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Do Not Be Afraid: El Paso Marches In Solidarity In Support Of Migrants And Humanitarian Workers Along The Borderland



The Diocese of El Paso, The Hope Border Institute, and faith-based organizations hosted 'Do Not Be Afraid': A March & Vigil for Human Dignity on the evening of March 21st. See the full story on Page 4. Photo by Fernie Cenicerros

SPECIAL GUEST COLUMNIST

Marching For Faith, Compassion And Human Dignity In El Paso

By Bishop Greg Kelly

Special to The Rio Grande Catholic

“Faith gives us the luxury to dream, to envision. We cannot work for a world that we cannot dream.”

El Paso Bishop Mark Seitz spoke these words at an inter-faith prayer rally at Sacred Heart Catholic Church in El Paso on March 21. More than a thousand people marched through the downtown streets in support of Annunciation House and the immigrants they serve. The march and vigil were in response to the Attorney General of the State of Texas seeking to shut down Annunciation House, accusing it, without any foundation, of being a stash house for illegal immigrants.

Bishop Seitz emphasized that reality is otherwise. Several other speakers, including Ruben Garcia, Executive Director of Annunciation House, did the same. The reality: Annunciation House, a Catholic nonprofit in El Paso, carries out the mandate of Jesus in the gospel in which He identifies himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the prisoner, the sick. Whatever we do or fail to do for them, we do or fail to do for Jesus himself. Jesus himself makes our response to the least of our brothers and sisters the criterion for living or failing to live our faith in Him.

At the rally before the march Mr. Garcia spoke of the circumstance that apparently provoked the attorney general's action against the organization. He told the crowd at the rally that University Medical Center (UMC) of El Paso had reached out to the Annunciation House about a migrant woman who had sustained a severe neck injury. Initially, when found by the Border Patrol at the foot of



Auxiliary Bishop Greg Kelley of the Diocese of Dallas joined Bishop Mark Seitz, Auxiliary Bishop Anthony Celino, Bishop Peter Baldachino and various members of the El Paso faith community during the vigil held at Sacred Heart Catholic Church. *Photo by Fernie Cenicerros*

the border fence, the woman was thought to be dead and so was not processed for an asylum claim. When authorities realized that she was still alive, the woman was transported to UMC where she received critical care. Mr. Garcia said the hospital then called Annunciation House and asked them to receive her. This information is apparently what led the Attorney General to accuse Annunciation House of being what he characterized as being a “stash house.”

Annunciation House, and so many other agencies in El Paso, are doing the essential work of the gospel. Daily acts of hospitality and care for those who show up at their doors are actions mandated by the gospel, responses to the basic, inalienable dignity of each person, created in the image and likeness of God. It is an

expression of the religious liberty that our Constitution guarantees.

These agencies are not magnets attracting the undocumented. They do not participate in smuggling or stashing or any illegal actions. The normal procedure is that the border enforcement agencies bring those who have been carefully vetted and released to pursue their asylum claim to the various NGO's like Annunciation House and shelters operated by the Catholic Diocese among others. These charitable agencies do not make immigration laws. They have no power to change a broken system that crushes people and leaves them desperate. They can only receive a brother or sister as they encounter them and be a sign of the hope of the gospel. They embody that hope, give it hands and feet, eyes that look with compassion

on people who experience very little compassion along a difficult and dangerous journey.

The El Paso rally ended with a blessing, using the words of St. Teresa of Avila from 400 years ago: “Christ has no body now on Earth now but yours; no hands, no feet on Earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which he looks with compassion on this world. Yours are the feet through which he goes about doing good.”

A final note: Ruben Garcia drew the initial inspiration for his work for the founding of Annunciation House 45 years ago through an encounter with Mother Teresa of Kolkuta. The foundress of the Missionaries of Charity, who for decades ministered to the sick and the dying in the streets of Calcutta, India, once gave advice to someone

who had expressed a desire to leave their comfortable life and join her work on the streets of Calcutta. “Stay where you are. Find your own Calcutta,” Mother Teresa wrote. “Find the sick, the suffering, and the lonely, right where you are.”

Ruben Garcia has done just that.

He has cared for the least of God's children who have crossed his path over the last 45 years. He has inspired so many others to be engaged in that work with him. He deserves our gratitude, and our prayers for the continuation of this great work, a work of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Bishop Greg Kelly is the auxiliary bishop of the Diocese of Dallas.

Marcha por la fe, la compasión y la dignidad humana en El Paso

Por el Obispo Greg Kelly

Especial, The Rio Grande Catholic

“La fe nos da el lujo de soñar, de imaginar. No podemos trabajar por un mundo que no podemos soñar”.

El obispo de El Paso, Mark Seitz, pronunció estas palabras en una concentración de oración interreligiosa en la iglesia católica del Sagrado Corazón de El Paso el 21 de marzo. Más de mil personas marcharon por las calles del centro en apoyo de Annunciation House y de los inmigrantes a los que atienden. La marcha y la vigilia fueron una respuesta a la intención del Fiscal General del Estado de Texas de cerrar Annunciation House, acusándola, sin ningún fundamento, de ser un escondite para inmigrantes ilegales.

El obispo Seitz subrayó que la realidad es otra. Varios otros oradores, entre ellos Rubén García, Director Ejecutivo de Annunciation House, hicieron lo mismo. La realidad: Annunciation House, una organización

católica sin ánimo de lucro de El Paso, lleva a cabo el mandato de Jesús en el Evangelio en el que se identifica con el hambriento, el sediento, el forastero, el desnudo, el preso, el enfermo. Lo que hagamos o dejemos de hacer por ellos, lo hacemos o dejamos de hacer por Jesús mismo. Jesús mismo hace de nuestra respuesta a los más pequeños de nuestros hermanos y hermanas el criterio para vivir o dejar de vivir nuestra fe en Él.

En el mitin previo a la marcha, el Sr. García habló de la circunstancia que provocó la acción del fiscal general contra la organización. Contó a los asistentes al mitin que el Centro Médico Universitario (UMC) de El Paso se había puesto en contacto con la Casa de la Anunciación en relación con una mujer migrante que había sufrido una grave lesión en el cuello. En un principio, se pensó que la mujer había muerto, por lo que no se tramitó su solicitud de asilo. Cuando las autoridades se dieron cuenta de que seguía viva, la mu-

jer fue trasladada al UMC, donde recibió cuidados intensivos. El Sr. García dijo que entonces el hospital llamó a Annunciation House y les pidió que la recibieran. Fue entonces cuando el fiscal general hizo su acusación de que Annunciation House era un “escondite”.

Annunciation House, y tantas otras agencias en El Paso, están haciendo el trabajo esencial del evangelio. Los actos diarios de hospitalidad y atención a quienes se presentan a sus puertas son acciones exigidas por el Evangelio, respuestas a la dignidad básica e inalienable de cada persona, creada a imagen y semejanza de Dios. Es una expresión de la libertad religiosa que garantiza nuestra Constitución.

Estas agencias no son imanes que atraen a los indocumentados. No participan en el contrabando ni en el alijo ni en ninguna acción ilegal. A menudo, es la Patrulla Fronteriza de EE.UU. la que lleva a los inmigrantes a sus puertas o les ayuda a encontrar su propio camino hasta allí. Estas

agencias benéficas no elaboran las leyes de inmigración. No tienen poder para cambiar un sistema roto que aplasta a la gente y la deja desesperada. Sólo pueden acoger a un hermano o hermana en el momento en que se encuentran con ellos y ser un signo de la esperanza del Evangelio. Ellos encarnan esa esperanza, le dan manos y pies, ojos que miran con compasión a personas que experimentan muy poca compasión a lo largo de un viaje difícil y peligroso.

El mitin de El Paso terminó con una bendición, utilizando las palabras de Santa Teresa de Ávila de hace 400 años: “Cristo no tiene ahora en la Tierra más cuerpo que el vuestro; ni manos, ni pies en la Tierra más que los vuestros. Vuestros son los ojos a través de los cuales mira con compasión a este mundo. Vuestros son los pies a través de los cuales va haciendo el bien”.

Una nota final: Rubén García obtuvo la inspiración inicial de su trabajo para la fundación de la Casa de la Anunciación hace

45 años a través de un encuentro con la Madre Teresa de Calcuta. La fundadora de las Misioneras de la Caridad, que durante décadas atendió a enfermos y moribundos en las calles de Calcuta (India), dio en una ocasión un consejo a alguien que había expresado su deseo de abandonar su cómoda vida y unirse a su trabajo en las calles de Calcuta. “Quédate donde estás. Encuentra tu propia Calcuta”, escribió la Madre Teresa. “Encuentra a los enfermos, a los que sufren y a los que están solos, justo donde tú estás”.

Rubén García ha hecho precisamente eso.

