

CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

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# WEST TEXAS ANGELUS



Serving Catholics in the Diocese of San Angelo, Texas

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## Bishop Sis welcomes Lent with students in Abilene



LORETTA FULTON

Bishop Michael Sis was assisted in the Ash Wednesday service at McMurry University by sisters Stefany, left, and Idaly Rosas. The sisters read Scriptures at the Mass.

**By Loretta Fulton**

McMurry University students were advised that they might get odd stares from people while walking around all day with a black cross smeared on their foreheads.

The advisory came from Bishop Michael Sis, who got an early start with an 8 a.m. Ash Wednesday Mass at McMurry, which is affiliated with the United Methodist Church. He also performed Ash Wednesday services at Abilene Christian University (Churches of Christ) at 11 a.m., and Hardin-Simmons University (Baptist) at 5 p.m. McMurry was the only campus that included a Mass.

The bishop's advice to all students, faculty, and guests at the services was to view the sign of the cross, made from ashes, as a public acknowledgment of repentance, which is the basis for Ash Wednesday.

"I am a recovering sinner," is the message of the cross on the forehead, Sis said.

Each year on Ash Wednesday, Bishop Sis and the vocation director rotate among some of the colleges and universities in the Diocese of San Angelo — all three of Abilene's universities, University of Texas Permian Basin, Odessa College, and Midland College. It is a practice he started in 2016.

"It helps students and faculty to stay in tune with the church's liturgical year," the bishop said, "and it helps to raise awareness of the availability of our ministry to those who otherwise might not know about it."

Ash Wednesday, which was observed this year on March 5, marks the beginning of Lent, the 40-day period leading to Easter. The bishop's message at all three campuses was basically the same. Sis said he recently saw a billboard while driving

through East Texas that carried three simple sentences:

- Repent of your sins.
- Believe in Jesus Christ.
- Proclaim him as your Lord.

"That's what Ash Wednesday is about," Sis said.

The observance of Lent normally includes prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, the bishop said. Those are done not to earn God's love, but as a response for what God did for us in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

"It's about taking up our cross every day and following Jesus," Sis said.

The bishop was met with enthusiastic audiences at all three universities. The Rev. Ricky Harrison, University Chaplain and Director of Religious & Spiritual Life at McMurry, was a student at McMurry when Sis was ordained as bishop of the Diocese of San Angelo. He recalled that the dean of students at the time, Dr. Vanessa Roberts-Bryan, was a student at Texas A&M University when Sis was a campus minister there. She helped arrange the bishop's participation in the inauguration of Dr. Sandra Harper, a member of Holy Family Catholic Church, as president of McMurry. Harper retired at the end of December.

"Hosting Bishop Sis on campus is not only a rich blessing for our Catholic community," Harrison said, "but the entire university."

Harrison said 13 percent of the McMurry student population, or 156 students, self-identify as Catholic, the third largest religious group on campus. A significant number of them are actively involved in Religious & Spiritual Life activities and many attend the weekly chapel services.

"Religious & Spiritual Life at McMurry is richly blessed by the presence



LORETTA FULTON

The magnificent stained glass window in Logsdon Chapel at Hardin-Simmons University served as a backdrop for the imposition of ashes on Ash Wednesday 2025. Bishop Michael Sis was assisted by Father Innocent Eziefule, pastor of St. Francis of Assisi parish near the HSU campus.



LORETTA FULTON

Bishop Sis imposed ashes on the forehead of Rayna Alaniz as Molly McCormack waited her turn during an Ash Wednesday service at Abilene Christian University.

community of our Catholic community," Harrison said.

Students at all three universities read the Scriptures for Ash Wednesday and some led the music at their school. At Har-

din-Simmons, senior Lauren Sullivan said she was appreciative of both the bishop for being on campus and HSU for inviting



## From the Bishop's Desk

# Pastoral planning process



**Bishop  
Michael J. Sis**

Diocese of  
San Angelo

medical mission trip to Honduras, scheduled for this summer. The Kolbe Ministry has become a very strong outreach of our lay faithful to those who are incarcerated in the prisons of West Texas.

### Engage Young Adults

We took a group of young adults to World Youth Day in Lisbon, Portugal. College students have attended the annual national Seek Conference each year. Some of our college students have gone on mission trips to other countries. Each year at St. Stephen Parish in Midland, there is a young adult conference called To the Heights. There are active young adult ministries in Midland, Odessa, and Abilene. We have encouraged parishes to involve more young adults in liturgical ministries, parish councils, and finance councils.

### Accompany Youth

Holy Cross Catholic High School in Midland, Texas, opened its doors for the first time in the fall of 2019. Our diocese brought the Totus Tuus summer catechetical program to many of our churches. St. Ann Parish in Midland built a new Youth Activity Center, one of the finest such centers I have ever seen. Teens from around the diocese participate in a variety of wonderful evangelization opportunities, such as the Search retreat, Teen ACTS, Youth 2000, and summer Steubenville Conferences. Some of our parishes and schools have begun to implement the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd. Sacred Heart Cathedral teaches young people how to sing through its Choristers program.

### Nurture Families

Some of our parishes have begun to offer new marriage enrichment opportunities such as Teams of Our Lady and Choice Wine. Additional ministries supportive of families have come to our diocese in the past several years, including, for example, That Man is You, for men, and Magnificat, for women. We offer excellent marriage preparation weekends called Engaged Encounter, in both English and Spanish. Our diocese recently created a Project Rachel ministry for post-abortion healing. The new St. Joseph Ministry raises awareness of the many ways Catholics can support children who enter the State of Texas' Child Protective Services (CPS) system.

### National Eucharistic Revival

Next, upon the completion of our 2019–2022 diocesan pastoral plan, we shifted our focus for three years to the Eucharist. This is because, for the three-year period from the summer of 2022 to the summer of 2025, the entire Catholic Church in the United States has focused on one central goal — the National Eucharistic Revival. This movement has sought to increase understanding of and devotion to the Holy Eucharist throughout our country.

Our diocese has thoroughly embraced the Eucharistic Revival. Several initiatives have taken place to help us unite around the source and summit of our faith in the celebration of the Eucharist. Here are a few highlights of how we

observed the Eucharistic Revival in our diocese.

Ours was the first diocese in the country to host the first-class relics of Blessed Carlo Acutis and St. Manuel Gonzalez, two heroes of Eucharistic devotion. We used billboards in our major population centers to invite people to join us at the Eucharist in our local parishes. We offered "Teaching Masses" throughout the diocese to help people understand more about the Mass. We published several helpful articles in the *West Texas Angelus* and on our diocesan website about the Eucharist. In many of our parishes, we undertook initiatives to help people reflect more deeply on the great gift of the Eucharist.

Another historic event during the period of the Eucharistic Revival was the dedication of St. Rita of Cascia Catholic Church in Greenwood on March 16, 2024. This was the first new building erected for a new community in our diocese in the past 38 years.

We celebrated two diocesan Eucharistic Congresses, one in English and one in Spanish. We sent a diocesan delegation to the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. For the first time in our diocese, we brought together representatives from our various parishes and missions for a diocesan liturgical ministry training day, to promote vibrant, faithful, prayerful liturgies in all our churches. On June 7, 8, and 10, 2025, we will host the National Eucharistic Pilgrimage in Abilene, San Angelo, and Fort Stockton. I hope many of our people will come to those events which we are privileged to host.

The National Eucharistic Revival will wrap up on the weekend June 21–22, 2025, on the Solemnity of the Body and Blood of Christ. There will be many special liturgies and Eucharistic processions throughout our diocese. In one such event, I will participate in a procession and Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Midland on the evening of Saturday, June 21.

### The Next Plan

After we conclude the three-year period of the Eucharistic Revival in our diocese, we will move forward with a new set of guiding priorities for the Diocese of San Angelo. This is why we are currently seeking input this spring for the formulation of our next diocesan pastoral plan.

The best planning is based on input from a variety of different perspectives. For this reason, one of the key elements of our process is that it gives people throughout the diocese the opportunity to participate by giving input.

We need to hear from people who live in the 29 counties within our diocese. Your opinions of what it will take for our church here in West Texas to grow and thrive in the near future are an essential component of this process. To participate, you can come in person to our forthcoming listening sessions, or you can fill out our survey, which is already available online in English and Spanish at [www.sanangelodiocese.org](http://www.sanangelodiocese.org).

This survey can be submitted online, or it can be printed from the website for those who prefer a paper version. We will accept survey results through April 22. Our upcoming deanery listening sessions will take place on April 8 in Abilene at Holy Family at 6:30 p.m., April 10 in Midland/Odessa at St. Stephen at 6:30 p.m., and April 14 in San Angelo at Holy Angels at 6:30 p.m. All the deanery listening sessions will be offered in both English & Spanish.

I invite and encourage you to both complete our survey and participate in a listening session if possible. Your input will help inform the priorities for our

## The Prayer Square

### Adsumus Sancte Spiritus

We stand before you, Holy Spirit, as we gather together in your name. With you alone to guide us, make yourself at home in our hearts; Teach us the way we must go and how we are to pursue it. We are weak and sinful; do not let us promote disorder. Do not let ignorance lead us down the wrong path nor partiality influence our actions. Let us find in you our unity so that we may journey together to eternal life and not stray from the way of truth and what is right. All this we ask of you, who are at work in every place and time, in the communion of the Father and the Son, forever and ever.  
Amen.

Catholic Church in West Texas. This will help to ensure that the priorities we pursue may meet the real needs of our people at this point in our history.

If a group or parish would like a focused listening session to share input particular to their group (for example, parents of school-aged children), they can host their own session. The outline explaining how to run a listening session and the relevant materials are available from Alison Pope by emailing her at [apope@sanangelodiocese.org](mailto:apope@sanangelodiocese.org).

It is vitally important for many people to share their thoughts about what is working well, and what is distracting us from achieving our mission. The fact that a particular strategy worked in the past does not necessarily mean it remains effective in the present.

As the local bishop, I want to hear from as many people as possible. If all of us give a little bit of our time to provide our input, it will make the church stronger for the future. After gathering the collective wisdom from our listening sessions and our survey, a group of committed Catholics from around the diocese will sift through all the shared input and look for common themes. This will be a process of prayerful discernment as we seek to understand where God is calling us as a diocesan church.

The most important factor for the success of this process is prayer. And so, I ask all members of the Catholic Church here in West Texas to pray that the Holy Spirit may guide this pastoral planning process, so that we can be more faithful to the mission entrusted to us by Jesus Christ Our Lord.

## Pastoral Plan surveys and listening sessions





# Proceso de planificación pastoral



**Obispo  
Michael J. Sis**

Diócesis de  
San Ángelo

cos a aquellos que están encarcelados en las prisiones del oeste de Texas.

## Involucrar a los adultos jóvenes

Llevamos a un grupo de jóvenes adultos a la Jornada Mundial de la Juventud en Lisboa, Portugal. Estudiantes universitarios han asistido a la conferencia nacional SEEK cada año. Algunos de nuestros estudiantes universitarios han realizado viajes misioneros a otros países. Cada año, en la Parroquia de San Esteban en Midland, se celebra una conferencia de jóvenes adultos llamada "To the Heights". Hay ministerios activos para jóvenes adultos en Midland, Odessa, y Abilene. Hemos animado a las parroquias a involucrar a más jóvenes adultos en los ministerios litúrgicos, los consejos parroquiales, y los consejos financieros.

## Acompañar a la juventud

La Escuela Preparatoria Católica Holy Cross en Midland, Texas, abrió sus puertas por primera vez en el otoño del 2019. Nuestra diócesis implementó el programa de catequesis de verano Totus Tuus en muchas de nuestras iglesias. La Parroquia de Santa Ana en Midland construyó un nuevo Centro de Actividades Juveniles, uno de los mejores de tales centros que he visto. Adolescentes de toda la diócesis participan en diversas y maravillosas oportunidades de evangelización, como el retiro SEARCH, Teen ACTS, Youth 2000, y las Conferencias de verano de Steubenville. Algunas de nuestras parroquias y escuelas han comenzado a implementar la Catequesis del Buen Pastor. La Catedral del Sagrado Corazón enseña a los jóvenes a cantar a través de su programa de Coristas.

## Nutrir a las familias

Algunas de nuestras parroquias han comenzado a ofrecer nuevas oportunidades para enriquecer el matrimonio tales como Teams of Our Lady y Choice Wine. En los últimos años, se han establecido en nuestra diócesis varios ministerios adicionales de apoyo a las familias, como, por ejemplo, Ese Hombre Eres Tú, para hombres, y Magnificat, para mujeres. Ofrecemos excelentes fines de semana de preparación matrimonial llamados Encuentro de Comprometidos, tanto en inglés como en español. Nuestra diócesis creó recientemente el ministerio Proyecto Raquel para la sanación postaborto. El nuevo Ministerio de San José concientiza sobre las diversas maneras en que los católicos pueden apoyar a los niños que ingresan al sistema de Servicios de Protección Infantil (CPS) del Estado de Texas.

## Avivamiento Eucarístico Nacional

Posteriormente, tras la finalización de nuestro plan pastoral diocesano 2019-2022, centramos nuestro enfoque por tres años en la Eucaristía. Esto se debe a que, durante el trienio comprendido entre el verano de 2022 y el verano de 2025, toda la Iglesia Católica en Estados Unidos se ha centrado en un objetivo central: el Avivamiento Eucarístico Nacional. Este movimiento ha buscado aumentar la comprensión y la devoción a la Sagrada Eucaristía en todo el país.

Nuestra diócesis ha acogido con entusiasmo el Avivamiento Eucarístico. Se han llevado a cabo diversas iniciativas para unirnos en torno a la fuente y cumbre de nuestra fe en la celebración de la Eucaristía. A continuación, algunos ejemplos de cómo celebramos el Avivamiento Eucarístico en nuestra diócesis.

La nuestra fue la primera diócesis del

país en albergar las reliquias de primera clase del Beato Carlo Acutis y San Manuel González, dos héroes de la devoción eucarística. Colocamos vallas publicitarias en los principales centros de población para invitar a la gente a unirse a nosotros en la Eucaristía en nuestras parroquias locales. Ofrecimos "Misas de Enseñanza" en toda la diócesis para ayudar a la gente a comprender mejor la Misa. Publicamos varios artículos útiles sobre la Eucaristía en el *West Texas Angelus* y en nuestro sitio web diocesano. En muchas de nuestras parroquias, emprendimos iniciativas para ayudar a la gente a reflexionar más profundamente sobre el gran don de la Eucaristía.

Otro evento histórico durante el período del Avivamiento Eucarístico fue la dedicación de la Iglesia Católica de Santa Rita de Cascia en Greenwood el 16 de marzo de 2024. Este fue el primer edificio nuevo erigido para una nueva comunidad en nuestra diócesis en los últimos 38 años.

Celebramos dos Congresos Eucarísticos diocesanos, uno en inglés y otro en español. Enviamos una delegación diocesana al Congreso Eucarístico Nacional en Indianapolis. Por primera vez en nuestra diócesis, reunimos a representantes de nuestras diversas parroquias y misiones para una jornada de entrenamiento en ministerio litúrgico diocesano, con el fin de promover liturgias vibrantes, fieles, y devotas en todas nuestras iglesias. Los días 7, 8 y 10 de junio de 2025, celebraremos la Peregrinación Eucarística Nacional en Abilene, San Ángelo, y Fort Stockton. Espero que muchos de nuestros feligreses asistan a estos eventos que tenemos el privilegio de organizar.

El Avivamiento Eucarístico Nacional concluirá el fin de semana del 21 y 22 de junio de 2025, en la Solemnidad del Cuerpo y la Sangre de Cristo. Habrá numerosas liturgias especiales y procesiones eucarísticas por toda nuestra diócesis. En uno de estos eventos, participaré en una procesión y Misa en la Parroquia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Midland la tarde del sábado, 21 de junio.

## El próximo plan

Tras concluimos el trienio del Avivamiento Eucarístico en nuestra diócesis, avanzaremos con un nuevo conjunto de prioridades rectoras para la Diócesis de San Ángelo. Por ello, esta primavera estamos solicitando aportaciones para la formulación de nuestro próximo plan pastoral diocesano.

La mejor planificación se basa en las aportaciones de diversas perspectivas. Por ello, uno de los elementos clave de nuestro proceso es brindar a las personas de toda la diócesis la oportunidad de participar aportando sus ideas.

Necesitamos escuchar a las personas que viven en los 29 condados de nuestra diócesis. Sus opiniones sobre lo que se requiere para que nuestra iglesia, aquí en el oeste de Texas, crezca y prospere en el futuro cercano son un componente esencial de este proceso. Para participar, puede asistir en persona a nuestras próximas sesiones de escucha o completar nuestra encuesta, disponible en línea en inglés y español en [www.sanangelodiocese.org](http://www.sanangelodiocese.org).

Esta encuesta puede enviarse en línea o imprimirse desde el sitio web si se prefiere la versión impresa. Aceptaremos los resultados hasta el 22 de abril. Nuestras próximas sesiones de escucha en los decanatos se llevarán a cabo el 8 de abril en Abilene en Holy Family a las 6:30 p.m., el 10 de abril en Midland/Odessa en St. Stephen a las 6:30 p.m., y el 14 de abril en San Ángelo en Holy Angels a las 6:30 p.m. Todas las sesiones de escucha en los decanatos se ofrecerán en inglés y español.

