Monsignor James Bridges, first priest ordained in Diocese of San Angelo, retires

Coverage, Pgs. 2, 5

(Photo by Alan P. Torre)
Msgr. Bridges celebrates final Mass as Pastor

Diocese’s first ordained priest retires as pastor of St. Stephen’s in Midland

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor
West Texas Angelus

MIDLAND — Msgr. James Bridges exited his pastorate without saying a word. The beloved priest, a gifted homilist rarely short on words, sat silently on Sunday, June 25, 2017, as Deacon Luis Mata delivered the homily at Msgr. Bridges’ final Sunday Mass as pastor at St. Stephen’s in Midland, and after serving the Diocese of San Angelo in active parish ministry for 55 years and one month.

Aside from the prayers he offered as celebrant, all that Msgr. Bridges offered on the last Sunday of his pastorate were nine simple words, delivered with his trademark wit: “I did not pay him to say those things,” he told St. Stephen’s parishioners and others in attendance after Mata’s tribute.

Msgr. Bridges heeded God’s call to become a priest at 22, when, according to Mata, he “came in with eyes wide open and an ear-to-ear smile and a burning desire to serve the people. Many years have gone by and he still has those wide-open eyes and that burning desire to serve.”

Simple arithmetic would suggest that Msgr. Bridges has celebrated more than 20,000 Masses so far.

Known as a visionary and a bridge-builder, Msgr. Bridges’ was instrumental in the founding of both St. Stephen’s Parish in Midland and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish in Odessa.

He founded Helping Hands of Midland and the West Texas Food Bank in Odessa, and has spent a lifetime serving the poor and stressing the importance of serving the poor to thousands in West Texas. “Monsignor Bridges is a very good and accomplished priest,” noted San Angelo Bishop Michael Sis. “On behalf of the entire diocese, I am most grateful to him for his generous service. His priesthood impacts the lives of thousands of people far and wide, and I hope that he will continue to do so after his term of office as pastor at St. Stephen’s is completed.”

Although Msgr. Bridges has not yet stated his plans for retirement, the bishop noted his options as a retired priest are many.

“There are many ways a priest can serve, whether as pastor or in another role. Retirement is a venerable phase of life that is to be embraced and honored. Over the years I have known many retired priests who continue to bring many blessings into the lives of the people through the continued exercise of their priestly gifts in their golden years. Their wealth of experience makes them resourceful spiritual guides and beloved wisdom figures for the community.”

A native of Lamesa who grew up Baptist and as a teenager managed what was at the time the largest restaurant in the small town, Bridges would become the first priest ordained in the Diocese of San Angelo — May 29, 1962 — just minutes ahead of the late Msgr. Timothy Murphy and three days before Msgr. Bernard Gully, current pastor of Holy Trinity Church in Big Spring.

Msgr. Bridges and Murphy, classmates at Josephinum Seminary in Columbus, Ohio, often playfully jabbed each other about who should have the honor of being known as the first priest of the diocese, and, according to Gully, Bridges’ three days of seniority is “something he still reminds me about every two or three days.”

After a priest steps down from parish duties, he can remain as active as he chooses, in the Diocese of San Angelo, retired priests are extremely helpful. A few examples...

Father Hugh Wade fills in for priests in many different parishes, and he maintains a high level of involvement in local charitable organizations in Ballinger.

Father Gilbert Rodriguez continues his weekly radio program that reaches a large listening audience, and he assists in many parishes, sometimes for months at a time.

For many years, Msgr. Benedict Zientek took care of parishes when the pastor was on vacation.

Father Joe Uecker remains very active with the Engaged Encounter in Spanish, the campus ministry in Odessa, and the Unbound ministry.

Father Knick Knickerbocker has been very helpful in Junction, and writes articles for the West Texas Angelus.

Msgr. Tim Schwertner is a retired priest of the Diocese of Lubbock, and serves as a sacramental minister at St. Joseph in Stanton and St. Isidore in Lemah.

Bishop Emeritus Michael Pfeifer remains active in his retirement in San Antonio, where he celebrates the sacraments in parishes, visits the sick, ministers to prisoners, continues his writing, and supports the ministry of the Church in multiple ways.

-- West Texas Angelus

Active retired priests in the Diocese of San Angelo

Msgr. Bridges’ assignments

1963 - Sacred Heart, Abilene, Assistant Pastor
1967 - St. Joseph, Rowena; St. Thomas, Miles
1970 – Sacred Heart, Abilene, Pastor
1980 - St. Mary's, Odessa
1983 - St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Odessa
1996 - St. Stephen's, Midland


(Photo by Karen J. Patterson)

Odessa music director receives Notre Dame certification

West Texas Angelus

ODESSA — Christopher Wilcox, Director of Music and Liturgy at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa, was recently awarded a Certificate of Completion in the University of Notre Dame’s program in Catholic Theology in the area of Liturgy.

In receiving word of his certification, Wilcox was told that his project, music from the Sacred Paschal Triduum, was thorough and his research and explanations in theology, liturgy and music “well thought out and excellent.”

Wilcox spent two years working toward his certification through Notre Dame’s Institute for Church Life Satellite Theological Education Program. His project involved research and explanations in the theology, liturgy, and music of the Sacred Paschal Triduum.

“After completing my final project, “Planning Music for the Triduum (and Justifying Its Use),” I received word the week of Chrism that it was approved and that I had obtained my certificate,” Wilcox said. “I can’t describe how excited, or important it is to me.”

Wilcox moved to West Texas six years ago from the Chicago area.

“I never imagined that I would have been given the opportunities that I’ve been presented,” Wilcox said. “I’m extremely lucky to be at St. Elizabeth Ann Seton and to serve the diocese. I never considered music or liturgy as a vocation while growing up.”

Wilcox added that his early life goals included a medical career or attending seminary.

“The Certificate in Liturgy through the University of Notre Dame is a very good example of training for lay leadership in the Church,” Bishop Michael J. Sis said. “I am very pleased that Christopher took the time to pursue this certificate, and I hope other men and women from the parishes of our diocese will consider doing the same. Many opportunities for advanced theological studies through distance learning are available from Catholic universities around the country.”

The steps completed that led Wilcox to his certification includes:

› An Introduction to the Catholic Faith
› The Eucharist: Source and Summit of the Christian Life
› Introduction to the Sacraments
› The Liturgical Year
› Liturgical Theology
› Liturgical Music
› The Liturgy of the Hours
God and summer vacation

By Bishop Michael J. Sis

By now we’re in the middle of summer. Summer is an opportunity that could be used well or squandered away. For many, it brings a chance for some welcome vacation time and travel. Taking a break for a little change of pace can help us to avoid burnout, and it can also enrich the quality of our life. In this article I would like to explore a few ideas for summer that are rooted in our Catholic faith.

Family

With a little planning, summer can become an occasion for investing some quality time with family members. Bonds of love and understanding are built up through the shared memories of reunions and family get-togethers. These moments are extremely valuable for all ages. The younger members gain a deeper sense of belonging, and the elderly get to pass on family history and traditions. The family is the basic building block of society. It is the domestic church, where good character is formed and the faith is passed on from one generation to the next. Summer is a great chance to renew important family bonds.

Creation

When we spend time outdoors, it is an opportunity to glorify God the Creator in the natural world that he created. Whether we spend a quiet evening in the backyard, or take a trip to a national park, we can see a reflection of divine glory in the beauty of creation. God blesses us with glorious works of art when we take the time to notice the colors of the sunset, listen to the song of the birds, and observe the power of a summer thunderstorm rolling across the landscape.

Summer Sports

Sports not only provide fun and relaxation, but they also help us to be good stewards by taking care of our bodies. Through summer sports we build community spirit and make new friends. We grow through teamwork and a healthy spirit of competition.

Pope John Paul II often spoke about the way our participation in sports can help us to grow in virtue. He recommended that sports should be “accompanied by moderation and training in self-discipline. It very often also requires a good team spirit, a respectful attitude, appreciation of the qualities of others, honest sportsmanship, and humility in recognizing one’s own limitations.”

Summer Reading

A slower pace of life in the summer can sometimes allow the opportunity to spend more time reading. I recommend going beyond the newspapers, magazines, and social media, picking a good, solid book that helps us to integrate our faith and our life. Of course, the Bible is always a good choice.

(Dios y las Vacaciones de Verano)

Por el Obispo Michael J. Sis

Ya, por ahora, estamos a mediados del verano. El verano es una oportunidad que podría ser utilizado bien o podría ser desperdiciado. Para muchos, trae una oportunidad acogedora para unos días de vacaciones y de viaje. El tomar una quebrada para un pequeño cambio de ritmo nos puede ayudar a evitar el agotamiento, y también puede enriquecer la calidad de nuestra vida. En este artículo me gustaría explorar algunas ideas para el verano que están arraigadas en nuestra fe Católica.

Familia

Con un poco de planificación, el verano proporciona momentos que podrían ser utilizados bien o podrían ser desperdiciados. Para muchos, trae una oportunidad acogedora para unos días de vacaciones y de viaje. El tomar una quebrada para un pequeño cambio de ritmo nos puede ayudar a evitar el agotamiento, y también puede enriquecer la calidad de nuestra vida. En este artículo me gustaría explorar algunas ideas para el verano que están arraigadas en nuestra fe Católica.

Deportes de verano

Los deportes no sólo proporcionan diversión y la relajación, sino que también nos ayudan a tomar la responsabilidad de cuidar nuestros cuerpos. A través de los deportes de verano construimos el espíritu de comunidad y hacemos nuevos amigos. Crecemos a través de trabajar como equipo y un espíritu sano de competencia.

