Love has conquered death!

Light has dispelled the darkness!

Do not be afraid;
HE HAS BEEN RAISED

In these difficult times, remember that the Light of Christ is constantly shining upon us, easing our burden, lifting our spirits, and healing our troubled souls.

This Kansas cross (at right) highlights Christ’s eternal presence among both the people of the High Plains of Kansas, and our sisters and brothers across the globe.

The angels at the bottom celebrate God’s gift of eternal life through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ at Easter.

¡El amor ha triunfado sobre el odio, la vida ha vencido a la muerte, la luz ha disipado la oscuridad!

Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were grieving the death of their Teacher. They were shocked by the events at the tomb, and afraid when the angel appeared to them. These emotions turned to joy when the angel said that they would see Jesus. As they returned to tell the disciples of this Resurrection reality, they met Jesus, fell to the ground, and worshipped Him.

We grieve the deaths and suffering, and are shocked and afraid during this terrible tragedy of Covid-19. What does the future hold? When will this situation abate? How are we to cope? As the women in the Gospel did, we seek the Lord, we follow the teachings of God, we worship Jesus our Risen Savior. This will give us peace and joy in the midst of this health emergency.

We reach out to others in compassion, as Jesus did: “See how He loved him” (John 11:36). Here are some ideas to Reach Out to Others in this time of crisis:

• Call or e-mail (or socially network with) your parents and grandparents, relatives, and any who may feel isolated, living alone, or who may be susceptible to the coronavirus, to provide a kind word, to see what help they need, or to provide your love and support in these challenging days.
• Offer to get groceries or other necessities for those who cannot go out.
• Check on those who live alone to see if they need anything (call ahead).
• Pray to our Loving God.
• Have compassion for those most at risk and advocate for vulnerable populations in society (the elderly, those in poverty, homeless persons, disabled persons, those already sick or hospitalized, those with compromised immune systems, those who do not have Internet, among others).

Let us rejoice that the Lord is Risen. A blessed and joyful Easter to you!

¡Él ha resucitado!

Estas palabras del pasaje de la Resurrección en Mateo (28, 1-10) me dan un gran consuelo durante esta pandemia de coronavirus.

Continúa en la página 17
The SKC online

Due to the coronavirus pandemic, the SKC has printed an 8-page, limited run issue to provide a continued presence in local churches. Please help spread the word to family and friends that this full-length, full color issue of the Southwest Kansas Catholic is available online at www.dcdiocese.org/swkcatholic.

On the cover

The cross on the cover was painted by SKC editor Dave Myers on plywood. It measures 3.5 feet tall. It represents Christ’s love for, and presence in, our Kansas community and the world. The painting includes an homage to his parents, painted at the bottom to illustrate God’s gift of eternal life through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Shades of Glory

Ireland’s native son, Father Dermot Tighe, dies on St. Patrick’s Day

Editor’s Note: The SKC learned of Father Tighe’s death just prior to the last issue going to press. That issue included an interview with the priest first published in 2014. Here is Father Tighe’s obituary.

Father Dermot Francis Tighe, 89, passed away on St. Patrick’s Day, March 17, 2020, at Via Christi St. Francis in Wichita. He was born August 4, 1930, to James Tighe and Sarah (McCormack) Tighe in Strokestown, Ireland, county of Roscommon. He was the youngest of 10 children.

Father Tighe attended elementary school at St. Mary’s Strokestown and Cloonfreee. At age 11 he won an academic scholarship to attend the Diocesan high school at Summerhill College in Sligo, Ireland. Following high school, he attended the seminary at St. Patrick’s College in Carlow, Ireland. He was very involved in athletics during his 11 years, particularly the Irish game of hurling.

Father Tighe heard his calling to the priesthood, and at the age 24, took his vows and was ordained on June 24, 1954, at the Cathedral of the Assumption, Carlow, Ireland, by the Most Rev. Thomas Keogh, bishop of the Diocese of Kildare and Leighlin. Father Tighe was recruited to Kansas by Monsignor John Cody, who was originally from Kilkenny, Ireland, and had great success recruiting Irish priests to Kansas. In Kansas, Father Tighe was assigned to parishes throughout the Dodge City diocese. He served as an assistant pastor at St. Joseph’s, Liebfrauen (1954-57), and Sacred Heart Cathedral, Dodge City (1957-59). His early pastorates were St. Lawrence, Jetmore, with St. Anthony, Hanston (1959-61), and St. Francis Xavier, Seward, (1961-65). He served as chaplain at Central Kansas Medical Center in Great Bend from 1965 to 1967.

Father Tighe, as a United States citizen in 1959, the first week he was eligible. In 1967, as the Vietnam war escalated, he volunteered to serve in the Army, serving as an army chaplain from 1967 to 1976, including a year in Vietnam. His first assignment was Fort Hood, Texas, and on August 22, 1968, he left for Southeast Asia. There he served on the front line, ministered to the infantrymen, and gave last rites to dying soldiers in the field. Following Vietnam, Father Tighe decided to stay in the Army, and was stationed in Ft. McClellan, Alabama, Ft. Richardson, Alaska, and Ft. Eustis, Virginia. He also served with the National Guard in Washington DC, Dodge City and Hutchinson. He retired as a Bird of Colonel, one rank below a Brigadier General in 1990.

During his service to the diocese, Father Tighe held a number of diocesan posts, including Director of Religious Vocations, Director of Hospitals, and a member of the Seminary Board and Priest’s Trust Fund Board. Father Tighe also worked in the Tribunal office where he served as Judicial Vicar. His later pastorates included St. Andrew, Wright (1977-84); St. Stanislaus, Ingalls (1985-91), and St. Patrick, Great Bend (1991-97). He was senior priest in residence at St. Patrick, Great Bend, until his retirement on Jan. 31, 1998. Following his retirement, Father Tighe remained where he considered home, Great Bend, and was warmly embraced by the faith community. He had a prominent presence at St. Patrick Church and Lake Barton Golf course, where he played regularly. Most recently he lived at the Catholic Care Center in Bel Aire, north of Wichita, where he made many new friends.

He has 33 living nieces and nephews. He is preceded in death by his parents, James and Sarah, and siblings, James, Bride, Mary, Tom, Annie, Alice, Brendan, John and Michael.

A private Mass was held and a public Memorial Mass will be held at a later date due to Mass restrictions and limitations set forth by the Catholic Diocese, due to the current virus pandemic. Throughout his life, Father Tighe showed an unwavering devotion to the causes of the poor and the unborn. He donated his home in Great Bend to Birthright and was charitable to many other causes that were faithful to the book of Matthew that the last shall be first. Memorials are suggested to the Birthright, Holy Family School Endowment Fund or Prince of Peace Parish, in care of Bryant Funeral Home.

If you have severe anxiety...

• In this time of isolation and fear, it’s normal to experience anxiety and worry. If you, or someone you care about, are feeling overwhelmed with emotions like sadness, depression, or anxiety, contact the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-9900 or text TalkWithUs to 66746. (TTY 1-800-846-8517).

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

• If these fears have led to a reoccurrence of opioid, drug or alcohol abuse, visit https://ckcaddictiontreatment.org/, or (call) 785 825-6224.

Help for farmers

• Kansas Rural Family Helpline, toll free, 866-327-6578: Provides confidential, short-term counseling, 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, 800-321-3376: Helps farmers, agricultural lenders and USDA agencies resolve disputes in a confidential and non-adversarial setting.

• 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.

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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.

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Protecting God’s Children

If you suspect abuse

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 a child is being abused or neglected, make a confidential report to Kansas Department for Children and Families Protection Report Center, 800-922-5330 or to the KBI Hotline, 800-KSCRIME (800-572-7463), or by emailing ClergyAbuse@kbi.ks.gov.

If you suspect sexual abuse by Church personnel, in addition to making a report to the proper civil authorities, contact Charles Befort, the diocesan Review Board representative who receives and follows up on reports. His contact information is cbefort@cox.net, 620-285-3219.

