on the physical, emotional, and psychological changes that occur in young women during the adolescent years.

“If you are a parent looking for a way to talk about these subjects with your daughter who is approaching adulthood,” says Deacon Dick Stojak, director of the Family Life Office, “perhaps this is the opportunity for both of you to listen, talk, and share your thoughts and feelings. It is our hope that by sharing this afternoon, both mothers and daughters will better apprehend themselves and each other because of who they are as women, and come to understand and expect the respect needed for their role in God’s plan for creation.”

The cost is $12.50 per person. Space is limited, so reservations are required. For reservations, contact Kathy Stojak at (817) 773-8906 or Nancy Novak at (817) 656-9633.

Reunion for former St. Joseph Hospital employees set for Sept. 30

All former employees, physicians, staff, nurses, and allied health students, volunteers, and friends of St. Joseph Hospital are invited to attend the annual reunion picnic Saturday, Sept. 30, from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Arts Pavilion in Trinity Park in Fort Worth. Come to share old friends and share your experiences,” suggest picnic organizers.

Participants are asked to bring their own chairs and drinks, and a chair if desired.

For more information, call Connie Dankersreiter at (817) 244-3311 or e-mail to ck@swbell.net.

St. Catherine of Siena’s Autumnfest planned for Sept. 23

St. Catherine of Siena Parish, 1705 E. Peter Colony Road in Carrollton, will host its 20th annual Autumnfest Saturday, Sept. 23. The family-fun event with a carnival-like atmosphere will be held from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For early risers, a 5K and a one-mile Fun Run will kick off the day, with registration to take place from 7:45 a.m. to 8 a.m. Later, all are invited to come enjoy games, arts and crafts, a silent auction, music, entertainment, and great food, according to festival organizers.

For more information, call the parish office at (972) 492-2537 or visit online at www.stcatherine.org. St. Catherine of Siena’s Autumnfest is planned for Sept. 23.

Nolan Catholic to host alumnus barbecue Sept. 15

Nolan Catholic High School will host its annual reunion barbecue Alumnus BBQ from 5 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Sept. 15, at Hartnett Arena, located on the Nolan campus at 4501 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth.

The event includes a full-service barbecue dinner catered by Dickey’s Barbecue Pit in Coppell, as well as activities for children and guided school tours. Homecoming T-shirts will be awarded to the first 100 alumni to arrive.

All Nolan Catholic graduates and their families are invited to attend the barbecue and the following football game at no charge. Reservations are requested by Sept. 1. Contact Julie Greene, alumni/special events coordinator, at (817) 457-2920 ext. 1557 or via e-mail at alumni@nolancatholic.org.

SERVICE AWARDS — Members of the Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas — Diocese of Fort Worth, No. 498, have recently received service awards for collecting eyeglasses for Lions Club International. The donated eyeglasses are to be repaired by LensCrafters and then donated to the needy. Accepting award certificates are (l. to r., front) Carlyc Pustejovsky, Payton Pustejovsky, Hallory Ballew, (back) Morgan Ballew, Sherry Pustejovsky, and Alyssa Ballew. (Photo by James Bezkod)
Holocaust Museum Houston

to host Rwandan exhibit

“Through the Eyes of Children: The Rwanda Project,” a photo exhibition offering stunning images of survival and a new beginning for children from Rwanda in the years since the 1994 genocide, will be on view at Holocaust Museum Houston, 5401 Caroline Street, in Houston’s Museum District, from Sept. 15 through Feb. 18, 2007.

What is so unusual about the exhibit is that all of the photos were taken by children — survivors and orphans of the Rwandan genocide — most of whom never saw a camera before the project started. A special opening reception will be held at 6:30 p.m., Wednesday, Sept. 13, with Rwanda Project coordinator and award-winning photojournalist Kristen Ashburn, who has been working with the children in Rwanda and who will talk about her experiences there. Admission is free.

For more information about Holocaust Museum Houston, call (713) 942-8000 or visit www.hmh.org.

LIMEX class about to form; few openings left

Only a few openings remain for those wanting to enroll in the Loyola Institute for Ministry Extension (LIMEX) graduate studies program, beginning this fall in the Diocese of Fort Worth.

Through this extension program, administered by Loyola University of New Orleans, students may earn certification or a master’s degree in the field of religious education or pastoral studies. The fully accredited Catholic school teachers and administrators; and members of the clergy who are interested in continuing their theological and ministerial education.

For more information, contact Terri Casey at (817) 560-2452 ext. 260, e-mail to casey@fwdioc.org, or visit online at www.loyno.edu/lim or www.fwdioc.org.

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September 14-17
September 21-24

Other Retreats
Sept. 29-Oct. 1 Divorced/Separated/Widowed
October 5-8 Lawyers & Spouses
October 16-20 Dallas Priests
October 20-22 Physicians & Spouses
October 26-29 Dallas Deacons

We have other dates available for any other groups wishing to have a retreat or group meetings.

A retreat is a chance to get away from the routine of your life and look at how God has loved you. It’s a chance to look at how you have responded to that love and how you will respond to it in the future. The Spiritual Exercises are not group-oriented but aimed at personal renewal and growth. The conferences are given to stimulate and facilitate personal reflection and prayer. Therefore, an atmosphere of silence is essential to the retreat.

Msgr. Charles King to mark 50th jubilee with Habitat for Humanity project

Msgr. Charles King, pastor of Immaculate Conception Church (ICC) in Denton for the past six years, is preparing for a special milestone. This December, the much-loved spiritual leader will celebrate 50 years of priesthood. In typical altruistic fashion, he is choosing to mark the occasion through a parish service project involving the sponsorship and building of a house with the Habitat for Humanity organization in Denton County.

Having recently completed work on a new church building for the growing number of families who call ICC home, Msgr. King’s hope is to involve the parish in a variety of service work, reaching out to others in the larger, Denton-area community. He has a special interest in partnership with Habitat for Humanity, an organization that helps low-income families to build and purchase their own homes.

Through involvement with the Denton Rotary Club, of which Msgr. King is a former president, he met a representa
tive from Habitat for Humanity of Denton County, who pointed out to Msgr. King that approximately 60 percent of homes built in Denton County by Habitat for Humanity are made available to Catholic families.

This comment turned a spark into a flame, as the pastor and ICC parishioners formed a steering committee and set a goal to raise $65,000 to begin building. Construction is expected to commence in September. Additionally, 10 percent of all money raised will go to the Habitat for Humanity International organization to build a house in Guatemala, where ICC has a sister parish and partner in mission work.

Teams of parishioners have been raising cash and obtaining in-kind donations, for such things as air conditioners, light fixtures, lumber, and electrical items. The teams will work together as volunteers in building the house, which is scheduled for completion in December, in time for Msgr. King’s golden anniversary of ordination, Dec. 16. The parish and Habitat for Humanity of Denton County will dedicate the house in honor of Msgr. King.

The opportunity for ICC parishioners to grow together while serving others is exciting to Msgr. King. “Helping people gets people involved,” he said, as he reflected on his hopes for future ambitious projects, such as a parish outreach center that would be home for a St. Vincent de Paul house and a counseling center.

For more information about plans for the ICC Habitat House, to be built in honor of Msgr. King’s 50th anniversary, contact the parish at (940) 565-1770.

Contributing to this story was Abigail Caperton.
Special Collection

Diocesan Special Collection

Operation Rice Bowl

CARE CENTER SING-ALONG
— Parishioners of St. Mary Church in Henrietta host a monthly sing-along at a local nursing home, the Henrietta Care Center, on the first Thursday of each month at 2 p.m. The youth choir, led by Kealey Bullinger (left), provided the music, singing, and storytelling throughout the summer. Youth choir members (abers, l. to r.) Leah Bullinger, Audrey Gallagher, Tahnée Fennell, and Lauren Gallagher are shown at a recent gathering. The center is located at 807 West D'Arc in Henrietta, and all are welcome to join in the sing-along.

Franciscan Father Richard Rohr to speak
at meeting of pastoral counselors in Argyle

Noted Catholic author and lecturer Father Richard Rohr, OFM, will lead a workshop on using the Enneagram in spiritual discernment and clinical assessment. Fr. Rohr will give his presentation at the annual meeting of the Southwest Region of the American Association of Pastoral Counselors. Pastors, spiritual directors, and mental health practitioners are welcome to attend the meeting, which will be held Sept. 29-30 at Briarwood Retreat Center in Argyle.

Fr. Rohr, a Franciscan of the New Mexico Province, is the founder of the Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC) in Albuquerque, New Mexico, where he presently serves as founding director.

A pre-conference workshop, “Professional Ethics and Morality: Practice Dilemmas for Pastoral Counselors,” will be offered from 9 a.m. to noon Sept. 29 at the retreat center. Fr. Rohr’s workshop will begin Friday afternoon and will continue through Saturday afternoon. He will explore ways in which the Enneagram — an ancient tool for spiritual assessment — can contribute to clinical, pastoral, and spiritual assessment by helping caregivers correct distorted images of self and God through the process of spiritual discernment. Fr. Rohr will also help participants understand how practices for spiritual discernment may enhance clinical assessment for psychotherapy and spiritual direction.

Prior to Sept. 15, the registration fee for the pre-conference workshop is $45; the Fr. Rohr workshop is $90. Participants will be eligible for CEUs from the National Board for Certified Counselors. For more information, contact Duane Bidwell, vice president of the Southwest Region, at d.bidwell@tcu.edu or visit www.aapc.org.

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**Transitions, an inevitable part of our faith walk**

By Dan Luby

**Viewed in the light of faith,**

transitions of all kinds, ordinary and inconsequential ones, as well as once-in-a-lifetime momentous ones, can become spiritual exercises, strengthening our habit of trust, deepening our reliance on God.

Transitions are always a challenge, whether they represent fears realized or changes we never dreamed of and worked hard to bring about. The new job, the foreclosed mortgage, the degree completed, the soul mate lost — as much as we plan and strategize, as many contingencies as we build into our calculations, transition always brings us to a point at which we have let go of the familiar world we have known, where we understand our role and know what to expect from life, but have not yet fully grasped the world we are moving to, so that the only constant is difference, the only certainty, uncertainty.

Transition cannot be rushed or avoided entirely. It must be endured, patiently if we have that gift, frantically if not, but always in its own time. It is often the house of anxiety. Just as often, it is also the birthplace of creativity and new life.

Viewed in the light of faith, transitions of all kinds, ordinary and inconsequential ones, as well as once-in-a-lifetime momentous ones, can become spiritual exercises, strengthening our habit of trust, deepening our reliance on God.

My steps echo in the hall as I walk once more to the front door, checking the street again for cars, willing them to arrive. A small black Hyundai slows down, passes the house, then turns around, and stops at the driveway.

Smiling, nervous, I step out to welcome the future.

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**Just a walk in the park on a summer day**

By Jeff Hensley

**W** ichta Mountains National Wildlife Refuge is a jewel of short mountains tucked away in a corner of Southwestern Oklahoma, less than three hours from Fort Worth, a little over an hour north of Wichita Falls. It is a corridor of mountains with a broad valley running between, and one of my favorite places for a day trip to escape into an entirely different environment.

When I traveled there a few weeks ago, it was in the middle of our choking heat wave, and despite rising early and beginning my exploration of the nooks and crannies of its creeks and reservoirs around 9 a.m., by the time I hit the trail of my longest walk, it was noon, and the temperature was creeping past 100 degrees.

I’d examined the map board at the trailhead and determined I might manage the eight-mile loop trail, but also figured out which of its two legs to take to see the flattest and prettiest parts of the territory it covered in case I had to double back.

Because I thought I might encounter the driver of the other car in the unpaved lot, I threw a couple of extra bottles of water into my day pack and more fruit and grain bars than I thought I needed, too, just in case they were in trouble on the trail.

And so I set out in the heat, thinking I’d know when to turn back as soon as not to get into trouble myself. I was wrong.

As I followed along the trail as it kept company with a beautiful, shaded creek, made into a series of small lakes by low check dams, it got increasingly warm, and I got increasingly tired. But my desire to push on further got the better of my good judgment, and I found myself three or four miles out by a row now rough and rock-strewn trail, beyond my energy and facing the same distance back to the trailhead, my car, and my supply of cool air, courtesy of the vehicle’s air conditioner.

