Youth convention draws largest crowd ever

BY JENNIFER KODYSZ
CORRESPONDENT

For months the excitement was mounting; a Twitter feed on the Austin Diocesan Catholic Youth Conference (DCYC) webpage kept participants informed, urged them to pray and get excited about the event that brought about 2,200 people to the Waco Convention Center Jan. 20-22. They came from more than 80 parishes throughout the diocese.

This year’s conference drew about 400 more participants than DCYC in 2011. The theme “Unafraid,” was based on Hebrews 13:6, “Thus we may say with confidence: ‘the Lord is my helper [and] I will not be afraid, what can anyone else do to me?’” It was also based on the message “Be not afraid,” from Blessed Pope John Paul II, and used an image of the crucifix as its logo.

The excitement was evident each time the conference doors opened for the sessions; participants eagerly awaited Mass, prayer services, skits, entertainment and keynote speakers Ennie Hickman and Jackie François.

In his keynote session on Friday evening, Hickman offered a challenge for the weekend. For the first part of his challenge, he encouraged participants to “be intentionally quiet,” so they could hear God speaking to them. The second part of his challenge was to “give God space,” to work in their lives; the final part of his challenge was to “respond,” to God.

François used her musical talents to incorporate secular and worship music into her keynote sessions where she discussed love, faith and what it means to be Catholic in our society.

“We should never leave Mass the same … every time we leave Mass we should be transformed by the body and blood of Christ,” she said.

Saturday began with daily Mass celebrated by Father Michael O’Connor, pastor of St. John Vianney Parish in Round Rock. The day included multiple rounds of workshops in the morning and afternoon. Participants were able to choose from workshops topics about saints, Scripture, social justice, youth ministry, music ministry and much more. Workshops included female and male only sessions, sessions for adults only and workshops offered in Spanish. On Saturday evening, teens who are seniors in high school had the opportunity to eat dinner with Bishop Joe Vásquez.

Participants were also offered an opportunity to go to the sacrament of reconciliation at various times throughout the weekend and experience Eucharistic adoration Saturday evening, which was led by Father Charlie Garza, associate pastor of Santa Cruz Parish in Buda.

Father Garza used the conference theme of “Unafraid,” to talk about fears and asking God to help us overcome our fears.

“When we offer our fears to God, they become transformed,” he said.

Sunday morning concluded with Mass celebrated by Bishop Vásquez. He encouraged the participants to take their experiences and what they learned over the course of the weekend, and go out and share it with others.

He also spoke about prayer and told participants to “be unafraid to pray … Jesus on the cross is our hope,” he said.

See DCYC on Page 3
From the cry room

I know I can hear, but do I listen?

BY SHELLEY METCALF
CATHOLIC SPIRIT STAFF

I chuckled to myself as I listened to the first reading on Jan. 15 where God is calling Samuel as he is sleeping in the temple. Poor Samuel is confused and thinks it’s Eli calling him time after time but finally Eli, the wise man that he is, realizes what is going on.

“Sheilah is coming in to get her ice cream. It’s been too long since her last visit. Poor child, how did you let her get this old without a little attention?”

“Eli told her to come and revealed his presence, calling out as before, “Sheila! Sheila!” Samuel answered, “Speak, for your servant is listening.”

Poor old Samuel grew up, and the LORD was with him, not permitting any word of his to be without effect,” 1 Sm 3: 10-19, 19.

I have to admit that this type of thing happens at my house all the time, but it’s not God who is calling, or then again, maybe it is! My 4-year-old daughter has a habit of calling for me all the time. When we are together, only a minute or two can pass before I hear “Momma?” in that sweet little voice and if I don’t answer, I hear “Momma?” times four or five and a thousand.

This little habit of hers can be annoying, especially since most of the time she is not hurt or sick and she does not need me, she is just making sure I am within earshot.

Sometimes that little voice saying “Momma?” invades my dreams, kind of like God calling him time after time but finally, he is calling, and if I don’t answer, I hear “Momma?” times four or five and a thousand.

This is calling me, but it is not God. It is more likely that I am in need to hear my own voice and ask, “Who is calling?”

I love this story of Samuel, and the key point of the story for me is learning the voice of God. At first, Samuel did not know God was the one who was calling him, and Eli had to help Samuel recognize God’s voice. I feel like Samuel quite often because I don’t recognize God’s voice much of the time. When I hear my daughter’s little voice in the middle of the night, my eyes pop open, my heart starts pounding and my feet hit the floor running. My response to God’s voice is rarely as significant. Although there are times when I hear God calling to me and act immediately, typically I feel him calling me but I refuse to recognize it is God. In fact, he usually has to repeat himself over and over again before I recognize him and listen to what he is telling me.

I think there are two lessons for me in all of this. One is that God is forgiving, patient and persistent. He is going to keep calling me until I recognize it is him and listen with an open heart.

The other is that when my daughter calls “Momma?” I should not answer with my typical exasperated “What?!” Perhaps, my response should be something like, “Speak, child, your mother is listening.” Or maybe I just need to give her lots of hugs and kisses and tell her how much I love her, which is probably why she calls to me anyway.

Sister Palacios died at age of 90 in Bremham

Poor Clare Sister Mary Joseph Palacios died Jan. 22 at the age of 90. She was born in Oregen and prior to becoming a religious sister, she was married and had three children. She joined the Monastery of St. Clare in Corpus Christi in 1979 and moved to the Bremham monastery.

For more than 25 years, Sister Palacios held the roles of cook, bread maker, ceramic painter, artist and storyteller at the Bremham monastery.

She is survived by her three children, three grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

The Mass of Christian burial was celebrated Jan. 24 by Father David Ivy, pastor of St. Mary Parish in Bremham.

Father Niehaus died from cancer Jan. 19

Schoenstatt Father Jonathan Niehaus died of lung cancer in Koblenz, Germany, on Jan. 19. Father Niehaus was born June 5, 1960, the oldest of six children of Veronica and Melvin Niehaus. He graduated from Ivanhoe High School in 1978 and from Southwest State University in 1982.

He joined the community of Schoenstatt Fathers and lived at their house of studies in Muenster, Germany, while attending classes at the Wilhelm University of Muenster. After finishing his studies there, he served one year as dean at St. Mary Parish Elm Grove, Wisc. Bishop Raymond Lucker ordained him to the priesthood on June 4, 1994 in Sleepy Eye, Minn.

Beginning in 1996, Father Niehaus devoted his time to the formation of Schoenstatt youth and he wrote several books on Schoenstatt spirituality.

He came to Austin in 2005 to join the community of Schoenstatt Fathers and soon thereafter Bishop Gregory Aymond appointed him director of the H.L. Grant Catholic Student Center at Texas State University in San Marcos.

In 2009, the Schoenstatt community called him to join the team of educators in Germany, from there he travelled to India, Africa and South America. Last September doctors discovered Father Niehaus had lung cancer that had metastasized to other parts of the body.

A memorial Mass was held Jan. 23 at the H.L. Grant Catholic Student Center in San Marcos. A memorial fund in honor of Father Niehaus has been established at the center. All donations will be used to support the missionary efforts of Saint Paul’s Outreach operating at the center. For more information, visit www.txstatecatholic.org or call (512) 392-5925.
Retreat seeks to keep teens, young adults active in faith

BY ENEDELIA J. OREJON
SENIOR CORRESPONDENT

There’s a great debate as to why Catholics leave the church as young adults. While the hard numbers, discerned through anecdotal evidence has people like Gracia Ávila worried. For several years, she and others at St. Thomas More Parish in Austin have searched for ways to stop young Catholics from falling away from the church.

“I noticed once they were confirmed or graduated we lost a lot of teens,” said Ávila, who with her husband, has volunteered their own now-grown children were teenagers. “A lot of things seem to get in the way. I wanted to find something that helps young adults transition from high school to college.”

Meanwhile, Joseph Pearson, a fellow parishioner, had approached Msgr. Mike Sis, then pastor at St. Thomas More, about bringing Teens Encounter Christ (TEC) to the Austin Diocese. TEC is a recognized movement of the Roman Catholic Church that offers teenagers and young adults an experience in the Paschal Mystery of Jesus through a three-day retreat. The program is specifically designed for teenagers at least 17 years old and in their senior semester as juniors in high school through age 24. Pearson attended TEC in 1978 at age 17.

Msgr. Sis left St. Anthony Marie de Sales as the vicar general in 2010, and St. Margaret Mary Parish in Cedar Park is now on the TEC core team.

“By the time teens are juniors or seniors they’ve met nearly everybody” in parish teen programs, he said. “By this age they are ready to meet people outside their immediate scope. It’s an opportunity to meet the larger church.”

Having a diocesan-wide program also allows small parishes with fewer resources the opportunity for their teenagers and young adults to participate. Megan Copeland, a parishioner at St. John Vianney Parish, Round Rock, attended TEC as a youngster.

“The assistant youth minister asked me to go,” she said of the reason for attending the TEC retreat. “I was agnostic at that point. I think God was using him. Otherwise I’d still be agnostic.”

For Allison Reeves, 21, who grew up Catholic, the change came when she moved away for a couple of years and she “lost touch” with her faith. The Texas State University student and parishioner at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Cedar Park, said Msgr. Sis left St. Anthony Marie de Sales as the vicar general in 2010, and Pearson worked with Msgr. Eiler Holtman to request permission for TEC to come to the diocese.

Their request was granted, and Msgr. Joseph Koeleartiz, the diocesan director of Youth, Young Adults and Campus Ministry, is excited about the new opportunity for teens.

“The TEC is a national program with a long tradition in the United States, and the Diocese of Austin is happy to be a new part of that movement,” she said.

Bishop Joe Vázquez appointed Msgr. Holtman as spiritual director for TEC in February 2011.

Pearson invited the Ávila, Msgr. Sis, and five others to attend a TEC weekend in January 2011 in New Orleans and attended a summer retreat in Kansas. That core group of adults, young adults and teenagers will share their experiences at the first three-day TEC retreat March 16-18 at Eagle’s Wings Retreat Center near Burnet.

The young people are eager to share their faith and the excitement of the experience, which they say is unlike any retreat they have ever attended.

Lauren Afflerbaugh, 20, a sophomore at Texas Christian University, drove to Kansas with her father to attend a TEC weekend last summer.

“Everyone is there voluntarily — it’s not like a Confirmation retreat where you have to go,” she said. “It’s more mature and more reflective.”

Melinda Szavo, a freshman at St. Edward’s University and parishioner at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Cedar Park, compared it to the difference between high school and college.

“In high school, you’re there because you have to,” she said. “In college, you are paying because you want to be there.”

Jimmy Colter, 18 and a senior at Westwood High School in Austin, said he has attended numerous retreats and thought this would be another fun experience with an opportunity to participate in fun activities and meet new people.

“It was different,” he said. “We spent a lot of time listening to others.”

Avila said the in-depth faith sharing at TEC is firmly grounded in Catholic teaching and makes one “proud to be Catholic.” This includes not only teens sharing, but adults and people in religious life.

Colter said teens “have to be courageous” to attend TEC.

“You have to go and just say ‘yes’ when Jesus called his disciples,” Colter said. “They dropped everything to follow him. That’s what you have to do. Just follow and trust.”

The group also enjoyed the intergenerational aspect of the weekend, since there were adults of various ages helping. One of those was Leland Butler, 67, a parishioner at St. Thomas More, who wonders how his life would have been different if he’d been able to attend TEC as a youngster.

“I had to pay my ‘tuition’ in life,” he said.

Eleven teens from parishes across the diocese also served in the unique leadership position of youth animators for the weekend. More than 40 teens applied to serve in this way; those who were chosen acted in skits, led hand motions for the theme song, introduced the keynote speakers and got the crowd excited for upcoming sessions. The teens also shared faith together, as they lifted each other up in prayer in their personal lives as well as at the conference.

“They were aware of the fact they were one of many applicants; they were honored and humbled and that showed at every retreat and rehearsal weekend and during DCYC,” said Marlene Lopez, Youth Animator coordinator.

Yvonne Hernandez, a teen from St. Anthony Marie de Claret Parish in Kyle, enjoyed her experience at DCYC.

“I’ve had a really amazing time. It’s something that you have to come and do and see for yourself. It’s an awesome experience and it makes you feel like a totally new person,” she said.

Tiara Kirk, also a teen from St. Anthony Parish, agreed.

“My faith has been strengthened. It’s just a really great experience,” she said.

March 16-18 at Eagle’s Wings Retreat Center near Burnet.

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You have to experience it for yourself … you’re going to change afterwards if you let the Spirit move you,” she said.
The centuries-old tradition of stained glass windows has received a new, yet traditional, look at Emmaus, Church of the Resurrection Parish in Lakeway.

Last September the parish installed three stained glass windows depicting a landscape in the adoration chapel.

Father Samuel Hose, pastor of Emmaus Parish, said the response to the new windows in the chapel has been overwhelming.

"Last year after we opened the chapel, we had presentations and sign-ups for perpetual adoration and we had overwhelming response," he said. "The environment is part of the reason."

Father Hose said when he arrived at Emmaus in June 2007, discussions began on expanding the facilities, including adding an adoration chapel. The building committee chose Heimsath Architects of Austin to oversee the expansion. The architectural firm has worked with churches for many years.

As plans progressed, Father Hose said the idea arose for having stained glass windows in the chapel. However, that was an added cost.

"We always intended to have stained glass," he said, but to do that a few years later. However, a couple in the parish, who wish to remain anonymous, offered $40,000 for the windows if the parish would match the other $40,000. The matching money was quickly raised and architect Ben Heimsath got to work on plans for the windows.

The windows were made at Dick Bour Artglass in Fayetteville.

Heimsath, a parishioner at the University Catholic Center at the University of Texas, got his inspiration from the former Ursuline Academy in San Antonio, built in 1851 and includes a Gothic Revival style chapel. The academy is now the Southwest School of Art.

Father Hose got his inspiration from a Chagall stained-glass window at the Art Institute of Chicago. Working with Father Hose, the donors and Joan Brown, who is in charge of the perpetual adoration schedule, Heimsath rendered their ideas into a design.

The windows, which face roughly north to southeast, wrap around three of the walls in the hexagonal shaped chapel, bringing the eye to the focal point, which is the crucifix and the stone altar with the monstarnce containing the Blessed Sacrament. The wood on the wall behind the altar is a gothic-shaped arch motif to reflect the images of the gothic arches from the church.

As one walks in, the small window to the left of the altar may seem like an afterthought, but it continues the sky scene from the three large panels and contains more blues. The window also holds the sanctuary flame and shares a wall with the new Parish Life Center, and can be seen by those walking through the PLC area.

"We wanted to connect it with the rest of the space," Heimsath said. "We wanted a reminder that this isn't just a social hall. What happens (in the PLC) is a continuation of what is happening in the adoration chapel. We wanted to remind people that day-to-day activities are an element of prayer and all levels of activity here are a celebration of our faith."

A giant cypress tree — a traditional symbol of eternal life — dominates one panel. Its vine-covered branches with bunches of grapes stretch into the other two panels. The giant tree in brown also helps diffuse the intense morning sun.

A seed is depicted at the bottom of each panel. As the eye moves toward the top at the apex of each window, one can see a cross. It is a reminder that the seed that became Jesus through the Incarnation died on the cross.

