‘God has become my light’

A Chinese teen’s conversion story

By COURTNEY GROGAN

B eijing, China (CNA)—The first time Wenxuan Yuan visited a Catholic church in Beijing as a child, she was struck by its beauty. In the courtyard of the church there was a blackboard with a verse from the Book of Revelation in Chinese, “Do not be afraid. I am the first and the last, the one who lives. Once I was dead, but now I am alive forever and ever.”

“I did not fully understand the significance of these words, but I couldn’t stop thinking about them. I kept visiting the church again and again,” Yuan said.

At the age of 14, Yuan made the decision to become a Catholic. “I found a freedom that I had never had before. For the first time, I had nothing to hide in my heart,” she reflected.

“God has become my light, and therefore I am no longer afraid of light,” Yuan told bishops and young people in Rome at a youth synod event sponsored by the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture earlier this year.

In an historic first, two bishops from China participated in the first few weeks of the 2018 Synod of Bishops on young people, the faith, and vocational discernment.

Beyond beauty, Yuan told CNA that what first attracted her to the Catholic faith was that, “It is true. It is not only a better theology. It is the true theology.”

And Yuan could not keep this truth to herself. “When I was in college, every weekend I would try to grab one of my friends for Mass, and I did that for several years,” Yuan continued.

However, many of her college friends in China knew almost nothing about the Catholic faith. “Some even got the wrong idea that after the Reformation, the Catholic Church became the Protestant church,” she added.

Upon hearing the Gospel for the first time, Yuan’s friends’ “first reaction was like, ‘It is beautiful,’ but second was ‘It is shocking. You are believing in crazy things.’”

“But that is part of the point of

Celebrating the CHRIST child

Parishes around the diocese were asked to submit photos from their Christmas events and celebrations. More photos are on Page 7.

Photo courtesy of Michelle Mead

Photo courtesy of Ruth Baalmann

Photo courtesy of Loretta Kinman

Flood the world with joy

The Most Rev. John B. Brungardt, Bishop of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City

A s we complete our Christmas Season today with the feast of the Baptism of the Lord, we reflect on the extraordinary gift of the Christ Child, our Savior. At the Mary Mother of God Masses, I used one of my favorite hymns as part of the homily: “You’re Here,” by Francesca Battistelli. This moving hymn is from the perspective of Mary, cradling her Newborn Son. The first verse:

Hold on now, got to take a deep breath.
I don’t know what to say when I look in your eyes.
You made the world before I was born,
And here I am holding You in my arms tonight.
Noel, Noel, Jesus our Emmanuel.

The first two lines, I imagine, all mothers would think/feel. The third line is the amazing gift of the Incarnation, “God became man.” The second verse ends with:

Look at Your hands,
they’re still so small
Someday You’re going
To stretch them out and save us all.

Yes, salvation. Jesus is not just a cute little boy resting in a manger, He is the Son of God, who died on the cross for you, for me. He rose from the dead to open the gates of heaven.

The third verse ends with:

But You’ll leave Your Spirit
And flood the world with joy.

Joy to the World! In the midst of pain, suffering, and violence in this world, we can have an inner joy, knowing that Jesus is with us. Let us return to Ordinary Time tomorrow as a quite extraordinary time, as the Father tells Jesus, “You are my Beloved Son; with You I am well pleased” (Luke 3:22). Let us flood the world with joy that we receive from Jesus, who loves us so much!

+ Bishop John
Local priest to co-lead pilgrimage to Greece in ‘Pathways of Paul’

Father Reggie Urban and Paul Maneth, PhD, will host a pilgrimage to Greece from Sept. 8-18, 2019. Registration for the pilgrimage, “The Pathways of Paul,” must be submitted on or before Feb. 18.

Participants will walk the pathways of one of the Bible’s most prolific personalities and one of history’s most interesting individuals. Together, the participants will:
• Retrace the missionary pathways of the Apostle Paul, prolific writer of the New Testament letters.
• Travel through ancient cities and pastoral landscapes.
• Enjoy a 3-night cruise of the magical Greek Islands of Mykonos, Patmos and Santorini.
• Visit the ancient Roman city of Ephesus, Turkey.
• Discover archaeological treasures like the Acropolis in Athens and seek ancient wisdom at the ruins of Delphi.
• Investigate the dramatic Meteoras Monasteries, a UNESCO World Heritage site.
• Explore the biblical town of Corinth on a guided tour featuring the Agora and the Bema, where Paul was brought before the tribunal.
• Stay in Philippi, where Paul first set foot in Europe.
• Explore the dungeon where he was held prisoner.
• Find inspiration throughout as participants visit the places where the great apostle lived, and preached.
• Stop at two monasteries in Meteora and learn about the resident monks.
• See Mars Hill where Paul delivered his “Men of Athens” speech.
• Visit the Museum of Byzantine Culture, one of the finest museums of Byzantine art.
• See the cave on Patmos where John, inspired by God, wrote the Book of Revelation.

The Acropolis in Athens.

• Explore ancient Corinth on a guided tour featuring the Agora.
• Join a local expert exploring the monuments of ancient Athens.
• See the Bema where Paul was brought before the tribunal, as recorded in Acts.
• Travel to the coastal town of Kavala where Paul first set foot in Europe.
• Experience the House of Mary, where she is said to have spent her last days.
• More detailed information, including registration material, can be found by visiting dcdioocese.org/swsathens and clicking on the Pathways of Paul icon, or you can call 800-362-9347.

Pope Francis Prayer Intentions

JANUARY: Young people and the example of Mary

That young people, especially in Latin America, follow the example of Mary and respond to the call of the Lord to communicate the joy of the Gospel to the world.

Help for farmers

• Kansas Rural Family Helpline, toll free, 866-327-6578: Provides confidential, short-term emotional support, advice, and qualified referrals directly to rural families struggling with an unmet emotional, medical, financial, or legal need.
• Kansas Agriculture Mediation Services, toll-free, 800-321-3276: Helps farmers, agricultural lenders and USDA agencies resolve disputes in a confidential and non-adversarial setting outside the traditional legal process.
• WORKS -- Work Opportunities for Rural Kansans, toll free, 866-271-0853: Helps farmers, ranchers, and their families to make a transition from farming and ranching to non-farm employment.

Steps to create a safe environment
1. Know the Warning Signs
2. Control Access
3. Monitor All Programs
4. Be Aware (Behavioral and Physical Signs)
5. Communicate Your Concerns

Protecting God’s Children

The Catholic Diocese of Dodge City requires all employees and volunteers who work with children to participate in a Protecting God’s Children awareness session. Through the Diocesan Awareness Sessions and other educational efforts of the diocese, all people of the diocese can learn how to discuss different aspects of abuse — including sexual abuse — with children and how to teach them to protect themselves.

Next Awareness Session:
Spearville
Sunday, Jan. 20, 2019; From: 3-6 p.m.
St. John the Baptist Church
100 S Main St., Spearville, 67876
Contact Person: Judy Gleason 620-385-2881
Facilitator: Sharon Stuart 620-225-5164

Abuse Hotline
If you suspect abuse or neglect of a child in Kansas, and the child is in immediate danger, call 911 or local law enforcement.
If you have suspicion that a child is being abused or neglected, make a confidential report to the Kansas Department for Children and Families Protection Report Center, 800-285-3219.
If you suspect abuse by Church personnel, in addition to making a report to those civil authorities, contact Charles Befort, cbefort@cox.net, 620-285-3219.
You may submit a report to the diocese. Report forms are available at www.dcdioocese.org/safe-environment.

Submissions accepted for book on local priesthood

Southwest Kansas Catholic editor Dave Myers is currently producing a book about the local priesthood, and would like your help.

