Some see a link between poverty, moral issues affecting the family

By Mark Pattison
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — One inescapable issue that too many families around the world face is poverty.

Some say related to poverty are the moral issues affecting the family -- children born outside of marriage, the increasing rate of cohabitation and the overall disintegration of families.

Does one issue feed into the other? Is there a cause and effect?

The effect of poverty on family life will undoubtedly be one of the issues taken up by the upcoming extraordinary Synod of Bishops on the family. The Oct. 5-19 extraordinary synod will prepare an agenda for the worldwide synod one year later.

Many voices -- including that of Pope Francis, who convoked the synod -- have weighed in on the role of poverty on family life.

Pope Francis, in an interview published in June in the Rome newspaper Il Messaggero, said many of today's social ills are driven by a lack of adequate social policies and government support, not just selfishness and moral degradation.

"Raising a family is hard work, sometimes salaries aren't enough," (with pay

(Please See SYNOD/20)
Reflections on the new bishops’ colloquium in Rome

By Most Rev. Michael J. Sis
Bishop of San Angelo

VATICAN CITY — From September 8 to 18, 2014, I participated in the annual colloquium offered by the Congregation for Bishops in Rome for newly appointed bishops. There were about 140 new bishops in our program as well as a parallel program at the same time for about 100 new bishops from mission lands, sponsored by the Vatican’s Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith.

Since most of the bishops in attendance had been appointed by Pope Francis, the group reflected the priorities of our new Pope in naming bishops. Most of the men come from a background of many years of active service in parishes and related pastoral ministries.

The colloquium included a very ambitious schedule of talks, community prayer, and group discussions among the new bishops. Since the presenters came from a variety of countries, each talk was given in the main language of the presenter, but was simultaneously translated for us into five major languages: English, Spanish, Italian, French, and Portuguese.

Since we all came from different language groups, our daily liturgies were celebrated in Latin, while the readings, songs, and preaching were done in a variety of modern languages.

One of the highlights of the experience was the presence of several bishops from the Middle East. They spoke of the sufferings of their people in the face of tremendous persecution by the extremists known as the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria. While they were encouraged by the fact that our dioceses in the United States were taking up a special collection to help them, they asked us to encourage our government to do more to support minorities in their countries who are in real danger of being completely eliminated.

Please See Bishop/23

Honduras Collection, Nov. 1-2

The parishes in the Diocese of San Angelo will take up a special collection for the Diocese of San Pedro Sula in Honduras, on the weekend of November 1 and 2, 2014. These two dioceses have been engaged in a partnership, called the "Hermanamiento," since 2001. Our two dioceses are in communion with each other in the Catholic Church and we have the same mission of proclaiming the gospel, celebrating the sacraments, and serving the community. The donations of Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo assist the Diocese of San Pedro Sula in its many pastoral works. The Diocese of San Pedro Sula has completed a Diocesan Synod in 2013, to review the situation of the Church in society, to judge its needs, and suggest a course of action for the future. Based on these findings, a Pastoral Plan is being printed, a plan of ministerial efforts and activities for the next six years. Each parish in turn will adapt the Pastoral Plan to its own situation. There are a great many challenges in the social fabric of Honduras. The clergy and the laity are working together to address many of these areas.

Donations to the special collection in the parishes and missions of the Diocese of San Pedro Sula and its parishes to proclaim the gospel and serve the people.

Ecumenical All-Saints Gathering

Saturday, November 1, 2014

Holy Family Parish Center
5410 Buffalo Gap Rd. Abilene, TX

Join us for the "All Saints' Gathering" Christian unity event at Holy Family Abilene, November 1. The event is jointly sponsored by our San Angelo Catholic Charismatic Renewal Diocesan Service Committee and United In Christ ecumenical team (www.united-in-christ.com) Join us in celebrating our mutual Baptism in the Holy Spirit as brothers and sisters in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

SCHEDULE
9:00 a.m. Registration & Welcome
9:30 a.m. Praise & Worship
10:00 a.m. Fr. Ed Wade "The Holy Spirit in Christian Unity"

Newman Center to celebrate 50

The Newman Catholic Student Center, formerly known as the Newman Apostolate and Newman Club, located at 2451 Dena Dr., will celebrate 50 years of active ministry to Angelo State University students in April 2015. To receive a SAVE THE DATE card and formal invitation for the April event, please contact Sr. Kathy at newmancenter2010@gmail.com or by phone at 325.949.8033. Your name and mailing address is the information needed.

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Worldwide Marriage Encounter

"For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through him." Let Christ into your marriage so it can be a greater marriage. Let God be the strength of your marriage by attending the next Worldwide Marriage Encounter Weekend on November 21-23, 2014 at the Grand Hotel in Midland. Please register online at www.newesttexas.org. For more information, you may contact Pete & Kathleen Molina at 432-528-3324 or Val & Cindy Luna at 432-349-3690.

Save the Date

SAN ANGELO — December 22, 2014 marks two special occasions that will be celebrated at the Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo. At 6:30 p.m., a Mass will be celebrated marking the 50th anniversary of the consecration of the cathedral. The same Mass will mark the 50th priestly ordination of the Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, retired bishop emeritus of San Angelo.

Fr. Romanus celebrates 25

Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Coleman and Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Winters, will celebrate the 25th anniversary and Mass of Thanksgiving for the priesthood of Fr. Romanus Akamkwe November 15, 2014, at 10:00 a.m. The Mass will be at Sacred Heart, 303 E. College Avenue, Coleman, Texas with Most Reverend Michael Sis, and Fr. Romanus and priests of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo.

Reception following in the Father Lawrence Cyr Parish Hall, Coleman.
Bishops affirm power of prayer for Israeli, Palestinian peace after Holy Land pilgrimage

Pilgrims included San Angelo Bishop Emeritus Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI.

West Texas Angelus

WASHINGTON — U.S. bishops affirmed that prayer is powerful, peace is possible and that support for a two-state solution is an essential dimension of pursuing Israeli-Palestinian peace in a September 22 communique, following a Prayer Pilgrimage for Peace in the Holy Land. Eighteen U.S. bishops made the September 11-18 journey to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

“There is no military solution to the conflict, but tragically violence on both sides undermines the trust needed to achieve peace. Violence always sows seeds of further violence and fear,” the bishops wrote in their communiqué.

Bishop Richard E. Pates of Des Moines, Iowa, chairman of the Committee on International Justice and Peace of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, led the delegation.

Bishop Pfeifer was part of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishop’s Pilgrimage of Peace to the Holy Land in September (Courtesy photo).

Most Rev. Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI, retired Bishop Emeritus of San Angelo, poses during a stop in the Holy Land. Bishop Pfeifer was part of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishop’s Pilgrimage of Peace to the Holy Land in September (Courtesy photo).

The bishops expressed concerns about the rights of religious minorities, especially the dwindling Christian population of the region, as well as the challenges to the peace process posed by factors like the barrier wall, expanding settlements and other legal and socioeconomic restrictions.

Full text of the communiqué follows:

Bishops’ Prayer Pilgrimage for Peace in the Holy Land

We went to the Holy Land as men of faith on a Prayer Pilgrimage for Peace. Motivated by the love of Christ and deep concern for both Israelis and Palestinians, we went to pray for peace, and to work for a two-state solution and an open and shared Jerusalem.

Arriving in the wake of the recent Gaza war, though, we encountered pain, insurrection and cynicism. Even the young people are discouraged. But we also saw signs of inspiration and hope.

Prayer was the central element of our pilgrimage. Through daily liturgies at holy sites and local parishes, we experienced our communion in Christ with local Christian communities. We are grateful to those at home who supported us in our pilgrimage with prayers and interest.

We also prayed alongside Jews, Muslims and other Christians. Prayer is powerful. We know peace is possible because God is our hope.

We met with people of goodwill, Palestinian and Israeli alike, who yearn for peace. We were inspired by the commitment of the staff and partners of Catholic Relief Services, The Pontifical Mission, and the local Christian community, who are providing relief to the people of Gaza; by the efforts of Christians, Muslims, and Jews who are building bridges of understanding; and by the mission of the Knights and Ladies of the Holy Sepulchre. We were moved profoundly by our visit to Yad

Federico Adan Castillo

Federico Adan Castillo is a Seminarian attending his first semester at Conception Abbey in Conception, Missouri.

Date of Birth: February 26, 1982
Birth Place: Pampa, TX
Do you have siblings: 1 brother
What Seminary do you attend? Conception Seminary
What level are you: 1st Year Philosophy
What led you to enter into formation as a seminarian: Altar serving and Seminarian Retreat
Altar serving has played a major role. I’ve altar served for about 20 years. The seminarian retreat helped answer questions that I had in the back of my mind.

Home Parish: St. Elizabeth Ann Seaton/Odessa
Favorite Saint: St. Michael
Favorite Scripture: Galatians 5:13
Favorite Color: Black
Favorite Sport: Football
Favorite Team: Dallas Cowboys
Favorite Food/Restaurant: Pizza
Favorite Dessert: Cheese Cake
Hobbies: Working out

Federico attended and graduated high School at the E.C.I.S.D Career Center in his home town of Odessa. He went on to attend Odessa College for two semesters and then was accepted into The Dallas Institute of Funeral Services in Dallas. He then graduated in November of 2002 from Dallas Institute and returned to his hometown and worked at Odessa Funeral Home for seven years. During that time he continued working with the youth as a Youth Leader and as Coordinator of the Altar Server Group at Holy Redeemer, where he had served as an altar server and Master of Ceremony. Later, he accepted the position of Youth Director and became a member of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa. He served in the position for two years where he hopes he enhanced the current youth programs and the college group. While in this position, he had the opportunity to work once again with his good friend and mentor Steve Rojo, who was one of his Youth Minister’s and fellow Master of Ceremony at Holy Redeemer as a youth.

In between classes when he isn’t studying, reading or doing homework for school, he enjoys going to the gym to exercise and volunteers at one of the local elementary schools as a mentor to the students every Tuesday during lunch. He is happy and honored to be able to represent the Diocese of San Angelo and prays that in the near future more young men will hear their calling to the priesthood.

(Please See PILGRIMAGE/23)
**Young Adult Ministry at San Miguel parish in Midland begins ‘Renew Theology on Tap’**

**West Texas Angelus**

**MIDLAND —** The San Miguel Arcangel Parish Young Adult Ministry kicked off Renew Theology on Tap with, “The Top 10 Myths of the Catholic Church” on August 28, 2014. Bishop Michael Sis participated in the conversation at Sedona Grill in Midland.

