Pope urges Czechs to regain values that inspired fight for freedom

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

PRAGUE, Czech Republic — Commemorating the 20th anniversary of the peaceful revolt that brought down the country’s communist regime, Pope Benedict XVI urged people in the Czech Republic to rediscover the spiritual and moral values that sustained their struggle for freedom.

In gatherings Sept. 26-28 with political, social, cultural, and religious leaders as well as the Catholic faithful, the pope delivered a message of hope meant to inspire both the country’s majority of nonbelievers and the minority Catholic community.

Central to his message was that no society, no matter how prosperous, could ever maintain a healthy and ethical sense of freedom without guidance from the truth found in God and the wisdom of faith.

The pope’s trip to Prague, Brno, and Stara Boleslav was his 13th trip abroad and his seventh to Europe. The fact that more than half of his apostolic journeys so far have been to Europe reflects his deep concern for revitalizing the continent’s Christian heritage.

“True freedom presupposes the search for truth — for the truth found in God and in the wise counsel of the Church. This is the path of freedom,” he said in an address to the Czech Senate Sept. 27.

Bishops say health reform should include all immigrants

By Chaz Muth
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Though Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, New York, concedes there’s no political will in Washington to include illegal immigrants in health care reform, he believes it’s the country’s moral obligation to ensure that everyone in the nation receives proper medical care.

That includes those who enter the country illegally, he told Catholic News Service in mid-September.

“I agree that there is a special problem with those who have entered here without the permission of the United States, and that has to be looked at,” said Bishop Murphy, who chairs the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development. “But that’s a problem unto itself.”

Most U.S. Catholic bishops who have spoken publicly about health care reform have expressed the opinion that one of the richest countries in the world should find a way to guarantee that everyone within its borders has access to medical care, from conception to natural death.

Several Hispanic bishops met with members of the House and Senate Sept. 17 to convey their concern that immigrants — legal and illegal — might be left out of health reform.

Bishop Jaime Soto of Sacramento, California, said that in addition to President Barack Obama’s pledge not to provide government-funded care to people in the country illegally, concerns have been expressed that even legal immigrants might be left out of the system.

Bishop Soto said the exclusion of government-supported insurance for undocumented immigrants is an issue with which the bishops might disagree, but could concede as a political necessity. But the legislation “has to be looked at,” he said.

SEE BISHOPS, P. 21

Recession drives 10 percent more to seek Catholic Charities assistance

By Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service

WOODBRIDGE, Va. — In a time of recession, Sondra knows she and her 4-year-old daughter Hope could be on the street.

Forced to flee an abusive relationship with her husband, Sondra, 45, who asked that her last name not be used, had nowhere to turn. Her time at the emergency shelter was limited. While Sondra had a job as a custodian at a local church, there was no way she could afford an apartment. There was no chance of moving back home, even if she and her husband could reconcile; their home had gone into foreclosure.

Enter St. Margaret of Cortona Transitional Residences in Woodbridge, Virginia. It’s where Sondra and Hope now have a home.

It’s a peaceful, cozy, and most importantly, safe place where they can enjoy dinner every evening. It’s where they can read and play and learn together.

For Sondra, the new home is a godsend, far better than her old life — the one that revolved around smoking crack and binge drinking mixed with beatings by her husband.

“I love it here,” she said.

A program of Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, the residence brings stability to nine single mothers and their children, most of whom have escaped domestic violence. The residence brings stability to nine single mothers and their children, most of whom have escaped domestic violence.

SEE CHARITIES, P. 14

Fr. Jasso honored for work with Mexican immigrants

On Sept. 15, Father Stephen Jasso, TOR, pastor of All Saints Parish in Fort Worth, received the Ohtli award from the Institute for Mexicans Abroad (Instituto de los Mexicanos en el Exterior) organization. Alberto Bernal, alternate consul for the Mexican Consulate in Dallas, presented the award at the consulate.

Fr. Stephen Jasso, TOR, receives the Ohtli award from the Institute for Mexicans Abroad. Alberto Bernal, alternate consul for the Mexican Consulate in Dallas, presents the award at the consulate.

SEE ALL SAINTS, P. 2
Pope urges Czechs to share light of Gospel with others

**FROM PAGE 1**

Sept. 26 with diplomats and political, civil, religious, and cultural leaders in Prague's presidential palace.

Under the soaring gilded stucco ceilings of the palace, the pope reminded his audience that the country's hard-fought freedom must be properly used. Leaders in society have the duty to encourage citizens to seek the truth and goodness, he said.

"Jointly we must engage in the struggle for freedom and faith, which either go together, hand in hand, or together they perish in misery," the pope said.

He urged people "to apply their faith respectfully yet decisively in the public arena" so that the truth and wisdom of faith could light the path of human progress.

"Far from threatening the tolerance of differences or cultural plurality, the pursuit of truth makes consensus possible, keeps public debate logical, honest, and accountable" and ensures a society that is united and dedicated to the common good, he said.

The Czech Republic represents a unique challenge for the church. Some 60 percent of the population claims to profess no religious belief — staking it the most secular country in Europe.

The largest faith community on the landscape is the Catholic Church, but Catholics are still only 30 percent of all inhabitants, and only a small percent say they are active members of the Church.

The pope told journalists aboard the papal flight to Prague "that normally those who determine the future are the creative minority," and he said this applies to European countries like the Czech Republic.

"The Catholic Church must see itself as a creative minority that has a heritage of values that are not passe but are alive and relevant," he said.

At a welcoming ceremony at Prague's airport, the pope said the 40 years of an atheist totalitarian regime could not be underestimated. The flame of faith has been kept alive thanks to the many "courageous martyrs whose fidelity to Christ spoke louder and more eloquently than the voice of their executioners," he said.

At an outdoor Mass Sept. 28 to celebrate the feast of St. Wenceslas, the patron saint of the Czech Republic, the pope said bearing witness to the Gospel was not easy.

"It is not enough to appear good and honest: One must truly be so. And the good and honest person is the one who does not obscure God's light with his own ego, does not put himself forward, but allows God to shine through," the pope said in his homily.

Sometimes it seems there is little motivation to put Christ first when so many people who exclude God from their lives and show no respect for others end up reaching the highest pinacles of power or achieve great success, he said.

But "one need only scratch the surface to realize how sad and unfulfilled these people are," and history points to many powerful figures in history who all of a sudden were stripped of their power, he said.

Some 40,000 people assembled for the outdoor Mass in a large field in Stara Boleslav. The town, 15 miles northeast of Prague, represents the spiritual heart of Bohemia and the origin of Czech statehood.

Every year on Sept. 28 patriotic sentiment and religious devotion merge as citizens take part in a pilgrimage to Stara Boleslav, where St. Wenceslas, a 10th-century prince credited with bringing Christianity to the Czech people, was murdered by his brother.

The Mass seemed like a mini-World Youth Day celebration as past youth day theme songs were sung and thousands of young people cheered and waved the flags of various countries. Many slept overnight in tents and some even came by water on rafts from a small town three miles away.

After the Mass, the pope told the young people that Christ "knocks on the door of your freedom and asks to be welcomed as a friend." While young people are often led astray by "illusory visions" of happiness, he said, only Christ can satisfy the human desire for happiness and meaning in life.

Addressing students and scholars at Prague’s Hradcany Castle Sept. 27, the pope said education is not merely "the accumulation of knowledge or skills" and must include forming the human conscience so that the individual seeks to live a virtuous and ethical life.

The pope highlighted his concern for families and children during his visit Sept. 26 to the Church of Our Lady of Victory, where he venerated the Infant of Prague.

Kneeling before the 18-inch-high statue, which draws 2 million pilgrims a year, the pope gave a special blessing for all the children of the world and appealed for increased attention to children in difficulty. The holy infant recalls the beauty of childhood, he said.

"Yes, how many children are neither loved, nor welcomed, nor respected. How many of them suffer violence and every kind of exploitation by the unscrupulous," he said.

There was not much public sign of the pope’s presence in Prague, with few posters and very few banners along the routes taken by the papal motorcade. Much of the city had emptied out for the three-day holiday weekend, perhaps spurred by dire warnings of traffic snarls during the papal visit.

But the papal visit drew Catholics from all over the Czech nation and from neighboring Austria, Slovakia, Germany, and Poland, specifically for the outdoor Mass Sept. 27 in the Moravian diocese of Brno. Some 140 miles southeast of Prague. Local organizers said 120,000 people attended the event, making it the largest Mass ever celebrated in the Czech Republic.

Gathered on a mowed hayfield at the airport, they waved flags and cheered when the pope’s plane landed. Some pilgrims wore colorful traditional dress, while others sported backpacks and pedaled bicycles to get to the event.

The pope’s homily focused on hope and how "the hope of truth and reliable hope is founded on God."

"History has demonstrated the absurdities to which man descends when he excludes God from the horizon of his choices and actions, and how hard it is to build a society inspired by the values of goodness, justice, and fraternity" he said.

The country is free of oppression, but people still need to be freed "from the evils that afflict the spirit," and saved from the poverty of isolation, despair, and egoism, he said.

During a vespers service Sept. 26 in Prague’s St. Vitus Cathedral, the pope encouraged the Catholic community to bear witness to the Gospel even though it was not easy to do in a country still scarred by atheism and often seduced by hedonistic consumerism and cultural relativism.

Monsignor Tomas Roule, secretary to Prague’s archbishop, Cardinal Miloslav Vlk, told Catholic News Service that the younger generations are getting used to the idea of being open about their faith.

He said those who have not experienced communism’s hostility toward and persecution of religion are finding “it’s now coming to be normal to believe” in God. He said people see how easily and openly Christians in the United States express their beliefs and that proves to Czech Christians that faith is nothing out of the ordinary or to be ashamed of.

**Fr. Jasso’s service to Church and Fort Worth community is honored**

**FROM PAGE 1**

ceremony and reception, praised the priest — a native of Waco whose parents were born in San Luis Potosi, Mexico — for his years of tireless efforts to assist immigrants with their most basic needs.

Fr. Jasso is such a role model for all of us, as priests,” said the bishop. “He is truly an icon, and a source of encouragement and inspiration. He is a credit to his religious community and to our diocese.

Fr. Jasso, 77, an Army veteran of the Korean War, joined the Third Order Regular Franciscans in 1957, and was ordained to the priesthood in Rome in 1965 after completing theology studies in Rome at the Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas (the Angelicum).

He served as a missionary in Peru and also served in Mexico as religious superior of his congregation during the 24 years he spent in pastoral ministry while in Mexico. He was director of the IFEM (Instituto Franciscano de Espiritualidad en Mexico) for eight years and earned an MBA from the College of High Graduates (Colegio de Graduados en Alta Dirección) in Mexico in 1993. He has served as pastor of All Saints Church since 1994.

A writer for the Fort Worth Spanish newspaper La Estrella, Fr. Jasso has served in a leadership capacity within the Diocese of Fort Worth, as a board member for several civic organizations; and has participated in numerous leadership summits in Washington, D.C. He currently serves as a member of the advisory board of Congresswoman Kay Granger and of the Salud Council of John Peter Smith Hospital in Fort Worth. He was named an Outstanding Texas Role Model by Fort Worth Mayor Mike Moncrief in April 2002.

“I am very happy to have received this award and even happier with God to have Bishop Yann present with me on such a special day in my life,” said Fr. Jasso, upon receiving the Offii award, which means “path” in the Nhuatl language. “I thank the other leaders who [during the past 15 years] we’ve been working with to help the community … and I thank my parishioners who have also joined me here today.”
Sacred Heart celebrates fourth annual Family Day in the Park in Muenster

"Balloonytick Betty" amazes young and old with her balloon art. She has an impressive list of animals and other things that she sculpts into shape with balloons.

Sacred Heart Church in Muenster held its fourth annual Family Day in the Park Sunday, Sept. 20, sponsored by the parish's Unity and Fellowship Committee. The event's purpose is to draw members of the Muenster community together for a day of fun and fellowship, committee members said.

After a week of bountiful rain, sunshine greeted participants on Sunday. About 450 people gathered in the Muenster Park including Bishop Kevin Vann of the Diocese of Fort Worth. Father Ken Robinson, pastor of Sacred Heart, led the meal prayer before everyone feasted on the covered dish meal.

The Muenster High School Honor Society served the drinks, and St. Anne's Society dished up the desserts. Snacks and treats were offered throughout the day: Boy Scouts from Troop 664 spun cotton candy, and the Muenster High School cheerleaders served snow cones. Children bounced, slid, climbed, and bounced again on four different bounce houses. Many rode around the Park on a train driven by Herbie Schmidlkoter.