El Papa Juan Pablo II muy a menudo habló en cuanto a nuestra participación en deportes puede ayudarnos a crecer en la virtud. Él recomendó que el deporte debía ser “acompañado con moderación y la formación en la autodisciplina. Muy a menudo se requiere también un buen espíritu de equipo. En cada evento, el respeto de las cualidades de los demás, la deportividad, la honestidad y humildad para reconocer las propias limitaciones.”

Leer durante el verano

Un ritmo más lento de la vida durante el verano a veces puede permitirnos la oportunidad de pasar más tiempo leyendo. Recomiendo ir más allá de los periódicos, revistas y medios de comunicación social, escogiendo un libro bueno y sólido que nos ayuda a integrar nuestra fe y nuestra vida. Por supuesto, la Biblia es esencial. Un excelente proyecto de verano sería leer por completo uno de los Evangelios o una de las cartas de San Pablo.

Para quienes les gustaría leer un libro clásico espiritual Católico, recomiendo cualquiera de los siguientes: San Agustín: Confesiones; Tomás Kempis: La Imitación de Cristo; San Francisco de Sales: Introducción a la Vida Devota; Hermano Lorenzo de la Resurrección: La Práctica de la Presencia de Dios; Santos del Niño Jesús, Historia de un Alma, y Jean-Pierre de Caussade: El Abandono en la Divina Providencia.

Algunos autores más contemporáneos que recomiendo serían el Papa Francisco, C. S. Lewis, G. K. Chesterton, Matthew Kelly, el Obispo Robert Barron, Jennifer Fulwiler, Thomas Merton, e Ignacio Larrága.

Viajar

Viajar durante el verano nos da la oportunidad de ampliar nuestra mente y mejorar nuestra comprensión de los diferentes lugares y culturas. Cuando se visita un nuevo lugar, es mucho más enriquecedor si tomamos el tiempo para aprender acerca de las condiciones de vida, las tradiciones, la economía local, la historia del lugar, el patrimonio artístico e histórico, o incluso algo del idioma local.

El manejar largas distancias con la familia y amigos nos pone en una situación para llegar a conocerse mejor al compartir nuestros pensamientos, sentimientos y sueños. Las vacaciones de verano proporcionan momentos oportunos para escuchar con más aten
DIOCESAN BRIEFS

Diocese sending group to Catholic Convocation
Prayer for the Convocation of Catholic Leaders, July 1-4 in Orlando, Fla.: O Holy Spirit, you who first enkindled in our hearts the joy of the Gospel, renew that same joy in those who are preparing for the Convocation of Catholic Leaders. Enflame the hearts of our bishops and their diocesan delegates; leaders of national organizations and movements; clergy, religious and laity, all who make this event possible; and Catholic leaders across the United States. Move us to welcome the word of life in the depths of our hearts and respond to the call of missionary discipleship.

Diocesan Women’s Conference
SAN ANGELO — Registration for the Catholic Women’s Conference for the Diocese of San Angelo, September 29-30, 2017, is open. Our theme this year is “Outrageous Love — Martha and Mary, the Two Within Us!” Our exciting Speakers for 2017 include: Sister Miriam James Heidland, SOLT, soltsisters.blogspot.com; Sarah Swafford, www.emotionalvirtue.com, and Teresa Tomeo, teresatomeo.com. Bishop Sis will preside at Mass on Saturday morning. The Catholic Women’s Conference has moved this year to the McNease Center, 501 Rio Concho in San Angelo. It begins at 5:30 pm on Sept. 29, 2017, and concludes Sept. 30 at 4 pm. Registration ends September 1. Admission is $50 with Saturday lunch and snacks provided. Register Online at: hearttmj.org (PayPal & major credit cards accepted). Please do not let price keep you from coming. We have generous groups that have donated so that we can give scholarships for those who want to come. You can register to receive a scholarship online at: hearttmj.org. A limited block of rooms has been reserved at the Clarion Hotel, 441 Rio Concho Drive for $69 a night, + tax & fees (Call 325-653-8328), and the Pearl on the Concho, 333 Rio Concho Drive for $79 a night, + tax & fees (Call 325-653-4500). Mention the Catholic Women’s Conference when registering.

St. Ambrose Fall Festival
78th St. Ambrose Church Fall Festival, Wall Sunday, October 15, 2017 Turkey, dressing, and sausage dinner served 11:00 am-2:00 pm Children’s games 10:30am-4:00pm Bingo 12:00pm-4:00pm Live Auction 1:15 pm

Victims Assistance Info
If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by anyone who serves the Church, and you need a place to talk with someone about your feelings of betrayal or hurt by the Church due to abuse, exploitation, or harassment, we are here to help you. To report sexual misconduct call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator, 325-374-7609, or write Diocese of San Angelo Victim Assistance Ministry, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. If the sexual abuse occurred outside this diocese, the Victim Assistance Coordinator will assist in bringing the concern to the appropriate authorities.

West Texas Angelus
Each year, parishes in the diocese are charged an assessment, which funds the operations of the Diocese of San Angelo. What do those assessments fund? Many things. Below is a list of items that parishes help fund through the assessment process.

Office of the Bishop
- Fosters unity within the diocese and with the universal Church through the threefold ministry of teaching, sanctifying, and governing;
- Proclaims the message of the Gospel and the teachings of the Church;
- Maintains vigilance over doctrinal integrity;
- Provides spiritual formation and administrative supervision of the diocese and parishes;
- Develops Pastoral Manual of Policies, Guidelines and Explanations for all areas of clergy, religious, and parish life;
- Oversees the Presbyteral Council and Priest Personnel Board for Diocesan Policies and Priest Assignments;
- Provides administrative support for the Diocesan Catholic Foundation;
- Manages Priest Retirement Fund;
- Provides annual financial support to the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops, the USCCB, and the Holy See;
- Manages the National USCCB Special Collections;
- Fosters missionary activity through the Diocesan Mission Council, the Bishop’s Mission Cooperative Effort, and the Hermanamiento relationship with the Dioceses of San Pedro Sula, La Ceiba, and Tyler.

Liturgy
- Oversees the dignity of divine worship throughout the diocese;
- Provides liturgical norms and training through the Diocesan Liturgy Commission.

Legal
- Makes legal assistance available to parishes;
- Provides guidance in property transactions and construction projects;
- Reviews contracts by parishes.

Social Justice Ministries
- Provides support in the areas of Pro-Life, Social Justice, Multi-cultural parishes, Criminal Justice Ministry.

Catholic Cemeteries
- Operates and maintains Calvary Catholic Cemetery;
- Monitors operations of other Catholic cemeteries in the diocese.

Priests
- Recruitment, evaluation, training, monitoring, and assigning;
- Provides ongoing spiritual formation and retreats for priests;
- Provides opportunities for continuing education of priests;
- Priests provide leadership in the parish liturgies, counseling for marriage, grief, spiritual direction, visitation to hospitals and nursing homes.

Office of Permanent Diaconate
- Deacons recruited, scrutinized, educated, psychologically evaluated, spiritually formed, and ordained;
- Oversees the ongoing ministry and assignments of permanent deacons.

Office of Vocations and Seminarians
- Seminarians recruited and scrutinized, educated, psychologically evaluated, spiritually formed, and ordained.

Office of Religious
- Provides support for members of religious communities serving in the diocese.

Office of Finance and Accounting
- Provides assistance in bookkeeping and government reporting.

West Texas Angelus;
- Maintains current and historical archives of administrative and sacramental records.

Dcn. Freddy Perez
4th Year Theology – Assumption Seminary Birthday: March 30, 1986 From: San Angelo Favorite Food: Home-cooked Food Likes learning random facts! PRAY FOR DEACON FREDDY!
La Décima Conferencia Bienal de Músicos Pastorales Hispanos, Misa, Música y Misión

La Diócesis de Austin se enorgullece en presentar la Décima Conferencia Bienal de Músicos Pastorales Hispanos, Misa, Música y Misión: Cantando la Buena Nueva, del 27 al 29 de julio. Acompáñenos a explorar nuestro servicio musical como discípulos ministeriales.

La conferencia se llevará a cabo en St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School, ubicada en 9300 Neenah Ave., en Austin, con una Misa que se celebrará en la parroquia cercana de Saint Vincent De Paul.

El propósito de la conferencia es proporcionar oportunidades profesionales y pastorales a los ministros de música de habla hispana y/o que sirven en comunidades de habla hispana o bilingües. A través de oradores y presentadores de talleres, los participantes aprenderán más acerca de la liturgia Católica, mejorarán sus conocimientos y habilidades para el ministerio de música, aprenderán nueva música de compositores talentosos, y renovarán su entusiasmo por la excelencia en su ministerio. Las presentaciones serán en español. Todos los presentadores son bilingües. Se proporcionarán intérpretes al inglés.

Los talleres incluirán los siguientes temas:
• El Año Litúrgico y los Cantos que Acompañan los Tiempos
• ¿Dónde encontramos la música apropiada para cada celebración?
• Cómo ser un director de coro eficiente
• Introduciendo Nueva Música a la Asamblea
• El Rol del Salmista y el Cantor en la Misa


En 2019 la conferencia será celebrada en la Diócesis de San Angelo.

Diocese of Austin to host Hispanic Pastoral Musicians Conference; Diocese of San Angelo to host in 2019

The Diocese of Austin will host the 10th biennial Hispanic Pastoral Musicians Conference, Misa, Música, y Misión: Singing the Good News July 27-29. Join us as we explore our musical service to the Church and to her Liturgy as ministerial disciples.

The conference will be held at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School, 9300 Neenah Ave., in Austin, with Mass at nearby St. Vincent de Paul Parish.