Los invito y los animo a completar nuestra encuesta y también a participar en una sesión de escucha si es posible. Sus comentarios contribuirán a definir las prioridades de nuestra Iglesia Católica en el Oeste de Texas. Esto ayudará a garantizar que las prioridades que perseguimos satisfagan las necesidades reales de nuestra gente en este momento de nuestra historia.

Si a un grupo o parroquia le gustaría

## Espacio de Oración Adsumus Sancte Spiritus

Estamos ante ti, Espíritu Santo, reunidos en tu nombre.  
Tú que eres nuestro verdadero consejero: ven a nosotros, apóyanos, entra en nuestros corazones. Enséñanos el camino, muéstranos cómo alcanzar la meta. Impide que perdamos el rumbo como personas débiles y pecadoras. No permitas que la ignorancia nos lleve por falsos caminos. Concédenos el don del discernimiento, para que no dejemos que nuestras acciones se guíen por prejuicios y falsas consideraciones. Condúcenos a la unidad en ti, para que no nos desviemos del camino de la verdad y la justicia, sino que en nuestro peregrinaje terrenal nos esforcemos por alcanzar la vida eterna. Esto te lo pedimos a ti, que obras en todo tiempo y lugar, en comunión con el Padre y el Hijo por los siglos de los siglos. Amén.

una sesión de escucha enfocada para compartir aportes particulares de su grupo (por ejemplo, padres de niños en edad escolar), pueden organizar su propia sesión. El esquema que explica cómo llevar a cabo una sesión de escucha y los materiales relevantes están disponibles por Alison Pope enviándole un correo electrónico a [apope@sanangelodiocese.org](mailto:apope@sanangelodiocese.org).

Es fundamental que muchas personas compartan sus ideas sobre lo que funciona bien y lo que nos impide lograr nuestra misión. El hecho de que una estrategia haya funcionado en el pasado no significa necesariamente que siga siendo eficaz en el presente.

Como obispo local, quiero escuchar a la mayor cantidad de personas posible. Si todos nosotros dedicamos un poco de nuestro tiempo a aportar nuestras opiniones, fortaleceremos la iglesia para el futuro. Tras recopilar la sabiduría colectiva de nuestras sesiones de escucha y nuestra encuesta, un grupo de católicos comprometidos de toda la diócesis analizará cuidadosamente todas las aportaciones compartidas y buscará temas comunes. Este será un proceso de discernimiento y oración para comprender hacia dónde nos llama Dios como iglesia diocesana.

El factor más importante para el éxito de este proceso es la oración. Por eso, pido a todos los miembros de la Iglesia Católica aquí en el oeste de Texas que oren para que el Espíritu Santo guíe este proceso de planificación pastoral, para que seamos más fieles a la misión que nos confió Jesucristo Nuestro Señor.

## Plan Pastoral encuestas y sesiones de escucha





# CALENDARS

*Please pray for our clergy*



**April**

- 2 Rev. Ignatius Edet (B)
- 2 Deacon Lazaro Sevier (D — 2009)
- 3 Deacon Edward Martinez (D — 1985)
- 3 Deacon Alan Neff (D — 2016)
- 4 Deacon Andres Hernandez (D — 2013)
- 4 Deacon Hector Mendez (B)
- 4 Rev. Jim Nugent, C.Ss.R (D — 2012)
- 7 Deacon Jerry Treviño (D — 2017)
- 12 Rev. Patrick Akpanobong (B)
- 13 Rev. Innocent Eziefulu (B)
- 16 Deacon Eliseo Carrillo (D — 1989)
- 17 Deacon Daniel Holguin (B)
- 17 Rev. Msgr. James Plagens (D — 2015)
- 17 Rev. Lee Zimmerman, CM (D — 2000)
- 19 Rev. John Lavin (D — 1983)
- 19 Rev. Georgius Sexton, OMI (D — 1979)
- 19 Rev. Jeevan Kamalapuram (O — 2007)
- 20 Deacon Claudio Sanchez (B)
- 21 Rev. Thomas Leahy, SAC (D — 1969)
- 22 Deacon Jesus Vasquez (D — 2018)
- 23 Rev. Louis Droll (D — 2006)
- 23 Deacon Walter Hammons (B)
- 24 Rev. Msgr. Fred Nawarskas (B)
- 24 Rev. Balachandra Nagipogu (O — 2006)
- 25 Deacon Dwain Hennessey (B)
- 25 Deacon Marc Mata (B)
- 25 Deacon Juan Muñoz (D — 2007)
- 27 Rev. John Collet, OMI (D — 2022)
- 29 Deacon Robert Daigle (D — 1986)
- 30 Rev. Gilbert Rodriguez (B)
- 30 Rev. Joe Barbieri (O — 1988)

**May**

- 1 Deacon Eduardo Castillo (B)
- 1 Deacon Leslie Maiman (O — 2015)
- 2 Rev. Russell Schultz (D — 2004)
- 2 Deacon Luis Villarreal (B)
- 5 Rev. Clifford Blackburn, OMI (D — 2005)
- 7 Rev. Msgr. Kevin Heyburn (D — 2001)
- 8 Rev. Mamachan Joseph, CMI (O — 1986)
- 8 Deacon Stan Sienkiewicz (B)
- 9 Deacon Juan Arguello (D — 2019)
- 9 Rev. Tom Diab (D — 2007)
- 9 Rev. Leo Diersing (D — 1999)
- 13 Deacon Leslie Maiman (B)
- 13 Rev. Bhaskar Morugudi (O — 1999)
- 14 Deacon Manuel Luevano (D — 2019)
- 15 Deacon Wayne Rock (D — 2006)
- 18 Rev. Arokiadoss Arokiasamy (O — 2013)
- 18 Rev. Fr. David Herrera (B)
- 18 Bishop Michael Pfeifer, OMI (B)
- 18 Deacon Clemente Villa (B)
- 19 Deacon Ronald Stegenga (B)
- 20 Deacon Robert Moreno (B)
- 21 Deacon Ricardo Torres (B)
- 22 Deacon Michael LaMonica (B)
- 22 Rev. Kevin Lenius (O — 2021)
- 22 Rev. Emilio Sosa (B)
- 25 Rev. Tom Barley (O — 1991)
- 25 Rev. Terry Brenon (O — 1991)
- 25 Rev. Martin Hubbs, OCarm (O — 2012)
- 25 Rev. Balachandra Nagipogu (B)
- 27 Rev. Charles Greenwell (O — 1982)
- 27 Rev. Msgr. Fred Nawarskas (O — 1967)
- 27 Rev. Mark Woodruff (O — 1972)
- 28 Rev. Francis Hynes, CM (D — 1996)
- 29 Rev. Msgr. Bernard Gully (O — 1962)
- 30 Rev. Felix Archibong (O — 2015)
- 30 Rev. Ryan Rojo (O — 2015)
- 31 Rev. Joey Faylona (O — 2003)
- 31 Rev. Gilbert Rodriguez (O — 1974)
- 31 Rev. Rodney White (O — 2003)

**B = Birthday | O = Date of Ordination  
D = Date of Death**

(Dates of birth and ordination given for living clergy; date of death for deceased.)



## Bishop's Calendar

Please contact the bishop's assistant, Lupe Castillo, for information about the bishop's calendar.  
325-651-7500 | lcastillo@sanangelodiocese.org

**April 2025**

- 1 AUSTIN, State Capitol, Catholic Advocacy Day
- 3 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priestly Life and Formation Committee meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 3 MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Adult Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
- 5 SAN ANGELO, downtown, Rodeo Parade, Lady in Blue float
- 5 ROWENA, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 4:00 p.m.
- 6 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Mass for diaconal formation class at 11:00 a.m.
- 6 MIDLAND, The Way Retreat Center, Project Miriam at 6:00 p.m.
- 7 SAN ANGELO, Christ the King Retreat Center, Diocesan Mission Council meeting at 2:00 p.m.
- 7 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Lenten Penance Service at 6:30 p.m.
- 8 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Catholic Charitable Foundation meeting at 10:00 a.m.
- 9 SAN ANGELO, Angelo Catholic School, Mass at 10:00 a.m.
- 9 BROWNWOOD, St. Mary Queen of Peace, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
- 11 BRADY, St. Patrick, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
- 12 WALL, St. Ambrose, Confirmation Mass at 4:00 p.m.
- 13 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Palm Sunday Mass at 10:00 a.m.
- 15 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Chrism Mass at 11:00 a.m.
- 16 AUSTIN, State Capitol, Invocation in the House at 10:00 a.m.
- 16 BALLINGER, St. Mary, Star of the Sea, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
- 17 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Mass of the Lord's Supper at 6:30 p.m.
- 18 SAN ANGELO, St. Margaret, Rosary Procession and Way of the Cross at 12:00 noon
- 18 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Service of the Lord's Passion at 6:30 p.m.
- 19 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Vigil at 8:30 p.m.
- 20 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Easter Sunday Mass in Spanish at 12:00 noon
- 22 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Liturgical Commission meeting at 10:00 a.m.
- 22 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Vocation Team meeting at 4:00 p.m.
- 23 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
- 25–May 2. ROME, visit the Pontifical North American College

**May 2025**

- 3 MIDLAND, Petroleum Club, Holy Cross Catholic High School Black and Gold Ball
- 4 OZONA, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Confirmation Mass at 11:00 a.m.
- 4 MIDLAND, San Miguel Arcángel, Confirmation Mass at 5:00 p.m.
- 7 ABILENE, Holy Family, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
- 8 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Priest Personnel Board meeting at 10:30 a.m.
- 8 MIDLAND, St. Ann, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
- 9 MIDLAND, St. Stephen, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
- 13 ODESSA, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, Deanery meeting at 12:00 noon
- 13 EDEN, St. Charles, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
- 14 ODESSA, St. Joseph, Confirmation Mass at 6:00 p.m.
- 15 SAN ANGELO, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Presbyteral Council meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 15 MELVIN, Jacoby's Feed Mill, Diocesan Rural Life Mass at 6:00 p.m.
- 16 ODESSA, St. Mary, Vocation Discernment Retreat at 6:30 p.m.
- 17 MIDLAND, Holy Cross Catholic High School Gymnasium, Diocesan Pastoral Planning Leadership Summit
- 17 MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Confirmation Mass at 5:00 p.m.
- 18 ANDREWS, Our Lady of Lourdes, Confirmation Mass at 10:30 a.m.
- 18 ODESSA, Kickball game with clergy and youth at 4:00 p.m.
- 19 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
- 20 WALL, St. Ambrose, Deanery meeting at 11:00 a.m.
- 21 ODESSA, Holy Redeemer, Confirmation Mass at 7:00 p.m.
- 23 MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Ordination Rehearsal at 6:00 p.m.
- 24 MIDLAND, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Diaconal Ordination of Francisco Camacho at 10:30 a.m.
- 24 MIDLAND, Holy Cross Catholic High School Gymnasium, Graduation at 3:00 p.m.
- 25 ABILENE, Sacred Heart, Confirmation Mass at 11:30 a.m.
- 25 ABILENE, St. Vincent Pallotti, Confirmation Mass at 5:30 p.m.
- 27 ABILENE, St. Francis, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
- 28 SAN ANGELO, St. Mary, Confirmation Mass at 6:30 p.m.
- 31 SAN ANGELO, Sacred Heart Cathedral, Wedding at 1:00 p.m.

**Deacon Apolonio Lopez Gutierrez**  
April 10, 1929 ~ February 27, 2025

*Eternal rest grant unto him, Oh Lord.  
And let perpetual light shine upon him.*

**The Diocese of San Angelo**



## Christ the King Retreat Center

**April 2025**

- 2 DOSA Staff Lenten Day of Reflection
- 4–6 Deacon Formation
- 14 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
- 18 CKRC Offices Closed for Good Friday
- 24 DOSA Staff Picnic
- 25–27 Engaged Encounter & Natural Family Planning
- 28 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group

**May 2025**

- 7 DOSA Staff Meeting
- 9–11 Deacon Formation
- 12 Heart of Mercy Prayer Group
- 15 Day of Reflection, Office of Evangelization and Catechesis
- 16–17 First Central Presbyterian
- 26 Closed in Observance of Memorial Day



## Special Collections

**April 18, 2025**  
**Pontifical Collection for the Holy Land**

This pontifical collection collects funds for support of the holy places, but above all for those pastoral, charitable, educational, and social works which the church supports in the Holy Land for the welfare of their Christian brethren and of the local communities.

**April 27, 2025**  
**Catholic Home Missions Appeal**

The bishops' Subcommittee on Catholic Home Missions is a grant-making agency. It offers financial support to missionary activities that strengthen the Catholic Church in the United States, and in its territories and former territories. Through its annual fundraising campaign, the Catholic Home Missions Appeal, Catholic Home Missions educates American Catholics about mission needs and invites them to assist fellow Catholics in the practice of the faith.

## Sacred Heart Parish Festival in Menard

Sacred Heart Parish in Menard, Texas, will hold their parish festival on Sunday, May 18, 2025, from 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The festival will feature dine in or to go plates of chicken and sausage dinner. There will be Bingo from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

## Diocesan seminarian receives scholarship

Catholic Home Missions has announced that Noah Hernandez, a seminarian for the Diocese of San Angelo currently studying at the Pontifical North American College in Rome, has been selected to receive a scholarship from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops.

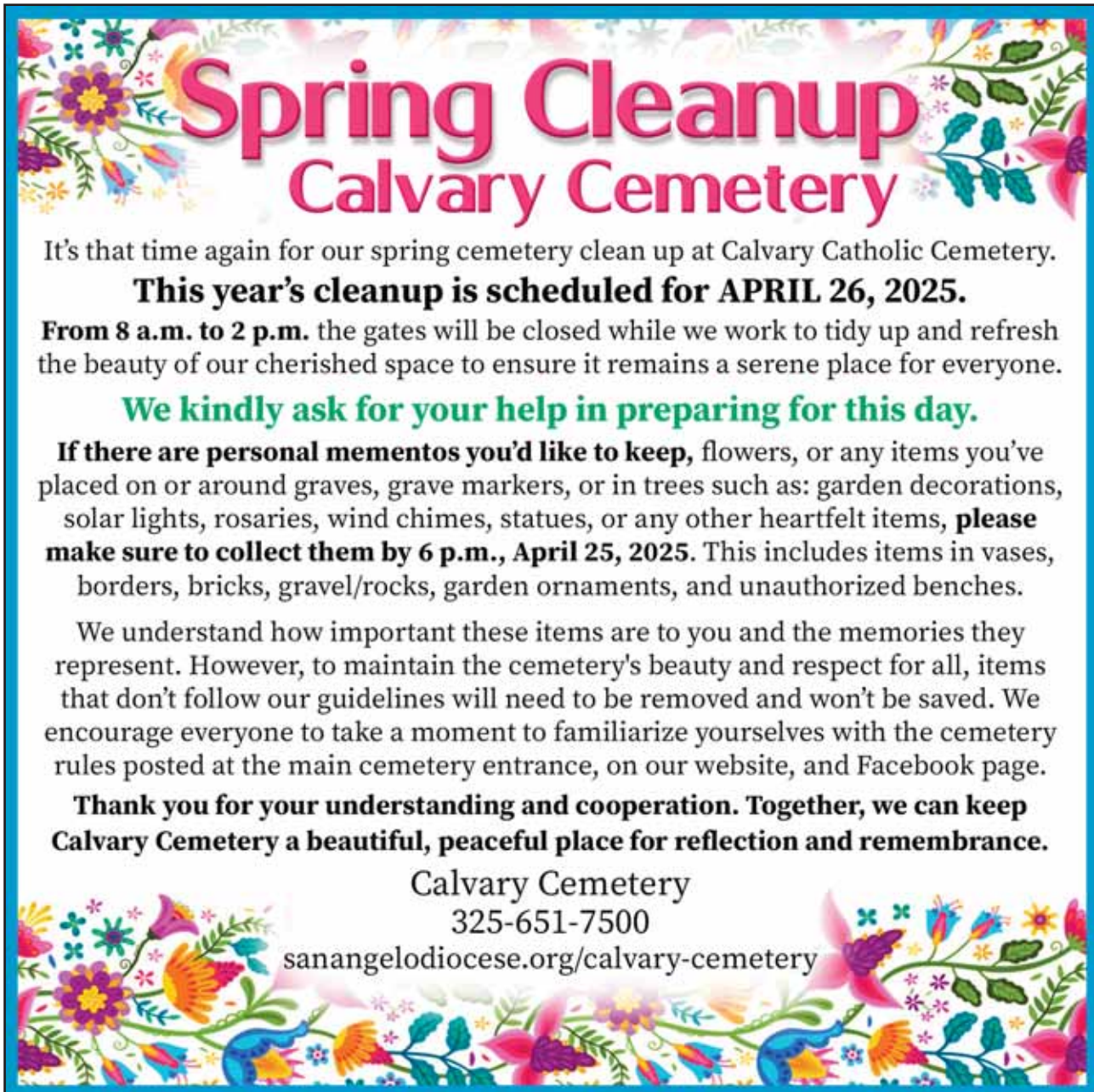
The Catholic Home Missions Eucharistic Seminar scholarship was created from donations given at the closing Mass for the 10th National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis last summer. Sixteen seminarians were selected from mission dioceses and eparchies.

For the quarterly periodical *Neighbors*, Hernandez wrote, "I was born and raised in Odessa, Texas, in a loving family that includes my father, mother, an older brother, and two younger sisters who have been incredibly supportive of my vocation. My journey to the priesthood began with the prayers and encouragement of many, especially my godfather, Father David Herrera, who has always guided me to discern God's call.

