Advent Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Master of both the light and the darkness, send your Holy Spirit upon our preparation for Christmas.

We who have so much to do seek quiet spaces to hear your voice each day.

We who are anxious over many things look forward to your coming among us.

We who are blessed in so many ways long for the complete joy of your Kingdom.

We whose hearts are heavy seek the joy of your presence.

We are your people, walking in darkness yet seeking the light.

To you we say, “Come, Lord Jesus”. Amen.

— Henri Nouwen
Trudos’ to celebrate grand re-opening, new owners, January 14

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor

SAN ANGELO — Thirty-seven years after it opened in the living room of Deacon Frank Trudo, the religious store bearing his name and operated at first by him and, since 1991, daughter Pat and husband Jim, has been sold.

Trudo’s Religious Store in San Angelo was purchased August 15 by two married couples with a dream of carrying on the tradition first set forth by Trudo and his family.

Dreams sometimes turn quickly into reality as Rachel and Mark Vega, and Connie and Mario DeHoyos, parishioners at St. Mary’s Church, soon learned.

On Saturday, January 14, 2017, 37 years and 12 days after Trudo first opened his living room doors to customers, Trudo’s Religious Store will celebrate its grand re-opening. Ms. DeHoyos said recently that in order to prepare for the big event, the store will be closed the week after Christmas.

“When my husband first read in The Angelus how Pat was looking to

(Please See TRUDOS/10)

Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe to be ‘Day of Prayer and Solidarity with Families of Immigrants’

U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops

WASHINGTON—A Day of Prayer with a focus on the plight of refugees and migrants will take place across the United States on December 12, 2016, the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe. It will be a time to place before a merciful God the hopes, fears, and needs of all those families who have come to the U.S. seeking a better life.

“As Christmas approaches and especially on this feast of Our Lady, we are reminded of how our savior Jesus Christ was not born in the comfort of his own home, but rather in an unfamiliar manger,” said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, archbishop of Galveston-Houston and president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). “To all those families separated and far from home in uncertain times, we join with you in a prayer for comfort and joy this Advent season,” Cardinal DiNardo added.

Prayer services and special Masses will be held in many dioceses across the country as the Catholic Church continues to accompany migrants and refugees seeking an opportunity to provide for their families. If you are unable to attend or there is not one near you, Catholics are invited to offer prayers wherever they may be. For example, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ office of Migrant and Refugee Services (MRS) has also developed a Rosary entitled “Unity in Diversity” that includes prayers for migrants and refugees at justiceforimmigrants.org/documents/Scriptural-Rosary-Eng.pdf.

“So many families are wondering how changes to immigration policy might impact them,” said Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, vice-president of the USCCB. “We want them to know the Church is with them, offers prayers on their behalf, and is actively monitoring developments at the diocesan, state, and national levels to be an effective advocate on their behalf.”
Living Advent in a new way this season

By Most Rev. Michael J. Sis

Many people in the culture around us have the notion that the Christmas season is the time frame between Thanksgiving and Christmas. That might be true from a retail commercial point of view, but it is not true from the perspective of the Christian faith. The real Christmas season actually begins on Christmas Eve, December 24, and lasts through the Feast of the Baptism of the Lord, which will take place on Monday, January 9, 2017.

The word “Advent” comes from the Latin word adveniens, which refers to arrival, entry, or coming. The one who is coming is Jesus Christ. In the season of Advent we are focusing on three different comings of Christ — in history, in mystery, and in majesty. These take place in the past, the present, and the future.

The past event of the coming of Christ in history took place with Jesus’ birth from the Virgin Mary more than 2,000 years ago in Bethlehem. This is what we commemorate with the Solemnity of Christmas on December 25; thus, Advent is a time of preparation for the celebration of his birth.

The future event of the coming of Christ will be when he returns in majesty at the end of time, when he comes in glory to bring the Kingdom of God to its fulfillment.

In Matthew 24:42, Jesus says, “Stay awake, for you do not know on which day your Lord will come.” Advent reminds us to be alert and vigilant at all times for the final return of Christ. As people of faith, the proper attitude when we consider the final coming of Christ at the end of time is not panic, but rather a spirit of joyful anticipation and reconciliation. If we’re living in a solid relationship with God, there will be no need to shudder in fear or run and scream. St. Augustine says, “If we love our sins more than we love Christ, we will fear his coming. If we love Christ more than we love our sins, we will rejoice at his coming.”

The third way we focus on the coming of Christ in Advent is the present. He comes to us in mystery every day, in the Sacraments of the Church, in the Scriptures, and in our neighbor in need. He is present to us here and now, speaking to us, nourishing us, molding and shaping us, challenging us, and healing us. When we serve the needs of those around us by carrying out the works of mercy, we are responding to the coming of Christ under the disguise of our neighbor in need.

The past coming of Christ and the future coming of Christ are like the two ends of a bridge. The bridge that stretches across them is the present coming of Christ. Every day we walk that bridge, seeking to act with justice and love in everything we do. Advent is a time to watch attentively for his presence in the concrete experiences of life, and to commit ourselves to bringing his presence into our world.

I would like to invite you to live Advent in a new way this year. Put on your thinking cap and consider some different ways to make this season come alive, and to discover the presence of Christ every day. Here are just a few suggestions to consider:

(Continued on Pg. 20)
**DIOCESAN BRIEFS**

**Advent Penance Services**

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**Retirement Fund For Religious collection to be taken in diocese, Dec., 10-11**

WASHINGTON—The annual Retirement Fund for Religious collection will be Dec. 10-11 throughout the Diocese of San Angelo. In its 29th year, the collection is coordinated by the National Religious Retirement Office, and benefits nearly 33,000 elderly Catholic sisters, brothers and religious order priests whose religious communities lack adequate retirement funding.

The appeal raised $30.7 million in 2015, the sixth highest total in its history. As a result, the NRRO distributed $25 million to 401 religious communities across the country. Communities utilize the assistance to bolster retirement savings and subsidize such day-to-day expenses as prescription medications and nursing care. Throughout the year, additional funding is allocated for religious congregations with the greatest needs. A portion of the proceeds also supports education in retirement planning and eldercare delivery.

The U.S. bishops initiated the Retirement Fund for Religious in 1988 to address the significant lack of retirement funding among religious communities in the U.S. Proceeds are distributed to eligible communities to help underwrite retirement and health-care expenses. Since the collection began, Catholics have contributed more than $785 million.

**COVER PHOTO:** Bishop Michael J. Sis lights the second Advent candle during a Mass at St. Anthony Church in Odessa, December 4, 2016. Photo by Alan P. Torre / aptorre.com

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**Honduran visitors enjoy Texas rodeo**

By Msgr. Larry Droll

MIDLAND — St. Ann’s Parish in Midland welcomed four visitors from its partner-parish in Honduras, November 9-16. The partnership agreement among the various dioceses in the “Hermanamiento” calls for reciprocal visits to learn about one another’s parish and programs and to deepen the relationship.

St. Ann’s has been partnered with Most Holy Trinity Parish of Chamelecon, a sector of the large city of San Pedro Sula, for about seven years. Groups from St. Ann’s have visited there almost every year and the pastor of Holy Trinity has visited in Midland several times. But this was the first time he was joined by other members of the parish.

Coming from Honduras were Padre Luis Estevez, pastor; Reina Ramirez, who coordinates a parish-based “Headstart” program to prepare children at risk for first grade; Osman Reyes, who teaches in a program called “IHER” to prepare students of high school age and older to get a high school equivalency diploma; and Jean Carlo Ventura, who coordinates youth programs at several parish sites.

Holy Trinity Parish has the main church and 12 satellite chapels, serving a general population of 80,000. They have three of the “Headstart” type programs for little children and two of the IHER programs, the latter serving 345 students.

The visitors came to observe a parish in the USA. Our style of parish is to have one big campus, to which everyone travels on their own. They were astounded to see the number of cars and trucks in the parking lots, as people gathered for Masses, classes, and various educational programs.

The group also visited the parish in Stanton, with its mission in Lenorah, to see another type of parish style, the smaller rural parishes and missions so typical of the Diocese of San Angelo.

Part of life in West Texas is the ranching industry, so the group visited the Parks Ranch, operated by St. Ann’s parishioners, where they fed some cows and rode a horse. They were treated to lunch under the trees at the ranch house. The group also attended a rodeo Saturday night.

St. Ann’s Parish Partnership Team hosted the group and was involved in many of the activities. Anyone who had ever visited Chamelecon during all the years of the partnership was invited to the farewell dinner on November 15.

Such visits help us to get to know one another, building communion within the universal Church, and to deepen the relationship.

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**PRAY FOR OUR SEMINARIANS**

**Upton Sewell**

2nd Year Philosophy

Conception Seminary

Birthday: June 26, 1996

Hometown: Midland

Favorite Food: All kinds of food

Likes: Working out

Dislikes: Not a morning person (LOL)

PRAY FOR UPTON!
John Paul II and the natural attribute he called ‘the genius of women’

The Dignity and Nature of Women

By Lisa Martinez

St. John Paul II believed that women are on the front lines of the effort to change our culture via their roles as mother, wife, sister, daughter, friend or colleague. In this way, women will lead a conversion of society and culture, which is part of their mission in God’s plan.

In this article, we will look at the specific capabilities God has given to women, and to the one who embodies this most perfectly, Mary of Nazareth.

Empathy and entrustment

John Paul coined this term the “genius of women,” and by it means an essential nature or spirit, which women naturally possess. One aspect is her natural inclination to being especially empathetic to the human person. In this way, John Paul believed, the basic plan of God takes flesh in the history of humanity and reveals that spiritual beauty which God gave in a particular way to women. She has a unique capacity to see the person as an individual, to understand his aspirations and needs with special insight, and she is able to face up to problems with deep involvement. Women acknowledge the person, perhaps more than men, because they see others with their hearts. They see them independently of various ideological or political systems. They see others in their greatness and limitations; they try to go to them and help them.

John Paul taught that a woman’s moral and spiritual strength is joined to her awareness that God entrusts the human being to her in a special way. Certainly, every human being is entrusted to every other human being, but a woman is strong because of her awareness of this entrusting, strong because of the fact that God entrusts the human being to her, always and in every way. The awareness of this fundamental vocation confirms to women the dignity that they receive from God himself, and this makes them “strong” and strengthens their vocation. This “built in” design imprinted in the feminine nature should be made known, encouraged and allowed to blossom. When women are able fully to share their gifts with the whole community, the very way in which society understands and organiz-

Genius of Woman
Ignoring type (and other angel habits)

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor / The Angelus

Since I was a boy, and even many years before, the Dallas Morning News has run a column by Paul Crume every Christmas Day. The piece, headlined, “Angels among us,” makes a compelling statement as to the existence of heaven-sent beings and how they help make this big world, and our little individual ones, better places.

