Fr. Francis Onyekozuru, top left, Director of the Newman Center at Angelo State University in San Angelo, with students Liz Gotay-Perez, at left; Tabitha Tobias, and Nathan Castro, right. Story, Pg. 2; Photos, Pg. 24.
The Inside Front

Guadalupe Network boosts power, reach of radio signal

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor

MIDLAND — With a simple click of a mouse, the power of the word of God in West Texas has increased exponentially.

Thanks to the tireless work of staff and the generosity of listeners, Guadalupe Radio Network boosted its signal output from 1,000 watts to 25,000 watts on Sept. 21, 2016. The increase allows GRN — heard in Midland-Odessa at 1180 AM — to broadcast to a potential additional 150,000 listeners in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico.

“KLPF-1180 AM will now be heard in cities such as Sweetwater, Iraan, Kermit, Plains, and in locations in Southeast New Mexico,” said Len Oswald, president and founder of GRN.

Bishop Michael J. Sis, flipped the switch at a special ceremony at La Promesa Foundation in Midland (photo at right).

“This is a historic occasion, and what you are doing through your support is helping bring souls to Jesus Christ through the truth of the Catholic faith,” Bishop Sis said. “I

(Please See GRN/19)

Newman: a great place to reflect, share, connect

By Nathan Castro

SAN ANGELO — I first came to the Newman Center at Angelo State University in the Spring Semester of 2013. I deeply valued having Mass easily available to attend every Wednesday (which was the only Mass we had during the week). I also enjoyed the meals that followed. The director at that time, Sister Kathy, was always very pleasant to be around and renewed a sense of peace, prudence, and prayer in an otherwise hectic, worldly college life. The student following then was a smaller group, but we had a very intimate and thoughtful experience as we engaged in the many sacred acts of our Catholic Faith.

With the arrival of our new director, Father Francis, we have built on that humble but strong foundation and begun to spread that experience to more and more students, multiplying the number of lives that are touched. People are reached by a persevering devotion to Catholic spirituality in a time when many disconnect. The Newman Center is a great place to calm down, reflect, refocus, dine in fellowship, and give service to others. I’m more involved now as I’ve become a student leader and helped during this time of transition. This new effort has done wonders to sharpen confidence and leadership skills in me that had long been unattended to. My desire is to help increase fellowship and attentiveness to spiritual life, and that is exactly what Father Francis is making happen. New friends, new experiences, music, worship, and fun are a given. We now have Sunday and weekday Masses: Sundays at 6:30 pm; Mondays at 6:30 pm;
From The Bishop’s Desk

Doing our part: The upcoming November elections

By Most Rev Michael J. Sis
Bishop of San Angelo

In just a few weeks, we, the citizens of our country, will select our leaders, from president to local officials. Each of us is faced with the challenge of deciding how we will vote.

This is a prime opportunity for us to remember the duty of lay members of the Church to be involved in the political process.

In the Gospel of Matthew 22:21, when Jesus says, “Repay to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and to God what belongs to God,” he is showing that we have responsibilities both to God and to our society. In a sense, every Christian has dual citizenship — in our nation, and in the Kingdom of God.

The First Letter of St. Peter, chapter 2, says, “Be subject to every human institution for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king or to governors... Give honor to all, love the community, fear God, honor the king.”

In the Church, we often hear about serving God. But how often do we think about our Christian responsibility to serve our country? Let’s consider what is the proper Catholic attitude toward politics and government and what is not:

First, it’s not blind patriotism, where we glorify our own country so much that the Kingdom of God is identified with the U.S.A. The nation is not God. The nation is under God. We are children of God before we are citizens of the state.

Second, it’s not a separation of faith and politics. Politics and religion are not two completely isolated realms. Our Catholic faith teaches that all political decisions must have a moral component.

Third, our faith is not an escape from the world, where all the pure and holy believers isolate themselves in a compound somewhere, untouched by an impure society.

Instead, the proper Catholic attitude toward politics and government is active engagement. We participate, critically evaluate, challenge, and call to account. We permeate and transform the world for Christ. We bring the seed of Christian truth to bear good fruit in the social order.

One great Catholic writer in the third century wrote in his Letter to Diognetus, “What the soul is to the body, let Christians be to the world.”

Our U.S. Catholic Bishops teach in the document entitled Political Responsibility, “We need more, not less public participation ... The key to a renewal of public life is reorienting politics to reflect better the search for the common good and a clear commitment to the dignity of every person.”

According to our Catholic theology of stewardship, as good stewards we should accept responsibility to take good care of what has been entrusted to us, and then hand it on to the next generation better than we found it. This principle applies to our participation in matters of politics and government.

Maybe it’s time for each one of us to do a little “stewardship check.” As we

(Continued on Pg. 20)

Las elecciones de noviembre de 2016

Por el Obispo Michael J. Sis

En tan sólo unas semanas, nosotros, los ciudadanos de nuestro país, seleccionaremos nuestros líderes, desde el presidente a los oficiales locales. Cada uno de nosotros se enfrenta con el reto de decidir cómo vamos a votar.

Esta es una gran oportunidad para que nosotros recordemos el deber de los miembros laicos de la Iglesia al participar en el proceso político.

En el Evangelio de Mateo 22:21, cuando Jesús dice: “Devolver a César lo que es de César, y a Dios lo que es de Dios”, él está demostrando que tenemos responsabilidades tanto a Dios como a nuestra sociedad. En cierto sentido, cada cristiano tiene doble nacionalidad - en nuestro país, y en el Reino de Dios.

La primera carta de San Pedro, capítulo 2, dice: “Sométanse a toda institución humana por causa del Señor, ya sea al rey o a los gobernadores... Den honor a todos, amen a la comunidad, teman a Dios, respeten al rey.”

En la Iglesia, muy a menudo oímos acerca de servir a Dios. Pero ¿con qué frecuencia pensamos en nuestra responsabilidad Cristiana para servir a nuestro país?

Consideremos cuál es la actitud Católica apropiada hacia la política y el gobierno y cuál no es:

En primer lugar, no es patriotismo ciego, donde glorificamos tanto a nuestro país que el Reino de Dios se identifica con los Estados Unidos. La nación no es Dios. La nación está bajo Dios. Somos hijos de Dios antes de ser ciudadanos del estado.

En segundo lugar, no es una separación de fe y política. La política y la religión no son dos ámbitos completamente aislados. Nuestra fe Católica enseña que todas las decisiones políticas deben tener un componente moral.

En tercer lugar, nuestra fe no es un escape del mundo, donde todos los creyentes puros y santos se aislán en un compuesto en alguna parte, intactos de esta sociedad impura.

En cambio, la actitud Católica apropiada hacia la política y el gobierno es un compromiso activo. Participamos, evaluamos críticamente, retamos, y pedimos cuentas. Impregnamos y transformamos el mundo para Cristo. Trаемos la semilla de la verdad Cristiana a dar buenos frutos en orden social.

Un gran escritor Católico en el tercer siglo escribió en su Carta a Diogneto (Letter to Diognetus), “Lo que es el alma al cuerpo, que sean los Cristianos al mundo.”

Nuestros Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos enseñan en el documento titulado Responsabilidad Política, “Necesitamos más, no menos, la participación publica... La clave para una renovación de la vida pública es la de reorientar la política para reflejar mejor la búsqueda del bien común y una compromiso claro por la dignidad de cada persona.”

De acuerdo con nuestra teología Católica de la administración, como buenos administradores debemos asumir la responsabilidad de cuidar bien lo que ha sido encomendado a nosotros, y luego pasársela a la siguiente.

(Please See BISHOP/17)
DIOCESAN BRIEFS

'Order for Celebrating Matrimony' Workshops

The new "Order for Celebrating Matrimony" may already be used in weddings, and must be used in weddings as of December 30, 2016. In order to assist Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo in understanding and utilizing the new ritual book, we are offering a workshop in three different locations in the diocese this fall. The workshop is for priests, deacons, and anyone who helps in the planning of wedding liturgies in our parishes.

Upcoming workshop dates and locations are as follows (workshops have already been presented in the Midland-Odessa deanery. Please contact your parish with additional questions):

Abilene Deanery: Saturday, October 8, 9am-12pm at St. Vincent Pallotti in Abilene
San Angelo Deanery: Saturday, October 29, 9am-12pm at Holy Angels in San Angelo

Pre-registration is necessary to ensure enough materials are available at each workshop.

Registration is on the Diocesan Website at: http://sanangelodiocese.org/ liturgy. For more information contact Lori Hines, Chair of the Diocesan Liturgical Commission, at 942-8192 or lhines@sanangelodiocese.org

San Angelo Women's Conference Oct. 21-22

SAN ANGELO — The Heart of JMJ Foundation is happy to announce that the 1st Catholic Women's Conference is coming to the Diocese of San Angelo. We invite you to come and learn about the love our Lord has for us all.

The conference will be held on October 21-22 at the Clarion Hotel, 441 Rio Concho Drive. The cost of the conference is $50 and includes a boxed lunch for Saturday. T-shirts are available at the time of registration. Visit heartjmj.org to register. Limited seating so register today.

We have an exciting roster of speakers, Dr. Margaret Schlentz, Sally Robb, Amy Perez and Dr. Carole Brown. These speakers will be talking about the spiritual battles that women face in their marriages and relationships today, the role of women as described in St. John Paul’s Feminine Genius letter and how women are to be armed with the spiritual tools to live in this world as Christ taught us.

The conference starts with registration opening on Friday, October 21 at 3:30 pm. Confessions will start at 4 p.m. and continue until 8 p.m. Friday will end with Benediction and Adoration. We start again on Saturday at 7:15 a.m. with registration and the vendors will open. Confessions start at 8 a.m. and Bishop Sis will say Mass at 10 a.m.

Charity Golf Tournament in Andrews

9th Annual Our Lady of Lourdes Charity Golf Tournament
Saturday, October 22, 2016
18 Hole, 2-Person Scramble
8:30 A.M. Shotgun Start

Entry Fee: $160 per team/$80 per individual (includes green fees, range balls, long drive, closest to pin prizes, & lunch)
Golf cart rental fee not included.

920 Golf Course Rd. Andrews, TX, 79714

Prize payouts include
Pro-Shop Gift Certificates & More!

Sponsorship Information:
Gold Sponsors - Donation of $1,000 & Up:
Company name on banner, 1 team, & 1 hole Sponsor Sign
Silver Sponsors - Donation of $500-$999:
Company name on banner & 1 Hole Sponsor Sign
Bronze Sponsors - Donation of $100:
1 Hole Sponsor Sign

For more information contact:
Robert Ramirez: 432-557-3933
George Molinar: 432-557-8105
John Parra: 432-209-8764
Rene Cruz: 432-894-9506
Our Lady of Lourdes: 432-523-4215
October 7-8
HOLY FAMILY-BIG SPRING
Friday, October 7, From 11 A.M.-7 P.M.
Saturday, October 8 from 11 AM till all gone,
Asado Plates - $10! Carne Guisada Plates - $10! Gordita Plates - $10!
Flauta Plate - $10! Call in Orders – 432-517-4491 On Saturday, the fun
begins at 6 p.m., with games! Basketball, and Football Throw! Duck Pond,
Fish Pond, and Hole in One Golf! Bingo! Join Us for Good Food, Fun
Games and Music!