Ha cuidado de los más pequeños de los hijos de Dios que se han cruzado en su camino en los últimos 45 años. Ha inspirado a muchos otros a comprometerse con él en esa labor. Merece nuestra gratitud y nuestras oraciones por la continuación de esta gran obra, una obra del Evangelio de Jesucristo.

Mons. Greg Kelly es obispo auxiliar de la diócesis de Dallas.

INSEITZ INTO THE FAITH

I Like Your Christ, But Not Your Christianity

I recently heard a commentator on a national network express his opinion that the world in which we live has left Christianity behind. In his view all religions have somehow become obsolete. We no longer need any religion to tell us the truth. We are now free to decide what is true for ourselves.

How sad a world like that would be! In a world like that one could well conclude that there are a billion different truths and there is no truth. And, while we might concede that many have some sliver of a perception of that which coincides with that which is, there would be little that could reliably bring deeper meaning to our lives.

Today we celebrate the greatest Christian Feast, Easter. Sometimes on this Feast when

I celebrate the Easter Mass, I ask children why we are so happy today. Usually, as Easter bunnies and candy and colored eggs dance through their heads, a well-prepared child will put those images aside to cleverly announce to me the correct answer. This is the day Jesus Rose from the dead!

Thank God a child knows the answer, because sometimes I fear that many adults today do not. They might in fact be able to say what Christians believe, but the earth-shaking import of what we celebrate means nothing to them. It would mean more to hear a weather forecast that informs us that they should expect rain tomorrow. Then they may be moved to action, packing a coat for their journey.

There does appear to be a dis-

connect in Christianity between the meaning of the Christ event and its impact upon our lives these 2,000 years later. There is definitely a disconnect between our belief in Christ and our love for the poor.

Gandhi, the great Indian thinker and leader, once observed, "I like your Christ, but not your Christianity." He went on to say, "I believe in the teachings of Christ, but you on the other side of the world do not. I read the Bible faithfully and see little in Christendom that those who profess faith pretend to see." (Gandhi, Christ and Christianity, by Pascal Alan Nazareth)

In this age of growing secularization, a time in which those who profess the Christian Faith in our country are more and more a minority, I think there



Bishop Mark J. Seitz



is something to what Gandhi observed. We Christians need to do some soul-searching. It is of little value to proclaim a doctrine or an event if no one can see that teaching has an impact upon the way we live.

As we celebrate the pivotal moment in our Christian Faith this Easter Sunday, the day in which Christ rose victorious over

sin and death, I recommit myself and I challenge you to live his Gospel of love of God and neighbor in such a way that the world will know that the truth can be found, hope restored, and this broken world made new.

May you have a very Happy Easter!

Me Gusta Su Cristo, Pero No Su Cristiandad

Hace poco escuché a un comentarista de una cadena nacional expresar su opinión de que el mundo en el que vivimos ha dejado atrás al cristianismo. En su opinión, todas las religiones se han quedado obsoletas de alguna manera. Ya no necesitamos que ninguna religión nos diga la verdad. Ahora somos libres de decidir lo que es verdad por nosotros mismos.

¡Qué triste sería un mundo así! En un mundo así se podría llegar a la conclusión de que hay mil millones de verdades diferentes y que no existe ninguna verdad. Y, aunque pudiéramos admitir que muchos tienen algún resquicio de percepción de lo que coincide con lo que es, habría poco que pudiera aportar con fiabilidad un sentido más profundo a nuestras vidas.

Hoy celebramos la mayor fiesta cristiana, la Pascua. A veces, en esta fiesta, cuando celebremos la Misa de Pascua, pregunto a los niños por qué estamos tan contentos hoy. Normalmente, mientras los conejitos de Pascua, los caramelos y los huevos de colores bailan en sus cabezas, un niño bien preparado dejará a un lado esas imágenes para anunciarme con astucia la respuesta correcta. ¡Este es el día en que Jesús resucitó de entre los muertos!

Gracias a Dios que un niño sabe la respuesta, porque a veces me temo que muchos adultos de hoy en día no la saben. Puede



que sean capaces de decir en qué creen los cristianos, pero la importancia trascendental de lo que celebramos no significa nada para ellos. Significaría más escuchar un pronóstico del tiempo que nos informe de que deben esperar lluvia para mañana. Entonces podrían ponerse en acción y preparar un abrigo para el viaje.

Parece haber una desconexión en el cristianismo entre el significado del acontecimiento de Cristo y su impacto en nuestras

vidas 2.000 años después. Definitivamente hay una desconexión entre nuestra creencia en Cristo y nuestro amor por los pobres.

Gandhi, el gran pensador y líder indio, observó una vez: "Me gusta vuestro Cristo, pero no vuestro cristianismo". Y añadió: "Yo creo en las enseñanzas de Cristo, pero vosotros, al otro lado del mundo, no. Leo fielmente la Biblia y veo poco en la cristiandad que los que profesan la fe fingen ver". (Gandhi, Cristo y el cristianismo, de Pascal Alan

Nazareth) En esta época de creciente secularización, una época en la que quienes profesan la Fe cristiana en esta época de creciente secularización, en la que quienes profesan la fe cristiana en nuestro país son cada vez más una minoría, creo que hay algo de cierto en lo que observó Gandhi. Los cristianos tenemos que hacer examen de conciencia. De poco sirve proclamar una doctrina o un acontecimiento si nadie puede ver que esa enseñanza repercute

en nuestra forma de vivir. Al celebrar el momento crucial de nuestra fe cristiana este Domingo de Pascua, el día en que Cristo resucitó victorioso sobre el pecado y la muerte, me comprometo de nuevo y os desafío a vivir su Evangelio de amor a Dios y al prójimo de tal manera que el mundo sepa que se puede encontrar la verdad, restaurar la esperanza y hacer nuevo este mundo roto. Que tengan una feliz Pascua.

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Border Community Marches Together in Solidarity for Migrants, Aid Workers

El Paso, TX – The Diocese of El Paso, The Hope Border Institute, and faith-based organizations hosted local faith-based organizations and leaders at ‘Do Not Be Afraid’: A March & Vigil for Human Dignity on the evening of March 21st.

The event began with a brief rally held at San Jacinto Plaza. A march led by matachine dancers followed it from various parishes in El Paso to Sacred Heart Church, where a Vigil was held to commemorate the lives of 40 migrants who lost their lives in a fire at a migrant detention facility in Ciudad Juárez in March of 2023. The event was also a show of support and solidarity in response to the State of Texas’s recent attacks on the Annunciation House migrant shelter and all of the El Paso community’s humanitarian workers. The Most Rev. Mark J. Seitz, Bishop of El Paso, and Most Rev. Anthony C. Celino, Auxiliary Bishop of El Paso, led the March along with other religious representatives, representatives of El Paso’s migrant shelter community, and other community leaders.

Co-sponsoring organizations included Abara Borderland Connections, Annunciation House, Border Servant Corps, Catholic Charities of Southern New Mexico, Derechos Humanos Integrales en Acción A.C. (DHIA), Estrella Del Paso, EPISO/Border Interfaith, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center, Maryknoll Lay Missioners, Pax Christi USA El Paso, Franciscan Action Network, the Immigration Law and Justice Network, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, Dorothy Day



The Diocese of El Paso, The Hope Border Institute, and faith-based organizations hosted local faith-based organizations and leaders at ‘Do Not Be Afraid’: A March & Vigil for Human Dignity on the evening of March 21st. *Photo by Fernie Cenicerros*

Catholic Worker, and the Rio Grande Borderland Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande.

“We are at an urgent and challenging moment in the defense of the rights and dignity of vulnerable persons on the move,” said Most Rev. Bishop Mark Seitz, Bishop of El Paso. “Recent events in El Paso, Texas, as well

as throughout the country, also raise the specter of the criminalization of humanitarian aid to migrants and troubling threats to religious liberties. These realities call us to prayerfully reflect and consider the requirements of a faith that seeks justice as well as the imperative to reimagine ways of effectively collaborating to build a society that welcomes,

protects, integrates, and promotes our sisters and brothers who migrate, and do so together with them,” Bishop Seitz added.

“This is the time to unite and safeguard our freedom to practice our faith and reaffirm our border community’s welcoming identity,” Dylan Corbett, Executive Director of the Hope Border Institute, said. “This vigil will

serve as a powerful reminder that our community remains united in our defense of the rights and dignity of vulnerable migrants and squarely behind Annunciation House and our community’s humanitarian workers and volunteers.” He added.

Comunidad Fronteriza Marcha En Solidaridad Con Migrantes Y Humanitarios

El Paso, TX - La Diócesis de El Paso, The Hope Border Institute, y organizaciones religiosas fueron anfitriones de organizaciones religiosas locales y líderes en ‘No tengas miedo’: Una Marcha y Vigilia por la Dignidad Humana la noche del 21 de marzo.