I read Paul Crume’s column every Christmas Day. Each year his words seem to take on a different meaning. For some reason, last year’s reading took particular hold. It’s been an interesting year. A good year.

I never expected one of the most memorable days of 2016 would begin when our travel trailer began to smoke as my wife and I drove down a remote New Mexico highway. As if to suggest there is another kind of New Mexico highway.

The first indication of a problem that November afternoon was a warning display on the dash. We pulled over, and sure enough, poring out of the passenger side axle was enough smoke to do George Burns proud. Combine that with the tragically unfolding events that occurred over the next couple of hours as Karen and I attempted to locate roadside assistance to come to a barren patch of land six miles west of Eunice, New Mexico, and we almost had our very own Burns & Allen routine.

We ended up limping the trailer into an RV park in Eunice. “Desert Oasis RV Park,” said the sign. As a full-disclosure subscript, it probably should have also noted “(9 parts Desert, 1 part Oasis)” were it not so evident to the naked eye. We decided to park our rig overnight, saying a little prayer that it would go unbothered as we left it alone. Karen and I returned to Midland for the night, and the next day I decided to forgo work, spending half of Monday on the phone trying to find a mechanic and the other half making my way back for the repair job and the certain high expense I was sure would follow.

From the Desert Oasis, I moseyed the smokey trailer into a nameless auto repair shop in downtown Eunice. I couldn’t help whine to myself about how I really didn’t have time to give up a day in the office and I didn’t relish the time it would take to trek across the desolate western Permian Basin into another state to watch someone perform surgery on a travel trailer. Was the mechanic credentialed? Did he have the proper tools? Had he ever seen a travel trailer before? I was certain I would only get my answers after I wrote the check and drove away.

The shop owner, dressed in the requisite greasy mechanic fatigue and possessing, thankfully, blackened fingernails, introduced himself as Duane. Inside of five minutes, he had jacked the trailer up, pulled the wheel and pointed to where the smoke had been.

“There’s your problem,” he said. I was relieved at how quickly he found the issue. His words, “There’s your problem,” were, for some reason, reassuring.

Duane made his official diagnosis.

“Ain’t got no grease in the bearings,” he said.

Several minutes later his assistant appeared out of nowhere. Together they formulated a plan of action.

“Might have to send you up to Hobbs for parts,” Duane said.

“Long as I know the part number, I guess I can do that,” I parked myself in the cab of my pickup, waiting for instructions and

Ballet Folklorico

The St. Vincent Ballet Folklorico Dance group, of St. Vincent Pallotti Church in Abilene, was established in 1961. The group’s dancers range in age from 8-20 years old and are most well known for the Jalisco dance and colorful dresses.

Ballet Folklorico dancers must meet a few simple requirements: All dancers must be actively involved in their church as well as their families and must maintain passing grades throughout the school year.

(Photos by Kellie Flores)
**Practicing Faith, Hope and Love: The Theological Virtues**

By Fr. Knick and Sandie Knickerbocker

Manifold are the gifts of the Holy Spirit through our Baptism into Christ! "The Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized sanctifying grace, enabling them to believe in God, to hope in him and to love him through the theological virtues" (CCC 1265). In the Sacrament of the Eucharist these virtues are nourished by the Body and Blood of Jesus, and in Penance our sins are forgiven and we receive the grace to live these virtues more perfectly. Through these virtues all other gifts and fruits of the Holy Spirit are lived. Our Blessed Mother Mary and St. Joseph model these virtues for us.

But let's start at the beginning: what is a virtue? "Virtue", says St. Augustine, "is a good habit consonant with our nature." St. Thomas Aquinas teaches us that "faith, hope and love are properly called theological [theos: God] because: 1) they are not attainable by a human's natural capacities; 2) they are only attainable through participation in God's nature; 3) they are infused by God and direct a person sufficiently toward God as the object of supernatural happiness; 4) they are known only through Divine revelation. They are properly called virtues because they are dispositions to that which is according to nature, even if this nature is only attained through participation in God's nature" (Summa Theologica I-II.62.1). The Catechism defines virtue as "a habitual and firm disposition to do good" (1803).

The earliest mention of these virtues in Scripture is in St. Paul's first letter to the Thessalonians: 1:3 (NAB), "...calling to mind your work of faith and labor of love and endurance in hope of our Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father...." And in I Thess 5:8: "But since we are of the day, let us be sober, putting on the breast plate of faith and love and the helmet that is hope for salvation." We are most familiar with St. Paul's words in I Cor. 13:13: "So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love." What is faith? Faith is the virtue by which we firmly believe all the truths God has revealed in Scripture and Tradition, who "can neither deceive nor be deceived" (Pope Pius IX in Dei Filius). "Be watchful, stand firm in your faith, be courageous, be strong. Your every act should be done in love" (I Cor 16:13). "Blessed are those who have not seen and have believed" (John 20:29). The Nicene Creed we repeat in Mass is a summation of what the Church believes. Fr. John A. Hardon, SJ, tells us that in faith we assent with our

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**Bishop in Austin**

Bishop Michael J. Sis was the keynote speaker for the St. John Paul II Life Center's 6th Annual "Life is Beautiful" Gala. Bishop Sis is the former Vicar General for the Diocese of Austin. The bishop stressed the value of crisis pregnancy centers like the St. John Paul II Life Center, and the educational programs available through the efforts of supporters and volunteers. (Photo courtesy St. John Paul II Life Center).

**Foundation supports local Catholic philanthropy**

The Catholic Charitable Foundation of the Roman Catholic Diocese of San Angelo was established in 2010. The Foundation is a separate nonprofit corporation organized and operated exclusively for charitable, religious, and educational purposes established under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Bishop Michael Sis serves as an ex-officio voting member of the seven-member Board of Trustees and also serves as Chairman of the Foundation. The Foundation is subject to the Code of Canon Law and the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Generous donors have made tax-deductible donations to establish endowment funds to support the Diocese of San Angelo, parishes, schools, and other Catholic entities within the diocese. In addition, specific endowments partially support seminarian education, deacon and clergy education, and provide for some emergency and other needs of seminarian students. There are also several Unrestricted Endowment Funds that allow the Board of Trustees to make grants on an annual basis after determining the most pressing needs around the diocese. The Foundation also manages investments for several Catholic agencies.

A gift to an endowment fund is a gift that will serve others in the Diocese of San Angelo in perpetuity. All funds in the Foundation are invested by professional money managers. The goal is to preserve and maintain the real purchasing power of the original gift forever. The Trustees on an annual basis review the earnings and determine an appropriate percentage that can be paid to the beneficiaries of each endowment fund. This percentage has averaged 4.1 percent over the past five years.

The Foundation has paid out a total of $706,206 in grants over the past five years. Beneficiaries of Designated Endowment Funds have received $80,412; Unrestricted Grants of $114,099 have been made; and $511,695 has been paid to agencies for a total of $706,206. All of the grants have benefited churches, schools, the diocese, and other charitable organizations within the Diocese of San Angelo.

(Please See FOUNDATION/23)
Bishop Sis encourages participation in 9 Days for Life novena, Jan. 21-27

San Angelo Bishop Michael J. Sis encourages Catholics to take part in the novena, 9 Days for Life, from January 21-29, 2017. Below are some FAQs from the USCCB describing more about this special prayer event:

What is 9 Days for Life?
9 Days for Life is an annual period of prayer and action focused on cherishing the gift of every person’s life. Surrounding the Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children on January 22 (also the anniversary of Roe v. Wade), the overarching intention of the centerpiece novena is the end to abortion. However, the novena also highlights many other facets of respecting each other’s God-given dignity, especially by respecting human life at every stage and in every circumstance. 9 Days for Life is an opportunity to pray for the respect and protection of each person’s life; to gather together in prayer, action, and fellowship with others; and to share your stories online.

Who can participate?
Anyone can join individually at www.9daysforlife.com. However, leaders in parishes and various parish ministries, as well as in schools, dioceses, and other organizations, are especially important in raising awareness and in helping others participate in various ways.

What are some ways to participate?
• PRAY: The novena’s short prayer guides highlight a different topic each day with five sections: intention, prayers, reflection, suggested actions, and related topical information. Subscribe to receive daily text messages or emails; join the Facebook event or follow the USCCB on Twitter, Facebook, or Instagram; download the novena in a printable format; or download the free mobile app. All options can be accessed at www.9daysforlife.com.
• GATHER: Join together with others in prayer, action, and fellowship. Organize or attend local events sponsored by dioceses, parishes, schools, etc., and/or host private gatherings of friends and family.
• SHARE: Share how you participated in 9 Days for Life on a particular day, why you are participating, or what being pro-life means to you. Post your filled-in “selfie sign” (available in 9 Days for Life leaders’ toolkit online) or a 5-15 second video using #9DaysforLife and tagging @USCCB on Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter. We’ll pick from the best to share!
For more information, visit 9daysforlife.com.

Lubbock diocese ordains 3rd bishop

LUBBOCK (CNS) — The Most Reverend Robert M. Coerver, 62, was ordained the third bishop of the Diocese of Lubbock, November 21, 2016 at Christ the King Cathedral in Lubbock.

The new bishop of the South Plains diocese said he looked forward to “this new role as chief shepherd of the Catholic faithful in Lubbock,” though he said he’ll miss his home diocese in Dallas. He asked for prayers from the people of Dallas “as I ... assume my new responsibilities.”

“I was born and raised in Dallas; my family roots are there and my ancestors were among Dallas’ first Catholics,” said Bishop Coerver, who served as pastor of St. Rita Parish in Dallas since 2010. “I have developed so many fantastic relationships over the years and it will be difficult to have them take on a different nature. I have cherished my work among my brother priests, and upon hearing of my appointment, a slight pang of sadness came upon me.”

As a priest, he continued, “I have always known that I must follow wherever the Lord leads me, and so when asked if I would accept the appointment, I did so immediately because I have promised to serve wherever the church needs me.

Pope Francis accepted the resignation of Bishop Placido Rodriguez in September. The changes were announced Sept. 27 in Washington by Msgr. Walter Erbi, who is charge d'affaires at the apostolic nunciature to the United States. Bishop Rodriguez headed the diocese since 1994. He turned 76 Oct. 11; canon law requires bishops to turn in their resignation at age 75.

Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, Dallas' bishop for 10 years who this past August was named by Pope Francis to lead a new Vatican office for the laity, family and life, said Bishop Coerver "will be a tremendous blessing" to the Lubbock Diocese.

"(His) extensive experience as a pastor ... (and) his service on priest leadership boards and committees will be a tremendous asset in his new role," Cardinal Farrell said in a statement. "His keen theological insight and deep devotion to our church, as well as an excellent pastoral manner, will serve him well as he leads his new diocese."

Born in Dallas June 6, 1954, Robert Coerver graduated from Jesuit College Preparatory School in 1972 and from the University of Dallas in 1976; he earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy there. He received his priestly formation at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, Texas. He pursued post-graduate studies at Rome's Pontifical University of St. Thomas Aquinas, also known as the Angelicum.

He also has a licentiate in spiritual theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome and a master's degree in counseling and guidance from Texas A&M University. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Dallas in 1980.
Acolyte Mass of Thomas Shows

Sunday, November 20, 2016

Photos from the November 20, 2016 Acolyte Mass of Thomas Shows, a seminarian in the Diocese of San Angelo. The Abilene-born Shows is a 2nd-year Theology student at St. Mary’s in Houston. Above, Shows with Bishop Michael J. Sis, second from left; Kevin Lenius, left, and Timothy Hayter, right. At right, Bishop Sis and Shows, center, with the 15 others who were installed as acolytes by Bishop Sis. As acolytes, seminarians assist members of the clergy during the Eucharist.

(Photos courtesy Wayne Ly, Armando Alejandro and Will Rooney).
THE ANGELUS

‘The Cowboy Deacon’ dies at 93

MILLERSVIEW — Deacon Leroy Paul Beach of Millersview passed away Thursday, Nov. 24, 2016 — four hours short of his 94th birthday. He was born Nov. 25, 1922, to Michael and Sophie Beach in Westphalia, Texas. He was preceded in death by his wife, Dorrace Beach.

After high school, he served his country in the United States Army during World War II. He was assigned to Company "E" 114th Infantry, 44th Infantry Division for duty in France, Germany, and Austria. After the war, he married Dorrace Engbrock on Nov. 20, 1946 in Cyclone, Texas. They then moved to Millersview to begin their new life in farming and ranching. Leroy and Dorrace were blessed with 11 children, two of which preceded him in death; a son Michael and a daughter Monica. His surviving children are Loretta (Ken) Burgess, Gary (Theresa) Beach, Damien (Geralyn) Beach, Theresa (Tinker) Lemke, Mary (Bubba) Adkins, Joseph (Dora) Beach, Johnny (Elaine) Beach, Patricia (Kerry) Rogers, and James (Robin) Beach.

He valued all of his 28 grandchildren, 29 great-grandchildren, and two more on the way. Much to their delight, he often treated them with goodies from his store.

He has four sisters, Elene Doskociol, Jet Kleypas, Carol Smetana, and Delores Beach along with two brothers Eugene Beach and Forest Beach. Along with his siblings, he was a great brother to Gene (Betty) Engbrock, Charles (Shirley) Engbrock, and Leonard (Sue) Engbrock.

Leroy was a lifelong member of the Knights of Columbus. He was also a member of Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic Church, where he served as a Deacon for 37 years. He performed many baptisms, weddings, and other special ceremonies. He wore many hats, and much of his Christian work was done in his cowboy hat giving him the name 'The Cowboy Deacon'. Through his years of ministry, he taught many children about the love for Jesus, by something as simple as tracing a cross on the back of little hands - 'so they could take Jesus everywhere they went'. And as those children matured, that cross was then traced on their forehead with the words - 'May God Bless You, in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit'. His most recent blessings were shared with residents and caregivers at Royal Estates.

Leroy was a man of strength & character. He was a trustworthy advisor. He was a constant and steady inspiration. This man's integrity rippled through the generations, making the world a better place.

Rosary was November 27 at St. Boniface Catholic Church in Olfen. A Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated November 28, in St. Boniface Catholic Church in Olfen, with graveside service at Millersview Cemetery.

Memorials may be made to The Pregnancy Help Center, 2525 Sherwood Way San Angelo, TX 76901, or your charity of choice.

TRUDOS

(From 2)

sell the store, we immediately started talking about it,” said Mrs. Vega. “We asked her some questions and prayed about it and decided it wasn’t a good time for us. We talked to Connie (De Hoyos) and her husband not realizing they had been thinking about it with their family members, too. We kept praying about it and talking about our faith and how we would like to do something to bring people back to their faith. Mark and I sat down with Connie and Mario and discussed it, and put it to prayer and that led us to talking more to Pat.”

Almost a month later, to the day, the four of them owned a new religious store.

And it has been quite a busy time in the four months since the transition of ownership. Much busier than Mrs. Vega remembers retail was when she worked at Super K-mart as a teenager.

“We thought this was a little retail store,” she said. “But there is so much that goes into it. It’s been an adventure. A lot of learning, a lot of ordering, learning vendors, names of customers who have come in since Pat’s mom and dad owned the store. It’s been a roller coaster but it’s been worth it.

Mrs. Vega said the store will provide the same Catholic focus it always has, but some small changes to enhance the shoppers’ visit are planned. A small storage building behind the store will be converted into a gathering room in hopes of having priests, deacons, religious and others as speakers. The couples also hope to start a lending library so that people can check out books, much like a library.

Mrs. De Hoyos gave ample credit to Pat Fennell for the ease of purchase and said she has offered invaluable assistance in the transition.

Ownership and operation has become a family affair for both the De Hoyos and Vegas as children, and husbands — both of whom have other jobs — have become active in the operation.

Bishop Michael J. Sis has also provided encouragement, and will be present at the grand re-opening in January.

“It is a great benefit to the Catholic community to have a place nearby where we can find resources for our faith,” Bishop Sis said. “When lay members of the Church take the initiative to offer a Catholic store, they are utilizing their personal gifts and talents to strengthen the Catholic presence in an area. I pray that all of our Catholic stores may thrive in service of God’s people.”

‘Trudos’ is located at 624 W. Avenue N in San Angelo. Phone number is 325-653-8011.

The store is now also active on social media, with presences on Facebook, Snapchat and Instagram where specials and information on events can be found.

(Please See SAINTS/23)

Speaking of Saints

Gaspar del Bufalo named after royalty:
the Three Kings from the East

By Mary Lou Gibson

Gaspar del Bufalo’s birth in 1786 might have gone mostly unnoticed by the family’s Roman neighbors, except for the baptismal names his parents gave him. Because he was born on the feast of the Epiphany, January 6, he was given the names of the three Magi: Gaspare Melchiori Baltasarque Quarterone. The family was poor and they lived in the servants’ quarters of a noble family where his father worked as a chef.

He began his studies at what had been the Jesuit College Romano. Gaspar was only 12 when he entered the minor seminary and spent his teenage years giving spiritual and material assistance to the poor. He was ordained at age 22 and soon afterwards met a friend, Francesco Albertini. Paul Burns writes in Butler’s Lives of the Saints that Francesco introduced Gaspar to devotion of the Precious Blood and a confraternity dedicated to preaching the redemptive power of Christ’s Blood. From this time on, the Precious Blood became the focal point of Gaspar’s spirituality.

Gaspar’s spiritual work came to an abrupt stop when Napoleon entered Rome in 1809 and deported Pope Pius VII. All clergy were required to sign an oath of allegiance to Napoleon and to reject the pope. Those who refused were exiled and imprisoned. Gaspar was in this group and he spent the next four years imprisoned in Bologna.

After Napoleon’s downfall in 1814, Pope Pius returned to Rome and asked Gaspar to devote his life to preaching missions to restore religion in Italy. At his first house in Giano, Gaspar established a congregation of missionaries and trained young clergy in scripture study, theology and foreign languages. Burns writes that Pope Pius gave his approval to this congregation dedicated to the Precious Blood in 1815. According to John Delaney writing in Dictionary of Saints, Gaspar’s goal for his missionaries was the evangelization of the world.

An early member of the Congregation was Giovanni Ferretti who, as Pope Pius IX, issued an encyclical, Redempti sumus (“We are Redeemed”), helped spread devotion to the Precious Blood worldwide.

Gaspar opened a second and third house soon after, but he had problems with bands of brigands who roamed the country preying on the people and carrying out vendettas and organized crime. While he made many converts, he also made some enemies especially among the Freemasons who made threats against him.
MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS
FOR THE WORLD DAY OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES
15 JANUARY 2017

CHILD MIGRANTS, THE VULNERABLE AND THE VOICELESS

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Whoever receives one such child in my name receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but him who sent me” (Mk 9:37; cf. Mt 18:5; Lk 9:48; Jn 13:20).

With these words, the Evangelists remind the Christian community of Jesus’ teaching, which both inspires and challenges. This phrase traces the sure path which leads to God; it begins with the smallest and, through the grace of our Saviour, it grows into the practice of welcoming others. To be welcoming is a necessary condition for making this journey a concrete reality; God made himself one of us. In Jesus God became a child, and the openness of faith to God, which nourishes hope, is expressed in loving proximity to the smallest and the weakest. Charity, faith and hope are all actively present in the spiritual and corporal works of mercy, as we have rediscovered during the recent Extraordinary Jubilee.

But the Evangelists reflect also on the responsibility of the one who works against mercy: “Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin: it is better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and be drowned in the depth of the sea” (Mt 18:6; cf. Mk 9:42; Lk 17:2). How can we ignore this severe warning when we see the exploitation carried out by unscrupulous people? Such exploitation harms young girls and boys who are led into prostitution or into the mire of pornography; who are enslaved as child labourers or soldiers; who are caught up in drug trafficking and other forms of criminality; who are forced to flee from conflict and persecution, risking isolation and abandonment.

For this reason, on the occasion of the annual World Day of Migrants and Refugees, I feel compelled to draw attention to the reality of child migrants, especially the ones who are alone. In doing so I ask everyone to take care of the young, who in a threefold way are defenceless: they are children, they are foreigners, and they have no means to protect themselves. I ask everyone to help those who, for various reasons, are forced to live far from their homeland and are separated from their families.

Migration today is not a phenomenon limited to some areas of the planet. It affects all continents and is growing into a tragic situation of global proportions. Not only does this concern those looking for dignified work or better living conditions, but also men and women, the elderly and children, who are forced to leave their homes in the hope of finding safety, peace and security. Children are the first among those to pay the heavy toll of emigration, almost always caused by violence, poverty, environmental conditions, as well as the negative aspects of globalization. The unrestrained competition for quick and easy profit brings with it the cultivation of perverse scourges such as child traffick-

(Please See LETTER/21)
Glad tidings to all ...