In my own defense, I think I’d picked up a small stomach bug that had my stomach rumbling and had also left me more drained than I normally would have been. As I turned on my heels and headed back, I found myself trudging rather than walking. Each patch of shade provided a brief and welcome resting place, and the occasional clouds — up to this moment when I needed them, a great rarity — refreshing beyond what I would have expected. I found myself praying for more of the clouds and that the light breeze would continue as well.

It was a very dicey experience as I found my muscles not getting enough blood sugar, forcing me to nibble constantly on the four fruit and grain bars while I rationed my four half-liter bottles of water. Despite what I believe was my very realistic fear that I would not make it back to the trailhead, I did.

My energy and ability to walk with longer strides increased as I neared my car and the end of this little adventure, my blood sugar restored by the bars and the just right amount of spring water.

As I prayed desperately for strength, for the clouds, the breeze, and the grace of God to complete what should have been an uneventful hike, I couldn’t help but reflect on how God had provided just what I needed in these difficult circumstances, and nothing more.

I usually would mention that on an earlier walk, I stumbled on a dozen wild turkeys that I followed through woods until I came upon three white-tailed deer and a buffalo, his legs folded under him like the paws of a sitting cat. It is a wildlife refuge, after all.
Making Bad Law into a bad memory

By Gail Quinn

But there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Legal experts, even those who support legal abortion generally, point to Roe as indefensible. People’s attitudes are shifting to a pro-life position. And perhaps most importantly, the new generation of young people are much more pro-life than are older Americans.

What has been the result of three decades of legal abortion? Millions of unborn children have been deprived of life, many brutally. Countless women and others carry the grief and guilt of having caused the death of their children.

Abortion has cheapened our respect for human life right across the board. If you can take the life of one, you can justify taking the life of another. It has coarsened our culture with its ethic of acceptable killing.

And, as has long been clear, legalized abortion has poisoned the politics of our nation, becoming the centerpiece of what many now call “the culture war.”

But there is a light at the end of the tunnel. Legal experts, even those who support legal abortion generally, point to Roe as indefensible. People’s attitudes are shifting to a pro-life position. And perhaps most importantly, the new generation of young people are much more pro-life than are older Americans.

Thirty-three years ago, the Catholic bishops of the United States accurately labeled Roe v. Wade and its companion decision, Doe v. Bolton. They called those Supreme Court abortion decisions bad morality, bad medicine, and bad public policy.

To this day the bishops continue to speak out against Roe v. Wade, which gave two human beings (a mother and an abortionist) the legal right to kill another human being, the mother’s child in the womb. That license was granted throughout the nine months of pregnancy, for any reason or none.

It seems strange, in retrospect, that the voices of others who identified Roe v. Wade as bad law did not garner much attention at the time. Later court decisions based themselves on Roe, and abortion became more and more entrenched in American culture and law. Because law is the great teacher, many began to think of abortion as morally acceptable — after all, there was no law against it.

Perhaps the worst U.S. Supreme Court abortion decision was Casey v. Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pennsylvania in 1992. Here the Court said that even if Roe had been wrongly decided, and even if the Court might not reach the same decision today, it would not reverse its 1973 decisions because (a) its own stature and authority would be questioned, and (b) women had come to order their lives around abortion’s availability. And so the Court reaffirmed that children, prior to birth — or even during birth — could continue to be killed by abortion.

The mixer had come into our lives inconspicuously in the ’70s, during an intense holiday-cookie-baking season. The electric mixer I already owned — just a few months old, and not a name brand — died an early death after being introduced to my mom’s potica recipe.

While working the elastic, thickening, bread-like mixture, the motor overheated, and smoke interjected itself into the aromas emanating from my otherwise delicious-smelling kitchen. (Apparently “extreme-bread-kneading” was not in that mixer’s specs; its mission statement did not include the phrase “will work for dough.”)

When I returned my small appliance to the department store, the manager looked at it, put it aside, and announced, “We’ll just replace it.” Then he picked up a heavy box that contained a shining new KitchenAid mixer. He handed it to me.

I had paid way less than $50 for my now-broken no-name mixer, and the one he was exchanging it for was valued three to four times that much. Was I getting a bonus for dried-up cake batter on the mixer’s feet? Was this a factory rebate for red-food-color-stained plastic beaters?

Instantly my well-tuned, Catholic-school-trained fairness-and-honesty-meter intervened, and I heard these words come from my mouth: “But that new one cost much more than mine did.” The store manager smiled wryly before answering.

“Well, I bet this one was on sale for that amount some time or another,” he said.

That was how I walked out of the store after the greatest financial transaction of my life. I owned a spanking new mixer — a KitchenAid! — in the fashionable color that matched my ’70s kitchen: harvest gold. God was good.

That mixer was on my countertop for 23 years, beating eggs for pizzelles, creaming butter for birthday cake frosting, or, when turned on too high, spreading a snow-like covering of sifted flower everywhere. It was a dream mixer.

My favorite student Richard was a dream too, except the time he yelled at me and walked out the door. He had come to TCU from Panama. He was a photographer with an artist’s eye and a poet’s heart. When he first arrived, in 1993, he joined my staff and quickly took on the routine of eating lunch with me every day. Like our own children when they are young, he had found a place of security and comfort. Also like our own young families, I knew those times would not last forever.

He worked with my yearbook staff at TCU for five years.

By Kathy Cribari Hamer

Sci HAMER, p. 30
Catholic Daughters of the Americas’ national convention held in Minnesota

MINNEAPOLIS (CNS) — The Catholic Daughters of the Americans pledged to take actions ranging from supporting U.S. troops and their families to assisting victims of human trafficking in resolutions approved during their biennial national convention in Minneapolis July 17-21.

Nearly 900 members from local and state courts (chapters) in the United States and several other countries attended the meeting.


The convention also affirmed its support for the Apostleship of the Sea, which provides pastoral ministry to seafarers, and urged the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to continue its support of that ministry.

It asked the national regent to keep members updated on the World Union of Catholic Women’s Organizations. The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, formed in 1903, has about 90,000 members in 1,400 courts throughout the world.

Contributing to this story was Chris Williams.

CDA OFFICERS — Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Mother Seton #2513, celebrated the installation of officers and 21 new members with a Mass July 15 at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller. Bishop Kevin Vann presided, and counselors included Court Chaplain Father Dennis Smith and Father Gary Geutz. CDA officers, standing with Bishop Vann (center) and Fr. Smith (right of bishop), are (l. to r.) Datene Sultana, financial secretary; Cruz Y. Rivera, vice regent; Angela M. Gallegos, regent; Jane Savoy, district deputy; Dorothy Hess, recording secretary; and Tunie Burke, treasurer.

More than 130 people, including representatives from other local CDA courts, attended the following luncheon, which was hosted by the Knights of Columbus, San Juan Diego Assembly. To learn more about CDA, contact Cruz Rivera, membership chair, at (817) 605-1741.

Two Texans elected to national board at CDA convention

Texas Catholic Daughters of the Americas elected two delegates to the National Board of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas at its 51st Biennial National Convention in Minneapolis, Minnesota, held July 17-21. Libby Ramirez of Victoria was elected national regent-elect, and Duchess Collins of Sugar Land was elected one of nine national directors.

Of the nearly 900 participants representing various states, Puerto Rico, the Dominican Republic, and Guam, more than 100 were attendees from Texas, and included delegates, alternates, members, clergy, spouses, and guests. The theme of the convention was “Women of Faith and Vision.”

Clergy from Texas attending the convention included Father Donald Ruppert, Texas State Court clergy consultant of East Bernard, and Father Roy Oggero of Sugar Land.

Texas State Regent Olga Samaniego of El Paso accepted a certificate for the state for winning second place in its division in the national newsletter contest. Texas was also awarded certificates for outstanding participation in the following Circle of Love categories: Education, Leadership, Quality of Life, National Charitable Projects, and Legislation.

The state regent also accepted a plaque for the state for having instituted the most new courts and a certificate for participation in Read Across America.

In addition to Olga Samaniego, Texas CDA officers in attendance included First Vice State Regent Carolyn Bachmann, Scotland, of the Diocese of Fort Worth; Second Vice State Regent Sheila Martinka, Pasadena; State Secretary Carolyn Malik, Shiner; and State Treasurer Peggy Rosales, Austin.

The convention offered CDA members the opportunity to listen to keynote presentations and reports from various regions of the country; to elect new members to the national board, and to debate, amend, and pass resolutions, including pledges to take actions ranging from supporting U.S. troops and their families to assisting victims of human trafficking.

The officers and members of New Mexico State — site of the 2008 Biennial National Convention — presented preliminary plans for the next convention and invited all to attend.

CART services for deaf and hard of hearing available

For those people of the Diocese of Fort Worth who are deaf or hard of hearing but who do not use sign language, CART (Computer Assisted Real-time Translation) services are provided at Most Blessed Sacrament Church, 2100 North Davis Drive in Arlington, at the weekly 10 a.m. Sunday Mass.

CART services involve the transcription of what is being said during the Mass being projected onto a screen so that deaf or hard of hearing persons may read it. A pew will be reserved for those persons needing this support service.

St. Francis of Assisi Church, 861 Wildwood Lane in Grapevine, also has a CART service-supported Mass on the first Sunday of the month, September through May, at 1:30 p.m. For more information, contact Mary Cinatli at mcinatli@fdw3.org or by calling (817) 284-3019 (voice and TTY).

Seminarian Welcome Dinner benefiting Holy Trinity Seminary to be held Oct. 10

Bishop Kevin Vann recently announced an increase in the number of men studying for the priesthood this fall. Current plans indicate 25 candidates — the largest number ever. Part of the increase is represented in seven college students who will be studying at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, according to a seminary press release. This continues a long tradition of priestly formation in the Diocese of Fort Worth, going back more than four decades.

Currently, 20 Holy Trinity alumni serve in the diocese, the press release states.

The annual Seminarian Welcome Dinner is an opportunity to show support for new and returning seminarians at Holy Trinity Seminary. The event will be held Tuesday, Oct. 10, at the Westin Park Central Hotel, 12720 Merit Drive in North Dallas.

The evening will begin with a reception at 6 p.m., followed by evening prayer at 7 p.m. A live auction will include items such as a dinner for six, hosted by Bishop Kevin Vann in his home. The event will conclude at 10 p.m.

All proceeds are used to help in funding seminary programs, renovations, and operations. According to press materials, $200,000 in funds were raised at last year’s event.

Tickets are $75 each; the cost is $1,000 for a sponsored table of 10. The deadline to purchase is Sept. 1. For more details or to purchase tickets or sponsorships, call (972) 438-2212 or visit online at www.holytrinityseminary.com.
Group works in churches to bring awareness of, tips on energy cuts

By Mark Pattison
WASHINGTON (CNS) — Interfaith Power & Light sounds like the name of a public utility, complete with monthly bills. But it’s not.

Interfaith Power & Light, active in 21 states and the District of Columbia, works at educating churches and their members about how to make a dent in global warming. It’s part of the organization’s way of caring for God’s creation, and the work is done on many fronts.

“The focus is mitigating climate change but through congregations... making congregations the model of behavior for individuals through conservation, new technologies; making congregations more energy-efficient; and then having it filter down to the individuals to make changes in their lifestyles and make their lives more energy-efficient,” said Tim Kautza, science and environmental education specialist for the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, a member of Iowa Interfaith Power & Light.

Michigan Interfaith Power & Light operates on several levels, said its director, Father Charles Morris, pastor of St. Elizabeth Parish in the Detroit suburb of Wyandotte, Michigan.

One is a Web site with an online shopping cart where customers can order compact fluorescent lights and power-saving appliances within a “carbon footprint.” They’re making it a little bit easier” for consumers to be energy-conscious, Kautza said of the Michigan group.

St. Elizabeth spent $5,000 on an energy audit in 1997 and recouped its cost within a year by implementing the audit’s energy-saving recommendations, according to Fr. Morris.

“We can save money as well as make a sacrificial witness of our deepest values, with our care of creation,” Fr. Morris told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview.

The National Council of Catholic Women (NCCW) will hold its 2006 assembly Sept. 21-23 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Sept. 21-23. The assembly will open Thursday, Sept. 21, with Mass at the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist, where Sister Arlene J. Klee will preside, and end Saturday, Sept. 23, following the assembly banquet. Installation of new provincial directors will take place at the closing business session on Saturday.