The text will include personal stories about local priests, in-depth how-to chapters regarding discerning God’s will and entering seminary, question and answer sections, and all with a good deal of humor. Among the chapters will be a delightful (and somewhat haunting!) story conveyed by Father Henry Hildebrandt to Myers a few weeks before he died. (A book on local women religious will be penned by Charlene Scott-Myers.)
You can help write a chapter in the book. Do you have poignant, fun, or even historic memories of interaction with local priests? Do you remember spending time with future saint, Father Emil Kapaun? How did a local priest help you? Is there a priest you especially admire? Why?
Everyone who submits a story that is used in the book will receive a free copy. Submit to: Southwest Kansas Catholic 910 Central, P.O. Box 137 Dodge City, KS 67801 Or email skregister@dcdiocese.org.

Bishop Brungardt invites you to celebrate World Day of Consecrated Life, Feb. 2 in Great Bend

RSVP for reception by Jan. 16

Bishop John B. Brungardt will again celebrate with the religious sisters and religious priests in the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City on Feb. 2, 2019 at Prince of Peace Parish in Great Bend at St. Patrick Church. Mass will be celebrated at 10:30 a.m., followed by a reception and meal.
Everyone is invited to participate in the Mass to show their support to the sisters and priests for their life in service to the Church and particularly to their presence in the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City.
Anyone who wishes to take part in the reception and meal, RSVP to Gayla Kimker (gkimker@dcdiocese.org) by Wednesday, Jan. 16.
ICE detains Dodge City man for three days in case of mistaken identity
Yet, father of three thankful for opportunity to live in the United States

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

Editor’s Note: “Alberto’s” documentation is in process and he has no fear of deportation. While he allowed the SKC to use his full name, due to his pending immigration hearing and any possible actions concerning his alleged false arrest, the SKC has decided only to use his first name.

I t was a December morning. A deep blue sky made the biting cold a bit more tolerable. As he did every morning, a Dodge City resident waved goodbye to his three young children as they boarded the bus to school.

As the bus drove out of sight, two individuals, a man and a woman, both with letters — ICE — emblazoned on their jackets, approached the man. They questioned him briefly with the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agents. He had committed no crime. He has no criminal record.

He was not the man they were looking for. If only they would accompany him to his home where he could get his passport to prove it.

“The ICE agents didn’t speak Spanish,” the man told the Southwest Kansas Catholic, and Alberto, the man questioned that morning, spoke very little English. They refused to allow him to go home, he said. His phone was taken from him. Unable to inform his wife, the father of three found himself being driven to Chase County, his wife, the previous owner of the house in which he lived, Sister Angela said.

“I felt very sad,” Alberto said. “They didn’t listen to me. They only spoke English.

“I have a clean record,” Alberto added.

When the truth was finally realized, that he indeed was not the person they were looking for, he was unceremoniously released.

“They told me that when my family pays a fine, I can go,” he said. His wife raced east with a friend, paid a $1,500 fine and retrieved her tired husband.

With his three children sitting quietly at his side during his interview with the SKC (his wife was at work and unable to attend), he explained that his attorney said that in four years, he would attend a court hearing in which he will, in all likelihood, obtain his legal residency (green card).

Despite all that has happened, he is ever thankful to live in the United States. “I’m so glad that I have the opportunity to live here,” he said. “I would never want to go back to Guatemala.”

His hope now is to one day be able to again step into a classroom and share the lessons he has learned with an eager audience.

“God is great,” he said. “God is love, and God is mercy. Our faith in God gives us hope.”

The immigrant story doesn’t end at the border

Alberto’s story (left) shows that the situations affecting immigrants are not just happening at the border,” Sister Angela Erevia, MCDP, told the Southwest Kansas Catholic, “they are happening right here.”

Sister Angela, the Director of Hispanic Ministry for the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City, offers a voice for the rapidly growing Hispanic population in the diocese.

She does so to build bridges of understanding and fellowship between all people.

In 2010, Sister Angela participated (as she has in years’ past) as a volunteer with the U.S. Census Bureau. Her job was to encourage people, documented and undocumented, to register with the census — to not be afraid.

“Once the census is calculated, the city receives federal funding based on the population,” Sister said.

“That’s funding for education, health care, infrastructure.”

“Therefore,” she stressed, “immigrants are contributing to the economy, to the schools!”

Father Hickey performs traditional ‘chalking’ of the church entrance

As youthful eyes looked on, Father Tim S. Hickey, pastor of St. Anthony’s Church in Leoti, performed the traditional Epiphany “chalking” of the entrance into the church, Sunday Jan. 6. The blessing includes writing in chalk the year, the initials of the names of the Three Magi (C for Caspar, M for Melchior and B for Balthasar) with plus signs in between them representing the Cross of Jesus Christ. The C, M, B also stand for the Latin words “Christus mansionem depuravit” or Christ has purified this house. Each family was given blessed chalk and the prayer so they could perform the Epiphany blessing in their home. St. Mary’s Church in Marienthal and St. Joseph the Worker Church in Tribune were also “chalked” on the Solemnity of the Epiphany.

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

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**Prayer for the year ahead**

**A holiday form letter**

**Dear**

We’re sending out our Christmas greetings a little bit late this year. Dave and Charlene hope that you and all the little (including children and/or pets) _________ had a holy Christmas and a very happy New Year celebration. Welcome 2019! Please know that you ________, are in our hearts, and that we think of you often. How is/are __________________? We hope he/she/they is/are well. We think of him/her/them often.

Health related issues highlighted our year, some serious, some not, some weird, some super gross, some totally uninteresting, all of which are included in detail below.

To catch you up, my cousin Doug was finally released from a correctional facility last January after serving seven years for performing dental work without a license. Or any experience in dentistry. “Ith a travertty!” said one victim upon his release. “He should get the firing thquad!” The victim testified at Doug’s parole hearing, but her testimony was dismissed when it was discovered that she was Cheryl, Doug’s wife.

Speaking of wives, you may remember that my wife had her big toe accidently severed during Father Ted Stockeclin’s Ash Wednesday homily. Father Ted felt terrible, but he couldn’t have known his machete would veer off during his mid-homily juggling act.

Well, the toe has grown back! We always thought that regenerating digits was something you only find among reptiles and earthworms. Turns out, humans share many traits with reptiles! In fact, our doctor told us that he was relieved as an infant. We thought that was neat.

By the way, my wife’s toe grew back in the shape of Alfred Hitchcock, which the doctor said is more common than not. Sometimes when I get home from work, she holds up her foot and says, “Goot eeeevening,” which is equal parts hilarious and disturbing.

In non-health related news, Dave (due to his rugged good looks and affinity for bougainvillea’s) briefly became the newest spokesman for Boscowitz’s Cattlemate Saddle and Salad. Their motto is, “As you might be aware, there’s no other place where you can enjoy a delicious salad while picking out saddle-wear or other farm-related leather goods as you enjoy a delicious salad, more so than at Cattlemate Saddle and Salad, where you can do both together at the same time.”

Moments before his first official function, Charlene mentioned to Mr. Boscowitz that his motto was a tad redundant, and he had us both ejected from the premises.

Charlene felt bad, so to lighten our mood, she bought matching Post-it dispenser collections for our Post-it Note dispenser collection, which is currently on loan to the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. It can be found in their Post-it Note Dispenser wing and runs through March 23.

Have you heard that 99 percent of cattle ranchers are vegetarians? We haven’t. Please boycott Boscowitz’s Cattlemate Saddle and Salad.

More medical news. At our Thanksgiving dinner, Dave suffered a very curious psychological affliction. During dinner, he suddenly and inexplicably demanded to be called “Turtledove the Wonder Boy” from now on.

We contacted Dave’s best friend, Dr. Albeck, who is a Professor of Brain Science at Colorado University in Denver. He told Dave to take a couple of Tums, and within an hour he was back to his old self! Dr. Albeck told us that Dave had experienced Temporary Altered Personality Disorder brought on by gas, or TAPDOBG.