The children were able to have their faces painted by Sacred Heart cheerleaders, and bingo games were offered to everyone.

Muenster's First Baptist Church held a "Basketball Throwdown" open to everybody.

Come join 40 Days for Life

By Father Kyle Walterscheid

S o you say you haven’t been part of the Pro-Life movement? Do you also say you just don’t get it? Do you say that it’s not for you? Do you say that it’s too controversial? To stand up for principles of faith and truth is to be an adult; not to do so is to play games and politics, whether you’re coming from the left or the right.

The 40 Days for Life campaign (www.40daysforlife.com) is a Christian grassroots movement designed to make a direct impact, through prayer and fasting in a public manner, against the abortion industry that has claimed the lives of almost 50 million unborn babies since the legalization of abortion on January 22, 1973. A health care industry that was founded on Christian principles of healing through prayer and medicine has turned against the health of women and exploited them when they are most vulnerable, legally murdering their children and mortally wounding the mothers’ psyches.

I wrote a poem in 2005 that, in part, speaks of this reality and our lack of response:

With no help and no support from you, then just what is a young pregnant mother to do? So many pregnant mothers turn to the only hands they see, people who convince them, “It’s only a fetus and not a baby in thee.”

This year in our city, 10,000 precious babies were created by God’s law; these precious babies came to life even when they were unplanned. 10,000 precious babies were murdered in the name of choice, but their mothers are left to silently suffer and years without a voice.

But many of you consider yourselves somewhere in between the pro-life and pro-choice movements. I suppose that you think that abortion should be limited or a last resort (86 percent of Americans last year, according to the Knights of Columbus and Marist Poll, hold this position) or performed only in the case of incest, rape, or when the mother’s life is endangered, or not at all (60 percent).

However, I ran across another poll that may make you think twice about washing your hands like Pontius Pilate. I seek peace here, but let’s test your thoughts. Would you consider abortion in the following situations?

1. There’s a preacher and wife who are very, very poor. They already have 14 kids. Now she finds out she’s pregnant with her 15th. Considering their poverty, and the excessive world population, would you consider recommending she get an abortion?

2. The father is sick with an illness; the mother has tuberculosis. They have four children. The first is blind, the second had died, the third is deaf, and the fourth has TB. She finds she’s pregnant again. Given the extreme situation, would you consider recommending abortion?

3. A white man raped a 13-year-old black girl and she got pregnant. If you were her parents, would you consider recommending abortion?

4. A teenage girl is pregnant. She’s not married. Her fiance is not the father of the baby, and he’s very upset.

Would you consider recommending abortion?

In the first case, you have just killed John Wesley, one of the great evangelists in the 19th century. In the second case, you have killed Beethoven. In the third case, you have killed Ethel Waters, the great black gospel singer. If you said yes to the fourth case, you have just cast your vote for the murder of Jesus Christ.

God may very well have placed in our midst great diseases, leaders to resolve global controversies, or priests to past our churches, but they were aborted because you and I did not feel a need to hand women in need. Can your conscience let you sit on the sidelines any longer?

Events like the 40 Days For Life have helped me to see that spiritual leaders and fathers in the support of mothers and unborn babies. College students from every college in the Metropole are banding together to discuss real-life issues as they testify to the culture of life that surrounds them. Many families have come to the sidewalks adjacent to the abortion mills to give public witness through silent prayer that abortion is not the answer and to ask God to help us support unwed mothers and to create a culture of life that sees unborn children and all human life as invaluable and inalienable rights. Stop judging and see for yourself. Sure, you have fear, but I assure you, God will help you by sending you many bundles of joy. Jesus, I trust in you!

I invite you to join the 40 Days for Life campaign that runs Sept. 23 through Nov. 1. It has already changed my life. May the Spirit of the Lord call you to have a change of heart and to give prayerful public witness too.

Father Kyle Walterscheid is the director of Vocations for the Diocese of Fort Worth. He can be reached by e-mail to kwalterscheid@fortdix.org.
Mass For Children Who Died Before Baptism scheduled for Oct. 10
Mass for Children Who Died Before Baptism will be celebrated by Bishop Kevin Vann Saturday, Oct. 10, at St. Mary of the Assumption Church, 509 W. Magnolia, east of Hemphill in Fort Worth. The Mass, sponsored by Mother and Unborn Baby Care of North Texas Catholic, United for Life of North Texas, will begin at noon. A reception with a light lunch will be held in the parish hall following the Mass.

The intention of the Mass is to help the healing process for parents who have lost children through miscarriage, stillbirth, or abortion. Relatives and friends of these parents are also invited to attend. Individual flowers will be provided for parents to place at the Virgin Mary’s altar during the Prayers of the Faithful in memory of their children, should they wish to do so.

Reservations are requested, but not required. For more information and reservations call the parish office at (817) 738-1086, mail to 5794 Myrtle Springs Rd., Fort Worth, 76116, or e-mail mcbare@gmail.com.

Couple to Couple League offers Natural Family Planning classes
The Couple to Couple League of the Diocese of Fort Worth, will host a class on Natural Family Planning Oct. 31 at 7 p.m. at St. Vincent de Paul Parish, 3819 W.城easor Ave., Fort Worth. The class is free and open to all couples. For more information, call the parish office at (817) 924-5123.

Cursillo weekends to be held in October at the Cursillo Center
A Cursillo is a short course in Christianity, modeled after a series of talks and meditations examining one’s life in relation to Jesus Christ. Separate Cursillo weekends for men and women will be held this coming October. The men’s Cursillo will be held Oct. 8-11 and the women’s Cursillo will be held Oct. 22-25. Both weekends will be held at the Fort Worth Cursillo Center, 2221 N. 26th Street in Fort Worth. The weekends will be presented in English.

For more information, call Florence Macucci at (972) 291-6817 or e-mail mmarucc@deglow.net.

Our Lady of Victory School kicks off its 100th anniversary
Our Lady of Victory School, located at 2530 Hemphill Ave., Fort Worth, will kick off its 100th year celebration at its annual Fall Festival to be held Saturday, Oct. 10, from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. All are invited for a day full of family friendly games, food, and prizes for all ages. For more information, visit the school Web site at www.olvs.org or call (877) 924-5123.

Subiaco Academy to host Discovery Weekend Oct. 30 - Nov. 1
Subiaco Academy, a Catholic college preparatory, residential, and day school for young men interested in entering the monastic life, is hosting a Discovery Weekend for prospective students and their parents from Oct. 30 through Nov. 1. The Discovery Weekend is open to those in grades 7-10 located at 13100 Subiaco Ave., near Oklahoma City.

Visiting students will have an opportunity to explore dorm life, join in activities with current students and take the placement exam. Activities for parents include information sessions with faculty and current parents, classroom visits, campus tours, and other fun activities. Families also have the option of visiting at any time at their convenience on weekdays or weekends.

Established in 1887 by the Benedictine priests and brothers of Subiaco Abbey, the academy offers a challenging college preparatory curriculum for young men in grades 8-12 with emphasis on honors and Advanced Placement classes plus a Learning Resource Center with focus on ADHD, ADD, and Dyslexia.

The academy is located on Arkansas Highway 22 approximately 45 miles east of Fort Smith, Arkansas. For more information about the Discovery Weekend or to reserve a place, contact the admission office at (800) 364-7824 or e-mail admission@subi.org.

White Mass announced for health care professionals
The Medical Association of Catholic Students from the University of North Texas Health Science Center will host the fifth annual White Mass Wednesday, Oct. 21. The White Mass, traditionally held for all physical therapists, nurses, health care workers, and for pastoral care ministers and students, will be celebrated at 6 p.m. at St. Patrick Cathedral, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. Bishop Kevin Vann will be the main celebrant.

“Traditionally, health care workers wore white attire. In the church, white symbolizes hope and comfort to the ill and hospitalized,” note event organizers. Liturgy is invited to wear their white coats.

For more information, contact St. Miriam Garcia at migarcia@hsc. unt.edu or (409) 549-1624.

Golden Anniversary Celebration to be held Oct. 11
The Family Life Office will host the fourth annual Golden Anniversary Celebration Sunday, Oct. 11, for all couples who have been married 50 years or more by the end of the year. The celebration will take place at Holy Family Catholic Church, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth.

Bishop Kevin Vann will be present at a special Mass that will begin at 3 p.m. and will include an opportunity for participants to renew their marriage vows and receive an anniversary blessing. A reception with cake and punch will be held in the Family Life Center following the Mass.

All couples married before 1959 and wishing to be part of this special celebration, are asked to call the parish office and leave their names, address and date of marriage with the parish secretary.

St. Paul's to host parish 'Come and See' mission Oct. 10-15
St. Paul the Apostle Church, 5508 Black Oak Lane, Fort Worth, invites all to their upcoming Parish Mission. “Jesus says: ‘Come to Me? There’s Always More!’” will be presented by Sister Joan Rodrigues, DJS, Sister Gabriel Mary, and Sister Regina Marie, members of the Congregation of the Precious Blood. The mission will be held Oct. 10-15 at their motherhouse, 1006 Yucca St., San Antonio.

Women, ages 18-45 will have the opportunity to experience life in a convent setting. During this week-long weekend guests will participate in community prayer, small group discussions, Bible study, personal reflection, Emmaus Walk, recreation, and other activities with the sisters.

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

Respect Life Holy Hour changes to third Monday
The Holy Hour sponsored by the Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Fort Worth will change in October from the first Monday of the month to the third Monday of every month. It will still be held from 7:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. at Holy Family Catholic Church, 6106 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth.

The hour will begin with a rosary and be followed by eucharistic adoration. Attendees are invited to come to pray and for prayer to end all offenses to the sanctity and dignity of human life.

For more information, contact Chasane Aud-R-Killgo, director of Respect Life for the Diocese of Fort Worth, at (817) 560-3300 ext. 257.

Nolan Catholic High School’s Homecoming set for Oct. 16
All Nolan Catholic High School alumni are invited to join their former classmates for this year’s Homecoming in Dallas/Fort Worth, Oct. 16, on the school grounds at 4501 Bridge Street in East Dallas. The Dallas area of Nolan is extending a special welcome to this year’s reunion classes of 1974, 1984, 1994, 2004 and 2005.

Former Nolan students are encouraged to bring their family member for a free pre-game alumni barbecue dinner to be served at 5:30 p.m. The first 100 alumni at the dinner will receive Nolan Catholic T-shirts. Students in attendance will enjoy special activities including Viking face “tattoos” compliments of the junior varsity cheerleaders, according to information from the school.

From 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m., current students will be giving tours of the school, alumni are encouraged to come and see how much the campus has changed and has stayed the same. At 7:30 p.m., the Homecoming games will begin, with the Nolan Catholic Vikings taking on Gainesville State. At halftime, there will be a special ceremony inducting members of the NHS to the 2009 Hall of Fame. For more information or to RSVP for dinner by Oct. 13, call (817) 395-0249 or e-mail alumni@nolancatholichs.org.

Retrouvaille to celebrate 25th Anniversary Nov. 13
Retrouvaille, a ministry to help troubled marriages, will celebrate its 25th anniversary in the Diocese of Fort Worth at a special event for anyone who has attended this ministry is invited to attend a Mass to be celebrated, Friday Nov. 13, at 7 p.m. at Holy Family Church, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth. A reception, hosted by Holy Family, will follow the Mass.

For more information, contact the parish office at (817) 375-0760.
Catholic Charities Fort Worth seeks to provide homes for unaccompanied refugee minors

By Nicki Prevou
Editorial Assistant
Photos by Donna Ryckaert

For most American parents, the prospect of being driven from their homes — their children’s day-to-day routines shattered, their stable lives torn apart by the terrors of civil war and guerilla attacks — is a nightmarish scenario, a situation too terrifying to imagine.

More horrific still is the thought that such violence could separate one’s family forever, leaving their children alone and defenseless. And yet, across the globe, approximately 10 million children have lost their homes and their families through wars waged against civilizations in countries such as Burundi, the Congo, Sudan, Somalia, and Eritrea.

These orphaned children who often live without protection in overseas refugee camps, waiting to be placed in a permanent home in another country, are called “unaccompanied refugee minors” (URM) by the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). The commission defines these unattached children as youth who are under 18 years of age and have been separated from both parents and are not being cared for by an adult.