The Review Board is a consultative body of lay Catholics and one priest representative who advise the Bishop in his assessment of allegations of sexual abuse, review diocesan policies for dealing with sexual abuse of minors and offers advice on all aspects of sexual abuse cases retrospectively and prospectively. The Assistant Minister’s role is to aid in the pastoral care of persons who claim to have been sexually abused as minors by clergy or other church personnel, whether the abuse was recent or occurred many years in the past.

The Southwest Kansas Catholic

April 12, 2020
Belpre couple celebrates 70 years of marriage

Not even WWII could take Ed Scheufler’s mind off that cute city-girl he’d seen in Larned

“We’re really active in our church,” Marge said. “Our little St. Bernard’s community is the center of our lives. I’ve been secretary of Altar Society since before I can remember. Ed is a Eucharistic Minister. He has said that he would give it up when he reached 90, but he enjoys it, so he still does it. He’s the only member of our congregation that consistently wears a suit and tie every Sunday.”

By DAVE MYERS

Southwest Kansas Catholic

It was 1940s Kansas. On Friday and Saturday nights, boys would pile into their cars and cruise Main Street, hoping to meet some girls, and maybe ... just maybe ... get a date.

Groups of girls, walking down the street or cruising in their own Fords or Hudsons or Chevys, might smile shyly or wave, wondering if maybe ... just maybe ... they might meet the man of their dreams.

One of those boys was Ed Scheufler, a farmboy from Belpre, who, on a warm night in the early 40s, saw a particularly pretty young girl walking down the street of Larned. Her name was Marge. Ed knew he was smitten.

Enter World War II.

With thoughts of that pretty Larned girl occupying his mind, the U.S. Army sent Ed overseas.

“I served in Japan in the occupation army in ’46 and ’47,” Ed said. “Our camp was in Yokohama. I saw all the destruction over there. We did a fine job cleaning up their country, but it took a lot of time.”

A few years later, Ed came home, and not long after that, while at a dance, he met up with that same girl he’d seen walking down the sidewalk.

“I went over to ask her to dance,” Ed said. “She was a good dancer. She had to be to be able to follow me! I didn’t really know what I was doing. We grew up dancing and we knew different dances, and I enjoyed every bit of it.”

“I was 18 and he was 22,” Marge added. “He’s really a good dancer! I was impressed.”

Having thoughts of Marge in his mind all those months while housed in the post destruction environment of war-torn Japan, Ed wasn’t going to wait long to propose once he got home. Only four months after that first encounter at the dance, the two were married.

“We’ve told our children, ‘Don’t do what we did; do what we tell you,,’” Marge said with a chuckle. “We went together for four months and got married! We knew what we knew as soon as we met. We knew that would be it.”

The two had five children: Mark, Donna Ruble, Brenda Gross, Greta Lakin, and Lisa Ney, along with 13 grandchildren and 20 great-grandchildren.

“That’s at the last count,” Marge said. “We never know from day to day if we’re going to have another one!”

In 1983, Marge became the first woman to serve as an Edwards County Commissioner. Although she said she had a great deal of support, it was also a time when blatant acts of sexism didn’t set off alarm bells. It wasn’t always easy, yet she persevered in the position for 12 years.

The two still live on the land they’ve farmed since they were married, located just three miles from the farm on which Ed was reared near Belpre.

“We were grain and cattle people,” Ed said. “I was running about 250 head of Black Angus cattle. I grew a lot of alfalfa, corn, beans, and wheat.”

They retired in 1999 and now lease their land to a neighbor.

At 88 and 92 respectively, Marge and Ed are still active. Marge can’t quite see well enough to drive, so Ed does the driving. In fact, when the SKC called, the pair had recently returned from picking up pre-ordered groceries from a Dillon’s store in Great Bend.

“We’re really active in our church,” Marge said. “Our little St. Bernard’s community is the center of our lives. I’ve been secretary of the Altar Society since before I can remember. Ed is a Eucharistic Minister. He has said that he would give it up when he reached 90, but he enjoys it, so he still does it. He’s the only member of our congregation who consistently wears a suit and tie every Sunday.”

That strong connection to their faith community is one secret to their happy marriage. Another?

“Part of it is that Ed is a man of few words, and I talk all the time,” Marge said, laughing. “We have been so privileged to farm—and be on the farm—all these years. We’re used to doing everything together and making decisions together. We did that raising our children. There was never a time when we really disagreed on what to do with discipline.”

When their grandson asked Marge for advice on marriage, she told him, “You can fight all you want to, but at the end of the day you kiss and make up. That’s really, really old advice, but it’s very true. I also told him to always sleep in a double bed, not in a king-sized bed. You can’t be mad at each other in a double bed; it’s too small!”

Ed and Marge Scheufler recently celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary. The Belpre couple still live on their family farm and are very active in St. Bernard Parish.
Life in the Twilight Zone

On Tuesday, March 16, the Catholic Chancery in Dodge City closed its doors for what was, at the time, to be two weeks. Ironically, this wasn’t due to the coronavirus, but to a bad tuna-loaf. (The bishop said that if I ever cooked something and it turned out to be only half eaten, I would be fired and possibly excommunicated.)

But seeing as the coronavirus was running rampant, the tuna-loaf incident was well-timed. (By the way, if you’re wondering where all the toilet paper in the world went, think “trusted staff” and “bad tuna-loaf.”)

Closing the office due to a virus was so weird, like being in an old Sci-fi movie. All we needed were gigantic ants to come crawling over the plains—or a wealth of other nuclear-giganto things that terrorized movie-goers in the 1950s: giant leaches, gila monsters, a 50-foot woman; you name it.

As they closed the doors to the office, I realized that this was, of course, the apocalypse, and so I’d better stock up on chicken noodle soup. I quickly drove to the store feeling all Twilight Zoned.

I go through milk like a 200-pound infant, so I headed first for the milk isle. For 10 minutes I stared at the empty milk shelves, willing a carton of milk to appear. The shelves paid me no head, and milk was not forthcoming. Fortunately, the store had plenty of M&Ms and potato chips, and apart from soup, I figured that’s all we really needed for the apocalypse.

I got home, hugged my fed, fed the cats and ate an M&M. Two hours later my skin was on fire. I was teetering on the edge of panic! I hadn’t been to China! I hadn’t eaten a bat... recently! How could I have the virus? And I had the chills. I had no appetite. All I wanted was to do was melt into my bed. I was in the worst place where everything normal seems abnormal, even when your favorite TV show is designed to make you realize how sick you feel. There was no joy in Bikini Bottom.

The worst pain I felt, though, came from the thought that my wife, who has diabetes, would catch whatever-it was from me. She had a higher risk factor for a horrible outcome. This trajectory worried me for the weeks to follow.

The next day, my doctor told me “yes, you have a virus,” but “not the bad one!” He said in no uncertain terms that it was NOT the coronavirus. And as far as my wife Charlene catches a cold, “No smooshing!!” he said.

And the same goes for the cats. I’m not quite sure how he knew I didn’t have the bad virus, since he couldn’t test for it. And the fact that he ran out of the room like a gazelle after speaking to me for two minutes didn’t give me a lot of confidence.

For the next week, I volleyed between fever and fear, anxiety and headaches. I downed a bottle of antibiotics I’d had since 2018. I took a prescription cough medicine that really did expire in 2003. I’m not sure it helped my cough, but Sponge Bob was suddenly far more entertaining.

Today is Saturday, April 4, almost three weeks since I first felt ill. I’m feeling much better. From the descriptions I’ve heard of coronavirus, I finally believe what the doc said. It wasn’t the bad bug. And my wife is okay, praise God. I called all the people I had contact with just prior to becoming ill, and they’re all fine, too. Except for those who ate the tuna-loaf.

I’ve learned several things over the last few weeks. First, it’s true that an apple a day keeps the doctor away. My wife and I had an apple every day, and came the day that I panicked and called the Emergency Room, they told me to stay away. Man, those apples really saved our lives.