El acto comenzó con una breve concentración en la Plaza de San Jacinto. Le siguió una marcha encabezada por bailarines de matachines desde varias parroquias de El Paso hasta la Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón, donde se celebró una vigilia para conmemorar las vidas de los 40 migrantes que perdieron la vida en un incendio en un centro de detención de migrantes en Ciudad Juárez en marzo de 2023. El evento fue también una muestra de apoyo y solidaridad en respuesta a los recientes ataques del Estado de Texas contra el refugio para migrantes Annunciation House y todos los trabajadores humanitarios de la comunidad de El Paso. El Reverendísimo Mark J. Seitz, Obispo de El Paso, y el Reverendísimo Anthony C. Celino, Obispo Auxiliar de El Paso, encabezaron la Marcha junto con otros representantes religiosos, representantes de la comunidad de albergues para migrantes de



La marcha encabezada por bailarines de matachines desde varias parroquias de El Paso hasta la Iglesia del Sagrado Corazón, donde se celebró una vigilia para conmemorar las vidas de los 44 migrantes que murieron en un incendio en un centro de detención de migrantes en Ciudad Juárez. *Foto por Fernie Cenicerros*

El Paso y otros líderes comunitarios.

Entre las organizaciones copatrocinadoras se encontraban Abara Borderland Connections, Annunciation House, Border Servant Corps, Caridades Católicas del Sur de Nuevo México, Derechos Humanos Integrales en Acción A.C. (DHIA), Estrella del

Paso, El Paso, El Paso y El Paso. (DHIA), Estrella Del Paso, EPISO/Border Interfaith, the Interfaith Immigration Coalition, Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center, Maryknoll Lay Missioners, Pax Christi USA El Paso, Franciscan Action Network, the Immigration Law and Justice Network, NETWORK Lobby for

Catholic Social Justice, Dorothy Day Catholic Worker, and the Rio Grande Borderland Ministry of the Episcopal Diocese of the Rio Grande.

“Estamos en un momento urgente y desafiante en la defensa de los derechos y la dignidad de las personas vulnerables en movimiento”, dijo el Obispo

Mark Seitz, Obispo de El Paso. “Los recientes acontecimientos en El Paso, Texas, así como en todo el país, también plantean el espectro de la criminalización de la ayuda humanitaria a los migrantes y las preocupantes amenazas a las libertades religiosas. Estas realidades nos llaman a reflexionar en oración y a considerar los requisitos de una fe que busca la justicia, así como el imperativo de reimaginar formas de colaborar eficazmente para construir una sociedad que acoga, proteja, integre y promueva a nuestras hermanas y hermanos que migran, y hacerlo junto con ellos”, añadió el obispo Seitz.

“Este es el momento de unirnos y salvaguardar nuestra libertad para practicar nuestra fe y reafirmar la identidad acogedora de nuestra comunidad fronteriza”, dijo Dylan Corbett, Director Ejecutivo del Hope Border Institute. “Esta vigilia servirá como un poderoso recordatorio de que nuestra comunidad permanece unida en nuestra defensa de los derechos y la dignidad de los migrantes vulnerables y apoya firmemente a Annunciation House y a los trabajadores y voluntarios humanitarios de nuestra comunidad.” añadió.

Celebrating 70 Years: Anniversary Mass at Our Lady Of Fatima Catholic Church

By Fernie Cenicerros

Editor, Rio Grande Catholic

A momentous occasion was celebrated with great joy as the Catholic faithful gathered at Our Lady Of Fatima Catholic Church in the west Texas town of Van Horn to commemorate the 70th anniversary of its current church building.

The anniversary mass was presided by Bishop Mark Seitz and concelebrated by Pastor, Fr. Frank Hernandez. The Mass was attended by parishioners, both young and old, coming together to honor the rich history and legacy of their beloved church.

Fr. Frank Hernandez reminisced about the humble beginnings of the church which was erected in 1953 as part of the need for expansion as the town of Van Horn began to grow at that time.

“Originally, the church here was next door in the current Kennedy Hall. That original church was a lot smaller. Maybe about 50 to 60 people could fit in that church. So the growth in the city with the railroad and of course a bigger church was needed for this community at that time,” Fr. Frank Hernandez said.

Fr. Hernandez expressed gratitude for the enduring strength of the church building, remarking, “We’re thankful that this church building has held up in those 70 years in our history.”

The cornerstone of the church, laid in September 1951, holds special significance for the community. Fr. Hernandez shared, “This community has always been welcoming, open and interesting enough as we’re getting ready for a celebration. We noticed that the month of September 1954 is what the cornerstone says outside, so that was the community knows and it has a deeper meaning for us because it’s a reminder of that dedication so many, many years ago.”

The community of Our Lady Of Fatima Catholic Church has always been steadfast in their faith and commitment to the church. Fr. Hernandez expressed his hope for the future.

“The community will continue and their faith has always been here and it’s always good. So in another 70 years when this church is still here, God willing, I hope that this faith will still grow, and it’s the people that make it their home,” Fr. Hernandez said.



The Community of Van Horn, Texas and of Our Lady of Fatima celebrated their 70th anniversary of the erection of the current church. The cornerstone of the church, laid in September 1951, *Photo by Emily Montelongo.*

The anniversary mass was not just a celebration of a building but a celebration of the faith, unity, and love that have sustained the Our Lady Of Fatima

Catholic Church community for the past 70 years. As the church looks forward to the future, the foundation laid by the past generations serves as a guiding light,

inspiring the faithful to continue their journey of faith with hope and perseverance.

Celebrando 70 Años: Misa De Aniversario En La Iglesia Católica De Nuestra Señora De Fátima

Por Fernie Cenicerros

Editor, Rio Grande Catholic

Una ocasión trascendental fue celebrada con gran alegría cuando los fieles católicos se reunieron en la Iglesia Católica de Nuestra Señora de Fátima en la ciudad de Van Horn, al oeste de Texas, para conmemorar el 70 aniversario de su actual edificio.

La misa de aniversario fue presidida por el obispo Mark Seitz y concelebrada por el párroco, P. Frank Hernández. A la misa asistieron feligreses, tanto jóvenes como mayores, que se reunieron para honrar la rica historia y el

legado de su querida iglesia.

P. Frank Hernández recordó los humildes comienzos de la iglesia que fue erigida en 1953 como parte de la necesidad de expansión como la ciudad de Van Horn comenzó a crecer en ese momento.

“Originalmente, la iglesia aquí estaba al lado, en el actual Kennedy Hall. La iglesia original era mucho más pequeña. En ella cabían entre 50 y 60 personas. Así que el crecimiento de la ciudad con el ferrocarril y, por supuesto, una iglesia más grande era necesaria para esta comunidad en ese momento”, dijo el P. Frank Hernández.

El P. Hernández expresó su gratitud por la perdurabilidad del edificio de la iglesia, señalando: “Estamos agradecidos de que este edificio haya resistido estos 70 años de nuestra historia”.

La piedra angular de la iglesia, colocada en septiembre de 1951, tiene un significado especial para la comunidad. El P. Hernández compartió: “Esta comunidad siempre ha sido acogedora, abierta y lo suficientemente interesante como para que nos estemos preparando para una celebración. Nos dimos cuenta de que el mes de septiembre de 1954 es lo que dice la piedra angular en el exterior, por lo

que fue la comunidad sabe y tiene un significado más profundo para nosotros porque es un recordatorio de esa dedicación hace tantos, tantos años.”

La comunidad de la Iglesia Católica de Nuestra Señora de Fátima siempre ha sido firme en su fe y compromiso con la iglesia. El P. Hernández expresó su esperanza para el futuro.

“La comunidad continuará y su fe siempre ha estado aquí y siempre es buena. Así que dentro de otros 70 años, cuando esta iglesia siga aquí, si Dios quiere, espero que esta fe siga creciendo, y es la gente la que hace de ella su

hogar”, dijo el P. Hernández.

La misa de aniversario no fue sólo una celebración de un edificio, sino una celebración de la fe, la unidad y el amor que han sostenido a la comunidad de la Iglesia Católica de Nuestra Señora de Fátima durante los últimos 70 años. Mientras la iglesia mira hacia el futuro, los cimientos establecidos por las generaciones pasadas sirven de guía, inspirando a los fieles a continuar su camino de fe con esperanza y perseverancia.