According to Dr. Albeck, there have been several studies performed, some having to do with that very subject.

As the new year gets underway, our prayer for you is that 2019 will be less weird than 2018. We should all pray hard for this.

We should pray for all those struggling with emotional, health, financial, and/or familial issues.

We must pray that all people on earth will be afforded the same chances to experience the peace and good will that our loving Lord promises us through His birth and His incredible sacrifice.

And don’t forget to pray for less weirdness. Amen.

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**Inherit the Mirth**

**By Cuyler Black**

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**Register by Jan. 15 for Topeka March for Life!**

The Right To Life March in Washington D.C. is one of the largest peaceful marches to take place at our nation’s capital on an annual basis since Roe v. Wade was passed on Jan. 22, 1973, with several hundred thousand people from all over the United States and several foreign countries in attendance.

Unique from day one – “Pro-Life is Pro-Science” is the theme for this year’s March for Life. Join us (physically or spiritually), in Washington, D.C. on Jan. 18, or on Jan. 22 in Topeka to speak out, to stand up, to pray, and to march for life.

While in Washington, D.C., we will pray the Rosary at Planned Parenthood, tour the St. John Paul II Shrine, attend the Life is Very Good Rally, tour Arlington National Cemetery, and celebrate Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, in addition to the March itself. We also plan to take some night tours within walking distance of our hotel following the March.

Our Washington, D.C. group consists of pilgrims aged 14 and up. We have a total of 48 attending: 21 adults and sponsors (including two priests) and 27 youth ranging in age from 13-19. A few of these youth have attended prior pilgrimages to Washington, D.C. through the Wichita Diocese, but for the majority, this is their first trip.

**March in Topeka**

There also will be a pilgrimage to march at the state capital in Topeka on Jan. 21-22, which will be led by Gayla Kinmer.

The trip will be different this year than in years past, as participants from the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City have decided to depart the night before so that pilgrims can participate in all of the activities that are being offered on Jan. 22, which will include

Continued on Page 8
On Charlie Gard  

The Value of Life

By JD FLYNN

Editor-in-Chief, Catholic News Agency

Editor’s Note: The following story was written in July, 2017. The Charlie Gard case drew national attention when the medical team and parents disagreed about whether experimental treatment was in the best interests of the child, who was born with a rare genetic disorder that causes progressive brain damage and muscle failure.

In the middle of the night, when she was just six days old, our daughter Pia went into cardiac arrest. We woke to find our little girl in the hospital already and so doctors and nurses rushed into the room and saved her life. Twice. It was terrifying, and we were powerless. Pia is alive because of the Providence of God, and the medical care she received.

There are, doubtless, some people who might have asked if saving Pia’s life was the right thing to do. Pia has trisomy-21, the chromosomal defect known as Down syndrome. And the day before her heart stopped pumping blood, Pia had been diagnosed with a rare and untreatable kind of cancer. We didn’t know whether it was the cancer or its course, develop into something worse, or end her life. We accepted this prognosis, and we knew that her parents should lead to suffering.

There, I’m sure, some people who might have thought that a disabled girl facing a battle with cancer would have no meaningful, worthwhile, or comfortable life. People with Down syndrome are aborted at staggeringly high rates, in part because of the false compassion that believes their sometimes-difficult lives are not worth living. Three years ago, some ethicists began suggesting that aborting children with Down syndrome is a morally virtuous—and ethically normative—thing to do. And the euthanasia of sick and suffering children—children facing battles like cancer—is also becoming acceptable in many parts of the world.

I shudder to think it, but there are doubtlessly people who thought that a sick and disabled little girl, like our daughter, would have been better off dying that night. That her suffering wasn’t worth it. Charlie’s parents knew that Pia’s life anyway, because saving lives is what medicine is all about. Pia has Medicaid: the government paid for her treatment because supporting families in need is what government is supposed to be about.

Today she’s four. She has endured a lot of suffering. But she is also the most joyful person I’ve ever met. And we, Pia’s parents, don’t see “Down syndrome” when we look at her. We don’t see “cancer.” We see our daughter. We see a person, not a calculation. We can’t help that: we’re her parents. We would have done anything possible to make sure she lived through that terrible night.

Charlie Gard’s situation is not the same as Pia’s. Charlie Gard will almost certainly die, and soon. But I can imagine what his parents might be feeling right now. They don’t see Charlie as a media sensation, the center of an international debate over human and family rights. They don’t see him as a tragic medical phenomenon. They don’t see him as the sum of a passionate calculation of suffering, usefulness, and “quality of life.”

Charlie Gard’s parents see their little boy. They see his mother’s nose, and his father’s eyes. They see a baby they just love to be with. They see, maybe, a gift from God. And they’re hoping that someone—one doctor or scientist—will rush into the room, and save Charlie’s life. They’re willing to do anything—to go the ends of the earth—to try to help their little boy.

The treatment Charlie’s parents hoped to try had very little chance of success. But they wanted to try. Not to become culture-warriors or advocates for parental rights. Just to save their little boy.

The court did not support Charlie’s parents because, in the words of Charlie Camosy, they “do not think Charlie’s life is a benefit to him. They think it is in his best interest to die.”

Charlie Gard’s parents are not allowed to try, because powerful people think that the life of a seriously disabled boy is not worth living.

Pope St. John Paul II wrote that the culture of death is “a war of the powerful against the weak: a life which would require greater acceptance, love and care is considered useless, or held to be an intolerable burden, and is therefore rejected in one way or another.” A person who, because of illness, handicap or, more simply, just by existing, comes to be seen as the well-being or life-style of those who are more favored tends to be looked upon as an enemy to be resisted or eliminated. In this way a kind of “conspiracy against life” is unleashed. This conspiracy involves not only individuals in their personal, family or group relationships, but goes far beyond, to the point of damaging and distorting, at the international level, relations between peoples and States.”

Charlie Gard is the victim of a “conspiracy against life.”

Doctors, governments, and courts which can look at parents like Charlie’s, and judge that they must give up the fight—that dying is in the best interests of their suffering little boy—have lost their humanity. They’ve forgotten, or rejected, that even difficult lives are gifts worth protecting, supporting, and saving. As a case Charlie’s reveals the inhumanity, the callousness, and the dictatorship of the culture of death.

Charlie Gard will likely die soon, and we’ll move on to some other media sensation. Some other tragedy will show up in our Facebook and Twitter feeds. We’ll read think pieces about something else. But Charlie’s parents won’t move on. They’ll mourn their son, whom they know in a way that no one else does, and whom they love in a way that all of us should understand. And they’ll wonder why, as their son lay dying, no one rushed in to help them try to save his life.

Charlie Gard died on July 28, 2017, at age 11 months and 24 days.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you.” (Jeremiah 1:5)

“See, upon the palms of my hands I have engraved you.” (Isaiah 49:16)
Sister Veronice saw ‘with the eyes of Faith and Light’

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

On Nov. 30, Frank Sumaya’s heart stopped four times. The Cathedral Our Lady of Guadalupe parishioner had received a heart catheterization and was in recovery. His wife Virginia sat nearby, praying as the medical staff rushed into the room.

“The staff came to my aid yelling at me to wake up,” Frank said. “As far as I knew, I had just been napping, because I was so tired from being there since 6:30 a.m. But apparently the EKG monitor said otherwise. I felt nothing, saw nothing, nor heard nothing. It was just a peaceful sleep.”

“We had just lost Randy [Zerr] three weeks before due to heart problems,” Virginia said. “I prayed for Randy’s intercession.”

Four different times her husband’s heart stopped—once for 30 seconds—and four different times it started back up again, something Virginia attributes, in part, to a beloved Sister whose life on earth was ending nearly at the same moment.