The response from the young adults has been overwhelming. Seventy eight people along with five priests from Midland and Odessa were in attendance for the kick off and 65 young adults were in attendance in September. The parishes represented are from the Odessa-Midland Deanery and include: St. Ann, St. Stephens, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Holy Redeemer, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Joseph, St. Mary’s and San Miguel Arcangel Parish.

In the month of September, the group welcomed Fr. Francis Onyekozuru, from St. Ann’s. The venue to host September’s event was La Mission Mexican Restaurant.

In September, Fr. Francis addressed Myth No. 1: ‘Catholics worship Mary and the Saints.’ His presentation was easy for a young person to understand. A lady in the restaurant said the reason she is starting to attend another church is because of the belief that the Catholics worship Mary.

In September, Fr. Francis addressed Myth No. 2: “Catholics are Anti-Women/misogynistic.” Fr. Francis clarified the important role women have had in the church since the beginning and continue to have today.

The remaining talks on the “Top 10 Myths of the Catholic Church” to be discussed in the Theology on Tap series include:

- Catholics added books to the Bible
- Myths surrounding purgatory, heaven and hell
- Christ is not present in the Eucharist
- The Church is Anti-Sex, and myths about contraception
- Catholics are not Christians
- Myths surrounding confession and penance
- Constantine invented the Church in the 4th Century
- Myths on the Church’s Social Teachings

For more information on the dates and locations of upcoming TOT events, please contact San Miguel Arcangel Young Adult Ministry at 432-570-0952 or follow us on our Facebook page at San Miguel YAM.
PARISH FESTIVALS & FAMILY FAIRS

(If your parish's family fair or fall festival is not listed here, please email the details to jpterson@sanangelodiocese.org so they can be included next week, and in upcoming editions of the West Texas Angelus.)

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12
ODESSA. Our Lady of San Juan Mission's Fiesta! Come Join Us for Family Fun!
905 Edgeport (corner of Hillmont & Edgeport Dr.) Odessa
Raffle Prizes, Bingo, Cakewalk, Ring Toss, Live Bands, Roasted Corn, Menudo, Brisket, Hamburgers and more!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12
OLFEN. St. Boniface Fall Festival at Olfen will be held on Sunday, October 12th at the Parish Hall.
Roasted Corn, Menudo, Brisket, Hamburgers and more!
905 Edgeport (corner of Hillmont & Edgeport Dr.) Odessa
entrance at 1:00 p.m. and live auction will begin at 2:00 p.m.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18
COLORADO CITY. St. Ann Parish will hold its Fall Festival On October 18 From 10am to 10pm. Everybody is invited.

SATURDAY OCTOBER 18
ANDREWS. Our Lady of Lourdes Jamaica. Bring your family, friends and enjoy live music, entertainment, and even volleyball teams to compete for this year’s title of Volleyball Champions for the year. Also featuring a Talent Show during raffle. Win cash prizes and let yourself shine like the stars! Email: Talent@going4th.com or call 432-425-5738 OLLJamaica.com

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19
WALL. The St. Ambrose Fall Festival on Sunday, October 19, 2014 marks the 75th Annual Jubilee Celebration at the St. Ambrose Catholic Church in Wall, TX. The turkey, dressing and sausage meal will be served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Adult tickets are $9. Children plates are $5.00. Children games begin at 10:30 a.m., Bingo starts at noon, entertainment at 1:00 p.m. and live auction will begin at 1:30 p.m. Shuttle bus is available from the school parking lot to the church. German sausage will be available for sale. Please join us in celebrating 75 years.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 19
COLEMAN. Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Coleman, Texas is having its annual Parish Fall Festival on Sunday, October 19, 2014. Activities will begin at 11 a.m. with a delicious authentic Mexican Dinner. There will be a Country Store, Silent Auction, Raffle, Outdoor and indoor games & activities which include: Bingo, Train-ride for the children, Cake-Walk, Horse-shoe tournament, and much more. Please join us for a great time for good food, great buys, lots of fun and fellowship. For more information, please contact Festival Chairperson: Becky Slayton at (325) 214-4164.

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 24-SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25
BIG SPRING. Friday, October 24, from 11 a.m.-7 pm and Saturday, October 25, the Festival will be selling FOOD! ASADO PLATES! CARNE GUISADA PLATES! AND GORDITA PLATES! On Saturday, October 25, the FUN begins at 6 p.m., with GAMES! Basketball, Football, and Baseball! Throwing! Duck Pond, Fish Pond, and Hole in One golf! Bingo! And many more games! Join us for good food, fun games and live MUSIC!

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 25
MIDLAND. St. Stephen’s of Midland will be hosting its Annual Fall Festival and Silent Auction in the Church Hall, 4601 Neely Ave., Saturday, October 25, 6-9 p.m. Your ticket into the festival, is a bag of candy per family. There will be a cake walk, a baked goods store, face painting, children games, silent auction and much more fun. Don’t forget to wear your costume as there will be a costume contest, so let your imagination run wild and be creative. For more information, please call 432-520-7394.

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 26
SONORA. 11am-6 pm. Everyone welcome! Food booths, games, silent auction and activities on the St. Ann’s Church grounds, 311 W. Plum in Sonora. Raffle drawing for prizes at 5pm. Music and dancing 4-6pm. Only one mass on this Sunday at 10am. The Festival Queen will be announced during Mass. For more information, contact 325-387-2278.

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9
ST. JOSEPH - ROWENA - FALL FESTIVAL
Sunday, November 9, 2014
"There’s No Place Like Home"
Flag Raising and Balloon Release - 10:30 a.m.
Turkey and Rowena German Style Sausage Dinner with all the trimmings - 11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Country Store, Live Auction begins at 11:30 a.m.
Prize Drawing, Games for all Ages 11:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. Uncooked sausage sold by the pound while supply lasts. Sausage Sandwich Supper - 4:30 p.m. Shuttle available from parking area to parish hall. Activities are on church grounds. Everyone is welcome to come join in the festivities.

NOVEMBER 21-22
SACRED HEART-ABILENE -- LADIES’ BAZAAR
The women of Sacred Heart Parish in Abilene will host their annual Holiday Bazaar, Saturday, November 22nd and Sunday, November 23rd from 9 a.m to 6 p.m. The women will be offering a variety of handmade gifts and decorations for the holiday season, baked goods and tamales for sale. Breakfast and lunch/dinner plates will be available at $5 per plate for adults, $3 for children ages 3 to 10. A raffle for 5 terrific gifts: a Keurig coffee maker, $200 gift certificate, a gift certificate for a day at the spa, a Kindle and a handmade prayer bench. Raffle tickets $1 each or 6 for $5. The drawing will be at 6 p.m. on Sunday. Our bazaar is our biggest yearly fundraiser enabling us to help our parish and to provide scholarships for two of our graduating high school students each year. We are located at Sacred Heart Church South 8th & Jeanette, Abilene.

EDICTAL SUMMONS
September 17, 2014
CASE: KRIEG -- PLUMLEE (ROSENTHAL)
NO.: SO/14/15

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Debra Irene Plumlee(Rosenthal).
You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the October 31, 2014, to answer to the Petition of David Norman Krieg, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “David Krieg and Debra Rosenthal, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: KRIEG -- PLUMLEE (ROSENTHAL); Protocol No.: SO/14/15, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.
You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.
Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 17th day of September 2014.

Reverend Tom Barley,
MSW, MBA, M. Div.,JCL
Judicial Vicar

EDICTAL SUMMONS
September 19, 2014
CASE: ZUNIGA – SANCHEZ
NO.: SO/14/34

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Omar Lopez Sanchez.
You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of October 2014, to answer to the Petition of Iris Zuniga, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Iris Zuniga and Omar Lopez Sanchez, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: ZUNIGA – SANCHEZ ; Protocol No.: SO/14/34, on the Tribunal Docket of the Diocese of San Angelo.
You may communicate with the Tribunal in person or in writing. Failure to communicate within the prescribed period of time will be considered your consent for the Tribunal to continue its proceedings in the above-named case.
Given at the Tribunal of the Diocese of San Angelo on the 19th day of September 2014.

Reverend Tom Barley,
MSW, MBA, M. Div.,JCL
Judicial Vicar
Msgr. Francis Frey was born December 7, 1928 in Pittsburgh, Penn., to John William Ambrose Frey and Ellen M. (Andrew) Frey. He was one of 13 children.

Msgr. Frey was ordained May 31, 1958 in Pittsburgh for the Diocese of Amarillo. He served in the Amarillo Diocese before coming to the Diocese of San Angelo.

During his years in the Diocese of San Angelo, Fr. Frey served St. Mary’s in Odessa for 23 years total on three different occasions, St. Agnes in Fort Stockton for a total of 15 years on two occasions, and Our Lady of Lourdes in Andrews for eight years.

Above photo, courtesy of the Diocese of San Angelo; photos of Msgr. Frey’s funeral Mass by Alan P. Torre aptorre.com.

In photo at left, San Angelo Bishop Emeritus Michael D. Pfeifer, and below, Msgr. Bernard Gully delivers Msgr. Frey’s eulogy.
Election Day is November 4...

...Are You Ready to Vote?

Join The

TEXAS CATHOLIC NETWORK

Faithful Citizenship requires education and engagement. Guided by the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, the TEXAS CATHOLIC NETWORK keeps you up to date on Texas policy issues through regular News Updates, helps you stay involved through regular Action Alerts, and connects you with thousands of other faithful Catholics across Texas.

Sign up at

WWW.TXCATHOLIC.ORG

Texas Catholic Network
An Initiative of the Texas Catholic Conference
By Mary Lou Gibson

For more than fifty years, St. Paul of the Cross had one message to deliver: he would promote the love of God revealed in the Passion of Jesus. He was born Paolo Francesco Danei in 1694 in Ovada, near Genoa, Italy, the second of 16 children in a noble but impoverished family. In his early years, Paul led a very normal and pious life but he lacked much formal education because of his father’s financial difficulties. In 1714, he joined the Venetian army to fight the Turks. When he left the army a few years later, he experienced a conversion to a life of prayer. One online source describes this period in his life as a search for a deeper spiritual insight into the images of God. He received some direction from priests of the Capuchin Order and was also influenced by a reading of the “Treatise on the Love of God” by St. Francis de Sales. He experienced a series of visions in 1720 in which he saw Our Lady in a black habit. John Delaney writes in the “Dictionary of Saints” that Paul later said that she told him to found a religious order devoted to preaching the Passion of Christ. As he wrote a rule for his religious community, he aimed to combine meditation with practical work such as preaching and ministering to the poor and to the sick. His idea for this community was to combine an austere monastic penitential life style with intense devotion to Christ’s passion.