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HAPPY BIRTHDAY, FATHER!

| | |
|------------------------------------|------|
| Fr. Andres Sosa Medellin, OFM | 4/12 |
| Fr. Francisco Rodriguez Roman, OFM | 4/18 |
| Fr. Jorge M. Palacio, OSM | 4/22 |
| Fr. Allan Oluoch Alaka | 4/25 |
| Bishop Anthony C. Celino | 4/29 |
| Fr. Lazaro Gonzalez, OFM | 4/26 |
| Fr. Fernando Mendoza Laguna, OFM | 4/30 |

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARY

| | |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Charles Rajan Michael OCD (Extern) | 4/2/2008 |
| Esteban Sescon | 4/3/1977 |
| Armando I Reyes (Extern) | 4/6/1976 |
| John Paul Madanu, (Extern) | 4/30/2008 |



Diocese offers assistance for victims of sexual abuse

Bishop Mark J. Seitz invites anyone who has been a victim of sexual abuse by a priest, deacon, religious, or any minister of the church, to contact the Victim’s Assistance Coordinator, Mrs. Susan Martinez LCSW, at (915) 872-8465 or the Office of the Chancery, (915) 872-8407. The Church desires the healing of anyone that has been harmed.

La diócesis ofrece asistencia a las víctimas de abusos sexuales

El Obispo Mark J. Seitz invita a cualquier persona que haya sido víctima de abuso sexual por parte de un sacerdote, diácono, religioso o cualquier ministro de la iglesia, a contactar a la Coordinadora de Asistencia a las Víctimas, la Sra. Susan Martínez LCSW, al (915) 872-8465 o a la Oficina de la Cancillería, (915) 872-8407. La Iglesia desea la curación de cualquiera que haya sido dañado.



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Pope Urges The Church To See The Face Of Christ In Migrants

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Catholic Church can draw closer to Jesus by accompanying migrants in their pursuit of a better life, Pope Francis said.

In the faces of migrants, the church “discovers the face of Christ,” he wrote, and like St. Veronica who offered a cloth to wipe Jesus’ face during his passion, the church “brings relief and hope on the ‘Way of the Cross’ of migration.”

The pope wrote his comments in a letter March 21 to participants at a meeting between bishops, church officials and migrants in Lajas Blancas, Panama, near the Darién Gap jungle crossed by thousands of migrants each day. The meeting took place during a three-day conference organized by the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development for bishops from Colombia, Costa Rica and Panama to discuss accompanying migrants.

Migrant brothers and sisters “represent the suffering flesh of Christ” since they are “forced to leave their land, to face the risks and tribulations of a hard road without finding another way out,” Pope Francis wrote in his

message to the group.

Bishops and other members of the church who support migrants “are the face of a mother church that walks with her sons and daughters,” he wrote.

Pope Francis urged the migrants to “never forget about your human dignity,” and encouraged them to “not be afraid to look others in the eye, because you are not discarded, but you form part of the human family and the family of God’s children.”

“I also am the son of migrants who left in search of a better future,” the pope told them, referencing his upbringing in Buenos Aires, Argentina, as the child of Italian immigrants. “There were times when they were left with nothing, even starving, with their hands empty but their hearts full of hope.”

The meeting of church officials and migrants took place outside of the Darién Gap jungle that straddles the Panama-Colombia border. Record numbers of migrants have risked their lives to cross the Darién Gap in recent months, subjected to rampant extortion, physical abuse and sexual violence by criminal



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gangs. More than 500,000 people crossed the gap in 2023, according to data published by the Panamanian government.

In a message to the bishops

a day earlier, Pope Francis had written that the church’s pastors must break free from indifference in addressing the crisis

of forced migration across the

Americas and that every migrant challenges Christians to embrace a spirit of hospitality.

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Collection for the Catholic Home Missions Appeal

There will be a Special Collection on Saturday, April 27 and Sunday, April 28, 2024 for the Catholic Home Missions Appeal

This annual appeal supports the work of mission parishes in the United States and its dependencies. The Catholic Home Missions Appeal extends and strengthens the presence of the Church by providing basic pastoral services in areas that struggle to provide such necessities on their own. Such assistance is essential to the scattered and isolated churches of the Appalachian Mountains, West Texas, the rural South and the islands of the Caribbean and the Pacific. Your support of missions in the United States helps strengthen:

- Remote and isolated parishes and missions,
- Religious education programs for children and adults,

- Formation for seminarians, catechists and adult leaders,
- Maintenance of mission parishes,
- Evangelization ministries to youth, ethnic communities, inactive Catholics, and those who have never heard the Good News.

A portion of the funds collected nationally each year is returned to the Diocese of El Paso in the form of a grant for the West Texas Rural Outreach, the Seminarian Formation Program, Tepeyac Institute, and the Marriage and Family Life Ministry. The Diocese also receives significant support from the national campaign as well.

Colecta para El Llamado para las Misiones Católicas Domésticas

Habrà una Ofrenda Especial Anual el sàbado 27 de abril, y el domingo 28 de abril del 2024 para el Llamado para las Misiones Católicas Domésticas.

Este llamado anual ayuda a sostener el trabajo de las misiones parroquiales en los Estados Unidos y en sus dependencias. El llamado para las Misiones Católicas Domésticas extiende y fortalece la presencia de la Iglesia, proporcionando los servicios pastorales básicos en áreas de recursos limitados. Esta ayuda es esencial a las Iglesias extendidas y aisladas a través de los Montes Apalaches, el oeste de Texas, el Sur rural, y las islas del Caribe y el Pacífico. Su apoyo a las misiones en Estados Unidos ayuda en el fortalecimiento de:

- Parroquias y misiones remotas y aisladas,
- Programas de educación religiosa para niños y adultos,

- Formación de seminaristas, catequistas y agentes pastorales,
- El mantenimiento de parroquias misioneras,
- Ministerios evangelizadores para jóvenes, comunidades étnicas, católicos inactivos, y aquellos que nunca ha escuchado la Buena Nueva.

Una parte de las donaciones nacionales se regresa a la Diócesis de El Paso cada año en forma de una concesión para el alcance pastoral en el Oeste de Texas, el programa de formación de los seminaristas, el Instituto Tepeyac, y el Ministerio de Matrimonio y la Vida Familiar.

En el fin de la semana del 27 y 28 de abril del 2024, por favor sean tan generosos como les sea posible, sus donaciones benefician a nuestra Iglesia local. Muchas gracias por su apoyo.

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LIVING THE LITURGY

The Apostles' Creed reminds us of our baptism



Fr. Michael Lewis, STL

This month, as we continue our series exploring the theology, history, and development of well-known prayers, we will look at a familiar text that is not strictly a prayer, but rather a statement of our basic beliefs as Christians — the Apostles' Creed.

The word “creed” comes from the first word of this text in Latin, *credo*, which means “I believe.” Though other creeds have developed over the centuries, the two most popular today are the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. The latter is the one the assembly most often recites together after the homily at a Sunday Mass. The Apostles' Creed, on the other hand, is a shorter, more succinct, and — in some ways — older version that is based on an ancient Roman formula of baptismal promises.

From the beginning of the Church to now, a person must first profess their faith before they are baptized. Since the 3rd century, this profession has taken the form of a series of questions

whereby the one being baptized confesses their belief in the Trinity, with separate questions regarding their faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Over time, as anti-Trinitarian heresies began to emerge in different parts of the early Church, this three-fold series of baptismal promises developed into a definitive statement of faith for believers in the truth of the Trinity. Because this early creed had its origins in Rome, it became known as the Old Roman Creed.

The threat that these heresies could tear apart the Church, and indeed the entire Roman Empire, prompted Emperor Constantine to call the Council of Nicea in the year 325. There, the council developed a statement of beliefs more detailed than the Old Roman Creed, because it needed to be tailored to combating the heresies plaguing the Church at the time. This text became the basis of the Nicene Creed.

Meanwhile, the Old Roman Creed continued to spread to other areas of Christendom, where local churches made their own small alterations to the text. It grew in popularity not only because of its brevity, but also because it reiterated the essential articles of faith required to be baptized Christian and to *be* a baptized Christian.

Nonetheless, the text we know

today as the Apostles' Creed did not first appear until about a century after the Nicene Creed. Originally adapted in what is now France, this expansion of the Old Roman Creed would later be promoted throughout Europe by the Emperor Charlemagne in the 8th century. Around that time, perhaps in an attempt to enhance the text's provenance, a legend became associated with this text: The creed was supposedly composed on the day of Pentecost by Jesus' Twelve Apostles, each of whom contributed one of the creed's statements of belief. Thus, the text became known as the “Apostles' Creed,” a moniker still in use today.

Though not technically a prayer, the Apostles' Creed has long been recited devotionally as a reminder of our baptismal faith. In the 4th century, St. Ambrose and St. Augustine both encouraged their flock to recite this creed at least daily. When the Rosary became popular in the Middle Ages, it too began with the recitation of the Apostles' Creed. But more

The Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God,
the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth,
and in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived
by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died
and was buried;
he descended into hell;
on the third day he rose again
from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of
God the Father almighty;
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.**

recently, with the publication of the latest edition of the *Roman Missal*, it can even be recited by the assembly at Mass on Sunday instead of the Nicene Creed, “especially during Lent and Easter Time.”