Virginia, with the assistance of Frank, have been the hosts of the Cathedral Our Lady of Guadalupe Faith and Light community, of which Randy Zerr had long been a part, for more than a decade. The monthly gatherings offer developmentally and intellectually disabled individuals, their family and friends, a few hours of faith, fun and friendship in a non-threatening atmosphere.

The communities in Wichita and Dodge City [there are Faith and Light communities across the world] were started by Sister Veronice Born, a forever smiling, soul-uplifting Most Precious Blood Sister who found her life’s work in helping the special needs.

Virginia Sumaya, far right, serves food at the most recent Faith and Light gathering, which she leads with the assistance of her husband, Frank. The group remembered fondly Sister Veronice Born, who founded the Cathedral Faith and Light Community.

Virginia related a moment that Frank Sumaya was struggling for life, Sister Veronice’s life on earth was ending, giving way to her rebirth into heaven.

“I wonder if in those moments, Sister Veronice wasn’t praying for Frank as well,” Virginia said.

“At a recent gathering of the Faith and Light community, members shared some memories of Sister Veronice.”

People talked about how nice she was,” Virginia told the SKC. “They were really happy that she started Faith and Light. If not for her, they wouldn’t be there, enjoying each other.

“Frank, do you have memories of Sister Veronice?” Virginia asked her husband.

In the typical dry wit for which he is known, Frank answered without pause, “You are the sons and daughters of the King; you need to see with the eyes of faith and light. If you live faith and light, you will have faith and light, the light of Jesus Christ the King.”

— Bishop Emeritus Ronald M. Gilmore, to participants at a 2011 Faith and Light gathering

“She always liked you best.”

Life after near-death, his humor is solidly intact.

“Not long before she died, she told me, ‘Don’t ever give up Faith and Light,’” Virginia said of Sister Veronice. For some time now, Virginia has been trying to find another person ready to give their all to this special community—just one day a month, eight months out of the year.

Sister Veronice’s plea to Virginia came in the knowledge that a good host is difficult to find.

Just as happened all those years ago when Sister Veronice attended the meetings (she had long since been residing at the motherhouse in Wichita), smiles, laughter, songs and praise filled the Holy Family Social Hall at the cathedral Dec. 15. After sharing their memories, Virginia had a reenactment of the Nativity using a small creche.

“And suddenly there was with the Angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!” Virginia read from the Book of Luke.

Concluding the gathering was a pot-luck with homemade Mexican food and many desserts, celebrated with smiles and delight thanks in large part to a beloved Sister who saw fit to serve God’s special people.

Performance promotions affect Knights Insurance Agency

Special to the Catholic

The Knights of Columbus Insurance Agency of western Kansas recently reported the transfer of George Spinelli, general agent, to Missouri, and the promotion of Darin Reed, formerly a field agent, to general agent.

Spinelli, general agent in western Kansas since 1995, is now responsible for two offices in Missouri, one in Camdenton and the other in Washington. Reed is the new General Agent in the Ellis office. He has lived in Ellis since the beginning of his career with the Knights of Columbus in November 2005. The agency Darin is taking over not only covers western Kansas, but will be expanded to include the Salina and Manhattan areas.

Spinelli will serve about 125 councils and parishes with 21 agents, with 20,000 members and their families. He began his career in Fort Lauderdale, Florida in 1992 where he served as a field agent for three and a half years. He moved to Ellis in 1995 serving the Western Kansas agency until 2018.

“Moving to Western Kansas was the best thing I could have done for my family. Raising my children in a small town with small town values has benefited them tremendously as they begin to work and raise their own families.” — George Spinelli

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“The Knight of Columbus Kansas State Family has been a pleasure and the relationship between the Western Kansas Agency and the Kansas State Council is used as an example to other states around the country. The people of Western Kansas have always welcomed me and the Knights of Columbus agents with open arms. The relationships I developed through my work with the Knights of Columbus and the friends that I have made will always be with me.”

“Moving to Western Kansas was the best thing I could have done for my family. Raising my children in a small town with small town values has benefited them tremendously as they begin to work and raise their own families.” — George Spinelli
Parishes across the diocese were asked to submit a photo to the Southwest Kansas Catholic from their Christmas events. As we share in their celebrations, we ask God to bless each day of this new year with the hope and joy that came with the birth of the Christ Child.

“Look at Your hands, they’re still so small
Someday You’re going
To stretch them out and save us all.”

-- Mary to her baby Jesus in the hymn, “You’re Here” by Francesca Battistelli. See the Bishop’s column on Page 1

[LACROSSE (above and right)] -- St. Michael PSR students and teachers presented “The Christmas Story” Dec. 19, in their parish center. Special songs for the program were provided by George Strait, Garth Brooks, Elvis Presley, Josh Groban and many other artists. Forty-nine of the 52 students took part in bringing this more than 2,000 year old story to life. Father Eric Gyamfi gave an opening prayer and Santa even stopped by to pay homage to the Baby Jesus. The parish Social Commission provided homemade cookies and the Knights served hot chocolate and helped Santa hand out treats for the kids. It was an evening enjoyed by all who attended.

[Photos courtesy of Ruth Baslmann]
U.S. bishops urge participation in ‘9 Days for Life’ novena

“9 Days for Life” is a multi-faceted novena for the respect and protection of every human life. Each day, a different intention is accompanied by a short reflection, suggested actions, and related information.

WASHINGTON, D.C.—On Jan. 14, thousands of Catholics across the country will join in prayer for “9 Days for Life.” The prayer campaign, sponsored by the Committee on Pro Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, leads up to the annual Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children. The novena and day of prayer are a time of recollection and preparation in observation of the anniversary of Roe v. Wade—the Supreme Court decision that made abortion legal throughout the United States.

The overarching intention of the novena is that all human life will be respected. Each day of the “9 Days for Life” novena highlights a related topic and provides a reflection, educational information, and suggested daily actions.

Participants can subscribe to receive the daily prayers at www.9daysforlife.com.

WHO: Since 2013, more than 100,000 Catholics have joined together to pray this annual novena for the respect of human life sponsored by the Committee on Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. Through prayer and sacrifice, we can help build a culture of life.

WHEN: 9 Days for Life will run Monday, January 14 – Tuesday, January 22, 2019.

WHAT: 9daysforlife.com is the dedicated website for joining the novena and for accessing resources. Participants can receive the novena by downloading the free 9 Days for Life app, or by subscribing to daily emails or text messages. (A printable version is also available online.) Those who join the campaign are invited to pray a multi-faceted novena that includes a new intention, brief reflection, related information, and suggested actions for each day.

WHERE: For additional information and updates on ways to get involved, visit 9daysforlife.com and follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Abortion was the leading cause of death in 2018, killing 42 million worldwide

By MICAH BILGER

More human beings died in abortions than any other cause of death in 2018, a new report indicates.

A heartbreaking reminder about the prevalence of abortion, statistics compiled by Worldometers indicate that there were nearly 42 million abortions world-wide in 2018. The independent site collects data from governments and other reputable organizations and then reports the data, along with estimates and projections, based on those numbers.

As of December 31, 2018, there have been some 41.9 million abortions performed in the course of the year, Worldometers revealed. By contrast, 8.2 million people died from cancer in 2018, 5 million from smoking, and 1.7 million died of HIV/AIDS.

It also records the total number of abortions in the world, based on the latest statistics on abortions published by the World Health Organization (WHO).

Globally, just under a quarter of all pregnancies (23 percent) were ended by abortion in 2018, and for every 33 live births, ten infants were aborted.

Worldometers estimates about 59 million deaths world-wide in 2018, but that number does not include unborn babies’ abortion deaths. Unborn babies are not recognized as human beings even though biology indicates that they are unique, living human beings from the moment of conception and they die brutal, violent deaths in abortions.