Clockwise from bottom left, a Christmas Village at Holy Redeemer in Odessa; an inflatable Christmas train at Holy Redeemer; an illuminated nativity scene at Holy Redeemer; parishioners at Holy Redeemer wish everyone a Merry Christmas; St. Vincent Pallotti in Abilene is bright with festive lights, and a nativity scene at St. Margaret in San Angelo (Courtesy photos).
Making Sense of Bioethics

Orphans in liquid nitrogen

By Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

Some humanitarian tragedies occur quietly and “in the background,” only gradually coming to light years or decades after serious harm has already occurred, like nerve damage in infants exposed to lead paint, or cancers in patients who were exposed to asbestos.

More recently, the humanitarian tragedy of hundreds of thousands of embryonic human beings frozen and abandoned in fertility clinics has come to light — “orphans in ice” arising from the decades-long practice of in vitro fertilization (IVF).

As a priest and ethicist at the National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia, I have seen an increasing number of Catholics who regret having engendered human life in this way, and regret that they ignored or weren’t informed about the teachings of the Church on IVF and infertility. They are perplexed and even tormented about what to do with these “spare” human embryos who really are their cryogenic children.

When I am approached with this question, I stress that there are no easy answers. Human embryos can never just be thawed and discarded, as that would be morally indistinguishable from the case of discarding a newborn or an infant in a dumpster to die. In fact, the step of merely thawing out human embryos exposes them to great risk, even with the praiseworthy intentions of saving lives and releasing orphaned embryos from their perpetual hibernation.

Others hope that one day “embryo adoption” — the transfer of “spare” embryos to another woman who implants, gestates, and raises them as her own — might end up being recognized as morally allowable by the Church. This unusual form of adoption is still morally debated, and Donum Vitae, the most recent Church document addressing the matter, raises serious concerns about the idea, as have a number of philosophers and bioethicists, myself included.

When confronted with the absurd fate of having embryos trapped in a state of suspended animation indefinitely, few or no alternatives really seem to exist. The future Pope Benedict XVI, in another important Church document called Dignitas Personae, referenced this “absurd fate” when he summarized how there was “no possibility of their being offered safe means of survival that can be licitly pursued.” Certain sinful acts like IVF, sadly, can provoke irrevocable and irresolveable consequences.

A few years ago, I had a conversation with a divorced woman who had seven frozen children in storage. She described how she agonized daily over the plights of her babies, and how it felt like an open wound that could never quite heal. She shared how each year, on the anniversary of the embryos’ creation — their “birthday” of sorts — she would place a call to the fertility clinic and inquire about their status. She would ask the staff to look up and verify how many were stored at the facility. Fearful that something might have happened to her children, or that they might end up being abandoned or forgotten, her annual call served as a reminder to herself and to those at the clinic that they were still there, that somebody still cared, despite the callousness of a world that seemed only too ready to ignore this ongoing humanitarian tragedy.

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

Advent: A time to give more and consume less

By Maria-Pia Negro Chin
Catholic News Service

Advent is a time of waiting and preparation through prayer and reflection — a time of anticipation for the celebration of Christ’s birth.

But sometimes, the season can "pass us by" without us taking the time to prepare for it. Christmas arrives and our hearts do not experience the joy that the season should elicit.

Years ago, parishioners at St. Francis of Assisi Church in the Diocese of Arlington, Virginia, found a different way to prepare for Christmas that yielded much joy. The idea was to keep Christ at the center by heeding his call to focus on others.

Parishioners participated in the "Advent Conspiracy" -- a Christian-led campaign, started in 2006, that challenges communities to "turn Christmas upside down" by praying more fully, spending less, giving more to others and loving everyone.

This year, I rechecked the campaign’s website and found an Advent calendar, prayers, videos and resources that help you dig deeper into the meaning of Christmas. The site also encourages you to put your faith into action.

Before and during Advent, many of our thoughts are on gifts -- yet, we often forget the greatest gift ever given to us: God's unconditional love. What was the one gift you remember getting for Christmas last year? What about the third or fourth gift?

The National Retail Federation estimates that people in the United States will spend $1 billion each day during the holiday season.

(Please See CHIN/23)

Adviento: Un tiempo para dar más y consumir menos

By Maria-Pia Negro Chin
Catholic News Service

El Adviento es un tiempo de espera y preparación a través de la oración y la reflexión -- un tiempo de anticipación para la celebración del nacimiento de Cristo.

Pero a veces, la temporada de Adviento puede ir y venir sin que nos tomemos el tiempo para prepararnos. La Navidad llega y nuestros corazones no experimentan la alegría que esta época debe provocar.

Hace años, los feligreses de la Iglesia de San Francisco de Asís en la Diócesis de Arlington, Virginia, encontraron una manera diferente de prepararse para la Navidad que les produjo mucha alegría. La idea era mantener a Cristo en el centro al prestar atención a su llamado a centrarse en los demás.

Los feligreses participaron en la "Conspiración del Adviento", una campaña dirigida por los cristianos, iniciada en 2006, que desafía a las comunidades a "cambiar la Navidad" a orar más plenamente, gastar menos, dar más a los demás y amar a todos.

Este año, revisé el sitio web de la campaña y encontré un calendario de Adviento, oraciones, videos y recursos que ayudan a profundizar en el significado de la Navidad. El sitio también anima a ponerte en acción.

Antes y durante el Adviento, muchos de nuestros pensamientos están...
By Effie Caldarola
Catholic News Service

The other day, I climbed out of bed a little before 4 a.m. to head to the Philadelphia airport.

My kids live in three different time zones from one another and from my husband and me, and we'd just had a short reunion to celebrate the second birthday of the person who represents our family's next generation, Charlotte.

Now, time for us to fan out across the country.

Forgoing morning showers or even a cup of coffee, four of us quietly left Charlotte's house in the darkness, dropping off a car rental, finding different airlines, different gates, hugging goodbye as each traveler peeled off.

I recognized again that the pain of separation underscores the blessing of being loved.

Arriving home, I revived myself with a short nap. No matter how tired I was, I didn't want to miss an address that evening at Creighton University. Jesuit Father Greg Boyle, the author of "Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion" and the founder of Homeboy Industries in Los Angeles, was speaking at our local Jesuit university.

Father Boyle entered the Jesuits in 1972, and his ministry eventually took him to a parish in East Los Angeles rife with gang activity and violence. He buried large numbers of young people and saw the pain of family crisis.

Some would find the experience deadening and debilitating. With the Jesuit grace of seeing God in all things, Father Boyle saw challenge and possibility.

No one wants to lead the life of misery that gang involvement produces, Father Boyle realized. That's not the life anyone would choose if given a viable alternative.

Homeboy Bakery was his first endeavor, training and employing former gang members who often worked side by side with partisans from rival gangs. Eventually, the bakery set the groundwork for Homeboy Industries, which today employs and trains former gang members in a variety of enterprises. Homeboy Industries website says 15,000 men and women are provided services each year.

Father Boyle talks about his experience with gang members much like he writes, with humor and touching insight. Jesuits write great books -- Father James Martin, Father Gary Smith, to name just two -- but it's hard to beat Father Boyle. Good news: He's working on another...
Catholic Voices

Taking our rightful place within the scheme of things

By Rev. Ron Rolheiser

What do we need to achieve to make us happy? What brings us peace and meaning?

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin once wrote about his own life: “Some sort of essential instinct makes me guess at the joy, as the only worthwhile joy, of co-operating as one individual atom in the final establishment of a world; and ultimately nothing else can mean anything to me. To release some infinitesimal quantity of the absolute, to free one fragment of being, forever – everything else is but intolerable futility.”

For him, at the end of the day, there is only one worthwhile joy, the feeling you get from cooperating rightfully within the big picture of things, from taking your place within the great cosmic jigsaw puzzle. Joy and meaning come from being one tiny piece within the overall progress of the universe, nothing more and nothing less.

At first glance this might all seem a bit abstract, idiosyncratic, and applicable only to the spiritually elite, but what Teilhard says here is really true for everyone. We all feel this, deep down, though perhaps we are not as aware of it as he was. What he says is universally true. There is only one thing that can bring real meaning, only one joy that doesn’t bring as much anxiety as peace, and that joy is had only when we fill-in with our own lives that particular space within the universe that has been uniquely allotted to us and when we take no more space and no less space than is truly ours.

But how is this true? When and how do we feel these things?

We experience these things all the time in our everyday lives. Why do we feel good when we succeed at anything? Is it because we are admired for it, our ego gets stroked, or because we enjoy the satisfaction of doing something well? Yes, for all of these reasons, though none is the deepest one. Ultimately, though we aren’t generally aware of it, we feel good because, deep down, we have contributed our little piece to the big picture, filled in a piece of the jigsaw puzzle that only we can provide, been one necessary atom in the final establishment of things.

That is why we feel good whenever we build something, help someone, give birth to something, help raise someone, teach something, complete something, nurse someone, perform a successful surgery, score a goal, clean a bathroom, cook a meal, do the dishes, or simply do anything properly. The satisfaction we feel at these times has a deep root. We have just filled in our little piece in the big picture, helped free up one fragment of being.

Conversely, why do we feel badly whenever we fail at something, betray someone, or realize that we have wasted some of our potential? Is this simply a feeling of wounded pride, frustration, shame? Yes, all of these things, but, again, it is more. Ultimately we feel a certain intolerable futility because we have not taken our rightful place in the cosmos, not filled in our proper piece of the jigsaw puzzle.

It can be helpful to recognize this more consciously, especially so as not to misread our own restlessness. Why do I say this?

Because we are born so restless, so incurably driven by the sense that we are special and meant to achieve something of significance. Nobody wants to live and not leave some mark in the world. “Have child, plant a tree, write a book!” says a popular axiom. Translated that means: “Make sure you do something to guarantee, a little at least, your own immortality.” We often lack the self-knowledge or honesty to admit this, but something inside us (the part that fuels our restlessness) understands exactly what that means. Want and need to leave a permanent mark somewhere. We are born for that reason.

But generally we misread this restless and what it is asking of us. The logic runs this way: We know that we need to leave a permanent mark somewhere. But we think we can only do this by becoming famous in some way, a person known to the world, a household word, someone with his or her name in lights, on the cover of TIME magazine. That is why we are always trying to achieve something of significance, something that will stand out, something that will last. Most often though our lives do not seem to measure up. We feel ourselves small-town, ordinary, unimportant, and so our restlessness begins to eat us up.