The Apostles' Creed is associated with these two liturgical seasons because they too are focused on baptism. As the *Ceremonial of*

Bishops explains, “The annual observance of Lent is the special season for the ascent to the holy mountain of Easter. Through its twofold theme of repentance and baptism, the season of Lent disposes both the catechumens and the faithful to celebrate the Paschal Mystery. Catechumens are led to the Sacraments of Initiation ... [and] the faithful, listening more intently to the word of God and devoting themselves to prayer, are prepared through a spirit of repentance to renew their baptismal promises.”

Whether or not your parish recites the Apostles' Creed during Lent and Easter, when you recite the Apostles' Creed prayerfully, you recall the baptismal promises you made yourself, or that your parents and godparents made on your behalf — promises that we renew each Easter. May it be a meditation for you that, as the baptismal liturgy reminds us, “This is our faith. This is the faith of the Church. We are proud to profess it in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

El Símbolo de los Apóstoles nos recuerda nuestro bautismo

Este mes, al continuar nuestra serie que explora la teología, la historia y el desarrollo de oraciones bien conocidas, examinaremos un texto familiar que no es estrictamente una oración, sino más bien una declaración de nuestras creencias básicas como cristianos: el Símbolo o Credo de los Apóstoles.

La palabra “credo” procede de la primera palabra de este texto en latín, *credo*, que significa “creo”. Aunque a lo largo de los siglos se han desarrollado otros credos o “símbolos de la fe”, los dos más populares en la actualidad son el Símbolo de los Apóstoles y el Símbolo Niceno. Este último es el que con más frecuencia recita la asamblea tras la homilía de la misa dominical. El Símbolo de los Apóstoles, por su parte, es una versión más breve, sucinta y —en cierto modo— antigua que se basa en una primitiva fórmula romana de las promesas bautismales.

Desde el principio de la Iglesia hasta ahora, una persona debe profesar primero su fe antes de ser bautizada. Desde el siglo III, esta profesión adopta la forma de una serie de preguntas en las que el bautizado confiesa su creencia en la Trinidad, con preguntas separadas sobre su fe en Dios Padre, Dios Hijo y Dios Espíritu Santo. Con el tiempo, a medida que las herejías antitrinitarias comenzaron a surgir en diferentes partes de la Iglesia primi-

tiva, esta triple serie de promesas bautismales se convirtió en una declaración definitiva de fe para los creyentes en la verdad de la Trinidad. Debido a que este credo primitivo tuvo sus orígenes en Roma, se conoció como el Antiguo símbolo romano.

La amenaza de que estas herejías pudieran desgarrar la Iglesia y, de hecho, todo el Imperio Romano, llevó al emperador Constantino a convocar el Concilio de Nicea en el año 325. Allí, el concilio elaboró una declaración de fe para los creyentes en la verdad de la Trinidad. Allí, el concilio elaboró una declaración de creencias más detallada que el Antiguo símbolo romano, ya que era necesario adaptarla para combatir las herejías que asolaban la Iglesia en aquel momento. Este texto se convirtió en la base del Símbolo Niceno.

Mientras tanto, el Antiguo Credo Romano siguió extendiéndose por otras zonas de la cristiandad, donde las iglesias locales introdujeron sus propias pequeñas modificaciones en el texto. Creció en popularidad no sólo por su brevedad, sino también porque

El Símbolo de los Apóstoles

**Creo en Dios,
Padre todopoderoso,
Creador del cielo y de la tierra.
Creo en Jesucristo, su único Hijo,
nuestro Señor,
que fue concebido por obra y gracia
del Espíritu Santo,
nació de santa María Virgen,
padece bajo el poder de Poncio Pilato,
fue crucificado, muerto y sepultado,
descendió a los infiernos,
al tercer día resucitó
de entre los muertos,
subió a los cielos
y está sentado a la derecha de Dios,
Padre todopoderoso.
Desde allí ha de venir a juzgar
a vivos y muertos.
Creo en el Espíritu Santo,
la santa Iglesia católica,
la comunión de los santos,
el perdón de los pecados,
la resurrección de la carne
y la vida eterna.
Amén.**

reiteraba los artículos esenciales de la fe requeridos para ser bautizado cristiano y para ser un cristiano bautizado.

Sin embargo, el texto que hoy conocemos como Símbolo de los Apóstoles no apareció hasta un siglo después del Símbolo Niceno. Adaptado originalmente en lo que hoy es Francia, esta expansión del Antiguo símbolo romano sería promovida posteriormente

en toda Europa por el emperador Carlomagno en el siglo VIII. Por aquel entonces, quizá en un intento de realzar la procedencia del texto, se asoció una leyenda a este texto: El credo fue supuestamente compuesto el día de Pentecostés por los Doce Apóstoles de Jesús, cada uno de los cuales contribuyó con una de las declaraciones de creencia del credo. Así, el texto pasó a conocerse como el “Símbolo de los Apóstoles”, un apelativo que aún se utiliza.

Aunque técnicamente no es una oración, el Credo de los Apóstoles se recita desde hace mucho tiempo como recordatorio de nuestra fe bautismal. En el siglo IV, San Ambrosio y San Agustín animaban

a sus fieles a recitar este credo al menos una vez al día. Cuando el Rosario se popularizó en la Edad Media, también comenzó con la recitación del Credo de los Apóstoles. Pero más recientemente, con la publicación de la última edición del Misal Romano en 2013, incluso puede ser recitado por la asamblea en la Misa del domingo en lugar del

Símbolo Niceno, “sobre todo en el Tiempo de Cuaresma y en el Tiempo Pascual.”

El Símbolo de los Apóstoles se asocia a estos dos tiempos litúrgicos porque también están centrados en el bautismo. Como explica el Ceremonial de los Obispos, “La observancia anual de la Cuaresma es un tiempo favorable por el cual se asciende al monte santo de la Pascua. El tiempo de Cuaresma, en efecto, con su doble carácter, prepara tanto a los catecúmenos como a los fieles para celebrar el misterio pascual. Los catecúmenos, ciertamente, ... son conducidos a los sacramentos de Iniciación cristiana. Por su parte los fieles, dedicados con mayor asiduidad a escuchar la Palabra de Dios y a la oración, mediante la penitencia se preparan para renovar las promesas del bautismo.”

Tanto si en tu parroquia se recita el Credo de los Apóstoles durante la Cuaresma y la Pascua como si no, cuando recitas el Credo de los Apóstoles en oración, recuerdas las promesas bautismales que tú mismo hiciste, o que tus padres y padrinos hicieron en tu nombre, promesas que renovamos cada Pascua. Que te sirva de meditación que, como nos recuerda la liturgia bautismal, “Ésta es nuestra fe. Ésta es la fe de la Iglesia, que nos gloriamos de profesar, en Jesucristo, nuestro Señor”.

SIDEWALK JESUS

Start At The Beginning



Janet M. Crowe

We recently celebrated Easter which is the most holy day in our Catholic faith. Without the resurrection of Jesus there would be no reason to celebrate, no reason to believe, no reason to hope. Christ's resurrection is the most fundamental moment in our faith.

Yet, the Easter story does not begin with the resurrection, nor with Good Friday's crucifixion, nor even the triumphant entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

The Easter story begins years earlier in a small town, miles away from Jerusalem, with a young woman and an angel and the Holy Spirit. The Annunciation by the Archangel Gabriel to Mary of Nazareth begins the story of how Jesus, the Son of God, took flesh and came into the world to redeem us of our sins, to sacrifice Himself for us, to be our Savior.

Okay, you're asking, but why do I mention the Feast of the Annunciation in April? Everyone

knows that the Church celebrates the Incarnation of Jesus exactly nine months before Christ's birth at Christmas. March 25 was weeks ago.

Surprise! This year is different. Since we celebrated Palm Sunday this year on March 24, the Solemnity of the Annunciation would have fallen on Monday of Holy Week, the most holy of weeks in our faith. However, rather than simply overlooking the Annunciation in favor of Holy Week, the Church moved the observation of this important day to April 8. This action demonstrates the true significance of this day that is often overlooked in our daily lives. Since it doesn't involve gifts or new clothes or cute animals bringing candy, then it must not be important. Apparently, the Church disagrees with our perception and feels it is so important that it deserves to be moved to a special date for this year, two weeks later.

What I also find interesting is that, typically, two weeks after a woman's fertile time is the time her menstrual period usually starts. Two weeks after Mary accepted the angel's announcement and agreed to God's plan, Mary would have experienced physical evidence in the lack of her period as added proof that she was pregnant, had truly conceived

and was carrying God's only Son within her womb.