His younger brother, John, became his first companion. They were granted permission to accept novices from Pope Benedict XIII in 1725. Both brothers were ordained to the priesthood in 1727. They established their first house in the mountains above Genoa.

Author David Farmer writes in the “Oxford Dictionary of Saints” that Paul wanted to communicate the devotion of the Passion to lay people through mission work in parishes.

As Wikipedia reports, the austerity of the life practiced by Paul and John and the first novices did not encourage large numbers. Paul called his monasteries “retreats” to underline the life of solitude and contemplation because of his father’s financial difficulties. In 1714, he joined the Venetian army to fight the Turks. When he left the army a few years later, he experienced a conversion to a life of prayer. One online source describes this period in his life as a search for a deeper spiritual insight into the images of God. He received some direction from priests of the Capuchin Order and was also influenced by a reading of the “Treatise on the Love of God” by St. Francis de Sales. He experienced a series of visions in 1720 in which he saw Our Lady in a black habit. John Delaney writes in the “Dictionary of Saints” that Paul later said that she told him to found a religious order devoted to preaching the Passion of Christ. As he wrote a rule for his religious community, he aimed to combine meditation with practical work such as preaching and ministering to the poor and to the sick. His idea for this community was to combine an austere monastic penitential life style with intense devotion to Christ’s passion.

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St. Paul of the Cross spent life promoting the love of God through prayer, preaching, and mission work.

By Dr. Greg Popcak

This month, Pope Francis has called an Extraordinary Synod on the Family. This is only the third time such a special meeting of all the world’s bishops has ever been held by the Church. But why are we looking at family life? In light of this momentous event, let’s look at why the Church considers the family to be of such significance.

More Than ‘Cause God Said So”

Many people know that the Church teaches that family (defined as one man married to one woman and the children produced by their exclusive union) is the basic unit of society. But not a lot of people have necessarily stopped to consider why this is the case.

While some might correctly say, “Because that’s the way God intended it to be” that answer doesn’t cut a lot of ice with those who would dispute the idea that family should occupy the spot as the bedrock of society. I actually spend a fair amount of time on this question with my students in the college course I teach on Christianity & Society. Because it is a sociology course, I challenge my students to examine various Church teachings using only social science research and reason rather than Scripture and revelation. Seen from this perspective, the data is clear. Promoting the stability and well-being of the family is simply the best way to create a just society.

What Makes Society Just?

In order for a society to be just, it has to be able to easily balance the rights of the individual with the greater good of the social group—the common good. A society that over-emphasizes the needs of the group often overlooks or crushes the rights of individuals. Obviously, that’s not healthy. Alternatively, societies that over-emphasize the rights of the individual tend to do a poor job both of attending to the needs of those on the margins of society and creating social structures that lead to the progress of a society as a whole. Also, not good.

A Just Society: Family Vs. Other Choices

The family is the smallest social unit that is capable of balancing the needs of both the individual and the social group. In families, individuals learn ways of asserting their rights in a manner that is consistent with the well-being of every other individual member and of the family group as a whole. Because of the size, the closeness, and the interdependence of family life, family is the ideal laboratory—much more than any other social unit—to learn the strengths and virtues that are essential for living a full, rich life. There simply isn’t any other social structure that’s equipped to do this as efficiently. But don’t take my word for it. Let’s look at how family stacks up in comparison to other social structures various civilizations have tried to place at the center of their life.

Namely, the state, corporation, religions, and individuals.

The State

Civilizations that build society around the state instead of the family, such as fascist and communist countries, have shown that they simply are unable to attend to the rights of individuals, in general, or marginalized individuals, in particular. Communist and fascist regimes of the 20th century have shown themselves to be soul-crushing societies that eliminate any individual aims that do not serve the goals of the larger society.

The Corporation

History has also shown that societies that place the corporation at their center of society also tend to crush the needs of the individual and the family. When corporations are seen as the building block of society, the fruit of such civilizations tend to be company stores, low wages, and the sacrificing of family life, personal health and the well-being of anyone who can’t contribute to the bottom line.

Religion

You might think that, as religious people, Catholics would want religion to be the building block of society, but we recognize that when religions serve as the focal point of a civilization, the rights of the individual also suffer as religious freedoms (especially of those who are not co-religionists) and other personal freedoms are trampled. Such societies, as well meaningful as they may be, tend to impose on people more than proposing to people.
Making Sense of Bioethics

Of proxies and POLSTs: The good and the bad in end-of-life planning

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Planning for end of life situations is important. We should put in place an advance directive before our health takes a serious turn for the worse and we are no longer able to indicate our own wishes or make our own decisions. Advance directives can be of two types: living wills and health care agents.

The best approach is to choose a health care agent (a.k.a. a “proxy” or a “durable power of attorney for health care”). Our agent then makes decisions on our behalf when we become incapacitated. We should designate in writing who our health care proxy will be. The National Catholic Bioethics Center (http://www.ncbcenter.org) and many individual state Catholic Conferences offer helpful forms that can be used to designate our proxy. Copies of our completed health care proxy designation forms should be shared with our proxy, our doctors, nurse practitioners, hospice personnel, family members and other relevant parties.

In addition to choosing a health care proxy, some individuals may also decide to write up a living will in which they state their wishes regarding end of life care. Living wills raise concerns, however, because these documents attempt to describe our wishes about various medical situations before those situations actually arise, and may end up limiting choices in unreasonable ways. Given the breathtaking pace of medical advances, a person’s decisions today about what care to receive or refuse may not make sense at a later time point. In the final analysis, it is impossible and unrealistic to try to cover every medical situation in a living will, and it is preferable to have a proxy, a person we trust, who can interact with the hospital and the health care team, weigh options in real time, and make appropriate decisions for us as we need it.

A new type of living will known as a “POLST” form — a tool for advance planning — also raises concerns. The POLST form (which stands for Physician Orders for Life Sustaining Treatment) is a document that establishes actionable medical orders for a patient’s healthcare. The form is typically filled out with the help of trained “facilitators” — usually not physicians — who ask questions about patients’ health care wishes, and check boxes on the form that correspond to their answers. The facilitators receive training that can lead them to paint a rather biased picture of treatment options for patients, emphasizing potential negative side effects while side-stepping potential benefits or positive outcomes.

POLST forms thus raise several significant moral concerns:

1. The approach encouraged by the use of POLST forms may end up skewed toward options of non-treatment and may encourage premature withdrawal of treatments from patients who can still benefit from them.

2. Filling out a POLST form may preclude a proxy from exercising his or her power to protect the rights of the patient, since the form sets in motion actual medical orders that a medical professional must follow. As a set of standing medical orders, the POLST approach is inflexible. Many POLST forms begin with language like this: “First follow these orders, then contact physician or health care provider.” Straightforwardly following orders created outside of a particular situation may be ill-advised, improper and even harmful to the patient.

3. In some states, the signature of the patient (or his or her proxy) is not required on the POLST. After the form has been filled out, it is typically forwarded to a physician (or in some states to a nurse practitioner or a physician’s assistant) who is expected to sign the form. Thus, in some states, a POLST form could conceivably be placed into a patient’s medical record without the patient’s knowledge or informed consent. In a recent article about POLST forms in the Journal of Palliative Medicine, approximately 95% of the POLST forms sampled from Wisconsin were not signed by patients or by their surrogates. Fortunately, in some other states like Louisiana, the patient’s signature or the signature of the proxy is mandatory for the form to go into effect.

The implementation of a POLST form can thus be used to manipulate patients when they are sick and vulnerable, and can even lead to mandated orders for non-treatment in a way that constitutes euthanasia. The POLST template represents a fundamentally flawed approach to end of life planning, relying at its core on potentially inappropriate medical orders and dubious approaches to obtaining patient consent.

Notwithstanding the pressure that may be brought to bear on a patient, no one is required to agree to the implementation of a POLST form. Patients are free to decline to answer POLST questions from a facilitator, and should not hesitate to let it be known that they instead plan to rely on their proxy for end of life decision making, and intend to discuss their healthcare options uniquely with their attending physician.

Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as the Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See www.ncbcenter.org

Changing your attitude to find success

By Erick Rommel

Catholic News Service

We all know that negative person: the one who builds himself up by tearing down those around him. The one who thinks the way to appear more competent and professional is to point out the mistakes and flaws of others.

People like that will always exist and most will never change. Their actions in high school, they’ll repeat in college and in professional life. Even though they think they’re perfect, we know differently. That leaves us with two options.

The first is to point out their every flaw in return. But that’s a never-ending spiral that makes us look defensive. It also sucks the joy out of work.

The second option can be life-altering. Turn that person’s negatives into a positive. Imagine yourself in a situation where someone points out your mistakes. Instead of defending your actions, take a different approach. How would those around you respond if you said, "Yep, I made a mistake"?

When you acknowledge your weaknesses, it’s harder for others to point them out. You become a person responsible for your actions.

What if you applied that approach to your entire life? Stand up for yourself. Turn your “I should” into an “I could.”

Little words make a big impact.

Have you lost a job? Not received a promotion you thought you deserved? Don't get frustrated. Make them opportunities, not obstacles.

I know someone who is great at what she does. Knowing her capabilities, her boss doubted her workload. Instead of struggling with these new, unrealistic goals, her frustration became motivation. She searched for and found another job. She's now in a better situation and the employer who took advantage must now face the consequences that come from losing a top employee.

What if she hadn't found that new job? Would she have struggled and asked, "What will I do with all this extra work?" Would she have complained and said, "I can't succeed"? No! She would have said, "I can handle this." She would have adapted and learned and found a way to be successful.

It's all about attitude.

What about your personal life? Do you complain about money? Your social life isn't perfect? Turn struggles into adventures. Can't afford a trip to the city? Go to the beach. Don't have a date for that movie you want to see? Go with a friend or go alone.

When you frame negatives as positive, you're guaranteed to have more fun.

Stop hoping for change. Believe in it. It's easy to say, "I hope I get what I want." It's more difficult to create an attitude where you believe that "I know I'll get what I want."

Sometimes you won't, but it won't be because you doubted.

The negative person doesn't know the real you. They see a target. They don't know your strength because they don't see it in themselves.

Be a better person by building yourself up, not by tearing others down. Don't look at challenges as roadblocks; see them as opportunities. Take responsibility for everything. The best way to achieve your full potential is to believe you can.

Now, get out of your way and find success.
Substance and appearance in 21st century America

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

My old philosophical mentor, Eric Mascall, used to say that, in our time, all the goods are in the store-window and there’s very little under the counter. He was commenting on empiricism as a philosophy and how it was slowly robbing daily life of its mystery and depth. Sadly, that comment made years ago, rings true today at a different level.