Our everyday satisfactions and disappointments though can teach us something. We need to listen closely to what makes us feel good or bad. Our lives can seem small, but we do not especially enlarge them through fame and recognition. You don’t get immortality—nor restfulness—for being a superstar. You get these for filling in that little piece of the big picture, that one wee atom, that is uniquely yours.

Ronald Rolheiser, a Roman Catholic priest and member of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate, is president of the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio. He is a community-builder, lecturer and writer. His books are popular throughout the English-speaking world and his weekly column is carried by more than seventy newspapers worldwide.

‘Dr. Strange,’ scientism and the gnostic way station

By Most Rev. Robert Barron
Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

Scott Derickson’s new film, Doctor Strange, has received rave reviews for its special-effects, its compelling storytelling, and the quality of its actors, but I would like to focus on the spirituality implicit in it. Doctor Strange is far from a satisfying presentation of the spiritual order, but it represents a significant step in the right direction, which proves especially helpful for our time.

Played by the always splendid Benedict Cumberbatch, Dr. Strange is dashing, handsome, ultra-cool, a brilliant neurosurgeon, called upon to handle only the most delicate and complex surgeries. He is also unbearably arrogant, pathologically self-absorbed, utterly dismissive of his colleagues, something of a first-class jerk. While racing in his Lamborghini to an evening soiree, he runs his car off the road and suffers grievous injuries to his hands. Despite the heroic efforts of the best surgeons, his fingers remain twisted, incapable of performing the operations which made him rich and famous.

In his desperation, he travels to a mysterious treatment center in Katmandu, where people with horrific and irreversible physical damage have, he hears, been cured. There he confronts a bald-pated female figure, played by Tilda Swinton, who claims that she has healed severed spinal cords through the manipulation of spiritual forces. When he hears this, the rationalist Dr. Strange explodes in anger and, poking her in the chest, he asserts his conviction that matter is all there is and that we human beings exist for a brief moment in the context of an indifferent universe. With that, she shoves him backward and, to Dr. Strange’s infinite astonishment, his astral body suddenly leaves his ordinary body.

This is his introduction to a world that he never knew existed, and the beginning of his mystical apprenticeship. By the way, if you want a compelling Christian take on this phenomenon, look at Fr. Robert Spitzer’s musings on “trans-physical consciousness,” or in more ordinary language, the “soul.”

What I particularly liked about this confrontation in Katmandu is how it represents a challenge to the comically arrogant scientism of our time, by which I mean, the fallacy of reducing all forms of knowing to the scientific manner of knowing. This attitude, though widespread today through the influence of the “new” atheists, is utterly self-refuting.

How, precisely, did the advocate of scientism see, measure, or empirically verify through experimentation the truth of the claim that only empirically measurable things are true? Though as I say widely held in many circles today, this crude attitude was not characteristic of the founders of the modern sciences, many of whom—Descartes, Copernicus, Galileo, and Newton come readily to mind—were devoutly religious, or was it embraced by such key scientific figures as Gregory Mendel, an Augustinian friar or Georges Lemaître, the formulator of the Big Bang theory of cosmic origins and a Catholic priest. The coolly arrogant but hopelessly narrow Dr. Strange is an apt representation of the clueless advocates of scientism on the contemporary scene, those who have simply closed themselves off to what a thousand generations of human beings have taken for granted.

In order to participate in the dynamics of the higher world, Dr. Strange has to go through a lengthy and demanding train

(Please See BARRON/22)
Lessons learned from the recent presidential election

By Father Eugene Hemrick
Catholic News Service

"I feel worse than I felt when Kennedy was assassinated." The depressed look in my friend's eyes the morning after the presidential election was terrifying.

Equally terrifying was the venom that poured out as another friend said, "Hillary Clinton is the devil personified: untrustworthy and a killer."

"I'll bet you're happy we now have a pro-life president," shouted a parishioner leaving church.

Putting aside our political persuasions, what are we learning about our changing times from the presidential race?

First, we are realizing we exist in a rapid, instant media age demanding increased critical thinking for sorting out fact from fiction, hopeful promises from real fulfillment. There is a need to practice long-range thoughtfulness.

Second, we find we have an upsurge in people becoming increasingly blase about false information. Many seem to think it is a sign of the times, to be accepted and to go with the flow.

Third, we have seen a big uptick in character assassination as a legitimate strategy for winning an election. And, too, spewing venom has become legitimized for achieving victory.

In early civilizations, it was common for victors to barbarically "grind" into the ground the heads of the conquered. During the course of these elections, we have seen political rhetoric prefer to employ vicious barbarism over dignified politeness.

Fourth, we live in an age in which money talks louder than ever, making it seem as if money is the god of political achievement. We are also seeing candidacy becoming a commodity for the rich only.

Fifth, it is thought one reason Donald Trump won is that he sounded a message of change louder than his competition. The lesson here is we live in times in which rapid change is now the accepted modus agendi, especially for millennials. They have experienced change like no generation before.

Many discontented people are shaking their heads about our elections and the future of the nation. My mother taught us to keep our heads still in these cases and to learn the lessons that caused us to shake in the first place.

The time is now to become a quick learner and upgrade our understanding of our new age and respond to its challenges calmly.

Paying for indulgences / God and the masculine pronoun

By Father Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. When did the church stop asking for money for indulgences? And why did they ask for money in the first place?
(Wichita, Kansas)

A. I am almost reluctant to answer your question because, as asked, a simple response would imply a serious admission. Though it has been accused for centuries of having "sold" indulgences, the Catholic Church never approved such a practice.

Undeniably, individual Catholics were guilty of selling indulgences, but the practice was never contemnanced by the church. Coupled with these abuses, though, was the fact (and this gave a basis to Martin Luther's challenge) that indulgences could be gained for giving alms to one of the church's charitable endeavors.

All of this came to an end with the Council of Trent, which decreed that the church "ordains in a general way by the present decree that all evil traffic in them (indulgences), which has been a most prolific source of abuses among the Christian people, be absolutely abolished." According to The Catholic Encyclopedia, soon after, in 1567, Pope Pius V "canceled all grants of indulgences involving any fees or other financial transactions."

Q. I would very much like to know the church's official position on whether God should be referred to as "Father" (that is, in masculine terms) or as a genderless being. I find it troubling when the words in traditional hymns are changed to remove any references to "his" or "him." Recently I was singing from memory the refrain, "Lift up your hearts to the Lord in praise of his mercy," only to hear myself "out of sync" with many others in the congregation who were singing from the hymnal, "Praise God's gracious mercy."

In a similar way, I often hear during the Liturgy of the Eucharist many people responding, "May the Lord accept the sacrifice at your hands for the praise and glory of God's name, for our good and the good of God's holy church." And yet, when I look up that response in the Roman Missal itself, I find "his name" and "his holy church."

What is next? I fear the day when some people will start the Lord's Prayer with, "Our God who art in heaven." I feel that we are pandering to a minority of overly sensitive feminists who have difficulty comprehending God's identity as a male being, as our Father -- and yet that is exactly how Jesus referred to God and taught us to pray to him. He is not some generic, abstract and neutered being. (City of origin withheld)

A. It is the clear teaching of the church that God is neither male nor female. As the divine being, God transcends gender.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says: "In no way is God in man's image. He is neither man nor woman. God is pure spirit in which there is no place for the difference between the sexes. But the respective 'perfections' of man and woman reflect something of the infinite perfection of God: those of a mother and those of a father."

The traditional use, then, of the masculine pronoun does not equate to a belief in the masculinity of God.

Having said that, I would make the argument that -- for the sake of uniformity within a congregation and across the wider church -- it is best to stick with the responses given in the Roman Missal and hope that the liturgical translators eventually catch up with the church's theology.

As for the Our Father, that of course has a special sacredness because it was the prayer taught directly by Jesus. In order to convey the ready accessibility to us of the Lord, Jesus called his Father by the Aramaic word "Abba" -- which, some scholars say, really translates to our warm and familiar word, "Daddy."

That word must have shocked Christ's Jewish listeners, who felt that God was so far above them that they ought not even pronounce his name. Since Jesus used these very words, this prayer ought never to change.

Q. I have read that miracles are required before someone can be proclaimed a saint. Can you tell me more about the process and perhaps give me some examples of miracles for saints recently canonized? (Roanoke, Virginia)

A. The process for canonization has been developed by the church over time -- with increasing rigor. The first Christian saints were martyred for their faith in persecutions during the church's earliest centuries.

Later, Christians started to recognize as saints those who had lived virtuous lives even though they had not been put to death for their beliefs, and church leaders realized the need for a more formal authentication. (In the 12th century, Pope Alexander III wrote to the King of Sweden castigating the Swedish people for venerating an imbibing monk who had been killed in a drunken brawl.)

The current steps toward canonization provide for one miracle to be documented for beatification and another one for canonization. Miracles obtained through someone's intercession are regarded as proof that the person is in heaven and able to intervene with the Lord. The general procedures for canonization were outlined by St. John Paul II in an apostolic constitution issued in 1983.

The pope, as the church's supreme legislator, can and occasionally does dispense from the requirement on miracles, especially when the deceased is universally recognized for holiness. (This was done for Pope John XXIII when he was canonized in 1984.) Reported cures are scrutinized thoroughly by a panel of medical experts who must conclude that there is no natural explanation to explain the recovery of health.

When St. John Paul II was canonized (also in 2014), a guest at the ceremony was a woman from Costa Rica who had recovered inexplicably from a brain aneurysm after praying to that deceased pontiff. In September 2016, St. Teresa of Kolkata was canonized after a Brazilian man with multiple brain tumors was healed when loved ones pleaded to Mother Teresa on his behalf.
U.S. bishops unraveling post-election animus

By Rhina Guidos
Catholic News Service

Baltimore — Like many others, the U.S. Catholic bishops are trying to figure out how to deal with a president-elect who's different from anyone they've dealt with in the past and one involved in one of the most rancorous elections in modern times.

As a candidate, Republican Donald Trump, said some things that proved hurtful and worrisome to groups of Latino and black Catholics, but also gave hope to Catholics concerned about religious freedom and abortion.

At the fall general assembly of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore in mid-November, church leaders tried to urge calm, caution and promote unity following an election season fueled by vitriol, name-calling and fear.

"The dust hasn't settled on the election yet," said Bishop Christopher J. Coyne of Burlington, Vermont, during a Nov. 14 news conference, adding that as a group of bishops, "we've just begun a conversation about how we're going to move forward." This election, Bishop Coyne said, "it's so beyond the pale of what we've faced before."