Consider that timing. Most women do not even realize they are pregnant for at least two weeks after the conception of their baby. For those two weeks, a little girl or boy has been growing and developing within the woman's body without her even being aware. This new life is not just a "blob of tissue" as many claim. Important features of the child were determined at the very moment of conception when that one successful sperm, among the millions in the swarm, fertilized the mother's egg. All the traits inherited from both mom and dad are already at work and have started forming the color of eyes and hair, controlling whether there will be freckles or dimples, influencing the child's height and stature, and so many other characteristics that the child's parents will not see for many years into their child's life as he or she grows from infant to toddler to teen to adult.

So, again you ask, why do we care enough about the Annunciation to move this year's observance of this event? Saint Pope Paul VI stated (in his Apostolic Exhortation *Marialis Cultus*) that when we recall the Incarnation of the Son of God, the moment when Jesus took our human form, we are asked to participate

in His life as we are "led through His passion and cross to the glory of His resurrection." Our celebration of Easter does not end on Easter Sunday but continues every day of our lives, and our appreciation of Christ's sacrifice begins with His Incarnation at His conception within Mary's womb.

Meditating on the Incarnation, we realize that God did not need to take human form to redeem us of our sins and He did not need to ask a humble Jewish woman of Nazareth to be a part of His divine plan. God chose to do both.

Mary became our role model when she willingly agreed to God's plan. In her heart, she knew she would endure many difficulties if she said "Yes" to God, becoming pregnant with His Son while she was betrothed but not yet married to Joseph. Mary was honored that God had chosen her and she trusted that He would be with her as she bore and raised His Son. She was willing to do God's will.

In our own hearts, we know that God can achieve whatever He wants on this earth. He does not need us to bring His love into the world. Instead, God allows us to work with Him. When we are open to God's will, we, like Mary, are asked to carry God's Son to those around us. What a

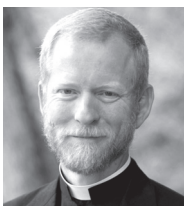
blessing, a privilege, and an honor to work together with God!

Two thousand years after Mary accepted God's request to be the mother of His Son, there are still women who suffer condemnation and ridicule as they carry God's precious children within their wombs. Every child begins life at conception and every child is one of God's precious children. While we no longer stone women, our words and actions can be just as harmful. Even if we do not actively condemn these women, our inaction, our apathy, can cause the death of God's little children and can emotionally and spiritually destroy vulnerable women as effectively as if we had cast the first stone.

This Easter season, let us continue celebrating the resurrection from its beginning at the Annunciation. Let us imitate Mary by saying "Yes" to God's precious gifts of life and doing all we can to help mothers and their babies and God's children of all ages. Let Christ resurrect our hearts and our efforts so that we accept God's invitation to carry His love to others.

MAKING SENSE OF BIOETHICS

Poking the Hornet's Nest of IVF



Fr. Tad Pacholczyk

A sweeping decision by the Alabama Supreme Court in February sent shock waves through the world of assisted reproduction. Justice Jay Mitchell, writing on behalf of the court's 7-2 majority, concluded that human embryos in IVF clinics "are 'children,' ... without exception based on developmental stage, physical location, or any other ancillary characteristics."

A firestorm followed. The decision uncomfortably reignited basic ethical questions that those in the IVF business had hoped were behind us. It had obvious financial implications, since it allowed parents to seek damages against IVF clinics when their embryonic children were lost or destroyed. It effectively upended the tacit assumption guiding the work of every IVF clinic, namely, that human embryos are nothing special, just a "means to an end" or objects to be used in the quest to satisfy customers and improve profitability. As one commentator put it, the court's

decision is "clearly extraordinary in its determination that in vitro, 8-cell, microscopic embryos are considered people."

But should it really be so extraordinary? What's extraordinary is the fact that so many people, for so long, could become so riveted to the falsehood that little human beings are not human beings, just because they are little.

IVF has become so engrained in lifestyle choices that it's now not only awkward, but positively impolite, to suggest that pre-born life has intrinsic value, whether in a petri dish, a freezer, or a womb. Yet scientific facts have a hard edge to them, and as O'Rahilly & Muller put it in "Human Embryology & Teratology," the 3rd edition of their famous textbook: "Although life is a continuous process, fertilization is a critical landmark because, under ordinary circumstances, a new genetically distinct human organism is formed."

The awkward truth for the purveyors of IVF is the fact that we are all embryos who have grown up, and if all men are created equal, then all embryos are human beings, each of whom ought to be unconditionally safeguarded and never exploited.

The Alabama court ruling thrust the state into the national spotlight and sent panicked lawmakers on both sides of the

aisle scrambling to come up with a quick legislative "fix." Only a few weeks after the judicial decision, the powerful infertility industry succeeded in convincing both the Alabama House and the Senate to pass legislation guaranteeing fertility clinics and doctors immunity from prosecution for any "death or damage to an embryo" that might occur during the IVF process.

Rather than running scared and caving to pressure from IVF advocates, we should be facing the question of how we have become so complacent about something so glaringly wrong. Why have we stood by to allow the industrialized commodification and destruction of younger human beings?

IVF involves at least two major moral problems—the "collateral damage problem" and the "intrinsic problem."

The collateral damage problem means that in order to achieve one IVF birth, clinic workers may create a dozen embryos, prescreen and transfer several of the "best" ones, discard or freeze the "leftovers", and if more than one implants successfully, selectively abort the additional fetus(es). Those IVF-produced babies who manage to run this gauntlet and cross the threshold of birth still manifest elevated rates of birth defects when compared to normally-conceived

babies, another instance of collateral damage.

This high tolerance for collateral damage in IVF clinics and among IVF customers arises out of the intentional prioritization of the desires of older, more powerful and wealthy adults over the rights and needs of voiceless embryonic children. Parental wants are always assumed by the industry to trump their children's best interests, allowing for grave human rights violations to become "standards of infertility care."

When it comes to the "intrinsic problem," meanwhile, IVF always involves actions contrary to the meaning of marriage and to the core designs of human marital sexuality.

Even if parts of society assert otherwise, sex remains fundamentally about bringing forth the next generation of human life within the stable bond of marriage. Children are not commodities and are entitled to be brought into the world through the loving embrace of the marital act, and within the protective and loving environment of the maternal womb, rather than being manufactured and manhandled under laboratory lights by hired hands in fertility clinics.

Through IVF, we create an "exploitable subclass"—those who, although they are just as human as the rest of us, are

unjustly instrumentalized and dehumanized by being brought into the world in a manner distinct from the rest of us. This subclass is produced and subjugated through human craftiness and scheming, instead of arriving as free and undeserved gifts through the bodily self-surrender and fruitful spousal love of the marital embrace.

For those interested in understanding these issues more completely, I have recently produced two full-length, professionally-filmed videos on YouTube and Vimeo, entitled "The Struggle of Infertility" and "Why is IVF Wrong?" They are available at: <https://www.youtube.com/@FatherTad/videos> or <https://vimeo.com/bioethicsvideos>.

Let us hope that the Alabama court's decision will provide the impetus for some serious soul-searching about the ongoing calamity of IVF in our society.

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.nccbcnec.org and www.fathertad.com.

Nunca Se Sabe A Quien Tienes Delante!



Padre Wilson Cuevas

Trata con amabilidad, respeto y sincera honestidad a todo aquel que se cruce en tu camino. No solo es lo correcto, sino también lo más prudente. Nunca se sabe a quién tienes delante. El universo no es más que una enorme ciudad, llena de seres queridos, humanos y divinos, que debemos conocernos y compartir lo que somos y sabemos para bien de todos.

Sucedió que un joven estudiante de ingeniería, que viajaba en un tren en Inglaterra, iba muy entretenido en su celular, revisando sus correos y mensajes. En cierto momento miro al hombre mayor que iba en la banca a su lado muy entretenido leyendo un libro. Y le pregunto: Que libro estaba leyendo, el hombre le dijo que era la Biblia. El joven se puso a reír y en forma burlona le dijo; ese libro es arcaico, viejo, pasado de moda y hoy en día la ciencia ha demostrado, que lo que dice ese libro no tiene fundamento científico... Si a usted, le gusta leer y quiere saber cuáles son los libros más actuales y recomendables, deme su Email o numero de teléfono y yo le puedo enviar información actualizada.

El hombre mayor saco de su billetera una tarjeta personal y se la entrego al joven y cuando él vio que en la tarjeta decía, Paster, inventor de los antibióticos. Se quedo mudo, cambio de color, quería desaparecer de vergüenza... No hay duda que la soberbia es atrevida y que tenemos la tendencia a creernos que sabemos y somos mejores que los demás... Este joven pensó que aquel hombre mayor que leía la Biblia, era un hombre cualquiera y sorprendido se dio cuenta que era nada menos que un científico muy famoso...