"Throughout my discernment, many priests and mentors have inspired me by living lives consecrated to God's will. I first felt the call to the priesthood during my junior year of high school at a retreat called 'Search.' That day, I felt God's invitation in the depths of my heart, and my love for his calling has only deepened through my years in seminary.

"This past July, I had the blessing of attending the National Eucharistic Congress in Indianapolis. The highlight for me was witnessing the profound faith of thousands gathered for the Eucharistic procession. Each moment reaffirmed the great love I have for the Eucharist, inspiring my continued journey toward the priesthood."

Please pray for Noah Hernandez and the rest of the seminarians from the Diocese of San Angelo as they continue their studies and discernment of God's call.



# Spring Cleanup Calvary Cemetery

It's that time again for our spring cemetery clean up at Calvary Catholic Cemetery.

**This year's cleanup is scheduled for APRIL 26, 2025.**

**From 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.** the gates will be closed while we work to tidy up and refresh the beauty of our cherished space to ensure it remains a serene place for everyone.

**We kindly ask for your help in preparing for this day.**

**If there are personal mementos you'd like to keep**, flowers, or any items you've placed on or around graves, grave markers, or in trees such as: garden decorations, solar lights, rosaries, wind chimes, statues, or any other heartfelt items, **please make sure to collect them by 6 p.m., April 25, 2025.** This includes items in vases, borders, bricks, gravel/rocks, garden ornaments, and unauthorized benches.

We understand how important these items are to you and the memories they represent. However, to maintain the cemetery's beauty and respect for all, items that don't follow our guidelines will need to be removed and won't be saved. We encourage everyone to take a moment to familiarize yourselves with the cemetery rules posted at the main cemetery entrance, on our website, and Facebook page.

**Thank you for your understanding and cooperation. Together, we can keep Calvary Cemetery a beautiful, peaceful place for reflection and remembrance.**

Calvary Cemetery  
 325-651-7500  
[sanangelodiocese.org/calvary-cemetery](http://sanangelodiocese.org/calvary-cemetery)

## ROME BOYS 5 YEAR CELEBRATION

Celebration begins with Mass at 4:00 followed by reception at the hall with refreshments, meal, and entertainment!

MAY 31, 2025 ROWENA, TX

**RSVP number attending to:**  
**Tony: text - 316-208-4908**  
**Email: romeboys312@gmail.com.**



## Reporting Sexual Abuse

The Catholic Diocese of San Angelo is firmly committed to creating and maintaining the safest possible environment for our children and vulnerable adults. If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by anyone who serves the Church, and you need a place to talk with someone about your feelings of betrayal or hurt by the Church, we are here to help you. To report incidents, call Lori Hines, Victim Assistance Coordinator, 325-374-7609 (cell), or write Diocese of San Angelo, Victim Assistance Mini-

stry, PO Box 1829, San Angelo, TX 76902. If the incident occurred outside this diocese, our Victim Assistance Coordinator will assist in bringing your concern to the attention of the appropriate diocese. Please keep in mind that one always has the right to report abuse to civil authorities, and civil law requires that any abuse of a minor must be reported. To report about a bishop, the Catholic Bishop Abuse Reporting Service can be accessed by visiting ReportBishopAbuse.org or by calling 800-276-1562 (national hotline).

## Reportar Abuso Sexual

La Diócesis Católica de San Angelo está firmemente comprometida a crear y mantener el ambiente más seguro posible para nuestros niños y adultos vulnerables. Si usted o alguien que usted conoce ha sido víctima de abuso sexual por cualquier persona que sirve a la Iglesia, y necesita un lugar para hablar con alguien sobre sus sentimientos de traición o herido por la Iglesia, estamos aquí para ayudarle. Para reportar incidentes, llame a Lori Hines, Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas, 325-374-7609 (celular), o escriba a la Diócesis de San Angelo, Ministerio de Asistencia a Víctimas, PO Box 1829, San

Ángelo, TX 76902. Un intérprete de español está disponible. Si el incidente ocurrió fuera de esta diócesis, nuestra Coordinadora de Asistencia a Víctimas le ayudará a traer su preocupación a la atención de la diócesis correspondiente. Por favor, tenga en cuenta que uno siempre tiene el derecho de reportar el abuso a las autoridades civiles, y la ley civil requiere que cualquier abuso de un menor de edad debe ser reportado. Para reportar sobre un obispo, se puede acceder al Servicio de Reportes de Abuso de Obispos Católicos visitando ReportBishopAbuse.org o llamando al 800-276-1562 (línea directa nacional).



# Charismatic Corner: Biblical and theological reflections on Catholic Charismatic Renewal

By Father Bob Hogan, BBD

Recently, some online speakers have been arguing that Catholic Charismatic Renewal is not really Catholic. Let us look at some of the areas that they have raised to demonstrate how Catholic Charismatic Renewal is fully Catholic, and that part of being fully Catholic is the ecumenical dimension.

## Catholic Charismatic Renewal, like a new Pentecost

Some people have said that it is wrong for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to describe itself as a “new Pentecost” for the church. Certainly, the coming of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, described in the Acts of the Apostles in chapter 2, is a unique event, since it is not only the coming of the Holy Spirit on the disciples of Jesus, but it is the beginning of the church. However, asking for new outpourings of the Holy Spirit, similar to Pentecost, is appropriate. Pope St. John XXIII in his prayer for the success of the Second Vatican Council wrote, “Renew Thy wonders in this our day, as by a new Pentecost.” Pope Benedict XVI in a homily on Pentecost 2008 said, “Today I would like to extend this invitation to everyone: Let us rediscover, dear brothers and sisters, the beauty of being baptized in the Holy Spirit; let us be aware again of our baptism and confirmation, sources of grace that are always present. Let us ask the Virgin Mary to obtain a renewed Pentecost for the Church again today, a Pentecost that will spread in everyone the joy of living and witnessing to the Gospel.” These two popes ask for a “new” or “renewed” Pentecost for the church. Pope Benedict also uses the term “baptized in the Holy Spirit,” which we will explain later in this article.

## New outpourings of the Holy Spirit

In the Scriptures we see examples of new outpourings of the Holy Spirit after Pentecost. The early church began to experience persecution so they gathered together for prayer (Acts 4:23–31): “As they prayed, the place where they were gathered shook, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and continued to speak the word of God with boldness” (Acts 4:31). A Roman centurion, Cornelius, has a vision telling him to seek out Simon Peter (Acts 10:1–49). When Peter comes, he begins to proclaim the good news of Jesus: “While Peter was still speaking about these things, the Holy Spirit fell upon all who were listening to the word. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astounded that the gift of the Holy Spirit should have been poured out on the Gentiles also, for they could hear them speaking in tongues and glorifying God. Then Peter responded, ‘Can anyone withhold the water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit even as we have?’ He ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ” (Acts 10:44–48). Acts 8 describes Deacon Philip preaching and healing in Samaria. Many people were baptized “in the name of the Lord Jesus ... but the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen on any of them.” When Peter heard about this, they came and “prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit ... they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.” Acts 19 describes some disciples of Jesus who seemed to be missing something. Paul asks them if they have received the Holy Spirit. They had not heard about the Holy Spirit: “They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied” (Acts 19:6). Paul tells Timothy: “I remind you to stir into flame the gift of God that you have through the imposition of my hands. For God did not give us a Spirit of cowardice but rather of power and love and self-control” (2 Tm 1:6–7). The gift of the Holy Spirit is meant to be experienced in an ongoing way. Every religious community

recognized in the church came from an inspiration of the Holy Spirit. They did not exist in the early church.

## The church as hierarchical and charismatic: “Charismatic Renewal” is a Catholic term.

We see from the documents of the Second Vatican Council that the Catholic Church is both hierarchical and charismatic. *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen Gentium, Vatican II, [LG])* describes the church as being hierarchical and charismatic: “He (the Holy Spirit) furnishes and directs her (the Church) with various gifts, both hierarchical and charismatic, and adorns her with the fruits of His grace (cf. Eph 4:11–12; 1 Cor 12:4; Gal 5:22); (LG 4).” “Allotting His (the Holy Spirit’s) gifts ‘to everyone according as He will’ (1 Cor 12:11), He distributes special graces among the faithful of every rank. By these gifts He makes them fit and ready to undertake the various tasks or offices advantageous for the renewal and upbuilding of the Church, according to the words of the Apostle: ‘The manifestation of the Spirit is given to every one for profit’ (1 Cor 12:7). These charismatic gifts, whether they be the most outstanding, or the more simple and widely diffused, are to be received with thanksgiving and consolation, for they are exceedingly suitable and useful for the needs of the Church ... judgment as to their genuineness and proper use belongs to those who preside over the Church ... not indeed to extinguish the Spirit, but to test all things and hold fast to that which is good” (cf. 1 Thes 5:12, 19–21), (LG 12). “Pastors also know that they themselves were not meant by Christ to shoulder alone the entire saving mission of the Church toward the world. On the contrary, they understand it is their noble duty so to shepherd the faithful and to recognize their services and charismatic gifts that all according to their proper roles may cooperate in this common undertaking with one heart” (LG 30). The Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (#3) confirms that the laity are also given “charisms or gifts” from the Holy Spirit. In the reception and use of these gifts they “enjoy the freedom of the Holy Spirit who ‘breathes where He wills’” (Jn 3:8). They are to act in communion with the church and its pastors, which the Catholic Charismatic Renewal has always done.

## Jesus’ baptism and baptism in (with) the Holy Spirit

Some speakers have taken issue with the use of the term “baptism in the Holy Spirit” and seeing Jesus’ baptism as a “baptism in the Spirit.” The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC) states: “Our Lord voluntarily submitted himself to the baptism of St. John, intended for sinners, in order to ‘fulfill all righteousness’ (Mt 3:15). Jesus’ gesture is a manifestation of his self-emptying (cf. Phil 2:7). The Spirit who had hovered over the waters of the first creation descended then on the Christ as a prelude of the new creation, and the Father revealed Jesus as his ‘beloved Son’” (CCC 1224). Also, Noah (Gn 8:10–12) sends from the ark a dove that comes back with an olive leaf as a sign of new creation beginning after the flood.

Jesus is a divine person with both a divine nature and a human nature. As a divine person he already has the fullness of the Holy Spirit. However, St. Paul describes Jesus as the new Adam (Rom 5:12–21) who represents the whole human race in freeing us from sin. John the Baptist said that “one mightier is coming ... He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire” (Lk 3:16; cf. Mt 3:11; Mk 1:7–8; Jn 1:25–27, 32–34). John the Baptist’s words, and the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus at his baptism, confirm that Jesus is truly the messiah (Christ, Anointed One, Anointed with the Holy Spirit) who already has the fullness of the Holy Spirit and will fulfill the Scriptural prophecies about the coming Messiah/Christ/Anointed

One who will baptize his followers with the Holy Spirit, fulfilling the prophet Joel’s words that St. Peter quotes on Pentecost Sunday (Act 2:16–21; cf. Joel 3:1–5). The Catholic Charismatic Renewal does not follow the Adoptionist Heresy which said that Jesus was just a human person whom at his baptism God raised to a divine state.

John the Baptist announces that the coming Messiah would “baptize you with the Holy Spirit” (Mt 3:11; Mk 1:8; Lk 3:16; and Jn 1:33). Jesus, the Christ/Messiah, completes his mission with the sending of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost. Before Jesus ascends into heaven, he says that “in a few days you will be baptized in the Holy Spirit” (Acts 1:5). In the book *Baptism in the Holy Spirit* by the International Catholic Charismatic Renewal Services Doctrinal Commission, 2012 (which is supported by Pope Francis and the Vatican), it states, “Baptism in the Spirit is a life-transforming experience of the love of God the Father poured into one’s heart by the Holy Spirit, received through a surrender to the lordship of Jesus Christ. It brings alive sacramental baptism and confirmation, deepens communion with God and with fellow Christians, enkindles evangelistic fervor and equips a person with charisms [spiritual gifts] for service and mission” (13).

Baptism in the Holy Spirit is an adult affirmation of our baptismal graces where we commit ourselves to be a disciple of Jesus, and ask for the Holy Spirit to be our daily Advocate who deepens our love and holiness, and empowers us with spiritual gifts (charisms) for evangelization and ministry. The catechism states, “By its very nature infant Baptism requires a *post-baptismal catechumenate*. Not only is there a need for instruction after Baptism, but also for the necessary flowering of baptismal grace in personal growth” (CCC 1231).

In the footsteps of St. Pope Paul VI, St. Pope John Paul II, and Pope Benedict XVI, Pope Francis has called Charismatic Renewal “a current of grace of the Holy Spirit being poured out for the renewal of the Church in our time.” On Pentecost Sunday 2019 Pope Francis confirmed his initiative to form CHARIS (Catholic Charismatic Renewal International Services), a new international service organization, for all expressions of Charismatic Renewal, and a means to promote the “current of grace” of Charismatic Renewal throughout the church. The Statutes for CHARIS approved by the pope state: “CHARIS promotes and strengthens communion among all Charismatic realities, fostering a sense of the worldwide family of Catholic Charismatic Renewal.” Since CHARIS has been erected by the Holy See, as part of the Dicastery for Laity, Family and Life, it has the right and calling “To help deepen and promote the grace of baptism in the Holy Spirit throughout the Church; To promote the exercise of charisms not only in Catholic Charismatic Renewal but also in the whole Church.” Father Alexandre Awi Mello, secretary of the dicastery, has stated that the pope’s placing CHARIS within the dicastery “is a strong gesture by the pope that he wants to integrate the Renewal, to say, the Renewal is church, and that baptism in the Spirit belongs to the church in the way that charity belongs to the church.” This is a clear step in confirming that this grace is meant for the whole church, and that preparation and prayer for baptism in the Holy Spirit should be a normal practice for all members of the church.

We have seen in the Scriptures that baptism in the Spirit is often accompanied by manifestations of the Spirit, and gifts of the Spirit (gift of tongues, proclaiming God’s mighty deeds, and prophecy, among others). In the 4th century we hear St. Hilary of Poitiers (315–368) saying: “We who have been reborn through the sacrament of baptism experience intense joy when we feel within us the first stirrings of the Holy Spirit. We begin to have insights into the mysteries of the faith, we are able to prophesy and speak with wisdom. We

become steadfast in hope and receive the gifts of healing. Demons are made subject to our authority. These gifts enter us like a gentle rain, and once having done so, little by little bring forth fruit in abundance” (*Tract on the Psalms*, 64:14–15, CSEL 22:246).

St. Thomas Aquinas, OP, writes that a person can receive the sacrament of baptism, but may not receive the full grace of the sacrament: “We receive justification in baptism not by force but willingly. So, a person must intend to receive what he has been given. True faith is also a prerequisite since grace, the ultimate effect of this sacrament, cannot be received without it. ... Whoever is baptized into Christ and is conformed to Him through faith and charity puts on Christ through grace. But if we receive the sacrament of Christ [with only a pretense of faith and charity] we put on Christ only by being configured to Him by our baptismal character, but not being conformed to Him by grace” (*Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation, Chapter 15 on Living in Christ*, 68–69). Later in life, the sacramental graces need to be “stirred into a flame” (2 Tm 1:6).

## Laying on of hands by the laity

Some people have argued that the gesture of laying on of hands can only be done by ordained ministers. CHARIS published a document that was approved by the church (which can be found on the CHARIS web page, <https://www.charis.international/en/can-the-laying-on-of-hands-be-done-by-lay-people/>). In the Scriptures this gesture is used as a way for parents to bless their children, to consecrate people for ministry, and to pray for healing. The risen Lord promises that believers “will lay hands on the sick and they will recover” (Mk 16:18). The laying of hands is used for imparting the fullness of the Holy Spirit and for ordination of presbyters and deacons; but also, by ordinary believers like Ananias who lays hands on Saul to heal him of his blindness (Acts 9:17).

## Charismatic gifts, including the gift of tongues

We have already seen how Vatican II encourages openness to charisms (charismatic gifts). The catechism published in 1994 under Pope St. John Paul II, has many sections that explain and encourage openness to charisms (CCC 688, 799–801, 951, 1508, 2003).

The charisms are active in Jesus’ ministry. Jesus fulfills the description of the Messiah/Christ given in Isaiah 61 in Luke 4:14–21: “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.” Jesus will then share his “power and authority” with his 12 apostles, as they also manifest gifts to cure disease, expel demons, and proclaim the kingdom of God (Lk 9:1–6). Later he will give this power and authority to 72 other disciples (Lk 10:1–12).

St. Paul describes charisms in Romans 12:4–8; 1 Corinthians chapters 12–14; Ephesians 4:7–14, and they are mentioned in other places. They are “manifestations of the Spirit” (1 Cor 12:7) to “equip” (Eph 4:12) Jesus’ disciples for ministry. St. Paul says to “strive eagerly for the spiritual gifts” (1 Cor 14:1).