"We knew the lay of the land when we approached a Democratic presidency or a Republican presidency, you'd go into Congress and approach them in (certain) ways," he said. "This election has thrown all that out the window."

"I think we need to talk about how we as bishops maintain the good news, maintain the things that we stand for as Catholics, seeking always the common good, in ways that serve the best way forward for all of us," he said.

At the fall general meeting, bishops were peppered with questions about how they'll work with or approach a Trump administration that made promises to anti-abortion Catholic constituencies yet insulted ethnic groups and threatened mass deportations, which some bishops have publicly opposed.

In a Nov. 15 news conference, Jesuit Father Thomas Reese asked Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, who had just been elected president of the conference, whether, as USCCB president, he saw opportunities for dealing with a new Trump administration on pro-life issues and religious freedom issues, such as the contraceptive mandate in the Affordable Care Act.

"I have to admit at this point I'm not sure where the new administration is coming from," he said. "My hope would be that we can sit down with the administration or meet with them in some fashion, perhaps even in terms of Congress, relative to some pro-life things. I would certainly think some aspects of the Affordable Care Act would be great if we could sit down and see them worked out, relative to, let's say, the Little Sisters of the Poor, and analogous things."

The Little Sisters of the Poor have been in the forefront of several Catholic entities fighting a mandate that would require them as employers to cover contraceptives in their employee health plans over their moral objections to such coverage.

Cardinal DiNardo added: "We would like to see the Hyde Amendment extended, as it has always been every year and not with the difficulties that were apparently attached earlier this year to its passage ... appointments of judges are important." The Hyde Amendment prevents federal funds from being used to pay for abortion except in cases of rape or to save the life of the mother.

The day before, Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory of Atlanta, addressing a question about Trump's campaign promise to repeal the Johnson Amendment, which prohibits certain tax-exempt organizations from endorsing and opposing political candidates, said there was an important distinction to make.

"There's a big difference between political promises and political action," he said. "The proof of the pudding is in the eating."

"What concerns him most, said Archbishop Gregory, is finding a peaceful way forward, not just for Catholics divided over the elections, but for the nation.

"One of the things we're grappling with now is not just bringing Catholics together, but bringing America together," he said. "We, in the life of the church, are united by our faith, by our religious conviction in liturgical life. This past election was so unusual in its hostility that it lays the foundation for this kind of unusual reaction."

In any election, he said, there are winners and losers, but when the climate has been so inflamed, there were bound to be protests, no matter who won "because of the animus that marked the entire election," he said.

"I would hope that we, as Catholics, no matter who you voted for, or (where you) are in the political spectrum, would be able to come together in Eucharist and say, 'There is one Lord, there is one Eucharist, there is one church, and it's big enough to embrace all of us,'" said Archbishop Gregory. "I am more worried about the nature of our society that seems to have taken in such violence and venom. ... If we're going to survive as a nation, we have to treat one another much more civilly."

He also issued a reminder that no political party or political candidate embraces the full range of human life issues that the Catholic Church teaches.

"I've looked and I can't find any," he said. "There has been no political platform that has been proposed that coincides perfectly with Catholic Social Teaching on the dignity of human life ... That's why it was so difficult for people to vote ... (there was) some dimension of human dignity and the respect of life on one political party, and another part on another. But there is no one cohesive expression of Catholic Social Teaching can be identified with any political party."
OBISPO

(Para 3)

venida de Cristo son como los dos extremos de un puente. El puente que se extiende entre ellos es la presente venida de Cristo. Cada día caminamos ese puente, tratando de actuar con justicia y amor en todo lo que hacemos. El Adviento es un tiempo para observar atentamente por su presencia en las experiencias concretas de la vida, y para comprometernos a traer su presencia en nuestro mundo.

Me gustaría invitarlos a vivir el Adviento de una nueva forma este año. Pónganse su gorra de pensar y consideren algunas maneras diferentes para darle vida a este temporo-

rada, y para descubrir la presencia de Cristo todos los días. He aquí sólo algunas sugerencias para considerar:

Pesebre

Con la costumbre de la escena de nati-
dad o pesebre, prepáren un lugar para recibir al Niño Jesús en la Navidad. Comiencen la temporada de Adviento con el pesebre vacío, y no pongan la figura de Jesús en la escena hasta la Navidad. Hay una hermosa costumbre que comenzó en Francia, donde se coloca un poco de paja en el pesebre para cada buena acción o acto de bondad hecho durante el Adviento, con el fin de preparar un lugar suave y acogedor en el que Jesús se acostará.

Confesión

Prepararen un lugar para Jesús en su corazón por medio de hacer una buena Confesión sacramental. De esta manera se estará limpiando la basura de los pecados que bloquean la entrada de él de manera más completa en sus vidas. Una lista de los Servicios de Penitencia de Adviento especiales que se ofrecen en todas partes de la Diócesis de San Ángelo se puede encontrar en la página web diocesana en www.sangan-
gelodiocese.org. Siéntanse libres de asistir a cualquiera de estos servicios, ya sea en su propia parroquia o en otro lugar, dependiendo de su horario.

Tarjetas navideñas

Si van a enviar tarjetas Navideñas, piensen en el mensaje en sus tarjetas, y el sentido Cristiano de la fiesta, y traten de que sus tarjetas reflejen la importancia de Jesús, no solamente de Rudolph, Santa, o los duendes. Con cada tarjeta Navideña que escriban y cada mensaje de Navidad que envíen electrónicamente, digan una oración por el recipiente.

Corona de Adviento

Recomienden encarecidamente el uso de una corona de Adviento en los hogares y en las parroquias. Esta costumbre se inició en el siglo XVI en Alemania, y con el tiempo se extendió por todo el mundo. El rico sim-

bolismo de esta corona ayuda a enseñar sobre el significado espiritual de la tempo-

rada de Adviento.

La base de la corona es un círculo de hoja perenne, que simboliza la vida eterna de Dios en Cristo. El color verde es un símbolo de la vida, y la forma circular representa la eternidad, ya que la línea de un círculo no tiene principio ni fin. El Adviento cele-
brar el hecho de que Cristo, quien vive en la eternidad, se hace presente en nuestra histo-

ria humana.

En la corona se encuentran cuatro velas, que proclaman que Cristo es la luz del mundo. Las cuatro velas representan las muchas generaciones de seres humanos que vivieron antes del nacimiento de Cristo, que estaban esperando la llegada del Mesías. El número de velas encendidas cada semana corresponde al número de la semana en curso de Adviento. Comenzando con cada uno de los cuatro domingos de Adviento, una vela adicional se enciende, hasta que las cuatro están iluminadas durante la cuar-
ta semana de Adviento. Por lo tanto, con cada semana consecutiva de la temporada, la luz aumenta, empujando afuera a la oscuridad. Jesucristo es la luz que entra en la oscuridad de nuestro mundo con el fin de conquistar la oscuridad.

Por lo general, hay tres velas moradas y una vela color de rosa. El color morado simboliza arrepentimiento del pecado como también la realeza de Cristo nuestro Rey. Las velas moradas se añaden en la primera, segunda y cuarta semana, mientras que la vela color de rosa se añade en la tercera semana. El color de rosa es un símbolo de la alegría. El tercer domingo de Adviento es tradicionalmente conocido como Domingo Gaudete, que es una celebración de una espera alegre, ya que hemos llegado a mediados de Adviento, cuando el tiempo de preparación ya está por terminar y la Navidad está cerca.

También es aceptable que una corona de Adviento utilice cuatro velas blancas en lugar de las velas moradas y color de rosa, especialmente en aquellos casos cuando velas moradas y color de rosa no se pueden encontrar. Cuatro velas moradas también se pueden usar.

Para aquellos que están en búsqueda de oraciones para usar con la corona de Adviento en casa, un ejemplo se puede encontrar en la página web de la Diócesis de San Ángelo en sanangelodiocese.org. Más muestras se pueden encontrar en los libros de oraciones Católicas, en las tiendas Católicas, y en el Internet.

En este Adviento, seamos todos con-

scientes de las tres venidas de Cristo, y hag-

amos espacio en nuestro corazón para su llegada - en la historia, en el misterio, y en la majestad.

BISHOP

(From 3)

Nativity scene

With the custom of the Nativity scene or crèche, prepare a place to receive the baby Jesus at Christmas. Start the Advent sea-

son with the manger empty, and don’t put the figure of Jesus in the scene until Christmas. There is a beautiful custom that began in France, where a few strands of hay or straw are placed in the manger for each good action or act of kindness done during Advent, in order to prepare a soft and welcoming place where Jesus will lie.

Confession

Prepare a place for Jesus in your heart by making a good sacramental Confession. In this way you will be clear-

ing away the trash of your sins that blocks him from entering more fully into your life. A list of the special Advent Penance Services offered throughout the Diocese of San Angelo can be found on Pg. 4 of this Angelus, on the diocesan website at www.sanganangelodiocese.org. Feel free to

attend any one of these services, whether at your own parish or elsewhere, depend-

ing on your schedule.

Christmas cards

If you are sending Christmas cards, think of the message in your cards, and the Christian meaning of the feast, and try to let your cards reflect the importance of Jesus, not just Rudolph, Santa, or the elves. With every Christmas card you write and every Christmas message you send elec-

tronically, say a prayer for the recipient.

Advent wreath

I highly recommend the use of an Advent wreath in homes and parishes. This custom began in the 16th century in Germany, and it eventually spread throughout the world. The rich symbolism of this wreath helps to teach about the spiritual meaning of the Advent season. The base of the wreath is a circle of ever-

green, which symbolizes the eternal life of God in Christ. Green is a symbol of life, and the circular shape represents etern-

ity, for the line of a circle has no begin-

ning or end. Advent celebrates the fact that Christ, who lives in eternity, makes himself present in our human history. On the wreath are found four candles, which proclaim that Christ is the light of the world. The four candles represent the many generations of human beings who lived before the birth of Christ, who were waiting for the arrival of the Messiah. The number of candles lighted each week corresponds to the number of the current week of Advent. Beginning with each of the four Sundays of Advent, an additional candle is lit, until all four are lit during the Fourth Week of Advent. Thus, with each successive week of the season, the light increases, pushing out the darkness. Jesus Christ is the light who comes into the darkness of our world in order to con-

quer that darkness.

Most commonly, there are three purple candles and one rose candle. The purple color symbolizes repentance from sin as well as the royalty of Christ our King. The purple candles are added in each of the weeks one, two, and four, while the rose candle is added in week three. Rose is a symbol of joy. The Third Sunday of Advent is traditionally known as Gaudete Sunday, which is a celebration of joyful expectation, since we have arrived at the midpoint of Advent, when the time of preparation is now half over and we are close to Christmas.