Heimsath said the panels are traditional in some ways but modern in others.

"This is an adoration chapel," he said. "So the focus needs to be on the Blessed Sacrament. The tree is a way to sew together the three designs."

Heimsath said having figures in the glass windows would distract from the Blessed Sacrament. Because of the nuance of shapes and color on faces, the faces on figures would have to be painted in. That would also require more frequent restoration.

"I suggested pictures, but not figures, which can be distracting," he said. "The action in the windows was to point the way to the monstarnce."

The windows are dominated by bold colors such as cobalt blue, greens and reds, Heimsath said. Because the parish has Perpetual Adoration, there are people inside praying at all hours of the day and night. They did not want the windows to be a black void at night.

The colors on the windows change from bold in the morning to softer, diffused tones in the late afternoon light. The light will also change with the seasons. As the sunlight refracts on the colored glass, the colors are reflected on the walls in the chapel and across the crucifix and monstarnce.

"The windows change the light and make the space livable," he said. "We have such strong, intense sun that we had to manage it. That's why we have the tree."

Father Hose said the adoration chapel makes it convenient for retreats such as Christ Renew His Parish and ACTS, which have adoration as central to the experience.

"We have it right here," he said. "If we can have people grow in their faith then those people become more involved in liturgy and are more willing to serve others."

Father Hose said creating an atmosphere that invites people to prayer pays for itself in countless ways. Something as traditional as a stained glass window with the symbols embedded give people a special environment for prayer.

"It's some place between heaven and earth," he said.
Workshop helps explain annulment process

The Austin Diocese will host an Annulment Writing Workshop Feb. 10 from 7 to 9 p.m. and Feb. 11 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Austin. The workshop will give participants a step-by-step explanation of annulment procedures, including how to tell one’s story and how to find witnesses to back up one’s story. The sessions incorporate prayer breaks throughout with an emphasis on healing the pain that often surfaces during the annulment process. The cost of the workshop is $30. For more information or to register, contact Pat Thompson at (512) 970-7063.

Silver Ring Thing focuses on abstinence

The Diocese of Austin and The John Paul II Life Center are hosting “The Silver Ring Thing – Catholic Edition” Feb. 17 at St. Michael’s Catholic Academy in Austin. The Silver Ring Thing promotes abstinence until marriage based on a Christ-focused relationship. The program has been presented more than 870 times in eight countries and has shared Christ’s forgiveness with more than 500,000 teens, 200,000 of whom have committed to strive for chastity. The Silver Ring Thing presents two concurrent programs: one for teens and one for parents. For more information, e-mail silverage@austindiocese.org.

Pastoral care for dying is topic of workshop

The diocesan Commission on Aging and the Chaplain Services Department of Seton Hospital will present a free workshop on Pastoral Care for the Sick and Dying Feb. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to noon in McFadden Auditorium at Seton Medical Center in Austin. The workshop will cover the church’s prayers and rituals for the sick and dying and church teaching on end of life and other pastoral care issues. Register by calling Yvonne Saldaña at (512) 949-2486 or e-mailing yvonne-saldana@austindiocese.org no later than Feb. 14.

Engaged couples invited to marriage prep

“Together in God’s Love,” a marriage preparation class, will begin Feb. 21 from 7 to 9:30 p.m. at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Austin. Subsequent classes will be held Feb. 28, March 6 and 13. The program will be offered in retreat format March 30-April 1 at Cedarbrake Catholic Retreat Center in Belton. Couples preparing for marriage are encouraged to register as soon as possible, as these classes fill quickly. The classes include talks on faith, communication, sexuality and stewardship in the context of Catholic marriage. For registration information, contact your parish or the diocesan Catholic Family Life and Family Counseling Office at (512) 949-2495 or rick-bologna@austindiocese.org.

Struggling couples invited to retreat

Retrovise (pronounced retro-vise) has helped couples at all stages of disillusionment or misery in their marriage. For confidential information about or to register for the February English program beginning with a weekend on Feb. 24-26, call 1-800-470-2230 or visit www.HelpOurMarriage.com.

Cedarbrake offers Lenten retreats

“Old and New Testament Dreams: What do they tell us?” will be presented Feb. 18 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Cedarbrake Catholic Retreat Center in Belton. This day of reflection will reflect on ways God speaks to us today. The cost is $30.

An Ash Wednesday day of reflection will be held Feb. 22 from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. at Cedarbrake. The day will include Mass and the distribution of ashes. The cost is $30, which includes lunch.

“Discerning God’s Will In Our Lives,” a Lenten retreat, will be held March 23-25 at Cedarbrake. The Apostles of the Interior Life Sisters will help participants discern God’s will in their lives during this retreat. The cost is $155 for shared rooms or $185 for a private room.

A day of reflection on Holy Week will be held March 28 at Cedarbrake. Holy Cross Father Bill Wack will help participants enter more fully into the mystery of Jesus’ passion, death and resurrection. The cost is $30, which includes lunch.

For more information on any of these events, contact Cedarbrake at (512) 780-2436 or cedarbrake@austindiocese.org.

Workshop focuses on women in Third World

The Theresians of Austin and the Austin Council of Catholic Women will host an event entitled “Women for Women: Awareness in Action” March 8 from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Thomas More Parish in Austin. The program will feature presentations highlighting aspects of Catholic Relief Services work for women and children around the world, HIV/Aids and health issues and economic development through fair trade. Fair trade merchants will have goods for sale. To pre-register e-mail Gerti Mistko at gerti.mistko@prutxrealty.com or call Eunice Washa at (512) 258-5243.

Tickets on sale for Pro-Life Benefit Gala

The Pro-Life Benefit Gala will be held April 14 at the Renaissance Austin Hotel and will feature Bishop Joe Vasquez and George Weigel. Weigel is a renowned theologian and author of the best-selling biography of Blessed John Paul II, “Witness to Hope.” Sponsorships are also available. For more information and to purchase tickets, visit www.centerstatexprolife.org or call (512) 949-2486.
Bulb of Tribunal’s work focuses on marriage

Editor’s note: Over the next few months, the Catholic Spirit will feature a series of articles about the diocesan Office of Canonical and Tribunal Services, which handles a variety of tasks dealing with the laws of the church.

By Harvey Bollich and Michele Chan Santos

Correspondents

The diocesan Office of Canonical and Tribunal Services at the Pastoral Center in Austin exists to help the bishop carry out the laws of the church, which is known as canon law. Some of the primary duties of the Tribunal, as the office is commonly known, are to help those who are preparing to be married or who are seeking an annulment of a previous marriage.

On television at this very moment, there are a number of reality shows about couples in the process of getting married. Their focus is on the gown, the party, the food and church decorations, but not on the religious meaning of the ceremony or the purpose of marriage itself. For the Catholic Church, marriage is a sacrament and it is not to be taken lightly.

The sacrament of marriage

Deacon John Pickwell, who has worked with engaged and married couples for more than eight years, reminds couples that through their marital vocation, they undertake a heavy but not impossible burden.

“St. Paul emphasized that matrimonial love reminds us of the love which Christ has for his bride, the church,” he said. “For those baptized in Christ, marriage is a sacrament — a mystery and a sign — that communicates God’s grace.”

In today’s society, about half of all marriages, including those of Catholics, end in divorce, and most divorced couples later remarry. Therefore, the knowledge and the counsel of the Tribunal are in high demand. The Austin Tribunal Office handles about 250 cases per year, according to Deborah Patin, the office’s case manager and office manager.

Deacon Pickwell, who works in the Tribunal as an assessor or judge’s assistant, said when it comes to marriages, the Tribunal’s work is governed by the church’s canon 1055.

“The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life and which is ordered by its nature to the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring, has been willed by God to be a spiritual and healing experience for people seeking an annulment.”

Based on canon law, the church has a fully developed legal system. In the Austin Diocese, Father Christopher Ferrer is the judicial vicar and Father Josef Musiol is the adjunct judicial vicar and tribunal judge. The appeals court for the Austin Diocese is located in San Antonio and the Roman Rota, the church’s “Supreme Court” is in Rome.

Robert Pine, a case manager and defender of the bond for the Tribunal, said 75 percent of the cases handled by the local Tribunal are related to annulments. For example, if someone were married and then divorced, and later sought to remarry within the Catholic Church, they would need an annulment of their first marriage. A declaration of nullity states that, according to church law, a given marriage was not valid (and therefore not binding) at the time the couple spoke their marriage vows. Annulments are also sought by people who have divorced and remarried and want the current marriage validated by the Catholic Church. There are several different types of nullities (annulments); all of them are handled by the Tribunal.

Father Robert Kincl said the work of the diocesan Tribunal is one of the great works of justice and mercy by the church.

“A person should never fear approaching the Tribunal if he or she thinks a declaration of nullity is warranted. We are here to help with that process,” he said.

Deborah Patin, the Tribunal’s office manager and case manager, said working with people seeking annulments is a ministry of healing.

“It’s a healing process by which people who have divorced, which provides a new beginning,” she said.

When someone petitions for an annulment, they are represented by an advocate who is generally a priest or deacon from their parish. The Tribunal holds workshops to train the advocates in parishes on how best to assist parishioners in filing the proper forms and documents, said Deacon Ray Sanders, an assessor in the Tribunal, who organizes the advocate workshops.

The Tribunal also offers workshops to help people in writing their petitions for annulments. Pat Thompson organizes these workshops, and said they can be a spiritual and healing experience for people seeking an annulment.

History of marriage

The Catholic Church has a long history regarding the institution of marriage. In the first two centuries of the church, the typical Catholic wedding was held in the house of the bride’s family. The local bishop or priest was invited to pronounce the church’s blessing over the couple, a role otherwise performed by the bride’s father. Beginning in the next century, the wedding was transferred to the local church where more people could participate in the Eucharist in a public manner. The church became increasingly involved in rules for marriage because of the lack of uniform practices in the lands of the newly legalized Christian religion.

St. Leo the Great and St. Augustine clarified that marriage is between a man and a woman for the spiritual and material welfare of the couple and their children, and the couple’s commitment is marked by fidelity and permanence.

By the sixth century, the church assumed greater jurisdiction over marriage and other aspects of society for the sake of preserving the church and the concept of indissolubility became formally added to marital doctrine.

In reaction to the Protestant Reformation, the Council of Trent in the 16th century defined Matrimony as one of the seven sacraments, condemned polygamy and taught that certain marriages could be dissolved only by church authority.

The Second Vatican Council in the 1960s raised the mutual welfare of the spouses on par with the good of the children as the main purpose of marriage. Marriage is a bond of love and openness (openness to the fruit of life) and procreativity (openly to children). Recently, Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have strongly upheld the divine dignity of faithful, permanent and fruitful marriage.

For more information, go to the Tribunal’s website go to www.austindiocese.org, click on the “Ministries” tab and then on the link to Canonical and Tribunal Services or call the office at (512) 949-2477.

More information about Canon Law

What’s in the Code of Canon Law?

The Code consists of 1752 canons, divided into seven “books” (General Norms, the People of God, The Teaching Office of the Church, The Sanctifying Office of the Church, Temporal Goods, Sanctions, and Processes). The reason why we have so few laws for the Church (as opposed to, for example, the civil or criminal codes in the United States) is due to the fact that canon law is based upon Roman law, and not English common law. As such, it lays down basic principles that are then applied to individual cases by those who have the responsibility of governing the church.

The reason for law in the church

Sometimes people wonder why the church, inspired by the Spirit, needs a system of law. There is no opposition between those two things. As Pope John Paul II wrote when he issued the Code of Canon Law, “The Code [of Canon Law] is in no way intended as a substitute for faith, grace, charisms, and especially charity in the life of the church and of the faithful. On the contrary, its purpose is rather to create such an order in the ecclesial society that, while assigning the primacy to love, grace, and charisms, it at the same time renders their organic development easier in the life of both the ecclesial society and the individual persons who belong to it.” Thus, the laws of the church are meant to make it easier for us to use the gifts of the Spirit in a more organized and unified manner.

The three functions of law

In general, the laws of the church do three things: they specify rights, set forth duties, and provide for the vindication of rights. In specifying rights, the Code states who has a right to do something; for example, who has a right to receive the sacraments, who has a right to be consulted in church matters, who has a right to expect compensation for their work in the church. At the same time, church law specifies who has a duty to do certain things. It details, for example, the responsibilities of bishops and pastors, so that people can know what they can expect from the pastoral leaders of the church. Finally, the Code of Canon Law provides means by which people can vindicate their rights. Thus, if they do not feel their pastors are performing their duties correctly, or if they feel they have been injured by an action of another, or if they want to clarify their rights with regard to a previous marriage, people can approach the church in order to vindicate their rights.

The purpose of law

This is all in keeping with the purpose of law, which is to allow people to use their gifts in the service of the good of the whole church. This ensures that no one has to live out the gospel call without the help of those who have been baptized. All that we do is done in the context of the community of believers. The Code of Canon Law assures that we have unity in our service to one another, and that those who believe their rights have not been respected are able to gain a fair hearing.

— Father Pat Leggess

Reprinted with permission from the Archdiocese of Chicago
Lenten conference focuses on healing

“A Lenten Journey of Healing,” the seventh annual Lenten women’s conference sponsored by the San José Council of Catholic Women, will be held Feb. 25 from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. at San José Parish in Austin. The conference will offer a time for reflection, prayer and sharing on the many aspects of healing during the Lenten season. The keynote speaker will be Father Charlie Garza. The registration fee is $25, which includes lunch and materials (not guaranteed for registrations after Feb. 15). For information and to register, contact Rosie Castillo at rcastillo@sanjosechurch.org or at (512) 444-7587 or Lydia Ruiz at ruz_lydia49@yahoo.com or call (512) 523-8327.

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Peter Kreeft visits Austin on March 3

St. John Neumann Parish in Austin will present a retreat featuring writer and philosopher Peter Kreeft on March 3 from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. The theme of the day is “Whom Do We Meet in the Eucharist?” In his 40 years as an academic, Kreeft has written “Angels (and Demons): What Do We Really Know About Them?,” “How to Win the Culture War,” “Because God is Real: Sixteen Questions, One Answer,” and “Everything You Ever Wanted to Know about Heaven ... But Never Dreamed of Asking.” He has been a professor of philosophy at Boston College since 1965 and also teaches at King’s College in New York. The cost is $30 in advance (visit www.sjnaustin.org to register) or $40 at the door.

Kreeft will also present on the topic of “Catholics and Muslims” during a sponsored dinner the evening of March 3 as well as at the weekly “Between the Masses” series on Sunday morning. For more information regarding these presentations, contact Nancy Biehler at nbiehler@sjnaustin.org.

To advertise, call (512) 949-2443.
Brenham priest stays busy despite retirement

BY AMY MORACZEWSKI
CORRESPONDENT

Nine years into retirement, Msgr. Benedict Zientek is enjoying his days back in Central Texas. After serving in the Diocese of San Angelo for more than 40 years, Msgr. Zientek returned to his roots in Brenham, where he was ordained a priest in 1958.