In the 2004 book, Making It Home, published by the International Rescue Committee, 14-year-old Joyce Ihuju recounts how her parents were killed in her presence by violence initiated by the Sudanese People’s Liberation Army in her home country of Sudan when she was four years old. Joyce came to live in a crowded refugee camp in Uganda after years spent searching for food and safety. Now living among other orphans, she writes, “I’m not sure of my next destination or what will happen to me tomorrow.” She says, “I spend all my time doing lots of housework and gardening and I have no time for playing. By the end of the day my body is aching and I am exhausted. Whenever I’m asked about my family life and background, I burst into tears.”

Faith Lamb, URM director at Catholic Charities Diocese of Fort Worth, has heard stories like Joyce’s far too many times, she says. Catholic Charities staff members, she adds, are committed to helping children like Joyce to find a loving new home, a sense of permanence, and the chance to feel safe again.

“Catholic Charities [in Fort Worth] is one of 19 programs in this country that have been asked to provide resettlement services to unaccompanied refugee minors,” she says. “We help our licensed foster families to provide specialized care that includes English as a Second Language, trauma and grief counseling, cultural activities, legal assistance, independent living skills, job training, and intensive case management.

Terri and Bernie, who live approximately 100 miles outside of Fort Worth, are “thrilled,” they say, to be one of the seven homes currently licensed through Catholic Charities of Fort Worth to offer foster care. The parents of five children, with two teen girls still living at home, have recently opened their home to a teenage girl from Burma.

“We’re often asked,” Why not[foster] American children, since there’s plenty of need here in this country?” says Terri. “Our answer is that American children have a safety net of social services that these foreign children do not have. Even toddlers in foreign countries are at times left to look after themselves as best they can. The Bible tells us to look out for widows and orphans, and that’s what we feel called to do.

“The need is great,” Terri adds. “It’s worth it to us to travel all the way to Arlington to be at our [training] meetings, because this is so rewarding to us to reach out in this way.”

While another seven homes are currently in the process of becoming licensed, more foster homes are still needed for approximately 30 additional children, says Lamb.

“More specifically, we are also working to place children who have been victims of rape or sexual abuse. This includes victims of human trafficking,” she says. “We expect to have about 40 children in our care in the Metroplex by the end of the year. We’re working hard to give these children — who have suffered so much more than we can imagine — a future filled with hope.”

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También podemos desarrollar programas en español
Fr. John Hampsch to lead ‘Healing the Family Tree’ conference

During the conference, Fr. Hampsch will address such topics as: why people should be concerned about family healing; scriptural references of fathers’ sins being passed down generations and whether mothers convey sins’ effects to their offspring; when illness is not a punishment for personal or ancestral sin; what other reasons there are for sickness; and how sin can be transmitted through generations.

Fr. Hampsch will then guide participants through a step-by-step healing process to clean up the effects of any sin in their lives that result from the sins of past generations, according to event organizers.

Fr. Hampsch is a member of the Clarettian Missionaries. Listed in Who’s Who in Religion In America, he has served as parish priest, seminary professor and rector, college professor, lecturer, writer, and editor. His main interest is bringing Jesus to the hearts of people through the mass media. For more information about Fr. Hampsch, visit his Web site at www.claretiantapeministry.org.

For more information, call (817) 244-7733 or (817) 558-9805 or visit the center’s Web site at www.queenofpeacecenterdallas.org.

Fort Worth imam to speak at Interfaith and Ecumenical Affairs Commission assembly at St. Bartholomew Oct. 18

The Fort Worth Diocesan Interfaith and Ecumenical Affairs Commission will hold its semi-annual assembly on Sunday, Oct. 18 at St. Bartholomew Church, 3601 Altamesa Blvd., starting at 7 p.m. on Friday with a Mass followed by the talk. The conference talks and family tree healing Mass and prayers will resume on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. No registration is required for the conference.

The two-day conference will begin at 7 p.m. on Friday with a Mass followed by the talk. The conference talks and family tree healing Mass and prayers will resume on Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. No registration is required for the conference.
**Found in Time**

**The Catholic Carpenters Club of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church Ft. Worth**

This photograph of the Catholic Carpenters Club of the Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Fort Worth was taken in 1949. Club officers were President Guillermo Leza, Secretary Pedro Reyes, and Treasurer José Ortega. In the Sept. 18 issue of the North Texas Catholic, readers were asked for information about this picture.

In the front row (from left to right) are: Don Florencio Ortega, unknown, Jesus Jaso, José Velasquez, Cayetano Rosales, Pedro Reyes, Guillermo Leza, unknown, Claudio Mata, and José Vasquez. Seated in the second row (from left to right) are: José Ortega, Gregorio Vasquez, Valentín Castillo, Gerardo Muñoz, unknown, and Francisco Jacobo.

Story by Susie Reyes

To the exclamations of “Wow,” and “That’s my dad,” and “Do you remember?” this past week, the telephone lines were burning and the conversations have been lively (Twittering is just not the method of communication among us, but e-mail has helped tremendously!).

We — a busy group of former and current parishioners of Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Fort Worth — sat in our homes, now located across the city, looking at the wonderful picture of our fathers, grandfathers, and uncles that was published in the Sept. 18 issue of the North Texas Catholic. That experience brought a moment of breathlessness, but also the appearance of this picture

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**Diocesan**
St. Andrew parishioner enters novitiate for Paulist Fathers

Clark Sample, a parishioner of St. Andrew Church in Fort Worth, has entered the novitiate of the Paulist Fathers with two other men during a Mass at St. Paul’s College in Washington, D.C. The novitiate is the first year of formation as a Paulist priest. The three men will spend the next year learning about and living in the Paulist community at the college and discerning their vocation to the priesthood.

The members of the 2009 novice class will make their first profession in the community next fall when they commit themselves to live according to the Paulist constitution for the following 12 months and begin priestly academic studies.

Legal professionals mark beginning of Judicial year with Red Mass

By Mary Lynne Hill

Special to the North Texas Catholic

Legal professionals, including judges, prosecutors, attorneys, and other public officials can come together in the public prayer of the Church to ask for wisdom and guidance from God, who is the source of all peace and justice. The Red Mass provides that opportunity,” said Gieb.

As a votive Mass of the Holy Spirit, celebrants wear red to symbolize the tongues of fire that descended upon the Apostles at Pentecost. In the Mass, they request guidance for those involved in the conduct of the legal profession, including judges, prosecutors, attorneys, law school professors and students, along with government officials. The Mass provides the opportunity to honor the sacred role of the administration of justice in society, while encouraging these public servants to ponder what guides their decisions in their daily work.

Celebrated annually in the fall, the Red Mass generally coincides with the opening of the judicial year of the United States Supreme Court, which convenes the first Monday in October.

The national Red Mass has been held at St. Matthew Cathedral in Washington, D.C., since 1953. Sponsored by the John Carroll Society, it is attended by Supreme Court justices, members of Congress, the cabinet, diplomatic corps, other government departments, and oftentimes the president. These participants, of varied religious traditions, attend only in their capacity as private citizens, rather than as civic officials. This year’s gathering is scheduled for Oct. 4.

The first recorded Red Mass was celebrated at the Cathedral in Paris in 1245. Within a hundred years, the tradition had spread throughout Europe, particularly to England, where all members of the bench and bar, who also wore red robes, attended the annual event. The first Red Mass in the United States was held at the Church of St. Andrew in New York City in 1928. Currently, the Red Mass is celebrated in more than half of the states of the U.S. The Diocese of Dallas will celebrate a Red Mass on Nov. 8.
The challenge of building a culture of life

By Cardinal Justin E. Rigali
Chairman of USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities

The effort to restore legal protection for unborn children faces new challenges, as we deal with a new Administration and Congress that support “abortion rights.” Many are asking: Where do we go from here?

We first need to recall why we are here, why we Catholics became involved in these tough battles. We begin with the dignity of each human person. Each and every one of us has intrinsic and immeasurable worth. That is because God created each of us in his image by the outpouring of his infinite and unconditional love. In return he asks only that we share that love with others, beginning with those most in need — the poor, vulnerable, and despised of this world.

This intrinsic God-given human dignity is the basis for all inalienable human rights — beginning with the most basic right, the right to life. It is most basic because it is the condition for all the others. First we must live, then we can talk about living well.

The right to life is the core element of all other rights. All other earthly rights involve something more than life itself — but without life, they are nothing.

That “something more” is vitally important. The defense of life reaches its fullness when it expands to defend the entire range of human flourishing. This is all one vision, and ultimately one issue — the dignity of the human person. In the words of St. Irenaeus, Gloria Dei vivens homo — the glory of God is man fully alive.

To keep that vision constantly before our eyes, to remember why we are here and to gain the strength to move forward, we need to begin all our efforts with prayer.

In defending the right to life, our first duty is to oppose the direct taking of innocent human life — any human life, at any stage. As Pope John Paul II confirmed in his encyclical on The Gospel of Life, “the direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always gravely immoral” (Evangelium Vitae 57). Abortion and euthanasia are preeminent concerns of the Church for reasons that are intrinsic to these issues, as well as reasons that are situational.

Intrinsically, these acts always constitute the direct taking of a human life when it is most innocent and defenseless. And they are belief and carried out by those most called to defend human life — members of the healing professions, and of one’s own family. To undermine these two havens of life is to make a culture of life impossible.

Situationally, these issues are the places where those committed to a conditional and selective vision of human rights have planted their flag in our time. They want to draw lines between the important and unimportant members of society, between persons and ‘nonpersons.’ In a different time or place the forcing issue might be slavery, racism, or anti-Semitism — today abortion and related issues force us to decide whether we mean what we say in speaking of inalienable human rights, inherent in simply being human.

In particular, the Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision has made abortion the battleground over our tradition of inherent human rights, and has polarized our society as nothing else has. Later efforts to use law as a weapon against other innocent human lives — against newborn children with disabilities, for example, or against the sick and elderly through a “right” to assisted suicide — have cited Roe as their inspiration and precedent.

Thus in promoting a culture of life, we must give priority to defending innocent unborn boys and girls from direct attack. We must also make it clear how this effort stands for the dignity and well-being of everyone, before and after birth.

In defending conscience rights in health care, for example, we stand with the unborn child, and also with the women and men of our healing professions whose freedom of conscience is at risk — and with women who will lose access to basic life-affirming health care if those who truly care about them and their children are forced out of medicine.

In sending tens of millions of postcards to Congress against the radical “Freedom of Choice Act,” we have helped stop extreme legislation that would treat ready access to abortion as a goal overriding respect for unborn children and for the well-being of pregnant women.

By insisting that the federal government promote only morally sound stem-cell research, we defend the life of embryonic children — and also the health of patients endangered by the many risks of attempted embryonic stem-cell treatments, and the health of women whom some want to exploit as “egg factories” for attempts at cloning human embryos for stem cells.

And the “Pregnant Women Support Act” will provide a wide range of assistance, so women can bring their children to live birth and receive a helping hand as they parent the child or make an adoption plan.

Of course, helping those in need is not only the task of government. The dedicated efforts of Catholics at pro-life pregnancy centers, maternity homes, hospitals, retirement homes, and parish-based support networks for pregnant women and children, as well as assistance and effort outside of abortion facilities, are needed more now than ever.

Our task is to change hearts and minds, including our own. All our good works in the areas of public policy, education, and pastoral care must be undergirded by our prayers and sacrifices offered up to the Lord of Life. Through his saving power, and with the prayerful intercession of our Blessed Mother, we can build a culture of life.

The defense of human life at its most vulnerable stages is an essential duty of those inspired by the Gospel. Our prayers and efforts in this cause should open us up to defending the rights and meeting the needs of human beings all along life’s spectrum. Having said “no” to attacks on innocent human life, we need to affirm a great “yes” to the full range of human living and flourishing.

Cardinal Justin E. Rigali is Archbishop of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia and Chairman of the USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

Assisted Suicide: Death by ‘Choice’?

By Rita L. Marker
Executive Director
International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Across the country assisted suicide is being promoted as a “choice” that should be available. This promotion, however, is just the first step of a strategy developed by assisted-suicide advocates to achieve their goal of death on demand.

Assisted suicide means deliberately and intentionally providing an individual with the means to commit suicide. It means that doctors would provide lethal overdoses of drugs to patients so they can end their lives.

In 1994 Oregon voters approved the “Death with Dignity Act,” transforming the crime of assisted suicide into a “medical treatment.” In the years that followed, similar laws were proposed in more than 20 states. Each and every one failed until November 2008, when Washington State voters adopted a law virtually identical to that in Oregon.