October 9
ST. BONIFACE-OLFEN
St. Boniface Church in Olfen will have its Fall Festival on October 9 and will
serve a meal of homemade German sausage, turkey and dressing. Other
activities will include a live auction, games, candy drop, and country store.

October 15
OUR LADY OF LOURDES-ANDREWS
201 N.E. Avenue K
JAMAICA 2016 begins at Noon, October 15. Raffle tickets are $5 each,
prizes include 2006 VW Beetle, $500 Gebos gift card, a 50 inch Vizio TV, a
Canon HF 4700 Video Camera, a $300 VISA Gift Card, a Ridgid Mitre Saw, a
$200 gift card, a new Huffy bicycle, a Star Wars BB-S Droid and a Kids Radio
Control Car. Bring your family and friends to JAMAICA 2016 in Andrews!

October 16
ST. AMBROSE-WALL
11 am - 2 pm Turkey, dressing and sausage meal served. Adult meal
tickets $10, child $5, plates to go $10. Youth games 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m.;
Bingo, 12-4 p.m.; live auction begins at 1:15 p.m. Shuttle bus available
from school parking lot to the church will run from 8 a.m.-3 p.m.

October 16
SACRED HEART CHURCH-COLEMAN
Father Lawrence Cyr Parish Hall, 201 San Saba
11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Authentic Mexican Meal served from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Concession
Stand Hamburgers and drinks, all afternoon. Games. Horse-shoe &
Washer Tournaments. Cow Pattie Bingo! Cake walk, Bingo, Country Store,
& Silent Auction, and Much More! Buy Raffle tickets for WONDERFUL
Prizes! Come join us in the fun! Everyone is welcome! For information
contact the Parish Office at (325) 625-5773.

October 23
ST. ANN CHURCH--SONORA
11:00 AM – 6:00 PM
Food booths, games, entertainment, silent auction, etc.

October 29
ST. STEPHEN’S-MIDLAND
The women's organization is organizing the Parish Fall Festival on October 29 from 6-9 PM in the Parish Hall. For questions, please contact Elaine Nguyen at 432-230-5062 or Gladys at the Parish office 432-520-7394.

November 13
ST. JOSEPH-ROWENA
94th Annual Fall Festival
"A Harvest of Blessings"
10:30 a.m. - Flag and Raising and Balloon Release to honor all
Veterans
11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. Turkey and Dressing with all trimmings along with
Rowena Style German Sausage. Plate for Adults and Plates to Go $10.00;
children (10 & under) $5.00. Plates-to-Go- are available at Drive Thru or
Walk-Up windows.
11:30 a.m.-3 p.m. Bingo and Children's games and activities
1 p.m. - Live Auction of donated merchandise begins. Cotton auction
begins at 2:00 p.m.
4:30 p.m. - Sausage Sandwich Supper $4.00 - includes tea and dessert
Parishioners will be preparing 9,000 lbs. of sausage. Uncooked
sausage will be sold @ $5.00 while supply lasts. A Country Store, featur-
ing needle work items, baked and canned goods and plants, will be open
throughout the day. Handicapped parking and assistance during the meal
will be available. All activities take place on church grounds.

40 Years as Deacons

Deacon Joseph Lopez, right, and Enrique Martinez, celebrated 40 years as deacons, August 20, 2016 at
St. Charles Church in Eden. The two men, members of the original class of deacons in the Diocese of
San Angelo, receive a blessing from Bishop Michael J. Sis. (Courtesy photos)

Elsie Arzadon named campus minister at UTPB, OC

The Angelus

ODESSA — Elsie Arzadon, pictured, of
Odessa, has been hired as the Campus Minister at the University of Texas of the
Permian Basin and Odessa College.

Ms. Arzadon comes with a rich background in parish ministry, and has had formation through
the diocesan Basic and Advance Formation programs and Pastoral Studies through LIMEX (Loyola
Institute Ministry Extension). She has a bachelor of science degree in nursing from the
University of Santo Tomas in Manila, Philippines, and received her licensure in New York state.

She has worked in the Medical Center Hospital System in Odessa for 20 years, as a pedi-
atriic nurse for four years and a neo-natal intensive care nurse for
16 years.

She has been a catechist for many years and is a parishioner at St. Mary Church in Odessa.
“Her collaborative skills and broad background will be a great asset to campus ministry. Elsie is a
person with a deep spiritual life and a very generous heart,” said Sister Adelina Garcia, with the
Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of San Angelo. “We welcome her and
are grateful for her willingness to serve in this capacity.”
Sister Mary Joseph: ‘I was married to the drugs, the alcohol, the party life’

By Becca Nelson Sankey
The Angelus

SCHLEICHER COUNTY — Sister Mary Joseph Solis is living, breathing proof that with God’s grace, anything is possible.

During a special Mass on Sept. 17 at Our Lady of Grace Monastery, the 59-year-old San Antonio native professed her first vows, officially concluding the novitiate period in her quest to become a Carmelite nun. For Sister, however, the ceremony was much more than a stepping stone in the formation process — it also closed the chapter on her previous life as a drug addict and alcoholic.

“I was married to the drugs, married to the alcohol, married to the party life,” she said. “For 27 years I was just doing that and going from job to job to job. As a phlebotomist I worked in nursing homes and hospitals, and I would get terminated and hospitals, and I would get terminated and hospitals, and I would get terminated and hospitals, and I would get terminated for my attendance.”

Solis said she finally hit rock bottom in 2004, when she was fired from her latest job. “I came home at noon and everything in my apartment was practically gone, because when you’re a drug addict you sell everything,” she said. “I looked at myself in the mirror, and I didn’t like what I saw. I was down to 98 pounds and almost anorexic. I made a deal with the Lord and said, ‘If you change me in three weeks, I’ll come back to the Church.’”

Sister had grown up in the Church and gone to an all-girls Catholic school. She turned away from her faith when she discovered drugs in college, she said.

“The power of prayer, I can’t stress it enough,” she said. “I used to snort cocaine and crank and crystal meth. (After my deal with God, the drugs) made my nose bleed. The alcohol I drank I (physically) couldn’t drink it anymore. I smoked two packs a day, and it made me sick to my stomach.

“On the third week, which happened to be Ash Wednesday, I called Father Mike (Haron) at St. Luke and said, ‘I want to come to Confession.’ I was in his office for over an hour telling him everything I did. I went to Mass and received Holy Communion and never looked back.”

The following month, Solis went on her first ACTS Retreat, a three-day refuge for Catholic lay persons, held separately for women and men.

“I was just sky high, took off like a jet and fell in love with Jesus, and that was

Sister Mary Joseph Solis

covered drugs in college, she said.

“There’s so much to be grateful for after those 27 lost years,” Sis said during his homily. “You were saved and delivered by our Lord. …Your life now is pointing all of us toward Heaven. I want to thank you for your witness. In many ways you have shared in the suffering of Christ and experienced a resurrection from a living death on Earth. Thanks to God for his miracles.”

“Our celibate vocation…is like being married to Christ,” Bishop Sis continued. “You’re now in a place where your spiritual marriage to Christ is nourished and bears good fruit for the Church. Every day, you enjoy the delicious fruit of God’s love, and you have the privilege of taking time to savor every morsel of this divine banquet of God’s grace.”

As a Carmelite sister, Solis will live out the virtues of poverty, chastity and obedience. She recited these vows as she knelt before Sister Mary Grace, prioress, with the other Carmelite nuns clustered around her. “With this temporary profession, I entrust myself to the Carmelite family, to live in the service of God and the Church, that through the grace of the Holy Spirit and with the help of the Blessed Virgin Mary, I will strive after perfect charity.”

The chapel erupted in applause as Sister Mary Grace and Sister Mary Joseph tearfully embraced.

“The chapel erupted in applause as Sister Mary Grace and Sister Mary Joseph tearfully embraced.”

“In perhaps one of the most profound moments of the Mass, Solis lay face-down on the floor of the chapel, her arms outstretched in the sign of the Cross. One by one, the names of saints were chanted, and each time the people responded, “Pray for us.”

Bishop Sis said after the Mass that the ritual is an expression of Sister’s willingness to die with Christ and of finding freedom through his Resurrection.

“She’s connecting to his experience on the Cross spiritually and joining herself with Jesus’ act of self-gift,” he said. “That’s a beautiful part of the whole act of religious profession.”

Sister Mary Joseph also ceremoniously traded out her black robe for one of pure white, which Sister Mary Grace and Sister Mary Theodore Therese helped her into as camera flashes popped and flickered.

“Those who follow the lamb perfectly will follow him clothed in white,” Sis

(Please See JOSEPH/20)

Sister Mary Joseph’s profession of vows an emotional, spiritual day for all

By Becca Nelson Sankey
The Angelus

SCHLEICHER COUNTY — In opening his homily during Sister Mary Joseph Solis’ profession of temporary vows on Sept. 17 at Our Lady of Grace Church, Bishop Michael Sis referenced Psalm 34, reciting, in part: “I will bless the Lord at all times. I sought the Lord. …and he delivered me from all my fears.”

The scripture passage was an appropriate summary of Sister’s journey to Our Lady of Grace Carmelite Monastery in Schleicher County, where she has lived the past two years during her period of discernment. She was a drug addict and alcoholic for 27 years who had turned away from her Catholic faith until 2004 (see related story, this page).

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(Please See VOWS/19)
Respect for life is the heart and soul of a nation

By Rev. W.E. and Sandie Knickerbocker

In 1972, the year before the U.S. Supreme Court ruled on Roe V. Wade to legalize abortion, Pope St. John Paul II set aside the first Sunday of October as "Respect Life Sunday," also called "Sanctity of Life Sunday." The Catholic Church has dedicated the month of October, starting with the first Sunday, to promote respect for life and provide resources to advance the culture of life through prayer, activism, and education against the falsehoods promoted by the pro-abortion advocates.

What are some of the falsehoods? "This is my body; I can do what I want with it;" "No woman can call herself free who does not control her own body" (Margaret Sanger); "Pro choice is advocacy for women's health;" "The issue is women's rights," "Abortion is the compassionate choice for an unwanted pregnancy."

Do our lives belong to us? Are we free—do we have the right— to choose life or death for ourselves or others? Is death of the unborn a compassionate choice? Does abortion promote women's health? We find answers in the Natural Law, Scripture, Church teaching, and current research.

Indicating the relationship of the Natural Law to the bases of American democracy, Mitchell Kalpakian writes, "To say that the pro-life argument is an attempt to impose, force, or dictate ideas upon others is just as preposterous as referring to the evil of abortion as a private opinion. The pro-life position is an appeal to the natural law—to reason, conscience, justice, and divine authority as the final arbiters of this issue.... The pre-born child, like the newborn infant, is helpless, weak, dependent, and in need of protection and nourishment. No one could be more innocent. The pro-abortion argument ignores these facts and self-evident truths, rejects common sense, evades reality, and suppresses the truth" (The Right to Life and the Natural Law).