The purpose of the biennial conference is to provide professional and pastoral opportunities for Spanish speaking music ministers and/or those who serve in Spanish-speaking or bilingual communities. Workshop topics include:
• The liturgical year and the songs that accompany seasons
• Where to find music appropriate for each liturgical celebration
• How to be an effective choir leader
• Planning music for Mass
• Introducing new music to the assembly
• The role of the psalmist and cantor

Speakers for the Austin conference include Bishop Felipe J. Estévez of St. Augustine, Florida; Rev. Juan Sosa, president of El Instituto Nacional Hispano de Liturgia; Peter Kolar, senior editor of Hispanic Music and Publications for World Library Publications; and Bishop Daniel Garcia, Auxiliary Bishop of Austin.

The 2015 conference was held in Las Cruces, N.M., and the 2019 conference will be in the Diocese of San Angelo.

To register visit www.swle.org or www.austindiocese.org/hpmc.
Images from
Holy Redeemer’s

Corpus Christi
Procession

Sunday, June 18, 2017

Odessa

(Photos by Alan P. Torre)
St. Boniface celebrates Fortnight For Freedom Mass

By Becca Nelson Sankey

OLFEN — Having so far trekked 1,200 miles by foot in a 2,668-mile journey punctuated with triple-digit temperatures, the young adults who comprise the international pro-life group Crossroads know a thing or two about perseverance in the name of religious freedom. So it was fitting that the group — whose members hail from Texas, North Virginia, Florida, Kansas, Washington, D.C., and Australia — attended the Fortnight for Freedom Mass on June 22 in the midst of their summer-long excursion.

Fortnight for Freedom is held each year from June 21 (the vigil of the feasts of Saints John Fisher and Thomas More) to Independence Day on July 4, according to the website for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. The USCCB started the event in 2012 to promote and pray for religious freedom, said Bishop Michael Sis, of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo.

“Those who persecute Christians include Islamic national governments in places such as Saudi Arabia and Iran; communist regimes such as Cuba, North Korea, China and Vietnam; religious nationalism in places such as India, Sri Lanka and Russia; governments with “harsh secular ideology” such as post-Soviet republics in Central Asia; violent religious groups such as the Taliban in Afghanistan and Boko Haram in Nigeria; and even the United States, where government sometimes seeks to prohibit the connection between one’s faith and secular life.”

At left, members of Crossroads, an international group of young adults, began their pro-life walk May 20 in Los Angeles, stopping at St. Boniface for the Fortnight for Freedom Mass. The group, whose members hail from throughout the United States and Australia, will conclude their walk Aug. 12 in Washington, D.C. Members of the Knights of Columbus, right photo, also attended the Fortnight for Freedom Mass June 22 at St. Boniface Parish in Olfen. Bishop Michael Sis, center, said the knights have a history of defending Christians’ religious freedom. Also pictured, Fr. Francis Onyekozuru, far left, and Fr. Ariel Lagunilla, pastor at St. Boniface. (Photos by Becca Nelson Sankey)

St. Ambrose farmer, parishioner, awarded Monsanto Fund donation

WALL — Curtis Wilde, his wife, Amie and their two sons, Graham and Owen, who live in Tom Green County and are parishioners of St. Ambrose Church, have been awarded an “America’s Farmers Grow Communities Monsanto Fund” donation and directed the donation to our parish in Wall.

The parish has used the gift of $2,500 to enhance its outdoor living space with new playground equipment.

Fr. Joseph Choutapalli, pastor, gave a special blessing of the new playground on April 30, 2017 after the 9 am Mass. More than 100 children and parishioners were present for the blessing.
Church lot resurfaced
San Miguel Arcangel Church, in Midland, recently had its church parking lot resurfaced with black top and a new covered parking area adjacent to the parish offices (top right of photo). (Photo by Alan P. Torre/aptorre.com.)

From the Editor

Love of family, self, and learning from others
(Reprinted from the October 2013 West Texas Angelus)

By Jimmy Patterson
Editor

AMMAN, Jordan — Tears are prevalent here. They come from the eyes of Syrian refugees driven from their homes by the violence of the Assad regime and the forces that oppose his rule in their homeland. In two years of fighting, the bloodshed quickly escalated and grew into the deadly conflict it is today. The latest numbers are startling: Over 2 million have fled the country. Of the ones who stayed, more than 115,000 are now dead. Those who escaped are left to face a future of uncertainty.

No one knows when or if they will ever be able to return home. Or if they will ever see their family members who stayed behind to fight for Syria.

In America, our greatest uncertainties can amount to what time a soccer game begins or when a spouse will get off work so that dinner can be on the table and warm for the family. So many of us have such minor problems in comparison.

The killing in Syria is not unlike the stories of war and brutality we’ve heard for as long as any of us care to remember. War has been with all of us for most of our lives, it doesn’t matter our age. We have not learned.

Certainly next to those who give their lives or suffer injury, and their families, the people who lose so much in war are the peaceful among us; citizens, such as the Syrians in this case, lose so much; they are forced to give up their homes, husbands and sons. Forced to trade lives of security for the unknown. Peace-seeking people are left out of the political equation of war. People like us and Syrian refugees — who are like us — are all one, perhaps especially so when part of the body is hurting.

I learned a lot in the Middle East. Most lessons came from people who say they are hopeless, but who still hope anyway.

When I left America on October 4, we were embroiled in much bitterness.

Disgust flowed from our lips and anger through our Facebook status — our modern day stage and soapbox. We were faced with the bleak reality of having a government in tatters, unable to pay its bills and its people but continuing to spend. When I returned home, we had traded a government shutdown for a healthcare lockdown.

The rage remained, only the object of the rancor had changed. I learned a lot from the people I was fortunate to meet from Syria and Jordan. Like many people in America, nothing is more important than love of family and country.

Many Syrians step out in courage instead of understandably suffering through pain and depression.

Just that one attitude can teach us a valuable lesson.

But there’s also this:

> Love your family. Anyone who has survived a fire or a natural disaster knows what it feels like to lose everything. When family emerges from the rubble, they know what it feels like to have everything. People driven from their homeland know both those emotions in an especially compelling way.

> Love your country through it all. Think we have problems in America? Despite our significant economic issues, what we do have — safety, opportunity, home.

(Please See PATTERSON/22)

Speaking of Saints

St. Hedwig, Queen of Poland at 10, became symbol of nationalism

By Mary Lou Gibson

There is a sarcophagus atop a tomb in the Cathedral of Saints Wenceslaus and Nicholas in Cracow, Poland. The stone image is of a beautiful woman who lies in repose there. This is the tomb of Hedwig, Queen of Poland from 1384 – 1399. She was born in 1374 in Buda (modern Budapest) the youngest daughter of King Louis I of Hungary. As a royal daughter, her future was dictated first, by her father, and later by the Polish nobility, who controlled the Diet, or parliament. Hedwig was betrothed to Wilhelm, the Hapsburg heir to the grand duchy, when she was one and he was five.

Paul Burns writes in Butler’s Lives of the Saints that she was sent to Vienna to be educated in the ways of the Austrian court. But life has a way of interfering with even the best laid plans, and Hedwig never married Wilhelm, who she grew to love. She returned to Hungary after her sister, Catherine, died and her father chose her as his heir. Again, political intrigue began, and the Hungarians preferred her sister, Maria, who had already been accepted as Queen of Poland by the nobles. But Maria was rejected in both Poland and Hungary. The result was that Hedwig was crowned Queen of Poland in 1384 when she was 10.

Burns writes that the Polish nobles then decided that Hedwig should marry Jagiello, the grand duke of Lithuania and Ruthenia. He was a pagan who promised to become a Christian if the marriage went ahead. Matthew Bunson writes in John Paul II’s Book of Saints that the nobles dissolved the betrothal between Hedwig and Wilhelm without allowing Hedwig a personal opinion.

There is a story from Polish history that before the marriage, Hedwig covered herself with a thick black veil and went to the cathedral in Cracow to pray for courage and resolve. She left the black veil draped over the crucifix to symbolize the acceptance of her own cross. The wedding took place in 1386 when she was 12 (the accepted age of maturity at the time) and Jagiello was 36.

David Farmer explains in the “Oxford Dictionary of Saints” that this marriage resulted in the emergence of Poland, Lithuania and Ruthenia into a strong political unit and began a 400 year alliance between Poland and Lithuania.

Jagiello kept his part of the bargain to bring Christianity to Lithuania and decreed that his people should be baptized. A diocese was established in Vilnius and Hedwig sent church plate and vestments for the cathedral there and for other churches. She endowed a college in Prague for the education of Lithuanian priests and brought monks who used the Slavonic rite to help build bridges between the Latin and Orthodox churches.

Hedwig also founded the Jagiellonian University at Cracow which became a major source of Polish culture. She became known for her charity and concern for the poor.

In 1399 Hedwig became pregnant and retired from public life. Burns writes that the baby girl was born prematurely and died after three weeks. Hedwig died four days later. In her will, she decreed that all her possessions be sold and the money used to restore Cracow University.

Her cult spread quickly and many miracles were attributed to her. In later years as Poland was partitioned, Hedwig became a symbol of Polish nationalism.

Her cause for sainthood opened in 1426 but it wasn’t until 1986 that she was beatified by Pope John Paul II. She was canonized by him in 1997 in Cracow. Her July 17 feast day is not on the General Roman Calendar. She is the patroness of Queens.

Mary Lou Gibson writes about saints for The West Texas Angelus from her home in Austin.
Catholic Charismatic Renewal turns 50

People pray during the worldwide jubilee gathering marking the 50th anniversary of the Catholic charismatic renewal at the Circus Maximus in Rome June 2. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

‘You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you ...’