With the theme “Yes, Lord, Your Servant is Listening,” the conference will offer participants from more than 5,000 affiliated Catholic women’s organizations in parishes and dioceses throughout the United States the opportunity to attend a wide variety of workshops and listening forums, and to participate in leadership and training sessions. Sister Amy Hoey, a Sister of Mercy and former staff member to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Department of Family, Laity, Women, and Youth, will offer a keynote presentation based upon the U.S. Bishops’ document “Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord,” which supports lay ministry as a vital part of the Church’s mission, to share the Gospel message with the world.

The cost of registration is $285, and includes all sessions, materials, and the awards reception. The registration deadline is Sept. 1. Room rates range from $119 to $139, depending upon the number of occupants. For more information or to register, visit the NCCW Web site at www.nccw.org or call the NCCW office at (703) 224-9990.

CARMELITES RECEIVE DONATION — Carmelite Auxiliary officers (foreground, l to r) Ann Carminati, 2006-2007 president; Kathy Thome, 2005-2006 president; and fundraising chairpersons Connie Meyer and Carole Weaver, are shown presenting a $15,000 check to (background, l to r) Reverend Mother Maria and Mother Ann Teresa of the Carmelite Monastery of the Most Holy Trinity in Arlington. Proceeds from the auxiliary’s recent fundraising activity, “Angels on Broadway,” made this yearly gift to the nuns possible. The local auxiliary is able to help with many of the living expenses of the Arlington cloister through this annual fundraiser and other fundraising efforts.

NCCW General Assembly set for Sept. 21-23

WASHING rON (CNS) — The National Association of Diocesan Ecumenical Officers has changed its name to Catholic Association of Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers.

The acronym NADEO, familiar to those in ecumenical circles, now becomes CADEIO.

Father Robert B. Flannery of the Diocese of Belleville, Illinois, the association’s president, told Catholic News Service by e-mail July 26 that the name change was adopted at the association’s recent annual general assembly.

He said the purpose was to communicate better the nature of the organization, as Catholic, and the work of its members, most of whom are responsible for interreligious as well as ecumenical work.

Ecumenism refers strictly to relations between or among Christian churches in the search for Christian unity. When any partner in a dialogue or joint effort is a member of a non-Christian religion such as Judaism, Islam, or Buddhism, the relationship is called interreligious, not ecumenical.

Fr. Flannery said the name change was also made to be sensitive to the national ecumenical associations from other Christian traditions that use the name of the denomination in their titles, such as the Lutheran Ecumenical Representative Network and the Episcopal Diocesan Ecumenical and Interreligious Officers.

He said that at the assembly the association also changed its bylaws so that all four top officers will be elected by the assembly. Previously the assembly elected only the president, who would then appoint the rest, with the approval of what was then called the executive committee — now renamed the association’s board of directors.

Catholic ecumenists rename national organization

Memorial Mass for Bishop Cassata to be celebrated Sept. 8

This September will mark 17 years since the death of Bishop John J. Cassata, first bishop of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Bishop Cassata served the people of local church from August 1969 through September 1980.

Bishop Kevin Vann will celebrate a memorial Mass for Bishop Cassata on the anniversary of his death, Sept. 8. The Mass will be celebrated noon at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton Street in downtown Fort Worth. Priests of the diocese are invited to concelebrate.

Bishop John J. Cassata

All people of the Diocese of Fort Worth and beyond are welcome to attend.
Holy Family of Nazareth Sisters leave legacy of compassionate care

By Mary E. Manley, Correspondent

Editor’s Note: Since this article was written, one of the sisters who played a significant role in the ministry at United Regional Health Care System and who is quoted in this story, Sister Ancilla Sojka, has died. Her obituary appears on the next page.

The large white cross atop the United Regional Health Care System (URHCS) 11th Street Campus will remain a bright beacon for Wichita Falls residents and wayfarers alike, even after the departure of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth (CSFN). It will also serve as a reminder of the lifelong service the sisters provided to the people of Wichita Falls.

July 31 marked the official last day of active duty for the CSFN contingent of six nuns who have been based in pastoral care at this campus and have served at the URHCS 8th Street Campus as well. Sisters Irena Azsemborska, Geraldine daSilva, Miriam Stepniowska, Ancilla Sojka, Virginia Melan, and Michaela Tomkowiak are in the midst of new life journeys, working from either their mother house in Grand Prairie or engaged in pastoral work elsewhere.

Since Jan. 1, 1935, when Bethania Hospital was opened, Sisters of the Holy Family have made great strides in bringing exemplary pastoral and health care to the people of Wichita Falls. Just over seven decades ago, the intrepid order of sisters from the Roman Catholic Sisters of Nazareth started with a groundbreaking dream to start a hospital in Wichita Falls. The large white cross atop the United Regional Health Care Center, or the “City of Faith Built,” has never settled for less.

Bringing Healing by Building

The nonpro

July 31 marked the official last day of active duty for the CSFN contingent of six nuns who have been based in pastoral care at this campus and have served at the URHCS 8th Street Campus as well. Sisters Irena Azsemborska, Geraldine daSilva, Miriam Stepniowska, Ancilla Sojka, Virginia Melan, and Michaela Tomkowiak are in the midst of new life journeys, working from either their mother house in Grand Prairie or engaged in pastoral work elsewhere.

Since Jan. 1, 1935, when Bethania Hospital was opened, Sisters of the Holy Family have made great strides in bringing exemplary pastoral and health care to the people of Wichita Falls. Just over seven decades ago, the intrepid order of sisters from the Roman Catholic Sisters of Nazareth started with a groundbreaking dream to start a hospital in Wichita Falls. The large white cross atop the United Regional Health Care Center, or the “City of Faith Built,” has never settled for less.

Bringing Healing by Building
Father Aidon Donlon will carry on Catholic ministry at URHCS

By Mary E. Manley, Correspondent

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only son, so that everyone who believes in him might not perish but might have eternal life.”

— John 3:16

Father Aidon Donlon, SAC, claims this Scripture as his favorite, one that has guided him in his 51 years as a priest, 31 of them as hospital chaplain in Wichita Falls. Fr. Donlon first began his service in this city as a spiritual leader of the former Bethania Hospital, which evolved into United Regional Health Care System’s (URHCS) 11th Street campus.

When asked why he had chosen this Scripture, Fr. Donlon responded, “Because it reminds me of the Lord’s love being so great that he came to save and redeem every one of us.”

The headline on an August 2005 Wichita Falls Times-Record News article about Fr. Donlon reflects how convincingly he has embraced this belief. The article, recognizing Fr. Donlon’s golden anniversary as a priest and his seasoned chaplain service, was labeled with the headline “In the spirit of love.” The Pallotine father has come to be recognized for his kind, Christ-like ways and his ecumenical stance in this community of 100,000.

Cindi Majewski, URHCS medical records director, has witnessed his unfailing compassion with patients, their family members, and staff alike, regardless of denomination, a compassion she has witnessed since he first came to Bethania in 1975. In fact, Our Lady Queen of Peace parishioner Majewski noted that the priest had been instrumental in her conversion to Catholicism.

Knights of Columbus Council #1473 representative Mike Brown is another OLQP parishioner and devoted fan of Fr. Donlon. Brown, the lay spearhead for the annual Father Donlon Vocations Dinner, said, “Fr. Donlon exemplifies what being a Catholic priest, hospital chaplain, and KC member are all about. He is a true follower of Christ.”

Joan Riddle, former nurse, and Rick Hutchings, Sacred Heart business manager, who have known Fr. Donlon since he first came to the city, spoke highly of the Irish priest and his contributions. Sacred Heart parishioner Riddle, concerned with Hutchings in recalling the white-haired priest’s continual support, guidance, and friendship through the good times and the rough on their life journeys.

Fr. Donlon was born in County Tipperary, Ireland, June 2, 1929. His father was a lawyer, and his mother, a school teacher. His three brothers, Brendan, Kevin, and Angus, also became priests.

The Roscrea native entered the Society of the Catholic (SAC) Apostolate, or Pallotine Fathers, in January 1948. He was ordained in August 1955 in Buenos Aires, Argentina, and came to the United States in 1956. Before coming to Wichita Falls, he led churches in Lubbock; Denver City, Texas; and Ely, Nevada, and was chaplain at Mercy Hospital in Muskegon, Michigan. In October 1994, he was named to the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher.

Recently, Fr. Donlon confirmed that, even after the sisters depart, he will remain to serve the many folks who depend on him. “That is,” he said, with his typically Irish droll wit, “if they will have me.”

“It’s a long way to Tipperary,” as the British World War I anthem goes, yet, in coming to know Fr. Donlon, it is clear he has claimed Wichita Falls as his home, and that there is no other place he would rather be. In the words of his devoted longtime administrator, Pat Saulsbury, there are countless supporters of this beloved man, who wouldn’t have it any other way.

Sister Ancilla Sojka, CSFN, who served in hospital ministry in Wichita Falls, dies

Sister Mary Ancilla Sojka, 81, died of congestive heart failure Aug. 7 in Wichita Falls. She was a member of the Congregation of the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth for 66 years. Memorial liturgies were celebrated at the congregation’s provincialate in Des Plaines, Illinois, Aug. 10, and on Aug. 11 in the chapel at United Regional Health Care System in Wichita Falls. A funeral Mass was celebrated at the sisters’ convent in Grand Prairie Aug. 12, interment was at Sutherland Memorial Park in Grand Prairie.

Sr. Ancilla was born in Chicago, Illinois, Sept. 7, 1924. Baptized with the name Dolores Ursula, she was the oldest of three children and the only daughter born to parents Peter and Elisabeth (Wrzesinska) Sojka. She attended Nazareth Academy in Des Plaines, a girls’ school operated by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth, the congregation that she joined as an aspirant in August 1940. She became a novice in August 1942 after graduating from high school, and was given the name Sister Mary Ancilla. She pronounced final vows Aug. 5, 1950, in the congregation’s Sacred Heart Province.

Sr. Ancilla spent much of her early life in the congregation in the teaching ministry, having earned an undergraduate degree from De Paul University in 1958. She served as a teacher and administrator in various Catholic schools, and went on to earn a graduate degree in education in 1975 from Sienna Heights College. She later pursued studies in Gerontology and Nursing Home Management, and became a licensed nursing home administrator in 1978, serving for eight years as administrator of Nazarethville, the congregation’s home for the aged in Des Plaines.

Having served from 1982 to 1989 as a pioneer in the congregation’s mission efforts in the Philippines, Sr. Ancilla was considered a leader within her religious order and came to Texas in 1992 to serve as provincial superior within the Blessed Frances Siedliska Province. In this role, she became a board member of Mother Frances Hospital in Tyler and of Bethania Hospital in Wichita Falls, and was involved in the subsequent mergers at both hospitals.

Following her term as superior, Sr. Ancilla chose to stay in Texas and to take an assignment in pastoral care at United Regional Health Care System in Wichita Falls, where she continued to serve until recently. “Her life was spent [in] the service of others, and we are all blessed to have known her and to have been the underserving beneficiaries of her incredible love and service,” wrote Phyllis Cowling, the hospital’s chief executive officer, in a statement released to hospital staff after Sr. Ancilla’s death.

“Sr. Ancilla was always interested in people, finding joy and energy in her interaction with them,” wrote Sr. Teresa Mika, CSFN. “Her genuine interest in people generated an enormous list of friends, here in Texas, throughout the country, as well as around the world. She is remembered for her quick wit and sense of humor.”

She is survived by a brother, Walter Sojka, of Chicago; two nieces, Susan Accardi and Adrienne Jaworski; several great-nieces and great-nephews; several cousins; and her religious sisters. Memorial gifts in her honor may be made to Nazarethville Home for Aging Seniors, 300 N. River Road, Des Plaines, IL 60016.

Sister Ancilla Sojka, CSFN

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Michael and Mary Runyan, Crowley High. The son of non-profit organizations. Youth 2000 retreats. He has and participated in the member of St. Andrew Parish. Daniel Joseph Runyan is a School valedictorian. He is the son of James and Kathleen Easter egg hunt, and the community Honor Society, she has a member of the National and nursery babysitter. As a church office volunteer team. She has served as a member of the youth in The Colony. She is attends Holy Cross Church valedictorian Jamie Wright of first Graces. The Colony. She is a member of St. Mark Parish in Denton, where she was involved in the Life Teen youth program and served the parish as a lector, extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, and a Vacation Bible School volunteer. Her community service projects included work with the Children's Cumberland Home, the Nelson Center for Mistreated and Misguided Children, and the Mildred Hawk Elementary School Library. The daughter of Patrick and Denise Burke, Kaitlin plans to attend Texas A&M University in College Station.