The abortion number is incomprehensible, but each of those 42 million abortions represents a living human being whose life was violently destroyed in their mother’s womb. Each unborn baby already had their own unique DNA, making them distinct from their mother. That DNA indicated if the child was a boy or girl, their eye and hair color, their height, possible genetic disorders and other disabilities, and much more. In most cases, the unborn babies’ hearts are beating when they are aborted, too.

In America, just less than 1 million babies are aborted every year. Though abortion rates have been dropping in the past decade, abortion remains the leading cause of death in the United States as well.

An estimated 60 million unborn babies have been killed in abortions in the U.S. since Roe v. Wade in 1973. In January, pro-life advocates will gather for the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C. to remember the anniversary of that infamous decision and call for restored protections for the unborn.

Worldometer presents live world statistics on population, government and economics, society and media, environment, food, water, energy and health.
The Clergy Abuse Crisis: Didn’t We Fix This? (Part II)

A Look at the progress the Church has made — and where we go from here

Editor’s Note: Bishop John Brungardt has asked that the SKC continue to bring articles and commentary about the ongoing priestly abuse crisis to the fore in the ultimate hope that never again is a child or an adult a victim of abuse, and that those who have been abused can seek healing in the Loving Lord.

The following is Part II of a three-part series.

By MSGR. STEPHEN J. ROSSETTI

It is important that the pope and the Vatican dicasteries address the accountability and disciplining of bishops. Pope Francis began to address this issue in his 2016 apostolic letter “Like a Loving Mother.” Obviously, more is needed. The Dallas Charter was not intended, nor can it address, this issue. Other vehicles, with the authority of the Holy See behind them, are needed. To ensure long-lasting change, there must be transparent accountability.

ACCELERATING SECULARIZATION

For priests today, the situation feels even worse than 2002. With the prospect of other states’ attorneys general convening grand juries to investigate clergy abuse, plus the likelihood of more lawsuits, including “look back” legislation that opens up windows for civil suits, no matter how old, we can only expect further decades of pain and shame. In 2002, we hoped that the Dallas Charter would put an end to it. Now it seems clear that, as the newly appointed bishop noted, no matter what we do, we are on a long, ugly road.

“SPEAK CLEARLY”

During an Oct. 13 meeting with seminarians from Italy, Pope Francis told the group that if they see or suspect abuse by a priest or bishop, they must report it immediately. “On this point, speak clearly,” he said. “If you see something like [abuse], [go] immediately to the bishop.

The upshot certainly will include a falling away of some American Catholics, especially those currently on the fence. Their alienation cries out for our persistent solicitude for them. Others will stop supporting the Church. “Some American Catholics, especially those currently on the fence. Their alienation cries out for our persistent solicitude for them. Others will stop supporting the Church.”

PARANOID VS. PRUDENCE

In the wake of this new trauma, we priests have a variety of emotions, all coexisting in an internal jumble. Parish priests are on the front lines and are directly taking in the anger of the people week after week. For them, this can feel devastating. They themselves are angry, alternatively, at the bishops, the media, the Vatican, the child molesters and/or the offices of the attorneys general. Some have told me they feel betrayed — strong language. Just about every priest feels shamed in some way.

We are bracing ourselves for another round of people assuming there is something wrong with us just because we are priests. When we thought the crisis was done with in 2002. Others are just plain tired: “Are we going to go through this again?” A few priests are getting their teeth and doubling down on their commitment to the ministry; they will not be cowed by the onslaught.

A common feeling among priests is the desire to hide, and they do so in many different ways. One way of hiding is not wearing clerical garb or doing your best to be seen as ordinary people. I see something like this. I can imagine the cross with Jesus hanging on it, and under it the caption, “I didn’t deserve this.”

“Another thing I learned from St. Therese was how important it is to balance such paranoia with the facts: False accusations are still rare. Priests should try to relax and simply be prudent in our ministry, following the child-safe guidelines of the diocese and maintain proper boundaries. But to avoid children altogether is an overreaction and would be a tragedy for them and for the future of the Church.

And we should wear our clerics in public! The people need to see their priests today more than ever.

OUR CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRISIS

One danger of the present moment is the increasingly mentioned distinction between “good priests” and “bad priests.” Some have looked at me and said, “Thank God you are a good priest.” These exclamations, while well-intentioned, should make us all feel uncomfortable. Where in the Gospel does it make such distinctions? I thought we were all sinners. I am reminded of the response of Jesus when someone called him good: “Why do you call me good? No one is good but God alone” (Mt 10:18).

We may find ourselves tempted to lapse into self-pity. But I am reminded of my many years of ministering to priests in difficulty. More than a few fell into moments of self-pity and then justified subsequent bad behavior. Pity parties are dangerous. Or, when reflecting on all the shame and pain of today, a little voice can whisper in our ears, “You don’t deserve this.” I can imagine the cross with Jesus hanging on it, and under it the caption, “I didn’t deserve this.”

The prayer of the Pharisee should haunt us: “O God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of humanity — greedy, dishonest, adulterous — or even like this tax collector” (Lk 18:11). It was an ugly prayer full of pride and self-deceit. The spirit of the Pharisee is behind so much of the public rhetoric today.

TO BE CONCLUDED IN THE NEXT ISSUE

A Chinese teens conversion story

Christianity. It is shocking and we are believing it,” Yuan said with a smile. “A Chinese religious sister from Hebei, China, also participated in the synod as an auditor.

Sister Teresa Cheng said that it is difficult for young people in China to “maintain a solid faith” because Catholic Christians are such a small percentage of the Chinese population.

“In universities, young Catholics are afraid of revealing themselves as such, for fear of being considered ‘strange’ or a minority,” Sister Cheng told AsiaNews.

Because of this, Sister Cheng fears that faith in China is “in danger of fading.”

“Certainly there are also young people interested in the Christian life, who on their own initiative come to ask to know the Church better, attend the catechumenate and activities in the parishes,” she added.

Yuan, a Chinese student full of such initiative, is currently pursuing a PhD in theology at Notre Dame University.

Her love of theology was born by reading religious writings through which she entered into “the living tradition of the Church.” Yuan found the “heroic battle of charity and self-sacrifice” in St. Therese of Lisieux’s autobiography to be a particular inspiration.

Another thing I learned from St. Therese is the importance of praying for priests. I am blessed to have encountered some very holy priests in my life, who correct my faults and guide me through spiritual desolation, and always keep me in their prayers,” Yuan said at the youth symposium.

“Since it is hard to overstate how much a priest can do for a soul, I believe that all faithful should try their best to support their priests,” she continued.

“I saw the Church as a home from the very beginning and I am thankful for all of the grace I have received through her,” Yuan said.

“Many things I have seen in the Church has also changed my relationships with people. I learned that all people are created by God in His image and therefore deserve my love,” Yuan said.

“Have to admit that sometimes I find it difficult to love some people, like to find Christ in them,” she continued.

“However, God puts His own love in me and that love drives me to approach those people, and actually I end up being friends with many of them.”

Yuan said. “It is really a transcendent experience to be driven by love that goes beyond your understanding.”

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Inundar el mundo de alegría

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 término hoy nuestro tiempo de Navidad con la fiesta del Bautismo del Señor. Reflexionamos sobre el extraordinario don del Niño Jesús, nuestro Salvador. En las misas de la solemidad de Santa María, Madre de Dios, usé uno de mis himnos favoritos como parte de la homilía: “You’re Here” (Tú estás aquí), de la cantante y compositora cristiana Francesca Battistelli. Este conmovedor himno es desde la perspectiva de María, acunando a su Hijo Recién Nacido. El primer verso:

Espera un momento, tengo que respirar hondo.

No sé qué decir cuando te miro a los ojos.