Editor’s Note: In the Special Golden Jubilee Issue of Pentecost Today, Winter 2017, Walter Matthews writes: “Saint Pope John Paul II wrote of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000: ‘Every Jubilee year is like an invitation to a wedding feast. The term jubilee speaks of joy; not just an inner joy but a jubilation which is manifested outwardly.’

This 50th Anniversary of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit among college students and professors on the Duquesne Weekend in February 1967, at The Ark and The Dove Retreat House near Pittsburgh, is an invitation to such a wedding feast and an invitation to rejoice.”

The following is a reprint of Bishop Sam Jacobs’ article from Pentecost Today, Winter 2017, vol 42, no.1a

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“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you will be my witnesses....”

Acts of the Apostles 1:8 NAB

By Most Reverend Sam Jacobs
Retired Bishop Emeritus
Diocese of Houma-Thibodaux, La.

What a blessing from the Lord! In 1967 God fulfilled once more his promise to pour out his Spirit upon the world in a fresh new way. From the time of Pentecost till today God has been renewing his people with a fresh outpouring of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

As at the time of Pentecost and the time of the event at The Ark and The Dove Retreat Center 50 years ago, what does God expect in response to this renewal of his grace?

To reflect on the answer to this question we need again to look at God’s purpose in the coming of the Spirit. The Spirit comes to us to sanctify, to empower and to mission. [The first role of the Spirit is to sanctify.] We first received the Holy Spirit in Baptism. We became God’s adopted sons and daughters, sharing his divine life. But because we fall short through sin, we need a fresh anointing of the Spirit to grow in the life of God. We are called to be full of the Spirit, not satisfied with just a relationship with God.

This means that more and more we are to uproot ingratitude to God for what he has given us. But gifts are useless if not exercised. Their power is limited if not used. Their limitation is not in the gifts but in us by leaving them relatively dormant for a long time. This is probably a very blatant sign of our ingratitude to God for what he has given us.

What does God expect in response to this renewal of his grace? You shall love the Lord, your God, with your whole heart, whole soul, whole mind and whole strength.” Mt 22:37

We have been renewed by the Holy Spirit so that we can freely choose to follow the lead of the Holy Spirit in the exercising of the gifts we have freely been given “when hands were laid upon us.” This means growing in the awareness of, and the understanding of the purpose of each of the gifts, culminating in the exercise of the gifts as led by the Spirit.

We need to step out of the boat of our comfort zone at the various divine appointments God gives us each day and do what God asks us to do. Then watch what he will do. That is what Peter and John did when they saw the paralyzied beggar at the Temple gate. They had been empowered, they were going to the Temple to give thanks and God put in their path a man who needed healing. Peter and John acted in the name of Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit. The man was healed and many more came to believe in Jesus as Lord and Savior.

The early Church did not see these divine appointments with signs and wonders as unusual and limited to a few people. Rather, they saw them as normative for those who are spirit-filled disciples of Jesus. And thus they prayed, as we read in Acts 4:29-31: “And now, Lord, take note of their threats, and enable your servants to speak your word with all boldness, as you stretch forth [your] hand to heal, and signs and wonders are done through the name of your holy servant Jesus.” As they prayed, the place where they were gathered shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness.”

The third role of the Holy Spirit is to mission us as bold disciples witnesses. We need to remember the words of Paul to Timothy “to stir into flame the gift of God” for “God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love.” What God desires in this time of the Renewal is a new missionary energy, bringing the Good News of God’s saving love to today’s ends of the earth, where the marginalized, the poor, the spiritually barren, the unchurched and the
Top photo, seminarians gather for a photo at Steubenville Lone Star, in Dallas, June 24, 2017. Above, conference host Ennie Hickman with Mario and Connie DeHoyos. Above right, Fr. Ryan Rojo, Bishop Michael J. Sis, Fr. Michael Rodriguez, and Fr. Francis Onyekozuru. At right, Fr. Louis Merosne leads a session during the conference.

Above, from left to right are Angelo State University Newman Center students Levi DeHoyos, Gabby LeBlanc, Matthew DeHoyos, Obe Ughanze, Jacob DeHoyos, David Sosa, Araceli Hernandez, and Kelsey Velez. Below, the young adult ministry from St. Mary Catholic Church in San Angelo. (Courtesy photos from Fr. Francis Onyekozuru and Ernie Acevedo.)
The Priestly Ordination

of

Joshua Gray & Timothy Hayter

June 10, 2017
Cathedral of the Sacred Heart
San Angelo
‘Relying on the help of the Lord God and our Savior Jesus Christ, we choose these, our brothers, for the Order of the Priesthood’
Clockwise from top left, Fr. David Herrera, lays hands on Joshua Gray ... Fr. Serafin Avenido lays hands on Timothy Hayter ... Fr. Hayter at the altar ... Deacon Hayter is invested in the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel ... and Josh Gray listens during Bishop Sis' prepared remarks to the elect prior to the Promise of the Elect. (Photos by Jimmy Patterson. Photo of Dcn. Hayter being invested below courtesy of Fr. Fabian Rosette).
Bishop tells Extension: ‘Church alive, growing in Texas’

Bishop Michael J. Sis reports on Catholic life in his Diocese of San Angelo

(Reprinted with permission from Catholic Extension)

Bishop Michael J. Sis is the sixth bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas. A native of Bryan in the neighboring Austin diocese, Bishop Sis served for more than 13 years in campus ministry at Texas A&M University in College Station and for three years as vicar general of the Austin diocese. He was ordained a bishop for the San Angelo diocese in January 2014. Bishop Sis says he considers his most precious treasure to be his personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

How would you describe the Catholic Church in Texas?

It’s alive, active, generous and culturally diverse. The overall direction of the Church in Texas is one of growth and vibrancy. It combines the dynamism of the Sun Belt and the heritage of Texas Hispanic Catholicism, which flavors the life of the Church here in a beautiful way. And we have other ethnic communities in small towns built by Polish, Czech or German immigrants, which provide a solid base of stewardship and Catholic identity.

What is the first thing that you tell people about the Church in the Diocese of San Angelo?

Visually, it’s the Wild West. It looks like the background of a cowboy movie. The terrain is dramatic with wide open spaces. The skies and sunsets are works of art.

Our diocese covers an area that is larger than the state of Indiana. With 115,000 Catholics, we are 14.6 percent of the population. Power industry is important, and we have two air force bases. Still, we need more economic diversity here.

Most people live in small towns with strong family values. High school football is a high priority in people’s lives. Many of our young people do not go to college, and of those who do, many do not return.

How do people in your diocese live their faith?

Parish life is active. We have relatively few religious and priests. We have a good number of deacons and strong lay leadership, which is encouraging.

The RENEW program has been helpful in creating a vibrant parish life with engaged and dedicated laypeople. Catholic Extension helped pay for this parish-renewal program in our diocese.

We have active “movements,” including Cursillo and the Search and ACTS retreats. All three are based on an experience of conversion. Catholics need a basic conversion experience to live their faith more actively.

How has your pastoral ministry with Hispanic immigrants shaped you?

Hispanic immigrants have helped me to appreciate the warm, passionate, devotional side of Catholicism. Many live with a deep awareness of their total dependence on God’s help.

They live with joy, with resiliency, with a strong sense of family, community and fellowship. They have a deep love for the Blessed Mother. Living, working, breathing and experiencing the Catholic faith in that environment has enriched my own faith, and I now reinforce that in the lives of our people.

Immigration and immigrants have been much in the news recently. How have immigrants in your diocese experienced that?

They are hard-working Christian people with a strong family life and deep faith. That is the kind of people this country needs. Rather than making life more difficult and pushing them away, we should be reforming our immigration system to make it easier for them to get legalized.

Our immigrant community is very worried about the recent wave of deportations. Just this week U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement deported many people from this area.

In many families the parents are undocumented, but the children were born here. The children attend public schools, but the parents live in constant fear of deportation. They are afraid to go to the police to report crimes. They’re afraid to get a marriage license.

Many will not register in a parish because they don’t want their name on any list. They lack the confidence to get involved in their parish, much less to become leaders. That weakens parish life.

How do the sisters of our U.S.-Latin American Sisters Exchange Program help the diocese?

Primarily, they are reaching out with home visits and evangelization. They help Spanish-speaking immigrants connect more to the parish.

They held a successful women’s conference in Port Stockton. With speakers and workshops, they encouraged women in their vocations as wives, mothers and Christian women to lead lives of holiness and to have healthy relationships.

What do you value most about Catholic Extension’s support for the San Angelo diocese?

The grants to parishes and for church construction have provided the greatest help. When I walk into many of our parishes, I am encouraged and grateful for this strong Catholic Extension support.

Application period for Msgr. Larry Droll Scholarship open until Sept.

SAN ANTONIO—Catholic laymen and women pursuing a graduate degree in theology or religious studies in order to serve their church in a professional capacity must submit applications for the Rev. Msgr. Larry J. Droll Scholarship by September 15, 2017.

The renewable $2,000 scholarship will be awarded to two candidates in need of tuition assistance for additional education who serve or want to serve his or her parish as an Administrator, Youth Minister, Parish Coordinator or other role.

“Today many dedicated Catholics, who are not ordained clergy or women religious, serve parishes as Parish Coordinators or Administrators, as Pastoral Associates, Directors of Religious Education, Youth Ministers, Liturgists, and many other roles,” said Msgr. Droll. “This scholarship can help provide the funds to earn the advanced educational degree in theology or religious studies that is often required for these positions.”