When scavenging through the house looking for extra toilet paper, I learned that, instead of toilet paper, the world ever faces a dire shortage of knick-knacks, glassware, old books, old mail, old magazines, old rugs, old clothes, old Christmas decorations, or Pee Wee Herman collectibles, my wife and I could keep all of Speareville stocked up for a month.

I learned the value of comfort food. I wasn’t kidding when I said I bought potato chips and a big bag of M&Ms. I bit of comfort food in discomfiting times is very... um... comforting. And when it’s all over, I’ll find additional comfort in knowing I’m giving my dentist lots and lots of business.

I learned that the greatest thing in the world when you are sick or anxious is a simple text from someone just checking in to see how you are. Because I’ve spent so much time napping, a text has been better than a phone call. I never thought I’d say that. That meant the world when I was so sick and anxiety-ridden.

Watching our local Mass remotely has also been a source of comfort and strength. And I learned to have much more empathy for people who are ill, and for those who are experiencing anxiety. I learned to appreciate friendship and kindness. Christ cleared the path to heaven for each person who is, today, experiencing the Lenten story—who are suffering, those who are dying. His Lenten promise “The best is yet to come.”

What does the immediate future hold for us here on earth? I don’t have a clue. I don’t have to have a clue! I’m not in charge. God is. And despite the pain, the fear, the anxiety, He’s been holding me and my wife—and you—in His loving embrace throughout this entire experience. And He will never, ever let go.

‘Every man for himself!’

By JUNNO AROCHO ESTEVESE

As the world feels the economic pinch due to the coronavirus pandemic, Pope Francis urged business leaders to seek solutions that will not hurt employees and their families.

“Each (country) must find concrete solutions depending on their situation, but of course, ‘every man for himself,’ is not a solution,” the Pope said in an interview via Skype that aired in Spain on March 22. “A business that lays off employees to save itself is not a solution. In this moment, instead of laying off, we must welcome and make everyone feel that there is a society of solidarity.”

When told by Spanish journalist Jordi Evole that business leaders could argue that he may not be knowledgeable of business management and the struggles of maintaining a business with staggering production losses, the Pope said they were right in their assertion.

But, he continued: “I do know the hardships that will face the employee, the workers and their families. And there are certain realities appearing, and we are being asked to take care of those realities.”

Commenting on the images of him blessing an empty St. Peter’s Square at the end of his Sunday Angelus address, Pope Francis said that the square has become “a desert.”

Although he does not meet with groups, the Pope said he still holds personal meetings “every hour or every half-hour, and I continue to work normally.”

He was also asked if he was an “optimist” when it came to how the world would be after the current crisis is over.

“I don’t like that word because optimism sounds to me like makeup,” something false and superficial, he said. “I have hope in humanity, in men and women, and I have hope in the people. I have a lot of hope (in) the people who will take lessons from this crisis to rethink their lives. We are going to come out better, although there will be fewer of us, of course. Many will remain on the path and it is hard. But I have faith we will come out of this better.”

When asked what he would tell men, women and families who live in fear due to the pandemic, the Pope said that “the last thing I would do is tell them something.”

“What I try to do is make them feel that I am close to them. Today, the language of gestures is more important than words. Of course, something should be said, but it is the gesture of sending them a greeting that is most important, he said.

The current pandemic, Pope Francis added, has also revealed the plight of the less fortunate, which is a tragedy “that is concealed from societies.”

“A couple of days ago, a police officer — with good intentions — told a man, ‘Sir, please go home, you can’t be out here in the street.’ And this man told him, ‘I don’t have a home, I live on the street,’” the Pope recalled.

“We must start to be close to those people who we only know as a concept: the homeless, those who are taken advantage, the sad world of exploited women which is all a business. And this brings us close to those people who, in a way, have very little hope because they don’t have anywhere to lean on. It’s very sad but at the same time, we start to realize that these people exist,” he said.
Priests without People

BY FATHER PAUL D. SCALIA

The priest came in ... and took out the altar stone and put it in his bag; then he burned the wads of wool with the holy oil on them and threw the ash outside; he emptied the holy water stoup and blew out the lamp in the sanctuary and left the tabernacle open and empty, as though from now on it was always to be Good Friday.

On the first day of no public Masses in our diocese, I was reminded of this scene from Evelyn Waugh’s novel Brideshead Revisited, when the priest came to close up the Marchmain family’s chapel. That last line in particular rang in my mind: as though from now on it was always to be Good Friday.

Granted, the analogy is not perfect. Our situation is not exactly like Good Friday. The Mass is still being offered (albeit privately), our Eucharistic Lord is still present, and our churches are still open for people to come and pray. Still, although necessary, the suspension of public Mass does create a sorrow not unlike Good Friday’s. It is like being exiled from a loved one; you know where He is, but you cannot be with Him.

Here is another painful exile: that of the priest from his people. The faithful throughout the world suffer the pain of life without the Mass. Priests suffer the pain of life without their people. Those men have given their lives for Christ’s flock. Now they struggle to understand their lives apart from that flock. Tend the flock of God in your midst, Saint Peter exhorts the Church’s pastors. (Spt 5:2) But what to do when the flock is no longer in your midst ... and not allowed to be?

The whole situation sets in stark relief this truth about us parish priests: we are ordained proper homines—to serve the people of God. Our lives don’t make sense without a people to serve or a flock to tend. When asked what he thought about the laity, Saint John Henry Cardinal Newman famously observed that “the Church would look foolish without them.” As it turns out, it is we priests who look most foolish in that scenario.

We are painfully aware of what happens when a priest loses the supernatural outlook and sense of the sacred. He becomes not just useless but dangerous. A priest must be oriented toward and attentive to the divine first of all. But now we see the other part of the equation more clearly. The priest maintains an orientation toward and focus on the divine not for himself but for others. For every high priest chosen from among men is appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. (Heb 5:1) Without the presence of those for whom he acts, a priest can lose sight of his purpose.

The suspension of public Mass, like any cross we endure, can and should become an occasion for spiritual growth. We need to draw what good we can from this suffering. What might this mean for a priest?

Well, for starters, the absence of a congregation can remind priests that at Mass we stand before the Lord on behalf of our people. Of course, they are not there. But we are there in their place and on their behalf. This highlights the difference between a prayer-leader and a priest. The former simply coordinates and guides a communal action. All he needs is delegation, not divine sanction.

But a priest is appointed to act on behalf of people in relation to God. He stands before the Almighty as the embodiment of the prayers and sacrifices of his people—whether they are there or not. Their absence should increase our appreciation of this truth.

Another bright light is the evangelical generosity and ingenuity of so many flockless priests. During the bombing of England in World War II, Monsignor Ronald Knox retired to Mells to work on scripture translations. He suddenly found himself chaplain to a girls’ school that had been evacuated from London to that sleepy town. Not the best scenario for the bookish Knox. Not what he would have looked for. But his response was generous, innovative, and lasting. From that ad hoc chaplaincy come two of his best works: The Creed in Slow Motion and The Mass in Slow Motion.

So also, many priests apart from their congregations are making the most of things. The situation is sad, and not what they would have chosen. But they are not giving up. They are finding how to evangelize in other, unexpected ways. The Internet makes possible creative solutions, and many have found opportunities there to reach the flock no longer in their midst.

Further, this whole situation reveals the true nature of priestly ministry—that it is really a matter of spiritual fatherhood, of a father being present to his people. The inability to be present in that way painfully highlights the need to be.

This also reveals that all our technology, which we tend to see as the evangelical solution, is insufficient, just a stopgap. It is a fascinating paradox that in this situation we both rely more on our technology and more deeply know its limits. As useful as it is (email, live-streaming, posted videos, etc.), it cannot actually put us in touch with one another. It only tides us over until authentic human communication—unmediated, face-to-face, person-to-person—can be recovered.