Our world has become obsessed with appearance, with image, with persona, with what’s in the store-window, with how we’re perceived. Today it’s more important to look good than to be good, more important to have a good-looking surface than to have much in the way of integrity and depth underneath.

We see this everywhere, in our obsession for the perfect physical appearance, in the cult around image, in our mania for celebrity, in the imperialism of fashion, and in our not-so-disguised efforts to be perceived as connected to all the right things.

For example, typically, more and more universities are handing out honorary degrees to two types of people, celebrities and highly recognized justice advocates. I’m not sure that many of those institutions actually care about the poor or intellectually endorse what the entertainment and sports industry (which produce most of our celebrities) are doing, but a Nelson Mandela, Desmond Tutu, Meryl Streep, Jodi Foster, Wayne Gretsky, or David Beckham looks mighty good on a University’s public face: “Just look how caring, beautiful, and energetic we are!”

In the end, and I hope I’m not being cynical, it seems it’s not so important what an institution believes in or how it treats its employees and students, it’s only important how it’s seen and perceived from the outside. Giving a doctorate to a Mother Theresa doesn’t do much for the poor in India, but it does a fair amount for the institution that’s honoring her.

The same is true in politics. Image has triumphed over substance. We tend to care less about policy than about appearance and we elect people to political offices more on the basis of their persona than anything else. To be elected to a public office today, it’s more important to have the right image than to have political substance and the character.

But we shouldn’t be too hard on the triumph of appearance over substance in public life because this simply mirrors what’s happening in our private lives: More and more, appearance is the first thing, the whole thing, and the only thing. It’s not important to be good, only to look good.

Cosmetics is becoming the biggest industry in the world and concern for how we look, for the perfect body, is now a crutchifying anxiety that’s leaving more and more of us, especially young people, dissatisfied with our own bodies and sadly restless within our own lives. The prevalence of anorexia, among other eating disorders, more than bears this out. Too often we’re dieting, not to be healthy, but to try to attain and maintain an impossible appearance. Everything is about how we look and so we exercise more, diet more strictly, and spend yet more money on fashionable clothing in an attempt to look right, even as we remain chronically disenchanted with how we look and know deep down that we’re fighting a losing battle as our bodies age and society’s standards grow ever more unattainable. Worse still, we tend now to make value judgements based on physical appearance alone. Our worth lies in looking good.

Not that all of this bad, mind you. Concern for physical appearance is a good thing in itself, as are concerns for exercise and diet. We are meant to look good and to feel good. Neither bodily health nor healthy aesthetics about our appearance should ever be denigrated in the name of morality, depth, or religion. Indeed lack of concern for one’s physical appearance is a telltale sign of depression or even some deeper illness of soul. Our concern for appearance is a good thing, but, today, it’s a good thing taken too far.

Concern for appearance should never replace a concern for substance, depth, and integrity of soul, just as, conversely, concern for substance and depth may never be an excuse for shoddiness and sloppy appearance. Still, today, we’ve lost the proper balance and it’s hurting us in more ways than we imagine.

Faith is built on the blood of martyrs and the institutions that bind a society together (marriage, family, church, politics) are sustained largely on the basis of self-sacrifice. But ninety-nine percent of that martyrdom and self-sacrifice remains hidden, silent, anonymous, unnoticed, unglamorous, blood shed in secret, love given for reasons beyond appearance.

If this is true, and it is, then the prognosis for the future leaves me uneasy. When appearance is everything, we soon stop focusing on deeper things and then slowly, imperceptibly, appearance begin to look like character, celebrity begins to replace nobility of soul, and looking good becomes more important than being good.

‘The Giver’ and the fading memory of Christianity

By Very Rev. Robert Barron

Lois Lowry’s 1993 novel The Giver has garnered a very wide audience over the past two decades, since it has become a standard text in middle schools and high schools across the English-speaking world. With the enormous success of the Harry Potter, Twilight, and Hunger Games films, Hollywood has been busy adapting books written for the young adult audience. The most recent example is the movie version of The Giver, which was produced by Jeff Bridges and which stars Bridges and Meryl Streep. Having never even heard of the novel, I came at the film with no expectations, and I confess I was quite surprised both by the power of its societal critique and by its implicit Christian themes.

The story is set in the near future, in a seemingly utopian city, where there is no conflict, no inequality, and no stress. The streets are laid out in a perfectly symmetrical grid, the domiciles and public buildings are clean, even antiseptic, and the people dress in matching outfits and ride bicycles so as not to pollute the environment. The “elders,” the leadership of the community, artificially arrange families and carefully assign vocations, all for the sake of the common good. In order to eliminate any volatile emotions that might stir up resentment or compromise the perfect equilibrium of the society, each citizen is obligated to take a daily injection of a kind of sedative. If someone’s speech veers even mildly in the direction of suggesting self-assertion or individuality, he is corrected with a gentle but firm admonition: “precision of language, please.” Most chillingly, the elderly and unacceptable children are eliminated, though the people have been conditioned not to think of this as killing but only as a peaceful transition to “Elsewhere.” The calm “sameness” of the city is maintained, above all, through the erasing of memory: no one is permitted to remember the colorful but conflictual world that preceded the present utopia. No one, that is, except the Giver, an elder who retains memories of the previous world for the sole purpose of consulting them in case an emergency arises and specialized knowledge is called for.

Utopian societies, maintained through totalitarian control, have been dreamed about at least since the time of Plato, and, to be sure, many attempts have been made over the centuries to realize the dream. The twentieth century witnessed quite a few of them: Mao’s China, Stalin’s Soviet Union, Hitler’s Third Reich, Pol Pot’s Cambodia. Indeed, there are echoes of all of these social arrangements in The Giver’s version of utopia, but I think what The Giver’s city most readily calls to mind is modern liberalism, especially in its European incarnation. We find the fierce enforcement of politically correct speech, the manic attempt to control the environment, coldly modernist architecture, the prizing of equality as the supreme value, the rampant use of drugs, the denial of death, and the wanton exercise of both euthanasia and abortion. Will all of this produce a balanced and peaceful society? Well, it might bring about a kind of equilibrium, but at a terrible cost.

The plot of The Giver centers on a (Please See BARRON/22)
Rallying cry of ‘Why not us?’ should be adopted by us

By Stephen Kent
Catholic News Service

"Why not us?" was the catch phrase used last season by Russell Wilson, quarterback of the Seattle Seahawks.

Wilson, then in his second season, used the phrase to inspire his teammates to believe in the possibility of winning the Super Bowl. And they did -- quite handily.

"Why not us?" could be used by Catholics to counter the deficit of leadership in the country, indeed the world. The church, of course, is a worldwide organization, headed by perhaps the most charismatic and admired public figure in the world.

The former prime minister of Israel, Shimon Peres, himself a Nobel Peace Prize winner, has already suggested that Pope Francis head an organization representing the world's major religions as a moral force able to intervene in conflicts.

Peres said Pope Francis would be the best person to head such a world body because "perhaps for the first time in history, the Holy Father is a leader who's respected, not just by a lot of people, but also by different religions and their representatives."

"In fact, perhaps he is the only leader who is truly respected" in the world, said Peres.

"Why not us?" would require far more than the pope heading an effort. It requires everyone in every parish, in every city, in every state, in every country to realize and take responsibility for acknowledging the world is a mass of problems and to do something about it.

There is little evidence to suggest that there is any leadership present or on the horizon to deal with things.

The president of the United States, perhaps backfilling to find reasons for his prematurely awarded Nobel Peace Prize, is looking about to form "a coalition of the willing" to deal with the barbarous Islamic State terrorists.

But we have a coalition, right? The United Nations. After surveying the beheadings, mass executions, rape and pillaging, that body in August boldly passed a resolution condemning these people for behaving badly. In September, the beheadings, mass executions, rape and pillaging continued unabated, the terrorists apparently finding the resolution unconvincing.

The do-nothing U.S. Congress remains content to do even less until after the November elections lest any vote in favor of right, reason and justice be used by an electoral opponent against a member standing for re-election.

Christians are supposed to be a light unto the world, a leaven. Individuals have to reach a critical mass to create a force that will be effective. Since solutions are not coming from capitols, executive mansions or palaces, it is time they come from the people.

Too often the answer to "Why not us?" is: because it's not my job. There are other people who are supposed to take care of things.

With the Internet, social media and communication, a drop can develop into a sea in a matter of hours.

Think if the parishioners of all the parishes in one city telephoned or messaged their member of Congress. Not a petition with names, but hundreds and thousands of individual communications saying we are dissatisfied with this scandalous inertia and insist on action. Extend this to one state, and then all states so that those in positions of leadership actually lead and honor the position of leadership. And then country by country.

"We can't spread a message throughout the world to form a worldwide coalition? It was done by 12 people 2,000 years ago.

Why not us?
Kent is the retired editor of two archdiocesan newspapers.

Hispanics and the future of the Catholic Church

By Moises Sandoval
Catholic News Service

Over the ensuing decades, the parish's Latino population grew steadily while the Anglo population declined as many moved to the suburbs or had smaller families.

Toward the end of the 20th century, the Redemptorists, feeling that prejudice had abated, wanted to close the church and merge the congregations in the main church. But the Mexican-Americans balked.

Victory Noll Sister Gregoria Ortega asked me to support the Mexican-Americans by writing about their resistance. For some reason, I was unable to do so and always wondered how the issue was resolved. Recently, I asked an old friend, Father Virgilio Elizondo, and Brother Ed Loch, archdiocesan archivalist.

As it turned out, Mexican-Americans were not only able to keep their chapel. Today it is a full-fledged parish, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, its buildings covering most of a city block. But they also moved into St. Gerard and are the overwhelming majority.

If they're not yet the majority of Catholics in the nation, Latinos will soon be.

According to recent figures, the Los Angeles Archdiocese, the most populous in the nation with 5 million Catholics, is 70 percent Hispanic. In many others, stretching from the Southwest to Florida, Latinos also are already the majority. Population growth is not the only cause. In good times and bad, like the Latinos of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, they remain faithful.

In 2000 at a Catholic Charismatic Renewal conference in New Jersey, I met a Puerto Rican permanent deacon who said that when his family first came to the area, they were not allowed to worship in their parish church. For them, Mass was celebrated in a chicken house. But they did not abandon the faith, and now, he announced proudly, "we worship in the cathedral."

"Waves and still more waves have passed over the Spanish-speaking people, but they are still as firmly rooted in the Southwest as a forest of Joshua trees," wrote the novelist D.H. Lawrence about Hispanics in the U.S. "They are not interlopers or immigrants but an indigenous people."

Today that can be said of the nation as a whole, even Alaska and Hawaii. And it is certainly true in the Catholic Church.