"Scripture affirms the sanctity of human life. In Genesis we read, "Then Lord God formed man of dust from the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living being" (Gen. 2:7 RSVCE). "...I have set before you life and death, blessing and curse: therefore choose life, that you and your descendants may live; loving the Lord your God, obeying His voice, and cleaving to him; for that means life for you and length of days (Deut. 30:19-20)."Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" (Jer. 1:5). Jesus said, "I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

The Scriptural truth about the source and sanctity of life is clear. God is life and holiness, He "knows" each of us and transmits Himself to us in the act of creation, through the saving acts of Jesus Christ, in His Holy Spirit, the Sacraments, and in all the means of grace of the Church.

"You can't have your cake and eat it, too," is another way of saying the same thing.

In our history as a nation, Catholics in the United States of America have wanted to have it both ways. We have wanted to be committed Catholics and loyal American citizens. This was not always easy because of the animosity of other Americans toward Catholic immigrants.

We were Catholics trying to be both Catholic and American in a nation that was culturally Protestant. On the whole, the Church helped us "have it both ways." On the whole, American civil laws and customs agreed with the Natural Law of Human Nature. Even when civil laws and customs were not in agreement with Natural Law, at least they did not contradict it.

As wave after wave of immigrants came into the United States, there were two things that contributed to the success of this attempt to be both Catholic and American. One was the desire of the immigrants to become American even...
St. Ambrose parishioners to celebrate 75th anniversary

West Texas Angelus

WALL — Parishioners at St. Ambrose Church in Wall will celebrate their 75th Anniversary of the Dedication of the Church on Dec. 7, 2016. Bishop Michael Sis will begin with the Celebration of the Holy Mass at 6:00 pm. Following Mass, the youth of the parish will present a re-enactment of the dedication day. A traditional turkey and dressing meal will follow.

The church was dedicated the day of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Its membership has grown to include 406 families, with 65 additional families in its mission church, Holy Family in Mereta.

The rich cultural history of St. Ambrose is deeply rooted in its people’s past. The Wall pioneers held their first Fall Festival in 1940 to raise money to build a church. The entire community of men, women and children joined hands to participate in the construction.

The original church building and rectory are still used today. St. Ambrose parishioners exhibit the same tenacity and cooperation as the early pioneers. The highest priority is to pass on to the next generation the same faith and morals taught by past generations.

Fr. Joe Choutapalli, the pastor, along with Deacon Allan Lange & Deacon Dan Shannahan, lead the congregation with love and goodness through the word of God. Fr. Joe shares with his parishioners to be encouraged with God’s word from John 15:5 – “I am the Vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from Me you can do nothing.” Fr. Joe encourages people to grow in their gifts, because everyone’s life has significance and there is purpose in what we do. He stressed that we are special to the Lord and special to those whose lives we touch.

St. Ambrose Parish remains a central place for worship and fellowship, fostering a strong sense of community. The people open their arms to others and share in God’s love and worship in His word. They are a vibrant faith-filled people, dedicated to worshipping God and proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ.

Fr. Joe and his parishioners invite you to join in the celebration and he ask that you keep his parish family in your prayers.

Speaking of Saints

Young St. Theodore remained steadfast waiting for calling

By Mary Lou Gibson
West Texas Angelus

Most 10 year olds have only a vague idea of what they want to do with their life. But some are like Anne-Thérèse Guérin who knew at a young age that she wanted to be a nun. She announced this to her parish priest in Etables, France after she received her First Communion in 1808 at the age of 10.

But it would be several years before she could realize her vocation. When she was 15, her father, Laurent, was killed by bandits as he traveled home and Anne-Thérèse had to care for her mother and young sister. Finally, when she was almost 25 years old, she entered the Sisters of Providence of Ruillé-sur-Loir, taking the name Sister Théodore.

Matthew Bunson writes in John Paul II’s Book of Saints that when Sister Théodore was in the novitiate, she suffered from an illness that severely damaged her digestive system and left her physically frail for life. Nevertheless, she taught at various schools for the next several years and also studied medicine and cared for the sick and the poor.

In 1839 a request came to the Sisters from the Most Reverend Simon Bruté, bishop of the Diocese of Vincennes in the State of Indiana. He asked for a small band of Sisters to come to the Indiana territory to start a school and a convent. Sister Théodore was asked to lead this missionary band. She demurred at first because she could not imagine that she was suitable either mentally or physically for such a mission, but eventually she accepted.

When she and five sisters landed in New York in the fall of 1840, they were expecting to be met by Bishop Bruté, but he was not there. Sarah Gallick writes in The Big Book of Women Saints that the Sisters eventually got help from strangers and the local clergy and got to Indiana by train, steamboat and wagons.

Sister Théodore and her Sisters soon built a log chapel in the forest near Terre Haute and a year later, they opened Saint Mary-of-the-Woods Academy for young girls. The Sisters began learning English and struggled to adapt to a new culture.

Those first few years in Indiana were difficult ones. The Sisters faced poverty, fires, prejudice against Catholics from local Protestants — especially against Catholic women religious. Mother Théodore always advised: “Put yourself gently into the hands of Providence.”

In 1843, Mother Théodore negotiated independence from her French congregation and formed the Sisters of Providence of Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She had to return to France for about a year to oversee this process.

While she was gone, Bishop Célestin Guynemer de la Hailandiére began to implement some decisions that affected the community. According to John Fink (St. Anthony Messenger Magazine, November 2006), Bishop Hailandiére admitted novices to vows, closed the school at St. Francisville, opened a new establishment all without input from the community and contrary to their Rule.

The matter reached a crisis in 1847 when he declared that Mother Théodore was no longer the superior. There were others in the diocese who were also having difficulties with the bishop. Help finally came from the Vatican when Bishop Hailandiére submitted his resignation and it was accepted.

The new bishop, John Stephen Bazin, brought peace and harmony to the Diocese and gave Mother Théodore a valid deed to the proper-

(Please See SAINTS/20)
Fourth grade students at St. Ann’s celebrate St. Teresa of Calcutta

West Texas Angelus

Mother Teresa – now Saint Teresa of Calcutta – once said: “Every time you smile at someone, it is an action of love, a gift to that person… a beautiful thing.”

The fourth grade students at St. Ann’s Catholic School in Midland (pictured above) celebrated the canonization of St. Teresa at their school Mass on September 2. Recognizing that she continually served as a living example to others, the students chose to focus on the eight beatitudes and how Mother Teresa lived her life demonstrating these blessings.

The students ended Mass by giving a “call to action” to their classmates: “Give your time to help others … inside our school or outside our community. Be inspired by Mother Teresa, reach out to serve those in need and act on the beatitudes like Mother Teresa did.”

— Fourth graders at St. Ann’s in Midland

Just as the students challenged their peers to a “call to action,” let us be reminded to do all that we can to follow the example of this remarkable saint and put the beatitudes into practice in our own lives.

Pope Francis recently tweeted “Let us carry Mother Teresa’s smile in our hearts and give it to those whom we meet along our journey.” Sometimes even a simple smile can make a difference.

St. Mary’s-Odessa

On September 8, 2016, Bishop Michael J Sis came to St. Mary’s to celebrate Mass with the St. Mary’s Central Catholic School Constituents for the beginning of the new academic year. On this day was the celebration of The Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary. After Mass one of the organizations of St. Mary’s Church, The Legion of Mary, celebrated our Blessed Mother by attending Mass and hosting a lunch immediately following to which they invited Bishop Michael Sis and Fr. Hilary. Pictured from left to right are: Fr. Hilary Ihedioha, Brenda Marcum, Lilibeth Hiner, Sylvia Gonzalez, Cookie Cobos, Ann Wikse, Martha Vasquez, Bishop Sis, Elma Martinez, Candel Wright, Ruby Esquivel, Lupe Smith and Mimi Mooney.

Diocesan Conference Day
Catechesis and Culture:
Embracing Our Diversity

Keynote Speakers:
Rev. Alejandro López-Cardinale
RENEW International
Ansel Augustine, MPS
Associate Director & Coordinator for Black Youth & Young Adult Ministry
Archdiocese of New Orleans

Date:
October 15, 2016

Time:
9:00 A.M.—4:00 P.M.

Place:
McNease Convention Center
(San Angelo Convention Center, San Angelo)

Registration: $30 in advance for the entire conference (lunch included), $35 at the door. For more information, contact the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis at 325-651-7500 or evangelizationandcatechesis@sanangelodiocese.org.
The power of the Rosary

By Lorenzo V. Penafiel, Ph.D.

For Roman Catholics there are two significant dates in October — the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary (originally the feast of Our Lady of Victory) on October 7, and the 99th year anniversary of the last apparition of Virgin Mary in Fatima, Portugal on October 13. Both events have a great deal of relationship with our devotion to the Holy Rosary.

During the 1500s the Muslims were ravaging Eastern Europe and were trying to gain control of the Mediterranean. In 1571 Pope Pius V formed the Holy League to stop the Muslims’ threat to conquer Europe. It was a tremendous undertaking considering that Europe was plagued with squabbling factions at that time. Nevertheless, the league was formed and the Holy Father had to seek supernatural means to achieve his goal. He recognized that without the help of Heaven his plans would be doomed. He called upon all of Europe to pray the Rosary for victory.

Under the command of Don Juan of Austria, a devout Catholic, a naval fleet was formed to ward off the Muslims who were raiding the coast of Italy. While preparing for their mission the Holy Father asked all of the faithful to say the Rosary and implore the Virgin Mary to grant victory to Christian forces.

Although they were outnumbered by the Muslim forces, Pope Pius’ fleet won the battle, notably known as the Battle of Lepanto, on October 7, 1571. The following year, on October 7, the Holy Father established the feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. As one historian writes, “Peace came through the strength in the Battle of Lepanto as the power of the Rosary propelled the battle-ready Catholic forces to a decisive and historic victory.”

On May 13, 1917 the Virgin Mary appeared to three children, Lucia (age 7) and Francisco (age 9), Jacinta’s brother, at the Cova da Iria, outside the village of Fatima in Portugal. It was the first of the six apparitions of Our Lady each time requesting the visionaries to pray the Rosary every day to obtain peace in the world. During one of the apparitions Lucia requested Our Lady to perform a public miracle in order to demonstrate the veracity of Her apparitions. On October 13, 1917 She appeared to 70,000 people who witnessed the “Miracle of the Sun” at Fatima, while praying the Rosary and where many were cured of diseases on the spot and many were converted to the Catholic faith.

There were atheists and anticlerical newspaper reporters who were scoffing at the event that later admitted that the miracle did occur — something that was announced in advance. The news spread all over world and since then October 13 became the feast of Our Lady of Fatima.

During my recent visit to the Philippines I visited a new shrine located on EDSA (3) Avenue in Quezon City, considered the busiest thoroughfare in Metro-Manila, and surrounded by commercial centers, office building complexes, malls and high-rise condominiums. Officially, it is the Archdiocesan Shrine of Mary, Queen of Peace, although the people lovingly call it the EDSA Shrine. It was built in 1989 to commemorate the People Power Revolution which ended on February 25, 1986 after three days of demonstrations against the corrupt government of the dictator, President Ferdinand Marcos. He was eventually overthrown without a single fire being shot and not one drop of blood shed. One of the pictures inside the church shows tanks, armored cars, and soldiers waiting for instructions to fire. Facing them is an estimated crowd of two million civilian protestors. On the front row can be seen nuns facing the soldiers and praying with rosaries in their hands. The revolution was led not only by political and military groups but by religious groups as well headed by no less than Cardinal Jaime Sin, Archbishop of Manila.