Jamie Wright Valedictorian The Colony High School valedictorian Jamie Wright attends Holy Cross Church in The Colony. She is a member of the youth group and youth softball team. She has served as a church office volunteer and nursery babysitter. As a member of the National Honor Society, she has volunteered at the local library, elementary school concerts, the community Easter egg hunt, and the school’s marching band clinic. Jamie is the daughter of James and Kathleen Wright. She will attend the University of Texas at Dallas.

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DENTON DENTON HIGH SCHOOL

Daniel Joseph Runyan Valedictorian North Crowley High School valedictorian Daniel Joseph Runyan is a member of St. Andrew Parish in Fort Worth, where he was part of the youth group and participated in the Youth 2000 retreats. He has done volunteer work at a local hospital and donated graphic designs to various non-profit organizations. He also took advantage of volunteer opportunities with the Key Club at North Crowley High. The son of Michael and Mary Runyan, Daniel will attend the University of Texas at Austin.

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Our Lady of Grace High School

Erika Metzler Outstanding Senior Award Erika Metzler received the Outstanding Senior Award for her hard work and dedication to her studies and extracurricular activities. She has been a member of the National Honor Society, served as a lector, and participated in the Life Teen program. In addition, she has volunteered at a local hospital and has participated in community service projects. Erika is the daughter of Michael and Tamera Metzler.

FORT WORTH FORT WORTH HIGH SCHOOL

Laura Saucedo Valedictorian Laura Saucedo, 2006 valedictorian for Amon-Carter Riverside High School in Fort Worth, is a member of St. George Parish in Fort Worth. She has served as a lector, religious education teacher, and youth group member. In addition to her parish activities, Laura has performed weekend school clean-ups, volunteered at the Fort Worth Zoo, helped with school blood drives, and collected toys, teddy bears, and coats for children in need. She will attend the University of Texas at Arlington. Laura is the daughter of José and Julia Saucedo.

AMY LYNN Price Valedictorian Cassata High School valedictorian Amy Lynn Price spent 184 hours doing volunteer work at St. Andrew School in Fort Worth. Her hours included preparing labs, assisting in experiments, grading assignments, and assessing inventory. She also volunteers with the Botanical Research Institute of Texas and has earned the Presidential Scholarship from Texas Wesleyan University as well as the Leo Benavides Award presented by Tarrant County Challenge. Amy is the daughter of Patrick Price.

CASSATA CASSATA HIGH SCHOOL

Susan Lira. Teen program and served participating in parish life, protecting them from the pitfalls of disciples in a world that needs their spirit. Guide their feet as they move through life, protecting them from the pitfalls of darkness while they help to lead future generations into the warmth and promise of your light. We ask this blessing upon each of them, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

THE COLONY THE COLONY HIGH SCHOOL

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Joe Richard Kilianski III  Salutatorian
Nolan Catholic High School
salutatorian Joe Richard Kilianski III is a member of St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Grapevine. During summers, he worked at Holy Trinity School assisting the maintenance director in painting classrooms, painting the gym, assembling scaffolding, patching drywall, and moving and assembling furniture. An Eagle Scout with the Silver Palm, he supervised the construction and installation of superior quality podiums for Holy Trinity School for his Eagle service project. Job plans to attend Texas A&M University in College Station. He is the son of Dr. Joe Kilianski Jr. and Helene Kilianski.

Robert Sparks  Appointment to the United States Air Force Academy
Robert Sparks, the son of Bob and Sandra Sparks, has been appointed to the U.S. Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. A member of St. John the Apostle Church in Fort Worth, Robert was an active volunteer with Habitat for Humanity.

Jessica Ann Joseph  Valedictorian
Nolan Catholic High School
valedictorian Jessica Ann Joseph achieved the honors of valedictorian for Nolan Catholic High School. At St. John the Apostle Church in North Richland Hills, she served as a Communion minister, religious education teacher’s aide, and was a fall festival volunteer. In addition to her parish involvement, Jessica volunteered with the neglected elderly and was a part of the Christian Ministry Leadership Team. The daughter of George and Laly Joseph, she plans to study chemistry at Texas A&M University in College Station.

Eric Robert Mueller  Appointment to the United States Merchant Marine Academy
Eric Robert Mueller, the son of Robert and Hilary Mueller, has been appointed to the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York. At St Francis-Shirley Parish in Granbury, Eric served as a Youth Council member, usher, altar server, and, for his Eagle Scout project, landscaped the front of the church. Outside of parish life, he was involved with Junior Leadership in Granbury, Habitat for Humanity, and Scouts Roadside Cleanup.

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David A. Walterscheid  Salutatorian
Sacred Heart High School
salutatorian David A. Walterscheid is a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster, where he has been an altar server and a volunteer for various parish events and school functions and repair and maintenance projects. In addition to his parish activities, he assists with local trash clean-up and serves as a referee for the Youth Soccer Association. David is the son of Anthony Jay and Jeannine Walterscheid. He will attend Oklahoma State University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

Blessed are the peacemakers; they shall be called children of God. Matthew 5:9

Joey De La Garza  Salutatorian
Nolan Catholic High School
salutatorian Joey De La Garza is a member of St. Lucy’s Parish in Denton. Joey has been involved with the Boy Scouts of America. He has received the Silver Palm award and was an altar server and a lector. Joey is the son of Anthony and Carmen De La Garza.

SOUTH HILLS HIGH SCHOOL

South Hills High School

Abby Crystle Endres  Valedictorian
Muenster High School
valedictorian Abby Crystal Endres is a member of Sacred Heart Parish in Muenster, where she participated in the youth education program. She was an altar server and an extra minister for the Eucharist. Abby served her community through numerous institutions and organizations such as the St. Richard’s Villa Nursing Home, Muenster Memorial Hospital, the National Honor Society, and the Muenster Beautification program. She will attend Southwestern University in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

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Our Father who art in heaven… Thus begins the prayer most Catholics have known since they were children. Two thousand years ago Jesus taught the multitudes how to pray, and in the process gave us this famous prayer. This summer more than 180 teenagers and 60 adults put the words of Our Father into action as they do every year at Camp Fort Worth.

There is a lot of sweat, tears, smiles, and laughter behind all the work, but the faith in action does not stop at the work site. After we are cleaned up from the day’s work, we move to our evening program that is filled with faith sharing, powerful worship, and solemn prayer experiences. Interspersed with these moments are the deep and lasting friendships that are formed. These friendships develop more than just being “camp buddies”; they are a very real experience of the Body of Christ, for they are formed in the midst of service to Jesus and his body.

Each year at camp we take as our theme the prayer that Jesus taught us. Every morning at breakfast the campers are given a button with one phrase of the prayer written on it, to reflect on this part of the prayer as they go about their day working and praying. At the end of the day we strive to connect the events of the day with the Scripture of the day. What follow are some reflections from this summer’s campers on the ancient prayer made new each day as we say:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name…

The stepping at Camp Fort Worth has made unshakable God very special to me. Worship time was a good way to just relax down from the hard work we had been doing that day and to praise God and to thank him. It was a time to lift up the Lord and sing about how wonderful, magnificent and glorious he is. When you sing, you pray better, so I knew we all did a lot of praying. Singing for God was very meaningful to me at CFW.

—Heather Myers, St. Vincent de Paul Parish, Arlington

Prayer is a strong component of the Camp Fort Worth experience, energizing for God was very meaningful to me at CFW!

—Alyssa Truett, St. Ann Parish, Burleson

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us…

For a Camp Fort Worth experience to spur youth into action

On Tuesday at Camp Fort Worth in Wichita Falls, Ryan Morgan, from St. Vincent de Paul Parish in Arlington, went with his group to one of the Boys and Girls Clubs we ministered to at camp. While he was there he realized that the air conditioning, if there was any, was not working very well. Plus there were only two small fans, so the place was very hot. He shared later that when he got back home, he was going to save his money and buy a box fan and mail it to this Boys and Girls Club.

Then he said, “If we can accomplish this, God’s name will be hallowed, his will will be done, everyone will have their daily bread, trespasses will be forgiven, temptation and evil will be avoided, and truly, the kingdom, the power, and the glory will be our Father’s forever and ever.

Amen
Katrina and Rita

One year after Katrina and Rita the re-building continues

From Page 1

homes, remodeling apartments for the elderly, and helping establish new communities.

“We don’t build levees, but if we did, we’d be right out there,” Dubuisson told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview.

The New Orleans Archdiocese was hit with $120 million in uninsured losses alone and is in the midst of the arduous process of repairing wind- and flood-damaged schools and churches. Six churches have been permanently closed and 23 have closed temporarily. A number of churches are still undergoing repairs, and 24 churches and one mission that sustained extensive flooding damage have reopened. Sixteen schools are still closed, and 21 have remained open while being repaired.

Although the archdiocese has filed paperwork with the Federal Emergency Management Agency in the hopes of being reimbursed for costs associated with the rebuilding of schools and other non-worship facilities, it is unclear how much the archdiocese will eventually receive. FEMA will not pay to rebuild church buildings.

The Biloxi Diocese suffered property damage of $70 million and only half of the damage is covered by insurance. Thirteen churches were damaged, and three of them will not reopen. The future of one church is currently undetermined. Five are using temporary locations until their buildings can be repaired, and four have been in use while undergoing major repairs.

Katrina also destroyed five schools and damaged 10. The diocese consolidated six schools into three and has been doing repair work on 10 schools that remain open.

The new school year in the Biloxi Diocese started in early August, and according to Mike Ladner, diocesan superintendent of schools, crisis management plans have been finalized, buildings have been modified — with electrical outlets placed higher off the floors and away from future flooding — and school officials have been advised to take school records with them to a dry place in the event of another hurricane.

In Biloxi and other areas, many are taking to heart what they would do differently in the face of a hurricane, but they are also hoping just to get their lives back to where they were prior to the storms.

That’s the Case in Texas, as well, where Karen Gilman, editor of the East Texas Catholic, Beaumont’s diocesan newspaper, noted that nearly a year later “life is not back to normal.”

Although Rita was overshadowed by Katrina, its destruction can’t be dismissed by local residents now accustomed to the ever-present blue tarps marking signs of repair. In Beaumont, one church closed because of hurricane damage and five closed temporarily for ongoing repairs. One Catholic school closed but will reopen for the upcoming school year.

Just prior to Hurricane Rita, the Louisiana dioceses of Houma-Thibodaux and Lake Charles were busy assisting Katrina evacuees. Although Katrina inflicted minimal damage on the Houma-Thibodaux Diocese, Rita flooded more than 10,000 homes. As a result of both hurricanes, seven Catholic schools and eight parishes in the diocese were damaged, but have since been repaired and are currently functional.

The Lake Charles Diocese, Rita caused severe damage in several counties, and its strong wind and storm surge essentially flattened the civil entity of Cameron Parish, a region that includes five parishes and five mission churches, nine of which had been temporarily closed because of storm damage.

Currently, three damaged churches are in the very early stages of repair, after gaining approval from the local government, the Army Corps of Engineers, and FEMA. For the past several months, the mission chapel of St. Patrick, a mission of St. Mary of the Lake Church in Big Lake, has been the only church in Cameron Parish safe enough to have Masses on a regular basis.

“It’s still a very difficult time for many people,” said Morris LeBlu, director of communications for the diocese and editor of its diocesan newspaper, The Southwest Catholic. He noted that only about 5 percent to 6 percent of the residents of Cameron Parish have returned.

On July 23, for the first time since Hurricane Rita, a Sunday Mass was celebrated at Our Lady Star of the Sea in Cameron. Parishioners brought their own chairs and prayed together in the empty shell of the church.

“It was good to see the church and be in it and worship,” LeBlu said, even if it will be a long time before parishioners will actually be inside the church as it once was.

Catholic initiative offers hope to families

By Peter Finney Jr.

NEW ORLEANS (CNS) — This was one serious crane. With the power of a few levers and pulleys, the crane plucked a 41,000-pound modular housing unit from the ground Aug. 7 and carefully deposited it on a raised wooden platform prepared a few days earlier to accept it.