As to their potential, late Mexican novelist Carlos Fuentes wrote that Hispanics in the U.S. are uniquely qualified by their diversity to help resolve the universal question of how to deal with the "other" at a time of global interdependence.
From her Christian childhood to Miss Black America 1973 to her Solemn Profession of Vows October 5, 2014, Sister Mary Theodore Therese has had a winding, fulfilling life.
Synod on Marriage

Hosting date nights a way parishes can help couples’ strong bond

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON-- For many Catholic married couples, the training they received for their vocation started and ended with the required marriage preparation classes they took as engaged couples.

But as divorce rates remain steady and couples face numerous struggles in their marriages, some parishes are recognizing the need to give married couples more resources to navigate challenges or keep their love alive.

One outreach is the simple notion of encouraging married couples to go on dates, which they might vaguely remember doing when they first met and long before their kids' soccer or karate schedules, escalating bills, or sheer exhaustion took over.

Some parishes are hosting date nights once a month or quarterly. They often provide child care, dinner or appetizers and guest speakers or video presentations and time for discussion. These sessions often come with the caveat that couples should try to carve out time for themselves before the next session.

When Prince of Peace Parish in San Antonio hosted its first date night last February, 120 couples showed up.

"Since then, we've been averaging about 40 to 50 couples a month," said Gil Montemayor, who coordinates the parish program with his wife, Diana.

And that's on Friday nights in Texas where football is a major event.

"We don't change it. Friday seems to work as date night," he told Catholic News Service Sept. 18.

The Prince of Peace date night program uses resources from San Antonio-based Covenant of Love Ministry, which provides parishes with material to strengthen marriages. The ministry, which began 15 years ago, is used in 64 parishes in the U.S., offering training programs and date night catechetical materials.

Steve Pokorny, director of Covenant of Love, said the effort brings couples back to what they first envisioned their marriage to be.

"Most married people don't date," he said, stressing the importance of just bringing couples together to do something for themselves.

"This is not just for couples in trouble; all of us need to spend time together," he added.

Pokorny said the parish date nights are meant as a jump-start for a couple's relationship and are more catechetical than social, giving couples topics to look at and discuss.

Another parish date night program, used in more than 500 parishes, is called "Six Dates for Catholic Couples" produced by John and Teri Bosio of Nashville, Tennessee.

The program similarly brings Catholic couples to their parish for an evening that includes a video presentation and some discussion. According to the Bosios, it not only fills a need in the church -- to support married couples -- but it also responds to data from a recent survey, which says couples who spend time together have more stable marriages.

John Bosio cites the 2012 survey "The Date Night Opportunity" -- from the National Marriage Project at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville -- which notes how date nights (without a spiritual emphasis) are taking part in cities and communities across the country and are having positive results.

The study said that by merely spending time together, couples boost their relationship because they end up communicating.

"By removing distractions such as children and employment responsibilities, date nights may afford couples the opportunity to discuss things that are important to them," the study said. It also said couples benefit from doing something new, not just "that old standby: dinner and a movie."

Leaders of other parish date-night programs, take this idea a step further by helping couples also come to understand the spiritual blessings of married life.

The Bosios, who give marriage enrichment retreats and workshops across the country, said they have seen a renewed interest in parishes offering support for married couples, particularly in parishes with a family life minister on staff.

Ann Hoffman, who has been involved in parish ministry with married couples for nearly 40 years, with her husband, Jim, similarly stressed how important it is for a parish family life minister to coordinate workshops, retreats or other marriage enrichment programs.

In her response to a survey of Catholics in preparation for the Oct. 5-19 synod on the family, Ann wrote: "Given the challenges in modern society, how can a few hours in marriage preparation and baptism class sustain a couple over years of marriage?"

The Hoffmans, parishioners at the Shrine of the Most Blessed Sacrament in Washington, wrote in their synod preparation response, which they shared with Catholic News Service, about the urgent need for the church to help couples strengthen their marriages.

"Programs of formation are needed for married couples throughout the stages of their life together. Marriages must have the capability to live through change -- no children; children; empty nest; aging parents; economic challenges; health issues," wrote Jim.

His wife noted that even though today's couples are busy, the church has to find ways to reach them.

"It is vital that couples and their families be given the support they need and not wait to do something for them when they become a statistic," she wrote.
Our Faith

What to do when someone is showing disrespect in church

By Father Kenneth Doyle

Q. Within the past year, I have seen a tremendous amount of talking and socializing while people are seated in church awaiting the priest’s arrival for Mass. Parents are even conversing with their children during the priest’s homily.

In the Communion line, individuals stop to shake the hand of someone they know and chat while the Eucharist is being distributed. One man, arriving in church and walking up the aisle to find a pew, was talking on his cell phone as if he were out on the street. What kind of example does this set for the young people in attendance?

Some devout parishioners arrive before Mass to pray, but with all the distractions I would think prayer to be almost impossible. Maybe if the priest made an appeal to those attending to respect the house of God, it might sink in. So far, the only thing that has ever been said from the altar (by the commentator) is, “We ask you to silence your cellphones.”

Thank you for addressing this total lack of reverence.

(Houma, Louisiana)

A. The real “villain” in your story is the man on the cell phone: That is not only irreverent, it is downright rude. Nearly three years ago in this column, I addressed the importance of quiet before Mass in answer to a similar question from a different reader, but perhaps we all need a reminder.

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal in No. 45 express it this way: “Even before the celebration itself, it is a praiseworthy practice for silence to be observed in the church, in the sacristy, in the vesting room and in adjacent areas, so that all may dispose themselves to carry out the sacred celebration in a devout and fitting manner.”

Certainly the goal of a parish is to create a community of faith, so it is natural and good for people to greet each other and “catch up a bit” when they meet at church. For that reason, newer churches are often constructed with a larger “lobby” so that folks can chat when they first arrive and then be quiet once they enter the church proper.

In the parish where I serve, our church was built in the late 1990s, at a time when we were being encouraged to create a separate chapel for the Blessed Sacrament (as a sign of special reverence and as a more intimate space where parishioners could stop for daily visits).

The downside, though, when the Eucharist is not reserved in the church proper, parishioners may regard the larger space as an “auditorium” and converse at sidewalk decibels.

So just before Mass is to begin, I announce something like this: “We are gathered this morning to share our faith in the risen Lord and to thank God for the blessings in our lives. Let’s take a moment now to quiet our hearts and to place ourselves consciously in the presence of God.”

Then we have 20 or 30 seconds of complete silence before the procession to the altar begins.

Q. In a book I read recently explaining the teaching of the church in simple language, it states that a person cannot lie even to save a life since you "cannot do evil that good may come of it.”

This would seem to contradict the right to defend people even if others were trying to kill them: e.g., if Nazi soldiers were at the door asking if any Jews were in that house, I would think that lying to save Jews who in fact were in the house would actually prevent a greater evil from happening.

It seems to me that, when the choice is between lying and abetting a murder, you should choose the lesser of the two evils. Please help me because the question has come up in our CCD class. (Milladore, Wisconsin)

A. You have put your finger on a neuralgic issue that has troubled Catholic thinkers for centuries. The common Catholic teaching is that lying is always wrong, even to save a life; that is clearly the majority position historically, and is reflected in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, which says in No. 2485: "By its very nature, lying is to be condemned. It is a profanation of speech, whereas the purpose of speech is to communicate known truth to others."

However, there has always been a lesser but significant school of thought that has argued that it is sometimes justified to lie, particularly to protect the innocent from harm, and the church has not resolved the dispute infallibly.

Interestingly, the earlier edition (1994) of the catechism said that to lie is "to speak or act against the truth in order to lead into error someone who has the right to know the truth." But that text was revised in the 1997 edition, which has now eliminated the words "who has the right to know the truth" (No. 2483).

How to respond to the barbarism in our world

By Effie Caldarola

I was moved when, at August’s end, we celebrated the feast of the beheading of John the Baptist. I have always been intrigued by this saint, this cousin of Jesus who retired to the wilder-ness to preach repentance and live on locusts and wild honey.

When I visited the Vatican, I saw a statue of John that deeply struck me. He looked austere, ravaged, wild, thin and passionate, like a man consumed by a mission.

That statue, whose creator's name I don't know, remains my memory's image of John.

I was touched by the feast of his beheading because, for a good part of my life, beheading seemed an historical anomaly. And now, suddenly, beheading is something we read about daily.

It happened in the past, yes, in times gone by. A student of British history, I was always intrigued by the beheading of Anne Boleyn. Those Tudors -- what wouldn't they do? Anne couldn’t produce a son, and Henry VIII was mad for a male heir. He had divorced Catherine of Aragon because she failed to produce a son, and he severed England's ties with the pope just so he could marry Anne.

But the marriage to Anne faltered as no son arrived. Out with another wife, but this time by beheading. Even after centuries, it takes the breath away to think that Henry would behead a woman who had been his heart's desire, his passion, his wife, his bedmate, his queen.

But this is history right? Were these the dusty pages of more barbaric times?

No, ISIS, the Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, has made beheading prevalent. Two American journalists have been beheaded as of this writing.

James Foley, the intrepid journalist who prayed the rosary on his knuckles in captivity in Libya, hoped he could communicate with his mother through the mystical, universal language of prayer. Freed from that first captivity, he went back to work in Syria, which led to another capture, and ultimately, execution by beheading.

The Jesuit Father Pierre Teilhard de Chardin said, "Faith has need of the whole truth," and journalists such as James Foley were committed to just that -- the pursuit of truth. This Marquette University graduate, who after his sojourn in a Libyan prison said that finding the story wasn't worth his very life, once again risked that life in pursuit of truth, and paid the ultimate price. Others like him have been martyred.

Thousands of good Muslims are being killed by this barbarism, many beheaded. Christians are nearly eliminated from Syria and Iraq, and much of the Syrian population is reduced to refugees.

Obviously, barbarism is not confined to an historical epoch.

How do we respond to such barbarism? First, we must pray, with James Foley and others like him so that the truth wins out.
Bern Nadette Stanis, who had a masters in dance from Juilliard, and who remains known to most people as Thelma, little sister to Jimmie Walker on the 1970s sit-com “Good Times.”

She became friends with many well-known figures at the Negra Ensemble Company in Manhattan, including Phylicia Rashad, late of “The Cosby Show” and an important figure in the black theater in Manhattan. She rubbed shoulders with many important people in the New York fashion and theater scene. She desired to sing, so she did. She learned computers and for eight years, worked by day in law firms and banks around New York while singing at night. She then returned to Indianapolis to take care of her ailing aunt, or ‘mommy.’ The years-long experience of caring for her loved one she said transformed her and purified her heart.