Deceptively soothing phrases like “death with dignity” and “aid in dying” gave some people the impression that they were voting for compassionate care, for better pain control, and for the right to forego medical treatment that was overly burdensome and unwanted. Nothing could be further from the truth.

Today, a pharmacist in Oregon or Washington can dispense a lethal prescription, accompanied by instructions to take it with a light snack and alcohol to cause death. And health insurance can pay for that prescription.

Concerns about health care costs are currently reaching a boiling point. If assisted suicide is added to the cauldron, the final result can be doubly lethal. Making assisted suicide a medical treat-

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**Viewpoints**

**Why Catholic? allows us to delve deeper into our faith and share it with others**

*By Lucas Pollice*

I n the coming weeks, all of the parishes in the Diocese of Fort Worth will begin studying, discussing, and applying to their lives the teachings of the **Catechism of the Catholic Church** through the **Why Catholic? adult faith formation series.** This is truly a unique and historical event in the life of our diocese.

Imagine, literally thousands of adult Catholics coming together in the communion of faith to more deeply know, understand, and live their Catholic faith. This is truly an occasion for Catholics in North Texas to rediscover the richness of their faith, and to open wide the doors of their hearts and minds to Christ. It is an opportunity that must be embraced and one that must not be squandered.

As we embark on this journey of faith in the **Why Catholic?** program, I would like to reflect on the powerful words of Pope Benedict XVI given at the beginning of his ministry as the successor of Peter:

> At this point, my thoughts return to 22 October 1978, when Pope John Paul II began his ministry here in St. Peter’s Square. His words on that occasion constantly echo in my ears: “Do not be afraid! Open wide the doors to Christ!”

The pope was addressing the mighty, the powerful of this world, who feared that Christ might take away something of their power if they were to let him in, if they were to allow the faith to be free…the Pope was also speaking to everyone, especially the young. Are we not perhaps all afraid in some way? If we let Christ enter fully into our lives, if we open ourselves totally to him, are we not afraid that he might take something away from us? Are we not perhaps afraid to give up something significant, something unique, something that makes life so beautiful? Do we not then risk ending up diminished and deprived of our freedom?

And once again the pope said: No! If we let Christ into our lives, we lose nothing, nothing, absolutely nothing of what makes life free, beautiful, and great. No! Only in this friendship are the doors of life open wide. Only in this friendship is the great potential of human existence truly revealed. Only in this friendship do we experience beauty and liberation.

And so, today, with great strength and great conviction, on the basis of long personal experience of life, I say to you, dear young people: Do not be afraid of Christ! He takes nothing away, and he gives you everything. When we give ourselves to him, we receive a hundredfold in return. Yes, open, open wide the doors to Christ — and you will find true life. Amen.

--- Homily at the Mass for the Inauguration of the Pontificate, April 24, 2005

Pope Benedict’s words so beautifully call us to completely open ourselves to Christ, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life so that we may truly find fullness of life. However, our modern culture presents for us a strange dualism. On the one hand it seeks to solve and understand the deepest meaning of the universe, the world around us, the purpose and meaning of life, and our existence as human beings. But at the same time, it often presents a culture of fear, and of hopelessness and death.

As Pope John Paul II so powerfully expressed in his first encyclical letter in 1979, *The Redeemer of Man: Christ is the answer!* He is the one who comes to reveal to us the fullness of truth, the truth about God and the truth about ourselves. He is the answer only if we open ourselves fully to him.

Pope John Paul II not only taught this but he lived it. He showed us that there is nothing to fear in embracing Christ, no matter what life throws at you. His life witnessed to us that only in Christ is it possible for a humble man from Poland to take the world by storm. His life was evidence that one could face the fears and tragedies of life, even an assassin’s bullet, and still experience and express the love of God. He proved that through Christ, love and peace could conquer the seemingly invincible evil of Communism. And finally, in his last days, he witnessed to the world that only in Christ is death the beautiful sleep through which we awaken into eternal life.

Following his example, what is there to be afraid of? What do we have to lose? We must open wide the doors to Christ and to the beauty and power of his truth, so that we may truly find the meaning of life. This is the message and mission that we must all take to heart. In many catechetical circles, Catholicism has lost its radiant beauty and power and has become quite benign, and often taken the form of a purely cultural phenomenon. The time has come at the dawn of the New Evangelization envisioned by Pope John Paul II to reclaim this beauty and power of the Catholic faith especially in the areas of catechesis and evangelization. The time has truly come: “Do not be not afraid! Open wide the doors to Christ!”

--- Homily in Orioles Park in Camden Yards, October 8, 1995

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

Some things you just have to do for yourself
By Mary Morrell

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like the plumber who needs to connect the sink to a water source not provided in the box, we need to connect our lives to God. We have the resources but no one can force us to use them.

Getting everything you need in one living room package, one communications bundle, one cell phone/calendar/GPS is inviting, allowing us to have it all with very little effort.

It’s too bad life isn’t that convenient.

But life doesn’t come in a box with instructions, or with all parts included for that matter. It seems to come in bits and pieces, thrown to the four winds and falling where they may.

It requires that we put our energy into a journey that may, or may not, uncover bits of the puzzle. Adding to the challenge is the reality that we can never see the big picture, so how are we to put the puzzle together?

We climb mountains, praying God won’t move them between the time we close our eyes to sleep and the moment we put our feet on the floor the next morning. We mine the darkness of our hearts and souls looking for treasures to bring to light. Sometimes we are successful but just as often we get lost.

If we pick up some wisdom along the way, we learn the value of detours and crafting pieces to fit when there are none. After all, we can’t take life back to the store because it seems the parts aren’t there or it’s too hard to put together.

But we have the tools we need to get where we’re going — prayer, Scripture, and the Eucharist. I recently read a quote attributed to Monsignor Ronald Knox, someone I don’t know, but whose thought appealed to me: “The day’s food for the day’s march ... that is what Holy Communion is meant to be.”

Like the plumber who needs to connect the sink to a water source not provided in the box, we need to connect our lives to God. We have the resources but no one can force us to use them.

Contraception: The Fine Print

By Susan E. Wills

The teaching of the Catholic Church on human sexuality is profound and uplifting. Married love is meant to mirror the love within the Trinity — to be faithful, selfless, permanent, and life-giving. And isn’t that what everyone really wants out of marriage?

But rather than encouraging this kind of love, contraceptives have helped many people to engage in sexual relationships that are unfaithful, selfish, short-term, and altered to be sterile, not life-giving. Such uncommitted sexual relationships cannot only damage our ability to love as we’re meant to love, but very often lead to other problems — contributing to the 3 million unintended pregnancies, over one million abortions, and 19 million new cases of sexually-transmitted diseases (STDs) in the United States each year.

Almost 90 percent of sexually-active American women “at risk” of becoming pregnant are using contraception. This prevalence is understandable because, for 50 years, we’ve been told they are “safe and effective” at preventing unintended pregnancies and (in the case of condoms) STDs. But if they are so “effective” and so prevalent, how to explain such high levels of unintended pregnancies and STDs? Something doesn’t add up.

One need only look at a report like Contraception Counts (2006) from the Guttmacher Institute, a research institute which supports abortion and contraception, to see there is no correlation between better access to contraception and lower abortion rates.

Condoms

Last year, Guttmacher reported a 17.4 percent pregnancy rate for condom-users over a 12-month period. But that’s an average which includes pregnancies among women in their late 30s and 40s, who have lower fertility and more experienced use. Teenagers are another story: Almost one in four low-income teens (23.2 percent) who rely on condoms will become pregnant in a year. If these teens cohabit (and are therefore more sexually active), almost three in four (71.7 percent) who rely on condoms will become pregnant within a year.

Condom failure rates in protecting against STDs are even worse. This is partly because a healthy woman can only become pregnant during a six-day window in each menstrual cycle, but she can contract an STD any day of the month. Also, while the risk of contracting an STD may appear low from one exposure, each additional exposure increases the risk until STD transmission becomes almost certain.

A fundamental reason why increased access to contraceptives fails to reduce unintended pregnancies is a well-documented fact of human behavior called risk compensation. Those who mistakenly believe that contraception protects them from pregnancy and STDs are more likely to become sexually active at an earlier age and to engage in riskier activity, such as having more

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The Fine Print

Some things you just have to do for yourself
By Mary Morrell

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At annual Camp Fort Worth, North Texas teens learn how to be Christ’s body on earth

By Jeff Hedglen
Camp Fort Worth Director

Each year at Camp Fort Worth the youth and adults that attend seek to put their faith in action. This year as an added point of focus we adopted St. Teresa of Avila’s great challenge to live the mission of the Church:

“Christ Has No Body”

Christ has no body but yours.
No hands, no feet on earth but yours,
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world,
Yours are the feet, with which he walks to do good.
Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world.
Yours are the eyes with which he sees the hungry and the homeless,
Yours are the body, yours are the hands of Christ.

With these words as inspiration more than 250 people were sent out to work at nursing homes, homeless shelters, and Boys and Girls Clubs. We also built, from scratch, 20 baby cribs that will be donated to local pregnancy centers. We did a lot of painting, cleaning, and other chores at our host sites of Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth and Our Lady Queen of Peace Church and Notre Dame School in Wichita Falls.

Camp Fort Worth (CFW) is a service camp that is sponsored by St. Bartholomew Church in Fort Worth and the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the Diocese of Fort Worth. CFW has been serving the diocese for 11 years. The week-long camp brings youth and adults together from all over the diocese. This year 19 parishes were represented from Vernon to Dublin and all points in between.

Each day the campers rotate to a different work site. In this way they get to experience five distinct forms of service ministry. In addition to the work that is done at CFW, the campers attend daily Mass, receive the sacrament of reconciliation, give praise and worship to God in song, have small group sharing about the day, and have various prayer experiences. Through all of these activities the faith of the participants comes alive in new ways. What follows are some reflections from campers on how they were the hands and feet of Christ at camp this summer.

This was my fourth visit to Camp Fort Worth so I wasn’t expecting anything new, just the normal help the community, praise and worship time, and some good food. Instead I got a lesson straight from God. Each day we have a segment of the Our Father that we’re suppose to tie in with the events of the day. It was Tuesday and the verse was “Give us this day our daily bread.” I’ve never really had a better experience than when I was working on the baby beds we make at camp and realized that these beds are for babies being born into this world with families that were unable to afford a baby bed. God was already making sure that these beds were being used and that those who were taking care of God’s love is truly amazing.

— Lauren Pohl, Holy Redeemer, Aledo

Volunteering has always been a part of my summer whether it has been teaching swimming lessons or helping at Vacation Bible School, but volunteering at Camp Fort Worth actually brings it into a whole new light. When I was told I would be making baby beds, I thought that sounded pretty fun, but when the leaders told us to really think about and pray for the babies that will someday be sleeping in those beds, it really brought meaning to this service.

— Chloe Schneider, Sacred Heart, Muenster

I was told at camp this year that we are here to be the hands and feet of Christ to those that we are ministering to. I saw this most especially one day at Faith Mission, a homeless outreach with a drug rehabilitation program. We were eating lunch with the clients when one of the campers offered to do the dishes with one of the gentleman who is currently going through the Faith Mission program. This camper was literally being the hands and feet of God by being willing to do this gross and sweaty job, but while they were working, the client shared his story about how he became addicted and what helped him to decide to turn his life around.

As the camper walked out of the dishwashing area, I could tell that he was changed. He seemed to realize that it could very well be one of his friends at Faith Mission in a few years. Even though we were supposed to be the hands and feet to the people we were serving, they ended up being God’s hands and feet back to us.

— Kendall Stewart, St. Mark, Denton

After my confirmation my faith life seemed to stop. I didn’t like going to church and I started to sin more. When I first arrived at camp I was not happy, but when I saw my cousins and friends, that began to change. Things really turned around at my first work site, baby beds. I started to open up because I love working with my hands. The next day I opened up more at the nursing home. I think that really changed me. The elderly lady I was with was so nice; we had so much fun, and she reminded me of my great-grandma who raised me. When I gave her a hug goodbye she told me that she loved me.

Now I am a youth leader at my parish; I love spending time with my family, and I go to Mass every Sunday.

— Sarah Sanchez, San Mateo, Fort Worth

Camper Caroline Axford of Good Shepherd Church in Colleyville shows off her ability to apply seats to picnic tables. Several hundred tables were donated to Boys and Girls Club locations in Fort Worth this summer.

A group of CFW teens leads a worship service for clients at Faith Mission shelter in Wichita Falls.