In a matter of minutes — like an oversized tower of Lego pieces — another New Orleans family was on the road home.

As president of Providence Community Housing, a Catholic-run post-Katrina housing initiative, Jim Kelly anticipates sights such as this over the months ahead will produce a commodity that has been in short supply since last August — hope.

Providence was among 22 nonprofit and private developers that won approval Aug. 3 to rehabilitate about 2,000 blighted properties that have been seized by the city of New Orleans because their owners have failed to pay taxes.

Providence applied for and was conditionally awarded 196 properties in all. Those property owners have been mailed letters giving them 60 days to redeem the properties by paying back taxes and liens, but it is unlikely many will do so because the lots have lain dormant for years.

Some are vacant lots and some are houses that are in such bad condition they probably will be demolished to allow a complete rebuild with fast-track modular construction, Kelly said.

“I don’t believe the healing process can truly begin until we put people back into their own homes or their new homes or apartments,” said Kelly, who is also CEO of Catholic Charities in the Archdiocese of New Orleans.

“Pre-Katrina, we were in the business of hope,” he said. “Post-Katrina, our business has taken on a much greater scale and a greater sense of urgency. We need small victories. It’s about small victories and it’s about hope.”

The modular houses set into place on two side-by-side lots Aug. 7 were actually placed on property owned by St. Peter Claver/Ujamaa Community Development Corporation, which had acquired the lots from the city within the last year. “But this is a wonderful example of what will happen with the 196 properties,” Kelly told the Clarion Herald, newspaper of the New Orleans Archdiocese.

To get this first project rolling, mayoral candidate Rob Couhig and partners Sam LeBlanc and David Loeb, through their company, Traditional New Orleans Homes, purchased the modular units, and Providence bought the homes from them with financing from Chase Bank and Fannie Mae. The home design has been approved by the Preservation Resource Center.

Kelly admitted this is a complex arrangement.

“This is a pilot project,” Kelly said. “We’re all trying to figure out how we’re going to make this happen. But everyone’s donating a lot of time.”

A Texas modular house construction factory, Palm Harbor Homes in Austin, moved a modular house into position in a housing development in New Orleans Aug. 17. The lot is owned by St. Peter Claver/Ujamaa Community Development Corporation. It is an example of what the Catholic-run Providence Community Housing initiative wants to do with 196 blighted properties it has acquired from the city of New Orleans. Providence hopes to build, rehab, or operate 7,000 housing units in the next five years.

Workers from Palm Harbor Homes in Austin move a modular house into position in a housing development in New Orleans Aug. 17. The lot is owned by St. Peter Claver/Ujamaa Community Development Corporation. It is an example of what the Catholic-run Providence Community Housing initiative wants to do with 196 blighted properties it has acquired from the city of New Orleans. Providence hopes to build, rehab, or operate 7,000 housing units in the next five years.

(CONTINUED NEXT PAGE)
**Irish-born Presentation nun honored for work with poor**

**CHICAGO (CNS) — An Irish-born Presentation sister who was well acquainted with the hard times faced by many New Orleans residents long before last year’s hurricanes is the 2006 recipient of the Catholic Church Extension Society’s Lumen Christi Award.**

Sister Vera Butler, who has lived in New Orleans since 1990, directs a daily lunch program on the outskirts of the city and is executive director of the Tu-lane/Canal Neighborhood Development Cooperative, which helps first-time homeowners and works in other ways to improve the quality of life for people living and working in the area.

The national Lumen Christi Award, Latin for “light of Christ,” is presented annually by the Chicago-based society to recognize outstanding missionary work in America.

The award is to be presented to Sister Vera, along with a $10,000 gift to the nun and $25,000 to the New Orleans Archdiocese, from Catholic Extension at a Sept. 23 Mass and dinner in Chicago.

In a statement, Archbishop Alfred C. Hughes of New Orleans praised Sister Vera for “her deep and visible faith in God, her undaunted dedication to the mission of the Presentation Sisters of the Blessed Virgin Mary ‘to do justice in the way of Jesus’ and her boundless energy and creativity.”

“Sister Vera Butler is a catalyst for thousands of Catholics and other Christian men and women of faith throughout the Archdiocese of New Orleans to make the important connection in their lives between faith and service,” he added.

Sister Vera, the director of outreach ministries at St. Joseph’s Church, also makes frequent visits to the elderly and helps them manage their bills.

When Hurricane Katrina struck, she walked the streets of New Orleans, offering sandwiches and cold drinks to anyone she happened to meet, along with hope, reassurance and optimism.

Sister Vera said she accepted the award “in the name of all the people here in New Orleans who have lost everything, and yet who still tell me that they are blessed, because they have been able to experience God through the generosity of others.”

Catholic Extension, the lead- ing supporter of Catholic mis- sions in the U.S., has raised and distributed more than $400 mil- lion over its 100-year history. The organization funds church con- struction, religious education and seminary formation, outreach ministries, evangelization, salar- ies, and operating expenses.

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Kelly said. Another Ujamaa lot around the corner and closer to St. Pe- ter Claver Church will receive its modular house in the near future.

“It’s very good quality,” Kelly said. “They do schools and even mansions this way. Right now because of the cost of materials and the scarcity of labor in New Orleans, the price break is about equal [to regular construction]. But you can get these homes done quicker, because in New Orleans, how do you find labor?”

**By Peter Finney Jr.**

**NEW ORLEANS (CNS) — The long haul is here.**

Every day, teams of counselors and social workers with Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of New Orleans visit hurricane-affected neighborhoods and go door-to-door asking people simple questions related to complex problems.

Behind every door is a Katrina survivor with his or her sobering story. The stories haven’t changed much since Katrina hit nearly a year ago, and that is perhaps the saddest indicator of a community in the midst of a collective mental health crisis.

By early July, social workers and counselors with Catho- lic Charities’ Louisiana Spirit outreach program, had person- ally visited 65,000 people and reported spikes in domestic violence, child abuse, substance abuse, depression, and suicidal tendencies.

Now the program is in dan- ger of elimination because the Federal Emergency Manage- ment Agency is refusing to pay for certain previously approved and budgeted services, leaving Catholic Charities with a $20,000 daily shortfall and an uncertain future.

Archdiocese of New Orleans to distribute more than $400 mil- lion over its 100-year history. The organization funds church construction, religious education and seminary formation, outreach ministries, evangelization, salaries, and operating expenses.

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**Diocesan**

**Complex end-of-life issues brought into clarity by speakers at Catholics Respect Life Bioethics Seminar**

*Story by Amy Yancy*  
*Photos by Michael Demma*

A seminar entitled “End of Life Issues: Bioethics from a Catholic Perspective” was presented Aug. 4 and 5 at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Grapevine. This second annual bioethics seminar, sponsored by Catholics Respect Life, a pro-life ministry within the Diocese of Fort Worth, addressed such complex issues as quality of life, advanced medical directives, living wills, and healthcare proxies. The seminar was hosted by Bishop Kevin Vann.

For the first part of the seminar, Bishop Vann invited the clergy of the diocese to an evening session, Aug 4, which focused on awareness of today’s complex end-of-life issues in an effort to assist them in their duties as pastoral counselors.

The following day’s full-day seminar was open to all participants with an interest in the topic.

Speakers included Dr. John M. Haas, president of the National Catholic Bioethics Center, based in Philadelphia, as well as Father Michael Olson, vicar general of the Diocese of Fort Worth.

The event began with Mass celebrated by Bishop Vann. During opening remarks, he noted that although certain circumstances surrounding end-of-life issues may change across the centuries, the heart of the issue is still the same.

“We as Catholics must be united in a common voice regarding end-of-life issues,” Bishop Vann said. “We as members of the Catholic faith must share the same view.”

Dr. Haas gave participants, who ranged from members of the clergy and social workers to nurses, doctors, and caregivers, an overview of what role the National Catholic Bioethics Center plays in regard to end-of-life issues. Dr. Haas touched on such subjects as advanced medical directives, living wills, health care proxies, and determination of death.

“Our concern, no matter what we’re doing, is preserving the integrity of life in the image of God and through the blood of Christ,” Dr. Haas said. “To me, there is no more difficult thing to deal with than end-of-life issues.”

Dr. Haas received his doctorate in moral theology from the Catholic University of America and his STL in moral theology from the University of Fribourg in Switzerland. He also holds a Master of Divinity degree and has studied at the University of Munich and the University of Chicago Divinity School. Before assuming the presidency of the National Catholic Bioethics Center, he was the John Cardinal Krol Professor of Moral Theology at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and adjunct professor at the John Paul II Institute for Studies of Marriage and Family. Dr. Haas is currently a consultant to the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research at the University of Texas Medical Center in Houston.

“Ordinary means includes such things as experimental surgery and procedures. Fr. Olson, who has a Master of Divinity degree and an MA in theological studies from the University of St. Thomas in Houston, is currently a doctorate candidate in moral theology at the Academia Alfonsiana of the Lateran University in Rome. He recently served as a member of the Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects in Research at the University of Texas Medical Center in Houston.

“These definitions [of ordinary and extraordinary care] mean different things to different people,” Fr. Olson said. “Ethicists, medical professionals, and legal professionals all have different definitions of ordinary and extraordinary means. That is why it is so important to prepare yourself for a holy death.”

The seminar provided ways to prepare for a holy death, including a patient discussing their wishes with their physician and providing designated proxies. Bishop Vann provided closing remarks and a prayer.


**Contributing to this story was Michael Demma.**
With grateful thanks to God, Father Lambert Leykam, OFM, celebrates 50 years as a priest

Surrounded by family members and hundreds of friends on June 29, Father Lambert Leykam, OFM, revealed, with his customary enthusiasm, in a day filled with joy and special memories. The famously jovial Franciscan priest celebrated the 50th anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood with a Mass and reception held at his longtime home, St. Francis Village in Crowley.

“I wanted to have my jubilee Mass on the actual anniversary date of my ordination,” said Fr. Leykam. “I am fortunate that so many of my family members and special friends were able to come from far away to join me for the occasion.” His sister-in-law, nieces, and their families, along with a priest-cousin and an aunt, all made the journey from other states in order to join in the Mass of Thanksgiving and to proudly pose for innumerable photographs with the beaming jubilarian.

Father Tom Keller, an associate pastor with the Cathedral Basilica of St. Louis in St. Louis, Missouri, and a close friend from Fr. Leykam’s years of ministry as chaplain to the Poor Clares cloistered nuns at the Monastery of St. Clare in Oakville, Missouri, served as homily at Fr. Leykam’s jubilee Mass, sharing stories of his mentor’s 50 years as a Franciscan priest.

“I thank God for the many times I was given the privilege of the miracle of changing bread and wine to Christ’s body, blood, soul, and divinity,” wrote Fr. Leykam in his jubilee program. “Over 20,000 times, I thank God, too, that he used me to teach, take care of the sick, preach, anoint, marry, and bury over 1,000 people in my lifetime.”

Those early years of ministry included teaching and coaching basketball for children and youth, working as a chaplain with young juvenile delinquents, and serving in a nursing home while in residence as pastor at Little Flower Church in Monroe, Louisiana.

“Our school, rectory, and the sisters’ houses were old army barracks,” recalled Fr. Leykam. “They were years that we had nothing, but truly had everything that counted. How good it is to have the Franciscan family.”

His dedication and faithful witness to Franciscan spirituality has been a welcome gift to the residents of St. Francis Village, a retirement community referred to by its 534 residents as “a little piece of heaven” near Fort Worth. Fr. Leykam, chaplain at the village since 1998, is a well-loved presence at the community’s daily Mass, numerous classes, potluck dinners, weekly Bible studies, and other activities.

“He’s been a really outstanding chaplain here,” said Judy Chesser, who also came to St. Francis Village in 1998. “He’s so understanding, compassionate, and kind. No one here is a stranger to him. He visits our classes and always has a smile for everyone.”

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Maronite bishops call for power to be in hands of Lebanese government

BERKE, Lebanon (CNS) — Lebanon’s Maronite Catholic bishops criticized their nation’s split in political authority and called for power to be in the hands of the Lebanese government.