The gifts of tongues and the interpretation of tongues are mentioned among the gifts in 1 Corinthians 12 and 14. Some speakers claim that the gift of tongues is demonic, or simply hysteria, or a babbling of sounds, and say that interpretation of tongues is simply being able to interpret a language. We have already seen how tongues in a common manifestation in the Acts of the Apostles when a person receives the Holy Spirit. A person does not have to be in an ecstatic state to pray in



# CHARISMATIC

Continued from Page 6

tongues. I have prayed in tongues for over 50 years. I use my mind to decide when to start praying in tongues and when to end. Once I start, the words just come without my thinking of words or even sounds. It is a childlike gift that helps us to follow Jesus' call to have childlike faith, and it helps us to be open to the Holy Spirit's inspirations. St. Paul describes the Spirit working in us in prayer with "inexpressible groanings" (Rom 8:26-27). The devil is the "Father of lies" and frequently will copy something good to confuse people. In some exorcisms there is a manifestation of something like speaking in tongues, but this does not mean the true gift of tongues is diabolic.

The gift of interpretation of tongues is mentioned among the "manifestations of the Spirit" (1 Cor 12:10). It would not be mentioned in this list if it were only a human ability. St. Paul says, "I should like all of you to speak in tongues" and "I speak in tongues more than any of you" (1 Cor 14:5, 18). St. Paul seeks good order in charismatic prayer, not wanting people to show off by speaking tongues out loud in a meeting by oneself, unless someone there has a gift of interpretation of tongues (1 Cor 14:20-39).

### Being fully Catholic includes ecumenism

Some people have spoken negatively about Catholic Charismatic Renewal because it was influenced in its beginnings by some Protestant Pentecostals and because it has emphasized the importance of ecumenism, seeking unity among Christians. Jesus often got in trouble with the religious authorities because he spoke of God working through non-Jews, e.g., the Good Samaritan parable (Lk 10:29-37); the man who was not of their company casting out demons in Jesus' name (Lk 9:49-50); the Samaritan woman at the well (Jn 4:4-42); healing of a Roman centurion's slave with Jesus honoring the centurion for his faith (Lk 7:1-10); Jesus explaining that God performed miracles for non-Jews through the prophets Elijah and Elisha (Lk 4:25-30).


Vatican II, Decree on Ecumenism #3 states: "widespread disagreements appeared and quite large Communities became separated from full communion with the Catholic Church — developments for which, at times, men on both sides were to blame. However, one cannot impute the sin of separation to those who at present are born into these Communities and are instilled therein with Christ's faith. The Catholic Church accepts them with respect and affection as brothers. For men who believe in Christ and have been properly baptized (author's note: with water in the name of the Holy Trinity) are brought into a certain, though imperfect, communion with the Catholic Church ... some, even very many, of the most significant elements or endowments which together go to build up and give life to the Church herself can exist outside the visible boundaries of the Catholic Church: the written word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope, and charity, along with other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit and visible elements."

The catechism, 817-819, confirms the same ideas as the Decree on Ecumenism: "All who have been justified by faith in Baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have the right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church" (CCC 818). "The desire to recover the unity of all Christians is a gift of Christ and a call of the Holy Spirit" (CCC 820). Pope Francis, following in the footsteps of Pope St. Paul VI, Pope St. John Paul II, and Pope Benedict XVI, has called the Charismatic Renewal a special grace in seeking the unity of Christians.

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 Father Bob Hagen, BBD, is a member of the CHARIS National Service of Communion USA. He was the major writer and chairperson of the committee that wrote the book, *A Grace for the Whole Church: Encountering the Holy Spirit through Baptism in the Holy Spirit (2023)*. It can be purchased through *Pentecost Today USA*, of which he is a former Board Member and Chairman.

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CatholicCharismatic.com

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# SAN RAFAEL EXPEDITIONS

A Catholic Mission Organization

June 29 – July 6, 2025

# MEDICAL MISSION

To La Ceiba, Honduras



Our diocese is seeking compassionate medical professionals, (physicians, nurses, PA's and NP's), to join us in providing essential healthcare services to underserved communities. This mission aims to offer medical care, health education, and support to those in need.

*"Our longstanding partnership with our brothers and sisters in Honduras will soon find expression in this new initiative of solidarity with the poor." - Bishop Michael Sis*

For more information, and to sign up, please contact us at:

SanRafaelExpedition@outlook.com or call Janelle O'Connell at (325-668-3397)

Scan the QR code below for an explanation of mission from Bishop Sis and the diocesan Mission Council





## Human dignity: Out of sight, out of mind —

# The invisible persons in our church and society, and why we need a disabilities ministry

## Part 3: Civil successes and failures

By Deacon Gary Brooks

This is part three of a four-part series. In Part 1 we looked at my own personal experience with those who have disabilities. In Part 2 we looked at many of the references we find in Scripture about individuals who had disabilities. This month we will view the civil attempts to assist those with disabilities, as well as those times when they have been mistreated.

In 2021, both the Pew Research Center and the United States Census Bureau stated that 42.5 million people in the United States, an average of 13% of non-institutionalized people, suffer from one form or another of disability.

Historically we know that these individuals who had disabilities did not live in the mainstream population. They were either left at home, never to go out, or they were put into institutions where they were rarely seen by friends or family.

One of the worst cases of abuse and neglect came to light when the evils at the Willowbrook State Developmental Center in New York were shown to the world in graphic film footage taken by Geraldo Rivera's film crew. Human beings with disabilities of all ages were treated in abominable and torturous ways, due to ignorance, arrogance, and an extreme void of basic moral compassion. It took far too long after the investigation for the institution to close, 15 long years, until 1987. But the deep tradition of placing individuals with any disability in institutions nationally started to change. Laws changed. More babies with disabilities were kept home with their families and started receiving education. This is the story that Geraldo Rivera is most proud of, as he continues to champion causes for people with disabilities to this day in his private life. People with disabilities, their families, and society as a whole owe a debt of gratitude to Mr. Rivera for revealing the horrid truth that was the daily reality for so many at this former "training center."

Below I have listed major examples that we in the United States have done historically, both to support those with disabilities by correcting all of the injustices they suffered, and to look at specific references where they suffered under the laws that were enacted. The ones I have included are more widely known; however, almost every state and municipality has enacted many measures to provide equal treatment for those with all different kinds of disabilities.

For example, the Continental Congress in 1776 enacted a pension law for those who lost a limb fighting in the Revolutionary War.

The American School of the Deaf was founded in 1817 and was the first school for children with disabilities anywhere in the western hemisphere. The National Association of the Deaf was established in 1880.

During the late 1800s up to 1970, many states had what were called "ugly laws" that contained language that applied to both cognitive and physical disabilities. One such ordinance was written in Chicago in 1881 that read as follows:

Any person who is diseased, maimed, mutilated, or in any deformed so as to be an unsightly or disgusting object, or improper person to be allowed in or on the streets, highways, thoroughfares, or public places in the city, shall not therein or thereon expose himself to public view, under the penalty of a fine of \$1 for each offense.

It was not until 1918 that the first Cleveland Cripple Survey was published, one of the first accurate disability

censuses, that measured the social and economic conditions of the individuals considered in the survey.

In 1940, both The National Federation of the Blind and The American Federation of the Physically Handicapped were founded.

It was during the 1950s that other organizations and public laws were enacted to help those with disabilities, but only a little at a time. It was not until 1958 that an American grassroots publication was begun to be an early voice for disability rights, independent living, and cross-disability organization.

The real advancement in disability rights did not begin until the 1960s when U.S. President John F. Kennedy began to advocate for those with disabilities. He called for a reduction in the number of persons institutionalized and for an increase in community services. He and his family had a direct connection to the disabled community when his younger sister was born with intellectual disabilities.

Other major milestones, such as laws, organizations, and movements, took root in this country at this point. Below are some highlights from the national level of the many hundreds of attempts to make accommodations for individuals with disabilities of a civil nature.

In 1965 Medicare and Medicaid were established through the passing of the Social Security Amendments of 1965. These changes resulted in the change in definition of a disability under Social Security Disability Program.

1968 saw the Architectural Barriers Act become law in the U.S., requiring all federally owned or leased facilities be accessible to those with disabilities.

The first legal advocacy center for people in the U.S. with disabilities was established in 1971 and was called The National Center for Law and the Handicapped and was founded at the University of Notre Dame.

Edward Roberts, and associates, established The Center for Independent Living in Berkeley, California, recognized as the first center for independent living.

In October 1972, President Nixon vetoed an early version of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and again in March of 1973. After many demonstrations around the country that included many disabled activists, the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 was enacted on Sept. 26, 1973.

Handicapped parking stickers were first introduced in Washington D.C. in 1973.

The last of the ugly laws was repealed in 1974.

New York City began to use busses in 1981 that had wheelchair access.

The United Nations established 1981 as the International Year of Disabled persons.

In 1982 The Telecommunications for the Disabled Act became law in the U.S. and it mandated that public phones were to be accessible to the hearing impaired by Jan. 1, 1985.

Ted Kennedy Jr. spoke from the platform of the Democratic National Convention on disability rights in 1984, and President Ronald Reagan signed into law the Social Security Disability Benefits Reform Act in 1984.

In 1986 the National Council on the Handicapped outlined the legal status of Americans with disabilities and documented the existence of discrimination. It cited the need for federal civil rights legislation, which led to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990.

The Air Carrier Act of 1986 was passed prohibiting commercial airlines from discriminating against passengers with disabilities.

1988 saw students at Gallaudet University in Wash-

ington, D.C., hold a demonstration called "A Deaf President Now." On March 13, 1988, Dr. I. King Jordan was named the first deaf president of the university.

The Fair Housing Act was amended to protect people with disabilities from housing discrimination in the areas of rentals, sales, and financing in 1988.

In the 1990s Hillary Clinton approved the addition of a ramp in the East Wing corridor of the White House to provide easier wheel chair access.

The Americans with Disabilities Act became law in 1990.

The Education for All Handicapped Children Act was amended and renamed the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1990.

On Jan. 23, 1991, the Television Decoder Circuitry Act of 1990 was passed by Congress. This is the legislation that led to closed captioning on our televisions.

1993 saw The American Indian Disability Legislation Project established to collect data on Native American disability rights laws and regulations.

Justice for All was organized started by Justin Dart and others in order to advocate against calls to amend or repeal the Americans with Disabilities Act and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in 1995.

The Congressional Accountability Act of 1995 became a law in the U.S., and it required all offices in the legislative branch of the government to make their public services, programs, activities, and places of public accommodation accessible to members of the public who have disabilities.

The year 2000 saw the Development Disabilities Assistance and Bill of Rights Act of 2000 become law.

On Oct. 30, 2004, President George W. Bush signed into law the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 became law and mandated equality, accountability, and excellence in education for children with disabilities.

In 2010 Rosa's Law became effective in the U.S. It mandated changes in many federal statutes that referred to "mental retardation," that the correct terminology should be "intellectual disabilities."

For every federal law or regulation that has been enacted, there are thousands more pieces of legislation that the states have ruled on in their individual states. Also, the courts of law in the U.S. have consistently been involved in settling disputes that arose from individuals who have been discriminated against. The U.S. Supreme Court has ruled on many cases, too numerous to show here.

While it may seem like we have an overabundance of laws and regulations to support those with disabilities, there have been many cases where attempts have been made to either eliminate or reduce the effectiveness of legislation that has been passed previously.

We will never be able to solve every disability issue that arises, but we need to keep in our forethoughts that we must constantly look for ways to help these individuals improve their quality of life.

In Part 4 we will begin to look at how the church has responded to the issues of individuals with disabilities.

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*Deacon Gary Brooks is assigned to St Elizabeth Ann Seton in Odessa. Anyone wishing to contact him about ministry for the disabled may reach him at gbrooks@sangelodiocese.org.*

## World Earth Day 2025 focuses on 'Our Power, Our Planet'

Tuesday, April 22, 2025, is the 55th anniversary of Earth Day.

Everyone is invited to support, study, and reflect on Earth Day's 2025 theme — Our Power, Our Planet. There are many ways to make a difference for our planet on Earth Day and every day. Join millions worldwide in Earth Day 2025 activities. Attend a local event or plan and register your own. *Earthday.org* mentions several resources such as quizzes, fact sheets, articles, and more to help us celebrate Earth Day this year in our homes and communities, at work, and at school. We are invited to act now to make smart powerful energy choices at a family level and community level and demand rapid renewable energy deployment from your governments, industries, schools, and businesses.

### Our duty is to protect the environment

Earth Day serves as a powerful reminder of our shared responsibility to protect the environment. With every passing year, the urgency grows — whether it's climate change, pollution, or deforestation, the planet's ecosystems are facing increasing challenges. Scientists are unified on the causes of climate change and warn that without quick and comprehensive action, we are heading toward



**Bishop Emeritus  
Michael D. Pfeifer, OMI**

Diocese of  
San Angelo

an existential threat to the Earth and all of its inhabitants, especially the most vulnerable among us. As we pause to reflect on our environmental impact, we must also remember that our power is directly tied to the health of our planet. In accord with the theme of Earth Day, we are invited to explore how our collective actions shape the future of the world around us, and how we can tap into the power of mindful, sustainable living. *Diversdirect.com* points out the theme of this Earth Day is simple yet profound: Our Planet, Our Power. We often think of power in terms of external forces — energy, machines, and technology. But power, in its truest sense, is about choices. It's about the choices we make every day that affect the environment which surrounds us. Whether it's the energy we

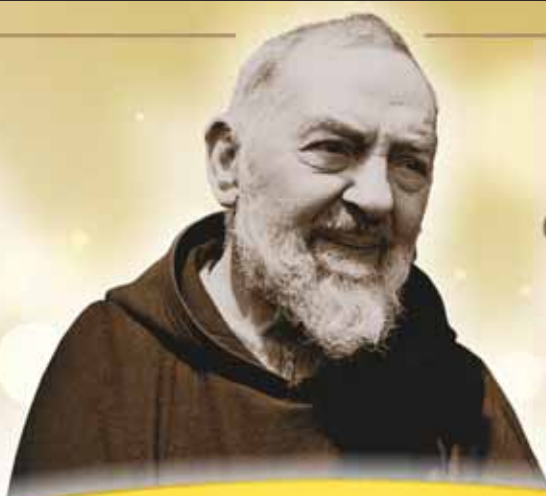
use, the waste we produce, or the products we buy, our individual actions ripple out, creating broader effects. As a collective body of people, we wield enormous power over the health of our planet. The planet's resources are finite. Fresh water, fertile soil, clean air — they aren't guaranteed to last forever if we don't manage them carefully. In accord with the theme of Earth Day, all are invited to choose to be part of the solution and how we can tap into our power to live more sustainably. Our daily choices hold immense power.

### Pope Francis urges climate justice

As regards the theme of Earth Day, Pope Francis has been a prophetic voice for climate justice, urging action to protect the earth and the vulnerable. His teachings challenge us to resist greed, embrace sustainability, and advocate for systemic change. Pope Francis has fearlessly and directly addressed the links between "the cry of the earth" and "the cry of the poor" and the vulnerable. Pope Francis spoke about the various international and national movements that have sprung up to appeal to our consciences about caring for our common home. He noted how young

See PFEIFER, Page 17





St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church invites you to a teaching and exposition of these Sacred Relics. Among the relics will be Saint Pio's Crust of his stigmata wounds, a lock of his hair, a piece of Saint Pio's Mantle, his white glove, and the handkerchief he used to wipe his tears during Mass.

## THE RELICS OF PADRE PIO

ST. ELIZABETH ANN SETON  
7601 N GRANDVIEW AVE  
ODESSA, TX 79765  
432-367-4657



HELD IN THE CHURCH ON SATURDAY, APRIL 12TH FROM 12 NOON - 7 PM

- 1 SAINT PIO'S CRUST OF THE WOUNDS
- 2 A PIECE OF SAINT PIO'S MANTLE
- 3 SAINT PIO'S WHITE FINGERLESS GLOVE
- 4 SAINT PIO'S HANDKERCHIEF
- 5 A LOCK OF SAINT PIO'S HAIR

### Read the Angelus online

Sign up for DOSA Mail (see below) to get the WTA and other news from the diocese in your inbox. Past issues available at: [sanangelodiocese.org/west-texas-angelus](http://sanangelodiocese.org/west-texas-angelus)



# Holy Week

Sacred Heart Cathedral  
Diocese of San Angelo



### Palm Sunday April 12/13 of the Passion of the Lord

Procession forms in the Courtyard 30 minutes before Masses at 4 pm, noon (Spanish) & 6 pm, Msgr. Droll; 10 am<, Bishop Sis

### Chrism Mass April 15

11 am Mass\*^ to consecrate the holy oils, Bishop Sis with priests (Lunch follows in the Gym)

### Holy Thursday April 17

6:30 pm Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper\*; Eucharistic Procession to the Altar of Repose with adoration in the Gym until 10 pm, Bishop Sis

### Good Friday April 18 of the Lord's Passion

12:10 pm Stations of the Cross, deacon; 6:30 pm Liturgy of the Lord's Passion^, Bishop Sis

### Holy Saturday April 19 at the Easter Vigil

in the Holy Night of Easter^+  
8:30 pm first Liturgy of Easter in four parts: Lucernarium, Liturgy of the Word, baptisms and professions of faith with confirmations; and the Liturgy of the Eucharist, Bishop Sis

### Easter Sunday April 20 of the Resurrection of the Lord

10 am Mass\*, Msgr. Droll  
noon Mass in Spanish, Bishop Sis



Ecce Homo, Titian, 1558-1560

### Citywide Good Friday Procession and Way of the Cross

The San Angelo bilingual rosary procession led by Bishop Sis leaves St. Margaret of Scotland at noon and arrives at the Christ the King Retreat Center grounds by 12:45 pm to walk the Way of the Cross.