There is no substitute for the shepherd’s presence among his people. And a priest’s heart cannot be content with a virtual connection. It longs for the real.

One last rose drawn from these thorns: an increased appreciation for our people’s devotion. The lack of a public Mass on Sunday will greatly impact the lives of all Catholics, whether they realize it or not. But many do realize it. They long for the Mass, they still come to the church to pray, and they desire to receive all that a priest desires to give. To see their pain and longing should encourage us to be worthy of them.

Ours is an unexpected advent in the midst of Lent. We are waiting—and thus preparing—for when the priest of Christ can again be with his people.

Spiritual Communion Prayer

This is the prayer used during the Liturgy of the Eucharist for all those celebrating Mass remotely and who are unable to receive the Eucharist.

My Jesus, I believe that you are present in the Most Holy Sacrament.

I love you above all things, and I desire to receive you in my soul.

Since I cannot at this moment receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.

I embrace you as if you were already there.

And I unite myself wholly to you.

Never permit me to be separated from you.

Amen.

-- St. Alphonsus Liguori

Reprinted from wantedinmilan.com
With the assistance of modern technology, Catholic Charities of SW Kansas offers a helping hand to those most affected by the pandemic

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

Catholic Charities of Southwest Kansas hasn’t let the coronavirus pandemic slow down their efforts to aid those most in need. Just the opposite, in fact. People have lost jobs. They can’t pay their rent and utilities. They need household necessities. Some haven’t filled their taxes and need assistance in doing so to receive their stimulus check. And for those who were facing difficulties before the pandemic–drug abuse, marriage difficulties, immigration and refugee resettlement issues, homelessness–their problems haven’t gone away. They still need help. They still need guidance.

“If their resources are closed down, where do they go?” said Rebecca Ford, Director of Marketing and Fundraising for Catholic Charities of Southwest Kansas. “In our staff meetings, that’s a constant refrain: ‘Who is looking after folks who have no place to go?’”

One of Catholic Charities’ first efforts was to start a “pandemic relief fund” to raise money to help those most affected. The fund provides “immediate service, relief fund” to raise money to fund provides “immediate service, relief fund” to raise money to efforts was to start a “pandemic relief fund” to raise money to efforts was to start a “pandemic relief fund” to raise money to efforts was to start a “pandemic relief fund” to raise money to efforts was to start a “pandemic relief fund” to raise money to.

Ford said. “We can help them think of things they should to be considering. We’re still trying to fund-raise because we know that more needs are going to come.”

At this point, she said, “we’re helping those needing assistance with paper work: applying for small business loans, and to file tax returns so they can receive their stimulus help.”

In the mean-time, a Catholic Charities volunteer is handing delivering items from the Great Bend office’s non-food pantry to the doors of those in need, setting the bags by the door, ringing the bell, and walking back to her car. And there are the routines, those everyday needs that were met by the staff long before the pandemic, and will continue to meet long after it is over. Clients are being assisted who have financial difficulties—not just to apply for financial help, but to create goals and spending plans. Others case workers are helping to get refugees resettled.

Despite the additional challenges, Catholic Charities continues to serve all whose needs have not changed with the advent of the pandemic. “It has been an interesting experience, us all working from home in disaster response while being in the disaster,” Ford said of she and her coworkers. “It’s amazing how we are able to continue our services through technological means.”

Counseling sessions with clients, she said, have been done through “telehealth” or “zoom”—both web meeting programs in which those taking part can communicate face-to-face even while miles apart. The staff of Catholic Charities meets weekly using Google Meet, another video meeting program.

“That’s been helpful,” Ford said. “That may open doors for the future as ways to expand our services to people in rural areas.”

For all inquiries for assistance or otherwise, refer to the list below for the appropriate phone number. If no one answers, please leave a message and someone will return your call as soon as possible.

In Garden City call: 620-272-0010
In Great Bend call: 620-792-1393
In Dodge City . . .
For Debbie Snapp call: 620-227-1588
For Amy Falcon call: 620-227-1590
For Maria Gutierrez call: 620-227-1586
For Kate Schieferecke call: 620-227-1584
For all other inquiries call: 620-227-1562

Prayers of the Faithful in a time of Health Scares

Here are some sample prayers for the faithful from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops:

For those who are suffering in the current outbreak of sickness that they might be healed, and for the happy repose of all who have died from this sickness in recent weeks; let us pray to the Lord.

For scientists, health professionals, public officials, and all who are serving the common good in this difficult and uncertain time, that they will be filled with wisdom and understanding; let us pray to the Lord.

That in times of illness, our merciful and loving Father will strengthen our faith and trust in his goodness and divine providence; let us pray to the Lord.

That our compassionate Father would touch all affected by the current outbreak with healing and peace; let us pray to the Lord.

Would you like to hear the Sunday readings recited prior to Mass? Audio readings from daily and Sunday Masses are available and free to download at http://uscgbible/readings-audio.cfm.

Local Masses live-streamed on Facebook
Bishop Brungardt and other priests around the diocese have been offering Mass online through the diocese and parish Facebook pages. Go to Facebook, and type in Diocese of Dodge City or your individual parish listed below. Once recorded live, all Masses are available for later viewing.

Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe -- Daily Mass 8:30 a.m. | Saturday 5 p.m. English & 7 p.m. Spanish | Sunday 9 a.m. English & Noon Spanish | St. Anthony, Liberal – Daily Mass 7:30 a.m. English & Noon Spanish | Sunday Mass 10 a.m. English & 11 a.m. Spanish

Prince of Peace, Great Bend - Daily Mass 8:30 a.m. | Sunday Mass 9 a.m. English & 10 a.m. Spanish

St. Mary, Garden City - Daily Mass (schedule as normal) | Saturday 4:30 p.m. English & 6 p.m. Spanish, Sunday 11 a.m. English & 1 p.m. Spanish

The following prayer is from Pope Francis:

O Mary, you always shine on our path as a sign of salvation and of hope. We entrust ourselves to you, Health of the Sick, who at the cross took part in Jesus’ pain, keeping your faith firm. You, Salvation of the Roman People, know what we need, and we are sure you will provide so that, as in Cana of Galilee, we may return to joy and to feasting after this time of trial. Help us, Mother of Divine Love, to conform to the will of the Father and to do as we are told by Jesus, who has taken upon himself our sufferings and carried our sorrows to lead us, through the cross, to the joy of the resurrection. Amen.

Audio Mass readings available online
The Southwest Kansas Catholic April 12, 2020  Page 7

By CHARLENE SCOTT MYERS
Special to the Catholic

A
fter my eyes fell upon its miles of long, hauntingly thick, and wild forests of the greenest trees on earth, its wrinkled old folks warming their hands at its wild bonfires that lit up the night sky, its devout people in prayer at the magnificent ancient Orthodox Cathedral in Moscow, how could I possibly ever forget the grand and majestic land of “Great Mother Russia?”

I was privileged to visit Russia several years ago with my esteemed friends Dr. John Jackson and his wife Rebecca of Colorado Springs, who have done so much research on the famous Shroud of Turin that they believe belonged to our beloved savior Jesus Christ.

A grouchy relative of mine who had given me a ride to the airport asked me “Are you a Communist?” before I boarded one of the several airplanes that would whisk me to the faraway land of Russia years ago.

In order to antagonize that grumpy person, I answered sweetly: “Would you like to see my Communist membership card?” (I was a very naughty and haughty young woman!)

The bright and sunny day that we landed in Moscow, we went immediately to visit its magnificent Russian Orthodox Cathedral, marveling at its magnificent stained glass windows and its great beauty!

A long line of pious nuns in matching gowns and veils were face down on the floor of the church’s vestibule, their arms spread out directly in front of their heads. They were praying fervently and paid us no heed whatsoever.

I learned that the Christians of Russia observe a very strict fast for a week before they receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ at their Orthodox Church. I was impressed by how deeply devout they were.