Eyewitnesses relate that (Please See ROSARY/20)
In Honduras, goodness overcomes difficulties

(Editor’s Note: Like the Diocese of San Angelo, the Diocese of El Paso supports a Hermanamiento partnership in Honduras. The following is a first-person account of a recent visit to the Central American country by Bishop Mark Seitz. It is reprinted here with the permission of the Rio Grande Catholic, the diocesan newspaper of El Paso).

By Most Rev. Mark J. Seitz
Bishop of El Paso

EL PASO — Whenever you travel you find yourself introduced to a new perspective that can enlighten the way you interpret your own experience. This was certainly the case a couple of weeks ago when I had the opportunity to join a team of 12 from our Diocese on a mission trip to our Sister Diocese of Choluteca.

While Honduras is one of the poorest countries in the hemisphere, Choluteca is one of the regions with the most limited economic resources in all of Honduras. There is a great deal of unemployment and the land is difficult to cultivate. People from this southern region often feel forced to leave in order to get by. Many move to other parts of Honduras, many head to the United States.

In the midst of this difficult situation, or maybe because of the way God’s grace works in such situations, one finds people full of goodness and generosity, and full of Faith. Our 12 missionaries divided between two parishes in which they have entered into sister-parish relationships. I stayed at the “Obispado” where the bishop lives and has his offices.

This relationship is not about people from a wealthier country giving money, although we do try assist them with our annual collection. It is not about people from a more powerful country coming in with all the answers for the weaker one. This is about breaking down the walls we build between people. This is about living in a more concrete way the amazing brotherhood and sisterhood we share as members of the family of God in the Church. As brothers and sisters we discover that there are an abundance of ways we can support and assist each other.

This is no one-way relationship. In the people of the Diocese of Choluteca we discover a deep and proven faith. Due to a severe shortage of vocations and because of very limited resources they have had an added impulse to develop lay ministries.

It was in the Diocese of Choluteca that a plan for forming lay men and women as leaders of communities that are some distance from the main parish center was first developed some 50 years ago. They are called "Delegados de la Palabra", "Delegates of the Word". Formation of leaders in various ministries such as catechesis is taken very seriously as is assisting those in need and working for social justice. At the same time I believe we have much to offer our brothers and sisters in Choluteca. One of the most important gifts we can offer by our presence and humble assistance is the gift of hope. The daily life in Honduras is very hard right now. People struggle in many places with narco-trafficking violence, which the government seems unable to control.

Gangs recruit children at the point of a gun, corruption drains much needed resources from those for whom they are intended. Unemployment is high, the opportunities for education are limited and many struggle to find ways just to put rice and beans on the table for their children.

Most of these issues cannot be fixed by our relationship, but our presence: our love and concern does make a difference. When they see that we have taken a personal interest in them they know that God has also noticed. They are not forgotten!

By working together we can each contribute our own particular gifts and we can take small steps for mutual growth in faith and in the service of our brothers and sisters. Anyone who has the opportunity to go to our sister diocese will tell you how much they have grown in their faith.

Anyone who has met one of the members of the Diocese of Choluteca when they have visited us will tell you of the lasting impressions the encounter has made upon them.

Isn't that the way it is supposed to be in this great family of God?
Profession of Vows: Sister Mary Joseph

Saturday, September 17, 2016
Our Lady of Grace Carmelite Monastery

Photos by Alan P. Torre (except where noted)

Assorted scenes from the Mass for the Simple Profession of Vows by Sister Mary Joseph, September 17, 2016, at the Our Lady of Grace Carmelite Monastery near Christoval. At top right, Sister Joseph prostrates herself as Bishop Michael J. Sis gives a blessing. At right, Sister Joseph is greeted by the community of Carmelite sisters following Mass. At left, Sister Mary Grace Erl, prior of the monastery. Near left, Sister Mary Joseph receives the laying of hands by Sister Mary Grace; top left, Bishop Sis looks on as Sister Joseph signs her vows. Above, Sister Mary Joseph stands near a painting of the Divine Mercy. (Above photo, courtesy photo).
Leaving our values at the strip club door

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

I was recently talking to a Massachusetts family with a 21-year-old son on the autism spectrum. Because of the Asperger syndrome and obsessive compulsive disorder that have affected him since childhood, he is only about 13 or 14 in his understanding and behaviors. Jimmy (not his real name) has been in and out of mental institutions and recently had to be placed into a group home because his single mom could no longer manage him at home.

Jimmy came from a good family, conscientious and Catholic, raised in a clean environment by his mother and grandmother, who hoped to see him cared for in a protected and secure setting at the group home. Soon they saw, however, that there were issues: the residents had unlimited TV access in their private rooms; there seemed to be high worker turnover; and some of the tattooed staff were not only heavy smokers but used foul language.

Things took an unexpected turn as Jimmy prepared to celebrate his 21st birthday. Others at the group home started pushing him to visit the strip club in a nearby town now that he was “going to be an adult.” Always guileless, and never hesitant to talk openly about whatever was going on around him, Jimmy blurted out to his grandmother that the group home staff were going to drive him the next weekend to the Foxy Lady Club. A series of phone calls ensued. When the grandmother spoke with a staff member running the group home, and spoke to the woman in charge of Jimmy’s case. She noted that Jimmy was not only within his legal rights, but she asserted, a matter of basic human rights to allow him to go to the strip club. His grandmother replied it would be a failure to care for persons with mental disabilities if caretakers facilitated sexually-addictive practices, which such persons were prone to engage in anyway, often struggling with self-control and masturbatory behaviors, and this might set them up for a trip back to the mental hospital. When she continued to protest that visiting such a club was not a good or moral activity, the official replied, “Well, if you’re concerned about ‘values,’ I leave my values at the door every time I go to work in order to get my job done.”

Cases like Jimmy’s serve as a disappointing reminder of how low the bar has come to be set in certain segments of our society. The misappropriation of public tax money by state agencies to subsidize damaging behaviors in a vulnerable patient population is also regrettable and fundamentally unjust. The family’s struggles further highlight an astonishing cultural misunderstanding around the idea of “human rights.” To suggest that the activity of leering lecherously at the bodies of naked women is a “basic human right” is itself a profound perversion, and represents a lamentable instance of outright moral bankruptcy.

Probably the most striking element of a case like Jimmy’s is the remarkably well-honed ability of some who serve in positions of authority and leadership — while professing to be “good” or even “religious” people — to jettison their values and beliefs the moment they are called upon to stand up and defend what is right.

Because individuals like Jimmy are consistently unable to make good decisions on their own behalf, it goes without saying that they require a guardian to attend to their interests and protect them. Yet legal guardians, like Jimmy’s grandmother, are finding themselves in the unenviable position of being ignored on certain issues by those entrusted with the care of institutionalized residents, apparently determined to bypass the guardian’s will whenever specific sexual agendas or views about “rights” need to be duly imposed.

Good parents never drive their children to strip clubs, and neither should any institution entrusted with a protective parental role; on the contrary, such institutions should erect appropriate boundaries and limits on harmful behaviors, so their residents can grow and flourish, contribute positively to society, and perhaps one day become good and mature moral agents themselves.

Making Sense of Bioethics

By Maria-Pia Negro Chin

Catholic News Service

"Young people demand change. They wonder how anyone can claim to be building a better future without thinking of the environmental crisis and the sufferings of the excluded," Pope Francis wrote in his encyclical on the environment "Laudato Si."

Youth's concern for the environment continues as a recent global survey shows that millennials see climate change as the most pressing problem affecting the world. This concern — expressed by 26,000 millennials from 181 countries — was followed by large-scale wars, religious conflicts and poverty.

During this Season of Creation (which lasts from Sept. 1 until Oct. 4), we are all called to reflect on the beauty of God's handiwork while renewing our commitment to protect the earth and its people. Some young people are already taking actions to protect the environment.

In July, the International Movement of Catholic Students and the International Young Catholic Students — two organizations representing around 10 million young Catholic students — called others to be "aware of the urgent need to create a new world marked by solidarity, ecologically responsible lifestyles, justice and peace."

"Inspired by the encyclical, we challenge governments and our fellow young people to work with us toward a positive vision of the future in which our activities do not com-

(See CHIN/23)

Los ‘millennials’ renuevan su compromiso de cuidar de nuestro hogar común

By Maria-Pia Negro Chin

Catholic News Service

"Los jóvenes nos reclaman un cambio. Ellos se preguntan cómo es posible que se pretenda construir un futuro mejor sin pensar en la crisis del ambiente y en los sufrimientos de los excluidos", el papa Francisco escribió en su encíclica sobre el medio ambiente "Laudato Si".

La preocupación de los jóvenes por el medio ambiente continúa como lo muestra una encuesta global reciente. Dicha encuesta dice que la generación del milenio (conocidos como "millennials") ve el cambio climático como el problema más apremiante que afecta al mundo. Esta preocupación -- expresada por 26,000 "millennials" de 181 países -- fue seguida por las preocupaciones por las guerras a gran escala, los conflictos religiosos y la pobreza.

Durante esta Temporada de la Creación (que dura desde el 1 de septiembre hasta el 4 de octubre), todos estamos llamados a reflexionar sobre la belleza de la obra de Dios mientras renovamos nuestro compromiso de proteger la Tierra y su gente. Algunos jóvenes ya están tomando medidas para proteger al medio ambiente.

En julio, el Movimiento Internacional de Estudiantes Católicos y la Juventud Estudiantil Católica Internacional -- organizaciones que representan a unos 10 millones de jóvenes estudiantes católicos -- hicieron un llamado a ser "conscientes de la necesidad urgente de crear un nuevo mundo marcado por la solidaridad, estilos de vida con responsabilidad ecológica, la justicia y la paz."

"Inspirados por la encíclica, desafiamos a los gobiernos y nuestros jóvenes compañeros a trabajar con nosotros hacia una visión positiva del futuro en la que nuestras actividades no pongan en peligro la dignidad humana o amenacen la belleza de nuestro planeta", dijeron en un comunicado.

(Mira COMPROMISO/23)
Discerning what God wants us to do can be a challenge

By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

Should I or shouldn't I? What does God want me to do? How many times have you wished you had a direct line to God?

Lately, we've learned so much about the life of St. Teresa of Kolkata. The founder of the Missionaries of Charity was destined to be both a Nobel Peace Prize winner and a canonized saint.

But she didn't know that when she boarded a train from Kolkata to Darjeeling many years ago. As a Sister of Loreto, she taught in a girls' school. But on the train, she experienced her famous "call within a call," an interior vision and movement so profound that it changed her entire life.

She felt Christ asking her to work exclusively with the poorest of the poor. She was sure of that call. A whole world would watch the result.

Now, most of us are not destined to be saints on the caliber of Mother Teresa. But all of us want to do God's will. We pray for that all the time.

But how often do we feel certainty? So often, I muddle along feeling like a giant question mark.

But sometimes, I think we do experience certainty, without the voices or the visions, of course. Occasionally, we have a strong interior sense of rightness.

I made a list the other day of things in my life that seemed so absolutely right that I "had" to do them. It surprised me that I could think of several.