“The hardships endured by the Lebanese during this war, which lasted over a month, have taught them that the double-headed political decision-making cannot go on and that a sole political decision-maker — the government that has the full trust of the democratically elected House of Representatives — must be in a position of authority, to avoid the dilution of responsibility and further catastrophes that would crush the country,” the bishops said in a statement issued after an Aug. 16 meeting in Berke, headquarters of the Maronite church in Lebanon.

Hezbollah — a political movement and a militia — remains strong in southern Lebanon. Hezbollah militia members have said they will not disarm, and the movement controls seats from southern Lebanon in the country’s parliament.

The bishops also noted that, although the Lebanese have welcomed the cease-fire in the Israeli-Hezbollah conflict, they remain concerned that U.N. Security Council Resolution 1701, which sought an end to the fighting, remains open to various interpretations. They did not elaborate.

French Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, Pope Benedict XVI’s special envoy to Lebanon, participated in the Aug. 16 meeting before he returned to Rome after a three-day visit. Cardinal Nasrallah P. Sfeir, Maronite patriarch, gave Cardinal Etchegaray a message of gratitude to present to Pope Benedict.

The bishops also expressed their gratitude to U.S. Cardinal Theodore E. McCarrick, retired archbishop of Washington, for his visit to Lebanon as well as to all the Catholic organizations worldwide that provided “such generous” help to the hundreds of thousands of Lebanese displaced by the war.

Pope prays for peace to prevail in Middle East and Druze

Aug. 11 passed a resolution calling for a cease-fire and for sending a 15,000-member international peacekeeping force into southern Lebanon.

Under the terms of the resolution, Lebanon also would send 15,000 of its own troops to the area to disarm the Hezbollah militias, and Israel would withdraw its troops from the Lebanese territory it invaded in an attempt to stop Hezbollah from firing rockets and mortars into Israel.

Although Israel, Lebanon, and Hezbollah accepted the cease-fire agreement, they each did so with conditions.

Speaking to pilgrims gathered for the recitation of the Angelus Aug. 13 in Castel Gandolfo, south of Rome, Pope Benedict said, “Everyone hopes that finally peace will prevail over violence and the force of weapons.”

Cardinal Nasrallah P. Sfeir, patriarch of the Maronite Catholic Church, told Vatican Radio Aug. 12 that there was a “strange atmosphere” in Lebanon after the U.N. Security Council vote but before Israel, Lebanon, and Hezbollah agreed to halt hostilities.

The Lebanese, he said, were feeling both “desolation” and hope.

While everyone hoped for a quick end to the fighting, the destruction created in a month of bombardments and the displacement of hundreds of thousands of Lebanese will make recovery difficult, the cardinal said.

“I hope that all those who were forced to flee can return soon, but unfortunately they will not find their houses, because everything has been destroyed. I think that initially we will have to shelter them in prefabricated houses or in tents until we can help them rebuild their houses,” he said.

A few hours before the Security Council adopted the cease-fire resolution Aug. 11, the Vatican’s representative to the U.N. Human Rights Council in Geneva decreed not only the loss of life and destruction of the fighting caused, but also its effects to peaceful coexistence among Lebanese Muslims, Christians, for one organization to handle, no matter how much money it has,” he said.

As many as a million people are on the move in Lebanon, returning to Lebanon and trying to move back in or seeking other shelter as they try to repair their houses.

In an Aug. 15 statement, CRS announced plans for an emergency response and rehabilitation program of at least $10 million for the Middle East region, including the Gaza Strip, northern Israel, and Lebanon.

CRS said it has assisted 85,000 out of the more than 900,000 people displaced from the war between Israel and the Hezbollah militia. The war left more than 1,200 dead in Lebanon and northern Israel.

AID TO LEBANON

— A worker from Doctors Without Borders helps move medical supplies across the Litani River, north of the port city of Tyre, in southern Lebanon Aug. 7. The only road that had crossed the river between Tyre and Sidon was destroyed by Israeli bombardment, essentially sealing off the rest of the country. (CNS photo/Zohra Bensemra, Reuters)

CRS has assisted more than 85,000 displaced from the war in Middle East

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decades has operated a charitable network, which was expanded as soon as Israel reacted to the militia’s kidnapping of two Israeli soldiers and its killing of others.

Snyder said a U.N.-related relief agency sent an assessment team into the Shiite neighborhoods of south Beirut as soon as the fighting ended, and the team was told that Hezbollah needed no help with its relief and reconstruction efforts.

White House spokesman Tony Snow told reporters in Washington Aug. 16 that Hezbollah reportedly was to receive more than $150 million from medical aid to help its reconstruction efforts, provide relief supplies, and give cash payments to those impacted by the fighting.

Snow said Hezbollah knowingly invited “billions of dollars of destruction into Lebanon ... and now they’re saying, ‘Oh, we’ll give you a little tiny, itty-bitty, fractional, tiny sliver of that money back in terms of cash payments.’ I’m sure the people will accept the cash, but they’re probably not all going to be all that deluded about the nature of the people who are delivering it.”

Snyder said that even if Hezbollah is using aid to try to win the hearts of the Lebanese people, it is not the role of Caritas Lebanon and the international agencies to use their aid as a counterenforcement.

“If Hezbollah is in one area handing out blankets, we don’t need to,” he said.

“The needs are way too big for one organization to handle, no matter how much money it has,” he said.

AID TO LEBANON

— A Lebanese family displaced by the conflict between Israel and Hezbollah waits in a van on the way to southern Lebanon from Beirut Aug. 14. Thousands of Lebanese refugees headed for the city from the rest of the country. (CNS photo/Sharif Karim, Reuters)

For years, aid groups have been critical of Hezbollah’s use of aid to support itself and supplement its income, but the latest accusations have been particularly intense.

Also critical of Hezbollah’s use of aid was Richard Snyder, CRS regional manager for the Middle East.

On a trip to Lebanon Aug. 15, Snyder said that even if Hezbollah was to receive aid, it would need to be carefully monitored.

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Pope discusses Middle East, morality in wide-ranging interview

By John Thavis
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In a lengthy TV and radio interview, Pope Benedict XVI called for an end to fighting in the Middle East and said he hopes to travel to the Holy Land “in a time of peace.”

The pope also explained some of the priorities of his papacy, saying he was convinced the church needs to frame its moral teachings in a positive way and shed the image of an institution that always says “no.”

The interview with German media was broadcast Aug. 13, eight days after it was recorded at the pope’s summer villa in Castel Gandolfo, Italy. It was aired in advance of the pope’s scheduled visit to his native Bavaria region of Germany Sept. 9-14. Translations of the German transcript were made available by the Vatican.

The pope addressed a wide range of topics, including ecumenical cooperation, the role of women in the church, and the unifying function of the papacy. He also offered some personal insights into the burdens of being pope.

“It really is tiring,” he said of his schedule. But the 79-year-old pontiff said he enjoyed the continual encounters with bishops, politicians, and other personalities “who want to talk to me personally.”

Despite having to live behind the Vatican walls, he said, “to tell the truth, I’m not that lonely.”

Seated on a gilded throne, the pope looked at ease as he fielded questions from four reporters, including a correspondent from Vatican Radio’s German program.

Asked about the situation in Lebanon, the pope said everyone has to realize that “war is the worst solution for all sides.” He expressed concern about the Christian community in Lebanon and warned of the danger of the emigration of Christians from the Lebanon, the pope said every-thing that sees the church “tumbling down.”

“It is a basic principle of a pope, he said: “I’m not a man who wants to talk to me personally.”

He also offered some personal insights into the burdens of being pope.

“I’d like to visit the Holy Land, and I hope to visit it in a time of peace,” he said.

The pope said that although he’s never felt strong enough to plan long trips he would do so if he feels he can “communicate a message.” He confirmed that he would visit Brazil next year for a meeting of Latin American bishops, saying his presence there would help “strengthen the hope that’s so alive in that part of the world.”

Asked why, during a recent visit to Spain, he didn’t specifically address hot-button issues like gay marriage or abortion, the pope said he wanted to present a positive message and not over-emphasize the negative.

“Christianity, Catholicism, isn’t a collection of prohibitions: It’s a positive option,” he said.

“We’ve heard so much about what is not allowed that now it’s time to say: We have a positive idea to offer, that man and woman are made for each other,” and that marriage develops as a “joyful and blessing-filled encounter between a man and a woman,” he said.

When the church does oppose social or political developments, he said, it should “say it first in a positive way” and make sure people understand, for example, that marriage between a man and a woman “is not a Catholic invention” but a value shared by all cultures.

The pope said the church’s basic challenge in modern so-ciety is to try to bridge the gap between technological progress and morality.

“Believe that the real problem of our historical moment lies in the imbalance between the in-credibly fast growth of our techni-cal power and that of our moral capacity, which has not grown in proportion,” he said.

“That’s why the formation of the human person is the true recipe, the key to it all, I would say, and this is what the church proposes,” he said.

He said teaching “know-how” is never enough.

“If we only teach how to build and to use machines and how to use contraceptives, then we shouldn’t be surprised when we find ourselves facing wars and AIDS epidemics. Because we need two dimensions: simultane-ously we need the formation of the heart,” he said.

In the battle against AIDS and other social ills, the pope suggested that the church’s role is misrepresented or misunder-stood as a negative one.

“We offer treatment, treatment to AIDS victims too, and we offer education, helping to establish good relationships with others. So I think we should correct that image that sees the church as spreading severe nos,” he said.

The pope said a basic problem afflicting Western society was a new wave of secularization and a loss of the sense of the sacred. Some African and Asian cultures, he said, are, “horrified” by the West’s rational approach and its coldness toward God.

He said the church needs to underline the church’s role is “beautiful” and show that the Christian faith in the West is an integrating force in society and not part of the “trash of history.”

On internal church matters, the pope said he planned to hold consistories regularly, convening cardinals to “discuss current problems together and look for solutions.” He said his frequent one-on-one talks with bishops also favor a mutual exchange.

Everyone knows the pope is “not an absolute monarch,” he said, but there’s a strong aware-ness that the church needs a uni-fying figure that can “guarantee independence from political powers” and make sure Christians don’t identify too much with nationalism.

The pope addressed several other topics:

— He said women have always had an important role in the church, but said the faith does not allow women’s ordination as priests. While noting that women today carry out important func-tions at the Vatican, he noted a juridical problem: Church law says the power to make legally binding decisions is limited to sacred orders.

— On the number of saints in the church, the pope said he had deliberately “decentralized” the beatification process, leaving such ceremonies to local church leaders so that local figures could inspire Catholics of that specific country or region. Those canon-ized, or declared saints, should be examples for the whole church, he said.

— The idea is to motivate people with models of holiness, without overloading them with too many figures.

“I can imagine some wonder-ful saints” about the lives of saints, he said.

— Speaking about relations with the Evangelical Church in Germany and about ecumen-ism in general, the pope said a priority today is for Christians to be more attuned and put into practice “ethical directives” in society. Moreover, Christians must also “witness to God in a world that has problems finding him,” he said, demonstrating their belief that “humanity is not an evolutionary product that turned out badly. We are the image of God.”

— Addressing a question about the role of humor in the life of a pope, he said: “I’m not a man who constantly thinks up jokes. But I think it’s very important to be able to see the funny side of life and its joyful dimension and not to take everything too tragically. I’d also say it’s necessary for my ministry.”

House passes bill to protect Pledge of Allegiance from federal court rulings

By Ben Gruber

It bars federal courts from ruling on constitutional issues surrounding the phrase “under God” in the Pledge of Alle-giance.

“I am thankful for the support of the House Republican leadership displayed during the passage of the Pledge Protection Act,” Akin said in a statement. The measure passed with a 260-167 vote, but The Associated Press reported it was not a cer-tainty the Senate would take up its version of the measure.

“Any thing that can be done to protect the Pledge of Allegiance with the words ‘under God’ is a good thing,” Pat Korten, spokesman for the Knights of Columbus, told Catholic News Service July 21.

The Knights have been at the forefront of legal action to fight efforts to eliminate the words “under God” from the pledge. The fraternal organization was a part of the successful 1954 effort to persuade Congress to add the reference to the pledge.

In 2002 the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in San Francisco declared that it was uncon-stitutional to recite the pledge in public schools if the reference to God remained in it. In 2004 the U.S. Supreme Court reversed the decision. But a new case was later filed in the 9th Circuit, and the Catholic News Service July 21.

Knights currently are working to defend the pledge in that court.