The next day, John, Rebecca, and I visited a Russian restaurant and enjoyed a delicious meal that lasted for six hours! At the end of each of those hours, a new and exotic dish piled with luscious food was set before us to eat. The flavors of the food were exquisite and each one different. We were about to explode when we finished the many plates offered to us!

Every hour we were presented with a new and different beautiful empty plate that appeared to be hand painted. Huge bowls of food then magically appeared before us. I think I added several pounds to my small skeletal frame by the end of the longest meal of my life!

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The city was filled with multiple fountains that sprayed their cool moisture high into the air. What a beautiful sight! They reminded me of the lovely fountains of another great city, Paris, France.

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But there also was a dark and sinister side to Russia. Anti-Russian government activist Konstantin Sinitryn and the Russian Orthodox priest Alexander Men had both been murdered in Russia, two of dozens of outspoken activists slaughtered there.

It was in September of 1905 that Delegation members had signed the Treaty of Portsmouth to end the Russo-Japanese War. In the 17 years since the making of that peace—hardly a generation—Russia had suffered during a World War, a civil war, two famines, and the so-called Red Terror.

Russians had endured a horrible era, a terrible nightmare that had spared no one within its bloodied borders!

Charlene Scott Myers stands in front of St. Basil’s Cathedral in Moscow while visiting Russia with Dr. John Jackson and his wife, Rebecca.

Dr. Jackson, a retired colonel with the United States Air Force, has been studying the Shroud of Turin for several decades. The pair presented their findings to several Russian organizations during the trip.

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I learned that the Christians of Russia observe a very strict fast for a week before they receive the body and blood of Jesus Christ at their Orthodox Church. I was impressed by how deeply devout they were.

The next day, John, Rebecca, and I walked the streets and alleys of Moscow, where thin beggars in ragged clothes slept along the curbs, or approached us with pitiful cries and outstretched hands for donations of money. Moscow was a beautiful city, but its sad beggars were both abundant and loudly persuasive.

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If you wish to learn more about Russia’s dark history, read “A Russian Diary” by Anna Politkovskaya, who also was murdered in Russia after she sold her book to Random House, which published it in the United States. Another excellent book about Russia is “A Gentleman in Moscow” by Amor Towles.

MINSK REGION, RUSSIA: Believers kneel before the Budslav Icon of the Mother of God at a Roman Catholic festival in the village of Budslav.

Natalia Fedosenko/ITAR-TASS News Agency
An encuentro with the Risen Lord

The Arco Iris youth of Dodge City and Liberal gathered for their annual spring break Encuentro gathering at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe March 12-15.

The second gathering, scheduled for the next week in Garden City, was cancelled due to the coronavirus pandemic.

The retreat experience is modeled after the Curcillo gatherings for adults, offering an atmosphere of celebration and praise in which young people are formed in their faith to become leaders in the Church.

The goals of Arco Iris are four-fold: 1) adolescents evangelizing adolescents; 2) adolescents evangelizing their families; 3) promoting vocations to the priesthood and religious life; and 4) promoting the Arco Iris movement.

For almost 20 years, the program has invited Spanish speaking youth to an intense, four-day retreat where they mix deeply spiritual activities with important lessons in social issues, creating a combination of spiritual and civic formation.

“Arco Iris” doesn’t end when the four-day event concludes. From that point on, participants will attend prayer sessions and group gatherings each week for as long as they want to attend – even into adulthood. And those who already attended the original four-day session will help present later retreats to new participants.

“It was amazing,” noted a student who attended a past gathering. “I didn’t expect it to be that touching. But it felt amazing. I actually felt that God came to me and … I felt ... wow! It was the most beautiful thing that’s ever happened to me.”

Another student commented, “To me it meant a lot. It was a very beautiful thing. You learn how to respect your parents, be a better person. It just opens your eyes to a lot of things ... It makes you appreciate everything.

“You can’t really explain how you feel because it was just amazing. There are no words to describe it.”

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A lasting covenant I will make with them’  -- Isaiah 55:3

Bishop celebrates Chrism Mass; priests renew promises

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

I t may have lacked the solemnity, the people, the communal, face-to-face, handshake/hug celebration of past gatherings, but one thing the annual Chrism Mass didn’t lack was the presence of the Loving Lord, whom one could feel joyfully present even while viewing the live feed of the service on Facebook from miles away.

On April 2, Bishop John Brungardt, Father Wesely Schawte and Father Juan Salas celebrated the annual Chrism Mass in the small Juan de Padilla chapel at the Catholic Chancery in Dodge City. The celebration also included the renewal of priestly promises.

More than 200 people tuned into the Mass as it was shown live on the Diocese of Dodge City and Cathedral Facebook pages simultaneously, and many more tuned in to watch the recorded Mass in the days to follow. It can still be seen on the Facebook pages.

“At this Holy Mass, the Chrism Mass, I will bless the oil of the sick, the oil of the catechumens, and I will consecrate the sacred Chrism, all used for our sacramental life,” Bishop Brungardt explained, often quoting the Catechism of the Catholic Church. “These last two are used for the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Orders, which are forever sacraments, needed only once, which last for eternity.”

The Catholic Catechism teaches that “Baptism seals the Christian with an indelible spiritual mark, a character of his belonging to Christ,” Bishop Brungardt said. “Given only once, Baptism cannot be repeated. In Baptism, the oil of catechumens and the Sacred Chrism are used. “We heard in the reading from Isaiah today, ‘A lasting covenant I will make with them.’” Confirmation completes baptism, and like Baptism, Confirmation is given only once, “for it too imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual mark, which is a sign that Jesus Christ has marked Christians with the seal of the Holy Spirit by clothing them with power from on high so that they may be His witnesses, also giving the gifts of the Holy Spirit — the seven-fold gifts of the Holy Spirit,” the bishop said. “The Sacred Chrism is used for this.

“We heard from Luke’s gospel this morning: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is upon me because He has anointed me.’ The third sacrament in which a holy oil is used (the Sacred Chrism) is Holy Orders—ordination.

“As the case of Baptism and Confirmation, this share in Christ’s office is granted only once,” Bishop Brungardt continued. “The sacrament of Holy Orders, like the other two, infers an indelible spiritual character that cannot be repeated or conferred temporarily.”

The bishop urged those celebrating the Chrism Mass at home to “listen carefully to the words of the renewal, as our priests and I trust in God’s help to make us more faithful, loving, and joy-filled priests. The sacrament of Holy Orders is forever, an indissoluble gift from God (see Renewal of Priestly Promises at right).

“We heard in Revelations today, ‘I am the alpha and the omega, the one who is, and who was, and who is to come. The lasting covenant.’

“Other examples of these lasting covenants include matrimony and the consecrated life (religious vows),” Bishop Brungardt said. “That’s for a homily at another time.”

“Let us seek to rededicate ourselves to our promises and our vows. These are beautiful truths and compassionate teachings of the Lord.

“However, we realize that we all fall due to human weakness, frailty and sin. We unite with all in the suffering of Christ that we celebrate this Lent. We compassionately reach out to others in prayer. We ask our Blessed Mother, Mary, to comfort us. “May all connect to the Word of God in the Bible for strength. May we all be aware of Christ’s presence in prayer and in the Eucharist—Holy Communion. Let us forever sing the goodness of our Lord.”

Renewal of Priestly Promises

During the Chrism Mass, priests of the Catholic Diocese of Dodge City were asked to renew their priestly promises. To each question asked by Bishop Brungardt, the priests responded, “I do.”

Fathers Juan Salas and Wesley Schawte represented the priests at the Mass. Priests were able to view the Mass and renew their vows from a remote location.

The Mass was shown live on the Diocese of Dodge City and Cathedral of Our Lady of Guadalupe Facebook pages. You can still view the Mass, and all live daily Masses, on Facebook.

“Beloved sons, are you resolved to renew, in the presence of your bishop and God’s holy people the promises you once made?”