It's a good exercise and I encourage you to do it. It may surprise you how many times you heard and answered a call. And it's good to ask yourself, What sense of desire or openness prompted that strong consent?

When I was a young teacher, I sent for a pamphlet called "Invest Yourself." This was long before the internet with its ready access to information. My pamphlet was promoted by Eunice Kennedy Shriver, founder of the Special Olympics, and in it was listed, in very fine print, just about every volunteer opportunity in the U.S.

Halfway through the book, I arrived at something called the Jesuit Volunteer Corps. It hit me. Bingo. I felt compelled to apply and really never looked back, even when JVC asked me to go to a remote village in Alaska to teach.

(Please See CALDAROLA/23)

A simple twist on being a Good Samaritan

By Fr. Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service

"Who is my neighbor?" asks a scribe (Lk 10:29). Christ replies with the parable of the good Samaritan.

After hearing this parable repeatedly, I thought I knew its full meaning. I was wrong!

The person who helps the man left for dead is a Samaritan. In the eyes of the Jews, Samaritans were detested. And yet, Christ picks a Samaritan to teach the Jews that this man possessed a heart in comparison to the heartless individuals who bypassed the victim.

The word "neighbor" indicates nearness, those close to us and our community. In the parable, the good Samaritan treats the dying man in a neighborly manner despite not knowing him.

It is easy to focus on the good Samaritan stopping to help and miss the point that following his example goes even further. It means helping another in need regardless of geography, race, nationality, nearness or label.

St. John Paul II often spoke of solidarity, meaning we must possess global heartfelt concern for others. In his encyclical "Laudato Si,'" Pope Francis further adds that we are connected not only as person to person, but as human beings to all of God's creation. When connectedness and solidarity are applied to ecology, the entire ecosystem is seen as a God-given neighbor with global needs.

The objection might be raised that we have enough problems in our own backyard without taking on global concerns for everyone and everything in the world.

But a lesson taught in grade school helps us understand what exactly is meant by being concerned for those in need.

In the city of Washington, sirens sound daily. As children, when we heard them we were taught to say a prayer for the person in the ambulance, the people whose home may have been burning, for the safety of the police responding to a crime and for the criminal committing it. We didn't know these people or where they lived, and yet we connected with them through a short prayer for their safety.

This may seem like a pious act of kindness, but it is much more; it keeps our hearts open to those in need even though they aren't our physical neighbor. The more open our heart, the more possible it is to be a good Samaritan to a stranger in need.
Our deepest insecurity keeps us from a happy life

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Why don’t we live happier lives? Why are we forever caught up in frustrations, tensions, anger, and resentments?

The reasons of course are too many to name. Each day, as Jesus himself tells us, brings problems enough for the day. We’re unhappy for reasons too many to count. And yet it can be helpful to ask ourselves sometimes: Why am I so chronically sitting just outside the gates of happiness?

Our initial answer would probably focus on the tensions in our lives that have to do with tiredness, with our health, with stress in our relationships, stress in our work, and anxieties about security. There’s always something! A second reflection would, I suspect, drag up deeper reasons: unacknowledged disappointment with how our lives have turned out, with what our lives have come down to, and with the many dreams we had which were frustrated.

But a still deeper reflection, I believe, would shine a light on something else, something that lies beyond the ordinary stresses and deeper disappointments in our lives. It would, I submit, reveal an underlying, unacknowledged insecurity which works at perennially turning the positive into the negative, has us habitually cursing rather than blessing, and has us projecting a negativity and bitterness right in the God and religion we believe in. What is this insecurity?

This insecurity is, at root, a feeling that we are not sufficiently welcome in this world, that God and the universe are somehow hostile to us, that we are not unconditionally loved and forgiven. And, because of this, we harbor a certain paranoia and hostility towards others. Their energy is a threat to the welcome we desire.

Here’s how Thomas Merton diagnoses this. Commenting on the negativity in the politics, churches, and communities of his time, he offers this reason for the bitterness and division: “In the climate which is not that of life and mercy, but of death and condemnation, the personal and collective guilt of men and of groups wrestle with one another in death struggle. Men, tribes, nations, sects, parties set themselves up in forms of existence which are mutual accusations. They thus seek survival and self-affirmation by living demonically, for the demon is the ‘accuser of the brethren.’ A demonic existence is one which insistently diagnoses what it cannot cure, what it has no desire to cure, what it seeks only to bring to full potency in order that it may cause the death of its victim. Yet this is the temptation which besets the sin-ridden dasein [existential situation] of man, for whom a resentful existence implies the need and decision to accuse and to condemn all other existences.”

And, when this is true, Merton submits, “God becomes a tribal totem, a magnification of the self-seeking existent striving to establish its autonomy in its own void. Can such a God be anything but the embodiment of resentments, hatreds, and dreads? It is in the presence of such idols that vindictive and death-dealing orthodoxies flourish. These gods of party and sect, race and nation, are necessarily the gods of war.” … And this can only be remedied “when men [people] realize that they are all debtors, and that the debt is unpayable.”

And isn’t all of this so true today? How vicious, demonizing, polarizing, and stalemate are our own political processes, churches, and communities! How resentful we all are! How much we have turned our God in the embodiment of our resentments, hatred, and fears! How much we are selling death-dealing orthodoxies as religion! How much our communities and churches are creating their own tribal gods! We see this, of course, most clearly in the religious terrorists who bomb and kill in the name of God, but no one is except. We all struggle to believe in a God who actually loves everyone and who is not just our own tribal deity. Indeed, part of the historical reason for present-day religious terrorism has to do with our own, longstanding, paranoia and how we have projected our own resentments, fears, and hatreds into the God we believe in and the religion we practice.

But Merton shares too the secret of how to move beyond this, of how to stop projecting our own resentments and fears into God and into our churches. His answer? Things will change when, at the root of our being, we accept that we are debtors and that the debt is unpayable. Then we will finally accept God’s welcome and love and, accepting our own welcome, we will no longer resent others. It’s only when we know our own welcome that we can let acceptance, and not judgment, flow out of our lives. And then, and only then, can we let our God be too the God of others.

At the root of our deepest resentment sits an insecurity about our own welcome in the world and with that comes a failure to understand the real nature of God, that is, because we feel threatened, we invariably create a God and religion that protects us against others.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser, theologian, teacher, and award-winning author, is President of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, TX. He can be contacted through his website www.ronrolheiser.com.

Apologists, catechists, theologians: Wake up!

By Most Rev. Robert Barron
Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

After perusing the latest Pew Study on why young people are leaving the active practice of Christianity, I confess that I just sighed in exasperation. I don’t doubt for a moment the sincerity of those who responded to the survey, but the reasons they offer for abandoning Christianity are just so unconvincing. That is to say, any theologian, apologist, or evangelist worth his salt should be able easily to answer them. And this led me (hence the sigh) to the conclusion that “we have met the enemy and it is us.” For the past fifty years or so, Christian thinkers have largely abandoned the art of apologetics and have failed (here I offer a j’accuse to many in the Catholic universities) to resource the riches of the Catholic intellectual tradition in order to hold off criticism of the faith. I don’t blame the avatars of secularism for actively attempting to debunk Christianity; that’s their job, after all. But I do blame teachers, catechists, evangelists, and academics within the Christian churches for not doing enough to keep our young people engaged. These studies consistently demonstrate that unless we believe seriously pick up our game intellectually, we’re going to keep losing our kids.

Let me look just briefly at some of the chief reasons offered for walking away from Christianity. Many evidently felt that modern science somehow undermines the claims of the faith. One respondent said: “rational thought makes religion go out the window,” and another complained of the “lack of any sort of scientific evidence of a creator.” Well, I’m sure it would come as a enormous surprise to St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. John Chrysostom, St. Jerome, St. Thomas Aquinas, St. Robert Bellarmine, Blessed John Henry Newman, G.K. Chesterton, C.S. Lewis, and Joseph Ratzinger—all among the most brilliant people Western culture has produced—that religion and reason are somehow incompatible. And to focus more precisely on the issue of “scientific evidence,” the sciences, ordered by their nature and method to an analysis of empirically verifiable objects and states of affairs within the universe, cannot even in principle address questions regarding God, who is not a being in the world, but rather the reason why the finite realm exists at all. There simply cannot be “scientific” evidence or argument that tells one way or the other in regard to God. Mind you, this is by no means to imply that there are no rational warrants for belief in God. Philosophers over the centuries, in fact, have articulated dozens of such demonstrations, which have, especially when considered together, enormous probative force. I have found, in my own evangelical work, that the argument from contingency gets quite a bit of traction with those who are wrestling with the issue of God’s existence. What these arguments have lacked is that, are convinced and articulate defenders within the academy and in the ranks of teachers, catechists, and apologists.

One of the young people responded to the survey using the formula made famous by Karl Marx: “religion just seems to be the opiate of the people.” Marx’s adage, of course, is an adaptation
approach the November elections, let's all do a brief examination of conscience regarding our own fulfillment of our responsibilities as good citizens. Here are some questions to ask ourselves:

1. Do I obey the law?
2. Do I pay my taxes?
3. Do I stay informed about local and national issues?
4. Do I let my public officials know where I stand on the issues?
5. Am I willing to be inconvenienced enough to serve on a jury, as part of the privilege of living in a free country?
6. Do I give of my time by volunteering in civic organizations and on boards?
7. Do I pray for those in public office?
8. Do I take the time to vote?
9. Do I encourage people whom I know to have a list of good candidates if good people don't run? In the words of Edmund Burke, "All that is required for the role of the Church to endorse specific candidates or parties. Each one of us has a right and responsibility to learn something about the candidates and their positions, and vote accordingly on a prudential decision based on our values.

To help form your conscience on the important issues at stake in our elections, I recommend reading a brief document entitled Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility. It is published by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and it is available in print and online at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship.

In the Vatican II Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes, it states that "every citizen ought to be mindful of his right and his duty to promote the common good by using his vote." It goes on to say that "those with a talent for the difficult yet noble art of politics...should involve themselves in political activity." (GS, 75)

Rather than spending our whole lives as mere spectators of politics and government, there comes a time when some good men and women need to step up and do the actual work of governing. If any government is going to function in a way that is just and fair, it needs leaders who are just and competent.

Our faith teaches us basic moral principles, and we apply those moral principles to concrete circumstances to bring about a more just society. It is not the role of the Church to endorse specific candidates or parties. Each one of us has a right and responsibility to learn something about the candidates and their positions, and vote accordingly on a prudential decision based on our values.

To help form your conscience on the important issues at stake in our elections, I recommend reading a brief document entitled Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship: A Call to Political Responsibility.

In the Vatican II Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et Spes, it states that "every citizen ought to be mindful of his right and his duty to promote the common good by using his vote." It goes on to say that "those with a talent for the difficult yet noble art of politics...should involve themselves in political activity." (GS, 75)

Rather than spending our whole lives as mere spectators of politics and government, there comes a time when some good men and women need to step up and do the actual work of governing. If any government is going to function in a way that is just and fair, it needs leaders who are just and competent.

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It is published by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and it is available in print and online at www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship.

Here in the state of Texas, the Texas Catholic Network is provided by the Texas Catholic Conference for everyone to stay informed about the issues currently before our state elected officials. Everyone can sign up at www.txcatholic.org.