He now resides on the farm in Brenham where he and his six siblings were raised picking cotton, milking cows, and raking hay. He lives on 20 of the original 150 acres of farmland that his family has called home since 1939. To Msgr. Zientek, home is a farm called home since 1939. To Msgr. Zientek is only a farm. Since 1917, 11 priests have been raised in the parish, as well. Since 1917, 11 priests have been raised in the parish, and raking hay. He lives on 20 of the original 150 acres of farmland that his family has called home since 1939. To Msgr. Zientek is only a farm.

When not called to duty elsewhere, Msgr. Zientek is only minutes from his home parish of St. Mary’s in Brenham, where he attended grade school. The small German town, best known as the hometown of Brenham, has been a substantial producer of Catholic priests as well. Since 1917, 11 priests have been raised in the parish, beginning with Msgr. Zientek and his brother Msgr. Boleslaus Zientek, along with four of their cousins.

His younger brother actually served in the Diocese of Austin for 30 years before Austin City was reassigned to the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, where he is now retired. Despite the traditional notion of retirement, both brothers remain active in surrounding parishes. Msgr. Benedict Zientek likes to joke that he is “tired and retired.”

The 79-year-old priest refers to his new work as “week-end supply.” But given that the first two and a half months of 2012 were booked at various parishes before Thanksgiving, it appears he has yet to slow down. “Whenever somebody calls, I’ll go help,” Msgr. Zientek said. However, as the requests continue to pour in, Msgr. Zientek says he is learning to spell, “N-O.”

While his time at home is limited, Msgr. Zientek remains happy to travel and serve throughout the state. In early December, he traveled to the small town of Ellinger to celebrate their annual Polka Mass, a role he inherited from his cousin when he passed away. The Polka Mass was first celebrated in 1973 by Father Frank Perkovich in Minnesota but quickly spread across the U.S., and only 10 years after the inception, Pope John Paul II invited Father Perkovich to celebrate the Polka Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica.

Although the constant travel can be exhausting, Msgr. Zientek said that any gesture of appreciation makes it all worthwhile. “When people come and say ‘thank you,’ that means more than anything else,” Msgr. Zientek said.

This gratitude is often felt most in times of suffering. Msgr. Zientek emphasizes the importance of listening to people, especially when they have lost a loved one.

“At the time of death, people really express their emotions. For me this is always an important moment because that’s when people need someone to listen,” Msgr. Zientek said.

One of the most touching moments of his career occurred just recently after a funeral. While the priest received a pecan pie, along with a pound of pecans, from the widow and son. Msgr. Zientek was astonished when the gift arrived priority mail and during a pecan shortage no less. No gesture goes unnoticed by him.

Another memorable moment came while attending the 50th anniversary celebration of the Diocese of San Angelo in November. As the only priest present both now and in 1961 when the diocese was founded, Msgr. Zientek was honored to be seated next to Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, a privilege he had looked forward to for 53 years, he said.

The anniversary celebration spawned recollection of the early days, back when he arrived in San Angelo to continue what the Franciscans had started. At the time, all of the parishes in the city and surrounding towns were staffed by Franciscans, and while Msgr. Zientek was not initially affiliated with the order, he was later invited to join the Third Order of St. Francis, which is open to both ordained and lay people.

As the new kid on the block, Msgr. Zientek learned a great deal from his Franciscan friends, including the game of poker. He recalls another priest upstaging the bishop during his first evening at the poker table. After being asked, “Don’t you know you’re not supposed to beat the bishop?” the priest replied, “I put in as many chips as you did, Bishop, and I had the better hand.” In that moment, Msgr. Zientek found a new pastime, new friends and a new perspective on authority.

The Franciscan influence remains evident in West Texas, where many parishes include mission churches located up to 30 miles away. Msgr. Benedict Zientek earned his first job as pastor at St. Joseph in Rotan because of his ability to celebrate Mass in Spanish. With the parish, he also gained the mission of Aspenmont where he traveled each Sunday to celebrate Mass in a parishioner’s home. Since there was no church, and this was prior to the days of face-to-face reconciliation, he would hear confessions seated in a closet of the home.

While in Rotan, Msgr. Zientek received the nickname “Padre Otras Cosas” after announcing, in his limited Spanish, the upcoming meal of “tamales, menudo, enchiladas, y otras cosas” and a parishioner was disappointed to discover he could not get a plate of otras cosas (“other things”) for dinner. The nickname stuck for one lady who recently recognized the pastor from her childhood when she said Mass at St. Vincent Palotti Parish in Abilene.

“My lady, they haven’t forgotten me!” said Msgr. Zientek. From his hat to his suspenders to his years of faithful service as a priest, Msgr. Zientek is indeed a man who will never be forgotten.
Affordable housing crisis calls us to action

BY DONNA POSTON WILLIAMS
CORRESPONDENT

“We love our nativity sets which tout the fact that Jesus was born in a barn and slept in a feeding trough surrounded by farm animals – homeless,” Kevin Berry reflected. “But how do we react when we see someone sleeping under a bridge or on a park bench in our hometown?”

Berry, a parishioner at St. Theresa Parish in Austin and advocate for the homeless, recently spoke at a forum sponsored by his parish’s Ministry of Peace and Social Justice. Declaring an “affordable housing crisis here in Austin,” Berry explained, “the result is that we have a greater number of homeless. It’s becoming increasingly expensive to live in this city and the poverty rate continues to soar. This is a sad reality for many people. We have large families crowded into small deteriorating apartments in crime-ridden neighborhoods. Or even worse, some are living out of their cars or on the streets.”

Citing the Catholic Social Teaching, “a central and essential element of our faith,” Berry said Catholics are charged to “look out for the poorest and most vulnerable in our society,” and ensure their “basic necessities of life: food and shelter.”

He described his own volunteer work with Austin Habitat for Humanity and invited others to get involved.

Founded on the principle that “a home is at the heart of every family and every community,” Austin Habitat provides a home ownership program for low-income families. Simple, quality houses are built by volunteers and then sold to qualifying individuals who are currently residing in substandard, overcrowded or cost-burdensome housing.

“You need to be employed and earning between 25 percent and 30 percent of the median family income,” Berry explained. “For a family of four, that’s between $18,325 and $36,650 a year.”

Houses are built by Habitat volunteers and cost about $60,000, with a zero-interest mortgage over a period of 15 to 35 years. Families must put in at least 400 hours of service toward building their home and others as well as attend educational classes on finances and home ownership. Once in the home, families get help with home maintenance and have access to other support services.

“Austin Habitat for Humanity is celebrating its 25th anniversary, and during that time they have raised about $25 million to build and repair more than 300 homes locally,” Berry said. “With the help of more than 75,000 volunteers, who have rolled up their sleeves and picked up a paint brush or hammer, we have changed countless lives. Having a home means so much more that having a roof over your head,” Berry said. “It means dignity and self-worth.”

Berry pointed out that there are some families in Austin who won’t qualify for a Habitat home, “because they fail the background checks or they may have lost their job and just don’t have the income to pay the mortgage.”

Another local non-profit, Foundation Communities, catches those who fall through the cracks.

Since 1990, Foundation Communities has been providing affordable, attractive apartments and duplexes for families and individuals who have run out of options. They own and manage 16 different residential complexes, offering housing to more than 2,700 families, and crucial support services for a wide range of low income Austinites - from the steadily employed to the chronically homeless.

Usually referred by a case worker or a shelter, Foundation Communities allows for a variety of difficult circumstances. One, two and three bedroom apartments are available for employed families and rent is based on income. Some of their complexes have only efficiencies, furnished and designated for single adults facing homelessness. Rents start as low as $50 a month. Allowances are made for individuals who have no income at all.

There is no time limit for how long you can live in most of the 16 properties. Many residents stay for years, while others move out and buy their own home.

Foundation Communities’ mission is to create housing where individuals and families can gain their independence and succeed. The free support services they provide include one-on-one financial coaching, income tax preparation, after school care, adult literacy classes, nutrition and fitness classes.

Both Foundation Communities and Austin Habitat for Humanity rely heavily on the generosity of volunteers.

“We have a wonderful opportunity to participate in real solutions for the homeless,” Berry said. “It couldn’t be more clear...as Catholics we are called to action.”

The U.S. bishops have revamped their Poverty USA website (www.usccb.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/povertyusa/) and launched a new presence on Facebook (www.facebook.com/povertyusa).

ASHES TO EASTER LENTEN BOXES will be distributed to parishes this month. In years past, the boxes have been purple, but this year they are blue. During Lent, families are asked to contribute coins to the boxes and to pray for the missionaries for whom the money is collected. Last year, more than $100,000 was collected and distributed to various missionary groups who have ties to the Austin Diocese. Father Tom Frank, pastor of San José Parish in Austin, handles the distribution of the boxes and the diocesan Mission Council reviews the applications from missionaries seeking grants from the collection. For more information on the Ashes to Easter Lenten project, call Father Frank at (512) 444-7587.
Black Catholics’ survey finds strong ties to church

BY PATRICIA ZAPOR
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

African-American Catholics are much more engaged in their church on a variety of levels than are white Catholics, conclusions drawn from the first National Black Catholic Survey.

Whether in a majority black church, a mixed or mostly white parish, the survey found African-American Catholics feel satisfied and fulfilled in their parishes, explained retired Bishop John H. Ricard of Pensacola-Tallahassee, Fla., who is president of the National Black Catholic Congress.

By “engaged,” Bishop Ricard explained, the authors of the report mean African-Americans are involved in their parishes well beyond simply attending Mass somewhat regularly. That includes having strong networks of friends and family in their churches, participating in multiple parish activities and saying their spiritual, emotional and social needs are met there.

Bishop Ricard, who is rector of the Washington seminary of his religious order, the Josefshites, said the results of the survey surprised and pleased him and the leaders of the National Black Catholic Congress who commissioned it, along with the University of Notre Dame’s Institute for Church Life and the office of the school’s president.

“This is a bright spot for the church,” said Bishop Ricard at St. Joseph’s Seminary. Whatever their parish situation, a majority of African-American participants in the attitudinal survey conducted by Knowledge Networks, “feel affirmed and have decided they are going to stay Catholic,” he said. “It’s a very optimistic message.”

Among the conclusions of the survey were that black Catholics feel more committed to their parishes emotionally, spiritually and socially than do white Catholics. In those respects, as in many other aspects of the survey, black Catholics were shown to be much more like black Protestants in their approach to church than they are like white Catholics.

“Compared with other religious and racial groups, African-American Catholics behave and look like African-American Protestants,” said the executive summary written by study authors Darren W. Davis, a professor of political science and associate vice president for research at Notre Dame, and Donald B. Pope-Davis, profes-

Most Engaged

Religious engagement among blacks is markedly greater than among whites. Those who say they are ‘engaged’ or ‘strongly engaged’ in their church or parish:

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<th>Black Protestants</th>
<th>White Catholics</th>
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Source: 2011 National Black Catholic Survey

That model could hold lessons for dioceses and churches that are struggling to help immigrants from Latin America and Asia feel like they belong, he said. Like African-Americans, Latinos and Asian immigrants have a strong cultural sense of community, Bishop Ricard said. “There is less emphasis on the individual and more on the communitarian aspects of a church.”

For instance, black Catholics in the survey were much more likely to say it’s important that their friends attend their church. Just about 7 percent of white Catholics agreed with that statement. But 27 percent of black Catholics said so. Phrased another way, 48 percent of black Catholics said being with others in church is an important reason to go, compared with 26 percent of white Catholics, 38 percent of black Protestants and 52 percent of white Protestants.

The survey did find various aspects of church life where African-Americans consider improvement is needed. Among them that although most Afri-

African-Americans, proportionally representing Catholics and Protestants according to their ratio in the U.S. popula-

tion. Seventy-six percent of those surveyed said their parish is not predominantly African-American. No margin of error was given.

In one set of comparisons, asking “how well do your parish meet your needs,” black Catholics, and both black and white Protestants were more likely than their white Catholic counterparts to agree. For instance, when the question asked about spiritual needs, 78 percent of black Catholics and 86 percent of black Protestants said “well” or “very well,” while 67 percent of white Catholics and 81 percent of white Protestants said the same.

The difference was sharper when the question asked about parishes meeting social needs, with 62 percent of black Catho-

lics, 76 percent of black Protestants and 63 percent of white Protestants saying “well” or “very well,” while just 41 per-

cent of white Catholics said so.

Bishop Ricard said the finding that black Catholics are almost as at-ease in mixed or mostly white parishes as they are in majority black parishes shows that efforts have been successful in helping African-Americans to feel a part of the Catholic Church and make it their own.

Majorities of African-Americans said the church should put more effort into emphasizing black saints; promoting black vocations and black bishops; supporting issues such as affirmative action and problems in Africa and promoting racial integration.

African-Americans are much more likely than their white counterparts to say religion is important in their lives. They also are more likely to say they would turn to their pastor or another church leader for help in times of crisis such as a death in the family, marriage or alcohol problems.

Johnnie Dorsey, the director of the Office of Black Catholics for the Austin Diocese, said the results of this survey will be helpful in the diocese and throughout the U.S. as the church seeks to evangelize and develop a more fruitful relationship with black Catholics.

“This survey will further enable the Office of Black Catholics to promote insight and knowledge of black Catholics and will assist with evangelization and encouraging efforts in Central Texas and throughout our nation,” Dorsey said.

He also said the data from the study will be used by the National Black Catholic Congress as it prepares to develop its five-year plan for pastoral priorities at the NBCC National Convention in Indianapolis July 19-21. Approximately a thousand participants are expected to attend the national convention.

For more information regarding the diocesan Office of Black Catholics, contact Johnnie Dorsey at (512) 949-2449 or johnnie.dorsey@ausstodiocese.org.
Pope stresses value of anointing of the sick

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

Anointing of the sick is not a minor sacrament, said Pope Benedict XVI, but one that “deserves greater consideration today” because of its spiritual benefits to both minister and recipient.

The pope’s words appeared in a message for the 2012 World Day of the Sick, released by the Vatican Jan. 3. The day itself is celebrated annually Feb. 11, the feast of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Pope Benedict noted that the sacrament, formerly known as extreme unction, may be administered “very late” in human situations connected with illness, and not only when a person is at the end of his or her life.

Anointing with olive oil recalls the “double mystery of the Mount of Olives,” the pope said, as both the location of the Garden of Gethsemane, where Jesus confronted his passion, and the place where he ascended into heaven. Oil thus acts “as God’s medicine … offering strength and consolation, yet at the same time (pointing) beyond the moment of the illness toward the definitive healing, the resurrection.”

Pope Benedict said that anointing of the sick is one of the church’s two “sacraments of healing,” together with the “medicine of confession,” penance.

When a sick person confesses and the sacrament of the sick “have their natural completion in eucharistic Communion,” the pope said. “Received at a time of illness, Communion associates the ‘person who partakes of the body and blood of Christ to the offering that he made of himself to the Father for the salvation of all.’”

Accordingly, the pope said, parishes should ensure that the elderly and the sick enjoy the “possibility of frequently receiving Holy Communion.”

Immigration reform is urgent, say advocates

By Marie Mische
Catholic News Service

The repressive immigration law passed last year by the Georgia General Assembly, which “The New York Times” called “one of the nation’s toughest,” was what brought Frank Mulcahy, executive director of the Georgia Catholic Conference, to Utah in mid-January.