This scholarship is geared towards those who have already obtained their bachelor’s degree and who are either enrolled or wanting to enroll in any Catholic graduate school in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma or Mississippi. Applicants may also be enrolled in an extension program or in the Catholic University of America School of Canon Law.

Applications may be obtained by submitting an application which may be found online at www.cliu.com, contacting the Communications Department at (210) 828-9921 or 1-800-262-2548 or by writing to Catholic Life Insurance, Atttn: Communications Department, P.O. Box 659527, San Antonio, TX 78265-9527.

Founded in 1901, Catholic Life Insurance offers life insurance, IRAs and retirement annuities to individuals and businesses living in Texas, Florida, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Mississippi.

Fr. Joshua at St. Ann's

Fr Joshua Gray, second from right, prepares for a Mass of Thanksgiving at St Ann’s-Midland, June 18, 2017, where he had his internship training. Joining him, from left, is Deacon Jesus Napoles, Seminarian Upton Sewell, Msgr. Larry Droll and Father Callisto Locheng, AJ, of Uganda.
Catholic Voices

Looking at despair as weakness rather than sin

By Fr. Ron Rolheiser

Classically, both in the world and in our churches, we have seen despair as the ultimate, unforgivable sin. The simple notion was that neither God, nor anyone else, can save you if you simply give up, despair, make yourself impossible to reach. Most often in the popular mind this was applied to suicide. To die by your own hand was seen as despair, as putting yourself outside of God’s mercy.

But understanding despair in this way is wrong and misguided, however sincere our intent. What’s despair? How might it be understood?

The common dictionary definition invariably runs something like this: Despair means to no longer have any hope or belief that a situation will improve or change. The Catechism of the Catholic Church, which sees despair as a sin against the First Commandment, defines it this way: “By despair, man ceases to hope for his personal salvation from God, for help in attaining it or for the forgiveness of his sins. Despair is contrary to God’s goodness, to his justice – for the Lord is faithful to his promises – and to his mercy.”

But there’s something absolutely critical to be distinguished here: There are two reasons why someone might cease to hope for personal salvation. One is a deeply experienced situation of despair; the other is a declaration of despair. In the first, the person is too crushed, too weak, too broken inside, to believe that he or she is loveable and redeemable. But being so beaten and crushed in spirit so as to believe that nothing further can exist for you except pain and darkness is normally not an indication of sin but more a symptom of having been fatally victimized by circumstance, of having to undergo, in the poignant words of Fantine in Les Misérables, storms that you cannot weather.

And before positing such a person outside of God’s mercy, we need to ask ourselves: What kind of God would condemn a person who is so crushed by the circumstances of her life so as to be unable to believe that she is loveable? What kind of God would condemn someone for her brokenness? Such a God would certainly be utterly foreign to Jesus who incarnated and revealed God’s love as being preferential for the weak, the crushed, the broken-hearted, for those despairing of mercy. To believe and teach that God withholds mercy from those who are most broken in spirit betrays a profound misunderstanding of the nature and mercy of God who sends Jesus into the world not for the healthy but for those who need a physician.

Likewise this too betrays a profound misunderstanding of human nature and the human heart. Why would a person deem herself so unlovable that she voluntarily and hopelessly excludes herself from the circle of life? It can only be because of a deep, profound wound to the soul (which no doubt is not self-inflicted). Obviously, unless it is a case of some clinical illness, this person has been deeply wounded and has never had an experience of unconditional love or indeed of faithful human love. We are facile and naïve when, because we ourselves have been undervalued, loved, we cannot understand how someone else can be so crushed and broken so as to believe herself or himself to be, in essence, unlovable. To paraphrase a painful question in the song, The Rose: Are love, and heaven, really only for the lucky and strong? Our common understanding of despair, secular and religious, would seem to think so.

But, nobody goes to hell out of weakness, out of a broken heart, out of a crushed spirit, out of the misfortune and unfairness of never having had the sense of being truly loved. Hell is for the strong, for those with a spirit so arrogant that it cannot be crushed or broken, and so is unable to surrender. Hell is never a bitter surprise waiting for a happy person. And neither is it the sad fulfillment of the expectation of someone who is too broken to believe that he or she is worthy to be part of the circle of life.

We owe it to God to be more empathic. We also owe this to those who are broken of heart and of spirit. Moreover, we have a Christian doctrine, expressed inside of our very creed that challenges us to know better. He descended into hell. What did Jesus reveal in his life and in his death is that there’s no place inside of tragedy, brokenness, sadness, or resignation, into which God cannot and will not descend and breathe out peace.

God is all-understanding. That’s why we’re assured that “a bruised reed will not break, and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.” You can bet your life on that. You can bet your faith on that. And you can also live in deeper empathy and deeper consolation because of that.

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

Pride, humility and social media

By Most Rev. Robert Barron

Auxiliary Bishop of Los Angeles

On a recent trip to Sacramento, from my home base in the LA area, I flew Southwest Airlines. In an idle moment, I reached for the magazine in the seatback pocket and commenced to leaf through it. I came across an article by a woman named Sarah Menkedick entitled “Unfiltered: How Motherhood Interrupted My Relationship with Social Media.” The piece was not only wittily and engagingly written; it also spoke to some pretty profound truths about our cultural situation today and the generation that has come of age under the influence of the Internet.

She argues that to have swum in the sea of Instagram, Facebook, Pinterest, and YouTube from the time that one was a child was to live one’s life perpetually in front of an audience. Most millennials never simply had experiences; they were conditioned to record, preserve, and present those experiences to a following who were invited to like what they saw, to comment on it, to respond to it. To be sure, she acknowledges, the social media, at their best, are powerful means of communication and connection, but at their worst, they produce this odd distillation from life and a preoccupation with the self. Here is how Menkedick puts it: “I’ve come of age as a writer at a time when it is no longer enough just to write. A writer must also promote her work and in the process promote herself as a person of interest…I learned the snarky, casually intellectual voice of feminist and pop culture bloggers, the easy outrage, the clubby camaraderie.”

But then something extraordinary happened to the author: she became a mother. On the front porch of her home, nursing her baby, she discovered that she had a visceral aversion to snark and absolutely no desire to share her experience with an audience or curry favor from it. She didn’t want to cultivate any ironic distance from motherhood; rather, she wanted to believe in it with all her heart, to let it wash over her. “Before I had a child, I took it for granted that no intellectual writer-type could ever be taken seriously were she to cave into conventional sentiment. As a mother, I was swept away by a strange, ancient, universal emotions I’d previously dismissed as uncomplicated.” Her baby, in a word, broke through the carapace of her self-regard and let in some real light.

Again, granting all that is truly good about social media (which I use massively in my own ministry), they can easily produce the conviction that we are the stars of our own little dramas, always playing for an eager audience. Authentic spirituality always gives rise to the opposite conviction: your life is not about you.

To grasp this distinction more completely, let me propose two scenarios to you. In the first, you are engaged in conversation with someone that you desperately want (or need) to impress, say, a prospective employer or a popular figure whose friendship you crave. In this context, you are indeed speaking, listening, laughing, looking pensive, etc., but more importantly, you are watching yourself perform these moves, and you are exquisitely attentive to the reaction of your interlocutor. Is she laughing at your jokes? Does she look bored? Did your witticism land effectively? The second scenario: you are in lively conversation with someone that you desperately want to save, to visit, to nourish, to support, to comfort. In this context, you are indeed speaking, listening, laughing, looking at the other person, but through a foggy window. Now a face of interest…I learned the snarky, casually intellectual voice of the world through the distorting lens of the ego and its needs. On the other hand, humility, from the Latin humus (earth), is getting in touch with reality directly, being close to the ground, seeing things as they are. This is why Thomas Aquinas famously says “humilitas est veritas” (humility is truth). What makes the first scenario so painful and cringe-worthy is that it is out of step with the truth of things. What makes the second scenario so exhilarating, so fun, is that it is full of reality.

What Sarah Menkedick intuited was the manner in which the social media environment can be a breeding ground for the unique type of spiritual distortion and dislocation that we traditionally call pride.

What made all the difference for her was the arrival of her baby, in all of her densely-textured reality—a reality that she could appropriate only through humility.
Cellphones revisited / Priests in mortal sin / Gay priests

By Fr. Kenneth Doyle
Catholic News Service

Q. Recently a reader complained about irreverent behavior in church prior to Mass, including cellphone use. As part of your response, you stated that cellphone use is "always inconsiderate." Judging behavior is also ugly behavior, at least as repugnant as irreverence. I use my cellphone prior to Mass while seated in church. I read the day's Scriptures along with meditations on those readings from several sources. (I particularly like the daily reflections from the University of Notre Dame and from the Jesuit community.) I will continue this practice despite anyone's misplaced judgments. (City of origin withheld)

Q. I take issue with your recent comments on cellphone usage in church, as appeared in your column in Our Sunday Visitor. I fully agree with the inappropriateness of talking or texting before, during or even after the service is over.

However, using the Laudate app, I read the daily Scriptures, the Loretto Litany (after saying the rosary) and a number of other prayers before Mass. It never really occurred to me that what I do quietly on my cellphone is offensive to others. (Lawrenceville, Illinois)

A. The letters above are indicative of those that arrive each week in response to this column. (Did you notice -- as I did -- a slight difference in tone between the two letters?) Such letters are valuable, serving to fill out my own answers and offering observations that cannot be included in a few short paragraphs.

The original question had complained about people talking and laughing on cellphones -- or texting -- before Mass (in fact, during exposition of the Blessed Sacrament). I did offer my own view that "the use of cellphones is never proper in church -- whether to speak or to text."

I neglected to mention that there are some legitimate and laudable uses that involve neither speaking nor texting -- most notably, to reflect on the Scriptures or to read prayers in preparation for the Eucharist. So, a mea culpa from me and a thank-you to those who responded.