CFW team member Katlyn Stitzer of St. Mark Church in Denton washes the feet of Nicole Stevens of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Keller during the leaders’ retreat held prior to the teens’ camp.

Mark Jimenez of San Mateo Mission in Fort Worth speaks with an elderly woman at her bedside. One of the work sites for campers involves volunteering at a local nursing home.

Kylie Brandt of St. Bartholomew Church in Fort Worth makes a new friend at one of the Boys and Girls Club locations in Wichita Falls during the July service camp.
Bishop visits Celaya, Mexico, hopes to establish ties between dioceses

By Juan Guajardo

The Diocese of Fort Worth is considering establishing ties with another diocese, this one in Mexico, adding to its current group of mission efforts in Honduras, Bolivia, Guatemala, and Vietnam.

For five days in July, Bishop Kevin Vann visited the Diocese of Celaya, as part of the continuing efforts to establish a relationship between the two dioceses. While in Mexico, Bishop Vann celebrated daily Masses, attended meetings with clergy and seminarians, met with members of the laity, and traveled to different cities within the diocese.

A relationship between the dioceses is beneficial for both, said Andrés Aranda, diocesan delegate for Hispanic Ministry. For one, Celaya has expressed interest in sending priests and seminarians to Fort Worth for three years of service, he said. Sending local priests and seminarians to Celaya to study Spanish or for an immersion experience is another tentative goal of the project.

The Diocese of Fort Worth would also provide help for the Diocese of Celaya. Aranda said. A parish-to-parish mission effort is being discussed, said Deacon Len Sanchez, chair of the diocese’s Mission Council. The mission effort would allow parishes within the Diocese of Fort Worth to travel to Celaya to help the parishes there.

“The idea is to establish a relationship so that this movement lasts — not that we’ll go and work hard for just a little bit, for a day or two. We want a relationship,” Dcn. Sanchez said. “The mission is the relationship between them and us, not the nails nor tables we might use.”

Bishop Vann and Dcn. Sanchez are optimistic about the possibility. Bishop Vann said he hopes the effort will result in a strengthening of faith in both dioceses and that perhaps it can provide a “bridge to the families that are separated,” referring to immigrants from the Mexican diocese who find work in the North Texas area to be able to send money home to their families.

“I hope there can be a consciousness of another diocese, that we can share their life,” Bishop Vann said. “So much history of the Church in Texas is connected to the life of the Church in Mexico. So it’s realizing part of our history a little better and how our being Catholic means we are not by ourselves but are united with our brothers and sisters based in other countries.”

Celaya is a city of 415,000, according to a 2005 estimate from the Instituto nacional de estadística y geografía (National Institute of Statistics and Geography). The heavily commercial and industrial city is located about 160 miles northwest of Mexico City and 30 miles west of Querétaro. According to a 2004 census, the diocese itself covers approximately 3,386 miles and has a little more than 1,500,000 people, 88 percent of whom are Catholic.

The idea to establish ties first arrived from Mexico in 2005, when Father Rogelio Segundo and Bishop Lázaro Pérez Jiménez — both of Celaya — came to Fort Worth to inquire about the possibility of a relationship between the dioceses. The late Bishop Joseph Delaney was too ill to go to Celaya, and the effort was delayed. Communication between the two local churches picked up once again in 2006, when Bishop Jiménez and Fr. Segundo came and further discussed the idea. In February 2009, Fr. Segundo, Aranda, and Bishop Vann met once again to develop a set of goals for the relationship and planned Bishop Vann’s visit to Celaya.

Despite the distance between the two dioceses, share similarities, Bishop Vann said. “I enjoyed making the connections,” Bishop Vann said. “We have a lot of people from Celaya, so I went down there. The bishop of Celaya and Fr. Rogelio approached the diocese here about a relationship with Celaya because we have so much in common. Many members of the Hispanic community in our diocese are from Celaya.”

On the trip, Bishop Vann met with the relatives of some of the families from Fort Worth. Many of the families in both dioceses are separated, as the husbands often come to the U.S. to find work. The wives and children stay behind, struggling to provide for themselves since the money sent back isn’t always enough, Bishop Vann said.

Bishop Vann hopes that the relationship will bring the laity closer to the reality of the immigration debate and bring more understanding for the situation of immigrant families.

“I really think in these days when immigration is such a concern, this helps us see the human face [of immigration],” Bishop Vann said.

A lot of progress still has to be made before the relationship is official. Bishop Vann, with the input of the Office of Mission Outreach, will begin communication with Bishop Jiménez of Celaya. Once both sides consent, a diocesan team will begin to study the needs of Celaya and then develop a plan to establish the mission effort. Dcn. Sanchez said the idea is still in the early stages of development, but hopes that it can be as successful as other mission efforts, especially the one in the Diocese of Juticalpa in Honduras, where a steady mission effort has prospered for more than 10 years.

“The vision of the [mission] council is to be able to assist a lot of countries, as many places as we can; the mission is always to seek out and help,” Dcn. Sanchez said. “Where we go, or when we get there, that’s another thing.”
**Charities...**

From Page 1

only transitional housing setting of its kind in the Arlington Diocese, the program helps women build self-sufficient lives.

Services such as financial education classes, employment counseling, and help with transportation and child care are some of the advantages for residents.

Sandra and Hope are among thousands of people who have turned to local Catholic Charities agencies for housing services when they had nowhere else to go during the current recession.

The need for housing services like the St. Margaret of Cortona program as well as emergency shelter and permanent housing jumped 12.4 percent in 2008 as the economic recession gained momentum, reported Catholic Charities USA in its 2008 annual survey of services.

Released Sept. 15 during a nationwide teleconference from the agency’s Alexandria headquarters, the report shows that Catholic Charities agencies served nearly 600,000 people in need of some type of housing assistance in 2008.

Overall, the 142 Catholic Charities agencies responding to the survey — about 85 percent of the nationwide Catholic Charities network — reported serving more than 8.5 million people in 2008, a 10 percent increase from 2007.

Without being able to offer specific services, Father Larry Snyder, president and CEO of Catholic Charities USA, said the demand for housing and other social services continued to climb as the recession deepened during 2009.

“We can only conjecture that when we get the figures for 2009 it’s going to be much, much greater,” he said.

Sr. Snyder also said the recession is causing local Catholic Charities agencies to struggle with “many of the same challenges as our clients.” Cuts in government funding for social services coupled with significant losses in donations of cash and goods are causing local agencies to scale back services, reduce hours of operation, lay off staff, freeze wages, and implement workdays without pay, he said.

“It is going to continue to put a great stress on our local agencies to continue to provide services,” he added.

Overall, Catholic Charities agencies had revenues of more than $3.9 billion in 2008. Two-thirds of the revenue came from local, state, and federal government sources.

Despite the challenges posed by the recession, Father Snyder expressed optimism that the agency will be able to make strides in its nearly 3-year-old campaign to reduce poverty by 50 percent by 2020.

“Actually think (the recession) gives us a greater opportunity to do that because when you look at the challenges that we have right now, one thing that should be very clear is that we can’t just meet those challenges with what we were doing before,” Fr. Snyder explained.

“Things have gotten so desperate it gives us the opportunity to really look at a solution that doesn’t depend on... the social structures we had before, but to really redefine how we do it,” he said.

A breakdown of the 8.5 million clients shows nearly half — 48 percent — were adults 18 to 64 years old, 29 percent were children and 13 percent were seniors.

Ten percent were unknown.

Prepared by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University, the survey revealed:

- Nearly 6.3 million people sought food services, a 5.8 percent decline from 2007.
- More than 3.6 million people — a 4.7 percent increase — received social services such as education, day care, programs aimed at at-risk populations, health care, and socialization, and neighborhood services.
- More than 1.7 million people — an 11 percent jump — received basic assistance with health care, clothing, utility payments, emergency financial needs, and prescriptions.
- Slightly more than 1 million people — a 7.3 percent decline — received various services that fall under what Catholic Charities USA calls strengthening families, including counseling and mental health, addiction, pregnancy, adoption, immigration, and refugee services.
- More than 330,000 people received disaster services, a decrease of 21 percent from 2007, but still nearly 60 percent more than in 2005.
- More than 67,000 people — a 35 percent spike — received employment services.

Overall, the statistics reflected the nationwide growth in poverty in 2008 reported Sept. 10 by the U.S. Census Bureau. Census data show that 39.8 million people — 13.2 percent of the population — lived in poverty last year, up from 37.3 million people, or 12.5 percent, in 2007.
Catholic leaders at UN summit urge immediate action on climate change

UNITED NATIONS (CNS) — Climate change is more than an environmental concern; it is an issue of justice that merits immediate attention by world leaders. This was the message delivered repeatedly by Catholic participants in the Sept. 22 U.N. Summit on Climate Change in New York. “It is unfair that people in developing countries pay the consequences for problems that rich countries have created,” said Elyza-beth Peredo, director of the Solon Foundation in Bolivia, at a Sept. 22 press conference. As an example, she said Bolivia generates only 0.1 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, but melting glaciers caused by the warming effect of those emissions worldwide endanger crops for small-scale farmers in communities throughout the country’s Andes moun-
tains. The proposals now under discussion at the United Nations set goals and targets for international investment in adaptation technologies to help countries withstand climate change. “We have 2020 targets and even 2050 targets, but it’s necessary to act now to reduce the vulnerability of the poorest,” said Rene Groenenhuis, president of CIDSE, a’s

Archbishop urges Canadian MPs to back palliative care, not euthanasia

OTTAWA (CNS) — The president of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops has sent an open letter to mem-
ers of Parliament, urging them to support good palliative care instead of assisted suicide or euthanasia. As debate approaches for Bill C-384, an act to amend the Criminal Code (Right to Die With Dignity), Winnipeg Archbishop V. James Weisgerber asked politicians to use “clear definitions” and to consider the “profound impact” such a bill would have on society. “Those wishing to reopen this debate are no doubt motivated by concern for the sufferings of oth-
ers,” he said in an open letter sent Sept. 23. “An unfortunate understanding of compassion has led them to suggest eu-
thanizing the most vulnerable instead of providing them with proper care, effective pain control, and spiritual support until their natural death.” Without clear terms, the discussion can be “confusing and unhelpful,” Archbishop Weisgerber said.

Catholic organizations aid Philippine victims of flooding

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Catholic charitable organizations are stepping up to help victims in the Philippines after the worst flood in decades hit in late Sep-
tember. “Many of the people who have lost everything are sleeping in schools right now,” said Luc Picard, Catholic Relief Services’ country representative in Manila, Philippines. “They’re calling this the Katrina of the Philippines.” Picard told Catholic News Service in a Sept. 28 telephone interview that rescuers were still searching for survivors from the flooding and mudslides two days earlier. The flooding followed Typhoon Ketsana, or Ondoy, as it was referred to in the Philipp-
ines.

Brian Caulfield, editor of Fathers for God, an initiative of the Knights of Columbus, said in a blog posting his wife’s fam-
ily was caught in the flood. He said his in-laws live a block from the river and said they had seen flooding that brought “8 feet of water into the house. With Ket-
sana, however, the water rose to second-floor bedrooms, then onto the pitched roof.

“With the water now touching the roof and the rain still slashing with 50-mile-per-hour winds, they were afraid of being washed away,” Caulfield said. In order to survive, his wife’s family created a raft out of a rope and bamboo poles to get to a neighbor’s house, which was located on higher ground, he said.

Picard told CNS that after the storm, approximately 100,000 families were sheltered in temporary housing, elementary schools, and churches. While some fam-
ilies will be able to go back home soon, others have lost everything, he said.

In a statement, CRS said it was providing immediate food aid, blankets, mosquito nets, sleeping mats, and soap, among other basic necessities.

“The equivalent of a month’s rain fell in six hours, and, at one point, more than 80 percent of Manila was under water. Impassable roads made rescue efforts challenging, and water supplies failed in some areas,” the statement said.

The government declared a “state of calamity” in Manila and 23 provinces. Metropolitan Manila was the worst-hit in terms of flooding and damage, while Rizal had the highest number of casualties due to landslides and flash floods, said Caritas Philippines.

In the province of Pampanga, more than 200 villages were submerged. A landslide occurred in Arayat, affecting 174 families, who were temporarily housed in five evacuation centers, mostly schools and chapels, said Caritas Philippines.

A woman and child sit outside a house damaged by a landslide in the town of Arayat, north of Manila, Philippines, Sept. 28. The Philippines appealed for international aid to help tens of thousands of people marooned by floods associated with Typhoon Ketsana. (CNS photo/Romeo Ranoco, Reuters)
One must first believe in order to understand God’s truth, says pope

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — Understanding the divine mystery will never come from study alone — one must first believe in the Christian faith in order to understand it, said Pope Benedict XVI.