(Lenten soup served in St. Margaret's Hall from 10:30 am)

- <Cathedral Adult Choir
- \*Cathedral Choristers
- ^Schola Cantorum
- +Concho Cathedral Brassworx

## Stay Connected with the Diocese of San Angelo

### DOSA Mail

The official Flocknote of the Diocese of San Angelo. Receive texts or emails with important news, updates, and messages from the diocese.

Two ways to join:

1) Text DOSA to 84576

OR

2) Visit

<https://app.flocknote.com/dosamail>

### Social Media

Diocese of San Angelo on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/DioceseofSanAngelo>

DioceseofSanAngelo

Bishop Michael Sis on X (formerly Twitter):

@SABishopMike

### On the Web

[www.sanangelodiocese.org](http://www.sanangelodiocese.org)



### Texas Catholic Advocacy Day



Faithful from around the Diocese of San Angelo traveled to Austin for Texas Catholic Advocacy Day April 1, 2025. Every two years, Catholics gather at the state capitol to pray and meet with legislators to discuss issues of importance to Catholic voters. For the first time this year the group included students from Angelo Catholic School in San Angelo, who attended a mock hearing at the capitol.

COURTESY

### 150 years for St. Joseph, the oldest church in the diocese



WEST TEXAS ANGELUS



The community of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Fort Stockton gathered March 19, 2025, to celebrate the 150th anniversary of the church building for St. Joseph Church. St. Joseph Church, built on the town square, was the first church of any kind in Fort Stockton. Canonically established in September 1871, the church is also the oldest Catholic church in the Diocese of San Angelo. Construction on the church building began in 1875.

WEST TEXAS ANGELUS



Bishop Michael J. Sis of the Diocese of San Angelo spoke on the steps of the Texas Capitol during Texas Catholic Advocacy Day April 1, 2025.

COURTESY

### Catholic Daughters of the Americas



COURTESY

Members gathered for a Catholic Daughters of the Americas monthly meeting at Holy Angels Parish Hall in San Angelo on Feb. 20, 2025. The Catholic Daughters brought pantry donations for Mt. Carmel Hermitage in Christoval.

### Acts XXIV Leadership Immersive



Father Ariel Lagunilla and Deacon Alan Pelzel of the communities of St. Joseph in Rowena, St. Thomas in Miles, and St. Boniface in Ofen, along with other parishioners, attended a week-long Leadership Immersive in Detroit led by Father John Richardo and the team from ACTS XXIV. The group's first goal after returning home from the workshop is to spread the importance of Eucharistic adoration and improve ways that everyone can benefit from spending time with Jesus.

COURTESY



# 30 years later: St. John Paul II's enduring challenge to culture in 'Evangelium Vitae'

By John M. Haas  
OSV News

Pope St. John Paul II could well be called the "apostle of life." He spent his entire pontificate boldly proclaiming the inviolability of innocent human life.

On his first pastoral visit to the United States in 1979, he stood on the Mall in Washington amid the symbols of U.S. institutional power and he called on all Americans "to stand up for life." Throughout his reign, the pope never hesitated to declare the right to life in the presence of heads of state, power brokers and arbiters of national social policy.

When it came to the life issues, this pope was best known for his powerful 1995 encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* (*The Gospel of Life*). This year marks its 30th anniversary, but it is no less relevant. St. John Paul spoke of "atrocious crimes" and "murderous violence" in contemporary societies. He said that

those who would choose abortion have an attitude that "is shameful and reprehensible."

What is distinctive about the pope's teaching on life issues, however, is that they do not deal simply with personal morality. They are always placed in a cultural context. Above all else, *The Gospel of Life* is a penetrating analysis and critique of contemporary "advanced" societies.

In the encyclical, the pope spoke of "attacks, affecting life in its earliest and its final stages, attacks that ... raise questions of extraordinary seriousness. It is not only that ... these attacks tend no longer to be considered as 'crimes': paradoxically, they assume the nature of 'rights,' to the point that the state is called upon to give them legal recognition and to make them available through the free services of health-care personnel." He says we have come "to interpret ... crimes against life as legitimate expressions of individual freedom, to be as acknowledged and protected as actual rights."

The cultural decline, the loss of social protections for innocent life, are what seemed to baffle and dismay the pope above all else. "How did such a situation come about?" he asked. "In the background there is the profound crisis of culture, that generates skepticism in relation to the very foundations of knowledge and ethics, and that makes it increasingly difficult to grasp clearly the meaning of what man is, the meaning of his rights and duties."

The pope saw civilization itself faced with the danger of its own self-destruction. He writes elsewhere that "we are facing an immense threat to life: not only to the life of individuals, but, also, to that of civilization itself."

St. John Paul told us that nations once considered civilized are reverting "to a state of barbarism." Whenever we see legally sanctioned abortion, we are dealing with a "tyrant state" engaging in a "tragic caricature of legality" through such actions as Supreme Court rulings.

These developments, the pope told us, "have a perverse and evil significance" as we suffer "the most alarming corruption and the darkest moral blindness." The pope's words were not hyperbolic. Since abortion was legalized nationwide in the U.S. with *Roe v. Wade* in 1973, around 65 million children have died from abortion. While the Supreme Court's 2022 *Dobbs* decision overturned *Roe*, it has not stemmed the numbers of abortion in the U.S. Available data actually points to a slight increase in the number of annual abortions in 2023, the most recent year for which data is available, when compared to the years immediately preceding *Dobbs*.

The problem, of course, is that the social threat to innocent human life is not fundamentally a political or juridical problem at all. It is, as the pope showed us, a cultural problem.

When the pope visited Los Angeles in 1987, he gave a description of culture as "all those things that reflect the soul of a nation." He asked, "How is American culture evolving today?"

... Your music, your poetry and art, your drama, your painting and sculpture, the literature that you are producing — are all those things that reflect the soul of a nation being influenced by the spirit of Christ for the perfection of humanity?"

A nation's culture reflects its deepest beliefs. And it is fundamentally religion that gives rise to culture.

Our nation has always afforded protection to the vulnerable in our midst because we cherished each individual human life. At one point, unborn children were protected by law because we cherished children. Infanticide and euthanasia were unspeakable — indeed, unthinkable. There was an underlying respect and love for human life that came to be reflected in the law. This love and respect did not arise from the law, however. Its roots were much, much deeper.

Our nation in its origins was Christian, a fact that the pope acknowledged repeatedly during his second pastoral visit to the United States. We afforded profound respect to human beings because we believed each person was the very image and likeness of God himself.

In *The Gospel of Life*, the pope reminded us that the Incarnation "reveals to humanity not only the boundless love of God who 'so loved the world that He gave His only Son' (Jn 3:16), but also the incomparable value of every human person."

The dignity of every person can be seen in the fact that each is the image and likeness of God, and each has been deemed "at a great price" by Jesus Christ. It is this profound religious insight that gave rise to the reverence shown the innocent in the laws of our nation.

St. John Paul taught us that the most fundamental place to begin to restore legal safeguards to human life is in deepening the religious beliefs of our people, and that God is the ultimate source of the dignity of the human person.

Following the teachings and example of St. John Paul, there is absolutely nothing more important that our bishops and priests can do to restore a sense of the sacredness of human life than to celebrate Mass with devotion and reverence and to offer this greatest of all prayers for the protection of innocent life.

In *Evangelium Vitae*, the pope taught us the Eucharist is the infinite gift of love. If we can instill once again, in the people of God, a sense of wonder and awe in the presence of Jesus Christ in the most holy sacrament of the altar, then we shall begin to see a culture of death begin to crumble, and we will witness the emergence of a culture of life and a civilization of love.

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John M. Haas is the John Cardinal Krol Professor of Moral Theology at St. Charles Borromeo Seminary near Philadelphia. He was the president of The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia from 1996 to 2019 and then served as senior fellow until January 2025.

## Are there any saints who had a difficult relationship with the church?

**Q: Are there any saints who had a difficult relationship with the Church? (New York)**

A: The answer to this question would depend on exactly what you mean by "a difficult relationship" or even the term "the church." But the short answer is that yes, there have been many canonized saints who were treated very badly by church leaders of their day, through no fault of their own.

To give just a few examples: St. Joan of Arc was condemned as a heretic in a clearly biased and politically motivated ecclesiastical trial and was subsequently burned at the stake; St. John of the Cross was imprisoned and regularly beaten by the members of his own religious community due to his work for the reform of the Carmelite Order; St. Mary MacKillop of Australia was unjustly excommunicated in retaliation for her reporting child abuse; and St. Padre Pio was for a time forbidden from exercising public priestly ministry due to concerns about his extraordinary mystical gifts, notably his stigmata (i.e., his bearing of the five wounds of Christ on his own body).

And to put things into perspective, we only know about these and other saints' stories of "friendly fire" persecution because they have been formally canonized. It's likely that there are other holy but less famous Catholics throughout history — who would be "saints" in the strict technical sense of any person who is actually in heaven — who endured similar sufferings.

This can be one of the most difficult scenarios for a faithful Catholic to wrap their mind around. Unlike other organizations, the church as a visible institution was founded by Jesus himself and exists to continue his saving mission in the world until the end of time. We believe that the church is holy. Naturally, the darker chapters in the lives of these saints can prompt the question of how the church could apparently hurt her own members.

This is where it becomes important to make some distinctions. "The church" as the people of God and the spotless bride of Christ does not hurt people. Rather, sinful human beings within the church do. While this can still be a difficult truth, in some ways it should not be surprising. After all, during his Passion and death Jesus himself was denied and abandoned by his own apostles, who would go on to become the church's very first bishops.



Jenna Marie Cooper  
OSV News

Question Corner

Of course, this in no way excuses bad behavior on the part of bishops, religious superiors, or anyone else who represents the church in the course of their ministry. We should keep in mind that the canonized saints who were persecuted by the church did not become saints because they were naïve to this reality of fallen human nature or because they cheerfully kept up a "party line" they knew to be false.

Instead, these men and women were saints because of their clarity of spiritual insight, which allowed them to know and love the church for what it truly is, and because of their courageous fidelity and patience under trials from those in the church who ought to have behaved in a way befitting their vocation but failed to do so.

Pope Benedict XVI discussed this dynamic in his General Audience of Jan. 26, 2011, wherein he reflects on the life and witness of St. Joan of Arc: "In Jesus Joan contemplated the whole reality of the Church, the 'Church triumphant' of Heaven, as well as the 'Church militant' on earth. According to her words, 'About Jesus Christ and the Church, I simply know they're just one thing,' this affirmation, cited in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (n. 795), has a truly heroic character in the context of [her] Trial of Condemnation, before her judges, men of the Church who were persecuting and condemning her. In the Love of Jesus Joan found the strength to love the Church to the very end, even at the moment she was sentenced."

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Jenna Marie Cooper, who holds a licentiate in canon law, is a consecrated virgin and a canonist whose column appears weekly at OSV News. Send your questions to CatholicQA@osv.com.

### GRN RADIO PROGRAM SCHEDULE

#### GUADALUPE RADIO NETWORK

Radio for your soul can be heard on:

- Abilene - 91.7 FM, KQOS
- Midland-Odessa - 1180 AM, KLPF
- Midland-Odessa - 90.9 FM (Español)
- San Angelo - 91.5 FM, KPDE

#### POPULAR ENGLISH PROGRAMS

6:00-7:30 AM – Morning Joy (877-757-9424) - Keith Downey, Adam Blai & Debbie Georgianni

7:30 AM – Holy Mass - The Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity

8:00 AM – Catholic Connections - Teresa Tomeo

9:00 AM – More 2 Life - Dr. Greg & Lisa Popcak

10:00 AM – Women of Grace - Johnnette Williams

11:00 AM – Take 2 - Jerry Usher & Debbie Georgianni

12:00 PM – The Doctor is In - Dr. Ray Guarendi

1:00 PM – Called to Communion - Dr. David Anders

2:00 PM – EWTN Open Line

3:00 PM – Beacon of Truth with The Divine Mercy Chaplet - Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers

4:00 PM – The Quest (877-757-9424) - Live call-in show for questions/comments

5:00 – 7:00 PM – Catholic Answers Live

8:00 PM – EWTN Nightly News

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# St. Julie Billiard kept faith in the French Revolution

There was nothing in Julie Billiard's childhood in 18th-century France that predicted the difficult events she would deal with in her adult life. She was born on July 12, 1751, the fifth of seven children, to a moderately prosperous family in Cuvilly, Picardy, France. She was christened Marie Rose Julie Billiard and was a devout child encouraged by her parish priest to teach children the catechism and to visit the sick.

Family life changed when her father's dry goods business failed when Julie was 16. She spent the next few years traveling to larger towns trying to sell off the remaining inventory.

Julie was in her early 20s when robbers invaded the house and shot her father. The shock sent her into a traumatic paralysis that left her an invalid for the next 20 years.

She used her time at home to find hiding places for fugitive priests during the French Revolution that broke out in 1789. Eventually she had to be smuggled out of Cuvilly because she was accused of harboring priests and supporting the church.

Friends came to her aid and hid her in a cart load of straw and took her to Compiègne.

Richard McBrien writes in *Lives of the Saints* that when the worst of the Reign of Terror was over, Julie moved to Amiens. She met an aristocratic woman there, Françoise (Frances) Blin de Bourdon, who looked after her. They be-



Mary Lou Gibson

Speaking of Saints

came good friends and together founded the Institute of the Sisters of Notre Dame, now known as the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur.

When the religious persecution renewed, both women moved to Bettencourt where, with a group of women, they conducted catechetical classes for the villagers. Then they met Father Joseph Varin who helped them lay the foundations of the institute that included a devotion to the spiritual education of poor children.

Father Varin provided them with a provisional rule and the first sisters made their vows as religious in 1804. Julie and Frances opened an orphanage soon after. It was during a mission in Amiens where another priest, Father EnFantin, conducted a novena to the Sacred Heart. After five days of intense prayer, he said to Julie, "If you have any faith, take

one step in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus." Mother Julie got up and walked after having been an invalid for 22 years.

But with that one miracle came a serious setback when Father Varin was replaced as chaplain of the institute. According to McBrien, the new chaplain was less sympathetic to the two women as co-foundresses and turned the bishop against them. Some priests wanted to bring her sisters under closer control. Julie maintained that her sisters had to be mobile and so there was no enclosure. She also did away with the traditional division into choir and lay sisters. All were to pray and meditate and all were to share in manual work. This resulted in the temporary closure of all their convents and schools in France.

Paul Burns writes in *Butler's Lives of the Saints* that Julie dealt with all these setbacks by keeping a complete trust in God's providence. Julie and Frances left Amiens and moved their mother house to Namur. Julie kept her community together by her constant visits and her optimism.

Mother Julie traveled constantly, expanding her institute and opening schools in France and Belgium until her death in 1816. She was canonized by Pope Paul VI in 1969. Her feast day is April 8.

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Mary Lou Gibson writes about the saints for the West Texas Angelus from her home in Austin.

## The time you least wanted to

Several years ago, I heard a story about a nun who was near death when Jesus appeared at the foot of her bed. He looked at her and asked if she knew what she had done in her lifetime that pleased him the most. She thought about it a moment and replied, "The day I decided to become a nun." He shook his head slowly and told her, "No." She thought about it longer and said, "Then it must have been when I took my final vows." Again, he told her, "No." "Then I don't know," she professed. "When?" "The time you least wanted to pray ... but you did!" I can't tell you how many times that story has brought me to my knees, how many more rosaries have been said, how many times I got out of bed late at night because I had forgotten to make my daily visitation to the adoration chapel and went grumbling all the way there, only to feel the miracle of Jesus' presence upon my arrival. Many other of the most important things I have done in my life were also done when it would have been easier to do something else.

When I was 16, I the plant manager of Nixon Nitration Works came to our home and was talking with my mom at our dining room table. He called me to come sit with them and asked me if I wanted a summer job to help my mom with finances. He told me I had to be 18 to work there but he would change the year of my birth to make it "legal." I was afraid. One of Dad's friends lost an eye and another lost an arm while working there. I didn't expect to work until I graduated from college. I looked at my mom and hoped she would say, "Of course not!" but instead she said it was up to me. I didn't want to say yes but I did. Working with men my father's age got me out of the house, gave me some small purpose, and got me to grow up a bit in ways I would not have done otherwise.

When I was 18, they sold the plant and that same general manager, who was close friends with my dad, found me another summer job. This time it was working as a garbage man for the township of Edison. Out of all the jobs in the world, that was the last one I thought I would ever have to do and was embarrassed that someone I knew would see me picking up their trash, but I did. It taught me how fulfilling and challenging hard physical work could be, and I came to really like it (becoming only one of two men who could empty four cans at the same time!).

Age 18 was also when I entered Rutgers University in their five-year Chemical Engineering Program. We were told in our first general assembly to introduce ourselves to the guy (Rutgers was still all male at that time) on our left and right. When our class was called back to order, the dean said, "The reason I asked you to meet them is because neither one of them will still be here second semester! Welcome to Rutgers." In that extremely competitive culture, flunking out was far more dangerous than mere embarrassment. The war in Vietnam was intensifying. I knew a kid who left school, became a helicopter pilot, got married one Saturday, left for Nam, got shot down, and had his funeral in the same church a week later. My class had the highest average SAT scores at that time and getting good grades was highly competitive and graded on a curve. I had a 91 in Economics and received a "D." Cheating was widespread. It was the time I least wanted to be honest, but I could not bring myself to cheating even when I was certain I would not make it. I told God that I would rather flunk out honestly, even if it eventuated in my death, then to stay in dishonestly. Four years later, while working 48 hours a week on the garbage truck and 15 hours more at a part-time night job throughout the entire second semester, I graduated on the Dean's List. Because I had not cheated, I left with total confidence in my academic abilities and was not afraid to enter the "oldest and most prestigious program in the



James R. Sulliman, PhD

world for marriage and family therapy" at Florida State University. By nine years, I was the youngest person to ever graduate and then did post-doc in psychology. My dissertation was the development of a psychometric in Adlerian Psychology and has become the gold standard for assessing "social interest." I can't imagine how I would feel today if I knew the foundation for it all was deceit.