Hiciste el mundo antes de que yo naciera,

Y aquí te tengo en mis brazos esta noche.

Noel, Noel, Jesús nuestro Emmanuel.

Los dos primeros versos, me imagino que todas las madres lo piensan y sienten. El tercer verso es el asombroso don de la Encarnación, “Dios se hizo hombre”. El segundo verso termina con:

+ Msgr. John, Obispo

Conoce el origen de los pesebres y villancicos de Navidad

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os villancicos y pesebres son costumbres que contribuyen a crear ambientes festivos en las familias, calles y ciudades y profundizar en el verdadero sentido de la Navidad.

A continuación, conozca cuándo y para qué fueron creadas estas tradiciones que permanecen a través de los años.

ORIGEN DE LOS VILLANCICOS

Los villancicos se remontan al siglo XV y fueron creados con el objetivo de llevar la Buena Nueva a los aldeanos y campesinos que no sabían leer.

Primero fueron llamados ‘villanus’ palabra derivada de ‘aldeano’, nombre que con el tiempo cambió a ‘villancicos’.

Estos cantos populares hablaban sobre el misterio de la Encarnación con inspiración en la teología y lirurgia de Navidad y se caracterizan por el tono sensible e ingenuo de sus letras y de sus melodías que hacen referencia a los sentimientos de la Virgen y de los pastores ante la decisión de Dios de hacerse hombre. Cantar villancicos es un modo de demostrar la alegría y gratitud a Jesús. Escucharlos ayuda a la preparación del corazón para el acontecimiento de la Navidad.

ORIGEN DE LOS PESEBRES

Tiempo después, en el siglo XIII, San Francisco de Asís y sus discípulos propagaron la práctica de los “beleños” en templos y casas.

De esta forma, para la Navidad de 1223 el santo realizó una representación viviente del Nacimiento de Jesús. Para ello preparó un establo e invitó a las personas del pueblo a hacer una representación real con pesebre y animales de verdad.

A esta actividad le llamó ‘crèche’, que significa ‘cuna’ en francés, y fue vista por hombres, mujeres y niños que se acercaron a ver la bellísima obra con sus antorchas encendidas. La unión gustó muchísimo y se empezaron a hacer representaciones en toda Italia. En los siglos XIV y XV, en Nápoles, se hicieron las primeras figuras que representaban el nacimiento del Niño Dios. Posteriormente, con la llegada a América de los primeros misioneros, estas tradiciones se extendieron más.

Los pesebres vivientes o materiales invitan a reflexionar sobre la pobreza de la Sagrada Familia que nos llama a imitarle en auténtica sencillez evangélica, renunciando a los apegos materiales.

En las casas cristianas se sigue esculpiendo un rincón especial para ubicar el pesebre dejando un espacio entre José y María para poner al Niño Dios el 25 de diciembre, generalmente a las 00:00 horas.
La migra (ICE) detiene a un hombre de Dodge City por tres días en un caso de identidad equivocada

Aún, el padre de tres está agradecido por la oportunidad de vivir en los Estados Unidos

Por DAVE MIYERS Southwest Kansas Catholic

Nota del Editor: Documentación de Alberto está en proceso y no tiene miedo de deportación. Mientras Alberto permitió al SKC usar su nombre de pila y apellidos, debido a que tiene corte de inmigración pendiente y cualquier acción posible acerca de su alegado arresto falso, el SKC ha decidido usar solamente su nombre de pila.

Era una mañana de diciembre. Un cielo azul profundo hizo el frío picar peor un poco más tolerable. Como hacía cada mañana, un residente de Dodge City señaló adiós a sus tres niños pequeños mientras abordaban el autobus a la escuela.

Mientras el autobus se fue fuera de la vista, dos individuos, un hombre y una mujer, ambos con las letras “ICE” grabadas en sus chaquetas, se acercaron al hombre. Brevemente lo cuestionaron. El suplicaba con los agentes de la migra (Immigration and Customs Enforcement Agents). El no había cometido ningún delito. El no tenía antecedentes penales.

El no era el hombre que buscaban. Solo lo sirvieron acompañado a su casa donde tenía el pasaporte para probarlo.

“Los agentes de ICE no hablaban español,” dijo el hombre a Southwest Kansas Catholic, y Alberto, el hombre que cuestionaban aquella mañana, hablaba muy poco inglés. No le permitieron ir a su casa, él dijo. Le quitaron su celular. Sin poder informar a su esposa, el padre de tres se encontró rumbo a Chase County, noroeste de Wichita, en esa mañana fría de diciembre.

De diciembre, su futuro inmediato en una losa de cemento (su cama) bajo condado Chase hace un año, pensó en el misterio espantoso. Esto hace 12 años. En esos 12 años, Alberto y sus esposas han creado una familia en Kansas — dos niños y una niña — la pareja tienen trabajo, sus niños y niña felizmente asisten a la escuela y han pagado por una casa. Apenas tiene 33 años y está realizando su verdadero sueño americano.

Mientras Alberto estaba acostado en una losa de cemento (su cama) bajo una manta delgada en la Carcel de Condado Chase hace un año, pensó en su vida en los Estados Unidos.

“Es muy activo en su iglesia,” ofreció la Hermana Angela mientras escuchaba a Alberto contar su historia. “Es un lector en la Misa, y de 3-6 p.m. cada domingo, atiende la reunión con los guatemaltecos de la comunidad para la oración, reflexión, Rosario, cantos y convivio.”

A llegar a la Cárcel del Condado Chase, Alberto recibió su celular; llamó a su esposa, le llevó de tristeza y alivio después de tener noticias de su esposo desaparecido.

Por tres días Alberto fue detenido en la cárcel, una víctima de identidad equivocada. Era alguien más que a quien buscaban, posiblemente al dueño anterior de la casa donde Alberto vive, dijo la Hermana Erevia.


Cuando finalmente se reveló la verdad, que en efecto él no era la persona que buscaban, sin ceremonias dejaron ir.

“No podíamos darnos el lujo ropa, no podíamos darles al gobierno una bola que haciamos de costales,” dijo, con una sonrisa en la memoria. A pesar de sus dificultades, Alberto Finalmente se graduó de la secundaria y siguió sus estudios hasta obtener su bachillero en “Educación Primaria en entorno Bicultural.”

Fue mientras enseñaba español y su idioma natal quiché en Guatemala que conoció a la mujer de sus sueños. Pronto se casaron.

El peso del mundo disminuye y aumenta cuando uno agrega al amor a la mezcla: el corazón de una persona se hace más liviano por el amor, aún amar a otra persona multiplica las inquietudes de salud y seguridad. El conflicto político, la economía deprimida, y lo peor de todo, las pandillas violentas, lo obligaron (como a muchos otros) a hacer la decisión difícil de comenzar una vida nueva en los Estados Unidos.

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A pesar de todo que ha pasado, él está siempre agradecido de vivir en los Estados Unidos. “Me siento muy feliz tener la oportunidad de vivir aquí,” dijo. “Nunca quisiera regresar a Guatemala.”

Su esperanza ahora es un día de nuevo entrar a una sala de clase y compartir lecciones que ha aprendido con una audiencia ansiosa.


La historia de inmigración no termina en la frontera

La historia de Alberto muestra situaciones que afecta a inmigrantes no sólo están pasado en la frontera,” la Hermana Angela Erevia dijo al Southwest Kansas Catholic, “están pasando aquí.

La Hermana Angela Erevia, MCDP, la directora del Ministerio Hispano de la Diócesis Católica de Dodge City, ofrece una voz para una población hispana rápidamente creciente en la diócesis. Ella lo hace construyendo puentes de entendimiento y convivio entre y con toda la gente.