She became an executive assistant during her time back home, and ultimately ended up in Austin where she began working for Dell Financial Services, again fairly high up the corporate ladder.

At about that time in her life, she began to feel a stronger call to God, and she changed jobs, to a slower paced position at Whole Foods. It was there she would meet a man who would become her RCIA sponsor.

The man could tell something was going on with her spiritually. He knew something was yearning to get out, and that the woman who would become Sister Theodore needed more out of life.

“I was nearly crying at my desk one time, and he asked me what was up. I started talking to him about Christ.”

The conversation continued and eventually its focus turned to her need of an RCIA sponsor.

“Throughout all of this, I kept telling God, ‘I know this is for you, God. Even with all those things that had happened to me, it was disconnected. I didn’t plan any of this out in my life, it was really all God, all the Holy Spirit.’”

Twenty-five years ago, Sister Theodore began to practice Siddha Yoga, a Hindu meditation practice that she continues to hold in high regard. Being at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, she says, encompasses Siddha Yoga meditation which, in Hindu, translates to “perfect union with God.”

“Christ for me had become so huge, he was beyond walls,” Sister Theodore said. “The experience I’d had as a child where I would sit and cry at the presence of God I found in my Siddha yoga. I don’t think I could be a Carmelite without Siddha yoga. I owe so much to that experience, it has created love and the discipline of meditation, silence and service.”

Siddha yoga, she said, is still brought into her daily life through her service, sewing, prayer and love of singing.

“So how did Sister Theodore, once Arniece Russell, Miss Black America, end up on this patch of hardscrabble desert in the rolling hills of remote Schleicher County, West Texas?”

Credit God, certainly. But also a priest known then as Fr. Michael J. Sis, who, at the time, was serving in the Diocese of Austin.

Now the sixth Bishop of San Angelo, Most Rev. Sis received an invitation from Sister Mary Grace Erl, superior of the monastery, to a Mass celebrating the solemn profession of vows of a novice several years ago. Fr. Sis, who had met Arniece Russell at a vocations retreat in Austin, knew he would be unable to attend, but he remembered the spiritual light aglow in the woman who would one day become Sister Theodore. After receiving a thumbs up from Sister Mary Grace, Fr. Sis asked Russell if she would like to attend the Mass at the monastery in his stead. She accepted and made the drive to West Texas.

When her car crested the hill at the end of the long dirt road and she saw the monastery rising majestically from the desert floor, she knew her life had come full circle. She knew she was home. All that she had been working for, striving for and praying for was now within reach.

“Who I am today is a product of this community,” she said. “My sister was concerned about me becoming a cloistered nun, but these women here ... they are alive in their love for God. They do not quit. I wish everyone could see them.”

So much has worked through Sister Theodore’s life to get her where she is now, but one aspect, above and beyond all else, shines through.

“The grace and movement of the Holy Spirit in my life has been the tying bond that has held everything together,” she said. “My destiny is and always has been Christ, and it has been the Holy Spirit that has watched, guided and protected, and created the situations in my life to make God’s purpose for my life become a reality.”
West Texas Angelus

Six youth from the San Angelo Diocese joined 30 other youth from Oklahoma, Arkansas and Texas this summer to train as animators for the Region 10 Catholic Youth Conference in November.

RCYC will be held in Oklahoma City, November 21-23, 2014.

Animators trained in singing, proclamation, liturgical movement and as prayer leaders during the conference. They will also provide music and introduce speakers.

Representing the San Angelo Diocese were Audye Butler (Our Lady of Mercy-Merkel), Gabrielle LeBlanc (Holy Family-Abilene), Oscar Narvaez (St. Peter-Mertzon), Pablo Zapata (San Miguel Arcangel-Midland), Maritza Morales (San Miguel Arcangel-Midland), and Stephanie Silva (San Miguel Arcangel-Midland).

For registration information regarding the November conference, please call the Office of Education and Formation at (325-651-7500)

San Angelo hosted RCYC November 2012.
The Diocese of San Angelo was well represented at the Texas Catholic Conference General Assembly, presented this year in Austin on September 22.

This year's assembly focused on preparing for the upcoming legislative session and advocacy day. The assemblies give delegates the opportunity to hear and discuss the bishops' legislative objectives, build communication and collaboration, and start gearing up for Advocacy Day at the State Capitol on March 24, 2015.

From left to right, Msgr. Larry Droll, vicar general, Diocese of San Angelo; Bishop Emeritus Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI; Sr. Hilda Marotta, OSF, director, Office of Education and Formation; Fr. Rodney White, Seminarians and Vocations Director; Bishop Michael J. Sis; Jerry Peters, diocesan Pro-Life Director; Fr. Tom Barley, diocesan Judicial Vicar; Sr. Elizabeth Anne Swartz, SSND, diocesan Superintendent of Schools, and Federico Medina, Director of Deacons, Diocese of San Angelo.

‘Year of Consecrated Life’ events will help Catholic laity learn more about religious life

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- In an effort to help lay Catholics gain a deeper understanding of religious life, priests, brothers and women religious intend to open their convents, monasteries, abbeys and religious houses to the public one day next February.

"If you've ever wondered what a brother or religious sister does all day, you will find out," said Dominican Sister Marie Bernadette Thompson in announcing the open house scheduled for Feb. 8, 2015.

The open house is just one of the events for the upcoming Year of Consecrated Life, which begins the weekend of Nov. 29-30 -- the first Sunday of Advent is Nov. 30. It will end Feb. 2, 2016, the World Day of Consecrated life.

The special year dedicated to consecrated life was announced by Pope Francis and is similar to previous themed years announced by popes such as Year of the Priest (2009-2010) or Year of St. Paul (2008-2009).

The year also marks the 50th anniversary of "Perfectae Caritatis," a decree on religious life, and "Lumen Gentium," the Second Vatican Council's Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. The purpose of the yearlong celebration, according to a Vatican statement, is to "make a grateful remembrance of the recent past" while embracing "the future with hope."

Bishop Michael F. Burbidge of Raleigh, North Carolina, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, announced the Year of Consecrated Life events at an Oct. 1 news conference at the USCCB headquarters in Washington.
Belief in one true God a starting point in nurturing lively faith

By Cardinal Donald Wuerl
Archbishop of Washington

In the parable of the sower and the seeds, Jesus likens the word of God to the seed and the ground on which it falls to our human hearts. Unfortunately, the seed can wither because it does not take deep root or because it is entangled in weeds, or because it is trampled under foot. Only the seed that falls on good ground grows and flourishes.

We live in an age that prides itself on the power of human reason and our ability to develop technology so that we advance the human condition far beyond that of our predecessors. In the enthusiasm for science and in the exultation of human reason, there is the danger that we lose the perspective that faith brings and that we may even be tempted to see faith and reason in contradiction to each other.

In dealing with faith under the heading of the "First Commandment," the Catechism of the Catholic Church touches on the tension that can be introduced between faith and reason. When exalted disproportionately, reason can lead to atheism which the Catechism points out "is often based on a false conception of human autonomy, exaggerated to the point of refusing any dependence on God" (2126). At the same time, we are reminded in the teaching of the Second Vatican Council that "The Church knows full well that her message is in full harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart" (Gaudium et spes 21, 7).

The most extensive treatment of the relationship of faith and reason that the Church has presented in recent years is the encyclical letter Fides et Ratio published by Pope John Paul II in 1998. While over a decade has passed, the clarity and truth of the encyclical remain. The pope goes into great detail on the rooting of both faith and reason in God's wisdom. We approach wisdom, knowledge, our understanding of reality through the use of our intellect but also through the free gift of the Holy Spirit, we know we have a sure guide to the truth.

The Catechism teaches us that the sins against faith include voluntary doubt about the faith or a refusal to assent to it. A difficulty in understanding an article of the faith is not the same as a voluntary doubt. Even the question that can arise, "how is this possible?" is not the same as a doubt or a refusal to assent to the faith.

The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults reminds us that "God has given us the virtue of faith, which is a personal response to the Lord's Revelation of his holiness, love, beauty and transcendence" (Ch. 25). We offer our assent of faith to all that God reveals, all that his Church defines and all that is presented by the Church in her ordinary and universal Magisterium as Christ's way to salvation.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church goes on to list a number of sins against the faith. "Heresy is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same; schism is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; apostasy is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him" (2089).

The commandment to recognize God and to have no other God is the starting point for our faith life. Secure in the realization that God is and that God loves us, we can proceed with our life's journey hopefully anticipating the promises of our faith that some day we shall live forever in the love of God.

The United States Catholic Catechism for Adults was developed by an ad hoc committee of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. Washington Archbishop Donald Wuerl served as chairman of the editorial oversight board that developed the catechism. He is the author of many books, including The Catholic Way and The Gift of Faith, and was one of the editors for the best selling The Teaching of Christ: A Catholic Catechism for Adults.

When presence of God seems remote, look for him within

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service

"Abide in me, as I also abide in you. A branch cannot bear fruit unless it abides in the vine. Neither can you, unless you abide in me" (John 15:4).

This quote launched me on my journey toward the priesthood. I wanted my life to honor God and bear rich and abundant good fruit. After 53 years as a priest, I know the Lord was with me every step of the way. However, on the emotional level, I never had the consolation of feeling his presence, the way you would if someone was holding your hand.

I trusted his promise; namely that, that together we would bear good fruit, but I never understood what bearing good fruit actually meant. Having used the media as best I could, I knew I was bringing God's word to a vast audience, but I never really understood whether it was really spiritually fruitful. I could only hope that with God's help, it was.

Why am I telling you this? Because this is the fifth draft of a difficult article, which began as an attempt to explain how God abides in us. I was writing a lot of theory but not owning up to how confusing it is on the personal level.

When all is said and done, I have to admit that over the years I longed to have a feeling of intimacy with God, but it never happened, except once perhaps when I was in the Army. One evening at prayer, I felt lifted out of my body. It moved me deeply, but it never happened again.

Otherwise, I've spent countless hours talking to God as though we were on opposite sides of a gigantic wall. I knew he was there but only by faith. Often the Holy Spirit would give me an idea for an entire column, but an idea is not God himself. I had to depend on faith-knowledge to know that God is love, but that was never enough.

I wanted to write this article to help you understand that once you invite God into your heart, he will always be there, abiding within you, but alas, it will not be as comforting as you might like.

I had to fight my doubts by falling back on the mental health principle: "Feelings are not facts." Even if you feel alone, you are never alone. Even if you feel unworthy, God's forgiveness makes you eminently worthy.

I would take Scripture quotes and repeat them over and over to reassure myself that my spiritual calling was true -- an objective fact -- and not merely a fantasy of my imagination.