Podemos estar sentados junto a un pasajero en un avión y entablar una animada conversación durante gran parte del viaje y al llegar al aeropuerto después de haber hecho el proceso de migración y recogido las maletas al salir del aeropuerto ver al vecino de su asiento rodeado de periodistas que con micrófono en mano entrevistan aquel personaje, que al preguntar nos damos cuenta que se trata del famoso tenor que viene a la ciudad a ofrecer una serie de conciertos. Se llama Luciano Pavarotti... Igualmente nos podía pasar en un restaurante, en la celebración de un bautismo o de un matrimonio; en un concierto o en el estadio, que haya persona sentada delante o detrás de nosotros y que no sabemos quiénes son y que hasta incluso podemos pedirle si nos toman una foto con el celular con nuestra familia o grupo de amigos, sin saber en realidad

quienes es esa persona que está participando en el mismo lugar que nosotros...

El encuentro con una persona puede modificar nuestros planes, cambiar nuestro estado de ánimo... Llevarnos a un nuevo empleo o amistad. Hacernos perder cien dólares o ganar mil... Hay encuentros que nos hacen perder tiempo y encuentros que nos ahorran tiempo, porque nos ofrecen una fácil solución a nuestros problemas. Hay encuentros que esperamos con ansiedad y encuentros que tememos y rehuimos. Encuentros que son el principio de una tragedia y encuentros que despiertan el amor que nos alumbrá toda la vida... Todos los días nos encontramos con diferentes personas: Nos podemos lamentar de lo que nos pasa o podemos salir fortalecidos, transformados y llenos de alegría. De que hablas o que haces con las personas que te encuentras... Muchos amigos y amigas se reúnen para hablar de sus aventuras, de sus enfermedades, otros se quejan de su familia, del trabajo, del gobierno, de los hijos o de la iglesia. Pocos se reúnen para hablar de su experiencia de fe en Dios, a unos les da vergüenza, a otros no les importa y otros no lo consideran necesario. En el Evangelio de San Lucas, 24, 13-35, que al atardecer del día de la Resurrección, iban dos discípulos a un pueblo llamado Emaus, distante aproximadamente 9 millas de Jerusalén, caminaban y convers-

aban decepcionados y tristes por las cosas que habían pasado ese fin de semana en Jerusalén, la crucifixión y muerte de su gran amigo en el que habían puesto muchas esperanzas. Regresaban a Emaus para seguir haciendo lo de siempre. Era de día tardos de corazón llevaban la noche. Se lamentaban de todo lo sucedido, se sentían desilusionados y tristes por la trágica muerte de Jesús el Nazareno. De la absurda aparición de los ángeles a las mujeres, de sueños rotos, un extraño nudo se les atragantaba en la garganta, cuando recordaban a Jesús. Aquel Domingo, el camino estaba solitario. Pero un peregrino se unió a ellos.

No estaban de humor para hablar con nadie, avanzaban con rapidez, pero la alegría alcanzo a la tristeza. El peregrino les pregunta: Que es lo que van conversando juntos por el camino? Pero una esperanza escondida en algún rincón de su corazón hizo que uno de ellos, Cleofás, le respondiera: Como así, eres el único residente en Jerusalén que no sabes las cosas que en estos días han pasado allí? El les dijo que cosas? Ellos le dijeron lo de Jesús el Nazareno, que era profeta poderoso en obras y palabras y le dieron muerte de cruz (Lc. 24, 19). Nosotros esperábamos que sería el Libertador de Israel, algunas mujeres e incluso algunos de nuestro grupo fueron al sepulcro y lo encontraron vacío... A Él no lo vieron. El peregrino los escuchaba atentamente su

relato. Es una actitud que retrata a muchos cristianos, poco o nada interesa que Jesús haya resucitado, sea Hijo de Dios o no lo sea. Les basta su familia, amigos, negocio o trabajo... Sin embargo en Señor interviene en favor de aquellos discípulos descorazonados. Les dice: Que insensatos y todos de corazón para creer lo que dijeron los profetas acerca de Jesús de Nazaret... Era necesario que Cristo padeciera para entrar en su gloria. No se sufre por sufrir, sino que por sufrimiento se gana la gloria Celestial. Jesús les explico las Escrituras, todo lo relacionando con Él, su corazón ardía y a llegar a Emaus, al partir el pan se les abrieron los ojos y entendimiento y reconocieron que era realmente JESÚS VIVO Y RESUCITADO y se llenaron de alegría y regresaron a Jerusalén. El Señor nos invita a no apartarnos de Él y a CREER todo lo que nos ha enseñado, a pesar de los desconciertos. Y que de corazón le digamos QUÉDATE CON NOSOTROS!

You Never Know Who's in Front of You!

Treat everyone who crosses your path with kindness, respect, and sincere honesty. It is not only the right thing to do but also the wisest thing to do. You never know who is in front of you. The universe is nothing more than a huge city, full of loved ones, human and divine, and we should know each other and share what we are and know for the good of all.

A young engineering student traveling on a train in England was very entertained on his cell phone, checking his emails and messages. At a certain moment, he looked at the older man sitting on the bench beside him, reading a book. He asked him what book he was reading, and the man told him it was the Bible. The young man began to laugh and mockingly told him that the book was archaic, old, and outdated, and today, science has shown that what that book says has no scientific basis. If you like to read and want to know the most current and recommendable books, give me your email or phone number, and I will send you updated information. The older man took out a business card from his wallet and handed it to the young man, and when he saw that the card said Pasteur, inventor of antibiotics, he was speechless. He was speechless;

his color changed, and he wanted to disappear in shame. There is no doubt that pride is bold and that we tend to believe that we know and are better than others. This young man thought that the older man reading the Bible was just an ordinary man and was surprised to realize that he was nothing less than a very famous scientist. We can be seated next to a passenger on a plane and engage in a lively conversation during a large part of the trip, and upon arriving at the airport after having gone through the immigration process and picked up our luggage when leaving the airport; we see the neighbor of his seat surrounded by journalists who with microphone in hand interview that character, and when we ask, we realize that he is the famous tenor who is coming to the city to offer a series of concerts. His name is Luciano Pavarotti.

It could also happen to us in a restaurant, at the celebration of a baptism or a marriage, at a concert or the stadium, where a person sits in front or behind us. We do not know who they are, and we can even ask them to take a picture with our cell phone with our family or group of friends without really knowing who that person is who is participating in the same place as us.

The encounter with a person can change our plans and our moods. Could you lead us to a new job or friendship? It can make us lose a hundred dollars or gain a thousand.

Some encounters make us waste time, and encounters save us time because they offer us an easy solution to our problems. There are encounters that we look forward to and encounters that we fear and shy away from. Some encounters are the beginning of a tragedy and encounters that awaken the love that enlightens our whole life. Every day, we meet different people: we can regret what happened to us, or we can leave strengthened, transformed, and full of joy. What do you talk about, or what do you do with the people you meet?

Many friends meet to talk about their adventures and illnesses; others complain about their family, work, government, children, or church. Few meet to talk about their experience of faith in God; some are embarrassed, others do not care, and others do not consider it necessary.

In the Gospel of St. Luke, 24, 13-35, that on the evening of the Resurrection day, two disciples were going to a town called Emmaus, approximately 9 miles from Jerusalem; they were

walking and talking, disappointed and saddened by the things that had happened that weekend in Jerusalem, the crucifixion and death of their great friend in whom they had put many hopes. They returned to Emmaus to continue doing what they had always done. It was late in the day, and they were late at night. They lamented everything that had happened; they were disappointed and saddened by the tragic death of Jesus the Nazarene. Of the absurd appearance of the angels to the women, of broken dreams, a strange lump caught in their throats when they remembered Jesus. That Sunday, the road was lonely. But a pilgrim joined them; they were in no mood to talk to anyone; they were moving fast, but joy overtook sadness. The pilgrim asked them: "What are you talking about together on the road? But a hope hidden in some corner of his heart made one of them, Cleopas, answer him: How so, you are the only resident in Jerusalem who does not know the things that have happened there in these days? He told them what things? They told him about Jesus the Nazarene, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word, and they put him to death on the cross (Lk. 24:19).

We expected Him to be the

Deliverer of Israel, some women and even some of our group went to the tomb and found it empty? They did not see Him. The pilgrim listened attentively to their story.

It is an attitude that portrays many Christians that it matters little or nothing that Jesus is risen, whether He is the Son of God or not. It is enough for them, their family, friends, business or work. However, the Lord intervenes in favor of those disheartened disciples. He tells them: How foolish and foolish at heart to believe what the prophets said about Jesus of Nazareth. Christ needed to suffer to enter into his glory. One does not suffer for the sake of suffering, but by suffering, one gains heavenly glory. Jesus explained to them the Scriptures and everything related to Him; their hearts burned, and when they arrived at Emmaus, at the breaking of the bread, their eyes and understanding were opened, and they recognized that it was JESUS ALIVE AND RISEN. They were filled with joy and returned to Jerusalem. The Lord invites us not to turn away from Him and to BELIEVE all He has taught us despite our bewilderment. And may we say to Him from our hearts, STAY WITH US!