Theologians and Christians who wish to deepen their faith “cannot count on just their intelligence, but must cultivate a profound experience of faith at the same time,” he said at his weekly general audience Sept. 23.

The pope’s catechesis was dedicated to the life and teachings of St. Anselm of Canterbury, an 11th-century Benedictine and doctor of the church.

With “clarity and rigorous logic,” St. Anselm’s teachings aimed to help elevate people’s minds toward the contemplation of God, said the pope.

According to the saint, people who wish to better understand the Christian tradition can carry out “a healthy theological quest” by following three steps, the pope said.

First, one must have faith, he said, which is “a free gift from God to be welcomed with humility.”

The second step is experience, which entails incorporating the word of God in one’s everyday life. The final step is “true understanding, which is never a result of ascetic reasoning, but of contemplative intuition,” he said.

Pope Benedict XVI signs a book at the end of a meeting with academic leaders in Prague, Czech Republic, Sept. 27. The pope cited St. Anselm: “I may believe, but I believe so that I may understand,” which shows that while faith comes before reason, reason can deepen faith.

The saint showed how the journey to understand God is never fully complete, at least here on earth, the pope said.

The pope said St. Anselm’s teachings should encourage all Christians “to tirelessly seek an ever more intimate union with Christ through truth and life.”

And he asked all priests, religious, and lay people to follow the saint’s example by “loving the Church of Christ, praying, working, and suffering for the church without ever abandoning or betraying it.”

The pope flew to the Vatican by helicopter from Castel Gandolfo, south of Rome, to lead the general audience in the Paul VI hall before about 9,000 pilgrims from around the world, which included a group of 25 Chinese priests.

By Jean Denton

I’m looking forward to visiting my church’s twin parish in Haiti in a few months. My standard explanation for traveling to the impoverished Caribbean island every couple of years is that I go there to find God. For me, Haiti is a little bit of heaven.

One wouldn’t think so given the Haitians’ daily struggle for survival without the barest necessities for living: potable water, food, electricity, basic medical care.

But in reading this weekend’s Gospel about the rich young man who asks Jesus what is required to enter the kingdom of heaven, I think of my Haitian friends. In today’s parlance, “They’re there!”

The pastor of the parish in Cabestor, Haiti, helped me see why. He recently visited our church community in Virginia, and one evening over dinner I discussed with him how hard it is to be a pastor in Haiti.

He agreed, explaining that a continuous flow of parishioners come to him for help, “They say, ‘I’m hungry, I need money, my child is sick.’ Sometimes I can help. But usually I can’t. I don’t have what they ask for — in Haiti there is no money, there is not enough food.

“They keep coming, but I tell them I can’t provide those things,” the priest said. “I remind them to look to God for help. They come to Mass, and they always keep faith in God because they know food and money aren’t what they most need. They need the love of God, and they know God cares for them and their children.”

Then he smiled wryly. “Here in the United States it’s different,” he said. “People have money. They have food. But they don’t know what to do with it. They know it doesn’t bring them faith,” he explained. “They know they need something more, but they don’t know how to find it. That’s difficult too.”

Guiding people to God, he said, “is different here.”

Living in a wealthy society presents a particular difficulty. Jesus made this point to his disciples after the rich man went away. Attachment to worldly comforts and success is hard to break. One can forget a need that will come soon enough: the need for God.

“How hard it is for those who have wealth to enter the kingdom of God!”

— Mark 10:23

QUESTIONS:

What material attachments are obstacles to your relationship with God?

When have you experienced a deep need for God that couldn’t be fulfilled through your own resources?

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Scripture Readings

October 18, Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time.
Cycle B. Readings:
1) Isaiah 53:10-11
Psalm 33:4-5, 18-20, 22
2) Hebrews 4:14-16
Gospel) Mark 10:35-45

By Sharon K. Perkins

There’s a proverb I’ve often heard people cite when they have to confidently make a quick but potentially risky decision: “It’s easier to ask for forgiveness than for permission.” I admit that I’ve had to fall back on this maxim myself occasionally. It gives me a sense of confidence (or is it bravado?) when the deliberating has been done; it’s time for action, and I know that I’ll ultimately be accountable for the risk.

In the Gospel, when James and John approached Jesus making the seemingly outrageous request to be seated at his right and his left hands, their request may have been delivered with a certain amount of bravado (thereby prompting indignation from the other 10 disciples). But Jesus did not dismiss them out of hand. Rather, he took advantage of a prime teaching opportunity.

The confidence to which the psalmist and the author of Hebrews refer is much more than bravado. I am reminded of the origins of the word “confidence” — coming from the Latin, *cum fidere* — meaning “with trust.” In this sense, one’s confidence is placed in God whose throne is grace and whose love is kind and merciful. According to the psalmist, it is precisely when we place our trust in God that God’s mercy is upon us.

Jesus qualified James’ and John’s request by making clear that a share in his glory comes only when one places oneself at the service of others. The world often views servitude as weakness. But a disciple who places their confidence in the Son of God — a “high priest” who has been “tested in every way” and can sympathize with weakness — has the assurance that God’s grace is poured out on them because of their trust.

“So let us confidently approach the throne of grace to receive mercy and to find grace for timely help.”
— Hebrews 4:16

QUESTIONS:

In what area of your life are you most in need of God’s mercy and grace right now? What is the greatest obstacle to your being the kind of servant Jesus describes?

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We experience God together because God too is a WE

By Jeff Hedglen

I remember a pivotal moment in my faith journey. I was about 14 years old, and I was walking into Mass with my parents. We usually sat on the left side of the church, but I had seen some of my friends sitting on the right side, so when my family turned left I turned right and went to sit with my friends. My parents did not say a word; they seemed to know that sitting with my friends was important to me. Looking back on it now I see it as a living out of the Nicene Creed.

The statement of belief we recite every Sunday begins with the words “We believe.” It is easy to pass over these words on our way to the more weighty statements of our faith in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, but these are two important words.

The creed says “WE believe,” not “I believe.” The “we” is vital to our identity as Catholics. My parents must have known this to be true because they let me sit with the most important “we” at that time of my life. Having my friends next to me while at Mass helped me feel connected to what was going on. This same thing was true as a young adult. At that time of my life I was attending a different parish than my parents, so the friends I had really were my family.

I have been attending the same parish since 1981, and this gives me an even greater understanding of the WE of the creed. I love to watch the communion line, for in it I see my faith family on the way to receive the One who unites us all.

The importance of the WE in the creed also comes alive in the sacraments. Baptisms and marriages must have witnesses and are usually celebrated with all our closest friends and relatives. The sacrament of reconciliation, while it is experienced alone with the priest, reunites us to the Body whom we have wounded by our sin. And at Mass we worship, hear the Word, and receive Jesus as a community.

The WE extends beyond the sacraments when we experience trials in life and our faith community supports us, as well as when we gather with these same people to grow in faith through Bible studies, youth, young adult, and other ministries.

So when we say “We believe” it is a statement of the reality that we believe in God, not on our own, but with others. By “believe” we mean many things. Along with the statements of doctrine in the Nicene Creed, believe also means we meet Jesus, experience Jesus, grow in our faith in Jesus, share our experiences of Jesus, and live our lives for Jesus. And all of this meeting, experiencing, growing, sharing, and living is done with other people.

Yes we do have many personal encounters with Jesus in prayer and in the daily living of life. Our personal belief is vital to our relationship with God. Each of us must cultivate our own relationship with Jesus. For it is these one-on-one experiences that build us up for when we are back to the WE part of the believing.

The Church Fathers of the Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. could have highlighted our personal encounters with Jesus in their defining statement of our beliefs, but even this early in Church history it was clear that the Church was not a haphazard collection of individuals believing in God in their own personal way, on their own, some place in the world.

The Gospels reveal a community of disciples. The Church itself was born in an upper room at a gathering of people when the Third Person of the Trinity filled the room, and them, with power, and the world was never the same.

It is in the image of this Trinity where we find our most compelling reason for why it is not I, but WE who believe. We are created in the image and likeness of a God who is a WE.
Obispo Vann visita a México, considera vínculos con Celaya, Guanajuato

El obispo Vann se ve parado con un grupo de seminaristas de San Miguel de Allende. A su izquierda está el padre Rogelio y a su derecha el pastor de la parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Luz, el padre Raul Ruiz.

Por Juan Guajardo
Corresponsal
Traducido por Ana M. Fores

La diócesis de Fort Worth está considerando establecer vínculos con otra diócesis, esta vez en México, añadiendo así a misiones con diócesis en Honduras, Bolivia, Guatemala y Vietnam.

Por cinco días en julio, el obispo Kevin Vann visitó la diócesis de Celaya, Guanajuato, marcando el comienzo de un esfuerzo por establecer una relación entre las dos diócesis. Mientras estaba en México, el obispo Vann celebró misas diarias, fue a reuniones con el clero y los seminaristas, diócesis. Mientras estaba en la diócesis de Celaya, el obispo Vann se reunió con el alcalde de Catalán (al centro), el padre Rogelio y un grupo de familias que tiene lazos al área de Fort Worth.

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Padre Jasso honrado en Dallas por ayudar a los inmigrantes

El pasado 15 de septiembre, el padre Esteban Jasso, TOR, pastor de la parroquia de Todos los santos en Fort Worth, recibió el Premio Ohtli del Instituto de mexicanos en el exterior. Alberto Bernal, cónsul alternativo, le presentó el Premio Ohtli al padre Jasso en una ceremonia celebrada en el Consulado mexicano de Dallas. La Asociación nacional de oficiales electos latinos (NALEO) por sus siglas en inglés) hace sus nominaciones para el premio, que son entregadas anualmente por el gobierno de México a personas que viven fuera de México pero que han dedicado su vida en abrir camino para beneficiar a los ciudadanos de México que viven fuera de su patria.

Monseñor Vann, obispo de Fort Worth, acompañó al padre Jasso a la ceremonia de entrega de premios y recepción, y elogió al sacerdote — natural de Waco, Tercera orden de México — por sus años de incansables esfuerzos por asistir a inmigrantes con sus necesidades más básicas.

“El padre Jasso es un modelo para todos nosotros, como sacerdote,” dijo el obispo. “En verdad es un ícono, una fuente de estímulo y de inspiración. Es un crédito a su comunidad religiosa y a nuestra diócesis.”

El padre Jasso, 77, veterano del ejército de la Guerra de Cora, se incorporó a la Tercera orden regular de Franciscanos en 1957, y fue ordenado sacerdote en Roma en 1965 después de terminar sus estudios teológicos en la universidad de Santo Tomás Aquino (La Angelicum). Servió como misionero en Perú y también desempeñó servicios en México como superior religioso de su congregación durante los 24 años que pasó de ministerio pastoral en México. Fue, por ocho años, director del Instituto franciscano de espiritualidad de México (IFEM) y ganó un M.B.A. del Colegio de graduados en alta dirección de México en 1993. Ha servido como pastor de la parroquia de Todos los Santos desde 1994.

Esclavo para el periódi La estrella, el padre Jasso ha servido en el liderazgo de la diócesis de Fort Worth y también como miembro del consejo de varias organizaciones cívicas. El padre Jasso ha participado además en varias reuniones cumbres del liderazgo nacional en Washington, D.C. Actualmente sirve como miembro del comité consultorio de la congregasia Kay Granger y del Consejo de salud del John Peter Smith Hospital en Fort Worth. El alcalde Mike Moncrief de Fort Worth lo nombró Modelo sobresaliente de Texas en abril del 2002.

“Estoy muy contento por haber recibido este premio e incluso más feliz con Dios por tener al obispo Vann presente conmigo en un día tan especial en mi vida”, dijo el padre Jasso al recibir el Premio Ohtli, que significa camino en la lengua náhuatl. “Agradezco a los demás líderes con quienes [durante los últimos 15 años] he estado trabajando para ayudar a la comunidad... y agradezco a mis feligreses que también me han acompañado aquí hoy.”

Dios está presente en aquellos que responden al odio con amor, dice el Papa

Por Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

CIDUCAD DEL VATICANO — Cuando el amor de uno por los demás es tan grande que puede responder al odio con amor y perdón, Dios está verdaderamente presente en el corazón de esa persona, dijo el Papa Benedicto XVI.

“Sin cierta apertura al amor, Cristo no puede entrar en nosotros”, dijo durante su audiencia general semanal el 16 de septiembre.