He was one of 230 immigration advocates from 43 states gathered in Salt Lake City for three days of panels, workshops and networking. The Jan. 11-13 conference, “Immigration: A 50-State Issue,” was sponsored by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Catholic Legal Immigration Network.

“We want to see it changed,” Mulcahy said. In addition to causing the loss of millions of dollars in agricultural crops that have gone unharvested for lack of workers, the law “created a climate of fear,” he said. “Some parishes where we had heavy Hispanic attendance, we saw big drop-offs.”

Paul Long, president and CEO of the Michigan Catholic Conference, also attended the immigration conference to learn what has been done in other states “and how best we can tackle the issue should adverse immigration legislation be proposed and pushed in the Michigan Legislature,” he told the “Intermediate Catholic,” Salt Lake City’s diocesan newspaper.

Issues addressed in the panels and workshops included an overview of state immigration enforcement laws and covered topics such as how to communicate the Catholic bishops’ message on immigration through the media.

The most contentious panel was that with John Sandweg, special counselor to Janet Napolitano, secretary of the Department of Homeland Security.

Sandweg discussed DHS policies, how those policies are enforced and some changes that DHS has made to that enforcement.

“We inherited a broken set of immigration laws,” Sandweg said at the beginning of his presentation. “I know that might sound cliché, but we all believe that.”

Although the system may be broken, DHS is nonetheless charged with enforcing the law; some discretion is allowed on how the law might be enforced, but there is no discretion on whether it is enforced, Sandweg said.

Over the past couple of years, DHS has changed its priorities from large-scale raids on workplaces to arresting undocumented people who are convicted criminals, those who have repeatedly violated immigration laws, those who are recently arrived and those who are fugitives from immigration courts, Sandweg said.

He acknowledged that DHS made mistakes with the way it introduced the “secure communitie initiative,” which allows the FBI to send to Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) fingerprints that it has received from state agencies. ICE can then check the fingerprints against the national immigration database.

Sandweg defended secure communities as nothing more than an identification tool, but numerous immigration advocates have decried the potential for abuse of the system, including the possibility of racial profiling. As a result of the complaints that were received about the initiative, DHS formed a task force comprised of members of various law enforcement agencies, attorneys, labor union officials, academics, social service agency personnel and others.

The task force’s recommendations, which were submitted in September, are being reviewed, Sandweg said.

DHS policy is to focus on undocumented people who have committed felonies, Sandweg said, and each year more of those who are deported fall into this category. “We are making a difference; it is changing,” he said, but added that Congress must enact reform for other changes that Catholic advocates would like to see.

Sandweg fielded numerous questions and complaints about his department’s policies and actions. Kevin Appleby, director of migration policy and public affairs for the USCCB, said that was expected.

“DHS is the agency of the federal government that is responsible for a lot of these enforcement actions that are impacting families and communities, and they need to be held accountable to the greatest extent possible as to how they go about that,” Appleby said. “I think they got the message pretty clearly from all the participants that there is a lot of discord in the communities – a lot of injustices going on that need to be corrected.”

The Utah Compact — an agreement signed by political, civic, business, religious, legal and law enforcement leaders that laid broad guidelines for how the immigration debate should be handled in Utah — was brought up several times as a model that could be used by other states.

The compact’s principles are that there must be a federal solution to the immigration system; that law enforcement should concentrate its efforts on felons, not immigrants whose only crime is being undocumented; that families shouldn’t be separated by the immigration system; that many businesses depend on immigrants; and that the U.S. is an inclusive, welcoming society.

“Here in Utah we used the compact as a firewall against harsh immigration enforcement proposals,” said Bishop John C. Wester of Salt Lake City in his keynote address at the conference’s opening dinner.

Bishop Wester, who was chairman of the bishops’ Committee on Migration from 2008-2010 and is now on the board of Catholic Relief Services, added that the Utah Legislature passed three immigration laws, only one of which was enforcement oriented.

“Similar compacts can be useful tools for advocacy but also are consistent with Catholic public policy based upon Catholic teaching,” he said.
Pope names 22 new cardinals, 2 from the US

BY FRANCIS X. ROCCA
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Pope Benedict XVI named 22 new cardinals, including two from the U.S., and announced a consistory for their formal induction into the College of Cardinals on Feb. 18.

Among those named were Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan of New York; Archbishop Edwin F. O’Brien, pro-grand master of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem who still is administering the Archdiocese of Baltimore; and Archbishop Thomas C. Collins of Toronto.

The pope announced the nominations to the faithful in St. Peter’s Square at noon Jan. 6, before praying the Angelus.

Cardinal-designate O’Brien, who was in St. Peter’s Square when he was announced, said his priestly life has been “a surprise at every step. I thought being appointed archbishop of Baltimore would be the last surprise, but I was wrong.”

He told Catholic News Service that the ministries he had been appointed to, and now his elevation to cardinal, were not things he could “anticipate, navigate or engineer. It’s just a matter of being open and in the right place at the right time and good things happen.”

In separate statements, the North American cardinals were quick to stress the collective rather than the personal nature of the honor.

“The pope is laying his hand on the whole Church as the shepherd that it needs,” said Father Jeffrey N. Steenson, of the Chair of St. Peter –– who still is administering the Archdiocese of Baltimore, and Archbishop Thomas C. Collins of Toronto.

Cardinal-designate O’Brien said his nomination reflected the “zealous faith” of Catholics in Baltimore, and Cardinal-designate Collins attributed his elevation to the pope’s “esteem for the role of Canada and of the Archdiocese of Toronto in the universal church.”

The latest additions will bring the U.S. and Canada’s share of the College of Cardinals to 22. The U.S., which is home to about 5 percent of the world’s Catholics, will provide almost 10 percent of the 125 cardinals under the age of 80, who are the only cardinals eligible to vote in a conclave for a future pope.

By contrast, only one of those named, Cardinal-designate Joao Braz de Aviz, comes from the country with the most Catholics, Brazil. When the cardinals are inducted in February, only seven of the 22 cardinal electors from Latin America will have been appointed by Pope Benedict.

With his latest appointments, Pope Benedict will have named more than 50 percent of the current cardinal electors, with the rest having been named by Blessed John Paul II.

The pope’s latest nominations included 16 Europeans, continuing a trend in his cardinal appointments since his election in 2005.

Seven of the new appointments are Italians, which will bring that nation’s total of cardinal electors to 30, more than any other country.

None of the new cardinals are from Africa, the region where the church is experiencing its fastest growth, or Oceania.

Ten of the new cardinals are officials of the Roman Curia, whose offices by tradition often entail membership in the college. Pope Benedict, when he was known as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, spent more than 23 years in the curia as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, though he had been elevated to cardinal in his role as archbishop of Munich-Freising, Germany.

Four of the new cardinals are already over the age of 80 and, therefore, ineligible to vote in a conclave. The pope uses such nominations to honor churchmen for their scholarship or other service to the church.

Among the new so-called honorary cardinals is Cardinal-designate Karl Becker, a Jesuit and former theology professor at Rome’s Pontifical Gregorian University.

The Jesuits remain the religious order with the highest representation in the college, with eight cardinals, followed by the Salesians with six, including the Vatican secretary of state, Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone. There are seven Franciscan cardinals, divided between the Order of Friars Minor and the Capuchins, with the latter represented by Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston.

New cardinals, their role and age
• Indian Archbishop George Alencherry of Emakulam-Amaramal, major archbishop of the Syro-Malabar Catholic Church, 66.
• Spanish Jesuit Father Karl Josef Becker, retired professor of dogmatic theology, 83.
• Italian Archbishop Giuseppe Bertello, president of the commission governing Vatican City State, 69.
• Italian Archbishop Giuseppe Betori of Florence, 64.
• Brazilian Archbishop Joao Braz de Aviz, prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, 64.
• Italian Archbishop Domenico Calcagno, president of the Administration of the Patrimony of the Holy See, who turns 69 Feb. 18.
• Spanish Archbishop Santos Abril Castello, archpriest of Basilica of St. Mary Major, 76.
• Italian Archbishop Francesco Cocopelmo, president of the Pontifical Council for Interpreting Legislative Texts, 73.
• Canadian Archbishop Thomas C. Collins of Toronto, who will be 65 Jan. 16.
• Czech Archbishop Dominik Duka of Prague, 68.
• Dutch Archbishop Willem J. Eijk of Utrecht, 58.
• Italian Archbishop Fernando Filoni, prefect of the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, 65.
• Maltese Augustinian Father Prosper Grech, biblical scholar, 80.
• Chinese Bishop John Tong Hon of Hong Kong, 72.
• Portuguese Archbishop Manuel Monteiro de Castro, major penitentiary of the Apostolic Penitentiary, 73.
• Romanian Archbishop Lucian Muresan of Fagaras and Alba Iulia, major archbishop of the Romanian Catholic Church, 80.
• German Archbishop Rainer Maria Woelki of Berlin, 55.
• Belgian Father Julien Ries, expert on history of religions, 91.
• Italian Archbishop Antonio Maria Veglio, president Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers, who turns 74 Feb. 3.
• Italian Archbishop Giuseppe Versaldi, president of Prefecture of the Economic Affairs of the Holy See, 68.

Pope creates new US ordinariate for ex-Anglicans

BY NANCY FRAZIER O’BRIEN
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Pope Benedict XVI has established a U.S. ordinariate for former Anglicans who wish to become Catholics and named a married former Episcopal bishop to head it.

The Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter — functionally equivalent to a diocese, but national in scope — will be based at a parish in Houston. It will be led by Father Jeffrey N. Steenson, the former Episcopal bishop of the Rio Grande who was ordained a Catholic priest of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe, N.M., in February 2009.

The establishment of the ordinariate and the naming of its first leader were announced by the Vatican Jan. 1.

More than 100 former Anglican priests have applied to become Catholic priests in the ordinariate and 1,400 individuals from 22 communities have expressed interest in joining. In fall 2011, the members of St. Luke’s in Bladensburg, Md., and St. Peter of the Rock Community in Fort Worth, Texas, were received into the Catholic Church with the intent of joining the ordinariate.

It is the second such jurisdiction established under the provisions of Pope Benedict’s 2009 apostolic constitution “Anglicanorum coetibus.” The first was the Personal Ordinariate of Our Lady of Walsingham, created for England and Wales in January 2011; others are under consideration in Canada and Australia.

The parishes and communities accepted into the ordinariate will be fully Catholic but retain elements of their Anglican heritage and traditions, particularly in the liturgy.

Father Steenson and his wife, Debra, have three grown children — a daughter and two sons, and a grandson. Because he is married, the 59-year-old Father Steenson will not be ordained a bishop and will not be able to ordain priests. He will, however, otherwise function as a bishop and will be a voting member of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

After working briefly in a New Mexico parish following his ordination, Father Steenson has been teaching theology at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minn., and at St. Mary’s Seminary, both in Houston, since August 2009. He also has been assisting priest at St. Cyril of Alexandria Parish in Houston.

Educated at Harvard Divinity School and at Oxford, he is an expert in patristics, the study of the early church fathers. Born in Camp Rucker, Ala., he was raised on a farm in Hillsboro, N.D., that has been in his family since the 1880s.

In a 2009 interview with Catholic News Service, Father Steenson said he had been “attracted to Catholicism all of my life.”

“It’s not negative things that turned me to the Catholic Church,” he said. “I just felt God saying, ‘It’s time.’”

The new ordinariate has been in the works since September 2010, when the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith asked Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl of Washington to be its delegate for the implementation of “Anglicanorum coetibus” in the U.S.

Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, in whose archdiocese the ordinariate’s headquarters will be located, called Father Steenson “not only an outstanding patristic scholar, but a priest with a strong pastoral sense and an abiding respect for all people.”

“He will surely be an effective, kind and joyful leader who will love and guide God’s people with the attitude of Christ,” he added.
Pope warns of threat to religious freedom in US

BY FRANCIS X. ROCCA AND SARAH DELANEY
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Pope Benedict XVI warned visiting U.S. bishops that “radical secularism” threatens the core values of American culture, and he called on the church in America, including politicians and other laypeople, to render “public moral witness” on crucial social issues.

The pope spoke Jan. 19 to a group of U.S. bishops who were in Rome for their periodic “ad limina” visits, which included meetings with the pope and Vatican officials, covering a wide range of pastoral matters.

Opening with a dire assessment of the state of American society, the pope told the bishops that “powerful new cultural currents” have worn away the country’s traditional moral consensus, which was originally based on religious faith as well as ethical principles derived from natural law.

Whether they claim the authority of science or democracy, the pope said, militant secularists seek to stifle the church’s proclamation of these “unchanging moral truths.” Such a movement inevitably leads to the prevalence of “reductionist and totalitarian readings of the human person and the nature of society.”

The pope drew an opposition between current “notions of freedom detached from moral truth” and Catholicism’s “rational perspective” on monthly, founded on the conviction that the “cosmos is possessed of an inner logic accessible to human reasoning.” Using the “language” of natural law, he said, the church should promote social justice by “proposing rational arguments in public square.”

Coming at the start of an election year, Pope Benedict’s words were clearly relevant to American politics, a connection he made explicit by mentioning threats to “that most cherished of American freedoms, the freedom of religion.”

The pope said that many of the visiting bishops had told him of “concerted efforts” against the “right of conscientious objection … to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices” — an apparent reference to proposals by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, opposed by the U.S. bishops, that all private health insurance plans cover surgical sterilization procedures and artificial birth control.

In response to such threats, Pope Benedict said, the church requires an “engaged, articulate and well-formed Catholic laity” with the courage and critical skills to articulate the “Christian vision of man and society.” He said that the education of Catholic laypeople is essential to the “new evangelization,” an initiative that he has made a priority of his pontificate.

Touching on one of most controversial areas of church-state relations in recent years, the pope spoke of Catholic politicians’ “personal responsibility to offer public witness to their faith, especially with regard to the great moral issues of our time,” which he identified as “respect for God’s gift of life, the protection of human dignity and the promotion of authentic human rights.”

The pope was not specific about the bishops’ relationship with such politicians, merely encouraging the bishops to “maintain contacts” with them and “help them understand” their duty to promote Catholic values.

While acknowledging the “genuine difficulties” facing the church in the U.S., the pope concluded on a hopeful note, pointing to a growing appreciation among “Judeo-Christian” civic values, and a “new generation of Catholics,” who he said will play “a decisive role in renewing the church’s presence and witness in American society.”

Before the speech, Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl, archbishop of Washington, greeted the pope with brief remarks that recalled his 2008 visit to the U.S.

The pope addressed bishops from the Diocese of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, Virginia, West Virginia, the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services, and the Virgin Islands.

POPE BENEDICT XVI meets Bishop W. Francis Malooly of Wilmington, Del., during a Jan. 19 meeting with U.S. bishops on their “ad limina” visits to the Vatican. (CNS photo by L’Osservatore Romano)
Recommendations issued for celebrating Year of Faith

**BY CAROL GLATZ**

**Catholic News Service**

In an effort to help Catholics have a better and correct understanding of their faith and become authentic witnesses to Christ, the Vatican issued a list of pastoral recommendations for celebrating the upcoming Year of Faith.

The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith released a “catechism,” it said, that outlines the aims of the special year and ways bishops, dioceses, parishes and communities can promote “the truth of the faith,” the congregation said.