Stewardship and Giving: Active Expressions of Faith

By Tina Edwards-Milam
Annual Appeal Director

Stewardship and Giving are inseparable facets of fulfilling our Catholic Faith, embodying the essence of Jesus’ mission to Build His Kingdom on earth. Each individual has a unique opportunity to actively contribute to this divine mission through initiatives like the Progress Annual Ministry Appeal, becoming the tangible embodiment of Jesus’ face and hands in our community.

The Progress Annual Ministry Appeal serves as a conduit for each of us to actively participate in transformative programs that extend throughout the community through our Ministries’ hard work and dedication. These programs touch on various aspects of human life, embracing Seminarian and Diaconate Formation through Pastoral Outreach, Marriage and Family Life, Education and Religious Formation, and more. Your sacrificial generosity plays a crucial role in ensuring the success of these Ministries, directly impacting the lives of those who benefit from the diverse array of services provided.

By contributing to Seminarian and Diaconate Formation, we support the development and training of future spiritual leaders. This contribution paves the way for a vibrant and dedicated clergy, strengthening the Church’s foundation and fos-

tering a deeper connection with Jesus Himself.

Vocations Ministry and Office of Worship further expand the impact of Stewardship. From Catholic Campus Ministry and Catholic Counseling Services to Marriage and Family Life and Catholic Education, the reach of our Ministries is broad and impactful. These efforts are not isolated; they intertwine to create a comprehensive tapestry of support and care, reflecting the teachings and compassion of Jesus.

The words of Jesus in Matthew 6:33 resonate powerfully in the context of Stewardship and Giving. “But seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things will be given you.” This biblical guidance emphasizes the prioritization of spiritual well-being and the impact it has on our lives and the lives of those around us.

The Progress Annual Ministry Appeal channels the faithful’s collective efforts toward Evangelization, reaching diverse communities through the Tepeyac Institute, the Communications Office, the Tigua Native American Ministry, and the Youth and Young Adult Ministry. This collaborative approach amplifies the impact of individual contributions, creating a meaningful and lasting influence in our community.

In conclusion, Stewardship and Giving are not just financial



transactions; they are active expressions of faith, hope, and love, and in Jesus’ mission to Build His Kingdom on earth. Through the Progress Annual Ministry Appeal and the Good

Works of our Ministries, all of the faithful can be the conduit of Jesus’ love, compassion, and transformative power in their communities, making a lasting impact on everyone around them.

Together, we can make a difference – a difference that echoes for generations to come. Visit www.2024progress-ama.org and make your gift today!

Corresponsabilidad Y Donativos: Expresiones Activas De Fe

Por Tina Edwards-Milam,
Directora de la Anual Progreso

La Corresponsabilidad y el Dar son facetas inseparables de la realización de nuestra Fe Católica, encarnando la esencia de la misión de Jesús de Edificar Su Reino en la tierra. Cada uno de nosotros tenemos una oportunidad única de contribuir activamente a esta misión divina a través de iniciativas como Progreso Campaña Anual para los Ministerios, convirtiéndose en la encarnación tangible del rostro y las manos de Jesús en nuestra comunidad.

La Campaña Anual de Progreso sirve como un conducto para que cada uno de nosotros participe activamente en programas transformadores que se extienden por toda la comunidad a través

del arduo trabajo y dedicación de nuestros Ministerios. Estos programas tocan varios aspectos de la vida humana, abarcando la Formación de Seminaristas y Diáconos a través de la Pastoral de Extensión, Matrimonio y Vida Familiar, Educación y Formación Religiosa, y más. Su generosidad sacrificial desempeña un papel crucial para garantizar el éxito de estos ministerios, con un impacto directo en las vidas de quienes se benefician de la diversa gama de servicios prestados.

Al contribuir a la formación de seminaristas y diáconos, apoyamos el desarrollo y la formación de futuros líderes espirituales. Esta contribución allana el camino para un clero vibrante y dedicado, fortaleciendo los cimientos de la Iglesia y fomentando una

conexión más profunda con Jesús mismo.

La Alcance Pastoral y la Oficina de Vocaciones amplían aún más el impacto de la Corresponsabilidad. Desde del Ministerio Católico Universitario y los Servicios de Asesoramiento Católico hasta la Vida Matrimonial y Familiar y la Educación Católica, el alcance de nuestros Ministerios es amplio e impactante. Estos esfuerzos no están aislados; se entrelazan para crear un tapiz integral de apoyo y cuidado, reflejando las enseñanzas y la compasión de Jesús.

Las palabras de Jesús en Mateo 6:33 resuenan poderosamente en el contexto de la Corresponsabilidad y el Dar. “Buscad primero el Reino de Dios y su justicia, y todas estas cosas os serán

dadas”. Esta guía bíblica enfatiza la priorización del bienestar espiritual y el impacto que tiene en nuestras vidas y en las vidas de quienes nos rodean.

La Campaña Anual de Progreso canaliza los esfuerzos colectivos de los fieles hacia la Evangelización, llegando a diversas comunidades a través del Instituto Tepeyac, la Oficina de Comunicaciones, el Ministerio Nativo Americano Tigua y el Ministerio de Jóvenes y Jóvenes Adultos. Este enfoque de colaboración amplifica el impacto de las contribuciones individuales, creando una influencia significativa y duradera en nuestra comunidad.

En conclusión, la Corresponsabilidad y el Dar no son sólo transacciones financieras; son ex-

presiones activas de fe, esperanza y amor, y en la misión de Jesús de Edificar Su Reino en la tierra. A través de Progreso Campaña Anual para los Ministerios y las Buenas Obras de nuestros Ministerios, todos los fieles pueden ser el conducto del amor, la compasión y el poder transformador de Jesús en sus comunidades, causando un impacto duradero en todos los que les rodean.

Juntos, podemos marcar la diferencia, una diferencia que resuena en las generaciones venideras. ¡Visite www.2024progress-ama.org y haga su donación hoy!

Annual Ministry Appeal · 2024

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Successful Cabrini Movie Night Benefits Deacons

By Analisa Cordova-Silverstein,
Major Gifts Officer

The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of El Paso is blessed to have had over 400 attendees on the evening of February 20th at the Alamo Drafthouse East for the preview night screening of the movie Cabrini. It was such a joyous night celebrating our Diaconate community. Special thanks to our wonderful Deacons: Deacon Jesus Cardenas, Deacon Chato Gonzalez, Deacon Jim Szostek, and Deacon Danny Bejarano, who are always ready to lend a helping hand and shared information about the vital work of our Permanent Diaconate to the audience and introduced the movie.

Because of the generosity of our Sponsors Machelle Vanecek, ClearViewRealty, RMPersonnel, and everyone who attended and gave an additional donation, we were able to raise over \$20,000 in support of the Permanent Diaconate Fund!

The Permanent Diaconate Program in the Diocese of El Paso was originally established by Bishop Sidney M. Metzger in 1973 and then reconstituted in January 2004 by Bishop Armando X. Ochoa. Formation for the permanent diaconate is a five-year program. It includes a year of discernment and four years of candidacy consisting of formation seminars, academic courses, annual retreats, and parish assignments. This fund provides support to the Diocese of El Paso for the continuing spiritual and academic formation of permanent deacons.

In the Catholic Church, ordained ministry is comprised of three degrees: bishops, priests and deacons. Deacons preparing for the priesthood are Transitional Deacons. Those not



Deacon Dagoberto "Chato" Gonzalez, from St. Frances Mother Cabrini Catholic Church welcomes movie goers to the pre-screening of the movie Cabrini at Alamo Draft House in Far East El Paso. The Catholic Foundation for the Diocese of El Paso had over 400 attendees on the evening of February 20th at the Alamo Drafthouse East for the preview night screening of the movie Cabrini that benefited the Diocesan Permanent Diaconate in El Paso. *Photo by Ale Saldaña, special to the Rio Grande Catholic.*

planning to be ordained priests are called Permanent Deacons. The Permanent Deacon is an ordained member of the Church who has received the Sacrament of Holy Orders (as does a Bishop and Priest) and is deemed a cleric. As such, he

is not a layman. Through their diaconate ministry, they preach the word of God during Mass and other liturgical celebrations, preparing couples for marriage, and even witnessing the sacrament of matrimony, as well as preparing parents and sponsors

for the baptism of their children and performing the sacrament of baptism. It was St. Pope John Paul II who stated that Permanent Deacons "represent a great and visible sign of the working of the Holy Spirit." If you would

like to the Permanent Diaconate Fund, please visit <https://catholicfoundationelpaso.org> or call Analisa Cordova Silverstein, Major Gifts Officer, at 915-872-8412.

TICKETS: \$20

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2024

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