En 2010, la Hermana Angela participó (como lo ha hecho en años pasados) como voluntaria con el Departamento del Censo de los Estados Unidos. Su tarea es animar a la gente, documentados e indocumentados, a registrarse con el censo — que no tengan miedo.

¿Por qué? “La información del censo se guarda secreto por 72 años,” explicó. “Ya que la información es analizada, todos nos convertimos en estadísticos y es lo que es publicado para archivos públicos.

“Después que el censo es calculado, la ciudad recibe fondos federales basados en la población,” dijo la hermana. “Son fondos para educación, cuidado de salud e infraestructura.”


La Escuela Intermedia de Dodge City ha construido puentes de entendimiento entre maestros y maestras al enviar a sus hijos e hijas a la escuela. Algunos de estos niños y niñas son ciudadanos estauindieres.

“Sólo miren nuestras escuelas. La Escuela Internacional de Dodge City ha tenido que expandirse. Dodge City está beneficiando de su presencia.”

Como en el caso de Alberto, inmigrantes no quieren limosnas, solo quieren trabajar.”
Elsie Mae Dreher, 75, of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Haysington, died Dec. 12, 2018. She was born in Monument, Kansas, the daughter of Nicholas and Louise (Befort) Klaus. She worked for Fuller Brush for 36 years retiring in 2003. She was a member of the Altar Society. On July 8, 1960, she married Ernest E “Ernie” Dreher; he preceded her in death on April 16, 2018. Survivors include children, Lee Allan Dreher, Michelle Morales, and Kimberly Dreher; 10 grandchildren; and four great-grandchildren. Father Anselm Eke presided.

Ronald John (Radar) Beckerman, 65, of St. Anthony Parish, Fowler, died Dec. 14, 2018. He was born in Fowler to John and Evelyn (Heinz) Beckerman. He attended St. Anthony’s Parochial School. On Aug. 25, 1973, he married Barbara Wenta. In 1985 he began working on his dad’s farm in Fowler, and started the local business Beckerman & Heinz Heating and Cooling with his partner, Doug Heinz. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, served on the Fowler City Council, was a volunteer fireman while in Ulysses, and was a gunfighter for Boot Hill Museum in Dodge City. Survivors include his wife Barbara, his daughters, Roxanne Jones and Nicole Beckerman; a brother, Tim Beckerman; and two sisters, Denise Staiger and Mary Kay Lungwitz.

Kathleen “Kay” Mae (Rajewski) Sandor, 87, of Prince of Peace Parish at St. Rose of Lima Parish, Great Bend, died Dec. 13, 2018. She was born on July 8, 1960, she married Ernest E. Rajewski; 10 grandchildren; and one great-grandchild; and two sisters, Mary Ann Swinson and Jane Enfield. Father Michael Klag presided.

Harold Charles Weikert, 90, of Prince of Peace Parish at St. Rose of Lima, Great Bend, died Dec. 17, 2018. He was born in rural Ellinwood to Frank and Teresa (Heinz) Weikert. He married Rosaline Stegman on July 29, 1958 and they later divorced. He then married Darylene “Dee” B. Burns on Dec. 15, 1967. She died Dec. 19, 1981. Harold was a Private First Class in the Army during the Korean War. He was a gunfighter for Boot Hill Museum in Dodge City. Survivors include daughters, Mary Ann Shorman, DeAnn Boyer, Theresa Leiker, Diane Weikert, Cyndi Whistler, Kathleen Weikert, Karen Merrill, and Margaret Dirks; 13 grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren. Father Ted Stoecklein presided.

James R. Gleason, 96, died Dec. 28, 2018. He was born to Harold Charles and Rosanna (Dauber) Gleason. James was a World War II veteran, having graduated early from Fort Hays State University in enlist in the U.S. Army Air Corp. He served in India and China as an airplane mechanic. On May 23, 1946 he married Rosanna Dauber. They celebrated 72 years of marriage. She survives, along with children Greg Gleason, Janice Scott, Carol Soukup, and Martin Gleason; 13 grandchildren; 23 great-grandchildren; two sisters, Catherine Hattrup and Theresa Aistrup; three sisters-in-law, Darlene Gleason, Lucille Gleason and Carolyn Gleason; and numerous nieces and nephews. Father John Strasser presided.

Kenneth Herbert Bieker, 81, of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Haysington, died Dec. 26, 2018. He was born in Hays to Herbert Leo and Amelia Josephine (Staab) Bieker. After high school graduation, he enlisted in the Navy and traveled the world, earning a rank of Petty Officer First Class E6 (Engineer). He was a aboard the USS Comstock and sailed to such locations as Hawaii, Japan, Hong Kong, China, and the Philippines, and earned his certificate for crossing the equator. He married Linda Louise Connolly on March 3, 1963. She survives, along with...
Pastoral Ministry Formation courses to start soon

For more information on these courses, or to register, go to www.dcdiocese.org/pastoral-ministry-formation, or call Coleen Stein, (620) 227-1538, or email cstein@dcdiocese.org.

THEO 1003 Introduction to New Testament (3 hour course)
Instructor: Father Reggie Urban
This course focuses on the literature, theology and history of the New Testament. Students will explore questions of authorship and critical methods of biblical interpretation from within the perspective of faith. Jesus, the first person in the divine council of disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” provides the theological center of the New Testament studies.

*This course is one of the 3-hour courses needed to obtain the Diocesan Certification in Youth Ministry.

Class Times: Jan. 19, 26, Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23, Mar. 2, 9, 16; Saturday mornings - 8:30 a.m. to 12 noon
Location - Interactive Television Sites throughout Dodge City and Salina Dioceses
Cost: $150.00*; 3 hr. course for enrichment - $75.00*
*Price quotes do not include books.

THEO 4881 The Why and How of Youth Ministry (1 hour course)
Instructor: Genty Heimerman
From Joseph, to Timothy, to Esther (who won a beauty contest, then saved a nation), God engaged young people in big ways to do even bigger things. Approaching Youth Ministry as a spiritual practice enables one to be equipped to go forth celebrating them with people of their parish.

*This course is one of the 1-hour courses needed to obtain the Diocesan Certification in Youth Ministry.

Class Times: Jan. 23, Feb. 20, Mar. 20, Apr. 10; Wednesday evenings - 6 to 9 p.m.
Location - Interactive Television Sites throughout Dodge City and Salina Dioceses
Cost: $50*; 1 hr. course for enrichment - $25.00*

THEO 4881 Navigating Charisms (1 hour)
Coordinating Instructor: Father Robert Schremmer

Sunday, Jan. 13, 2019; Baptism of the Lord
Monday, Jan. 14, 2019
Hebrews 1:1-6/Mark 1:14-20
Tuesday, Jan. 15, 2019
Hebrews 2:5-12/Mark 1:21-28
Wednesday, Jan. 16, 2019
Hebrews 2:14-18/Mark 1:29-39
Thursday, Jan. 17, 2019; Saint Anthony, abbot
Hebrews 3:7-14/Mark 1:40-45
Friday, Jan. 18, 2019
Hebrews 4:1-5, 11/Mark 2:1-12
Saturday, Jan. 19, 2019
Hebrews 4:12-16/Mark 2:13-17
Sunday, Jan. 20, 2019
Monday, Jan. 21, 2019; Saint Agnes, virgin and martyr
Hebrews 5:1-10/Mark 2:18-22
Tuesday, Jan. 22, 2019
Hebrews 6:10-20/Mark 2:23-28
Wednesday, Jan. 23, 2019
Hebrews 7:1-3, 15-17/Mark 3:1-6
Thursday, Jan. 24, 2019; Saint Francis de Sales, bishop and doctor
Hebrews 7:5-8/Mark 7:12
Friday, Jan. 25, 2019; Conversion of Saint Paul, apostle
Acts 22:3-16, or Acts 9:1-22/Mark 16:15-18
Saturday, Jan. 26, 2019; Saints Timothy and Titus, bishops
Sunday, Jan. 27, 2019
Nehemiah 8:2-4, 5-8, 10-11/First Corinthians 12:12-30 or 12:12-14, 27/Luke 1:1-4, 14-21

THEO 4881 RCIA Kansas!
Celebrating the Rites (1 hour course)
Presenter: Father Tim Piasecki
Coordinating Instructor: Father Robert Schremmer
Students will study and experience their RCIA rites; seek better understanding of the focus and goal; be equipped to go forth celebrating them with people of their parish.