“You are resolved to be more united with the Lord Jesus, and more closely conformed to him, denying yourselves and confirming these promises about sacred duties for Christ’s Church, which prompted by love of him, you willingly and joyfully pledged on the day of your priestly ordination?”

“You are resolved to be faithful stewards of the mysteries of God in the Holy Eucharist and the other liturgical rites and to discharge faithfully the sacred office of teaching, following Christ the Head and Shepherd, not seeking any gain, but move only by zeal for souls?”

“And you, dear sons and daughters, pray for your priests. That the Lord may pour out his gifts abundantly on them and keep them faithful as ministers of Christ, the High Priest, so that they may lead you to him, who is the source of salvation.”

From left: Father Wesely Schawte, Father Juan Salas, and the Most Rev. John B. Brungardt celebrate the Chrism Mass in the chapel at the Catholic Chancery in Dodge City. The Mass was recorded live on Facebook, and is now available for viewing.

Above, Bishop Brungardt blesses the holy oils.

Photos by Gentry Heimerman

Father Wesley Schawe and Eric Haselhorst livestream the Chrism Mass celebrated by Bishop Brungardt in the Juan de Padilla Chapel at the Catholic Chancery in Dodge City. “Livestream” means that the Mass was presented live on Facebook as it occurred. It is recorded and currently available for viewing. To see a schedule of livestreamed Masses, see Page 6.
ROMEBOYS: Former local teacher helps create web video series

By DAVE MYERS
Southwest Kansas Catholic

Kay, so, say you have a question about the Catholic Church. Perhaps it has to do with why we worship the way we do. Or maybe there’s something about the Church that’s always been a mystery to you, and you’d like it addressed.

Or maybe you just want to learn a little more about your faith.

In our day of technological expertise that allows endless ways to cruise the electronic seas, you may find yourself turning to the Internet for answers. And if you do, you may find yourself opening a Youtube video, one in which three guys sit around a table, one of whom you may find looks familiar—especially if you’re a resident of Dodge City or Spearville.

This is the video series, “Romeboys,” which launched on the Feast of the Annunciation, March 25. Former Spearville resident and Sacred Heart Cathedral School teacher Tony Frasco, along with Joe Mathiesen and Chris Martin, have so far produced four videos, ranging from one minute to 46 minutes in length.

The videos have the three men discussing issues in down-to-earth and easily understandable language meant to help evangelize in the Catholic faith.

Subjects include: “Do Catholics Worship Mary?” “10 Reasons to be Catholic,” “10 Days to Keep the Lord’s Day Holy during the Pandemic,” and “Covid 19.”

Future programs will be entitled, “Did You Know?” “Ten Positives from the Coronavirus Epidemic,” and another offering a reflection from Matthew Kelly’s book “Rediscover Catholicism.”

“We have a lot of ideas, but we want to hear from our viewers about topics that are of interest to them,” Frasco said.

By having three different perspectives on various issues, “Our audience can get a full spectrum of information and discussion,” Frasco said from his home in Texas, where he, his wife, Lyza, and their seven children are hunkering down due to the pandemic.

“Social media is a powerful way to reach many different types of people in various walks of life,” Frasco added. “We feel there is a great need in the Church for solid Catholic content … and hopefully coming from a few guys who are down to earth and with a splash of added humor.”

For six years, Frasco served as a theology teacher at Sacred Heart School in Dodge City, prior to which he taught for five years at Magdalen Catholic School in Wichita. A former Spearville resident, he moved to Texas where he is a pilgrimage coordinator. He’s also an author, having written, “Reflection of the Son: A Scriptural Rosary and Marian Guide.”

Martin, married with six children, is owner of a nursing home and is an RCIA director. He also is Frasco’s brother-in-law. Mathiesen, married with five children, has farmed most of his life, and teaches CCD and RCIA.

“We decided to do this because we wanted to help evangelize in the Catholic Faith,” Frasco explained. “What excited us is that we are allowing the Holy Spirit to lead us, and we have no idea where He is going to take this. We pray it helps people come to know Christ and His Church more fully. Whether a person is on fire for the faith, somewhat committed, or not at all, it is our hope to stir minds and hearts.”

Frasco said that the three envision the videos being utilized in a variety of ways, “whether for personal use, RCIA, CCD, or for people to share with family and friends who have questions. We hope to have a couple of different priests come on as guests, deacons, our wives, our local bishop. The goal of our program is to remain positive, give practical advice, and be relatable.”

“You can find more information about the Romeboys on their Facebook page: https://m.facebook.com/romeboys/ And their YouTube channel: https://m.youtube.com/channel/UCiB8-W56pMganUjQd95Ekmg

“Do Catholics Worship Mary?”
--- Tony Frasco, from the video “Do Catholics Worship Mary?”

Art, faith and family: Fowler artist lends skills to parish

Rebecca Heinz, a retired artist, having returned home to Fowler, has graciously donated her work to refurbish and refinish the 21 figures that have long graced St. Anthony of Padua Parish in Fowler. Her mother, Kate Heinz, also an artist, had done repair work on the figures many years ago. Rebecca remembers being part of the second grade group that presented the figure of the Holy Infant on Christmas eve when she was a student at St. Anthony School.

Former Sacred Heart Cathedral teacher, Tony Frasco (left), along with Joe Mathiesen (center) and Chris Martin, recently created an internet video series highlighting different aspects of the Catholic faith.
Doubting Thomas: Easter witness for these times

By STAN KONIECZNY

(CNS) “I can’t say that I fully comprehend what happened that first Easter Sunday morning in the garden with the empty tomb, but I certainly feel that over the years I have stood right next to Thomas the next Sunday evening in that Upper Room,” Peggy quietly explained.

Although soft-spoken with a slight drawl, Peggy usually commanded the attention of everyone in her Scripture-study class. Her fellow parishioners had come to rely on the retired nurse to share some special insight. Peggy had a gift for drawing parallels between Gospel truths and everyday experience.

“Thomas was blessed,” she said. He was able “to see God in life’s wounds. And, she said, “Thomas gives me hope that you are never too late to find Jesus.”

Peggy said that she liked to think that Thomas may have “missed the first Easter because he was somewhere working the night shift. Who knows, Thomas may have been folding sheets or emptying bedpans in some ancient hospital because, as I am always telling you, there are no holidays for health-care workers!”

Bill interrupted the group’s laughter. He asked, “So you harbor a fondness for ‘Doubting Thomas’?” Peggy replied. “It almost seems that Thomas had a flawed character, when, in fact, I think Thomas’ questioning and probing made him the most credible of the apostles. He may even be the Easter witness for our times.”

“I don’t really care for the nickname ‘Doubting Thomas,’” Peggy replied. “It seems that Thomas had a flawed character, when, in fact, I think Thomas’ questioning and probing made him the most credible of the apostles. He may even be the Easter witness for our times.”

Peggy sat quietly and could almost see the wounded witnesses to Jesus that she had met over the years. There were so many patients -- women, men, children -- who faced cancer, heart disease and other life threatening illnesses with courage and dignity. More than a few of her co-workers and friends had struggled to overcome various dependencies and substance abuse.

As a divorced mother and grandmother, Peggy knew the special challenges of surviving while working hard to nurture a loving, single parent home. “The scars remain, but they only add to the beauty,” Peggy concluded softly.

Mary, who was fresh out of college and was the group’s youngest member, spoke next. She said that while Peggy was speaking she’d turned to John’s account of Thomas meeting the risen Christ. Mary said, “I loved Thomas’ prayer that he must have whispered in awe as he touched Jesus’ wounded side. ‘My Lord and my God’ were the only words he managed to utter,” Mary said, “For me that is indeed a profession of faith filled with wonder ... but it is also very focused.”

“How’s that?” Bill asked.

“Well, Thomas was overwhelmed by so many doubts and questions and feelings of distrust. He was all over the place, asking questions and almost making demands. Thomas was very much like so many of us in these crisis times. Yet, face to face with Jesus, he came back to the essence of faith. Thomas brought us all back to that which remains the most fundamental: ‘My Lord and my God’,” Mary replied.