At 25, I took a job at a Tallahassee high school of approximately 2,500 students to conduct my research. In February, two girls told me they were quitting school because nobody cared about girls. I asked what on earth they were talking about, and they said while boys could play football, basketball, baseball, and run track, there were no girls' sports. I told them to ask their P.E. teachers or any others to get something started. They said they did, and no one would do it. Then they asked me. "ME?! No, not me, absolutely not! I have a dissertation to write in the next three months!" They lowered their heads. I said, "Oh man, don't do that to me! ... OK, what do you want to play? I don't know anything about track but I played semi-pro baseball, so I know a little about that ... you want to play softball? They eagerly said yes. We made an announcement two days later and I was so hoping that no one would show up after school because I had the least amount of time ever and didn't want to be involved with it at all, but I did. After school that day, I stood on the practice football field with two bats, three softballs, 92 girls, and no plan! Two years ago I was invited by the superintendent of Leon County to appear before the board of education in recognition of starting girls sports in Tallahassee 50 years earlier. Girls now play in 14 different sports.

It was also in that first year that a girl missed practice before the day of a game for the third time. She was my best player, but I had not started her the other two times because we had a rule: if you miss practice the day before a game you don't start. She was white and I had started a black girl both times before in her place. She came into my counseling office and said she needed to talk. She asked me if she was going to start in the game that afternoon and I told her she knew the answer because she had missed practice. She leaned forward and said, "Then you are a dead man!" I said, "Really? Now why would you say that?" She told me her father was in the Klan and he and his friends had killed others before and disposed of their bodies and I would be just one more. She said she did not want that to happen and all I had to do was start her in the game that afternoon and she would quit the next day. There was no way I was not going to start her! It was not worth dying for a softball game. We were the home team that day, so she was already at first base when I brought the lineup card to the umpire just prior to the start of the game. I had her batting third. As I was about to hand the lineup to the ump, I stopped, looked at her, looked at my black kids, glanced at her father, crossed her name out, and played the black girl. I was afraid of what might happen to me, and it was a change I least wanted to make, but I did. While it was not worth dying for a softball game, it was worth dying for doing what you believed to be the right thing. Apparently my namesake did too.

Jim Sulliman was a medic with the Marine Corps and was killed in Iwo Jima while trying to save someone's life.

Although there are many other personal examples I can give of not wanting to do something, but did, two more are of extreme importance in my life. Thirty-two years ago, at the end of a long day, I finally had a rare break and had things that I needed to do with the time. At that moment, I received a request to meet with someone. It would have been so easy not to do because it completely went against the system that was in place and was not what seemed to meet the standard of a true emergency. I didn't want to change my plans but after going through all the other possible options, I did. In so doing my life was changed forever. I am a daily communicant, spend an average of an hour each day in the adoration chapel, say nine rosaries daily, and have consecrated my life to Jesus and Mary because of that decision I did not want to make.

The other significant thing I did not want to do goes all the way back to 16 and the reason I needed to go to work in the first place. I was an only child, and my dad died after a horrendous battle with cancer that left him significantly disfigured. I had prayed on my knees for at least an hour for 15 months and told God I would become a priest if he would just let my dad live until I graduated college because it meant so much to him and I would be the first person in our family to do so. The moment he died on Jan. 19, I "lost" both of my fathers. For many months, I cried myself to sleep and my prayer was a simple one each night and I no longer knelt ... "I don't think you love me and have no reason to believe you do, but if I'm wrong and you have love for me as much as the smallest grain of sand out of all the beaches and deserts of the world, then tomorrow I won't wake up!" Each morning I awoke, looked up, and said, "I didn't think so." All I wanted to do was die and thought about it constantly. It was the time in my life when I least wanted to live ... but I did.

It is not surprising that Jesus may have made that appearance to the nun and was touched most of all about her doing what God was calling her to do when she least felt like doing it. He knew what it was like for him on the greatest scale in the history of mankind:

"Then Jesus came with them to a place called Gethsemane, and he said to his disciples, 'Sit here while I go over there and pray.' He took along Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to feel sorrow and distress. Then he said to them, 'My soul is sorrowful even to death. Remain here and keep watch with me.' He advanced a little and fell prostrate in prayer, saying, 'My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me; yet, not as I will, but as you will.' When he returned to his disciples he found them asleep. He said to Peter, 'So you could not keep watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray that you may not undergo the test. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.' Withdrawing a second time, he prayed again, 'My Father, if it is not possible that this cup pass without my drinking it, your will be done!' Then he returned once more and found them asleep, for they could not keep their eyes open. He left them and withdrew again and prayed a third time, saying the same thing again" (Mt 26:36-44).

Jesus, as fully man, didn't "want" to be crucified. There is no doubt that this was the time that Jesus least wanted to do the will of his Father...

BUT HE DID!!!

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Dr. James Sulliman has 50 years' experience in individual, marriage, and family therapy. He is also the Abilene-area pro-life coordinator for the Diocese of San Angelo.



## Catholic Voices

# St. Joseph–St. Anthony Parish: A space for spiritual growth for children

By Sister July del Carmen Castillo, Bethl  
Translated by Lupe Castillo

"Jesus said to them, 'Leave the children alone, and do not prevent them from coming to me, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to those like them.' " (Mt 19:14)

On July 14, 2024, the parish of St. Anthony in Odessa began the Eucharist dedicated to children, a space that since its beginning has been characterized by the active participation of the youngest ones. At 2:00 p.m., the children have the space to encounter the Lord and actively participate as altar servers, ushers and lectors. Although at first the attendance was not numerous, over time there has been an increase in the participation of both children and their parents.

In this environment, the children sit in the first pews of the church, which allows them to pay better attention, since there are screens that facilitate the following of the songs and the active participation of the little ones.

Lately, the number of children participating in this Eucharist has grown significantly. This space has not only allowed children to acquire greater knowledge about

the Eucharist, as one of the fundamental sacraments for Christian growth, but has also been a key place for parents to recognize the importance of this spiritual formation process. The Eucharist has established itself as a privileged space for Christian education in the parish.

In addition to this Eucharist, the parish of St. Joseph-St. Anthony began the formation of Missionary Childhood, a school of formation in faith and mission for children from all over the world. Its objective is to accompany children and adolescents in their spiritual growth and in their relationship with God, offering them spaces for encounter through games, songs, creative activities, and moments of prayer. The purpose is to make them aware of their mission as baptized people, where each child must make known the presence of God in their daily life, at home, at school, and in general in the ecclesial community.

Thanks to the motivation that was made during the Eucharist and the invitations made in the Catechesis (CCD), we managed to create a leadership work team composed of nine women, who provide support in the development of meetings with children. These meetings are

held on the first and third Saturdays of each month, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon in the parish hall.

Currently, around 40 children, between 4 and 13 years of age, participate, divided into three groups according to each stage of development of the children.

This evangelizing work is part of the Pontifical Mission Societies, which ensures the process of formation of children, who become agents of change and evangelization in their immediate environment.

In this way, the parish of St. Joseph and St. Anthony continues to be a space of spiritual growth and evangelization for children, strengthening both their faith and the commitment of families in the formation process of future generations.

A highlight took place on February 23 of this year, when we had the honor of sharing in the celebration of the Eucharist presided over by Bishop Michael Sis. During his visit, the bishop was able to perceive the enthusiasm and welcome of the children, and at the same time, he offered an evangelizing message that strengthened the parents in their mission to guide their children along the path of faith.

## Indulgences for the Jubilee Year 2025

By Bishop Michael J. Sis

A plenary indulgence is a grace granted by the Catholic Church through the merits of Jesus Christ to remove the temporal punishment due to sin. The indulgence applies to sins already forgiven. A plenary indulgence cleanses the soul as if the person had just been baptized. Plenary indulgences obtained during the Jubilee Year can also be applied to souls in purgatory with the possibility of obtaining two plenary indulgences for the deceased in one day.

To obtain an indulgence, the usual conditions of detachment from all sin, sacramental confession, holy Communion, and prayer for the intentions of the pope must be met (usually, an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be).

The following plenary indulgences are designated by the Vatican Office of the Apostolic Penitentiary:

1. Make a pilgrimage to Rome and pray for the pope's intentions in any one of the Four Major Papal Basilicas (St. Peter's Basilica, the Archbasilica of St. John Lateran, St. Mary Major, or St. Paul Outside the Walls) or any of the special jubilee churches listed by the Apostolic Penitentiary in Rome.

2. Make a pilgrimage to one of the following churches in Italy: Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Basilica of Our Lady of the Angels in Assisi, Basilica of Our Lady of Loreto, Basilica of Our Lady of Pompeii, Basilica of St. Anthony in Padua; or in the Holy Land: Basilica of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem, Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem, Basilica of the Annunciation in Nazareth.

3. Perform an extraordinary work of mercy such as a generous gift to the poor or visit nursing homes or prisons.

4. Participate in diocesan or parish sponsored spiritual exercises, missions, or formation activities based on the documents of the Second Vatican Council or the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

5. Visit any local cathedral, Marian shrine, or other special church designated by the local bishop for obtaining the Jubilee Indulgence.

6. Fasting at least one day a week from "futile distractions" such as social media, television, video games, or certain phone apps.

The following plenary indulgences are designated by the authority of Bishop Michael Sis of the Diocese of San Angelo:

1. Jubilee sites: Individually or in a group, devoutly visit any jubilee site and engage in Eucharistic adoration and meditation for at least a half hour,

concluding with the recitation of the Our Father, the Creed, and prayers to the Virgin Mary. In the Diocese of San Angelo, the jubilee sites include Sacred Heart Cathedral in San Angelo and the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Midland. Besides those, I have chosen to designate the following sacred places in the Diocese of San Angelo as places where the plenary jubilee indulgence may be received: the perpetual adoration chapel at Sacred Heart Church in Abilene, the perpetual adoration chapel at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church in Midland, the perpetual adoration chapel at St. Mary Church in Odessa, and the perpetual adoration chapel at St. Margaret Church in San Angelo.

2. Shut-Ins: Those who cannot participate in visits to these places (especially cloistered monks or nuns, the elderly, the sick, and prisoners) can obtain the jubilee indulgence in their homes or wherever they are confined, if they recite the Our Father, the Creed, the Hail Mary, and the official jubilee prayer, offering up their sufferings or the hardships of their lives in prayerful union with Christ. The jubilee prayer can be found at the following website: [www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/preghiera.html](http://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/preghiera.html).

3. Carry out any of the corporal works of mercy: feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, clothe the naked, welcome the stranger, visit the sick, visit the imprisoned, and bury the dead.

4. Carry out any of the spiritual works of mercy: counsel the doubtful, instruct the ignorant, admonish sinners, comfort the afflicted, forgive offenses, bear wrongs patiently, and pray for the living and the dead.

5. Participate in any of the following: parish missions, spiritual retreats (such as Search, ACTS, Cursillo, Kolbe, Awakening, Engaged Encounter, and Marriage Encounter), faith formation activities on the documents of Vatican II or the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*.

6. Devoutly pray the Rosary in a church, or in a family, or with a group of fellow believers.

7. Prayerfully read the Bible for at least half an hour.

8. Devoutly pray the Way of the Cross, going from station to station, in any of our churches, or at any of our outdoor sites of the Way of the Cross, such as Christ the King Retreat Center in San Angelo, Sacred Heart Church in Abilene, Our Lady of Guadalupe Shrine in Midland, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Church in Odessa, and Holy Trinity Church in Big Spring.

## Indulgencias para el Año Jubilar 2025

Por Bishop Michael J. Sis

Una indulgencia plenaria es una gracia concedida por la Iglesia Católica a través de los méritos de Jesucristo para eliminar el castigo temporal debido al pecado. La indulgencia se aplica a los pecados ya perdonados. Una indulgencia plenaria limpia el alma como si la persona acabara de ser bautizada. Las indulgencias plenarias obtenidas durante el Año Jubilar también se pueden aplicar a las almas del purgatorio, con la posibilidad de obtener dos indulgencias plenarias para los difuntos en un día.

Para obtener una indulgencia, se deben cumplir las condiciones habituales de desapego de todo pecado, confesión sacramental, sagrada Comunión, y oración por las intenciones del Papa (por lo general, un Padre Nuestro, un Ave María y un Gloria).

La Oficina de la Penitenciaría Apostólica Vaticana designa las siguientes indulgencias plenarias:

1. Hacer una peregrinación a Roma y rezar por las intenciones del papa en cualquiera de las Cuatro Basílicas Papales Mayores (Basílica de San Pedro, la Archibasílica de San Juan de Letrán, Santa María la Mayor o San Pablo Extramuros) o en cualquiera de las iglesias jubilares especiales enumeradas por la Penitenciaría Apostólica en Roma.

2. Peregrinar a una de las siguientes iglesias en Italia: Basílica de San Francisco de Asís, Basílica de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles en Asís, Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Loreto, Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Pompeya, Basílica de San Antonio en Padua; o en Tierra Santa: Basílica del Santo Sepulcro en Jerusalén, Basílica de la Natividad en Belén, Basílica de la Anunciación en Nazaret.

3. Realizar una obra de misericordia extraordinaria, como un regalo generoso a los pobres, o visitar hogares de ancianos o prisiones.

4. Participar en ejercicios espirituales, misiones, o actividades de formación patrocinados por una diócesis o parroquia basados en los documentos del Concilio Vaticano II o el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*.

5. Visitar cualquier catedral local, santuario Mariano, u otra iglesia especial designada por el obispo local para obtener la Indulgencia del Jubileo.

6. Ayunar al menos un día a la semana de "distracciones inútiles" como las redes sociales, la televisión, los videojuegos, o ciertas aplicaciones del teléfono.

Las siguientes indulgencias plenarias son designadas por la autoridad del Obispo Michael Sis de la Diócesis de San Angelo:

1. Lugares del jubileo: Individualmente o en grupo, visite devotamente cualquier lugar del jubileo y participe en la adoración Eucarística y la meditación durante al menos media hora, con-

cluyendo con la recitación del Padre Nuestro, el Credo, y oraciones a la Virgen María. En la Diócesis de San Angelo, los sitios del jubileo incluyen la Catedral del Sagrado Corazón en San Angelo y el Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Midland. Además de estos, he elegido designar los siguientes lugares sagrados en la Diócesis de San Angelo como lugares donde se puede recibir la indulgencia plenaria del jubileo: la capilla de adoración perpetua en la iglesia del Sagrado Corazón en Abilene, la capilla de adoración perpetua en la iglesia de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Midland, la capilla de adoración perpetua en la iglesia de Santa María en Odessa, y la capilla de adoración perpetua en la iglesia de Santa Margarita en San Angelo.

2. Los confinados: Aquellos que no pueden participar en las visitas a estos lugares (especialmente los monjes o monjas de clausura, los ancianos, los enfermos, y los prisioneros) pueden obtener la indulgencia jubilar en sus hogares o donde estén confinados, si recitan el Padre Nuestro, el Credo, el Ave María, y la oración jubilar oficial, ofreciendo sus sufrimientos o las dificultades de sus vidas en unión orante con Cristo. La oración del jubileo se puede encontrar en el siguiente sitio web:

[www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/preghiera.html](http://www.iubilaeum2025.va/en/giubileo-2025/preghiera.html).

3. Realizar cualquiera de las obras de misericordia corporales: dar de comer al hambriento, dar de beber al sediento, vestir al desnudo, acoger al extranjero, visitar a los enfermos, visitar a los encarcelados, y enterrar a los muertos.

4. Llevar a cabo cualquiera de las obras de misericordia espirituales: aconseja a los que dudan, instruye a los ignorantes, amonesta a los pecadores, consuela a los afligidos, perdona las ofensas, soporta las ofensas con paciencia, y ora por los vivos y los muertos.

5. Participar en cualquiera de los siguientes: misiones parroquiales, retiros espirituales (como Search, ACTS, Cursillo, Kolbe, Awakening, Engaged Encounter, y Marriage Encounter), actividades de formación en la fe sobre los documentos del Vaticano II o el *Catecismo de la Iglesia Católica*.

6. Rezar devotamente el Rosario en una iglesia, o en una familia, o con un grupo de compañeros creyentes.

7. Leer la Biblia en oración por lo menos una media hora.

8. Rezar devotamente el Vía Crucis, yendo de estación en estación, en cualquiera de nuestras iglesias, o en cualquiera de nuestros sitios al aire libre del Vía Crucis, como el Centro de Retiros Cristo Rey en San Angelo, la Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón en Abilene, el Santuario de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe en Midland, la Iglesia de St. Elizabeth Ann Seton en Odessa, y la Iglesia de la Santísima Trinidad en Big Spring.