Q. Can priests baptize someone if they are in the state of mortal sin? My daughter was baptized as an infant priest in the 1980s. A few months later, he committed suicide. The reason given was that he was being accused of sexual abuse.

If that was true, was he allowed to baptize? And is my daughter legitimately baptized, or does she need a new baptism? (Manassas, Virginia)

A. The church has always taught that the validity of a sacrament does not depend on the state of soul of the human minister. (The technical theological language is that the sacraments act "ex opere operato" -- i.e., from the very fact of the action's having been performed.) With every sacrament, Jesus Christ is the principal actor, even when the minister is incapable of living a celibate life; the thinking is that the person may well have been so disturbed as to mitigate somewhat his own moral responsibility.

Q. I have heard that 60 percent of Catholic priests are gay. Is this the truth? (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

A. Frankly, no one has an accurate answer to your question. Numbers vary widely, and I have seen "guesstimates" that range from 10 percent to 60 percent. My belief is that the reality tends nowhere near the lower end of that scale.

In a 2002 national survey of priests by the Los Angeles Times, 9 percent of respondents identified themselves as homosexual, and another 6 percent said that they were "somewhere in between but more on the homosexual side."

Most social scientists who have studied the issue believe that the percentage of homosexuals within the Catholic clergy is somewhat higher than among American males generally, since priests are already a self-selected group who have chosen not to marry.

The church always distinguishes, of course, between a homosexual orientation, which is not considered sinful, and homosexual acts, which are. A priest -- whether gay or straight -- is pledged to celibacy.

The church's Code of Canon Law notes that "clerics are obliged to observe perfect and perpetual continence for the sake of the kingdom of heaven and therefore are bound to celibacy which is a special gift of God by which sacred ministers can adhere more easily to Christ with an undivided heart and are able to dedicate themselves more freely to the service of God and humanity" (Canon 277.1).

In 2005, the Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education said that men should not be admitted to the seminary who "practice homosexuality" or "present deep-seated homosexual tendencies."

That guideline, repeated by the Vatican's Congregation for the Clergy in a document issued in 2016, has generally been taken to mean that everyone with a homosexual orientation must be denied admission, but that homosexuals incapable of living a celibate life cannot be priests.

Such an interpretation would seem consistent with Pope Francis' off-the-cuff response to journalists aboard a papal flight in 2013: when asked about clerics who are gay, the pope said: "A gay person who is seeking God, who is of good will -- well, who am I to judge him?"

Many Catholics have known gay priests who remained faithfully committed to celibacy and who served the church effectively and with distinction.

Questions may be sent to Fr. Kenneth Doyle at askfatherdoyle@gmail.com and 30 Columbia Circle Dr., Albany, New York 12203.

Despite the statistics, however, the situation is not hopeless. With effort, we can become better listeners. One way is to engage other senses. Awareness of visual cues, vocal tone, time and place help pin down the content of what we hear.

Focus is key. According to the International Listening Association data, more than 50 percent of meaning is carried in nonverbal cues. (In other words, it's more respectful than keeping our gaze on our cellphones!)

Health can affect how we listen. Hearing loss or other challenges can make it difficult to take in aural information. An emotional or psychological unwillingness to engage in conversation can keep us from truly hearing what someone is saying to us. Addressing these issues can make us better listeners.

We need to be aware, focused, engaged and able to understand. We need to remember that what we hear may not be what we understand. Praying to God to help us understand is a good thing to do.
Making Sense of Bioethics

Can I donate my body to science?

By Fr. Ted Pacholczyk

Some people may wish to “donate their body to science” after they die. Such a gift of themselves can be objectively good and praiseworthy provided that their body would contribute to meaningful research or study, and that it would not be used in a disrespectful or otherwise inappropriate manner.

There are a number of potentially laudable projects that can benefit from a person’s decision to donate his or her body to science. A human cadaver can be useful for anatomical studies, to help train medical students to save lives later. It can be of assistance in carrying out basic biomedical research or in developing new medical instruments. It can be used as a forensic tool to help solve crimes, such as studying advanced states of bodily decay. It can assist with the training of surgeons, and can even help with the development of various types of safety or protective gear, like automobile airbags or bulletproof vests.

In 1956, Pope Pius XII noted in Pope Pius XII that consent to “damage to the integrity of the corpse in the interest of those who are suffering, is no violation of the reverence due to the dead.” St. John Paul II wrote in a 1995 encyclical that “the donation of organs, performed in an ethically acceptable manner, with a view to offering a chance of health and even of life itself to the sick, is the duty of donors.”

A second consideration of importance for Catholics involves the offering of prayers, and particularly the sacrifice of the Mass, on behalf of the deceased. Rev. Edward McNamara, a well-known writer and liturgy professor in Rome, offers some practical guidance in this regard: “Since it is usually impossible to have a funeral with the remains shortly after death, as this would render the body unsuitable for research purposes, a memorial Mass without the body can be celebrated so as to enthuse the soul of the deceased to God and offer the family the opportunity of mourning together. When the remains are released to the family, another Mass may be offered.”

A third potential area of concern involves the possibility that certain cells or tissues derived from the human body may be inappropriately used in research. To consider one instance, it is possible to harvest sex cells, or their progenitor cells, from corpses even up to a few hours following death. Some researchers might be tempted to use these cells, for example, to create human embryos in the laboratory for biomedical research. Although such practices are uncommon, if an individual believed that his or her cells were likely to be used in this unethical way by a research institution, they should not agree to donate their bodies after death.

To prevent the possibility of donating their bodies to science should weigh a fourth consideration as well, namely, whether others in their family are open to their body being utilized in this way. They should find out whether their spouse, children, or others close to them would have any objections or concerns. At the end of the day, there may be some family members who, in the words of one commentator, can’t quite get past the idea, “that you will be dissected over a period of months in anatomy class, or cut up and divided among different programs (brain to an Alzheimer’s study, joints to an orthopedic surgery training).” Careful vetting of the details ahead of time helps avoid resentment, pain and surprises after a loved one passes on.

With these caveats and considerations in mind, donating a body to science can indeed allow someone to “give back” or “contribute to society” after death.

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

Young adults, it’s time to let your voices be heard

By Patrick Laorden
Catholic News Service

"Make your voice heard; let it resonate in communities and let it be heard by your shepherd of souls," proclaims Pope Francis in his letter to young people this past January. As we look to the upcoming Synod of Bishops in October 2018, these times are crucial for young adults to be engaged in the life of the church.

For me, this means being an advocate for social change in a world very much in need of it. For almost five years, I discerned religious life with the Dominicans. My time in formation helped me to understand the apostolic life of the church. It means to go into the world and proclaim the Gospel as the friars have done for more than 800 years.

In 2014, I served as a missionary in Kenya and made a silent pilgrimage through Kibera, the largest urban slum in Africa. While there, I saw extreme poverty. But I also saw a persevering spirit within the people.

This encounter was where I truly realized what I was called to do: to dedicate my life working for social change. Though I did not continue with formation, God’s provided me with a new way to answer this call.

Today I work as a parish social ministry coordinator. I organize an annual social justice conference, provide faith formation in parishes and schools, work with parish social ministry leaders and connect with local grass-roots organizations.

I've noticed a smaller young adult presence at Mass and in social justice efforts. On occasion, young adult groups participate in daylong opportunities to do service. However, they are by and large not engaged in ongoing advocacy or ministry. I'm left asking the question: Where are they? I suspect the upcoming synod will ask that same question.

Our pope wants to hear from us and wants the world to hear from us. That means we need to move beyond direct service into advocacy, where we can bring the Gospel into the public square, for instance, by looking at unjust policies and communicating with our legislators. It means regularly showing up in pews and food pantries alike.

In preparation for the synod, I think we should turn to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ "Two Feet of Love in Action" inspired by Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical "Deus Caritas Est" ("God is Love") and "Caritas in Veritate" ("Charity in Truth"), which remind us that when it comes to love of neighbor, we need two feet: charity and social justice.

Charity responds to immediate needs and specific situations, like my ministry at a children’s orphanage in Kenya. Social justice entails finding solutions to the structural dimension of problems, such as how these slums came to existence in the first place, and how we might change those conditions.

Pope Francis has repeatedly challenged young adults to create a culture of encounter by emulating Jesus. This requires going beyond our routine activities and concerns, listening to and accompanying others and awakening ourselves from complacency. Our faith will only continue to grow if we remain steadfast and share it.

My challenge to fellow young Catholics is to raise our voices so that the world knows a different way.

Join the conversation. Email: inlightoffaith@catholicnews.com.

Patrick Laorden works as a parish social ministry coordinator with the Office for Catholic Social Justice Ministry in the Archdiocese of Hartford, Connecticut. He is a guest contributor for the Catholic News Service column "In Light of Faith.”

How does your tech use affect you?

By Brett Robinson
Catholic News Service

As a father of four, I am familiar with practice. There's hockey practice, piano practice and lots of reading practice. My kids are practicing patience. My kids are practicing forming us for?

The question that needs asking is, What is all of this technology practice forming us for?

Our devices -- even when they are put away -- haunt us with the possibility that a new message or bit of news is ready to be consumed. It starts with a practice like using the computer for hours a day (required for most office workers) that spills over into leisure time with social media, games and plenty of Netflix.

One example is viewing family photos with a child and telling them stories about when they were little. It's a small practice that forms their memory in ways that remind them that they are part of a family and a stream of memories, part of something much larger than themselves.

If the goal is finding a healthy balance with our technological creations, then we have to start with practice. Just as a doctor practices medicine, a Catholic practices religion. We know it's the cure for our spiritual maladies, but sometimes we shirk our duty to rise and pursue the good.