Our world is not perfect. These are the times when all people of good will need to step up and take a more active role in building a better world. If we want to live in a world of justice and freedom, then we all have to do our part.
High stakes for religious freedom, free speech

By Tom Tracy
Catholic News Service

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. -- With every passing U.S. election cycle, First Amendment and religious freedom-minded voters and watchdogs might be tempted to think, "This is the election that will most matter in our lifetime." But as recent years have brought a wave of religious liberty court battles and the federal contraceptive mandate infringing on an array of operations by church entities -- along with a U.S. Supreme Court vacancy to be filled -- 2016 might be a seminal electoral year.

"I have been doing this 25 years, and I don't recall the same level of concern," said Mark Harrington, executive director of the Ohio-based Created Equal, a non-sectarian pro-life organization, who spoke with Catholic News Service about the upcoming religious liberties landscape in light of the presidential campaign.

Harrington pointed out he was part of an audit in 2009 by the Internal Revenue Service following comments he made about one of the presidential candidates. He said he speaks as a private individual when he asserts that he worries about the pace at which federal government has been chipping away at freedom of speech and religious liberties under the current administration.

"Each cycle I keep saying this is the most important election in my lifetime and this one really is, because of the Supreme Court mainly," Harrington said, referring the vacancy left this year by the death of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, the leading conservative voice on the court.

"Whatever is decided (this year), those two issues -- religious liberty and abortion -- hang in the balance, and if the Supreme Court would tilt to the left, we could see an entire generation pass before we get back to a place where the courts protect life and religious liberty," he said. "It is clear First Amendment liberties are being threatened."

Without endorsing candidates or parties, Harrington said he predicts that if elected president, Democratic nominee Hillary Clinton would continue with President Barack Obama's domestic policies of curtailing religious liberties.

Harrington sees some relief in Republican nominee Donald Trump's recent statements, saying that Trump, if elected, would consider doing away with the so-called Johnson Amendment, which threatens religious institutions with the loss of their tax-exempt status if they openly advocate their political views.

"I don't know if (Trump) would get it done, but organizations like ours would love to see that happen and to see that stripped. The Johnson Amendment initially was never intended to be used to stymie free speech," said Harrington, who said his organization prevailed after an IRS investigation but that the process itself was a kind of punishment for perceived partisanship rather than pro-life principles.

Trump also has vowed to appoint judges and justices who will uphold law as it is written in the Constitution and not rewrite law based on a political agenda; he has released a list of 11 potential Supreme Court nominees.

"We can direct people to vote on the issue of abortion, to vote pro-life, and leave it up to the individual to reason which candidate is for or against abortion, to let people know where candidates stand," Harrington said. "With Mr. Trump, he has to answer to his Republican caucus, which in the case of the U.S. House, has become more conservative, so I would feel very comfortable with a Trump presidency protecting religious liberty."

In Chicago, Tom Brejcha, president and chief counsel of the Thomas More Society, which is fighting religious freedom court battles around the country, noted that he "is not a fan" of either the Democratic or Republican candidates and that he expected his organization will be busy no matter who is elected president.

Brejcha does point out that the rhetoric from the Democratic nominee and her plumbing would necessarily result in increasing religious liberty issues, and..."But as recent years have brought a wave of religious liberty court battles..."
VOWS

(From 6)

said, “May you keep your robe white in token of a pure heart.”

Bishop Sis said the Mass is an expression – both to live her life faithfully and to present herself as a gift to God.

“She’s acknowledging what God’s done for her and entrusting herself completely to God,” he said following the Mass. “She’s seeking to live out her baptismal call to holiness in the particular state of life as a vowed religious.”

Sister Mary Joseph has now completed the stages of being a postulant and a novice, Sis said, but has three more years before she finishes the formation process and can profess her solemn vows.

“That’s why they’re called simple vows,” he said of the promises Sister made during the Mass. “This day is significant because the Church lifts her up in prayer as she makes this commitment, and I, as the bishop, represent the diocese by presiding at the vows.”

The celebration of Sister Mary Joseph’s profession was a community effort, Sis said.

“The diocese does not provide financial support for the monastery, so the sisters depend on God’s providence through the generosity of their supporters,” he said, adding that that support system was in full force during the Mass, with every pew packed.

Sister will continue to need that support and prayer throughout the next three years.

“I’m still learning to let go of myself, let go of things that I brought with me from out there,” she said. “I pray this is my vocation, because I’m still in discernment. I pray this is it.”

GRN

(From 2)

believe so strongly in radio, and feel it is one of our greatest tools of evangelization. Let us pray that more people will be brought to the Church and a better, clearer understanding of our faith through this radio station.”

KLPF is the flagship station of the GRN, which broadcasts in 14 Texas markets, four Alabama markets, three Florida markets, Washington, D.C., and Clayton, N.M. Founded in 1950, KLKF's network offerings include primarily syndicated radio shows, most produced by Eternal Word Television Network or Ave Maria Radio. Programs include “Catholic Answers Live”; "The Son Rise Morning Show"; "Catholic Connection," featuring Teresa Tomeo; "Women of Grace"; "More 2 Life," featuring Greg and Lisa Popcak; "The Doctor is In," featuring Ray Guarendi, and "Kresta in the Afternoon" featuring Al Kresta. GRN also broadcasts a number of shows it produces itself, including "GRN Alive," "Rise and Walk," "Matrimonios En Fe," and "Kerigma."

GRN’s Texas markets include Midland, Dallas-Fort Worth, Houston, San Antonio and 10 smaller locations.

ELECCIONES

(Para 17)

bres y buenas mujeres necesitan hacer el trabajo actual de gobernar. Si cualquier gobierno va a funcionar de una manera que sea justa y equitativa, pues se necesitan líderes que sean justos y competentes.

Si usted se siente frustrado por la selección de candidatos disponibles en nuestras elecciones, por favor, considere si usted alguna vez estaría dispuesto a presentarse como candidato y servir. Ya sea que se trate de su mesa directiva local de la escuela, el ayuntamiento municipal, o algún otro cargo, ¿cómo podemos tener una lista de buenos candidatos si la gente buena no se da por servir? En palabras de Edmund Burke, “Todo lo que se necesita para que el mal prevalezca es que los hombres buenos no hagan nada.”

Nuestra fe nos enseña los principios morales básicos, y aplicamos esos principios morales a las circunstancias concretas para lograr una sociedad más justa. No es el papel de la Iglesia para apoyar a candidatos o partidos específicos. Cada uno de nosotros tiene el derecho y la responsabilidad de aprender algo acerca de los candidatos y sus posiciones, y votar de acuerdo a una decisión prudencial sobre la base de nuestros valores.

Para ayudar a formar la conciencia sobre las cuestiones importantes que están en juego en nuestras elecciones, recomiendo la lectura de un breve documento titulado Formando la conciencia para ser ciudadanos fieles: Un llamado a la responsabilidad política. Es publicado por la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, y está disponible en forma impre-sa y en línea en www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/faithful-citizenship.

Aquí, en el estado de Texas, la Red Católica de Texas (The Texas Catholic Network) es proporcionada por la Conferencia Católica de Texas (Texas Catholic Conference) para que todos se mantengan informados acerca de las cuestiones corrientes que se encuentran ante nuestros funcionarios electos del estado. Todos pueden inscribirse en www.txcatholic.org.

Nuestro mundo no es perfecto. Estos son los momentos en los cuales todas las personas de buena voluntad necesitan tomar un papel más activo en la construcción de un mundo mejor. Si queremos vivir en un mundo de justicia y libertad, entonces todos tenemos que hacer nuestra parte.

KNICKERBOCKERS

(From 7)

though they valued their ethnic roots and continued some of their cultural customs, blending them into American life. Second was the effort of bishops and priests in growing parishes throughout the land to help these new Americans be both Catholic and American. To put it in current parlance, they helped these new Americans be both Catholic and "politically correct." And, as long as the civil laws and customs by and large agreed with the Natural Law, this was entirely possible.

The Catholic Church teaches that grace builds upon nature and does not contradict it. The Natural Law enshrined in American Positive Law provided a common basis for all Americans, and Catholic doctrine and morality built on this Natural Law.

From the beginning of our American nation, there were Catholic bishops who took the lead in this. Bishop John Carroll of Maryland, our first American bishop, was committed to this effort to be Catholic and American. His brother, Charles Carroll, was one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence. What historian Thomas Bokenkotter calls the "Age of Carroll" was followed by the "Age of John England," the Bishop of Charleston.

England delivered a two-hour address to the United States Congress, and was, in Bokenkotter's words, "Extremely conscious of the need to adapt the Catholic Church to the American spirit." (A Concise History of the Catholic Church, 331). Carroll and England were followed by other leaders, both clerical and lay, who worked for Catholics in American to "have it both ways," to be both Catholic and American.

The efforts of Catholics to have it both ways was not without opposition both in the Church and from the cultural Protestantism of the new nation. In 1834, a group of anti-Catholics burned down an Ursuline convent in Charlestown, Massachusetts. However, this incident caused many non-Catholics to repudiate this kind of violence, even though opposition to Catholicism continued. Thanks to immigration and the growth of Catholic families, by the last half of the 19th Century, Catholics were the largest Christian communion in the country.

In 1928, a Catholic, Governor Alfred E. Smith of New York, was nominated by the Democratic Party as their candidate for President of the United States. Although Smith lost, he gained enough of the popular vote to indicate the improving acceptance of Catholics in a nation that was culturally Protestant. In 1960, another Catholic, Senator John F. Kennedy of Massachusetts, was nominated by the Democratic Party to run for the Presidency and won. It had taken awhile to complete the effort of Catholics in America to "have it both ways," but now it seemed that one could be Catholic and a politically correct American, loyal to American laws and customs that were in accord with Natural Law or at least were not opposed to it.

How quickly things change. With the Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion in Roe v. Wade, the "pill," no-fault divorce, the Supreme Court's decision legalizing so-called same-sex marriage, various trans-gender bathroom laws, and the effort to force private businesses to cooperate with these new rules, we have seen the Positive Law of our nation absolutely contradict the Natural Law of Human Nature. Now, to be a "politically correct" American, one must acquiesce in all these decisions of the federal government and some of the state governments.

In other words, today, if you are a Catholic in the United States of America, "you can't have it both ways." "You can't have your cake and eat it too." In the election in which we will vote this November, we can't have it both ways. Either we choose to be Catholic or we will choose to be "politically correct" Americans, who let the federal government determine right and wrong, good and evil, truth and falsehood. This is a time when we are called upon as Catholics to show that the way to be the best American citizens we can be is to be the best Catholics we can be and bring our nation back to its roots in the Natural Law of Human Nature. This can be the "Catholic Hour" in the history of the United States of America, when the Catholic Church can become the heart of our culture.
JOSEPH

(From 6)

and worked among five other sisters at our Lady of Grace, some 50 miles south of San Angelo.

“We get up at 5 in the morning and we’re in solitary prayer,” she said. “Then we meet as a community for local prayer, and we work. We pray eight times a day, throughout the day. We do have recreation in the evening when we come together and laugh and laugh. We play games on Sundays. Other than that you’re always in the presence of God throughout the day. You try to keep that

presence with you, even when we’re working.”