It also announced that within the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization, a secretariat would be set up to suggest and coordinate different initiatives. The new department will be responsible for launching a special website for sharing useful information on the Year of Faith.

Pope Benedict XVI wanted the Year of Faith, which runs from Oct. 11, 2012, to Nov. 24, 2013, to help the church focus on its rediscovery of faith, so that the members of the church will be credible and joyful-filled witnesses to the risen Lord, capable of “leading those many people who are seeking it to the door of faith,” the note said.

Critical to renewing one’s faith and being a credible witness is having a firm and correct understanding of church teaching, it said.

Because the year’s start, Oct. 11, coincides with the anniversaries of the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962 and the promulgation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church in 1992, it would be an auspicious occasion to make the work of the council and the catechism “more widely and deeply known,” it said.

The congregation said the pope “has worked decisively for a correct understanding of the council, rejecting as erroneous the so-called ‘hermeneutics of discontinuity and rupture’ and promoting what he himself has termed the ‘hermeneutics of reform,’ of renewal in continuity” with the church and tradition.

The catechism “is an integral part of that ‘renewal in continuity,’” by embracing the old and traditional while expressing it “in a new way, in order to respond to the questions of our times,” it said. The note offers pastoral recommendations aimed at aiding “both the encounter with Christ through authentic witnesses to faith, and the ever-greater understanding of its contents,” it said.

Among the initiatives will be various ecumenical events at the Vatican aimed at restoring unity among all Christians, including “a solemn ecumenical celebration in which all of the baptized will reaffirm their faith in Christ,” it said. There will be special Masses at the Vatican to mark the opening and closing of the Year of Faith, it added.

Some recommendations ... include ensuring there be better quality catechetical materials that conform to church teaching; promoting Catholic principles and the significance of Vatican II in the mass media; hosting events that bring artists, academics and others together to renew dialogue between faith and reason; offering penitential celebrations; and putting a focus on liturgy, especially the Eucharist.

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BY FATHER BRIAN McMaster
VOCATION DIRECTOR

We are pleased to feature our 41 diocesan seminarians in this special insert of the Catholic Spirit. These men have generously said ‘yes’ to follow Christ in a potential vocation to the priesthood. They represent different ages, come from different parts of our diocese, and each of them has a unique vocation story as to how Jesus Christ called them personally to explore the calling to priesthood.

While in seminary, they continue to discern God’s call while receiving formation that helps them grow spiritually, personally, intellectually and pastorally. Our men are located at one of four seminaries: Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving, St. Joseph Seminary College in Covington, La., St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston, and the Pontifical North American College in Rome, Italy. Please keep our seminarians in your prayers that each day their hearts may be more conformed to the heart of Jesus.

Prayer Calendar
This insert includes a suggested prayer calendar that guides us to pray for specific seminarians and priests each day of the month. A sample prayer is also provided. I encourage everyone to pray daily for vocations to the priesthood and for our priests who lead us in our spiritual journey. In our diocese, we are blessed with a large number of seminarians, but more are needed as the number of Catholics continues to grow.

With the image of Blessed John Paul II carrying the Blessed Sacrament in a Eucharistic procession, we are reminded that Christ leads the way in every vocation and that we can be encouraged by Blessed John Paul II’s frequent words “Be not afraid.”

New Vocation Website
The Vocation Office for the Diocese of Austin is happy to unveil its new website, www.austinvocations.com. The site was developed to help men and women gather information to help them discern God’s will. It is also designed to assist parishes, vocation committees, youth ministers, educators and even those who simply want to pray for vocations. In its pages there is information about the priesthood and consecrated life in the Diocese of Austin, tools for prayer and discernment, helpful links and pages that introduce viewers to our seminarians in priestly formation.

Upcoming events
Single, Catholic men between the ages of 16 and 45 are invited to attend Project Andrew, which will be held Feb. 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin. The day will include prayer, testimonials by priests and seminarians as well as Mass and lunch with Bishop Joe Vásquez.

Single, Catholic women between the ages of 16 and 45 are invited to Project Miriam, which will be held Feb. 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin. The day includes testimonials and prayer with religious sisters serving in the diocese, as well as Mass and lunch with Bishop Joe Vásquez.

We also host discernment dinners for young men interested in learning more about seminary life and the priesthood. High school-aged men will meet March 7, April 4, May 7 and June 6 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the St. William Parish Rectory in Round Rock. For more information, contact Father Jonathan Raia at (512) 255-4473 or frjonathan@saintwilliams.org. College-aged men and older will meet Feb. 8, March 14, April 11, May 9, June 13 and July 11 at the Borromeo House in Austin. For more information, contact Father Brian McMaster at (512) 949-2430.

Everyone is invited to attend the following Masses: the Transitional Diaconate Ordination on May 19 at 10:30 a.m. at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Cedar Park and the Priestly Ordination June 9 at 10:30 a.m. at St. William Parish in Round Rock.

For more information about these events and vocations in general, visit www.austinvocations.com, e-mail vocations@austindiocese.org or call (512) 949-2430.

Father Brian McMaster is the Vocation Director for the Austin Diocese. He was ordained June 16, 2001, and was named director of vocations in 2009 after serving in several parishes.
Meet Our Seminarians

Deacon Uche Andeh
St. Mary’s Seminary
IV Theology
St. Albert the Great, Austin

Ben Cramer
Holy Trinity Seminary
I Pre-Theology
St. Mary, College Station

Greg Gerhart
Pontifical North American College
I Theology
St. Thomas Aquinas, College Station

Augustine Ariwaodo
St. Anthony, Kyle Pastoral Year
Diocese of Austin

Barry Cuba
St. Mary’s Seminary
III Theology
St. Catherine, Austin

Jeff Haecker
St. Mary’s Seminary
I Theology
St. Thomas More, Austin

Payden Blevins
St. Mary’s Seminary
I Theology
St. Louis, Austin

Henry Cuellar Jr.
St. Joseph Seminary
III College
Santa Barbara, Austin

Will Heath
Holy Trinity Seminary
II College
St. Theresa, Austin

Jason Bonifazi
St. Mary’s Seminary
III Theology
St. Mary, Mexia

Joseph Daheim
Holy Trinity Seminary
IV College
St. Luke, Temple

Deacon Ryan Higdon
St. Mary’s Seminary
IV Theology
St. Thomas More, Austin

Alberto Carbajal
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. Julia, Austin

Sean DeWitt
Pontifical North American College
I Theology
St. Martin, Dripping Springs

Doug Jeffers
Holy Trinity Seminary
II Pre-Theology
St. Mary, College Station

Patrick Carlin
St. Joseph Seminary
I College
St. Albert the Great, Austin

Craig DeYoung
St. William, Round Rock Pastoral Year
St. Helen, Georgetown

Steve Kim
St. Mary’s Seminary
I Pre-Theology
St. Andrew Kim, Austin

Alex Caudillo
St. Mary’s Seminary
III Theology
St. Francis, Waco

Dung Dinh
St. Mary’s Seminary
I Pre-Theology
Holy Vietnamese Martyrs, Austin

Darrell Kostiha
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
Church of the Visitation, Westphalia
MEET OUR SEMINARIANS

Brandon Marcos Fuentes
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. Mary’s Cathedral, Austin

Paul Michael Piega
St. Joseph Seminary
I Pre-Theology
St. Mary, College Station

Deacon David Trahan
St. Mary’s Seminary
IV Theology
St. William, Round Rock

Jesse Martinez
Holy Trinity Seminary
IV College
St. Mary’s, Caldwell

Sang Quan
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
Holy Vietnamese Martyrs, Austin

Sebastian Twesigomwe
St. Joseph Seminary
IV College
St. Albert the Great, Austin

Darrell Miller
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. William, Round Rock

Amado Ramos
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
Santa Cruz, Buda

Garret Twining
St. Joseph Seminary
II College
St. Mary’s, College Station

Hai Nguyen
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. William, Round Rock

Tom Reitmeyer
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. Thomas Aquinas, College Station

Robert Vitela
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. Catherine, Austin

Tim Nolt
St. Mary’s Seminary
III Theology
St. John Vianney, Round Rock

Francisco Rodriguez III
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. Helen, Georgetown

James Wenetschlaeger
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Theology
St. Margaret Mary, Cedar Park

Thomas Pettit
St. Mary’s Seminary
II Pre-Theology
St. Patrick, Hutto

Jose Rodriguez
St. Joseph Seminary
II College
St. John, Marble Falls

Deacon Kurtis Wiedenfeld
St. Mary’s Seminary
IV Theology
Holy Family, Copperas Cove

Brian Phillips
St. Joseph Seminary
IV College
St. Joseph, Bryan

Kevin Simmons
Holy Trinity Seminary
III College
St. Joseph, Bryan
Prayer calendar for seminarians and priests

We invite everyone to pray for vocations. The following prayer helps us pray for each of our seminarians as well as our priests.

Jesus, I thank you for leading me along the path of my personal call to holiness. I pray for all priests and seminarians today especially ____________. Form their hearts to seek you above all things. Fill them with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Supply them with steadfast charity, heroic generosity, and confidence in you. I ask you Jesus, to speak to the hearts of young men and encourage them to follow you in the priesthood. May they hear your voice: “Be not afraid!” In your name I pray. Amen.

Our Father..., Hail Mary..., Glory be... St. John Vianney, patron of priests, pray for us. Blessed John Paul II, pray for us.

Vocations contact information
For more information about vocations in the Austin Diocese, contact the Vocations Office at (512) 949-2430 or vocations@austindiocese.org.

Mailing addresses
The seminarians studying for the Austin Diocese enjoy getting mail from the people they hope to serve. They often receive birthday cards, inspirational notes and Christmas cards. The address for the seminaries where they are studying are listed below.

Holy Trinity Seminary
P.O. Box 140309
Irving, TX 75014

St. Joseph Seminary
75376 River Rd.
Saint Benedict, LA 70457

St. Mary’s Seminary
9845 Memorial Dr.
Houston, TX 77024

Pontifical North American College
00120 Vatican City State
EUROPE
Seminarian has a message for youth of Central Texas

BY HENRY CUELLAR JR. SEMINARIAN

Peace be with you and greetings from St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, La. My name is Henry Cuellar Jr.; I am a seminarian from our diocese. I would like to extend an invitation to all youth to the Abbey Youth Fest, a youth rally coordinated by my seminary.

On March 10, St. Joseph Abbey Seminary College will host its 12th annual Abbey Youth Fest, which is a full day of contemporary Catholic music, inspiring keynote speakers and the celebration of the Mass by Archbishop Greg Aymond. As the sun sets, we unite with the Benedictines in vespers or evening prayer, and we end the night with adoration of the Blessed Sacrament by candlelight. Throughout the festival, there is the opportunity for personal prayer in an outdoor chapel, the sacrament of reconciliation with visiting priests, a tour of St. Joseph Abbey, several priests and seminarians, the Benedictine monks of St. Joseph Abbey, several priests and religious from all over the country, and many youth from the Austin Diocese to get a group together and make the trip to South Louisiana! I hope that others to get a group together and make the trip to South Louisiana! I hope that many youth from the Austin Diocese will be able to join me, 80 other seminarians, the Benedictine monks of St. Joseph Abbey, several priests and religious from all over the country, and thousands of Catholic youth in worshiping our Lord and searching for the vocation to which he calls us.

While the first Benedictine monastery dates to around 530 AD, Saint Joseph Abbey was founded in 1869 on more than 1,200 acres of land in Southern Louisiana. The monks used the land to raise cattle and grow their own food. Now, the wooded areas are used for peaceful walks on the trails and some of the fields are used to host events like Abbey Youth Fest. In its 11 year history the Abbey Youth Fest has hosted more than 25,000 teens.

You are in my prayers; may our hearts, like St. Augustine’s, find eternal rest in the heart of God.

For more information and pictures from previous festivals, visit www.AbbeyYouthFest.com and find us on Facebook.

ARCHBISHOP GREG AYMOND of New Orleans will celebrate Mass during the 12th annual Abbey Youth Fest, which will be held March 10 at St. Joseph Abbey Seminary College in St. Benedict, La. (Photo courtesy Abbey Youth Fest)

Good News

FOCUS ON THE FUTURE

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...and time for yourself.
Bishop's Interview

True love involves sacrifice and commitment

Bishop Joe S. Vásquez is the fifth bishop of the Austin Diocese. He shepherds more than 500,000 Catholics in 25 Central Texas counties.

Editor: Bishop, February is known (to Hallmark at least) as the month of love. There are four different types of love. Please explain them for us.

Bishop Vásquez: Yes, there are four types of love we take from the Greeks, who had different types of love and commitment and affection. For them it was very important to distinguish them, so they have given us these four different forms of love.

One is “eros.” Eros is about attraction toward another person; it is the attraction between a man and woman that leads to romance. Eros is the attraction between a man and woman that leads to romance.

Then there is “storge,” which is parental love or the love between father, mother and child and the child’s love for the parents. This is a very strong love because it comes naturally. This bond is strong because parents spend so much time caring for and nurturing their children before they grow up and become independent adults. This bond lasts forever, a father and a mother continue to care for their child, and children continue to care for their parents. This love is about protection. Storge is very sacrificial and selfless as parents often give up a great deal to raise their children.

Then we have “philia,” which is what we call friendship. Philia describes a special relationship between persons. True friendship focuses on how one person benefits the other. It answers the question, “What can I do that will enhance who my friend is?” Philia matures and develops into intimacy in the sense of knowing the other as well as we know ourselves. This love is about desiring the best for someone and not about what we get out of the relationship.

Finally, we have the “agape” love, which is the highest form of love. The agape love is true charity, but not simply in the sense of giving money or assisting someone. Agape means giving of oneself completely, totally to the other and seeking the good of the other while not expecting anything in return. This form of love has its origins in God. From Scripture we know God is One, the Creator, as is expressed in the Old Testament. Our God is personal and he is interested in his creation, specifically in man because we are made in his image and likeness. God is so in love with creation and man that eventually he becomes flesh in the person of Jesus Christ. This love is completely selfless and unselfish.

I think there is some sacrifice that is involved in all types of love. Even in the eros, there has to be a dying of self in order to reach out to the one we are attracted to. In the storge, there is definitely a dying to self involved as parents sacrifice so much for the good of their children. And the philia love, where one is willing to sacrifice for another individual because they care about them and are grateful for the friendship that has developed. Agape love is the supreme love and it is what Jesus speaks about in the 15th chapter of the John’s Gospel: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.” This is what Jesus does as he willingly dies on the cross for us. This is the highest understanding of love.

Editor: When people think of romantic readings from the Bible in the 13th chapter of 1 Corinthians, they think of “Love is patient, love is kind.” What kind of love is Paul really talking about here?

Bishop Vásquez: That is a very popular reading and it is used at many weddings. Paul is speaking about the highest form of love, agape love. Paul goes on to say that love is more than a feeling or a sentiment. True love will eventually bring a person to putting himself second and his beloved first. So this love is a giving of one’s self to the other, which is based on divine love. Therefore, love is patient, love is kind, love is not arrogant, love doesn’t put on airs, it doesn’t delight in that which is hurtful. It doesn’t delight in seeing another person suffer.