## Voces Católicas

# Parroquia San José–San Antonio: Un espacio de crecimiento espiritual para los niños



Por Sister July del Carmen Castillo, Bethl

"Jesús les dijo: «Dejen a los niños, y no les impidan que vengan a mí, porque el Reino de los Cielos pertenece a los que son como ellos.»" (Mt. 19, 14)

El 14 de julio de 2024, la parroquia de San Antonio en Odessa inició la Eucaristía dedicada a los niños, un espacio que desde su comienzo se ha caracterizado por la participación activa de los más pequeños. A las 2:00 pm, los niños cuentan con el espacio de encuentro con el Señor y participan activamente como servidores del altar, acomodadores y lectores. Aunque en un principio la asistencia no era numerosa, con el paso del tiempo se ha notado un aumento en la participación tanto de los niños como de sus padres.

En este ambiente, los niños se ubican en las primeras bancas de la iglesia, lo que les permite una mejor atención, ya que se cuenta con las pantallas que facilitan el seguimiento de los cantos y la participación activa de los pequeños.

Hoy en día, la cantidad de niños que participan en esta Eucaristía ha crecido significativamente. Este espacio no

solo ha permitido que los niños adquieran un mayor conocimiento sobre la Eucaristía, como uno de los sacramentos fundamentales para el crecimiento cristiano, sino que también ha sido un lugar clave para que los padres reconozcan la importancia de este proceso formativo espiritual. La Eucaristía se ha consolidado como un espacio privilegiado para la educación cristiana en la parroquia.

Además de esta Eucaristía, en la parroquia de San José-San Antonio se dio inicio a la formación de la Infancia Misionera, escuela de formación en la fe y en la misión para niños de todo el mundo. Su objetivo es acompañar a los niños y adolescentes en su crecimiento espiritual y en su relación con Dios, ofreciéndoles espacios de encuentro a través de juegos, cantos, actividades creativas y momentos de oración. La finalidad es hacerlos conscientes de su misión como bautizados, donde cada niño debe dar a conocer la presencia de Dios en su vida diaria, en el hogar, la escuela y en general en la comunidad eclesial.

Gracias a la motivación que se hizo en las Eucaristías y a las invitaciones realizadas en la Catequesis (CCD), logró crear un equipo líder de trabajo compuesto por nueve mujeres, quienes brindan apoyo en el desarrollo de en-

cuentros con los niños. Estos encuentros se realizan los primeros y terceros sábados de cada mes, de 10 de la mañana a 12 del mediodía en el salón parroquial.

Actualmente, participan alrededor de 40 niños, entre los 4 y 13 años, de edad, divididos en tres grupos según cada etapa de desarrollo de los niños.

Este trabajo evangelizador es parte de las Obras Misionales Pontificias, lo que asegura el proceso de formación de los niños, quienes se convierten en agentes de cambio y de evangelización en su entorno más cercano.

De esta manera, la parroquia de San José y San Antonio continúa siendo un espacio de crecimiento espiritual y de evangelización para los niños, fortaleciendo tanto su fe como el compromiso de las familias en el proceso formativo de las futuras generaciones.

Un momento destacado tuvo lugar el 23 de febrero de este año, cuando tuvimos el honor de compartir la celebración de la Eucaristía presidida por el Obispo Michael Sis. Durante su visita, el obispo pudo percibir el entusiasmo y la acogida de los niños, y al mismo tiempo, ofreció un mensaje evangélico que fortaleció a los padres en su misión de guiar a sus hijos por el camino de la fe.



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## The Trump executive order on IVF

On Feb. 18, President Trump issued an executive order entitled, “Expanding Access to *In Vitro* Fertilization” (IVF), in which he stated, “My Administration recognizes the importance of family formation, and as a Nation, our public policy must make it easier for loving and longing mothers and fathers to have children.”

The order sets in motion a review process to obtain policy recommendations for “protecting IVF access and aggressively reducing out-of-pocket and health plan costs for IVF treatment.”

Although it seeks the good end of fostering family building, it embraces a reckless and unethical means of pursuing that goal. By doing so, it champions wrongdoing and cooperates in evil.

The use of IVF to bring new human life into the world always involves a disordered choice on the part of a couple or an individual. By allowing various third parties and employees from the infertility industry to build their children for them, parents commodify, objectify, and instrumentalize both their own sexuality and the vulnerable bodies of their embryonic children.

Because of IVF, an industry has arisen that, at its core, produces and markets human beings and treats persons as products. This has had the effect of establishing a subclass and dehumanizing an entire segment of humanity: those who can now be sold, exploited, manipulated, or handed over to stem cell researchers for destruction.

Every human being has the right to be conceived under his or her mother’s heart, in the safety of her body, and under the loving embrace of his or her parents. Instead of receiving their offspring as “gift” through their own marital embrace, those who seek IVF pursue a false “right” to manufacture their sons and daughters in laboratory glassware.

This results in collateral damage on multiple levels, including the freezing and destruction of embryonic children, eugenic screening of those children for specific traits or sex selection, heightened rates of birth defects, the taking advantage of surrogate mothers, and the “selective reduction” of multiplet pregnancies.

Given the moral objectionability of IVF, what should the administration do when it comes to IVF?

Simply put, the *opposite* of what it has done thus far.

It should seek to forbid the practice through statutory mechanisms, or, if that is not yet politically possible, limit and circumscribe the practice by bringing it under tight regulation and oversight.

Rather than cooperating with the multi-billion dollar infertility industry and playing into its agenda by expanding IVF funding and availability, the Trump administration ought to clamp down on this largely unregulated behemoth.

The golden rule in the IVF industry has long been that if it makes gold, it’s got to be good and ethical. Its unique and much-touted “self-regulation” has made it into something of a laughingstock, so much so that the industry is often branded by the epithet, “the wild west of infertility.”

Strict regulation of IVF has a strong precedent even in some of the more progressive countries in Europe. If Germany and Italy have been able to regulate IVF by passing laws that restrict the production of embryos to a maximum of three at a time, with the requirement that all three be implanted, why couldn’t the administration, at a minimum, establish similar regulations to limit the collateral damage of IVF in the US?

In our country, hundreds of thousands of cryopreserved human embryos have been abandoned and condemned to perpetual stasis in liquid nitrogen. The practical effect of the Italian and German laws has been to preclude the production of supernumerary embryos during IVF, and to eliminate the humanitarian tragedy of freezing and storage of the youngest human beings by clinics.

For couples facing infertility, the administration could take the ethically upright approach of promoting, and assuring coverage for, restorative reproductive medicine in place of IVF. This medical approach pursues a thorough evaluation of the underlying causes of a couple’s infertility and provides tailored therapies so they can bring new life into the world through the marital embrace. It seeks to address the causal mechanisms of infertility such as an inability to ovulate, low sperm count, endometriosis, blocked fallopian tubes, and/or early miscarriages during pregnancy. Among the better-known examples of this approach are NaPro Technology, FEMM, and NeoFertility.

The laudable goal of making it easier for “loving and longing mothers and fathers to have children” could also be promoted through other creative strategies, including changing tax structures to incentivize stay-at-home spouses, subsidies for childbirth expenses, the expansion of healthcare access and coverage, educational vouchers, and other steps to increase the likelihood that more children will be welcomed into a family.

Rather than governmental intrusions promoting exploitative technologies like IVF, Americans are entitled to upright approaches that beckon life into society through loving acts of marital intimacy and nurture and support it within the sanctuary of the family.

---  
Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Ph.D. earned his doctorate in neuroscience from Yale and did post-doctoral work at Harvard. He is a priest of the diocese of Fall River, MA, and serves as Senior Ethicist at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia. See [www.ncbcenter.org](http://www.ncbcenter.org) and [www.fathertad.com](http://www.fathertad.com).



**Father Tad Pacholczyk**

Making Sense of Bioethics

## Catholic Voices

## The liturgy: A source of spiritual renewal?

My work as vocation director oftentimes means my working with young men and women who might have a potential religious vocation. I have discerned in my work, however, a real suspicion about the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council in the hearts and minds of our young people, fueled by talking heads and traditionalist social media accounts powered by the algorithms. I have also discerned that many of these same young people will surface these ideas with their pastors and other leaders in the church, only to be met with hand waving and — even worse — anger or cynicism about their genuine questions and concerns. This is compounded with banal and uninspiring liturgies in some of our parishes. I contend that we as pastors can no longer live with our heads in the sand, and we must face these challenges head on while being intellectually honest about the authentic reforms of the Second Vatican Council. This will be the first of two articles challenging popular narratives about the Second Vatican Council while hopefully gesturing toward a deeper appreciation for its historical context.

### The reform of the Mass: A response to a spiritual crisis

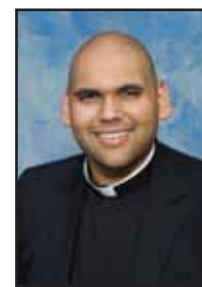
The second millennium of Catholicism saw a whirlwind of spiritual movements. A few examples will illustrate the variety of spiritualities seen in the second millennium. *Devotio Moderna* was a spiritual movement popular in the 14th and 15th centuries, up until the time of the Protestant Reformation. The movement was marked by an emphasis on virtue (such as humility) and popular devotions. A seminal example would be Thomas á Kempis’ *Imitation of Christ*, a text I still recommend to serious spiritual searchers today. One could also point to Quietism, a spiritual movement that championed the complete spiritual annihilation of the soul, so that it could reunite with the “divine essence.” Quietism was condemned as a heresy by Pope Innocent XI in 1697. Mysticism is best understood as an intimate union with the divine. Best case examples of mysticism would be embodied by St. Theresa of Avila or St. John of the Cross. Mysticism also translated into private revelations, oftentimes about the hidden life of Jesus or Mary. Examples of this type of mysticism would be Blessed Ann Catherine Emmerich’s *The Dolorous Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ*, or Venerable Maria of Ágreda’s *Mystical City of God*. These spiritual movements were sometimes met with openness, while others were met with suspicion, such as with quietism and unchecked mysticism.

This spiritual pendulum led many to wonder about a potential measuring stick of authentic spirituality. Is there something in the church’s tradition that could be used to ground spiritual movements and curiosities? This led to a movement in the life of the church called the Liturgical Movement in the early 20th century. The fathers of the Liturgical Movement encouraged a *liturgical piety*, which practically means a spirituality grounded in the text, signs, and symbols of the liturgy. The assumption of this idea, however, is that the experience of the Mass would be accessible to God’s people.

### The Liturgical Movement: Championing the active participation of the people

Active participation is a phrase rightly associated with the reforms of the Second Vatican Council. We know from history, however, that active participation was first championed by Pope St. Pius X in his 1903 *Tra Le Sollecitudini*, which treated the use of Gregorian Chant in the Mass. In this document, Pope St. Pius X identifies active participation with chant as the “foremost and indispensable font” for the “sanctity and dignity of the temple.” His successor, Pope St. Pius XI, echoed the sentiment of St. Pius X, emphasizing the importance of singing the parts of the Mass that belong to the people in Gregorian chant, because it is important that they not be “strangest and silent spectators” at Mass (*Divini Cultus*, 1928).

The Liturgical Movement reached its magisterial peak, however, with Pius XII’s 1947 *Mediator Dei*. This encyclical is the first instance of a pope writing about the theology of the liturgy, a reality that admits the liturgy’s historical backseat to other dimensions of faith and spirituality. In this text, Pope Pius XII affirms the value of



**Father Ryan Rojo**

Diocese of San Angelo

active and individual participation the liturgy so as to “foster the people’s piety and intimate union with Christ and His visible minister and to arouse those internal sentiments and dispositions which should make our hearts become like that of the High Priest of the New Testament” (no. 100). In this same encyclical, Pope Pius XII imagines the possibility of parts of the rite in the vernacular (no. 59). One can observe, therefore, the movement toward liturgical piety — embodied in active participation — some fifty years before the Second Vatican Council. The movement toward a liturgical piety demanded, however, an evaluation of the Mass (complete with its signs, symbols, and gestures) to check its fittingness for engendering this sense of spirituality and liturgical piety. Did what we now call the Traditional Latin Mass accomplish this end? Did the liturgy as it was experienced ensure that men and women were fed with spiritual sustenance?

### The traditional Latin Mass: Low Mass, Misa Cantata, and Solemn High Mass

The Traditional Latin Mass assumes three “forms” of the Mass: the Low Mass, the Sung Mass, or the Solemn High Mass. The Solemn High Mass, which was the ideal for corporate worship, demanded the presence of other ministers, including the deacon, subdeacon, and multiple altar boys, one of whom had to handle incense. The Solemn High Mass demanded that these sacred ministers chant the Epistle and the Gospel, regardless of their ability or competence. The Ordinary (Gloria, Creed, Holy, Lamb of God) and the Propers (Introit, Offertory, and Communion Antiphons) were ideally sung to traditional chant notation found in the *Liber Usualis* or the *Graduale*, the traditional chant books of the church. The Sung Mass demanded many of the same parts, without the presence of the deacon or subdeacon and the optional use of incense. The Traditional Latin Mass was a zero-sum experience, with the absence of any of these moving parts relegating a community to the commonly experienced Low Mass. The Low Mass was quietly recited, with the dialogues of the Mass shared quietly between the priest and servers. The Low Mass allowed no music, incense, or other ministers. In a rural situation like West Texas, the Low Mass was the default liturgical experiences in many of our parishes.

This experience of the liturgy lead to what can be described as a Low Mass culture. The lack of resources, coupled with human nature’s tendency to settle for the lowest common denominator, lead to disastrous consequences on people’s liturgical experience. The Low Mass culture translated into the faithful rarely experiencing Gregorian Chant or the church’s ministers, thus denying them the visual experience of the hierarchy. The silent dialogues of the Mass between the priest and servers in Latin meant that people were not actively participating, a desire championed by popes for 50+ years before the Second Vatican Council. Instead of experiencing the liturgy as the sources of spirituality, the faithful became passive observers focused on their personal devotions during Mass. Virgil Michael, a father of the 20th century Liturgical Movement and a monk at St. John’s Abbey in Collegeville, Minnesota, wrote the following about people’s experience of the Mass:

“Many Catholics really do use the Mass as an occasion for reciting private prayers, carrying on some private devotion of their own, as a casual observation on any Sunday in almost any Catholic church will show ... those who flock to the Sunday Masses recite one, two, or three rosaries while attending Mass, read litanies and other prayers from their books, recite the Angelus and the morning prayers, or even follow the devotional prayers set down in their books for recitation during Mass. In the latter case, however, as



## Catholic Voices

### Our power is to enrich our planet

In accord with the theme of this wonderful day, we reflect together on the power we have with Earth itself to improve and enrich our planet. Everyone, as already mentioned, is invited to support Earth Day's theme: Our Power Our Planet. We ask the question: how can we empower ourselves to make a positive difference? To begin, we remember that Earth Day is important because it raises awareness and promotes action toward protecting our planet and its natural resources. It provides an opportunity for individuals, organizations, and governments around the world to come together and discuss the urgent need to address the global environmental crisis we are facing, such as climate change, air and water pollution, deforestation, and loss of biodiversity. Every good action matters — and we all have a role to play. *Nature.org* gives us four ways to get started.

- Volunteer With Us

Want to get your hands dirty for nature? Help a preserve by removing invasive species or collecting data. Or virtually volunteer your professional skills.

- Explore Our Externships

We partnered with The National Geographic Society to create unique opportunities for people 18–25 to gain conservation training and experience.

- Share Lessons from Nature Lab

Explore virtual field trips and nature teaching guides great for classrooms or home from Nature Lab, our youth curriculum platform.

- Plant a Tree (or Three)

When we restore critical forests, we fight climate change and support biodiversity. Help us reach our goal of a planting a billion trees!

### How we bring together the two words — Our Power, Our Planet

As mentioned, Earth Day is the occasion for empowering ourselves to make a difference. While it can feel overwhelming to think about global challenges, we must remember that change often begins with small, intentional steps. Whether it's reducing our carbon footprint, embracing renewable energy, or simply being more conscious of our consumption, our daily choices hold immense power. This helps us to see how we bring together in a living manner the two words of the theme of Earth Day, "Our Power. Our Planet".

*Diversdirect.com* invites us to consider how shifting to energy-efficient appliances, reducing plastic waste, and supporting eco-conscious business can reduce the burden on natural resources. It doesn't take a large-scale revolution — it begins with each of us taking responsibility and being mindful of how our decisions impact the planet. Small changes make a big difference:

- Reduce. Reuse. Recycle: These three Rs are fundamental in minimizing waste. Recycle products when possible and always try to reduce consumption and reuse items to avoid unnecessary waste.

- Opt for renewable energy sources: Solar, wind, and other renewable energies are increasingly accessible. Consider making the switch to lower your carbon emissions.

- Support sustainable brands: Choose companies that prioritize sustainability in their supply chains and manufacturing processes. By supporting them, we vote with our dollars for a greener future.

- Eat more plant-based foods: The food choices we make also have a huge impact on the environment. Plant-based diets are generally more sustainable, requiring fewer resources and producing less pollution.

*Diversdirect.com* reminds us that though individual action is crucial, we must recognize the power of collective action. The environment isn't a challenge that can be solved by any one person or country. It requires all of the world working together.

Governments, businesses, individuals, must collaborate for future generations. This means supporting policies that combat climate change, funding initiatives, protecting diversities, and demanding great accountability from corporations that harm the environment.

### The Earth is our common home

Mother Earth provides us with all we need to live. In return we need to give power back to Mother Earth to continue the mission given to her by our loving Creator. We do this individually and as a family by caring for and protecting the piece of our common home entrusted to each family and community. Earth Day helps us realize how we must use the power given to us to enrich our part of the planet.