I always knew what I wanted -- to be close to God -- which was a grace in itself, but I needed Scripture quotes to help me stay on track: "For where your treasure is there your heart will be also" (Mt 6:21). I knew my treasure was God himself. I knew I wasn't a self-absorbed egotist, blind to God's invitation. I accepted his invitation to abide in him as best I could. This empowered me to move away from self-absorption to a life of loving service.

Sept. 8, 2014, was my 83rd birthday, and looking back, I am happy to say that I know I made the right choice. Why is God silent? He has his reasons; he knows exactly what he is doing.

Albert Einstein put it this way, "God doesn't play dice." Woody Allen smirked in reply, "Yes, but he does play hide and seek."

So be it.
SYNOD

(From 1)

checks) not lasting to the end of the month. People are afraid of losing their job or of not being able to pay rent. Social policies don't help,' the pope said.

"Much depends on the economic crises and not just on a cultural deviation marked by selfishness and hedonism," he added.

Nearly 50 years ago, Daniel Moynihan, at the behest of the Lyndon Johnson White House, issued what is commonly known as the "Moynihan Report," which looked at African-American family life in the U.S. Its conclusions lit a powder keg of debate about poverty, its causes and effects.

Moynihan's central thesis was that the decline of the black nuclear family would significantly impede blacks' progress toward economic and social equality.

He described a "tangle of pathologies" negatively affecting African-American families -- disintegrating families, poor educational outcomes, weak job prospects, concentrated neighborhood poverty, dysfunctional communities, and crime and high non-marital birth rates among blacks -- that would create a self-perpetuating cycle of deprivation, hardship and inequality. And with black men less frequently in the household, Moynihan predicted the pattern would repeat from one generation to the next.

A 2013 Urban Institute study, "Moynihan Report Revisited," looked at the differences between then and now.

"In the early 1960s, about 20 percent of black children were born to unmarried mothers, compared with 2 to 3 percent of white children. By 2009, nearly three-quarters of black births and three-tenths of white births occurred outside marriage," the study said.

"Declining male employment rates accompanied by higher female employment rates could be both a cause and effect of the decline in marriage rates. With greater economic opportunities, women may be less inclined to marry, especially when more potential marriage partners are struggling in the labor market. Alternatively, because marriage rates are declining, more women may be compelled to work to support themselves and their children," it added.

Frequently asked questions about the extraordinary synod of bishops

By Catholic News Service

Q. When and where is it?
A. Oct. 5-19, 2014, Vatican City

Q. What is this?
A. The synod is a meeting of Pope Francis, bishops, clergy and laypeople.

Q. What is its purpose?
A. Pope Francis has written that the synod will discuss the "challenges of marriage, of family life, of the education of children, and the role of the family in the life of the church." The discussion will be based largely on responses to a questionnaire sent out to the world's bishops in November 2013.

Q. Who will attend?
A. Approximately 250 people, including the presidents or vice presidents of 114 national bishops' conferences, 13 heads of Eastern Catholic churches, three superiors general of religious orders, heads of Vatican offices and synod officials, and synod fathers appointed by Pope Francis. They synod also will have nonvoting collaborators and auditors, including married couples appointed by the pope.

Q. What controversial issues will be discussed?
A. Pope Francis has said birth control and the eligibility of divorced and civilly remarried Catholics to receive Communion will be among the topics of discussion. The latter was also a major topic of discussion at a special meeting of cardinals the pope called in February.

Q. Will the synod change church teaching?
A. Italian Archbishop Bruno Forte of Chieti-Vasto, chosen by Pope Francis to be the special secretary of the extraordinary synod, said that the "doctrine of the church is not up for discussion, but rather the discussion will concern improving the 'pastoral application' of church teaching."

Q. Why is it "extraordinary"?
A. The meeting will not reach definitive conclusions but set the agenda for a larger meeting of bishops, to be held at Vatican in October 2015. That meeting will generate proposals for the pope's approval.

Q. What prompted this synod?
A. In July 2013, Pope Francis told reporters he wanted the gathering to explore a "somewhat deeper pastoral care of marriage," including the question of the eligibility of divorced and remarried Catholics to receive Communion.

One cultural critic sees the issue in starker terms. "People who have less money than the average family can usually easily get by even the score with public funds, but the largest reason they are poor in the first place is because they live in fractured relationships and/or haven't developed the character traits necessary to stay out of poverty: good work ethic, personal responsibility, etc.

"Today's more complex social milieu requires a much broader strategy and set of initiatives to address the multitude of factors impeding black economic and social progress," it said.

But Gregory Acs, one of the authors of the Urban Institute's "Moynihan Report Revisited" took a different view.

"Let's pull the moral dimension out of it," he told Catholic News Service. "Did they make decisions because they had to make a compromise of long-term prospects ... to get by day to day? I think it would be very hard to say one caused the other. It's an inter-tangled web."

Acs added, "If you find yourself with a child that you have to support, you may choose to not complete or pursue additional education, and so you stay in unstable jobs and in and out of poverty, which creates stresses at home.

"Declining male employment rates accompanied by higher female employment rates could be both a cause and effect of the decline in marriage rates. With greater economic opp..."
OBISPO

(Para 2)

Siendo que todos venimos de diferentes grupos de lenguajes, nuestras liturgias diarias fueron celebradas en latín, pero tras que las lecturas, los himnos, y las homilías fueron dados en una variedad de lenguajes modernas.

Uno de los momentos resaltantes de la experiencia fue la presencia de varios obispos del Medio Oriente. Hablaron tocante los sufrimientos de su gente quienes se afrentan a una persecución tremenda por los extremistas conocidos como el Estado Islámico en Iraq y Siria (I.S.I.S., por sus siglas en inglés).

Aunque son animados al saber del hecho que nuestras diócesis en los Estados Unidos levantaron una colecta especial para ayudarlos, nos han pedido que animemos a nuestro gobierno hacer aún más por apoyar a las minoridades en sus países quienes están en gran peligro de ser completamente eliminadas por las fuerzas de violencia.

Aunque solamente fue en el último día que pudimos ver y saludar al Papa Francisco, el espíritu de su pontificado impregnaba la entera conferencia. La mayoría de los oradores hacían referencia a su encíclica, Evangelii Gaudium, La Alegría del Evangelio. Había ciertos temas que resonaban muy a menudo, tal como la de misericordia, la sencillez, el compromiso con la comunidad, y la constante necesidad de re-examinar la manera en que hacemos cosas en la Iglesia.

La conferencia enfatizó la necesidad del ministerio de un obispo que sea profundamente misionero, siempre buscando maneras de alcanzar a quienes están en las márgenes de sociedad y de la Iglesia. Otro tema central fue el como ejercemos la autoridad. Cualquiera que tenga algún papel de autoridad en la Iglesia la ha de llevar a cabo con un espíritu de servicio, humildad, autenticidad, y de corazón. Todos somos animados a fomentar la Nueva Evangelización, y darle vida al Evangelio en la Iglesia y en el mundo.

Los oradores enfatizaron el valor de la colegialidad y la “sinodalidad” en la Iglesia. Esto se refiere a la voz compartida de todos los obispos alrededor del mundo en unión con el Papa, como distinta de un ejercicio de autoridad que es muy centralizada y concentrada en el papel singular del Papa.

Hubo muchos cardenales quienes se dirigieron a los nuevos obispos, ya sea por sus homilías durante la Misa o por medio de lecturas formales. Uno de ellos fue el Cardenal Edwin O’Brien de los Estados Unidos. Él compartió con nuestro grupo qué experiencia tan profunda fue la de tomar parte en el conclave donde de eligió al Papa Francisco. Él dijo que había un sentido fuerte y tangible de que los cardenales estaban guiados por la presencia activa del Espíritu Santo.

En el discurso dado por el Papa Francisco en el último día de la conferencia, estuvo particularmente deslumbrado por su exhortación de poner atención especial a los ancianos y a los jóvenes de nuestras diócesis. Él dijo que estos representan nuestras raíces y nuestras alas. Los ancianos son nuestras raíces, y los jóvenes son nuestras alas. Ellos nos mantienen al tanto de donde venimos y a donde vamos.

El Papa animó a todos los nuevos obispos a seguir la santidad, escuchar a la gente, vivir con alegría en un estilo de vida sencilla, y seguir el ejemplo de Jesucristo el Buen Pastor.

Durante la plática del Papa, hubo una tormenta ligera que trajo una buena lluvia y una brisa fresca. Viniendo de San Ángelo, ciertamente pude apreciarla. La pequeña y delicada lluviza también simbolizó para mí el hecho de que el amor y la misericordia de Dios continúan siendo derramados sobre su Iglesia, trayendo nueva vida y esperanza constante.

Estoy muy agradecido por el apoyo de todos quienes rezaron por el éxito y seguridad de esta conferencia. También aprecio la paciencia de todos quienes tuvieron que tratar con las incomodidades prácticas debidas a mi ausencia. Que el Espíritu Santo nos guíe a nosotros y a todas las diócesis alrededor del mundo para que seamos fieles en la misión que Cristo nos ha encomendado.

GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The Guadalupe Radio Network (GRN) operates 3 English language Catholic radio stations in the Diocese of San Angelo:

- Abilene - 91.7 FM, KQOS
- Midland-Odessa - 1150 AM, KLPF
- San Angelo - 91.5 FM, KPDE

The GRN (Radio for Your Soul) is an EWTN Affiliate. The Top 10 weekend programs (most are “live” call-in shows) are:

- 7 AM - Mass (EWTN Chapel)
- 8 AM - Catholic Connection
- 9 AM - Fr. Ricardo
- 10 AM - Women of Grace with Janette Benkovic
- 11 AM - More to Life
- 12 PM - The Doctor Is In
- 1 PM - Called to Communion (Tues./Thurs.)
- 2 PM - EWTN Open Line
- 3 PM - Divine Mercy Chaplet; Kresta in the Afternoon
- 5 PM - Catholic Answers Live

Schedule Exceptions

The GRN produces 3 other shows:

- Mon., 1 PM - We Sing Our Faith
- Wed., 11 AM - Made for Each Other
- Wed., 1 PM - A Good Habit

For a complete schedule, or to listen live, please go to: www.grononline.com
SANDOVAL

(Para 11)

uring misión. Pero los feligreses anglos no admitieron a los mexicanoamericanos. Para ellos se construyó una capilla en el barrio. Con el tiempo, los latinos en la parroquia aumentaron y mejoraron su capilla mientras que los anglos disminuyeron, muchos mudándose a los suburbios y otros dando vida a pocos hijos.