*This course is one of the 1-hour courses needed to obtain the Diocesan Certification in Liturgical/Youth Ministry.

Class Times - March 22 and 23
Location - Heartland Center for Spirituality, Great Bend
Cost: $60.00* 1 hr. course for enrichment - $25.00*
*Price quotes do not include books.

THEO 4881 Navigating Charisms (1 hour)
Coordinating Instructor: Father Robert Schremmer

For those taking credit, one needs to have participated in a Called and Gifted Workshop. The Workshop would be beneficial for those not taking it for credit. The Workshop guides one to recognize gifts given by the Holy Spirit through baptism and confirmation. These gifts enable one to accomplish things for God above and beyond your natural abilities.

Topics include steps needed for discernment of spiritual gifts; clues one needs to follow God call; the way charisms can work together uniquely in one’s life; release of control to welcome charisms.

Class Times: Wednesday evening: Jan. 30; 6 to 9 p.m.
Location - Interactive Television Sites.
To enroll in this class for credit, you will need to have participated in a Called and Gifted Workshop (see article above).
Cost: 1 hr. course for college credit - $65.00*; 1 hr. course for enrichment - $25.00*
*Price quotes do not include book.

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Cost: $50*; 1 hr. course for enrichment - $25.00*

*Price quotes do not include books.
Esta Navidad, reflexionemos sobre la alegría de que, como Jesús enseñó, un pesebre. A veces somos pobres: espiritual, humildes y pobres comienzos como un bebé en nuestro Salvador Jesucristo. Recordamos sus paramos para la celebración del cumpleaños de

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For information about suicide prevention, visit SpeakingOfSuicide.com, or, if you are having thoughts of suicide, call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.
The Southwest Kansas Catholic

Diocese accepting Adult Religious Scouting Awards

The Diocese of Dodge City Catholic Committee on Scouting is accepting letters of nomination for adults who have provided exceptional service as an adult leader in Catholic Scouting ministry, or other groups serving youth that have contributed to the spiritual development of Catholic young people. Although these awards are given by the Catholic Church, the recipients do not have to be a member of that faith to be considered.

The deadline for submitting nominations is Jan. 25, 2019. All nominations, except for the St. George Emblem, may be in the form of a letter submitted to the Diocesan Catholic Committee on Scouting, Diocese of Dodge City, P. O. Box 137, Dodge City, KS 67801.

The recognition and presentation of the awards will occur at the conclusion of the Diocese of Dodge City’s Scout QUEST 2019 retreat Feb. 17, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral Church, Dodge City.

The following is a summary of the adult awards that can be awarded by the Diocese of Dodge City.

1. The Saint Elizabeth Ann Seton Award - This award recognizes the meritorious contributions of adults who serve youth through girls’ organizations on a parish or unit level. The applicant must have a minimum of three years active service to youth as an adult to be considered for this award.

2. The Saint Anne Medal - This medal honors the outstanding service of adults contributing to the spiritual development of Catholic members in the Girl Scout movement and to further promote adult leadership in youth ministry. The applicant must have a minimum of seven years active service to youth as an adult member to be considered for this award.

3. The Bronze Pelican - This award recognizes the contributions of adults who serve Boy Scouting organizations on the parish or unit level. The recipient must have demonstrated a good example as a Christian and influenced boys to live a good Christian life.

4. The Saint George Emblem - This award recognizes the contributions of adults who have made a significant contribution to the spiritual development of Catholic youth involved in Cub/Boy Scouting organizations at the diocese level. The Diocese of Dodge City is permitted to present one emblem per year. An application for this emblem is also required.

Scouting QUEST set for Feb. 15-17, Sacred Heart Cathedral

The Catholic Committee on Scouting for the Diocese of Dodge City invites all Catholic Boy and Girl Scouts age 11 and older in southwest Kansas to QUEST 2019 – Feb. 15-17, at the Sacred Heart Cathedral School, 905 Central, Dodge City.

Throughout the three-day camp the Scouts will participate in various workshops relating to the Catholic religious emblems program for their age, take part in fun activities, grow in their faith, hear some awesome speakers and make lifelong friends with other Catholic scouts from across the diocese.

Speakers for QUEST 2019 include Rev. Wesley Schawe, Director of Seminarians, for the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City and Adam Urban, Director of Youth Ministry, also with the diocese. Both presenters will challenge the scouts to think about their vocation in life and how God can be a part of it if they let Him.

The highlight of the weekend will be the Sunday 10 a.m. closing Mass and awards ceremony presided by the Most Rev. John B. Brungardt, Bishop of the Diocese of Dodge City. The closing Mass and awards ceremony will be held at Sacred Heart Cathedral Church adjacent to the school.

A QUEST 2019 brochure and registration form was mailed to all the Girl and Boy Scout troops and venture crews within the Diocese of Dodge City the second week of January. This information is also available on the Diocese website: www.dcdiocese.org/quest and look for QUEST 2019 Registration Form.

For additional information about the QUEST 2019 retreat or the Catholic emblems available to Cub, Boy and Girl Scouts, contact Dave Geist, Committee Chairperson at davegeist.dckks@gmail.com or (620) 430-2123.

THE HOLY LAND

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Pilgrimage includes airfare from the city of your choice, guiding, driver, 4-star hotels, breakfast, dinner, wine, tips, transfers, taxes surcharges, excursions, etc.

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Performance promotions affect Knights Insurance Agency

From Page 6

As General Agent, Reed will be managing eight field agents, covering 113 councils with over 12,000 members.

“I am very excited and a little nervous,” stated Reed. “I feel I have big shoes to fill coming in after George, and though I am not going to change many of the things George did, it will be my agency. This is a new era for the Knights of Columbus, and I am excited to be a part of it. I do have agents covering the Salina and Manhattan areas, but we will need to hire an agent for the current area that I cover as a field agent; southwest Kansas will need one or two more agents, and Salina and Manhattan will need probably two or three more agents. Reed, an agent since 2005, has been in the Supreme Knights Sales Club for 12 years; named Western Kansas Agent of the Year six times, and consistently finishes in the top three percent of the field force throughout America and Canada. He is a veteran, serving in the Marine Corps from 1997-2001 as a tank mechanic and platoon sergeant. He and his wife April have four children Ava, Leah, Jack, and Nolan.

When asked what he enjoys about being a Knights of Columbus Insurance agent, Reed responded: “My father and hero, Marty Reed, passed away in 2004 and he was my guide. I graduated college and was newly married in mid-2005, and was not sure what I wanted to do. Shortly after I met George Spinelli, and everything just clicked. Though life insurance is a different language, I knew I was meant to do this. My time in the Marine Corps taught me to take care of those around me, and through the Knights of Columbus, I am able to continue that vocation. My father’s memory stays with me and impacts my work. Whenever I meet with a widow of a brother knight, I see my mother. And whenever I meet with someone who has lost a parent, I see myself, and I am better equipped to help, because I have experienced that same loss. I like to say that I went from one fraternity in the Marine Corps to another in the Knights of Columbus. They are very different, they both teach us to take care of our fellow man. and it’s an incredible honor for me to be a part of both. The Knights of Columbus has made me a better Catholic, a better husband and father, and a better man.”

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-- Darin Reed