Peggy nodded in agreement. She said, “The poking and the probing and the questioning and the griping are just a bunch of aggravation if they don’t bring you down to your knees.”
The Last Supper and other suppers with the Lord

By ALLAN F. WRIGHT

I often ask people to reminisce about the most significant meal they have ever eaten. It is never the food that makes the most impact in their memory but the people around the table.

Whatever the occasion, whatever the cultural norm dictates, it rings true to human experience that meals bring us together.

Jesus’ Middle Eastern culture was one in which only those considered family would be welcomed around the table. The people whom one dined with defined the boundaries of one’s relationships.

There are no fewer than 58 references to food, eating, hunger or meals in the Gospel of Luke alone! In fact, Jesus is so involved with sharing his teachings and meals in the Gospel of Luke that if the Son of Man cannot dine with sinners he will not eat with Simon either, since all are sinners.

In the parable of the Prodigal Son the celebration begins in the home. A fattened calf could feed up to 75 people; the message here is that it is a community celebration of the father who welcomes his son back with open arms. The father also goes out to invite the younger son as well. The family is not complete until the older son accepts his seat around the table. Jesus would not use his miraculous power to feed himself when he was hungry and tempted by Satan, but when he sees the hunger of the 5,000, he multiplies the loaves and fish so that others are fed.

The Last Supper too is a way for Jesus to share his very life around the table with friends. This significant event was not lost on the early Christians, who gathered around the table to share in the Eucharist (1 Corinthians 11).

Likewise, it was during a meal around a simple table in a home that the disciples’ eyes were opened to the risen Lord in their midst.

Sharing a meal can be difficult in our fast-paced world. Often our vehicles have more cup holders than we have place settings for our dining room tables! Nonetheless, sharing food can still bring a family, community and friends together. Like Jesus, they too can share their lives—their stories, hopes and joys—by the simple act of sharing a meal.


Life in the balance: From sorrow to great joy

By M. REGINA CRAM

(CNS) It is amazing how we can experience a great trial in our lives only to find it leads to a positive outcome that we never expected. Here is a story of one such trial and aftermath.

I awoke abruptly as the sensation of contractions wracked my body. “It’s too early to be in labor,” I shouted. “The baby’s not ready. Please, Lord, no!” But still the labor pains came one on top of another. With the light of early dawn the pains subsided.

The day was a blur of doctor’s appointments, ultrasounds and tests. Had I miscarried? Did the baby survive the night?

Even with the wonders of modern technology, no one could say for sure. I was sent home; the doctor ordered me to stay in bed with a slim hope of salvaging the pregnancy.

The final hope was one last ultrasound. I was tired, distracted and frightened as my gaze swept across the monitor. But no baby appeared. The technician searched for a long time.

After what seemed an eternity, my fears were confirmed. There on the screen was the image of my lifeless child. Choking back tears, I slumped back on the table.

My baby was dead—this son I loved even before I knew he was expected. Here is a story of one such trial and aftermath that leads to a positive outcome that we never expected.

By ALLAN F. WRIGHT

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My baby was dead—this son I loved even though I never cradled him in my arms. I could almost smell his sweet hair against my cheek. I turned toward the window and wept, feeling more alone than ever.

As I gazed blankly outside, the technician resumed the ultrasound. It made no sense. Hadn’t she found what she was looking for? “What are you doing?” I asked dully.

“Oh, I’m just looking a little more,” she replied, ignoring the nearby room of restless patients who were awaiting their turn.

I did not understand. What could she find that would make any difference now? I kept thinking of my tiny son, whose fingers never would curl around my own.

Suddenly the technician gasped. “Look at the monitor! Do you see that blip?” I turned, and there, in a sea of static, I saw a tiny blip-blip-blip. “It’s a heartbeat,” the technician whispered.

“But ... I don’t understand,” I said. “My baby died.”

“Yes, he did,” the technician explained gently. “This is a second baby, and this one looks awesome.”

A second baby. One had died, but the other was clinging to life, and her heart was beating strongly despite the troubled world around her. That little blip-blip-blip continued to cling to life until she was born amid great celebration.

When asked how many children I have, I answer, “Four.” But silently I add, “and one in heaven.”

Risen Lord, we greet you with joy this Easter season, and we thank you for the gift of new life. Bless our food, our family and our friends, and help us to celebrate the springtime in our hearts as we rejoice in the good news of your resurrection. Alleluia! Amen.
A children’s story for Easter: Friendship and the empty tomb

By JANAA MANTERNACH

(CNS) Kylie kept thinking about the assignment by her religion teacher to read the Gospel story for Easter Sunday over and over until they could come up with a creative way to retell it.

The students were not to discuss their ideas with each other. That was okay with Kylie because since coming to this new school she hadn’t made friends. Actually, none of the children seemed to want to have anything to do with her. That was the part that hurt the most.

Kylie wished she had friends like the ones who went to the tomb to be with Jesus. She was sure that no one at her school would go to her if she died. She tried not to think about that, but she couldn’t quite get it out of her mind. Maybe that was the seed of a way for her to retell the Gospel story.

Their teacher told them how Jesus had died at the hands of a mob who hung him on a cross. She also told them about his burial in a tomb. The story they had to recreate was about what happened after that.

Kylie kept re-reading the Gospel story. The thought of Jesus’ friends made her happy, but she couldn’t seem to get much beyond that. So she decided to retell the story pretty much like it was in the Gospel, but from her own perspective.

Jesus had died on Friday. On Monday Mary Magdalene, Joanna and Mary, the mother of James, took spices to Jesus’ tomb. On the way they talked about their friendships with Jesus.

Mary Magdalene said that hardly anyone ever wanted to be her friend. Jesus befriended her when she was shunned by others. Joanna said that she never had a problem having friends, but what she liked about Jesus was that anyone and everyone could be his friend.

Mary, James’ mother, told them that she became a friend of Jesus because of her son and that it was the best friendship she ever had.

They were now nearing the tomb and noticed that something was wrong. Jesus’ body was gone. The tomb was empty!

Peter decided to check into the story for himself. He ran to the tomb, bent down and saw the empty burial cloths. He stood there for a while and finally went home puzzled at what had happened.

Kylie told her class that the story helped her to think more about Jesus. Something she especially liked was that he did not pick and choose who would be his friends. She added, “It helps me to know that Jesus is my friend, too.”

Manternach is a veteran catechist and freelance writer in Dubuque, Iowa.

Heaven: the warmth, the comfort, the peace of mind

By DAVID MYERS

Southwest Kansas Catholic

Easter is a time in which Christ’s victory over death is most joyously celebrated. He pushed open the gates of heaven allowing us entry – without us even having to get our hand stamped; no dress code, come as you are. The only entry fee is accepting the invitation from Christ that he first sent out some 2,000 years ago (back when postage was much cheaper).

I imagine heaven as being like that moment when you wake up on a Saturday morning (or what ever day you’re off work) and think you have to get up for work. Suddenly you realize it’s the weekend; you smile, give a good stretch, curl up in your blanket and go back to sleep. Ahhhhh; the warmth, the comfort, the peace of mind.

It’s impossible for me to wrap my mind around Heaven. When I was a child, I really did believe it was up on a cloud, and that if an airplane ventured too high, the passengers could catch a glimpse of angels in their robes and halos, maybe playing soccer or something.

Remember how they used to show people bound for Heaven as standing on a giant escalator going up, up and up into the clouds? Wouldn’t it be cool if there really were those big pearly gates they talk about? And St. Peter holding a clip board, just like they always said? “No way. Are you...? No way!”

“Let’s see — you’re Dave—”


“Yes. We know.”

This moment has been brought to you by Easter, the eraser of death. In fact, not only does Easter erase death, but it hands us our own personalized invitation from Christ to life everlasting.

“I have to admit, I was never entirely sure I was Heaven-bound. Not that I was a bad person, but I wasn’t a saint, either. I mean, there were times I envisioned God more as a disapproving parent than an all-loving Father.