For work, Sister Mary Joseph cares for the sisters’ pet dogs and cleans the bird walk, an outdoor corridor on the property where swallows nest. She also washes the laundry, helps with the yard work and other miscellaneous household chores.

“You think you love the Lord, but when you’re in here, it’s deep, it’s really deep,” she said. “You go within yourself, within your soul. That’s where He is, and you learn through His grace, His help and His love, and how to love Him more - and not only Him, but to love others.”

Sister Mary Grace Erl, the convent’s prioress, said she is “very, very proud” of Sister Mary Joseph, especially considering “where she came from and what she’s gone through.”

“To accept the grace to turn around, that takes tremendous courage,” Sister Mary Grace said. “It’s a wonderful witness. It wasn’t easy for her, but she did it, and she persevered. It’s a good example of how not to give up on anything. Her mother kept praying for her, and it worked.”

To have completed two years in a five-year life-changing process is “amazing,” Sister Mary Joseph said.

“I can’t even believe I’m here,” she said incredulously. “I never dreamed I would be here. Never, never. It’s grace.’

— Sister Mary Joseph

ROSARY

(From 10)

they saw the soldiers leave their posts and join the crowd in praying. Thus the revolution ended peacefully thanks to the people’s prayers. Note that the Philippines is the only Christian country in the Far East with population being Catholics.

More recently, in San Angelo, the Planned Parenthood offices were closed. Many would still remember seeing groups of devout Catholics praying across the street. Could the closing of the offices be a result of their prayers?

Traditionally, it is believed that St. Dominic received the Rosary from our Blessed Mother in an apparition in the church of Prouille, France in 1214. It was then that he received the “15 Promises” (5) that the Blessed Mary made to those who recite the Rosary. It is another belief that sometime in the later part of the 15th century St. Alain de la Roche, a learned Dominican theologian, received a vision from Jesus about the urgency of using the Rosary as a form of prayer. Some scholars, however, are of the opinion that the structure of the Rosary evolved between the 12th and the 15th centuries which started with the monks’ recitation of the Psalms of David in groupings of 50, 100, or all the 150 but since most could not read, they would say “Our Father” instead. And for that reason the rosary (a string of beads), on which they counted the prayers, was called the “Paternoster.” Later, fifty “Hail, Mary’s” (6) were recited and linked with verses of Psalms and other phrases evoking the lives of Jesus and Mary. The prayer was then known as the rosarium (“rose garden”) actually a common term used to describe a collection of similar material. The five-decade Rosary based on three sets of mysteries was established by Pope Pius V in 1569 and prevailed during the 16th century. The Rosary remained essentially unchanged until the Fatima prayer (7) was added in 1917 and the introduction of the Luminous Mysteries by St. John Paul II in 2002. To sum it up, various elements enter into the composition of the Rosary which is a product of a long and gradual development.

The fact that the Catholic Church includes the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary in the liturgical calendar is a testimony to the importance and value of this form of prayer. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (Sec. 971) states, “The Church’s devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship. . . . (It) rightly honors the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. . . . The liturgical feast dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the Rosary, an ‘epitome of the whole gospel,’ express this devotion to the Virgin Mary.”

Catholic publications are replete with stories of many well-known saints, popes, churches and other religious groups devoted to the Holy Rosary. There are many events recorded in which the power of praying the Rosary has resulted in favorable outcomes through Divine intervention. “Everyone who recites the Rosary must feel its supernatural power” (Pope Leo XII).

“With the Holy Rosary, we will save ourselves, we will sanctify ourselves, we will console Our Lord and obtain the salvation of many souls” (Sister Lucy of Fatima). As Archbishop Fulton Sheen succinctly concludes, “The power of the Rosary is beyond description.”

Footnotes
1. When capitalized, the word “rosary” refers to the form of prayer. Otherwise, it means the string of beads.
3. EDSA is an acronym for Epifanio de los Santos (a Filipino hero) Avenue.
4. The writer had many relatives and friends among the protesters.
5. For a list of the 15 promises, see Catholic Encyclopedia.
6. St. Peter Canisius, Doctor of the Church, is credited with adding the sentence “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.”
7. This is one of the three prayers taught by Our Lady to the visionaries

SAINTS

(From 8)

The Angelus

John Paul II in 1998 and canonized by Pope Benedict XVI in 2006. Her feast day is October 3.

St. Mary-of-the-Woods College presently enrolls about 1,700 students and the college became fully co-educational in 2015.

Sister Mary Grace Erl, the convent’s director, cares for the sisters teaching 1,200 children and operating two orphanages.

Mother Théodore’s final illness began in Holy Week, March 1856 and she died on May 14. She is buried in the Church of the Immaculate Conception at Saint Mary-of-the-Woods. She was beatified by Pope
FREEDOM

(From 18)

running mate, Tim Kaine, strike him as more openly anti-religious and anti-Catholic -- a potentially even more vigorous continuation of what many say are Obama's anti-religion policies.

"We are in a time way beyond perilous, and some of the statements and edicts coming down from on high in Washington reflect that," he said, pointing to the recent comments by the chairman of the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, Martin Castro, that the phrases "religious liberty" and "religious freedom" were "code words" used to discriminate.

The tragic irony is that the civil rights movement and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was a movement born out of the Christian churches of the South, he said.

"And now you have Tim Kaine's comments that the church's position on the definition of marriage is just going to have to change: This is outspoken anti-church banter, anti-Catholic bombast," he said, adding that his organization is trying to recruit more volunteer lawyers to keep up with challenges from "anti-religious progressive" opponents and activities.

Kaine, a U.S. senator from Virginia, is a Catholic who has been criticized for his support for legal abortion; he personally opposes it but says a woman has a right to choose. He also supports same-sex marriage, which the church opposes. Kaine's remarks that the Catholic Church must change its position on "marriage equality," as he put it, were in a talk he gave to gay rights activists Sept. 10.

"All the elections are important, but this one is pivotal to religious liberty in so many ways, which is the first liberty the freedom of belief," Brejcha said. It's well past time for Catholics to wake up and see that the government is trying to take over our religion and that is not an understatement in the slightest.

In addition to ongoing court battles, religious institutions, including the U.S. bishops through their national Fortnight for Freedom campaign, have waged a response to the health care contraception mandate and other legal directives that impact the ability of Catholic entities to serve the poor and vulnerable in accordance with human dignity and the church's teaching.

The Health and Human Services mandate that most religious employers must provide sterilization, contraception and abortion-inducing drugs as part of their health care plans forces religious institutions to facilitate or fund a product contrary to their own moral teaching. Other mandates or laws impact adoption and foster-care services, immigration services and Catholic humanitarian services.

The federal government also tries to define which religious institutions are "religious enough" to merit protection of their religious liberty, according to a statement of the U.S. bishops, which notes the threat to religious freedom is larger than any single case or issue and has its roots in secularism in our culture.

Although that decision has prompted concern that the federal government will interfere with long-held religious beliefs and marriage traditions among faith communities such as the Catholic Church, it has not been a major point of discussion in the ongoing election campaign.

"It has been taken it off the table as a wedge issue, and you don't see the Republicans running on that," Created Equal's Harrington said, adding that "the Christian community is not pressing hard to make it illegal as much as it had in the past, after the opposition has died off a bit."

The U.S. bishops have noted that religious liberty is much more than freedom of worship, asking aloud: Can the church do the good works our faith calls us to do, without having to compromise that very same faith?

"Without religious liberty properly understood, all Americans suffer, deprived of the essential contribution in education, health care, feeding the hungry, civil rights, and social services that religious Americans make every day, both here at home and overseas," the bishops wrote in a 2012 statement.

ELECTIONS

(From 18)

the situation demands "we be different people" and change the country by changing ourselves.

The nation's future depends on strengthening traditional family life and church life, the archbishop said, and rejecting secular society's mores of casual sex, adultery and divorce, abortion, selfishness, instant gratification and sexual confusion.

The future, he said, "belongs to people who believe in something beyond themselves, and who live and sacrifice accordingly. It belongs to people who think and hope inter-generationally."

In his 46 years as a priest and hearing countless confessions, he has observed a "huge spike in people -- both men and women -- confessing promiscuity, infidelity, sexual violence and sexual confusion as an ordinary part of life, and the massive role of pornography in wrecking marriages, families and even the vocations of clergy and religious."

Along with that, he said, has been the "media nonsense about the innocence of casual sex and the 'happy' children of friendly divorces." The result "is a dysfunctional culture of frustrated and wounded people increasingly incapable of permanent commitments, self-sacrifice and sustained intimacy, and unwilling to face the reality of their own problems."

He said that "weak and selfish individuals make weak and selfish marriages" that "continue and spread the cycle of dysfunction" by "creating more and more wounded individuals."

"The family is where children discover how to be human ... how to respect and love other people," he said, adding that "social costs rise" when "healthy marriages and families decline."

While single parents deserve praise for the "heroic job" they do, he said, "only a mother and father can provide the intimacy of maternal and paternal love." "Only a mother and father can offer the unique kind of human love rooted in flesh and blood; the kind that comes from mutual submission and self-giving; the kind that comes from the complementarity of sexual difference," he said.

Parents aren't perfect, he said, and too often modern American life "encourages them to fail." He also acknowledged many pressures on families come from outside the home, like unemployment, low pay, crime, poor housing, chronic illness and bad schools.

Strong families and churches "stand between the individual and the state," Archbishop Chaput said. "They protect the autonomy of the individual by hemming in the power of government, resisting its tendency to claim the entirety of life. But they also pull us out of ourselves and teach us to engage generously with others."

In the U.S. "marriage, family and traditional religion all seem to be failing and ... support for democracy itself has dropped," he said. None of that has happened overnight, he said. The current situation, he said, has been fueled "by a collection of lies" over the issue of abortion.

"No issue has made us more dishonest and less free as believers and as a nation than abortion," he explained. "People uncomfortable with the abortion issue argue, quite properly, that Catholic teaching is bigger than just one issue. Other urgent issues also need our attention. Being pro-life is not the same as being pro-life. And being truly 'pro-life' doesn't end with defending the unborn child."

He said, "In every abortion, an innocent life always dies. This is why no equivalence can ever exist between the intentional killing involved in abortion, infanticide and euthanasia on the one hand, and issues like homelessness, the death penalty and anti-poverty policy on the other."

Archbishop Chaput noted the criticism Notre Dame received for awarding its Laetare Medal to Biden, a Catholic who supports keeping abortion legal. Former House Speaker John Boehner, a pro-life Catholic, also was a recipient. The men were honored for their public service, the university said at the time.

"For the nation's leading Catholic university to honor a Catholic public official (Biden) who supports abortion rights and then goes on to conduct a same-sex civil marriage ceremony just weeks later, is -- to put it kindly -- a contradiction of Notre Dame's identity. It's a baffling error of judgment," the archbishop said.

Notre Dame "really is still deeply Catholic," he added, which is what the Catholic Church needs and what is necessary to create people who can change the country.

The church needs "a university that radiates the glory of God in age that no longer knows what it means to be human," he said. "What the people of God need now is a university that fuses the joy of Francis with the brilliance of Benedict and the courage, fidelity and humanity of the great John Paul."
PEACE

(From 2)

75 people who had gathered. “Let’s all try to do that, especially in this Season of Peace.”