Take a moment to revisit the practices in your daily life and to ask how they are forming your memory and imagination. As Catholics, we call to mind Christ’s passion, death and resurrection so that we can imagine a life of hope.

Some have an app for that! It’s called 3D Catholic and 3D stands for three deviations: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It’s a simple reminder that our virtual technologies shouldn't strip us of our physical bodies. Because those bodies can be used to commemorate Christ's passion through prayer, fasting and helping others in very real ways.
As Christians, Sis said, we can pray, stay informed of current events; encourage our governments to respect and defend religious liberty; join with people of other faiths in a call for mutual respect; support agencies that help persecuted Christians; and, lastly, take time to reflect.

In concluding his homily, Bishop Sis referenced Matthew Chapter 10: “You will be hated by all for my name’s sake. But the one who endures to the end will be saved.”

“That’s a message for all of us as we try to persevere and we encounter hardship,” Sis said.

Sis said he was not aware that the Crossroads youth – who wore matching neon yellow T-shirts emblazoned with the words “PRO LIFE” - would be in attendance, but added that their presence “tied into the theme beautifully.”

According to their website, Crossroads’ mission “is to spread the Gospel of Life and promote and inform others about the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, especially with regard to the sanctity and dignity of all human life.”

Sydney Dunavin, Crossroads Southern Walk director, said the pro-life walks began in 1995 in response to Pope John Paul II’s call to the youth to go out into the streets like the first Apostles. “We’re answering that call through our own peaceful and prayerful witness,” Dunavin said. Two walks began May 20 this year in San Francisco and Los Angeles, Dunavin said. Participants fly to the starting locations and spend the next two and a half months walking to Washington, D.C.

“It’s like a giant leapfrog,” Dunavin explained of the walks. “We walk in small shifts three to five minutes at a time. It’s constantly rotating (with walkers). We cover about 60 miles as a team each day.”

Dunavin admitted that the youth, who range in age from 18 to 26, must put their lives on hold to participate in the walk but added, “It’s such an amazing experience. We’re really separated from the world, so it’s an awesome time to discern God’s will for our lives.”

 Asked what helps the group get through their sweltering daily walks, Dunavin laughed. “Lots of water,” she said. “And an air-conditioned support van.”
### Professing innocence, Cardinal Pell to face charges

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Proclaiming his innocence after being charged with sexual abuse, Australian Cardinal George Pell said, "I'm looking forward finally to having my day in court."

"I'm innocent of these charges. They are false. The whole idea of sexual abuse is abhorrent to me," he said June 29 during a brief news conference in the Vatican press office.

Greg Burke, director of the Vatican press office, said Pope Francis had granted Cardinal Pell a leave of absence from his position as prefect of the Vatican Secretariat for the Economy so that he can work on his defense.

Cardinal Pell, Burke added, will not participate in any public liturgies while his case is being considered.

"These matters have been under investigation now for two years," Cardinal Pell told the press. "There's been a relentless character assassination, a relentless character assassination, and for more than a month claims that a decision on whether to lay charges was imminent."

Without giving specifics about the number of charges or the incidents, police in Australia's Victoria state announced June 29 that charges had been filed against the cardinal and that he has been called to appear in court.

Victoria Police Deputy Commissioner Shane Patton told reporters June 29, "Cardinal Pell is facing multiple charges in respect of historic sexual offenses and there are multiple complainants relating to those charges."

Patton also told reporters, "It is important to view in context of the allegations that have been made against Cardinal Pell have obviously been tested in any court yet."

"Cardinal Pell, like any other defendant, has a right to due process and so therefore it is important that the process is allowed to run its natural course," Patton added.

In his statement, Cardinal Pell said he had kept Pope Francis informed "during these long months" when police and the Australian media were talking about the possibility of charges being made.

"I have spoken to him on a number of occasions in the last week. I think most recently a day or so ago," Cardinal Pell said of Pope Francis. "And we talked about my need to take leave to clear my name, so I'm very grateful to the Holy Father for giving me this leave to return to Australia."

Cardinal Pell said he had spoken to his lawyers about the timing of his return to Australia and also had consulted his doctors about the trip.

In February 2016, Australia's Royal Commission into Institutional Responses to Child Sexual Abuse allowed Cardinal Pell to testify by video link from Rome because a heart condition prevented him from traveling to Australia.

(See Please PELL/24)

### OBISPO

**Para 3**

...la oración a lo que está pasando en la vida del otro y compartir desde el corazón.

Nuestros viajes también nos permiten servir como embajadores de la fe, no sólo de la palabra, sino también en las acciones que realizamos. Nosotros somos la voz de Dios que en verdad los libra. Las palabras que decimos, la forma en que practicamos nuestras virtudes, y las palabras que sentimos uno mismo, la forma en que practicamos nuestra fe a lo largo de nuestro viaje. Si elegimos, podemos dar testimonio de nuestra fe, no sólo con nuestras palabras, sino también con nuestras acciones.

### EDICTAL SUMMONS

**June 5, 2017**

**CASE: HOGEa (Barreto) -- Noriega**

NO.: SO/17/29

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Joe Michael Noriega. You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of July, 2017, to answer to the Petition of Karen Jeanette Hogeda (Barreto), now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Karen Barreto and Joe Michael Noriega, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: HOGEa (BARRETO) – NORIEGA; Protocol No.: SO/17/29

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

**June 5, 2017**

**CASE: WOOD -- BARTLEY (French)**

NO.: SO/17/31

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Kathleen Ann Bartley (French). You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of July, 2017, to answer to the Petition of Donald Sherman Wood, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “Donald Wood and Kathleen French, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: WOOD -- BARTLEY (FRENCH); Protocol No.: SO/17/31

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

**June 5, 2017**

**CASE: ZANT -- WHITE**

NO.: SO/17/37

The Tribunal Office of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is seeking Mary Jane White. You are hereby summoned to appear before the Tribunal of the Catholic Diocese of San Angelo, at 804 Ford Street, San Angelo, Texas 76905, on or before the 31st day of July, 2017, to answer to the Petition of John Henry Zant, now introduced before the Diocesan Tribunal in an action styled, “John Zant and Mary White, Petition for Declaration of Invalidity of Marriage.” Said Petition is identified as Case: ZANT -- WHITE; Protocol No.: SO/17/37

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

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**La ley sábática**

Exodo 34:21 dice: “Seis días trabajaráis, y al séptimo día descansarás.” Dios nos da la ley del sábado para que hagamos tiempo para tener suficiente descanso, culto, y tiempo de calidad en nuestras relaciones. La espiritualidad del sábado nos recuerda que Dios está en control, y que el trabajo no es todo. Nos ayuda a construir en nuestras vidas tiempo para descanso y reflexión. Esta misma espiritualidad informa a nuestra práctica de tomar vacaciones.

Jesucristo mismo tomó el tiempo para escapar y descansar con sus amigos. En un momento cuando notó que sus Apóstoles estaban particularmente ocupados, les dijo en Marcos 6:31: “Salgan ustedes solos a un lugar deserto para descansar un rato.” Todos haremos bien en escuchar su consejo.

### Submissions

- **Story suggestions, calendar items, parish briefs and all other submissions** should be emailed to Jpatterson@sanangelodiocese.org.

**COPY, PHOTO DEADLINE:**

Third Friday of every month.

Photos should be in jpeg format.

Letters to the editor are welcome, and should be emailed to Jpatterson@sanangelodiocese.org.

Letters to the editor are printed at the discretion of the editor and identities of the writer are subject to verification. Please include name, address and phone number when submitting letters.

**Bishop Michael J. Sis**
Publisher

**Jimmy Patterson**
Editor

**Third Friday of every month.**

The Western Texas Angelus
Official Newspaper of the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

**POSTMASTER:** Send all address changes to: WEST TEXAS ANGELUS
P.O. Box 1829
SAN ANGELO, TX 76902-1829
is essential. A great summer project would be to read straight through one of the Gospels or one of St. Paul’s letters. For those who would like to read a Catholic spiritual classic, I recommend any of the following: St. Augustine’s Confessions, Thomas a Kempis’ The Imitation of Christ, St. Francis de Sales’ Introduction to the Devout Life, Brother Lawrence of the Resurrection’s The Practice of the Presence of God, St. Therese of Lisieux’s The Story of a Soul, and Jean-Pierre de Caussade’s Abandonment to Divine Providence.

Some more contemporary authors that I recommend would be Pope Francis, C.S. Lewis, G.K. Chesterton, Matthew Kelly, Bishop Robert Barron, Jennifer Fulwiler, Thomas Merton, and Ignacio Larrañaga.

Travel

Summer travel gives us a chance to expand our mind and improve our understanding of different places and cultures. When we visit a new place, it is much more enriching if we will take the time to learn about the conditions of life there, the challenges of the local economy, the history of the place, the artistic and historical heritage, or even some of the local language.

Driving long distances with family and friends puts us in a situation to get to know one another better by sharing our thoughts, feelings, and dreams. Summer vacations provide opportune moments to listen more carefully to what is going on in the life of the other and to share from the heart.

Our travels also allow us to serve as ambassadors of the faith, no matter where we go. By the way we treat the strangers we meet, we can bring them the love of Christ. Through the way we carry ourselves, the way we practice the virtues, and the words we choose, we can witness to our faith along the journey. If we do this, we will make a positive impact on the people we encounter.

Prayer

The summer is not intended to be a vacation from God. A fundamental part of being Catholic is participating actively in Sunday Mass throughout the year. It is not difficult to find Mass when we travel, especially if we take advantage of an online tool such as masstimes.org, which also offers an automated church lookup service by calling 1-858-207-6277.