In June, the Knights filed a brief asking the court to reject the latest effort by a California atheist, Dr. Michael Newdow, and several other parents to have the Pledge declared unconstitutional. The Knights were given permission to join the case as a defendant.

The brief was filed by the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty on behalf of the Knights. Joining in the brief were six individual Knights and their families.

“The words ‘under God’ were not a newly minted phrase or idea that Congress added to the pledge in 1954 to achieve the effect of steering individuals to religion,” said the brief. “Instead, they served as a self-con-scious effort to echo and reaffirm a political philosophy that has animated this country through-out its history, and that is reflected in seminal documents like the Declaration [of Independence] and Gettysburg Address.”
Life is full of struggles, pope says, but believers possess hope

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (CNS) — Life is full of struggles and difficulties, but believers survive and even thrive by always keeping in mind the fact that life on earth is simply a prelude to eternal life, Pope Benedict XVI said.

With only 4,000 people requesting free tickets to the Aug. 16 audience, Pope Benedict was able to hold the gathering in the courtyard of his summer villa at Castel Gandolfo, rather than return to the Vatican for the morning.

The pope told his guests he wanted to continue focusing on the assumption of Mary, celebrated the previous day.

“The assumption evokes a mystery that interests each one of us,” he said, because the fact that Mary lives with God in heaven is a reminder that God created each person for eternal life with him.

Unfortunately, he said, people often are so overwhelmed by the daily events of their lives that they forget “this consoling spiritual reality, which constitutes an important truth of faith.”

“The assumption is that first step to healing. Living out the word that I’ve heard, on any given day, in some concrete way, is the cure for hypocrisy. And allowing God to move me from good intentions to fruitful action is the key to discipleship.”

“I am the resurrection and the life. The one who believes in me will live, even if he dies. And everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?”

CNS photo/Dario Pignatelli, Reuters

QUESTIONS:
What is one “word” of Jesus that you have heard repeatedly and done little or nothing to bring about? In what way have you behaved as a hypocrite?

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By Jeff Hedglen

Summer heat and visions of H, E, double-hockey-sticks

I keep having visions of a red, horned, pitchfork-wielding, flaming man, too comfortably at home in a lawn chair in my yellow, withering back yard.

Through this haze I was reminded of a time I came across a sign outside a local church on a typical hot summer day that read something like:

“If you are not a Christian, this is as cool as it’s going to get.”

It’s because I watch the news more often and see the five-day forecast with all 100 degree-plus temperatures, or maybe it’s just that I am older and affected by the heat more. But whatever the cause, the heat is getting to me. I think that the fact my outdoor thermometer has not seen the 70s – even at 4 a.m. or that my brand new A/C unit cannot cool my house to under 80 before 7:00 p.m. has warped my brain.

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Through this haze I was reminded of a time I came across a sign outside a local church on a typical hot summer day that read something like: “If you are not a Christian, this is as cool as it’s going to get.”

As you might have guessed, all this heat has got me thinking about hell. I have heard it described a number of ways. A former deacon at my church said hell was choosing yourself while on earth and receiving just that for eternity. Hell is classically said to be the total absence of God. In the New Testament, hell is often referred to as an unquenchable fire called Gehenna. And the Old Testament says that the wicked will “receive a punishment to match their thoughts” (Wisdom 3:10).

Any of the above is not a scene I long to endure for eternity. Yet just because I do not long for hell doesn’t mean it doesn’t exist, nor does it mean that I should totally ignore it. I think that keeping the reality of the possibility of hell, whatever form it may take, in mind, is a good exercise to engage in from time to time. In other words, I do not get into my bathing suit and lay out on a 106 degree day, yet I do spend in the sun reminds me how awesome the A/C is inside.

I am in no way suggesting we should spend hours contemplating the horrors of a life devoid of God. If you have hours of time to spend contemplating, by all means spend this time on the unfathomable, awesome, unending love of God most perfectly displayed in the person of Jesus.

Nevertheless, hell is just as real as heaven, and it is a place I do not want to spend eternity. Being reminded of this gives me incentive to redouble my efforts to make it to a cool place for the long forever. It’s kind of like making that special effort to find a parking space in the shade. It doesn’t take away from the reality of the temperature, but it is an act of faith that with a bit of effort on my part I can lessen the pull of the “heat” in my life and be focused on seeking a cooler climate—both now and forever.

By 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.
Monseñor Vann anuncia que la Diócesis no apelará decisión judicial de dar a la luz pública porciones de los expedientes de siete sacerdotes

Caracterizó la decisión como un cambio crucial hacia la sanación y reconciliación.
Una reflexión que los padres pueden compartir con sus hijos

Meditando en el regreso a la escuela

Por Pedro A. Moreno, OPL
Director, Instituto Luz de Cristo

Las vacaciones de verano de millones de estudiantes llegaron a su fin. Ya no se puede ir a la playa a los dos de la madrugada por estar viendo películas o por estar paseando por el Internet. No se puede seguir durmiendo hasta el mediodía ni volver a tomar una siesta por la tarde. Se acaba el tiempo de diversión. Comenzó el tiempo para que nuestros jóvenes vuelvan a tomar sus respectivas cruces para seguir creciendo y madurando. Cruces que darán buenos frutos.

Los cruces a las que me estoy refiriendo son varias. Las cruces de volver a dormir temprano para despertarse temprano, las cruces de regresar al estudio y lectura de los libros y las cruces de las diversas tareas escolares. También me refiero a las cruces de la buena alimentación y ejercicio diario, no solo dulces, comida rápida, y descanso.

Crecer y madurar no es fácil. Ninguna de estas dos realidades pueden ocurrir sin soltar algunas lágrimas o pasar por algunos momentos difíciles. Todo crecimiento, sea físico, mental, emocional, cognoscitivo, espiritual o de cualquier otro tipo, será siempre un crecimiento que traen diversos dolores. Nacer, crecer y madurar, en fin la vida misma, siempre traerá alegrías y dolores. El dolor es desagradable pero Dios nos ha dado todo lo necesario para poder manejar estos dolores.

Un ejemplo de crecimiento y maduración difícil y dolorosa es el de la langosta. Este animal de aguas saladas tiene un caparazón sólido y fuerte. Su caparazón lo protege de la hostilidad de las aguas saladas. Mientras la langosta crece su caparazón se queda igual. Llega un momento donde ya no cabe la langosta en su caparazón y da la vuelta, la langosta lleva a cabo una mudanza o cambio. Al soltar el caparazón su piel queda expuesta, sin protección alguna a las aguas intensamente salinas hasta el momento en que se vuelva a desarrollar un nuevo caparazón.

Es un proceso doloroso para la langosta. Solo tienen que imaginarse como se sentirían si alguien les echaran sal a una herida abierta. La piel expuesta a las aguas intensamente saladas para la langosta es para la langosta una situación muy hostilidad de las aguas saladas. Mientras la langosta crece su caparazón se queda igual. Llega un momento donde ya no cabe la langosta en su caparazón y la deja atrás, la langosta lleva a cabo una mudanza o cambio. Al soltar el caparazón su piel queda expuesta, sin protección alguna a las aguas intensamente salinas hasta el momento en que se vuelva a desarrollar un nuevo caparazón.

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El movimiento de Jezbolá de musulmanes chiflados, además de contar con un ala militar y de agua sana, es el de la langosta. Este animal de aguas saladas tiene un caparazón sólido y fuerte. Su caparazón lo protege de la hostilidad de las aguas saladas. Mientras la langosta crece su caparazón se queda igual. Llega un momento donde ya no cabe la langosta en su caparazón y da la vuelta, la langosta lleva a cabo una mudanza o cambio. Al soltar el caparazón su piel queda expuesta, sin protección alguna a las aguas intensamente salinas hasta el momento en que se vuelva a desarrollar un nuevo caparazón.

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Mientras CRS trabaja junto con Caritas del Líbano, la organización local humanitaria más grande del Líbano no participa en los esfuerzos de coordinación. El movimiento de Jezbolá de musulmanes chiflados, además de contar con un ala militar y de agua sana, es el de la langosta. Este animal de aguas saladas tiene un caparazón sólido y fuerte. Su caparazón lo protege de la hostilidad de las aguas saladas. Mientras la langosta crece su caparazón se queda igual. Llega un momento donde ya no cabe la langosta en su caparazón y la deja atrás, la langosta lleva a cabo una mudanza o cambio. Al soltar el caparazón su piel queda expuesta, sin protección alguna a las aguas intensamente salinas hasta el momento en que se vuelva a desarrollar un nuevo caparazón.

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No olvidemos que Cristo mudó su caparazón. A ese día lo llamamos Pasqua de Resurrección, un día que todavía nos está dando muy buenos frutos. Un día que nos sigue llenando de esperanza.

Pedro Moreno es director diocesano del Instituto Luz de Cristo. Sus escritos espirituales han recibido premios de la Asociación de Periodismo Católico de los Estados Unidos y Canadá. Vive en el noroeste de Fort Worth con su esposa María Marta y sus tres hijas María, Patricia y Mirangela. Pedro es Laico Dominico.
En amplia entrevista el Papa discute Oriente Medio, moralidad

Por John Thavis

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — En una larga entrevista de radio y televisión el Papa Benedicto XVI hizo un llamado a terminar el combate en el Oriente Medio y dijo que él tiene la esperanza de viajar a Tierra Santa “en tiempos de paz”.

El papa también explicó algunas de las prioridades de su papado diciendo que está convencido que la iglesia necesita delinear sus enseñanzas morales de una manera positiva y despojarse de la imagen de una institución que siempre dice “no”.

La entrevista con los medios alemanes fue difundida el 13 de agosto, ocho días después de que fue grabada en la villa de verano del papa en Castel Gandolfo, Italia. Esta fue transmitida con antelación a la visita del Papa a su región nataliva de Baviera, Alemania, programada para el 9 al 14 de septiembre. El Vaticano puso a disponibilidad traducciones de la transcripción alemana al italiano y al inglés.

El Papa trató una amplia gama de tópicos, incluyendo la cooperación ecuménica, el rol de las mujeres en la iglesia y la función unificadora del papado. Él también ofreció algunas opiniones personales sobre las cargas de ser papa.

“Es realmente agotador”, dijo él de su programa. Pero el pontífice de 79 años de edad dijo que él disfruta del encuentro continuo con obispos, políticos y otras personalidades “que desean hablar personalmente conmigo”.

Al preguntársele sobre la situación en El Líbano, el papa dijo que todos tenemos que darnos cuenta que “la guerra es la peor solución para todos los bandos”. Él expresó preocupación por la comunidad cristiana en El Líbano y advirtió sobre el peligro de la emigración de cristianos de la región completa.

“Yo quisiera visitar Tierra Santa y tengo la esperanza de visitarla en tiempos de paz”, dijo él.

El Papa dijo que aunque él nunca se ha sentido lo suficientemente fuerte como para planificar muchos viajes largos él lo haría si él creyese que puede “comunicar un mensaje”. Él confirmó que visitará Brasil el año próximo para una reunión de los obispos latinoamericanos, diciendo que su presencia allí ayudaría “a fortalecer la esperanza que está tan viva en esa parte del mundo”.

Al preguntársele porque durante una visita reciente a España él no trató específicamente asuntos volátiles como el matrimonio homosexual o el aborto, el Papa dijo que él deseaba presentar un mensaje positivo y no acentuar demasiado lo negativo.

“El cristianismo, el catolicismo, no es una colección de prohibiciones: es una opción positiva”, dijo él.

Cuando la iglesia sí se opone a desarrollos sociales o políticos, dijo él, ésta debe “decirlo primero de una manera positiva” y cerciorarse de que la gente entienda, por ejemplo, que el matrimonio entre un hombre y una mujer “no es invención católica”, sino un valor compartido por todas las culturas.

El Papa dijo que el reto básico de la iglesia en la sociedad moderna es intentar cerrar la brecha entre el progreso tecnológico y la moralidad.

“Creo que el verdadero problema en nuestro momento histórico está en el desequilibrio entre el crecimiento increíblemente rápido de nuestro poder técnico y nuestra capacidad moral, la cual no ha crecido en proporción”, dijo.

“Si enseñamos solamente cómo fabricar y utilizar máquinas y cómo usar los anticonceptivos entonces no debemos sorprendernos cuando nos encontramos enfrentando guerras y epidemias del SIDA”, dijo él.