Bishop Emeritus Michael Pfeifer created the Peace Ambassadors of West Texas in 2004. The group is an alliance representing the three Abrahamic faiths – Christianity, Judaism and Islam – in response to anti-Muslim sentiment following the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The group promotes peace through understanding, education and building relationships, according to its Facebook page.

The Season of Peace theme this year is “Your Peace Matters.” In addition to the Friday Mass, events throughout the month in San Angelo included an interfaith prayer vigil and reception at Unity Spiritual Center, a 9/11 Memorial Program, a Jewish Sabbath service held at Congregation Beth Israel, art displays, films and discussions, a peace showcase and more.

“I think the kind of events they offer provide experiences that open up the heart to dialogue and encounter among people who would not normally interact at this level,” Sis said of the Peace Ambassadors. “It is these experiences of face-to-face encounters that lead to a softening of the heart and a growth in compassion and peace.

“You can read a book about peace and get some good ideas, but when you actually spend time with people of different faiths in an atmosphere of mutual respect, that’s when your attitudes are more likely to change.”

Peace Ambassador Becky Benes said peace comes about through open dialogue and a spirit of curiosity. “What separates us is fear of the other,” she said. “When we fear, we tend to close ourselves off and stop being curious.”

As human beings embrace peace, they find fulfillment, because peace brings about harmony and unity with one another.

BARRON

(From 16)

of Ludwig Feuerbach’s observation that religion amounts to a projection of our idealized self-image. Sigmund Freud, in the early twentieth century, further adapted Feuerbach, arguing that religion is like a waking dream, a wish-fulfilling fantasy. This line of thinking has been massively adopted by the so-called “new atheists” of our time. I find it regularly on my internet forums. What all of this comes down to, ultimately, is a dismissive and patronizing psychologization of religious belief. But it is altogether vulnerable to a tu quoque (you do the same thing) counter-attack. I think it is eminently credible to say that atheism amounts to a wish-fulfilling fantasy, precisely in the measure that it allows for complete freedom and self-determination: if there is no God, no ultimate moral criterion, I can do and be whatever I want. In a word, the psychologizing cuts just as effectively in the opposite direction. Hence, the two charges more or less cancel one another out—and this should compel us to return to real argument at the objective level.

A third commonly-cited reason for abandoning the Christian churches is that, as one respondent put it, “Christians seem to behave so badly.” God knows that the clergy sex abuse scandals of the last 25 years have lent considerable support to this argument, already bolstered by the usual suspects of the Inquisition, the Crusades, the persecution of Galileo, witch-hunts, etc., etc. We could, of course, enter into an examination of each of these cases, but for our purposes I am willing to concede the whole argument: yes indeed, over the centuries, lots and lots of Christians have behaved wickedly. But why, one wonders, should this tell against the integrity and rectitude of Christian belief? Many, many Americans have done horrific things, often in the name of America. One thinks of slave owners, the enforcers of Jim Crow laws, the carpet bombers of Dresden and Tokyo, the perpetrators of the My-Lai Massacre, the guards at Abu Ghaba Prison, etc. Do these outrages ipso facto prove that American ideals are less than praiseworthy, or that the American system as such is corrupt? The question answers itself.

Relatedly, a number of young people said that they left the Christian churches because “religion is the greatest source of conflict in the world.” One hears this charge so often today—especially in the wake of September 11th—that we tend to take it as self-evident, when in point of fact, it is an invention of Enlightenment-era historiography. Voltaire, Diderot, Spinoza, and many others in the 17th and 18th centuries wanted to undermine religion, and they could find no better way to achieve this end than to score Christianity as the source of violence. Through无数 channels this view has seeped into the general consciousness, but it simply does not stand up to serious scrutiny. In their exhaustive survey of the wars of human history (The Encyclopedia of Wars), Charles Phillips and Alan Axelrod demonstrate that less than 7% of wars could be credibly blamed on religion, and even the most casual reflection bears this out.

In point of fact, the bloodiest wars in history, those of the twentieth century, which produced over 100 million dead, had practically nothing to do with religion. Indeed, a very persuasive case could be made that ideological secularism and modern nationalism are the sources of greatest bloodshed. And yet the prejudice, first fostered by the philosophes of the Enlightenment, oddly endures.

An earlier Pew Study showed that for every one person who joins the Catholic Church today, six are leaving, and that many of those who leave are the young. This most recent survey indicates that intellectual objections figure prominently when these drifters are asked why they abandoned their faith. My cri de coeur is that teachers, catechists, theologians, apologists, and evangelists might wake up to this crisis and do something about it.
**CALDAROLA**

(From 15)

It was a life-changing decision, but one that involved so little "should I or shouldn't I."

Much later, I wanted to take a writing course from a woman who was the first female bureau chief of The Associated Press. I just knew it was for me. But after I applied, word came back -- sorry, class is full.

I am not usually a pushy person, but I wrote a letter to the instructor telling her all of the reasons she needed to make an exception and let me into her class. I got in -- to that one and several more.

There were a few other "have to" moments on my list, some personal and some professional, like deciding to pursue a master's degree in pastoral ministry. What I realize is that these moments in my life drew on an openness, a need for something new and challenging. I was ready and willing to take a risk. I was ready for a call.

When having trouble wondering what God wants next, I'm going to think about my list and ask what qualities or conditions or needs prompted my eagerness. Then I'll ask God to help me be open to the next "have to" call. Surprise me, Lord, with another decision that feels right.

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**BYRON**

(From 17)

Scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing" (Lk. 4:14-21).

With that, he launched what we now call the social ministry of the church, although at that point in time the church had not yet been formally established. But Jesus, who is for us the church, took it upon himself to declare that he and we, as church, must have a special concern for the poor, for the infirm, for those in prison and for all the oppressed. Their condition points to social imbalance, to inequalities, to injustices that must be addressed.

The Red Mass gives us a special moment for self-examination, for social reflection, for consideration of what must now be done to correct these imbalances and inequalities and restore right relationships. We have to begin thinking of the opposite of poverty not as wealth but as justice.

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**NEWMAN**

(From 2)

Wednesdays at noon, and Fridays at 12 noon. We have Confessions and Eucharistic Adoration available one hour before every Mass. We have three free meals that follow our weekday Masses. We have Wednesday praise and worship Adoration at 7:00 pm (a.k.a the ROCK). We have weekly faith-sharing and spiritual activities, and many recreational and service events.

It truly renews inspiration and hope to see so many young adults holding their faith in such high regard — by choice. I cherish the fact that these sacred sacraments that are truly treasures for any man or woman are so easily available now. They are eternally impactful yet cost not a cent. This is why my favorite part is now having Mass four times a week. I tend to get a restless, racing mind that gets confused with what direction I want my life to go. This exacerbates when I'm challenged with the demands of academics. So on a day that I am mentally restless and tired, I find renewal with participation in the Divine Liturgy. Participating in these sacraments and other events with fellow students spaws a meaningful love between people who were just strangers not long ago. For example, being trained along with some others and becoming an extraordinary Eucharistic minister has largely increased my capacity to love and connect. It's really about the connection. The opportunity to be together with people of all backgrounds is made possible with the Catholic faith and its extension to college students through the Newman Center.

Nathan Castro is a junior nursing student at Angelo State University from Brady.

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**COMPROMISO**

(Para 14)

A pesar de los cambios promulgados por los gobiernos tras la firma del Acuerdo de París y los esfuerzos de numerosas organizaciones, la lucha contra el cambio climático todavía tiene un largo camino que recorrer. Según el Programa de las Naciones Unidas para el Medio Ambiente, la extracción de materiales de recursos primarios se ha triplicado en 40 años. Esto, según el informe, puede agotar algunos de los recursos de la Tierra.

"Si la actual tendencia continúa, este siglo podría ser testigo de cambios climáticos inauditos y de una destrucción sin precedentes de los ecosistemas, con graves consecuencias para todos nosotros", dijo el papa Francisco en su encíclica, que fue publicada en el 2015.

Cuando dañamos el medio ambiente, también dañamos a otras personas. A menudo, los pobres, que menos contribuyen al daño ambiental, son los más afectados por la destrucción de los ecosistemas o los cambios en los patrones climáticos.

¿Qué podemos hacer? ¿Cómo podemos ser mejores administradores de la creación de Dios? Además de abogar por la justicia ambiental, hay muchos pequeños pasos que podemos tomar. Estos incluyen el uso de envases reutilizables, el reciclaje, el cocinar sólo lo que razonablemente se puede consumir, cultivar un jardín comunitario, el uso de productos de comercio justo, mostrar aprecio y cuidado a otros seres vivos, el uso del transporte público o compartir el coche, apagar las luces innecesarias, etc.

Otras formas en que los jóvenes han estado viviendo "Laudato Si'" incluyen la participación en el activismo climático, comiendo menos carne y fomentando el uso de paneles solares. De cierto modo, la multitud de maneras en que podemos asumir el reto del cambio climático es una razón para mantener la esperanza. Nuestras decisiones diarias pueden tener un impacto positivo.

El 1 de septiembre, el papa Francisco sugirió que "el cuidado de la casa común", debe añadirse a la lista de obras corporales y espirituales de misericordia. Es algo que no puede ser opcional o pospuesto. Ya es el momento de cambiar nuestros hábitos y para cultivar y proteger el don de la creación.

**CHIN**

(From 14)

promise human dignity or threaten the beauty of our common home," they said in a statement.

Despite changes enacted by governments after the Paris Agreement was signed and efforts by numerous organizations, the fight against climate change still has a long way to go. According to the United Nations Environment Program, extraction of primary resource materials has more than tripled in 40 years. This, the report continued, can deplete some of the earth's resources.

"If present trends continue, this century may well witness extraordinary climate change and unprecedented destruction of ecosystems, with serious consequences for all of us," Pope Francis said in his encyclical, which was published in 2015.

When we damage the environment, we also hurt other people. Often the poor, who contribute the least to environmental damage, are hit the hardest by the destruction of ecosystems or changes in weather patterns.

What can we do? How can we be better stewards of God's creation? In addition to advocating for environmental justice, there are many little steps we can take. These include using reusable containers, recycling, cooking only what can reasonably be consumed, starting a community garden, using fair trade products, showing care for other living beings, using public transportation or carpooling, turning off unnecessary lights, etc.

Other ways young people have been living "Laudato Si" include engaging in climate activism, eating less meat and encouraging the use of solar panels. In a sense, the multitude of ways we can take on the challenge of climate change is a reason to remain hopeful. Our everyday decisions can have a positive impact.

On Sept. 1, Pope Francis suggested that "care for our common" should be added to the list of corporal and spiritual works of mercy. It is something that can't be optional or postponed. Now is the time to adjust our habits and to cultivate and protect the gift of creation.

Maria-Pía Negro Chin is bilingual associate editor at Maryknoll Magazine.
Hello, Newman: the Center of Catholic life at ASU

Students gather round Bishop Michael J. Sis, top photo after launching their new web site -- catholicram.org. Photos above and at left show the celebration of Mass at the Newman Center in San Angelo. See related story on Page 2, and photo on Page 1. (Courtesy photos).