It is also acceptable for an Advent wreath to use four white candles instead of the purple and rose candles, especially in those cases when purple and rose can-


dles cannot be found. Four purple candles may also be used.

For those who are looking for prayers to use with the Advent wreath at home, an example can be found on the Diocese of San Angelo web site. More samples can be found in Catholic prayer books, at Catholic stores, and on the Internet.

This Advent, let us all be conscious of the three comings of Christ, and make room in our hearts for his arrival – in history, in mystery, and in majesty.
BRIDGES
(From 2)

now provides the poor of Midland
$2,000,000 of help each year with all
volunteers. The more St. Stephen’s
helped the poor, the more it grew and
blossomed. St. Stephen’s is now the
largest parish in the diocese.

“Everyone who gives to the poor ben-
fits. It always happens,” Msgr. Bridges
said. “I always tell people to try it. If it
doesn’t work, we’ll give them their
money back. And it is not that God’s
blessings might return if they give to the
poor. They will return.”

Trust in God, Msgr. Bridges empha-
sizes, must be an integral part of giving
to the poor. The one thing God wants
from us, he said, is trust.

“Trust and faith are about the same
ting,” he said. “I don’t know why trust
is so important to God. But it is.”

Msgr. Bridges has been gifted with the
ability to gather others for a common
good. Some people sing. Some write.
Some act. Msgr. Bridges inspires others
into action.

On a recent Sunday, his gaze upon the
Crucifix at the back of the St. Stephen’s
sanctuary never left as he recited the
Eucharistic prayer. His eyes do not ven-
ture downward to the Sacramentary.
Seeing him see Christ impacts Mass
goers. The vision of Christ working
through him is a moving experience.

His love of the poor is backed up by
action. He ends each day by writing 10
letters to indigent prisoners — offenders
who have been behind bars for 2-5 years,
who have never received a letter or a dol-
lar and often still have 10 years or more
remaining on their sentence.

“If those people aren’t the least among
us, I don’t know who is,” he said.

KNICKERBOCKERS
(From 7)

What is hope? Hope is the virtue by which
we firmly trust that God, who is all-power-
ful, merciful, and faithful to His promises,
will give us eternal life with Him and the
means to obtain it. In His promise is our
hope. “For you are my hope, O Lord; my
trust, O God, from my youth” (Ps 71:5).

...hope does not disappoint, because the
love of God has been poured out in our
hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been
given to us" (Rom 5:5). "Blessed be the
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
who in his great mercy gave us a new birth
to a living hope through the resurrection
of Jesus Christ from the dead" (I Pet 1:3).

What is love? Love or charity is the virtue
by which we treasure God supremely above
all things for His own sake and our neighbor
as ourselves, for the love of God. Charity
has been called the queen of virtues. In love
we are united with God through Jesus Christ
and with our neighbor. "Therefore, you shall
love the Lord, your God, with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your
strength" (Deut 6:5). Jesus said, "This is my
commandment: love one another as I have
loved you" (Jn 15:12). In 1 John 4:19 we
read, "We love him because he first loved
us." In heaven, faith and hope will be real-
ized, but we can love God and our brothers
and sisters forever.

A living tree has been used as a symbol for
the theological virtues. Faith is the root, hope
is the trunk, and love/charity is the fruit. Faith
nourishes hope, hope sustains love, and love
bears the fruit of faith and hope. Faith has
been depicted as a cross, hope as an anchor,
and charity as a burning heart.

We revere our holy Mother Mary and ask
her grace, prayers, and assistance to grow in
the virtues of faith, hope, and love that she
embodied and lived: in her "yes" to God in
her fiat, whose promises she believed; when
she informed Jesus that the wine had run out
at the wedding feast in Cana; as she stood at
the foot of the Cross, her heart pierced; as
she held a lifeless Jesus in her arms, shed-
ing tears of love; as she gathered in the
Upper Room with the disciples; as she
rejoiced in Jesus resurrection and ascension
into heaven.

St. Joseph, too, lived the virtues of faith,
hope, and love: in his trust in God’s message
in a dream to take Mary as his wife; in his
acceptance that the child Mary carried was
of the Holy Spirit and was to be named
Jesus; in his journeying far and near as led
by God; in his lifelong care and protection
of Mary and Jesus; in his provision for them
as a working man; as the foster father of
Jesus.

In our Advent preparation for the birth
of Jesus, our Savior, and throughout the
Christmas season, let us be prayerful and
intentional about growing in the virtues of
faith, hope, and love infused in us by the
Holy Spirit at Baptism. We can make acts of
these virtues every day: "O my God, I
believe in Thee, I hope in Thee, I love Thee.
To Thee be honor, praise, and glory for-ev-
er." By your grace, O Lord, and by the
intercession of Blessed Mother Mary and St.
Joseph, strengthen these virtues in us by
enabling us to live them.

Mary Sanctified
(Immaculate Conception of Mary)

Our perfect human virtues seen in her
Who bore God’s Son, whose presence
sanctified
Her heart in Anna’s womb, a fragrant
myrrh
In Mary blown from Calvary where He
died.
His Spirit in first Adam’s clay once
breathed,
Now blows again—eternity in time.
Humility from garden Mary breathes;
A human crown they share, "Not mine but
thine."
Her arms of love in hope her Baby holds,
The fruit of faith revealed when she said
"yes";
Faith grown in Anna’s home, her virtue’s
mold,
Shaped by the One she welcomed as her
guest.
May Mary’s virtues lead us to her Son;
With Him through her we say, “Thy will
be done.”

— W. E. Knickerbocker

What’s more, Bridges calls the prison
to find out who isn’t being written to,
who could use a little money for hygiene
items, or to learn whose mother or chil-
dren are sick. Only then does he pick up
his pen and begin to write to each of
them.

“Helping the indigent prisoners makes
them feel more worthy of God’s love and
forgiveness,” Msgr. Bridges said.

This falls in with his core belief: Take
care of the poor and God will take care of
you.

Bridges says, “Helping the poor, the
indigent, the least among us, is actually
touching Jesus where he loves to hide
most.”

RETREAT CENTER (cont’d),
ORDINATIONS, NECROLOGY

CHRIST THE KING RETREAT
CENTER

JANUARY 2017 (cont’d)
8-13 — Holy Trinity Silent Retreat
13-15 — Deacon Formation
16 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
20-22 — Engaged Encounter
22 — Natural Family Planning
23 — Heart of Mercy
23 — Deacon Quarterly
26 — DOSA Staff Mass/Lunch
29 — CKRC Confirmation Retreat
30 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

FEBRUARY 2017
3-4 — First Central Presbyterian Church
Women’s Retreat
6 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
10-12 — Deacon Formation
12 — St Ambrose First Communion Retreat
13 — Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
16 — DOSA Staff Mass/Lunch
17-19 — Engaged Encounter

NECROLOGY
JANUARY
10-Rev. Francis Beazley, OMI (1992)
16-Rev. Cyril Lange (1971)
19-Fr. Robert Kelly (1999)
23-Deacon Jose Esparza (2011)
24-Bishop Thomas Tschoepe (2009)
26-Deacon D.J. Goetz (2003)
26-Deacon Jack Peterson (1987)

PRIEST ORDINATION DATES
JANUARY 2017
14-Fr. Emilio Sosa (2016)
28-Fr. Knick Knickerbocker (2009)
ing, the exploitation and abuse of minors and, generally, the depriving of rights intrinsic to childhood as sanctioned by the International Convention on the Rights of the Child. Childhood, given its fragile nature, has unique and inalienable needs. Above all else, there is the right to a healthy and secure family environment, where a child can grow under the guidance and example of a father and a mother; then there is the right and duty to receive adequate education, primarily in the family and also in the school, where children can grow as persons and agents of their own future and the future of their respective countries. Indeed, in many areas of the world, reading, writing and the most basic arithmetic is still the privilege of only a few. All children, furthermore, have the right to recreation; in a word, they have the right to be children.

And yet among migrants, children constitute the most vulnerable group, because as they face the life ahead of them, they are invisible and voiceless: their precarious situation deprives them of documentation, hiding them from the world’s eyes; the absence of adults to accompany them prevents their voices from being raised and heard. In this way, migrant children easily end up at the lowest levels of human degradation, where illegality and violence destroy the future of too many innocents, while the network of child abuse is difficult to break up.

How should we respond to this reality?

Firstly, we need to become aware that the phenomenon of migration is not unrelated to salvation history, but rather a part of that history. One of God’s commandments is connected to it: “You shall not wrong a stranger or oppress him, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Ex 22:21). “Love the sojourner therefore; for you were sojourners in the land of Egypt” (Deut 10:19). This phenomenon constitutes a sign of the times, a sign which speaks of the providential work of God in history and in the human community, with a view to universal communion. While appreciating the issues, and often the suffering and tragedy of migration, as too the difficulties connected with the demands of offering a dignified welcome to these persons, the Church nevertheless encourages us to recognize God’s plan. She invites us to do this precisely amidst this phenomenon, with the certainty that no one is a stranger in the Christian community, which embraces “every nation, tribe, people and tongue” (Rev 7:9). Each person is precious; persons are more important than things, and the worth of an institution is measured by the way it treats the life and dignity of human beings, particularly when they are vulnerable, as in the case of child migrants.

Furthermore, we need to work towards protection, integration and long-term solutions. We are primarily concerned with adopting every possible measure to guarantee the protection and safety of child migrants, because “these boys and girls often end up on the street abandoned to themselves and prey to unscrupulous exploiters who often transform them into the object of physical, moral and sexual violence” (Benedict XVI, Message for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2008).

Moreover, the dividing line between migration and trafficking can at times be very subtle. There are many factors which contribute to making migrants vulnerable, especially if they are children: poverty and the lack of means to survive – to which are added unrealistic expectations generated by the media; the low level of literacy; ignorance of the law, of the culture and frequently of the language of host countries. All of this renders children physically and psychologically dependent. But the most powerful force driving the exploitation and abuse of children is demand. If more rigorous and effective action is not taken against those who profit from such abuse, we will not be able to stop the multiple forms of slavery where children are the victims.

It is necessary, therefore, for immigrants to cooperate ever more closely with the communities that welcome them, for the good of their own children. We are deeply grateful to organizations and institutions, both ecclesial and civil, that commit time and resources to protect minors from various forms of abuse. It is important that evermore effective and incisive cooperation be implemented, based not only on the exchange of information, but also on the reinforcement of networks capable of assuring timely and specific intervention; and this, without underestimating the strength that ecclesial communities reveal especially when they are united in prayer and fraternal communion.