De hecho, esto es un indicador útil para saber si “estamos verdaderamente cerca de Dios, si Dios existe y vive dentro de nosotros”, dijo.

“_Solamente el amor divino puede abrir nuestros corazones hacia otras personas y hacernos sensibles a sus necesidades, hacernos pensar en ellas como hermanos y hermanas e invitar a las demás personas a responder al odio con amor y a la ofensa con perdón”, dijo el Papa.

El Papa enfocó su catequesis a conocer a Dios los fieles por los pecados de uno para poder alcanzar la unión con Cristo, quien no es el fruto del bautismo que es común para todos los cristianos, dijo el Papa.

“Inspirados por la vida de Simeón, pongamos mayor atención a nuestra vida espiritual, buscando la dirección que necesita mos para crecer en el amor de Dios”, dijo.

Al final de la audiencia general el Papa voló de regreso en helicóptero hasta la residencia Papal de verano en Castel Gandolfo, donde pasaría las semanas finales de sus vacaciones.

Retiro de Rachel’s Vineyard para sanación después del aborto

¿Estás sufriendo después de haber tenido un aborto? Los ministerios de Rachel’s Vineyard ofrecen un retiro espiritual el fin de semana del 30 de octubre al 1 de noviembre, para la sanación después de un aborto. Este retiro está diseñado para ayudar a encontrar esperanza y sanación a quienes están lidiando con sentimentos de sufrimiento, culpabilidad, vergüenza y dolor después de haber tenido un aborto. Te invita mos a que vengas a vivir el perdón, la sanación y la misericordia en el amor de Dios y en compañía de otras personas que compartirán lo que estás viviendo. Para más información, favor de llamar al número (817) 886-4760. Estrictamente confidencial.

La Escuela de ministerio local del Instituto Papa Juan Pablo II ha cambiado las fechas de comienzo y lugares del programa en español

La Escuela de ministerio local del Instituto Papa Juan Pablo II ha cambiado las fechas de comienzo y lugares del programa en español. Habrá dos clases, cada una reuniéndose en el Centro católico. Una clase se reunirá los lunes, comenzando el 5 de octubre. La otra se reunirá el segundo sábado del mes, comenzando el 10 de octubre.

Para inscribirse en la Escuela de ministerio local el aspirante debe comunicarse con el padre Carmelo Mele, O.P., director, en el Centro católico. Se puede encontrar la solicitud de inscripción si se la pide al párraro, si la encuentra en la página diocesana de Internet, o si llama al padre Carmelo. Se puede inscribir hasta el día de la primera clase.

La Escuela de ministerio local del Instituto Papa Juan Pablo II lleva adelante el trabajo del Instituto de Cristo de la Diócesis de Fort Worth. Intenta formar a los laicos para el ministerio en las parroquias. Durante el año escolar de 2009-10, ELM ofrecerá clases de teología y de ministerio al nivel introductorio o “Competencia básica”.

Celebración de aniversario de oro, 11 de octubre, en la iglesia de Holy Family

La diócesis de Fort Worth y la Oficina de asuntos familiares invitan a todas las parejas que tienen 50 años o más de casados a su cuarta Celebración de aniversario de oro el domingo, 11 de octubre. La celebración se llevará a cabo en la iglesia Holy Family, 6150 Pershing Ave. en Fort Worth. El Señor obispo Vann será el celebrante de la Misa que empezará a las 3 p.m. Durante la celebración de la santa Misa las parejas tendrán la oportunidad de renovar sus votos matrimoniales y recibirán una bendición especial.

Habrá una recepción con pastel y bebidas inmediatamente después de la Misa en el centro familiar de la iglesia. Si ustedes se casaron antes del 1958 y desean formar parte de esta celebración especial, favor de hablar con la secretaria de su iglesia, dejando sus nombres, dirección y fecha de la boda.

EL 16 de septiembre en el Vaticano, el Papa Benedicto XVI saluda al cielo al final de su audiencia general semanal en el salón de Pablo VI. (CNS photo/Tony Gentile, Reuters)
Algunos obispos hablan de cuidado de salud y de inmigración con miembros del Congreso

Por Patricia Zapor
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON — Aunque creen que la iglesia está de acuerdo con el Congreso, cuando se trata de otros aspectos de cuidado de salud y de reforma de inmigración, una delegación de obispos hispanos salió de las reuniones, sostenidas con varios grupos de dirigentes de la Cámara y del Senado, preocupada de que quizás los inmigrantes quedarían fuera de la reforma de salud.

En rueda de prensa con periodistas, después de las reuniones matinales con los senadores y con grupos que representan congresistas hispanos, dos de los obispos dijeron que se sentían optimistas de que, por medio de la legislación sobre el cuidado de salud que se vislumbra, no se proporcionarían fondos federales para abortos y se incluiría protección de conciencia para trabajadores en cuanto al cuidado de salud. Esos dos han sido temas de preocupación para la Iglesia Católica mientras se le da forma a la legislación.

El arzobispo de San Antonio, José H. Gómez, dijo que el grupo de media docena de obispos hispanos les dijo a los miembros del Congreso que, además del no usar fondos para abortos e incluir una cláusula para alivio de conciencia, su preocupación era que la reforma de cuidado de salud debería ofrecer un plan legal o no.

“Nos damos cuenta que es un asunto que provoca mucha discusión”, dijo el obispo Soto. “Pero debe de haber algo así como una red de seguridad”. Si los inmigrantes indocumentados no pudieran participar y por el cual se brindaría cuidado de salud desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

Dijo que quieren que en el plan se incluya a todos los inmigrantes, sea que estén en el país legalmente o no.

“Todos deberían tener una forma de participar”, dijo el arzobispo Gómez.

El obispo Jaime Soto, de Sacramento, California, dijo en la rueda de prensa que, además del no brindar cuidado de salud con fondos del gobierno a personas que estén en el país ilegalmente — como el Presidente Barack Obama prometió en su discurso ante el Congreso el 9 de septiembre — se ha expresado preocupaciones de que, incluso, los inmigrantes legales quedarían fuera del sistema.

El obispo Soto dijo que la exclusión de inmigrantes indocumentados al seguro de salud sostenido por el gobierno es un asunto del cual los obispos pueden no estar de acuerdo, pero podría conceder que era una necesidad política.

“Nos damos cuenta que es un asunto que provoca mucha discusión”, dijo el obispo Soto. “Pero debe de haber algo así como una red de seguridad”. Si los inmigrantes indocumentados no pudieran participar en el seguro de salud, añadió, “terminarán yendo a las salas de emergencia”.

Los obispos dijeron que salieron de las reuniones con la sensación de confianza que la reforma completa de inmigración empezaría pronto a progresar en medio del Congreso, una vez que la legislación sobre el cuidado de salud se habría solucionado.

El grupo entero de obispos se reunió con senadores democráticos, la Conferencia hispana del Congreso que representa a los republicanos, y representantes hispanos del Congreso, representando a los demócratas. El arzobispo Gómez también se reunió en forma separada con el senador John Cornyn, R-Texas.

Entre otros obispos de la delegación se incluía al obispo Ricardo Ramírez de Las Cruces, Nueva México; al obispo James A. Tamayo de Laredo; al obispo Carlos A. Sevilla de Yakima, Washington; y al obispo auxiliar Edgar Moreira da Cunha de Newark, Nueva Jersey.

Santidad para fundador de Caballeros de Colón posible dentro de dos años

HARTFORD, Connecticut (CNS) — Carl Anderson, caballero supremo de los Caballeros de Colón, dijo que tiene la esperanza de que la consideración de nueva evidencia de un posible milagro llevaría a la santidad del fundador de los Caballeros de Colón dentro de un plazo de dos años.

Anderson hizo los comentarios al Catholic Transcript, periódico de la arquidiócesis de Hartford, momentos antes que el arzobispo Henry J. Mansell, de Hartford, firmara los documentos que contenía la nueva información recolectada por el tribunal que está investigando el caso para la canonización del padre Michael J. McGivney.

Los documentos, que se mantienen secretos, fueron sellados el 22 de septiembre en presencia de unos 20 testigos y preparados para entregárselos al Vaticano.

Padre McGivney (1852-1890) fue el sacerdote de la arquidiócesis de Hartford que fundó los Caballeros de Colón en 1882 en New Haven. La causa para su santidad comenzó formalmente en Hartford en 1997.

Anderson dijo que la ceremonia marcará “un día muy importante para la causa de padre McGivney porque es la conclusión de la evidencia y evaluación médicas (de) el milagro que se está entregando —o de lo que tenemos la esperanza que se está considerando un milagro— y entonces este es un paso muy importante para nosotros”.

Mecanismos para reportar la conducta sexual inapropiada

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

- Llamar a Judy Locke, Coordinadora de asistencia para víctimas, al número (817) 560-2452, Ext. 201, o mandarle correo electrónico a jlocke@fwdioc.org.
- Llamar al número de emergencia para el abuso sexual: (817) 560-2452, Ext. 900.
- O llamar al Centro Católico al número: (817) 560-2452, Ext. 102 y preguntar por el canciller/moderador de la curia, el padre James Hart. Cada santo tiene su virtud.

La Vida después de esta vida

Un día de retiro para hombres y mujeres

En el Centro de Cursillos, 2221 NW 26th St., Fort Worth

domingo, nov. 8, 8:30 a.m. — 5 p.m.

Misa, confesión, reflexión, pláticas y oración en silencio

Venga e invite a sus amistades a este día de crecimiento en su vida de fe, basado en la enseñanza de la Biblia sobre el “más allá”, i.e. la vida después de la muerte, ahora que estamos en el mes de los difuntos.

Donación por persona es $25. No hace falta registración previa. Registre el mismo día, de 7:30 — 8:30 a.m. Ayudaremos a los que no puedan dar esa donación. Para más información, llame a Martha Galván (817) 770-6522, o al Centro de Cursillos (817) 624-9411. Favor de traer su Biblia.
Devalued elderly, ill, disabled – and even the able – may be granted ‘choice’

From Page 9

Both the Oregon and Washington laws limit assisted suicide to terminally ill, competent adults who must self-administer the lethal drugs. Yet personal autonomy and ending suffering were the two chief reasons given for permitting assisted suicide in the first place. Those reasons, in and of themselves, logically demand that the practice not be limited to terminally ill, competent adults who happen to be physically and mentally capable of administering the drugs.

Consider:
• If personal autonomy is the basis for permitting assisted suicide, why would a person only have personal autonomy when diagnosed (or misdiagnosed) as having a terminal condition?
• If assisted suicide is proclaimed by force of law to be a good solution to the problem of human suffering, then isn’t it both unreasonable and cruel to limit it to the dying?
• Once assisted suicide is changed from a bad thing to be prevented into a good thing to be facilitated, isn’t it easy to see how the early “safeguards” will come to be seen as obstacles to surmounted?
• On what basis could one deny a good and compassionate medical “treatment” to those who are suffering from chronic conditions? Or to children? Or to those who never have been or are no longer competent?
• If a lethal dose of drugs is considered a good medical treatment, isn’t the requirement of self-administration both illogical and overly restrictive? What about the person who is physically disabled and unable to self-administer the lethal dose?

In fact, assisted-suicide legislators have acknowledged that laws like those in Oregon and Washington are only a “first step” in achieving their agenda of death, for persons of any age and for any reason.

Do we want to have a society where assisted suicide is common, where it is considered normal?

Do we want to go from a situation where, initially, people are horrified by assisted suicide, but then tolerate it and, finally, accept it? Do we want to see a time, in the not too distant future, when people feel guilty for not choosing assisted suicide?

Many people in Oregon and Washington, including those who voted for a “death with dignity” law, didn’t have a clue about its implications. All of us need to help others know what legalized assisted suicide really means. That is the only way we can prevent its spread.

We must work to prevent assisted suicide from becoming the American way of death. Not only our lives but the lives of our children and grandchildren depend on it.

Rita L. Marker is an attorney and executive director of the International Task Force on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Devalued elderly, ill, disabled – and even the able – may be granted ‘choice’

To be a leader is to have a clear sense of identity. What I wish for all Latino leaders is that you have a sense of identity and of very clearly belonging.

—Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States, welcoming CALL members and hundreds of others

CALL, Catholic Latino leaders group, hosts D.C. launch

WASHINGTON (CNS)—With several hundred guests for a reception at the Vatican Embassy Sept. 23, the Catholic Association of Latino Leaders, or CALL, launched its first national outreach effort at an observance of Hispanic Heritage Month.