Deacon Michael LaMonica in Midland has helped to start a new retreat center called The Way Retreat Center. Deacon Mike Medina oversees and trains our volunteers and clergy who serve in prison ministry. Deacon Clemente Villa is the pastoral coordinator of St. Joseph Parish in Stanton and its mission in Lenorah. An older, retired man, he provides sacramental ministry, but when people need things done, they go to Deacon Clemente.

You served for many years in campus ministry at Texas A&M. Along with many other priestly and religious vocations, you are one of two Aggie bishops connected to that campus ministry.

What’s in the water at Texas A&M?

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What’s in the water at Texas A&M?
In every age and moment.“ He knows well what the need is for you, guide you, and push you where He wishes. He knows what the need is in every age and moment.”

Office of Catholic Schools
- Regulates and monitors Catholic schools in the diocese

Office of Immigration
- Processes all documentation for international priests and sisters
- Provides services to legal immigrants for visa renewals, permanent residence status, family immigration matters, and for citizenship

Office of Human Resources
- Provides norms to develop, implement, and monitor guidelines for employees, hiring, benefits, termination, and relationships between the employer and employees
- Provides Employee Policies Handbook for diocesan offices, and guidelines for parish policies
- Administers Safe Environment Program through Extensive Background Check, Monitoring, and Safe Environment and Ethics Training for priests, deacons, seminarians, employees, and volunteers
- Ethics Training for ministers
- Child Abuse Protection Training for parents
- Utilizes the Diocesan Review Board for review of alleged abuse cases
- Victim Assistance Coordinator to assist victims of sexual abuse
- Provides Hi/R training for parishes

Office of Communication
- Publishes the West Texas Angelus;
- Provides news coverage of diocesan events;
- Maintains diocesan communications through Flocknotes and through diocesan email system;
- Creation and maintenance of the diocesan web page;
- Maintains and updates the diocesan directory

JUBILEE
(From 9)

none-churched reside and are perishing.

In the words of Pope Francis: “There is no greater freedom than that of letting oneself be carried by the Spirit, refusing to calculate and to control everything, and allow Him to illuminate you, lead you, guide you, and push you where He wishes. He knows what the need is in every age and moment.”

OPINIO
(From 18)

When Pope Francis speaks of “a poor church for the poor,” he is not asking Catholics to imagine poverty or to do something that the church — the people of God — cannot accomplish.

He comes from a part of the American continent where hundreds of millions live in poverty and many church organizations and leaders, inspired by the Gospel, have championed efforts to confront this social ill. He knows that the work is unfinished. In his present role as the bishop of Rome, he challenges all Christians to do likewise everywhere poverty exists.

One opportunity for Catholics in the United States to experience the freshness with which God has gifted the Catholic world in recent years is through the process of the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry, a priority initiative of the Catholic bishops in the country (see www.vencuento.org).

The V Encuentro embodies many aspects of Pope Francis’ prophetic vision for evangelization, a vision deeply informed by his Latin American experience. The V Encuentro is a moment to speak and think "in Spanish" — literally and metaphorically. It is an invitation to be a poor church for the poor, a true moment of Catholic renewal.

Many speak of the "Francis effect." Yes, there is one in our country. However, I think that much of that "effect" actually started several decades before Pope Francis, thanks to the exponential growth of the Latino Catholic population since the middle of the 20th century.

When the pope speaks and acts, his message finds fertile ground in the hearts of millions of U.S. Catholics, particularly Latinos, who share with him important religious and cultural roots.

In four years, Pope Francis, the first Latino pope, has brought to the fore much of the energy, language and initiatives that Latinos share with the rest of the church in the United States. Let us allow ourselves to share in this moment of grace.

Ospino is professor of theology and religious education at Boston College. He is a member of the leadership team for the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry.

LATINO
(Para 18)

sentido profundo que exigen un discernimiento cuidadoso para comprenderlas a la luz del contexto en que surgieron. Otras veces se trata de una manera de entender la realidad desde una perspectiva latina. El Papa está compartiendo con los católicos del mundo entero maneras de interpretar la fe que son increíblemente valiosas y hermosas, las cuales tienen relevancia universal.

Cuando el papa Francisco habla de "una iglesia pobre para los pobres", no nos está pidiendo a los católicos que nos imaginemos la pobreza o que hagamos algo que la iglesia - el pueblo de Dios -- no pueda asumir como identidad.

El viernes de una parte del continente americano en donde cientos de millones de personas son pobres y muchas organizaciones y líderes católicos, inspirados por el Evangelio, están a la vanguardia de esfuerzos para confrontar esta enfermedad social. Él sabe que la tarea no está terminada. En su misión actual como obispo de Roma, nos desafía a todos los cristianos a hacer lo mismo en donde exista la pobreza.

Los católicos en los Estados Unidos tenemos una oportunidad para unirnos a este aire de frescura, el cual es regalo de Dios para el mundo católico en general, por medio del Quinto Encuentro Nacional de Ministerio Hispano/Latino. El V Encuentro es una prioridad para todos los diócesis de los obispos católicos del país (ver www.vencuento.org).

El V Encuentro hace vida muchos de los aspectos de la visión profética del papa Francisco sobre la evangelización, una visión que está profundamente inspirada en su experiencia latinoamericana. El V Encuentro es un momento para hablar y pensar "en español" -- literal y metafóricamente. Es una invitación a ser una iglesia pobre para los pobres, un verdadero momento de renovación católica.

Muchos hablan del "efecto Francisco". Me parece que sí es posible sentir ese efecto en nuestro país. Sin embargo, pienso que ese "efecto" de hecho comenzó unas décadas antes del papa Francisco gracias al crecimiento extraordinario de la población latina en los Estados Unidos de mediados del siglo 20.

Cuando el papa habla y actúa, su mensaje encuentra terreno fértil en los corazones de millones de católicos estadounidenses, especialmente latinos, quienes compartimos con él muchas raíces religiosas y culturales.

En cuatro años el papa Francisco, el primer papa latino, ha puesto de relieve la mucha energía, el lenguaje y las iniciativas que los latinos compartimos con el resto de la iglesia en los Estados Unidos. Regocijémonos en este momento de gracia.

Ospino es profesor de teología y educación religiosa en Boston College. Es miembro del equipo de liderazgo del Quinto Encuentro Nacional de Pastoría Hispano/Latina.
Participants at Christ the King Retreat Center chapel, for “Light the Fire Within,” June 2-3 in San Angelo. (Courtesy photo)

More than 100 participate in Life in the Spirit Seminar

By Fr. Tom Barley

On June 2-3, more than 100 people participated in “Come Light the Fire Within: a Life in the Spirit Seminar” at Christ the King Retreat Center, celebrating the glorious coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.

The seminar presented with an explanation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit. Bishop Michael Sis gave a welcoming presentation. He outlined the papal support this style of prayer has received since that retreat.

The days were filled with praising God. Many participants prayed with an explanation of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit for their prayers for others. The seminar ended with the celebration of a Spirit-filled Mass of the Solemnity of Pentecost and then wonderful fellowship.

On a personal note, in my experiences of prayer I have felt the power of the Rosary, Benediction, and the Sacraments, especially the Eucharist. I have prayed using Scripture and the Divine Office. I have prayed with monks, priests, laity, the infirmed and the incarcerated. Each form of prayer has been beautiful and powerful.

A year ago, in July, allegations surfaced in a report by the Australian Broadcasting Corp. featuring several people who accused Cardinal Pell of sexual assault; at least one of the accusations had been found to be unsubstantiated by an Australian court in 2002. Some accusations dated to the late 1970s, when Cardinal Pell was a priest in Ballarat.

Speaking to reporters at the Vatican June 29, the cardinal said, "All along I have been completely consistent and clear in my total rejection of these allegations. News of these charges strengthens my resolve, strengthens my resolve. And court proceedings now offer me an opportunity to clear my name and then return here, back to Rome, to work."

When the allegations surfaced last year, Cardinal Pell dismissed them as "nothing more than a scandalous smear campaign," and a statement issued by his office said that "claims that he has sexually abused anyone, in any place, at any time in his life are totally untrue and completely wrong."

In October, Australian police questioned Cardinal Pell in Rome regarding the accusations.

While Burke, the Vatican spokesman, told reporters that the Vatican respects the Australian justice system, he also said people should remember that Cardinal Pell "has openly and repeatedly condemned as immoral and intolerable the acts of abuse committed against minors" and, as a bishop, "introduced systems and procedures both for the protection of minors and to provide assistance to victims of abuse."

Archbishop Anthony Fisher of Sydney, in a statement released shortly after the cardinal's news conference, said, "Many people will be shocked, as I have been, by the news that Victoria Police have issued charges against Cardinal George Pell in relation to sexual abuse allegations."

"Cardinal Pell has repeatedly and vehemently rejected these allegations and insisted that he is completely innocent," the archbishop said. "He will now have the opportunity to put his case in court and is determined to clear his name."

"The George Pell I know is a man of integrity in his dealings with others, a man of faith and high ideals, a thoroughly decent man," the archbishop added.

Archbishop Fisher said the Archdiocese of Sydney will "assist with the cardinal's accommodation and support, as it would for any of its bishops or priests" as the legal process unfolds, however, he said, "it is not responsible for the cardinal's legal bills arising from these matters."

"Where complaints of abuse are made, victims should be listened to with respect and compassion and their complaints investigated and dealt with according to law," Archbishop Fisher said. At the same time, "no one should be prejudged because of their high profile, religious convictions or positions on social issues."

Contributing to this story was Carol Glatz.