Secondly, we need to work for the integration of children and youngsters who are migrants. They depend totally on the adult community. Very often the scarcity of financial resources prevents the adoption of adequate policies aimed at assistance and inclusion. As a result, instead of favouring the social integration of child migrants, or programmes for safe and assisted repatriation, there is simply an attempt to curb the entrance of migrants, which in turn fosters illegal networks; or else immigrants are repatriated to their country of origin without any concern for their “best interests”.

The condition of child migrants is worsened when their status is not regularized or when they are recruited by criminal organizations. In such cases they are usually sent to detention centres. It is not unusual for them to be arrested, and because they have no money to pay the fine or for the return journey, they can be incarcerated for long periods, exposed to various kinds of abuse and violence. In these instances, the right of states to control migratory movement and to protect the common good of the nation must be seen in conjunction with the duty to resolve and regularize the situation of child migrants, fully respecting their dignity and seeking to meet their needs when they are alone, but also the needs of their parents, for the good of the entire family.

Of fundamental importance is the adoption of adequate national procedures and mutually agreed plans of cooperation between countries of origin and of destination, with the intention of eliminating the causes of the forced emigration of minors.

Thirdly, to all I address a heartfelt appeal that long-term solutions be sought and adopted. Since this is a complex phenomenon, the question of child migrants must be tackled at its source. Wars, human rights violations, corruption, poverty, environmental imbalance and disasters, are all causes of this problem. Children are the first to suffer, at times suffering torture and other physical violence, in addition to moral and psychological aggression, which almost always leave indelible scars.

It is absolutely necessary, therefore, to deal with the causes which trigger migrations in the countries of origin. This requires, as a first step, the commitment of the whole international community to eliminate the conflicts and violence that force people to flee. Furthermore, far-sighted perspectives are called for, capable of offering adequate programmes for areas struck by the worst injustice and instability, in order that access to authentic development can be guaranteed for all. This development should promote the good of boys and girls, who are humanity’s hope.

Lastly, I wish to address a word to you, who walk alongside migrant children and young people: they need your precious help. The Church too needs you and supports you in the generous service you offer. It is necessary, therefore, to deal with the causes which trigger migrations in the countries of origin. This requires, as a first step, the commitment of the whole international community to eliminate the conflicts and violence that force people to flee. Furthermore, far-sighted perspectives are called for, capable of offering adequate programmes for areas struck by the worst injustice and instability, in order that access to authentic development can be guaranteed for all. This development should promote the good of boys and girls, who are humanity’s hope.

I entrust all child migrants, their families, their communities, and you who are close to them, to the protection of the Holy Family of Nazareth: may they watch over and accompany each one on their journey. With my prayers, I gladly impart my Apostolic Blessing.
of Mary consists in this: she, who was in all her being a gift for her Son, has also become a gift for the sons and daughters of the whole human race. Here we see very clearly that service to another and "self-gift" are identical.

John Paul believed that Mary's maternal heart, open to all human misfortune, reminds women that the development of the feminine personality calls for a commitment to charity. More sensitive to the values of the heart, women show a high capacity for personal self-giving. Indeed, he says "to all in our age who offer selfish models for affirming the feminine personality, the luminous and holy figure of the Lord's Mother shows how only by self-giving and self-forgetfulness towards others is it possible to achieve fulfillment of the divine plan for one's own life."

John Paul taught that Mary's presence and words at the wedding feast in Cana ("They have no wine") actually reveals a new kind of motherhood according to the spirit and not only according to the flesh; that is to say, Mary’s consideration for human beings, her coming to them in the wide variety of their wants and needs. At the Cana event there is shown only one concrete aspect of human need, apparently a small one of little importance. But it has symbolic value: this coming to the aid of a human need means at the same time bringing those needs within the range of Christ’s mission and salvific power. Following in Mary’s footsteps, women bring the human person and their needs to Christ. It can thus be said that women, by looking to Mary, find in her the secret of living their femininity with dignity and of achieving their own true advancement.

Lisa Martinez is the founder and executive director of the greenhouse for women, a Catholic women’s ministry based on the teaching of St. John Paul II. This center for women will be launching later next year in the Diocese of San Angelo. Further information can be found at thegreenhouseforwomen.org.

CALDAROLA

(From 15)

It was on another airplane trip years ago that I encountered "Tattoos on the Heart." Reading Father Boyle's tale about gang members, the people he has buried, love's ability to redeem, had me chortling and sobbing by turns. I'm sure my fellow passengers thought they'd been seated next to a crazy lady.

The Creighton crowd was heavy with students. If you go to a Jesuit university in the U.S., you've likely been assigned "Tattoos" in some class at some point, and many kids had their books with them to be autographed.

Father Boyle told the crowd about recent funerals. No project serving the marginalized is going to be successful all the time. If we're caught up in measurements of "success," we often forget true mission.

Addressing his young audience, Father Boyle told them several times that Creighton is not a place to be but a place you will go from. He was telling the students -- and all of us -- that we are called, we're sent, to be the boundless compassion that can change lives.

I sent a copy of Father Boyle's book to one of the people to whom I'd said goodbye at the Philadelphia airport. It's a tale that bridges separation. It's a story of maintaining humor, faith and compassion in life’s darkest moments. It's a story that goes beyond the mean streets of East L.A. It’s a story of the best of being Catholic.

BARRON

(From 16)

ing, not unlike, his master explains, the formation he went through to become a neurosurgeon. But now he has to leave his ego aside and surrender to something he can’t entirely understand. This disciplining of the grasping self, of course, is at the heart of monastic and spiritual traditions the world over. Therefore, in the measure that it reminds young people that there is more to reality than meets the eye and in the measure that it encourages them to embark upon a properly spiritual path, Doctor Strange performs, I would argue, an important service.

However, all is not well with this film from a spiritual point of view, for it stops, as many contemporary movies do, at a sort of way station to the real thing. As does Star Wars, which also features a young man going through a needed apprenticeship, Doctor Strange initiates us into a fundamentally Gnostic space, a realm of spiritual powers, both good and evil, engaged in a relentless and never-ending struggle. Dark and light side of the Force, anyone? And its basic game is the learning of spells and incantations — secret gnosia — that will enable one to manipulate the higher powers to a good purpose. To be sure, there are elements of the Biblical story in Doctor Strange, as there are in Star Wars, for instance the theme of salvific suffering and embrace of mission on behalf of others. But Gnostic visions always miss the essential teaching contained in Biblical revelation, namely that God is a personal power, who can never, even in principle, be manipulated by us and who reigns supreme and victorious over any and all powers of evil at work in the cosmos. The point of the spiritual life, on the Biblical reading, is not to control the powers through knowledge, but to surrender in faith to the purposes of God and to accept from God a mission to incarnate his love in the world.

I’m sure it’s asking too much to expect escapist popcorn movies to get Biblical spirituality right. And if Doctor Strange can beguile young people out of a deadening and self-contradictory scientism, opening them to a world beyond ordinary experience, I say “two cheers for it.”

GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE

The Guadalupe Radio Network (GRN) operates 3 English language Catholic radio stations in the Diocese of San Angelo:
- Abilene - 91.7 FM, KQOS
- Midland-Odessa - 1150 AM, KLPF
- San Angelo - 91.5 FM, KPDE

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

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

Schedule Exceptions

The GRN produces 3 other shows:
- Mon., 12 PM - We Sing Our Faith
- Wed., 1 PM - A Good Habit
- Fri., 8 AM - GRN Alive

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

(From 5)

her person to the saving plans of the Most High. John Paul asks, is not Mary the first of “those who hear the word of God and do it?” Already at the Annunciation she accepted the word of God, because she believed it, because she was obedient to God, and because she “kept” the word and “pondered it in her heart” and by means of her whole life accomplished it.

The Church sees in Mary the highest expression of the “feminine genius” and she finds in her a source of constant inspiration. Mary called herself the “handmaid of the Lord” (Lk 1:38); through obedience to the Word of God she accepted her lofty, yet not easy vocation, as wife and mother in the family of Nazareth. Putting herself at God's service, she also put herself at the service of others: a service of love. Precisely through this service Mary was able to experience in her life a mysterious but authentic “reign.” The maternal “reign” of Mary consists in this: she, who was in all her being a gift for her Son, has also become a gift for the sons and daughters of the whole human race. Here we see very clearly that service to another and “self-gift” are identical.

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**FOUNDATION**

**(From 7)**

There is a real need for additional Unrestricted Funds that can be given out in grants each year especially to small parishes and missions where the needs are very great. Funding was only available to meet approximately one half of all grant requests received last year. Please prayerfully consider establishing an endowment fund or making a donation to one already established to assist meeting needs of your parish and others throughout the diocese. The Foundation can accept gifts of money, mineral interests, appreciated stocks, bonds, IRA's, or real estate. All gifts require approval of the Board of Trustees.

It is also very helpful if Catholics will remember the Catholic Charitable Foundation in their last will and testament or as a beneficiary of insurance policies.

Additional information can be obtained by visiting www.catholicfoundationsanangelo.org or contacting Kathy Webster, President, at 325-698-7206 or kwebster@sbglobal.net or Steve McKay, Treasurer, at 325-651-7500 or smckay@sanangelodiocese.org

**SAINTS**

**(From 10)**

But Gaspar and his missionaries continued to preach missions throughout central Italy. He encouraged his followers admonishing them to "be ready for anything: like soldiers and sailors, they must never surrender." David Farmer writes in the "Oxford Dictionary of Saints" that Gaspar's missions were often dramatic and have often been described as a spiritual earthquake. He also founded charitable institutions for young and old, men and women.

It is a remarkable achievement that Gaspar opened 15 new houses during his life time. One biographer credits him with accomplishing so much and doing it with so little. Throughout his life, Gaspar struggled with poor health and an anxious spirit and apparently suffered from insomnia all his life.

Gaspar died on December 28, 1837 during the cholera epidemic. His remains are buried at Santa Maria in Trivio. He was beatified by Pope Pius X in 1904 and canonized by Pope Pius XII in 1954. His December 28th feast day is not on the General Roman Calendar. The Missionaries of the Precious Blood celebrate it on October 21.

There are now four provinces of the Society in the United States. Members work in parishes, schools, hospitals and clinics. They preach missions and retreats and minister to those who have experienced family violence.
A Blessed Advent and
Merry Christmas from
The Angelus

Christmas at Holy Redeemer
Catholic Church, Odessa