As Pope Francis has stated, the beautiful God-given gift of planet Earth is our common home for all people worldwide. Like in our homes, all members of the family are to care, clean and protect the home in which we live. In a similar way, each and every human being is to care for, cultivate, protect, and preserve Mother Earth, which provides all we need to stay alive. Our responsibility for God's Earth is to respect natural laws with the delicate equilibria, the biodiversity existing between all creatures of this world. In this way, we come to see that nature has intrinsic value and that each creature possesses its own particular goodness. This Earth Day all people everywhere on the globe should raise their voices — in our homes, schools, churches, workplaces, cities, civic and faith communities, and government offices and demand leaders to make peace with nature. World Earth Day is indeed an important time to focus our attention and appreciation on the wonderful God-given gift of Mother Earth with all its power and life and how we can be better stewards for our planet and the surrounding universe.

## A Eucharistic word: Remembrance

Remembrance is a central part of our Catholic faith.

For the nine years I attended Catholic grade school, Friday afternoons of Lent were spent in church. The entire school community gathered to pray the Stations of the Cross, led by the pastor. Stations always ended for us with exposition of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction.

Over the years, I've often thought about how we concluded Stations with Eucharistic worship, and it's been on my mind a bit this Lent. The connection seems quite fitting.

The Stations are an opportunity for us to remember what Jesus did for us in a precise and specific way. Our meditation on his passion and death — traditionally following along from his condemnation to death to his burial — offers us the opportunity to enter a bit more fully into his experience.

For me, ending the Stations with Eucharistic worship provided the means for making the Stations more fruitful. Having remembered and prayed intensely through reflections on the Lord's passion and death, being in his sacramental presence offered the opportunity to make the experience more fruitful and, in a sense, real.

This prayerful and focused way of remembering is a central aspect of Judeo-Christian spirituality. The technical term "anamnesis," or memorial, conveys this reality and is a central component of our Eucharistic worship. Ultimately, it's a mystery made present by the Holy Spirit.

This biblical sense of memorial, the catechism says, "is not merely the recollection of past events but the proclamation of the mighty works wrought by God for men" (No. 1363). This sense of "memorial," in the context of liturgical celebration, makes the events of our salvation "present and real."

The catechism continues: "This is how Israel understands its liberation from Egypt: every time Passover is celebrated, the Exodus events are made present to the memory of believers so that they may conform their lives to them. In the New Testament, the memorial takes on new meaning. When the Church celebrates the Eucharist, she commemorates Christ's Passover, and it



Michael R. Heinlein  
*OSV News*

### The Eucharistic Word

is made present the sacrifice Christ offered once for all on the cross remains ever present. 'As often as the sacrifice of the Cross by which 'Christ our Pasch has been sacrificed' is celebrated on the altar, the work of our redemption is carried out.'"

Remembering is something of an art, and, as a society, it sometimes seems like we have forgotten more than remembered. With our faith's insistence on its importance, we should consider anew how to remember better.

In addition to the Stations ending with Benediction, I think of a lot of other activities from my early years — not all that long ago! — centered around remembering. Having Masses offered for loved ones or visiting cemeteries as a family. Researching family history with my grandpas. Looking at old family photos with my grandmas. Having them tell me stories about their parents and grandparents or drive me past places where they once lived or went to school. The list goes on.

And I'm so grateful I learned how to remember like this. These were sacred occasions that not only brought me into contact with the past, but, in a sense, helped me remember who I am. These are things I try to keep alive for my own kids, unusual as they might be in our own day.

So, for Lent, I'm trying to pray the Stations of the Cross more often as a means of remembering. And I believe this remembering will help me to appreciate more fully and enter more deeply one of the core realities of the Mass — the depth of Christ's love manifested in his passion and death. Doing so can help us to remember, not only who we truly are and what we are called to be, but to be Eucharistic people.

## Cartoon Corner





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## ASH WEDNESDAY

Continued from Page 1

him. When she first learned that he would be on campus for Ash Wednesday, Sullivan said she knew she would attend.

"I really didn't know what to expect," she said.

As a pre-med major and a member of the volleyball team, Sullivan has a full schedule and doesn't make it to Mass very often at one of Abilene's four parishes. She said that even though the service at Hardin-Simmons didn't include a Mass, it did have the traditional Scripture readings.

Abilene Christian University is the only local university with a Catholic student organization, called Lighthouse. Matthew Nguyen, events coordinator for Lighthouse, said Catholic students can feel disconnected with other Catholics and that having Bishop Sis on campus was a reminder of the larger Catholic world.

"It really brings a lot of joy to us to know we're thought about and cared for," he said.

Catholic students make up less than 1 percent of the student body at ACU, Nguyen said, and Lighthouse serves as a point of connection for them. Because of their schedules, they can't always attend services at local parishes or get to know members.

For one day at least, local Catholic students and faculty felt united by the presence of Bishop Sis. Many college students are from cities outside the Diocese of San Angelo, so they don't know Bishop Sis personally. But when they left, they did feel connected with him, with one another, and with Catholics worldwide.

Sis repeated the words on the billboard that he had seen — Repent of your sins, Believe in Jesus Christ, Proclaim Him as your Lord — and then added his own personal message.

"That's what Ash Wednesday is about all over the world," he said.

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**St. Joseph Adoration Chapel, Ballinger**  
Next to St. Mary, Star of the Sea Church  
605 N. 5th St.  
8:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. Monday – Friday

**Our Lady of Guadalupe, Midland**  
1401 Garden Ln.  
Open 24 hours

**Odessa Adoration Chapel**  
612 E. 18th St.  
6:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. every day

**San Angelo Adoration Chapel**  
2601 Era St.  
Open 24 hours

## ROJO

Continued from Page 16

often as not, the prayers are not read parallel with the prayers and actions of the priest at Mass. The devotions read may be too short in parts, or too long, so that the well-meaning soul may during the Mass of the priest even recite two whole sets of Mass prayers, or again only part of one. Should these constitute the best and most approved methods of attending holy Mass?" (*My Sacrifice and Yours*)

An example easily accessible of Low Mass culture on YouTube is the Funeral Mass for President John F. Kennedy. Watching the footage, one is immediately surprised to find the Cardinal Archbishop of Washington D.C. celebrating a Pontifical Low Mass, in terrible Latin, in about 30 minutes. The Funeral Mass of President John F. Kennedy would have been the moment for the full experience of the church's worship, but the Low Mass culture prevalent in many churches even negatively affected the Funeral Mass of the first Catholic president!

The above narrative challenges the idea that the reforms of the Second Vatican Council were a consequence

of the 1960s, marked by the sexual revolution, suspicion of authority and tradition, and a desire for all things new. It might be true that some players in the reform were caught up in the tides of the 1960s, but one can see that the desire for active participation, and in turn a more accessible liturgy, was couched in decades of liturgical, theological, and spiritual reflection. The above narrative also challenges the idea that the Traditional Latin Mass was the "Mass of the saints." It is true that the Traditional Latin Mass was the form of the Mass experienced by many saints, but these same saints rarely thought about the liturgy as a touchstone for their own spirituality. At best, the liturgy was a convenient vehicle for the worthy reception of communion, not something that itself was a source of Christian spirituality.

Next month, we will consider the reforms of the Second Vatican Council, specifically how it sought to remedy the Low Mass culture prevalent in many parishes. We will then ask ourselves if we are in a better liturgical place than before, in light of the church's desire for active participation.

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*Father Ryan Rojo is the vocation director for the Diocese of San Angelo.*



**GUEST SPEAKER:  
BRENDA MAIMAN**



Brenda Brown Maiman ministers in the Diocese of San Angelo as a spiritual director, retreat facilitator, and teacher. Her past ministries include teaching Spiritual Director Formation for the Archdiocese of San Antonio, teaching Theology in the Archdiocese of Anchorage(Alaska) Catholic high school and promoting Small Faith Communities (throughout the Archdiocese of Anchorage) for RENEW International.

She has an MA in Pastoral Ministry from Loyola University and an MA in Christian Spirituality from Creighton University. She and her husband, Deacon Les, are members of Holy Angels Parish in San Angelo, Texas. They are the parents of two adult children.

Be Still, and Know that I am God. Psalm 46:10  
Come and be encouraged. Come and bring a friend.



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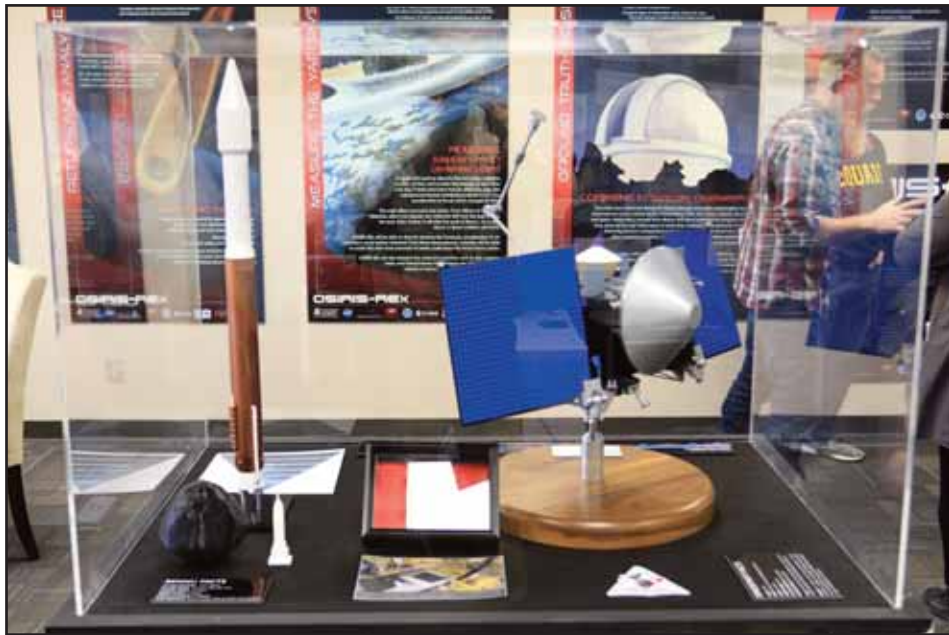
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## A tale of two asteroids



FATHER JOE BARBIERI



FATHER JOE BARBIERI

### Models of OSIRIS-REx at the program headquarters in Tucson.

“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of Light, it was the season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way” (Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*).

As I write this article we are in the middle of Lent, the season of the memorial of the suffering and death of Our Lord, imbued with the lively hope of resurrection. The first reading for the Mass of Thursday after Ash Wednesday offers us this passage from the Book of Deuteronomy: “Moses said to the people: ‘Today I have set before you life and prosperity, death and doom ... I call heaven and earth today to witness against you: I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life.’”

In terms of salvation, Lent falls under the category of Dickens’ “best of times,” for as Paul reminds us at the beginning of this liturgical season, “Behold, now is a very acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” Lent is spiritually the best of times, but perhaps these good times are not as evident to us as the “age of foolishness” and the “season of darkness” indicated by Dickens. These are challenging times also called “times of distress” by the prophets. Diplomatic relations between the US, Canada, and Europe are strained over tariffs and the assurances, or not, of security as the fear of the great bear’s return looms on the horizon. The wars continue in Gaza and Ukraine while societal conflicts rage globally. A bomb dating back to WWII was found on the tracks of a Paris train station, disrupting the travels of thousands of commuters. I ask myself if the bomb is just a simple, even if dangerous, artifact of the past or an unearthing of what always lies just under the surface and at our doorstep? Among other events, the Chair of St. Peter came close to being vacant. We feel exposed and vulnerable to the tides and winds of our times.

In ancient history astronomical events were considered as harbingers of things to come, the birth of a king, for example, or some imminent disaster. On the one hand, as Catholics we spurn astrology, magic, and superstition, for they are contrary to the First Commandment and reveal a lack of faith in a provident Father who, paradoxically gives and takes away. On the other hand, the Fathers of the Church remind us that the created world is permeated with the Paschal Mystery and, as any work of art, the author is recognized in the style of the opus.

At the beginning of this new year 2025 the world of



### Father Joseph Barbieri

Diocese of San Angelo

astronomy was enthused and slightly disconcerted over the news of two different asteroids. One asteroid was a harbinger of life, the other the portent of potential death and destruction projected for the year 2032. The former is Asteroid Bennu, the latter is Asteroid 2024 YR4.

Part of the program of the Faith and Science Workshop (FAW) that was held in Tucson in 2019 included a visit to the headquarters of the OSIRIS-REx program. While it sounds like some mix of the Egyptian god of the dead and a dinosaur, it stands for “Origins, Spectral Interpretation, Resource Identification, Security and Regolith Explorer.” It is the U.S.’s first asteroid sample-return mission. During the group’s visit, we got to see cool models and demonstrations on how the samples would be collected, as shown in the photos. As an aside, if you are a collector of stamps, a beautiful sheet commemorating the probe is available from USPS.

OSIRIS-REx launched on Sept. 8, 2016, and rendezvoused with Bennu on Dec. 3, 2018. It spent the next two years analyzing the surface to find a suitable site from which to extract a sample. On Oct. 20, 2020, OSIRIS-REx touched down on Bennu and successfully collected a sample. OSIRIS-REx left Bennu on May 10, 2021, and returned its sample to Earth on Sept. 24, 2024.

The truck-tire-sized capsule from space had invaluable cargo onboard: more than 120 grams of pristine material from the solar system’s early history. The scientific community considers the sample of enormous value because the breathtaking preliminary results of analyses shows that the brine found in it contained thousands of organic compounds, including 14 of the 20 amino acids found in terrestrial organisms, as well as all the nucleotide bases that make up our DNA and RNA. This means that the basic molecules of life existed in our solar system practically from the start. According to some theories, the chemical predecessors of early life on Earth were imported via asteroids rather than being home-brewed. The discovery of these organic molecules strengthens the theory that life could have started elsewhere, well beyond Earth in a distant part of our galaxy.

### A presenter displays a photo of the asteroid Bennu.

For we who profess the Credo, these initial exciting discoveries simply and wonderfully reaffirm for us that life was in the mind of God from the beginning.

Around the same time as the publishing of the results of Bennu’s samples, a recently discovered near-Earth object (NEO), dubbed Asteroid 2024 YR4, was making headlines because of the possibility that it could impact Earth on Dec. 22, 2032. The ESA (European Space Agency) estimates that asteroid 2024 YR4’s diameter is in the range of 40–100 meters (around 130–330 feet). If it did collide with Earth, an impactor of that size could cause an explosion in the atmosphere or even an impact crater, either of which could cause serious, even devastating, damage on the ground.

Odds are that the probability of impact will go to zero. And yet our interest, and perhaps fear, of a killer asteroid speaks volumes. The former preacher of the Pontifical Household, Cardinal Raniero Cantalamessa wrote, “the fear of death is the worm at the center of our existence.”

Conflict and paradox, life and death, are part and parcel of the common human experience. On a cosmic scale, the whole of creation mirrors the Logos. With our belief that the Incarnate Lord is the exemplar of every creature, it stands to reason that his life, death, and resurrection should in some way be reflected in the created world which is modeled after him. Simply put, the Paschal Mystery is woven into the fabric of the universe. The Fathers held that the deepest enigmas of our cosmos are unlocked only in the light of Christ’s death and resurrection. Unless a seed dies, or a super nova explodes ...

I find it fascinating that the news of these two asteroids, each in its own way mirroring an aspect of the Paschal Mystery, should occur practically simultaneously at the beginning of 2025. This new year is sadly already bearing the signs of an *Annus horribilis*.

Where is the hope? Well, providentially it is also the Jubilee Year of Hope. As Pope Francis wrote, we would do well “to recognize the immense goodness present in our world, lest we be tempted to think ourselves overwhelmed by evil and violence. The signs of the times, which include the yearning of human hearts in need of God’s saving presence, ought to become signs of hope” (Bull of Indiction, n. 7).

The Gospel of Jesus Christ, crucified and risen from the dead, is the fundamental message of hope that imbues the cosmos, fulfils the ancient promises, leads to glory, is grounded in love, and does not disappoint.

In the best of times and the worst of times, “Hope does not disappoint” (Rom 5:5).

## First student athlete from Holy Cross HS to make commitment to college football



COURTESY

The athletics program at Holy Cross Catholic High School celebrated an exciting first for the school. Jude Mendez, senior at Holy Cross, has committed to playing football in the fall with St. John’s University in Collegeville, Minnesota, an NCAA Division III institution.

Mendez’s athletic career at Holy Cross has excelled and led him to several honors in the TAPPS division over the last couple of years. Mendez helped lead the team to their first division playoff game this season, another reason for Holy Cross to celebrate. Mendez humbly says, “I thank everyone at Holy Cross Catholic High School for making this opportunity possible. I will always represent the Crusaders positively in

the things I do on and off the field at St. John’s University. I share this journey with all of you. Let’s go Cru!”

Coach Hosea Stredic joined HCCHS this 2024–2025 academic year and is pleased with the growth of the athletics programs. As he has watched all the young athlete’s growth, on and off the field, Scripture is what he turned to in learning of Jude’s commitment to St. John’s: “Trust the process. Stay focused, work hard, and believe in yourself, but more importantly, trust in God’s word,” Coach Stredic continued with Jeremiah 29:11, “For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans to prosper you, and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.”



COURTESY