En la batalla contra el SIDA y otras enfermedades sociales el Papa sugirió que el rol de la iglesia es mal representado o malentendido como uno negativo.

“Ofrecemos tratamiento a las víctimas del SIDA, y ofrecemos educación, ayudando a establecer buenas relaciones con los demás”, dijo él.

Todos saben que el papa “no es un monarca absoluto”, dijo él, pero hay una fuerte conciencia de que la iglesia necesita una figura unificadora que pueda “garantizar la independencia de los poderes políticos” y cerciorarse que los cristianos no se identifiquen demasiado con el nacionalismo.

Él dijo que las mujeres han tenido siempre un rol importante en la iglesia, pero dijo que la fe no permite la ordenación de las mujeres como sacerdotes.

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‘Creo que el verdadero problema en nuestro momento histórico está en el desequilibrio entre el crecimiento increíblemente rápido de nuestro poder técnico y nuestra capacidad moral, la cual no ha crecido en proporción’.

—El Papa Benedicto XVI
By Cindy Wooden
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As the 28th anniversary of Pope John Paul I’s brief pontificate approached, one of the priests working on his sainthood cause said the paperwork would be sent to the Vatican by the end of the year.

Cardinal Albino Luciani of Venice, Italy, was elected Aug. 26, 1978, to succeed Pope Paul VI. As Pope John Paul I, he served just over a month, dying Sept. 28.

The diocesan phase of his cause for sainthood formally opened in 2003 in his home diocese of Belluno and Feltre, Italy.

Vatican Radio reported that Msgr. Giorgio Lise, vice postulator of the cause, said Aug. 17 that 170 witnesses already had been interviewed about the late pope’s life and ministry, and the last remaining interviews would be conducted by early November.

A formal biography and the witnesses’ testimony will be sent to the Congregation for Saints’ Causes by the end of the year, he said.

The postulators already had forwarded to the Vatican information about a southern Italian man who believes he was cured of cancer through the intervention of Pope John Paul, Msgr. Lise said.

The monsignor said the congregation found the material about the alleged miracle “interesting” and asked for more information, which was sent.

“We are awaiting their response, but we are optimistic,” Msgr. Lise said.

Vatican Radio said that on average the congregation takes 10 years to complete its historical and theological examinations of the submitted material, but approval of Pope John Paul’s beatification, a major step toward sainthood, could come more quickly if the miracle is recognized.

Over-the-counter sales of Plan B would be detrimental to minors, says bishops’ attorney

FROM PAGE 1

dangerous would not have the benefit of any clinical advice to alert them to the risks.”

McQuade also said FDA approval of over-the-counter sales would allow “place additional pressure on pharmacists who conscientiously object to dispensing drugs that kill humans at their earliest stages of development.”

Barr Pharmaceuticals originally had sought approval for over-the-counter sales of Plan B to anyone 16 or over. Then-FDA Commissioner Lester M. Crawford announced in August 2005 that the agency would not grant such a proposal and set a 60-day period for comment. Crawford resigned his post that October.

Dr. Andrew von Eschenbach, acting FDA commissioner, said in a July 31 letter to Duramed that the agency “is not satisfied with the approximately 47,000 comments, and ‘we concur with the overwhelming majority of the comments ... that it is not necessary to engage in rulemaking to resolve the novel regulatory issues raised by your application.’”

In a comment on behalf of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Mark Chopko, USCCB general counsel, said over-the-counter sales of Plan B “would be injurious to many — children and adults, as well as health care providers and professionals.”

Chopko said any effort to restrict over-the-counter sales of the morning-after pill to those over the age of 16 would be doomed to failure.

“We believe, as we stated in previously filed comments, that permitting the over-the-counter sale of Plan B would be detrimental to minors [and adults] notwith-standing any effort to limit marketing to adults,” he wrote.

“As a practical matter,” he added, “a minor could procure the drug indirectly through a nonparental adult, or might obtain it directly as a result of lax enforcement by the pharmacy, misrepresentation, or theft.”

In his letter to Duramed, Von Eschenbach said the issues remaining to be resolved in discussions with the pharmaceutical company include the marketing, education, distribution, and monitoring of over-the-counter sales of the drug.

Under Duramed’s plan, the over-the-counter version of Plan B “would not be available at gas stations, convenience stores, etc., but only to those pharmacies agreeing to (1) keep the OTC version of the drug behind the pharmacy counter and (2) dispense the drug only upon the production of a valid photo identification card establishing the age of the consumer,” the FDA official said.

The agency wants to “learn more about your plan to routinely monitor these pharmacies” and is “very interested in learning how you plan on enforcing the restrictions if a pharmacy fails to comply with them,” he added.

“If after our discussions we conclude that the [Duramed plan] isn’t sufficiently rigorous to prevent the OTC version of Plan B from being used by young girls ... Plan B will remain prescription-only for women of all ages,” von Eschenbach said.

In a news release, the FDA said it hoped the discussion process “can be wrapped up in a matter of weeks.”
Disabled seek bishops’ support for community living law

WASHINGTON (CNS) — More than 30 people in wheelchairs occupied the lobby of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops for an hour July 27 in an effort to get USCCB backing for a federal law that would help many people with disabilities live in their communities instead of in nursing homes.

The demonstrators were members of Adapt, a national organization that fights for disabilities rights.

After demonstrating for an hour and meeting briefly with top USCCB officials, who agreed to a follow-up meeting, the group left.

Cassie James of Philadelphia, who led the group in several chants, told Catholic News Service that Adapt “is fighting for real choice” for many people with disabilities who would be able to leave nursing homes if Medicare and Medicaid funding were not biased in favor of the institutionalization of those with disabilities.

The group was seeking support for the Medicaid Community Based Attendant Services and Support Act, which the demonstrators referred to by the shortened name MCASSA. The bill has been introduced in both houses of Congress.

“It’s time for change, not charity,” James said.

She led the group in a back-and-forth chant: “What do we want?” “We want MCASSA!” “When do we want it?” “We want it now!”

She added: “Our homes, not nursing homes!”

Kathleen Kleinmann, who has muscular dystrophy, told CNS she worked for Catholic Charities of the Pittsburgh Diocese as its Washington County director in 1986-87 but left to start her own nonprofit center for independent living there. The center “is now a $6 million operation,” she said.

Compared with nursing home care, “giving the basic services needed (for people with disabilities to live independently) is not expensive, but it is essential,” she said. “The church could be in the forefront.”

She said Adapt was formed in 1982 to campaign for wheelchair access on buses. When it won that fight in 1990, it turned to the independent living issue. But she said the Catholic Church has not been giving that issue “the kind of response we think it deserves.”

Philadelphia Eileen Sabel, who said her friends call her “Spitfire,” described nursing homes as “death camps.”

The demonstrators began gathering in the lobby of the bishops’ national headquarters shortly before 1 p.m. Promptly at 1 p.m. they began singing “Amazing Grace” followed by chants for MCASSA, for “change, not charity” and for “justice, not charity.”

About 1:40 p.m. Msgr. David J. Malloy, USCCB general secretary, and Nancy Wisdo, USCCB associate general secretary, came to meet the group. No accompanying them were Msgr. Francis J. Maniscalco, USCCB secretary for communications, and Janice LaLonde Benton, executive director of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, whose offices are next door to USCCB headquarters.

They listened as James and others described the concerns they wanted addressed and what they described as a lack of responsiveness from Catholic officials on the MCASSA legislation, on which the USCCB has not taken a position. A couple of speakers also complained about the lack of hands-on accessibility in some Catholic churches.

Wisdo volunteered to set up a time to discuss the issues more fully, saying she would also like to include the Catholic disability office and the Catholic Health Association in the discussion.

Benton, who has been with the Catholic disability agency since it was formed in 1982, said she would like to work with Adapt and assist it in getting the voices of the disabled heard more widely.

Msgr. Maniscalco told CNS later the demonstrators he talked with seemed to share a spirit of goodwill that would be marred by one woman who told him, “This demonstration is kind of a compliment to you because we think you can really make a difference on something like this.”

“They really were looking for the church to assist them in a matter that’s extremely important to them,” he said.

During the demonstration Anita Cameron of Washington told CNS she grew up Catholic and got interested in social justice through the church.

“The Catholic Church has a long, long history of social justice,” she said, but she finds it “dishheartening” that the church does not pay more attention to the civil and human rights of those with disabilities. “We’re participating members of society, too.”

Bob Kafka of Austin, a national organizer of Adapt, said there has been a bias toward institutionalization of the disabled in Medicare and Medicaid since the programs were established in 1965.

When the money gets short, states cut back first on the community-based programs that would free people with disabilities to stay out of nursing homes, he said.

“It’s a civil rights issue,” he added.
New Orleans Archbishop Hughes reflects on Katrina’s lessons, further challenges

By Peter Finney Jr.
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For New Orleans
Archbishop
Alfred C. Hughes, the first anniversary of Hurricane Katrina elicits tears and emotionally charged flashbacks.

The tears still come 12 months later when he speaks of encounters with Katrina survivors at a Baton Rouge shelter who shared with him their life-and-death stories, their enduring faith, and their raw anger.

When Archbishop Hughes walked into the shelter two days after Katrina inundated 80 percent of the city of New Orleans, a Red Cross representative asked him to speak to an insomniac Lower 9 Ward resident.

The man told the archbishop about rushing to his attic with his wife after the levee burst and hacking a hole in the roof to escape the surging tide. When the man tried to lift his wife, she became paralyzed with fear and slipped from his grasp into the water.

“I dove down and grabbed onto her shirt, and she slipped out of her shirt. That was the last I saw of her,” he told the archbishop.

Archbishop Hughes said the man was “consumed with anger” and could not eat. “He had a hard time even talking,” he said. “I just tried to listen and tried to incorporate into a prayer some of the depression and anger and confusion he obviously was feeling.”

A year later, the archbishop said he is aware of the high level of frustration, anger, and depression many survivors are experiencing because of the slow pace of recovery.

That is where the church can play a healing role, he told the Clarion Herald, archdiocesan newspaper of New Orleans.

“I know there’s a lot of depression and free-floating anger that gets focused on anyone who is a convenient target,” Archbishop Hughes said. “We’re going to have a very important role as church to help people move from being victims to being victors, and that’s going to be a challenge.

“Some people may choose to remain victims, but that para-lyzes and polarizes,” he added. “If we’re going to be victors, we need to marshal our energies and positive attitudes and work together in accordance with our own abilities to try to accomplish something bigger and better.”

To illustrate his point, he used the example of a woman he met at a shelter immediately after Katrina. The woman held up a grocery bag telling him it was all she was able to rescue of her belongings.

“The Lord has given, and the Lord has taken away,” she told him. “The Lord has taken away. I guess extraordinary prayer.”

“It was real. It was where she was, but it was coming out of her faith and a desire to reconnect with God,” he said. Katrina’s devastation – more than 1,500 deaths and the destruction of 200,000 homes in the metropolitan New Orleans area — crossed all racial, ethnic, and economic lines. The archdiocese sustained $225 million in damage to its properties — $145 million in flood damage and $80 million in wind damage — and $120 million of that was uninsured flood loss.

Seven of the worst-hit areas in the archdiocese developed a pastoral plan that closed six parishes and delayed the reopening of 23 others until there is a pastoral need for some of them to reopen.

While the archdiocese has implemented its plan for the next 18 months, Archbishop Hughes expressed regret that the community-wide plan he helped develop as part of Mayor Ray Nagin’s 17-member Bring New Orleans Back Commission was met with criticism and essentially shelved.

“I have said a number of times that we have to do everything we can — and I commit the Catholic Church to doing this — to make it possible for anyone who previously lived in New Orleans to come back. We need to develop a community that is more welcoming to people of different races and economic backgrounds.”

One of the major initiatives backed by the archdiocese is Providence Community Housing, that hopes to renovate or build 7,000 housing units in the metropolitan New Orleans area.

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Inside... This issue of the NTC

In their 71 years tending to the health needs of the Wichita Falls area, the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth brought medical care wrapped in the love of God.

Our honor graduates amaze us with the variety of the services they’ve offered, the breadth of their interests, and the height of their achievements.

Jeff Hedglen conveys a sense of this year’s Camp Fort Worth experiences, shaped by phrases from the Lord’s Prayer.