This is the love that Christ shows us and Christ becomes the true example of love for all of us. His love for God motivated Paul to extend this love to those in the communities he served. He took a vow of celibacy and gave himself completely to God and to serving his people.

Editor: What is the significance of the agape love in our faith tradition, especially with Lent beginning soon?

Bishop Vásquez: For us, as Catholics and as Christians, as we prepare for Lent, we must think about the areas of our lives where we are not loving as we should. To put it another way, areas where we are not living out our baptismal calling. Through our baptism, we are called to live and to love as Christ did.

During Lent, the church gives us three actions that help us purify ourselves: fasting, praying and giving alms. Through these three actions we realize we are not the most important person and we are able to focus on God. Those things that take us away from putting God first and others ahead of ourselves are things of which we need to let go.

God can help us change through the power of his love. The agape love means giving completely of one’s self and that is a life-long challenge! This love means helping the poor, or making more time for your children, or spending more time with your spouse. It may mean visiting the person down the street or reaching out in hospital ministry or in prison ministry. This love involves reaching out to others.

The ultimate sign of love for us as Catholics is Christ willingly dying on the cross. This sign reminds us of the perfect way to love. The season of Lent is about perfecting our love for others by focusing on God’s love for all of us.

Editor: Christ commands us to love our neighbors as ourselves, which is brotherly love. How can we better fulfill that commandment?

Bishop Vásquez: I think to love thy neighbor as thyself means to see yourself in your neighbor. You see your neighbor and you realize you are just like them and that God loves them as much as he loves you. We all have struggles and challenges, and we all have gifts and blessings. We all have dignity that has been given to us by God and we are all reflections of the presence of God. Age doesn’t matter, wealth doesn’t matter, position or status doesn’t matter. All of us are required to respect one another. This is what brotherly love is all about.

Editor: What is your prayer for all of us as we strive to love God, our neighbors, our families and our spouses more fully?

Bishop Vásquez: I pray that God who is love may give us all the capacity to love as Christ did. And in loving others, may we commit ourselves to doing what is best for them, seeking nothing in return.
Catholic Schools
The enduring gift of Catholic education

BY NED VANDERS, ED.D.
Superintendent of Catholic Schools

The Catholic Schools Diocese of Austin (CSDA) recently celebrated National Catholic Schools Week Jan. 29 to Feb. 4. During the months of February and March, the application and registration process for the 2012-2013 school year moves into “high gear.”

As a parent or legal guardian, one of the most important decisions in your life and in the lives of your children is that of choosing the education that will most benefit them. You ask yourself many questions: Where will they learn the most? How do I help them prepare to live in the world around them? Who will be their friends? Will they fit in?

Having attended Catholic schools and colleges and with 42 years of experience as a teacher and administrator in Catholic schools, I believe that a Catholic education is the best answer to every parent’s questions. A Catholic education is the enduring gift that parents give to their child now as a student and in the future as an adult.

As members of the CSDA system, our 23 schools are part of a large organization dedicated to educating our children to be fruitful, moral members of our society. We join the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops in their mission “to provide an atmosphere in which the Gospel is proclaimed, a community in which Christ is experienced, service to our sisters and brothers is the norm, and thanksgiving and worship of our God is cultivated” (“Renewing Our Commitment to Catholic Schools in the Third Millennium”).

CSDA provides the highest of academic preparation, coupled with the broad enrichment opportunities that nurture our children’s minds, bodies and souls.

CSDA offers excellent Catholic school opportunities for every child’s education! Find out more about our exciting schools and their commitment to the highest academic, moral and spiritual standards at www.csdax.org.

I invite visitors to look through the website to further discover all that our Catholic schools have to offer. The website has profiles of each school in the diocece, information about open house events, and information on the registration process. Application deadlines for the fall are due very soon.

Our 17 Catholic elementary schools offer an excellent education, with an emphasis on academics and moral training, which will last our children a lifetime. The academic foundation set by the Catholic elementary schools is strengthened in our six Catholic high schools for acceptance into college and life-long learning.

I encourage those who already send their children to Catholic school to invite their friends to investigate our Catholic schools for their children’s education. Research has shown time and again that the most effective publicity for Catholic schools is by word of mouth. So those who love Catholic schools should spread the word!

With teamwork, we can build support for our Catholic schools and provide even more students with the enduring gift of a Catholic education.

William Stavinoha, M.D.
Family Practice — Board Certified
11671 Jollyville Road #102
Austin, TX
(512) 338-5088
www.stavinohamd.com

Dr. Ned Vanders is diocesan Superintendent of Catholic Schools. He may be contacted at (512) 949-2497 or ned-vanders@austindiocese.org.
By Barbara Budde
Catholic Spirit

It is important to note that we are in an election year. Once again, the bishops have asked us to form our consciences as we prepare to vote in the primaries and later in the general elections for 2012. Forming our consciences is always about listening to God through the teachings of Scripture and the church. These short reflections on church teaching and the public policy issues that touch us are prepared to help Catholics do the difficult, but important, work of being faithful citizens and voting according to the dictates of a well-formed conscience.

The Life and Dignity of the Human Person

Scripture exposes us that we are made in the image and likeness of God, who loves us. The Church in the modern world has stated the documents of Vatican II, to be a sign of the dignity of the human person. Human life is sacred. We believe that everyone is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is how it advances the life and dignity of the human person.

The Catholic community is called to shape public policy that protects and defends human life and human dignity from the moment of conception until the moment of natural death. This would include legislation relating to abortion, embryonic stem cell research, cloning, infanticide, physician assisted suicide and the death penalty. It would also include legislation relating to all that is needed to support life, meaning adequate food, shelter, health care, education and work; as well as condemning any assault on human dignity such as hate crimes, pre-emptive war, racism and terrorism.

The Call to Family, Community and Participation

The family is the central social institution that must be supported and strengthened. In community, we realize the fulfillment of our dignity and rights in relationship with and to others. The Holy Trinity — a relationship of love between the Father and the Son and the fruits of that love, the Holy Spirit — helps us understand our responsibility to be God’s image of love not only within our family but to society as well. Economics and politics, law and policy, justice and charity, directly affect human dignity and our capacity to grow in community.

We, the Body of Christ, are called to reject any policy that would adversely affect marriage and family, as well as the collective good of the community. The church defends traditional marriage and examines the effects of tax policy, welfare reform, legislation, labor laws, parental choice in education, and child welfare regarding family life.

Rights and Responsibilities

As created images of God, people have basic rights and responsibilities. Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our family and to the larger society.

Our rights flow from our human dignity and call us to public policy that defends those things required for human life: food, shelter, health care, education and employment. It also calls everyone to be responsive to a world that needs to work for one’s health to seek adequate education, to provide sufficient food and shelter, etc. As Catholics, we are called to participate in the political process by voting and helping to shape the laws that govern our society.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

The Gospel calls Christians to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. A common moral test of a society is how it treats those on the margins. Wherever there is structural injustice, Christians are called to oppose it. Those with the greatest need require the greatest response.

Above and beyond the common good, our values call us to show special concern for the poor. In the arena of public policy, the church’s teaching causus us to examine the effects of legislation on the most vulnerable. Our responsibility is to work for laws that would assist the poor to move out of poverty such as equal educational opportunities, just tax policies, adequate shelter, a strong economic safety net, and access to decent, affordable health care.

Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Work is an expression of our dignity and of our involvement in God’s creation. People have a right to decent work, fair wages and property. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected — the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property and to economic initiative. The economy exists to serve people, not vice versa.

Public policy issues that flow from this principle are clear: the human right to work, the right to fair wages, the right to a decent standard of living, the right to working conditions that are safe, free from discrimination and harassment.

Solidarity

We are all one human family in the world despite national, ethnic, racial, economic or ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that, “loving our neighbor,” has global dimensions in an interdependent world. By working for justice, we fulfill our mandate to build the body of Christ.

We acknowledge that we have a responsibility to the whole human family. In the area of public policy this awareness leads us to examine both trade policies, foreign aid, international relations and treaties would affect not only ourselves but also throughs the world.

Care for God’s Creation

We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is a requirement of our faith. It calls us to protect people, the planet and to live our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation. The fundamental moral and ethical dimensions of this challenge cannot be ignored.

Advocating for public policy decisions that will protect the environment against degradation is mandated through the church’s concern for God’s creation.

We are called to support policies that promote clean air and water to ensure that the gifts are accessible and affordable to all. We are particularly concerned for the poor who have the least influence.

Collection for Propagation of the Faith

The special collection for the Propagation of the Faith was taken up Oct. 22-23, 2011. If your parish does not receive an error, call the diocesan Finance Office at (512) 949-2470.
Saints for our times

‘Miraculous’ oil still flows from tomb of St. Walburga

By Mary Lou Gibson

St. Walburga spent all of her adult life in convents, first as a nun, then as an abbess. However, it wasn’t her role as abbess or the missionary work she did in Germany that made her one of the most popular saints of the Middle Ages. Rather it was her death in 779 and what happened afterwards that still draws pilgrims to her shrine in Eichstätt, Germany.

When she died, she was the abbess at the double monastery at Heidenheim founded by her brother, Willibald. About a hundred years later, 870-879, her body was moved and interred next to her brother in Holy Cross Church at Eichstätt.

Soon something strange and wonderful began to happen. Editor Paul Burns writes in “Butler’s Lives of the Saints” that an aromatic fluid with healing qualities began to flow from a fissure in the rock where her tomb and that of her brother stands. For the next 10 centuries, this substance, also called an oil, was collected by Benedictine nuns, bottled and given (also called an oil) was collected by the next 10 centuries, this substance and that of her brother stands. For healing qualities began to flow from the Saints” that an aromatic fluid with Paul Burns writes in “Butler’s Lives of wondertwonderful began to happen. Editor

in Holy Cross Church at Eichstätt. moved and interred next to her brother years later, 870-879, her body was tery at Heidenheim founded by her was the abbess at the double monas-

In the words of the composer Wagner’s “Walpurgisnacht,” the beginning of summer and the revels of witches. Moreover, a German variant of her name is Walpurgis and popularization and became something of a ecclesiastical precedent in this position and became something of a Woman of Power, according to Sean Kelly and Rosemary Rogers writing in “The Saint-a-Day Guide.”

Not much is known of her years as a student. She was well educated and read and wrote in Latin. Her account of Winnibald’s travels in Palestine earned her a reputation as the first female author of England and Germany. By the time she died, she was becoming well known for many miracles. Gallick describes how she was once guided at night to the home of a dying girl. She stood outside in the darkness but did not identify herself. When the girl’s father saw her, surrounded by his fierce dogs, he assumed that she was an intruder. She then told him who she was and he welcomed her inside. She spent the night praying for the girl who became completely recovered by morning.

St. Walburga is the patroness of Eichstätt and is invoked against fam-
tine. One of her emblems is three ears of corn.

There are churches dedicated to St. Walburga in Europe and in the U.S. The Abbey of St. Walburga is a small community of contemplative Benedictine nuns in Virginia Dale, Colo. There is also a Benedictine community is St. Walburga Monastery in Elizabeth, N.J. St. Walburga’s feast day is Feb. 25.
In explaining their ruling, the three-judge panel said that opponents “failed to demonstrate constitutional flaws” largely because “the required disclosures of a sonogram, the fetal heartbeat, and their medical descriptions are the epitome of truthful, non-misleading information.”

Because abortion is not used strictly as a medical procedure, but as an exercise in self-determination, informed consent is essential. “The point of informed consent laws is to allow the patient to evaluate her condition and render her best decision,” wrote the court’s Chief Judge Edith H. Jones. “Denying her up-to-date medical information is more of an abuse to her ability to decide than providing the information.”

Judge Jones’ ruling echoed the arguments made by pro-life advocates in lobbying for the bill during session. The Texas Catholic Conference (TCC) was persistent in arguing that, as Catholics, we sanctify life as a precious gift given to all of us from God. It is a gift that should be nurtured and protected at all stages. Laws must be in place that protect the life of the unborn child and educate mothers who may not realize that the life in their womb is exactly that: a unique, irreplaceable human life.

Waco Catholic goes undercover for CBS reality series

BY MARK PATTISON
CATHOLIC NEWS SERVICE

Dina Dwyer-Owens, CEO of the Dwyer Group, a collection of home service franchises, donned a wig, pearls and blue jeans to check in on her employees for an upcoming episode of the CBS reality series “Undercover Boss.” And, by and large, she liked what she saw.

“To see how much our employees and our franchisees care is really awesome,” Dwyer-Owens said in a Dec. 15 telephone interview with Catholic News Service from Dwyer Group headquarters in Waco.

“Being out there in the van with the service professionals and the franchisees for a day or half a day really doing the work that they do, I have a whole new appreciation and respect for these professionals,” she said. “I look at myself and think, ‘I wonder what their day’s going to be like today?’ Their work is hard. It’s hard work. It was hot when I was out there with them, and they were doing it every day.”

When the “Undercover Boss” production team met with Dwyer-Owens before arranging her visits, they asked her what she did in a typical day. One part of her answer was making pancakes for breakfast. Another part was getting bogged down by the to-do’s instead of the to-be’s.

“I found that going to Mass was the best way to keep me grounded and focused on what I needed to do in life.”

Dwyer-Owens said she had a near-daily Mass routine for the duration of the experience. She was able to find time to participate while doing the work of the CEO of the Dwyer Group, which she founded 30 years ago.

“I drive by a church and the billboard said, ‘Is faith important?’ I said to myself, ‘Yes, faith is important,’” she said. “When I was getting bogged down by the to-do’s instead of the to-be’s. I found that going to Mass was the biggest way to keep me grounded and focused.”

In one instance, she was checking in on her employees for a January episode of the CBS reality series “Undercover Boss.” Dwyer-Owens is a parishioner of St. Louis Parish in Waco.

Her “Undercover Boss” name she chose, Faith Brown, has its roots in, well, her faith.

“Every time I go to Mass, I feel like I come away feeling like I need to tend to do the work that I was able to do that day, instead of just getting consumed by the to-do’s,” she said. “I need to be in a place that quiets me.”

When the “Undercover Boss” segment shows her at a morning Mass at St. Louis Parish inWaco and chatting with the parish pastor, Father John Guzzaldino, Waco is in the Diocese of Austin.

“He’s such a cool priest,” Dwyer-Owens said. “I can text him and he responds.”

There’s a closing segment showing her praying alone inside St. Louis. “I’m not very good on meditating on Bible Scriptures and being focused. I find things I need to do around the home (instead),” she said. “I need to be in a place that quiets me.”

Dwyer-Owens said the routine of near-daily Mass came early in her tenure as CEO after she succeeded her father, who bought a company that was bigger than the original Dwyer business, and with the purchase came a seemingly endless string of things to do.

“I found that gettingMass was the biggest way to keep me grounded and focused. It just keeps me from getting consumed by the negativity that creeps into your day.”

Dwyer-Owens said in a Dec. 15 telephone interview with Catholic News Service from Dwyer Group headquarters in Waco. (CNS photos courtesy CBS (top) and Dwyer Group (left))

“Everything became faith,” she said.

When the Dwyer Group had a company that was bigger than the original Dwyer business, and with the purchase came a seemingly endless string of things to do.