“Do you know, to say you’ll pay for my dying, but you won’t pay to help me possibly live longer?”

Wagner’s case was not isolated. Other patients received similar letters. An OHP spokesperson said the letters were a public relations blunder. In the future, insurance officials will “pick up the phone and have a conversation” to avoid putting the decision in writing.

Bishop says failure to include immigrants will send them to ER, cost more

From Page 1

to include at a minimum some kind of safety net for the undocumented, particularly regarding the goal of a nationwide health care reform plan is to improve the overall health of society, he said.

“We realize it’s a very contentious issue,” Bishop Soto said.

“But there has to be some kind of a safety net.”

If undocumented immigrants cannot participate in health insurance, he added, “they will end up in emergency rooms.”

Bishop Murphy said Catholic hospitals will not turn illegal immigrants away if they don’t have medical insurance, but he believes it will be more cost-effective if

Chicago woman runs to raise funds to enter religious life

CHICAGO (CNS) — When Alicia Torres laced up her running shoes and tackled the 13.1 miles of the Chicago Half Marathon Sept. 13, her goal was to become a nun. Torres is not a runner and had never run a distance race. But she ran the race as part of an appeal to friends and strangers to help pay off more than $90,000 in student loans so she can enter religious life.

When Torres felt God calling her to this vocation, she realized there was one more obstacle in her path — $94,000 in student loans that must be paid off to enter the Franciscan community she’s chosen. Most of her loans are held by private lenders so they can’t be consolidated or the interest rates negotiated. The 24-year-old graduated in 2007 from Loyola University Chicago with a degree in theology and bioethics and works in the Respect Life Office for the Archdiocese of Chicago.

Facing this large debt and feeling God’s call to her becoming clearer every day, Torres chose to do something public to seek help.

She took the “run nun” vocation for herself, then decided to run a half marathon to call attention to her situation and to encourage donations.

CALL’s board of directors, said the group came to Washington to introduce the organization to the leadership in the nation’s capital.

Among the guests at the event were Janet Murguia, president and CEO of the National Council of La Raza; Luis Lugo, director of the Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, several senior staff members of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and Washington-area active in politics, public policy, and cultural groups with ties to various Latin American countries. Many of the guests said they came out of curiosity, to learn about CALL.

Manny Garcia-Tunon, secretary of the organization, told Catholic News Service that the reception was intended to mark CALL’s national presence.

Though the group numbers fewer than 50 official members, Garcia-Tunon said local chapters are being developed in Miami, San Antonio, Denver, Houston, and Phoenix, all of which will have events in October.

Garcia-Tunon, the vice president of his family’s engineering and construction firm and an author and speaker on business topics, said the broad goal of CALL is simply to work with the church for the common good in the service of Latino communities.

That starts with goals such as helping Hispanic youth get good educations to enable them to succeed in life, he said.

Promotion of the sanctity of life and the sanctity of marriage and supporting the Church in the promotion of vocations to religious life are also on the group’s agenda.

He said they also will be working in support of comprehensive immigration reform and health care legislation.

Membership in CALL is by invitation. Its activities so far have included a retreat in June led by Boston Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley and a formal launch event in 2008, both in San Antonio.

Garcia-Tunon said he’s been impressed at the “absolute fellowship” and camaraderie that characterizes all the group’s activities, despite the sometimes very different perspectives of its members. Particularly on some political topics he acknowledged that the views of Latinos of Cuban heritage in Miami, for example, are vastly different from those of Mexican-Americans from Western states.

But the commonality of faith and Church teaching has gotten the members beyond such differences, he said.

“Regardless of the issues, we need to always make sure we use mercy and justice as our barometer,” said Garcia-Tunon.
Williams’ directive to the faithful was echoed by the words of the Rev. Scott Fisher, pastor of Metroplex Chapel in Euless. “Our weapon is prayer and our demeanor must reflect the character of Christ,” he said. “(We) must reflect his nature and his character. He is our model. Imitating Him must be the passion of our lives. Longing to see his Kingdom realized here on earth as it is in heaven must be our greatest desire.”

“Tonight we stand together to embrace and wield the most powerful weapon on the planet — prayer,” continued Rev. Fisher. “The apostle Paul instructed that though we live in this physical realm, our battle is spiritual and is not fought with physical weapons but is fought with spiritual weapons. Tonight we take up the weapon of united prayer. Men, women, boys and girls, Catholics and Protestants under the banner of Jesus Christ, praying for God to move in our community.”

Father Louis Leonelli, CFR, made the point in his remarks that there is even more at stake than saving the unborn. “The pro-life movement is more than saving lives,” he said. “It is saving souls. We are here to not only precipitate an end to abortion but to help those around us more fully embrace the Gospel of Life.”

As night closed around the faithful and the hour-long rally drew to a close, attendees once more prayed the prayer that Jesus taught. Then they went forth as they had gathered: in peace.

The 40 Days For Life 24-hour, 40-day prayer vigil in Fort Worth takes place this year between Sept. 23 and Nov. 1. To sign up for a time to participate in the sidewalk vigil or to learn other ways to join in the prayer efforts of those involved, visit the local 40 Days For Life Web site at www.40daysforlifeftworth.com.

Father Louis Leonelli, CFR, speaks to the crowd from the back of a pickup during the first day of the 40 Days For Life Campaign. Fr. Leonelli encourages people to invite their families, friends and — speaking to young adults — asked them to invite their dates too.
To Report Misconduct
If you or someone you know is a victim of sexual misconduct by anyone who serves the church, you may:
- Call a local Catholic Krakow contact, (817) 560-2462 ext. 102 or evil@diocese.org
- Or call the Sexual Abuse Hotline at 1-800-214-5437
- Or call The Catholic Center at (817) 560-2452 ext. 102 and ask for a sexual abuse coordinator of the curia, Father James Hart

To Report Abuse
Call the Texas Department of Family Protective Services (Child Protective Services) at (800) 962-5400

WHITE MASS
The Medical Association of Catholic Students from the University of North Texas Health Science Center will host the annual White Mass Wednesday, Oct. 21. The White Mass, traditionally held for all physicians, nurses, health care workers, and for pastoral care ministers and students, will be celebrated at 1 p.m. at St. Patrick Parish, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. Bishop Kevin Vann will be the main celebrant. "Traditionally, health care workers and nurses gather in the church, while symbols hope and comfort to the ill and hospitalized," note event organizers. Parishioners are encouraged to wear their white coats. For more information, contact Jennifer Garcia at jeniani@unt.edu or (409) 549-1624.

BLESSED KARL FEAST DAY
St. Mary the Virgin, 1408 N. Davis, will host the annual Blessing of the Animals, a celebration similar to St. Francis of Assisi’s 17th century blessing. A reception with refreshments will take place after the service, and participants can pray together, share their vocational call, to God, open the Word, and to pray together. For more information, contact Father Kyle Walterscheid, director of Vocations at (817) 560-3300 ext. 110 or kwalterscheid@dioceseoffortworth.org.

CATHOLIC ENCOUNTER
A Catholic Encounter weekend will be held Oct. 9-11 at the Catholic Renewal Center, 4503 Bridge Street in East Fort Worth. Nolan is extending a special welcome to this year’s reunion attendees. The event takes place Oct. 10 and 11 at a St. Patrick Parish, 1206 Throckmorton St., Fort Worth. Nolan students are encouraged to bring their family members for a reunion weekend. The cost is $75 and will begin at 5 p.m. on Oct. 10 and consist of sliced brisket, German sausage, new potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, and German goulash. Dinner will begin at 5 p.m. and consist of sliced brisket, German sausage, new potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, and German goulash. The meal will be followed by eucharistic adoration. All are invited to participate. For more information, contact the parish office at (817) 560-2462 ext. 102.

Cursillo
Cursillo is a short course in Christianity, consisting of a series of talks and meditations on the Gospel, with special emphasis on listening to the Word of God, with the aim of helping people experience this ministry is invited to attend the retreat. The cost of the retreat is $100, and includes all meals. For more information, contact Andrew and Samantha Matta at (817) 284-5117. Visit www.ciwid.org for more class information.

RETROVUENNALE ENCOUNTER
Retrovuennales, a ministry to help troubled marriages, will celebrate its 25th anniversary in the Dallas area. The event is open to anyone who has experienced this ministry is invited to attend the retreat. The cost of the retreat is $100, and includes all meals. For more information, contact Andrew and Samantha Matta at (817) 284-5117. Visit www.ciwid.org for more class information.

TASTE AND SEE FESTIVAL
Good Shepherd Parish, 1000 Tinker Rd., Colleyville, will host its third annual Taste and See Festival. The event is an Artistic Creatures Weekend, beginning at 11 a.m. and consist of sliced brisket, German sausage, new potatoes, green beans, sauerkraut, and German goulash. Dinner will be served at 5 p.m. in the Holy Family Holiday Inn, 6150 Pershing Ave., Fort Worth. A reception, hosted by Holy Family Parish, will be held at the parish hall. For more information, contact the parish office at (817) 737-6787.

IVR KOCHE GROUP
The Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus As- semblies 6308, 5022, 1302 and 3022-1509 is based in Fort Worth. Fr. Ivan Koch is the Parish Director, and the chapter meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. The chapter has been the recipient of the Szyszko Foundation’s Most Outstanding Parish Chapter Award. The chapter is open to all Catholic men who are at least 18 years old. For more information, contact the parish office at (817) 722-5238.
Second annual 40 Days for Life campaign encourages participants to **Persevere in Prayer**

By Michele Baker  
Correspondent  
Photos by Juan Guajardo

The Fort Worth kickoff rally for 40 Days For Life, an international, ecumenical prayer campaign to end abortion, took place Wednesday, Sept. 23 outside the Henderson Street Planned Parenthood facility near downtown. This 24-hour prayer vigil will take place from Sept. 23 through Nov. 1.

The gathering was unassuming at first. It began with a trickle of participants under barely twillit skies: clergy, laity, seniors, singles, young families with babies in arms, and teenagers brimming with youthful zeal.

“Our school prays in front of an abortion clinic every first Saturday,” said VyVy Nguyen of St. Ignatius College Preparatory School in Fort Worth. “We heard about the 40 Days For Life event and thought it was cool. There are 10 of us here today. There would be more but everyone has the flu.”

By 7 p.m., the narrow street of Daggett Avenue was swollen with people — nearly 400 by organizers’ estimates — careful to stay off the grass and away from driveways, respectful of the space they occupied. A portable generator motor powering a public address system grumbled in the background as people gathered and greeted one another.

Finally, silence. The back of a pickup truck balancing a black music stand became a podium. Bishop Kevin Vann ascended the truck bed and gave the opening invocation. He prayed for strength, courage, and perseverance. He closed with the prayer that unites all Christians: “The Lord’s Prayer.”

Next, local campaign organizer Jeff Williams took to the makeshift platform and reviewed the guidelines for the next 40 days. Every participant is required to sign a Statement of Peace, a pledge to be a prayerful witness to Christ’s love.

“40 Days for Life is a focused prayer effort,” explained Williams in an interview. “We encourage our volunteers to pray and fast. The only way to end abortion is for us to pray. We are a witness to faith, hope, and love. This is a peaceful sidewalk prayer vigil, not a protest.”

And so Williams reminded those gathered for the kickoff rally that participants must follow local assembly laws to the letter: no trespassing on Planned Parenthood property; no blocking drives or entry.

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**SEE 40 DAYS, P. 22**

 VyVy Nguyen (far right) and John Nelson (center) from St. Ignatius College Preparatory School in Fort Worth stand on the sidewalk during the first day of the campaign. Nguyen said students from her school regularly pray in front of an abortion facility.

**Catherine Saldena holds her son, 4-year-old Adan, while listening to a speaker talk about the negative consequences of abortion.**

**Participants listen to a speaker during the rally to kick off 40 Days for Life.**

**Jeff Williams, local director of Fort Worth’s 40 Days for Life Campaign, spoke on rules for peaceful vigil and encouraged the crowd to fight for this cause.**

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**Inside... This issue of the NTC**

- Catholic Charities Fort Worth is seeking homes for unaccompanied refugee minors: victims of war and terror here without any adults to care for them. And the need is great.
- October is Respect Life month. Cardinal Rigali outlines the challenges to building a culture of life, and Rita Marker tells us that “choice” may have a new and ugly face to show the elderly and disabled.
- Camp Fort Worth has come and gone again, but the lessons learned by the young Church will go on, as they seek to be the hands and feet of Jesus to the world of need around them.