Hacia el fin del siglo 20, los Redentoristas, viendo la disminución en la iglesia principal, propusieron cerrar la capilla y unir las dos comunidades en la iglesia principal, pero los latinos se opusieron totalmente.

La religiosa de Victory Noll Gregoria Ortega me pidió que escribiera algo

SAINTS

(From 8)

pliation which he believed was necessary. His members were expected to celebrate the divine office and to devote at least three hours to contemplative prayer each day. He also insisted on poverty above all.

Paul was not discouraged by how few men came to their community. His main aim, as he said himself, was to form “a man totally God-centered, totally apostolic, a man of prayer, detached from the world, from things, from himself so that he may in all truth be called a disciple of Jesus Christ.” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paul_of_the_Cross) It became St. Paul’s lifelong conviction that God is most easily found by us in the Passion of Jesus Christ. “I am Paul of the Cross in whom Jesus has been crucified.”

Paul Burns writes in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that the way in which the Passionists (as they began to be known) were successful is because their method involved active participation by the laity. This included processions, vigils, penitential works, hymns, prayers and other forms of devotion. Their message remained the exaltation of suffering and sorrow. The image they wore on their habits of Christ crucified was to be a visible way of life, not just a badge, according to Burns.

Delaney writes that Paul was one of the most celebrated preachers of his time. People sought to touch him and get a piece of his tunic as a relic. Paul was also a contemplative and spent long hours in prayer each day. Unfortunately, there are no audio recordings of his preaching, but his message lives on in his letters. He wrote on matters of spirituality and produced over 2,000 letters many of them on ascetical and mystical theology. A diary he wrote during a retreat in 1720 was published in 1964, according to Burns, and a work on “Mystical Death” was published in 1976.

In 1765, Pope Clement XIV gave Paul (his brother, John, had died), the basilica of SS John and Paul. For many years Paul had been especially interested in the reconciliation of England to the Holy See. Near the end of his life, Paul founded a convent of enclosed Passionist nuns at Corneto in 1771.

Paul died in Rome in October 1775 at the Retreat of Saints John and Paul. By the time of his death, the congregation had 180 fathers and brothers living in twelve Retreats, mostly in the Papal States. Burns writes that the Passionists did not spread outside of Italy until the mid 19th century. They went first to Belgium and then to England where they became the major force preaching and ministering to Irish immigrant workers in industrialized areas. The Congregation spread to the U.S. in 1852.

Paul was beatified in 1852 and canonized in 1867 by Pope Pius IX. His feast on the General Roman Calendar is October 19 and on the Proper Calendar for Dioceses of the U.S. on October 20.

BARRON

(From 8)

young man named Jonas who was chosen by the elders to become the sole recipient of the suppressed memory of the previous world. Through a sort of telepathy, the Giver communicates to Jonas all of the richness, color, drama, and joy of the pre-Utopian society. The most beguiling image he receives is of himself slidding down a snowy hill and coming upon a cottage from which he hears emerging the strains of a song he had never heard before (in fact, both snow and music had been excluded from his world). In time, the Giver fills out the picture, communicating to the young man the pain and conflict of the previous world as well. Though at first he is horrified by that experience, Jonas realizes that the colorful world, even with its suffering, would be preferable to the bloodless and inhuman dystopia in which he had been raised. As the story moves to its climax, Jonas escapes from the city and ventures out into the forbidden wilderness. The weather turns fiercely cold and he wanders through the snow until he comes to a clearing where he spies the sled that he had previously seen in memory.

Following the prompts of the recollection, he rides the sled down a snowy hill, comes to the quaint cottage, and listens to the song. It is only then that we hear that they are singing the best-known and best-loved Christmas hymn, “Silent Night.”

And now we see that what makes the society in The Giver most like contemporary Europe is precisely the forgetfulness of Christianity. What the story suggests, quite rightly, is that suppression of the good news of the Incarnation is in fact what conduces to dysfunctional and dangerous totalitarianism. The source of the greatest suffering throughout human history is the attempt to deal with original sin on our own, through our political, economic, military, or cultural efforts. When we try to eliminate conflict and sin through social reform, we inevitably make matters worse. As Pascal said long ago, “He who would turn himself into an angel, turns himself into a beast.” The key to joy at the personal level and justice at the societal level is in fact the conviction that God has dealt with original sin, by taking it on himself and suffering with us and for us. This belief allows us to embrace the world in both its beauty and its tragedy, for we see salvation as God’s project, not our own. It is the Incarnation—the event celebrated by the singing of “Silent Night”—that frees us from our self-importance and gives the lie to our programs of perfectionability.

I can’t help but think that the recovery of this lost memory—so key to the authentic renewal of contemporary society—is what The Giver is finally about.
PILGRIMAGE

(From 3)

Vashem Holocaust Memorial, and were encouraged by Bethlehem University, a Catholic institution that is building bridges between Christians and Muslims as they study together to create the future of Palestine, and by the Church’s schools that are open to all.

We are compelled by the Gospel of Peace to share the fruits of our prayers and encounters with Israelis and Palestinians. Two peoples and three faiths have ancient ties to this land. Sadly, Jerusalem, the City of Peace, is a sign of contradiction. We were told more than once that the city could erupt in violence as it has on far too many occasions.

The towering wall that divides Israelis and Palestinians is another sign of contradiction. For Israelis, it is a sign of security; for Palestinians, a sign of occupation and exclusion. The contrast between Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories is also a sign of contradiction. In crossing the border one moves from freedom and prosperity to the intimidation of military checkpoints, humiliation, and deeper poverty.

The situation of Christian Palestinians is an added sign of contradiction. The Christian community is emigrating at alarming rates. As we learned from Patriarch Fouad Twal, the unresolved conflict and occupation undermine human dignity and the ability of Christians to raise their families. Israeli policies in East Jerusalem prohibit Christians who marry someone from outside the City to remain there with their spouse, and security policies restrict movement and confiscate lands, undermining the ability of many Christian families to survive economically. The harsh realities of occupation force them to leave. Muslims also suffer similarly, but have fewer opportunities to emigrate.

As U.S. bishops, we humbly acknowledge that we do not understand all the complexities of the situation, but in faith we do understand some things clearly. We reaffirm the longstanding position of the U.S. bishops and the Holy See and support a two-state solution: a secure and recognized Israel living in peace with a viable and independent Palestinian state. The broad outlines of this solution are well known; but there has not been, nor does there appear to be, the determined political will to achieve it.

There is no military solution to the conflict, but tragically violence on both sides undermines the trust needed to achieve peace. Violence always sows seeds of further violence and fear. We witnessed the horrific devastation of whole neighborhoods in Gaza and heard about tragic deaths on both sides, especially a disproportionate number of Palestinian noncombatants, women, and children. The local Christian community in Gaza described the nightly terror they suffered during the war. Israelis in Sderot and elsewhere described their dread of Hamas rocket fire.

The route of the barrier wall, the confiscation of Palestinian lands in the West Bank, especially now in the Bethlehem area and the Cremisan Valley, and any expansion of settlements threaten to undermine the two-state solution. Many reported that the window of opportunity for peace was narrowing dangerously. If it closes, the futures of both Palestinians and Israelis will be harmed.

Many persons with whom we met joined us in commending the recent initiative of Secretary of State John Kerry, but said renewed U.S. leadership is required for peace. For the sake of both Israelis and Palestinians, the United States must mobilize the international community to support both parties by adopting parameters for a lasting solution, including borders, an open and shared Jerusalem, and a timeline.

Pope Francis, in word and gesture, inspired hope on his pilgrimage to the Holy Land in May. After another Gaza war, hope is now in short supply. One person on our journey told us that the Holy Land is the land of miracles. The miracle we need is the transformation of human hearts so each side is less deaf to the concerns of the other. In solidarity with our brother bishops and all people in the region, we urge alternatives to the cycle of hatred and violence.

Peace is possible.

Bishop Richard J. Malone, Diocese of Buffalo, Board of Catholic Relief Services
Bishop John O. Barres, Diocese of Allentown
Archbishop Eusebius J. Beltran, Archdiocese of Oklahoma City
Bishop Stephen E. Blaire, Diocese of Stockton
Bishop J. Kevin Boland, Diocese of Savannah
Bishop Paul J. Bradley, Diocese of Kalamazoo
Bishop Tod D. Brown, Diocese of Orange
Bishop Michael D. Pfeifer, Diocese of San Angelo

BISHOP

(From 2)

The speakers emphasized the value of collegiality and “synodality” in the Church. This refers to the shared voice of all the bishops around the world in union with the Pope, as distinct from an exercise of authority that is highly centralized and focused on the singular role of the Pope.

There were many cardinals who addressed the new bishops, either through homilies at Mass or through formal lectures. One of those was Cardinal Edwin O’Brien of the United States. He shared with our group what a profound experience it was to take part in the conclave that elected Pope Francis. He said there was a strong, tangible sense of the cardinals being guided by the active presence of the Holy Spirit.

In the address by Pope Francis on the last day of the conference, I was particularly struck by his exhortation to pay special attention to the old and the young in our dioceses. He said these represent our roots and our wings. The old are our roots, and the young are our wings. They keep us in touch with where we came from and where we are going.

The Pope encouraged all the new bishops to pursue holiness, to pray every day, to listen to people, to live with joy in a simple lifestyle, and to follow the example of Jesus Christ the Good Shepherd.

In the middle of the Pope’s talk, there was a brief thunderstorm that brought nice rain and a cool breeze. Coming from San Angelo, I certainly appreciated that. The gentle little afternoon shower also symbolized for me the fact that God’s love and mercy continue to rain down on his Church, bringing new life and constant hope.

I am grateful for the support of those who prayed for the success and safety of this conference. I also appreciate the patience of those who had to deal with the practical inconveniences of my absence. May the Holy Spirit guide us and all dioceses around the world so that we may be faithful to the mission Christ has entrusted to us.

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Sister Estela Tovar, CDP, above and at left with Bishop Michael J. Sis, celebrated her 50th anniversary as a religious sister, September 6, 2014, with a jubilee Mass at St. Stephen’s in Midland. With a distinguished life in service to God and church, Sister Estela was also a 2012 nominee for the Catholic Extension Service Lumen Christi Award for her work in prison ministries in Texas. (Courtesy photos)

On August 19, 2014, Daniel Garza II, top row at right, was awarded the Outstanding Mentor Award for 2014 at Ron Jackson TJJD Facility. Daniel was accompanied by his wife, Valerie. Both are members of St. Mary’s Church in Brownwood and members of the Ministry of the Third Cross prison ministry. Daniel works with the residents of the facility helping them to grow in their Catholic faith, gain self-respect and develop a positive direction in preparation for their release from Ron Jackson. Daniel works for 3M in Brownwood.