“Everything became faith,” she said.

“Everything became faith,” she said. “That was so much fun. I tend to have too big of a heart sometimes. It’s nice to have heart,” she said.

This episode of “Undercover Boss” originally aired on Jan. 22. It may be viewed at www.cbs.com/shows/undercover_boss/video/.

PASTORAL SUPPORT FOR VICTIMS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

The Diocese of Austin is committed to providing confidential and compassionate care to victims of sexual abuse, particularly if the abuse was committed by clergy or a church representative. If you have experienced abuse by someone representing the Catholic Church, please contact the diocesan coordinator of pastoral care at (512) 949-2400.

APoyo pastoral a las victimas de abuso sexual

La Diócesis de Austin se compromete a proporcionar ayuda confidencial y compasiva a las víctimas de abuso sexual, especialmente si el abuso fue cometido por el clero o un representante de la iglesia. Si usted ha sufrido abusos por parte de alguien que representa la Iglesia Católica, por favor comuníquese con el coordinador diocesano del cuidado pastoral al (512) 949-2400.

Cómo reportar un caso de abuso

La Diócesis de Austin está comprometida a la prevención del daño que se cause a cualquier niño o adulto vulnerable. Si usted está enterado del abuso sexual o físico o/abandono de un niño o adulto vulnerable, la ley estatal requiere que se reporte esa información a la policía local o el Departamento de Servicios Familiares y de Protección del Estado de Texas al (800) 252-5400 o al sitio: www.dfps.state.tx.us y además, si la sospecha de abuso es por parte del clero, empleado o voluntario de cualquier parroquia, escuela u organización de la diócesis, se debe enviar un Reporte Confidencial de Abuso y debe ser presentado a la Oficina de Ética e Integridad en el Ministerio de la diócesis al (512) 949-2400. El Reporte Confidencial de Abuso se encuentra en nuestra página de Internet diocesana: www.austindiocese.org (Haga click en la liga COMO REPORTAR UN CASO DE ABUSO). Estos reportes pueden ser hechos de manera anónima.
For Your Information

The Assembly of Catholic Professionals will meet Feb. 8 at 11:30 a.m. at the Austin Regional Teen Center in Lake Creek, Dr. Richard Grant will give a talk on “The Four Gospels at Work.” Registration must be made before Feb. 2 at www.austindiocese.org/acp and select “RSVP/Purchase Admission.”

The Austin Diocese and 54 councils of the Knights of Columbus in the Austin Diocese (south) invite all priests, deacons and their wives, religious sisters and brothers to the annual Clergy/Religious Appreciation Dinner Feb. 9 beginning at 5:30 p.m. at St. Helen Parish in Georgetown. Bishop Joe Vásquez will be the featured speaker. This event seeks to honor the clergy and religious for their dedicated ministry to the church. For more information, contact Jeremiah O’Rourke at jtrothley@yahoo.com or (512) 739-5271.

The Austin Diocese will host an Annulment Writing Workshop Feb. 10 from 7 to 9 p.m. and Feb. 11 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Austin. The workshop will give participants a step-by-step explanation of annulment procedures, including how to tell one’s story and how to find witnesses to back up one’s story. By the time the workshop is complete, participants will have written a first draft of their annulment case. The sessions incorporate prayer breaks throughout with an emphasis on healing the pain that often surfaces during the annulment process. The cost of the workshop is $30. For more information or to register, contact Pat Thompson at (512) 970-7063.

The diocesan Religious Education Office will host a Publisher’s Day Feb. 13 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Austin. Approved publishers will be on site with materials and resources for review. Each publisher will make a presentation and discuss their products. For more information, contact Carolyn Martinez at (512) 949-2461 or carolyn.martinez@austindiocese.org.

The Diocese of Austin and The John Paul II Life Center are hosting “The Silver Ring Thing – Catholic Edition” Feb. 17 at St. Michael’s Catholic Academy in Austin. The Silver Ring Thing promotes abstinence until marriage based on a Christ-focused relationship. The Silver Ring Thing presents two concurrent programs: one for teens and one for parents. For more information, e-mail silversrthing@austindiocese.org.

The diocesan Commission on Aging and the Chaplain Services Department of Seton Hospital will present a workshop on Pastoral Care for the Sick and Dying Feb. 18 from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. in McFadden Auditorium at Seton Medical Center, 1201 West 38th St. in Austin. The workshop will cover the church’s prayers and rituals for the sick and dying and church teaching on end of life and other pastoral care issues. This workshop is offered without charge, but parking in the garage south of the hospital will cost approximately $5. Register by calling Yvonne Saldiva at (512) 949-2486 or e-mail yvonne_saldiva@austindiocese.org no later than Feb. 16.

A training for those who would like to administer the Prepare-Enrich Assessment in their parish or deanery will be held Feb. 18 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the diocesan Pastoral Center in Austin. To register or for more information, contact Rick Bologna at (512) 949-2405 or rick.bologna@austindiocese.org.

Those who feel called to be women in need, particularly those in crisis pregnancies, are invited to a Gabriel Angel training on Feb. 18 from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at St. John the Evangelist Parish in San Marcos. Gabriel Angels offer one-on-one spiritual and emotional support to a mother during and after her pregnancy. Lunch and all materials will be provided. Registration is due no later than Feb. 13 as space is limited. For more information, call (512) 949-2488 or e-mail rebecca-niernagel@austindiocese.org.

The diocesan Office of Black Catholics is sponsoring a Black History Month Mass Feb. 19 at 10 a.m. at Holy Cross Parish in Austin. For more information, contact Johnnie Dorsey at (512) 917-1661 or johnnie.dorsey@austindiocese.org.

The Creighton Austin will meet Feb. 19 at 7 p.m. at the Father John Payne House at St. Ignatius, Martyr Parish in Austin. Pax Christi Austin, which meets the third Sunday of every month, is a member of Pax Christi International and Pax Christi USA, the Catholic peace and justice movement that works and prays to create a world that reflects the peace of Christ. For more information, contact Bob Rankin at bob ранкин@att.net.

Catholic School religion coordinators will meet Feb. 21 from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at St. Ignatius Catholic School in Austin. For more information, contact Irma Perez at irma.perez@austindiocese.org or (512) 949-2497.

Hispanic young adults are invited to Mass in Spanish (Feast of the Epiphany) Feb. 24 at 9 a.m. at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Austin. Participants will pray the rosary beginning at 8:30 p.m. For more information, contact Juan Torres at (512) 415-5908 or lily_mora1tz@ilc.org or (512) 363-3609 or phila__mora1tz@gmail.com.

The diocesan Office of Black Catholics is sponsoring a Day of Reflection March 3 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Holy Cross Parish in Austin. The day is in preparation for the National Black Catholic Congress to be held in Indianapolis in July. For information, contact Johnnie Dorsey at (512) 217-9161 or johnnie.dorsey@austindiocese.org.
BULLETIN BOARD

Catholic Parish and Community Events

February 202 begins the 33 days of preparatory prayers for “Total Commit- ment to Jesus through Mary” that continue until March 24. Each day of prayer, representing one year in the life of Christ, is to be done privately in our own homes using the consecration preparation books (contact local Legion of Mary for a book). Attendees are invited to make or renew their consecration at Mass on the Annunciation of the Lord. For a book or for more information, visit www.TexasToJesusThroughMary.org.

The Knights of Columbus Council of Caldwell will host Fish Fry Friday Dinners Feb. 24, March 9, 16, 23 and 30 from 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. at St. Mary’s gym in Caldwell. The cost is $8 per plate.

St. John Neumann Parish in Ausin will host a Fish Fry at 6 p.m. and the Stations of the Cross will follow at 7 p.m. on the Fridays during Lent. Dinner includes fried catfish, cole slaw, fries and husk puppies. Suggested donation is $5 or $15 for families.

The Heart of Texas Ultreya movement of the Austin Diocese meets the first Sunday of the month from 3 to 5 p.m. at St. Margaret Mary Parish in Cedar Park. Classes consist of prayer, small group discussion, lecture, and fellowship. The first Wednesday of every month is Intro Day, where the students are invited throughout the year to attend a session and register for class. For more information, visit www.cssaustin.org or contact Patty Hogan (Austin classes) at (512) 267-4789 or cssaustin@yahoo.com or Bob Gorski (Cedar Park classes) at (512) 636-2927 or celajoa@att.net.

The Telesma of Austin and the Austin Council of Catholic Women will host an event entitled “Women for Women: Awareness in Action” March 8 from 7 to 9 p.m. at St. Thomas More Parish in Austin. The program will feature presentations highlighting aspects of Catholic Relief Services work for women and children around the world, HIV/AIDS and health issues and economic development through fair trade. Fair trade merchants will have goods for sale. Doors open at 6 p.m. and a donation of $10 will go to the work of CRS. To pre-register e-mail Gerri Misko at gerri.misko@ptruxrea.com or call Eunice Wisha at (512) 256-5243.

Discernment

A Discernment Dinner for single, Catholic men (ages 18 and older) with an open heart to a priestly vocation and discernment will be held Feb. 8 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the Borromeo House in Austin. The evening includes dinner, prayer, and a presentation with discussion on topics such as the priesthood, seminary, prayer, discernment, and spiritual life. For more information, contact Father Brian McMaster at (512) 949-2405 or fr-brian@mcmaster@austindiocease.org.

Project Andrew will be held Feb. 11 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin. Ages of 16 and 45 invited to find out more about discernment, the priesthood and seminary life are invited to attend. There will be time for prayer, testimonials by priests and seminarians as well as Mass and lunch with Bishop Joe Vásquez. For more information, visit www.austinvocations.com.

Project Miriam will be held Feb. 18 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin. Single, Catholic women between the ages of 16 and 45 are invited to attend. The evening includes testimonials by priests and prayer with members of the diocese, as well as Mass and lunch with Bishop Joe Vásquez. For more information, contact the Vocation Office at (512) 949-2430 or vocations@austindiocease.org.

A Discernment Dinner for high school age Catholic men will be held March 7 at 7 p.m. at St. William Parish Rectory in Round Rock. Men with an openness to encountering Christ, discovering their identity, and their mission are invited to join others for dinner, evening prayer and discussion. For more information, contact Father Jonathan Raia at (512) 255-4473 or jraia@stwilliams.org.

The Salesian Sisters will host a “Come and See” weekend March 9-11 in Coralitos, Calif. Women who are discerning a call to religious life are invited to spend the weekend with the Salesian Sisters. For more information, contact Sister Jeanette Palasota at palasota@hotmail.com or visit www.salesiansisterswest.org.
Por las Escrituras sabemos que Dios es mente, totalmente al otro y buscar el significado de darse a sí mismo completa. El amor no se da en un hospital del ministerio o en el ministerio de prisión. Este amor implica ayudar a los pobres, o hacer más tiempo para sus hijos, o pasar más tiempo con su cónyuge. Puede significar que visite a la persona por la calle o ayudar en un hospital del ministerio o en el ministerio de prisión. Este amor implica acercarnos a los demás.

El último signo de amor para nosotros, como católicos, es Cristo voluntariamente muerto en la cruz. Esta señal nos recuerda la manera perfecta de amor. La temporada de Cuaresma es el perfeccionamiento de nuestro amor por Dios para los demás.

Editora: Esta es una lección muy popular y se utiliza en muchas bodas. Pablo está hablando de la forma más alta de amor, el amor ágape. Pablo dice que el amor es más que una sensación o un sentimiento. El verdadero amor eventuamente lleva a una persona a ponerse en segundo término y a su amado en primero. Por lo que este amor es el darse uno mismo al otro, que se basa en el amor divino. Por lo tanto, el amor es paciente, es bondadoso, el amor no es arrogante, el amor no se da en, no se guía en el dolor. No se deleita en ver a la otra persona sufrir.

El amor que Cristo nos creó y Cristo se convirtió en el verdadero ejemplo de amor por todos nosotros. Su amor por Dios motivaba a Pablo a extender este amor a aquéllos en las comunidades que servía. El tomó un voto de celibato y se entregó por completo a Dios y al servicio de su pueblo.

Obispo Vásquez: ¿Y qué es la oración para nosotros? ¿Qué clase de amor es del que Pablo está realmente hablando aquí?

Obispo Vásquez: Esta es una lección muy popular y se utiliza en muchas bodas. Pablo está hablando de la forma más alta de amor, el amor ágape. Pablo dice que el amor es más que una sensación o un sentimiento. El verdadero amor eventuamente lleva a una persona a ponerse en segundo término y a su amado en primero. Por lo que este amor es el darse uno mismo al otro, que se basa en el amor divino. Por lo tanto, el amor es paciente, es bondadoso, el amor no es arrogante, el amor no se da en, no se guía en el dolor. No se deleita en ver a la otra persona sufrir.
Crisis de vivienda asequible nos llama a la acción

Por Donna Williams Poston
Corresponsal

“Amamos nuestros nacimientos que promocionan el hecho de que Jesús nació en un establo y durmió en un pesebre duro rodeado de animales de granja - sin hogar”, reflexionó Kevin Berry. “Pero, ¿cómo reaccionamos cuando vemos a alguien durmiendo bajo un puente o en una banca del parque en nuestra ciudad?”

Berry, un feligrés de la parroquia St. Therese en Austin y abogado de las personas sin hogar, habló recientemente en un foro auspiciado por el Ministerio de Paz y Justicia Social de la parroquia. Con la declaración de una “cri- sis de vivienda asequible en Austin”, Berry explicó: “el re- sultado es que tenemos un sistema de vivienda asequible en Austin que se ha puesto a trabajar y que logra un techo sobre su cabeza”, dijo Berry. “Significa dignidad y autoestima”.

Berry señaló que hay algunas familias en Austin que no tienen derecho a una casa de Habitat, “porque no pasan las verificaciones de antecedentes o han perdido su trabajo y simplemente no tienen los ingresos para pagar la hipoteca”. La Communities Foun- dation, otro grupo local sin fines de lucro, ayuda a los que faltan en calificar.

Desde 1990, Communities Foundation ha proporcionado apartamentos asequibles y arrendamientos a familias y personas que han quedado sin opciones. Poseen y administran 16 diferentes complejos residenciales, que ofrecen vivienda a más de 2,700 familias, y los servicios esenciales de apoyo para una amplia gama de Austin de bajos ingresos — desde los empleados constantes a los falsos de vivienda crónicos. Por lo general, referidos por un trabajador social o un refugio, Communities Foundation permite una variedad de circunstancias difíciles. Apartamentos de una, dos y tres recámaras están disponibles para familias de empleados y al aquiler se baja en los ingresos. Algunos de sus complejos tienen sólo apartamentos de una pieza, amueblados y designados para los adultos que enfrentan la falta de vivienda. Los alquileres empiezan tan bajo como $ 50 al mes. Hacen ex- cepciones para las personas que no tienen ningún ingreso en absoluto. No hay límite de tiempo para que puedan vivir en la mayoría de las 16 propieda- dades. Muchos de los resi- dentes permanecen durante años, mientras que otros se mueven a comprar su propia casa.

La misión de Communities Foundation es la creación de la vivienda donde los indi- viduos y las familias puedan recuperar su independencia y éxito. Los servicios de apoyo técnico gratuito que ofrecen incluyen asesoría financiera personal, preparación de imuestos, cuidado después de la escuela, clases de alfabe- tización de adultos, clases de nutrición y salud.

Ambas, Communities Foundation y Habitat for Hu- manity de Austin dependen en gran medida de la genero- sidad de voluntarios. "Tenemos una maravi- llosa oportunidad de partici- par en soluciones reales para las personas sin hogar", dijo Berry. "No podría estar más claro... como católicos esta- mos llamados a la acción".

Los obispos de Estados Unidos han remodelado su página web, La pobreza de USA, (www.useocheck.org/about/catholic-campaign-for-human-development/povertyusa/) y pusieron en marcha una nueva presencia en Facebook (www. facebook.com/povertyusa).

Masses in Spanish/Misas en Español

Austin
St. Mary Cathedral – domingo: 1:45 p.m.
Cristo Rey – domingo: 6 a.m., 7 a.m., 10 a.m., 1 p.m., 5:30 p.m.; jueves: 7 p.m.
Dolores – domingo: 8 a.m., mediodía; martes-viernes: 8:30 a.m.
Our Lady of Guadalupe – sábado: 6 p.m.; domingo: 7:45 a.m. y 6 p.m.
Sacred Heart – sábado: 7 p.m.; domingo: 9:30 a.m., 11:15 a.m., 5:30 p.m.; martes, miércoles, jueves: 7 p.m.
St. Ignatius – domingo: 1 a.m., 1 p.m., 7 p.m.
St. Julia – domingo: 7:30 a.m., 9:30 a.m.
St. Louis – domingo: 6 a.m., 1:30 p.m., 5 p.m.; martes, jueves: 6 p.m.
St. Paul – domingo: 12:30 p.m.
St. Peter – domingo: 1 p.m.
San Francisco Javier – domingo: 8 a.m., mediodía; miércoles, viernes: 6 p.m.
San José – domingo: 7:30 a.m., 11:15 a.m.; jueves: 7 p.m.
Bastrop
Ascension – domingo: mediodía
Belton
Christ the King – domingo: 8 a.m.
Blanco
St. Ferdinand – domingo: 11 a.m.; segundo y cuarto lunes: 1 p.m.
Brenham
St. Mary – domingo: 12:30 p.m.
Bryan
Santa Teresa – sábado: 7 p.m.; domingo: 8 a.m., mediodía, 2 p.m.
Buda
Santa Cruz – domingo: 8:30 a.m.
Caldwell
St. Mary – sábado: 7:30 p.m.
Cameron
St. Monica – domingo: 7 a.m.
Cedar Park
St. Margaret Mary – domingo: mediodía
College Station
St. Mary – sábado: 7 p.m.
Elgin
Sacred Heart – domingo: 7:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
Gatesville
Our Lady of Lourdes – domingo: mediodía
Georgetown
St. Helen – domingo: 7:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m.; miércoles: 6:30 p.m.
Giddings
St. Margaret – domingo: 11 a.m.
Hamilton
St. Thomas – sábado: 7 a.m.
Hearne
St. Mary – domingo: 11 a.m.
Hornsby Bend
Santa Barbara – domingo: 8 a.m.
Kileen
St. Joseph – domingo: 9 a.m.
Kyle
St. Anthony – domingo: mediodía, martes y jueves: 6:30 p.m.
La Grange
Sacred Heart – Primer y tercer domingos: mediodía
Lakeway
Emmaus – domingo: 12:15 p.m.
Lampasas
St. Mary – domingo: 12:15 p.m.; jueves: 6 p.m.
Lockhart
St. Mary – domingo: 7:30 a.m., 5:30 p.m.; martes: 6:30 p.m.
Luling
St. John – domingo: 8 a.m.
Manor
St. Joseph – domingo: 7 a.m., 11 a.m.
Marble Falls
St. John – domingo: 12:30 p.m.
Martin
St. Joseph – domingo: 11:30 a.m.
Martindale
Immaculate Heart of Mary – domingo: 8 a.m.; sábado: 6 p.m.; jueves: 7 p.m.
 McGregor
St. Eugene – domingo: 8 a.m.
Mexia
St. Mary – domingo: mediodía; jueves: 6 p.m.
Pflugerville
St. Elizabeth – domingo: 1:30 p.m.
Rockdale
St. Joseph – domingo: mediodía
Rogers
St. Matthew – domingo: 9 a.m.
Round Rock
St. Ann – domingo: 11:15 a.m.
Salado
St. Stephen – Domingo: 11:30 a.m.
San Marcos
Guadalupe Chapel – sábado: 5:30 p.m. y miércoles, 7 p.m.
St. John – domingo: 9:30 a.m., 1:30 p.m.; sábado: 8 a.m.
San Saba
St. Mary – domingo: mediodía
Smithville
St. Paul – domingo: 6 p.m.
Stoney Point
San Juan Diego – sábado: 6 p.m.; jueves: 6 p.m.
Taylor
Our Lady of Guadalupe – domingo: 8 a.m. y 1 p.m.; martes-viernes: 8 a.m.
Temple
Our Lady of Guadalupe – domingo: 8 a.m., 11:45 a.m., 6 p.m.; martes-viernes: 6 p.m.
Uhlman
St. Michael – domingo: 5 p.m.
Waco
Sacred Heart – domingo: 8 a.m.; mediodía
St. Francis on the Brazos – sábado: 7 p.m.; domingo: 8 a.m.; mediodía
St. Peter Catholic Center – viernes: 7:30 p.m.
West
Assumption – primer y tercer domingo: mediodía
Wimberley
St. Mary – domingo: 1 p.m.
**Reflexión Espiritual**

**La Gracia de Dios ... por encima del entendimiento**

**POR EDGAR RAMIREZ**  
DIRECTOR DEL MINISTERIO HISPANO

En este mes comenzamos la celebración de la cuaresma — cuarenta días que el calendario de la Iglesia nos regala para reflexionar, orar y viajar hacia el interior de nuestros corazones. Comenzamos este tiempo litúrgico con el Miércoles de Ceniza, las cenizas son un signo que acompaña de las palabras: “polvo eres y en polvo te convertirás”, o “irrempiéntete y crea en el Evangelio”, nos recuerdan nuestra realidad perecedera y nuestro destino final: la vida eterna.

En este camino de cuarenta días la Palabra nos guiará preparándonos para entrar al misterio de la muerte y resurrección de Jesús. Caminaremos reflexionando sobre nuestras intenciones en nuestras prácticas religiosas, confrontaremos nuestras tentaciones, tendremos los signos a las que accedemos en los momentos de soledad, de tristeza, de hambre.

Este camino cuaresmal nos llevará a conocer a un Jesús que confronta las creencias de su tiempo, que claramente señala que aquel que lo siga deberá perderlo todo, incluso su vida. Esta jornada de 40 días no terminará en la Cruz, es en la Cruz donde se comienza otra nueva jornada, un camino nuevo, hacia la tumba vacía. Pero antes de entrar a este misterio, antes de hacer todas esas reflexiones es importante reflexionar y preguntarnos el por qué de nuestra participación en las prácticas religiosas de nuestras comunidades. ¿Cuál es nuestra intención al participar de todos los ritos religiosos en los que hemos participado y participaremos?

Nuestra comunidad Hispánica tiene una riqueza enorme en cuanto a tradiciones religiosas. Estas tradiciones expresan nuestro carácter comunitario, deseo de justicia, la profunda e histórica relación con la Iglesia Católica, finalmente nuestra fe. Estas tradiciones nos han transformado y dado identidad en medio de las muchas transiciones que nuestra comunidad hispánica ha pasado en Latinoamérica y en los Estados Unidos. En muchas de estas tradiciones hemos descansado cuando nuestra identidad ha sido amenazada, conquistada e incluso perseguida. Somos Católicos como somos mexicanos, brasileños, colombianos, etc. Pero con un sentido más profundo que el que un país nos da o una nacionalidad, este sentido es el sentido de la fe, la fe en que Dios siempre proveerá, que Dios está ahí cuando procesamos, cuando rezamos el rosario, cuando cantamos las mañanitas a la Virgen, cuando vestimos a los santos y les ponemos veladoras, cuando hacemos el viacrucis, cuando damos el pésame a la virgen, o bendecimos el carro o celebramos los quince años. En mis años de ministerio he aprendido lo importante que es el miércoles de ceniza para nuestra comunidad. En esta celebración religiosa cientos de hermanos y hermanas participan con mucho entusiasmo y alegría. Llegan a las parroquias con una sed profunda de conocerse con Dios, con ellos mismo, con su fe. Ya que muchos miembros de nuestra comunidad por alguna razón o por otra, no participan de la Eucaristía o de algún otro sacramento, el miércoles de ceniza es una oportunidad para recibir algo tangible que los conecta con su fe. Las cenizas se convierten en un signo — la cruz en la frente, que nos hace saber y al mundo conocer que estamos buscando a Dios, que le pertenecemos, que pertenecemos a una comunidad identificada por este mismo signo en la frente, esta cruz le dice al mundo y a nosotros mismos que nuestra fe está viva aun en medio de todas las circunstancias.

**“La Total Consagración a Jesús a través de María”**

El 20 de Febrero empiezan los 33 días de oraciones de preparación para “La Total Consagración a Jesús a través de María” que continúan hasta el 24 de Marzo. Cada día de oración, representa un año en la vida de Cristo, así lo hace en la privacidad de su hogar usando los libros de la consagración. Los libros de Preparación serán dados por la Legión de María de su parroquia durante las misas del 5-19 de Febrero. Después de estos 33 días de oraciones, todos estamos invitados a hacer o renovar su Consagración en Misa en la Anunciación del Señor. Para esta Consagración, se ofrecerá una mesa en 4 Iglesias. Por favor visite www.TexasToJesusThroughMary.org para reservar su libro gratis y para mas información.

**Los jóvenes adultos hispanos**

Los jóvenes adultos hispanos están invitados a la Misa en español que será celebrada el 24 de febrero a las 9 p.m. en la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Austin. Los participantes rezarán el rosario a partir de las 8:30 p.m. para mas información comuniquese con Juan Torres al (512) 415-5908 o Lily Montes al (512) 363-3609 o pjhaustin@gmail.com.

Los jóvenes adultos hispanos están invitados a la reunión Interparroquial que será el día 3 de Marzo en la Parroquia de St. Margaret Mary comenzando a las 5:30pm. Para más información comuniquese con Juan Torres al (512) 415-5908 o Lily Montes al (512) 363-3609 o pjhaustin@gmail.com.

**La cruzada del Rosario de Austin**

La cruzada del Rosario de Austin celebra su 37 aniversario de la promoción del Rosario y la evangelización con un retiro de 8 a 4 el sábado, 10 de marzo de 2012 en la ciudad de Austin. Los participantes rezarán el rosario a partir de las 8:30 p.m. El retiro comenzará el 24 de febrero a las 9 p.m. en la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Austin. Todos están invitados a hacer o renovar su Consagración en Misa en la Anunciación del Señor. Para esta Consagración, se ofrecerá una misa en 4 Iglesias. Por favor visite www.TexasToJesusThroughMary.org para reservar su libro gratis y para mas información.
Around the Diocese

**THE KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS** from Killeen prepared and donated food baskets for needy families during the Christmas holidays. Together with the Sociedad Culthispana Group, the Knights also prepared Christmas dinner for the elderly at the Gilmore Center in Killeen. (Photo courtesy Gilbert Barrata- chea)

**FOUR NEW GUIDES** for Prayer and Life Workshops of Father Ignacio Larrañaga have been trained and sent forth to offer the workshops. (Photo courtesy Aida Calderon)

**STUDENTS** from Holy Family Catholic School in Austin donated and wrapped gifts for those in need during the Christmas holiday. (Photo courtesy Kelly Hagemeier)

**THE FAITH FORMATION PROGRAM** at Emmaus Parish in Lakeway held appreciation receptions for the catechists Dec. 11 and 14. (Photo courtesy Linda Rives)

**EACH THURSDAY,** members of the Knights and Ladies of St. Peter Claver deliver hot meals to elderly, sick shut-in residents East Austin. (Photo courtesy Johnnie Dorsey)

**THE LAMPASAS-MARBLE FALLS Council** from Caldwell and their families prepared Christmas baskets for needy families in the Caldwell area. (Photo courtesy Tina Vavra)

**THE BOYS’ BASKETBALL TEAMS** from St. Louis Catholic School in Austin and St. Helen Catholic School in Georgetown played Dec. 16 at the Cedar Park Center before the Austin Toros game. (Photo courtesy Debbie Chaney)

**THE FOURTH GRADE** religious education students at St. Martin de Porres Parish in Dripping Springs constructed a church laced with royal icing and adorned with candy for the residents of a local senior care facility. (Photo courtesy Susan Bonner)

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**JAKOB HURLIMANN,** a junior at St. Dominic Savio Catholic High School, improved an outside area Holy Family Catholic School in Austin by adding decorative stone to an area where no grass would grow and created a prayer garden in a nearby grove of trees for his Eagle Scout project. (Photo courtesy Emily Hurlimann)

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On Christmas Eve Father Bud Roland (middle) and Bishop Emeritus John McCarthy celebrated the first Mass in the new church at St. John Neumann Parish in Austin. (Photograph by Donald R. Winslow)

Students at St. Austin Catholic School were visited by Santa’s Head Elf before Christmas. He delivered letters from the North Pole and spread good cheer and magical snowflakes in the hallways. (Photo courtesy Leah F. Esparza)

A Christmas Pageant portrayed by children was held Dec. 24 at San José Parish in Austin. (Photo courtesy San José Parish)

The Knights of Columbus Council #10209 of St. Paul Parish in Austin built and sold 60 lighted crosses to support the idea of keeping Christ in Christmas. Schoenstatt Father Christian Christensen blessed the crosses as they were being built. (Photos courtesy Tom Natoli)

Parishioners of St. Joseph Parish in Rockdale gave Christmas gift bags to the residents at Manor Oaks Nursing Home in Rockdale. (Photo courtesy Robin Manthei)

The Duke Energy Foundation awarded grants totaling $40,000 to San Juan Diego Catholic High School and St. Gabriel Catholic School in Austin. San Juan Diego Catholic High School will use its $20,000 grant to enhance its Corporate Work Study Program. Ted Matula, Deputy General Counsel for Duke Energy, played a key role in helping the schools receive these grants. (Photos courtesy Laurie Osman)

The Children of the St. Catherine of Siena (in Austin) Parents Morning Out Program presented their annual Nativity program to family and friends on Dec. 15. (Photo courtesy Jo Ann Campbell)

David Mercado’s artwork was selected for the cover of the 2011 Advent Issue of Unidos en Cristo/United in Christ Missal by Oregon Catholic Press. About 300,000 missals distributed to parishes throughout the U.S. Mercado’s parents are parishioners of San José Parish in Austin. (Photo courtesy Margaret Mercado)

Children from the FISCHE homeschooling group reenacted the appearance of Our Lady of Guadalupe to Juan Diego at St. Mary Cathedral in Austin. (Photos courtesy Arlen Nydam)

The children of the St. Catherine of Siena (in Austin) Parents Morning Out Program presented their annual Nativity program to family and friends on Dec. 15. (Photo courtesy Jo Ann Campbell)

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