“Dave, God peers into the deepest recesses of our hearts. He knows how difficult the journey has been. He knows the trials you’ve faced. He knows not just how you’ve failed, but the many times you’ve stood victorious over sin – most of which you’ve long since forgotten. Remember, it’s much easier to recall one personal failure in life than a multitude of victories.”

“So, I did okay then, huh?”

“Big screen TV and Taco Bell. What do you think?”

This moment has been brought to you by Easter, the eraser of death. In fact, not only does Easter erase death, but it hands us our own personalized invitation from Christ to life everlasting – where everyone is ageless; where no one can eat too many bean burritos in one sitting and get a stomach ache and have to run home fast; where money is naught and sickness is naught; where, in God’s loving embrace, we will forever more experience the warmth, the comfort, the peace of mind.

Happy Easter, everyone!
Soon he was able to rent an apartment, complete with a loft and a fireplace. He bought all the modern comforts: a sleeping mat, a sitting mat, and an extra mat, just in case. And lo, he even purchased a year’s membership to the Roman baths, wherein he did scrub. But still the clay adhered like Amazing SuperGlue to his eyes.

As the weeks passed, Ed became bored with his life and its riches, and began frequenting Bathsheba’s Bar & Grille, where he acquired the nickname, “Good Time Eddie.” And thus, the sun did not rise nor set on the corner grille without Ed therein to bear witness. The alcohol flowed like wine and he partook of complimentary pretzels until there were none to be had until the next shipment came in on Tuesdays.

In his last known days, Ed found himself in the Pool of Siloam, praying often for guidance. And it came to pass while walking along 47th Street in midtown Jerusalem he caught wind of an opening for a salesman.

Being empty of pocket and hungry of stomach, Ed applied for, and was offered the position of sales trainee in the sandal department. With the Pool of Siloam still swimming in the back of his mind, Ed would often inquire of his customers about the whereabouts of said pool, to which most would reply, “Dude, you got clay on your eyes.” As his pocketbook grew, his interest in finding the Pool of Siloam diminished.

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Grace has its own timetable: A love letter

By DENISE BOSSERT
Special to the Catholic

Editor’s Note: This following is reprinted from an earlier edition of the Southwest Kansas Catholic.

The letter didn’t come on Valentine’s Day. I didn’t receive it on an anniversary. The best love letter I ever received came from my husband a few weeks ago on Christmas Eve.

While John was raised Baptist, much of his extended family was Catholic. His parents’ siblings had married Catholics and raised their children in the Catholic Church. But John’s mom was Baptist, and John and his sister first discovered God’s love through their mother in a Baptist church.

When John was in middle school, his mother died of breast cancer. He tried to go to church regularly for awhile, but it just became too difficult without a mother’s prompting. John’s dad decided to send his son to a Catholic high school, hoping it would be a soft, safe place for the boy who had experienced a terrible loss at such a tender age.

Like most students in Catholic high schools, John gained a strong identity by becoming part of a private school. He wore the school’s name (St. John Vianney) with pride, even though he did not convert. After high school, John headed off to college, but church wasn’t a big part of his life. One day, while commuting to graduate school, the radio station paused its regular programming to announce that the Federal Building in Oklahoma City had been bombed. The tragic news made John take stock of his life, and he decided that it was time to return to his faith, because he realized that for all of us, there are times when faith is all that’s left to go on.

Like when a mom dies and a boy is only half-grown. Or when tragedy comes suddenly, and there is nothing anyone can do but pray.

John and I met about a year later. The timing was ideal. I needed some ballast in my life. John was rock solid, and that was an important thing to a single mother of three small children.

After a brief engagement, we married. We attended the Presbyterian church where my father preached. When Dad became ill and left pastoral ministry, we attended the Baptist church where John’s mother had taken him as a small boy. Then my father died, and I went searching for answers. I found a copy of Dark Night of the Soul by St. John of the Cross and eventually found my way to the Catholic Church.

“I think I’m supposed to become Catholic,” I told John one day. He nodded and told me that was fine, but he wasn’t interested in becoming Catholic. I agreed.

So I prayed in earnest. At Mass. During my hour of Adoration. But it is very difficult to hope for something you cannot imagine.

On Christmas Eve everything changed. While waiting for Mass to begin, John passed me a card. I looked at it for a second, and while my heart filled with joy (because John’s love letters are always very special), I still did not know what was about to happen. I opened the letter and began to read. I love John’s handwriting; it’s so familiar to me, like all the other things about him after 11 years of marriage. I read the words, about how deeply he loves me, and how that had prompted him to consider the Catholic Church.

And so, I join the Church this coming Easter. I read the final sentence. He smiled as the tears gathered in my eyes. I tried to wrap my mind around this news. “When are you going to begin?” I whispered, unsure that the unfolding miracle could really be true.

A candle is held aloft, a symbol of divine love. “What is love?” “What really happens when I die?” “What am I supposed to do?” “What is sinful?” “What really happens in the hereafter?” “What is God’s plan?”

But that doesn’t always happen the moment you realize how much you want it. Grace has its own timetable. Another’s files can’t be forced. And while I prayed for this one conversion, I must admit, I didn’t think it would ever happen. “Remember St. Monica,” my parish priest said. “Would she have become a saint if she had not had a son who needed her prayers? And then we never would have had St. Augustine.”

Okay, fair enough. So I prayed in earnest. At Mass. And so, I join the Church this coming Easter. I read the final sentence. He smiled as the tears gathered in my eyes. I tried to wrap my mind around this news. “When are you going to begin?”

I whispered, unsure that the unfolding miracle could really be true. And he told me that he had been secretly studying with our parish RCIA leader for months. The impossible had happened. And I realized that his life, like my own, has been dotted by one grace after another. Some moments had seemed very good, some very difficult, but all of it pointed to conversion, our “yes” to the great call of divine love.

God’s love letter to us.

The darkness Christ pushes back for us

By Scott J. Rutan
(CNS) How does the Easter Vigil model an adult faith journey?

The vigil begins in darkness, at night. There is a sense of loss, abandonment. Every adult’s faith journey also starts there, with confusion, lack of clarity and security, in the face of the truly difficult questions. “What is right and good?” “What is sinful?” “What really happens when I die?” “What am I supposed to do about this world’s injustice?”

At the Easter Vigil, a light shines in the darkness. First it is just a new fire, giving off warmth—like that of a distant but treasured memory. Then, a new flame arises from it. A candle is held aloft, and we look up. “Christ our Light!” the deacon sings! We respond, “Thanks be to God!”

As adults, we “begin” to remember that it is Christ who enters the darkness of our lives, bringing a sense of clarity, calmness and hope that did not exist before. In the Easter Vigil, his light is rekindled in us. And then the “story” of faith—salvation history—is broken open through the proclamation of the word. The familiar Scripture stories remind us that we are created by and for God, that all are delivered from sin, that our lives are a perpetual sacrifice and that we will return to God.

This cycle of life, death and rebirth/resurrection is at the heart of Easter faith. It is also how we move into authentically mature faith.

With Christ’s light pushing back the darkness and God’s word filling our hearts, we who gather for the Easter Vigil move together toward the baptismal water of new birth. We fearfully, yet joyfully, renounce evil and profess faith in the Triune God.

We also support those now coming to the baptismal font for the first time. Entering as sinners, they emerge as saints.

That’s why baptism is the perfect metaphor for adult faith that goes deeper into the mystery of Christ’s saving power and rises to greater life.

The Easter Vigil next takes each adult to the eucharistic meal-banquet-sacrifice-thanksgiving. All eyes finally are open. Our Lord and Savior is made real, whole and entire. Our “Amen!” is the boldest of faith statements: “Let it be that you and we become one!”

Finally we hear with new ears: “Go in peace, Alleluia! Alleluia!”

“Thanks be to God, Alleluia! Alleluia!” is the only possible response of an adult church that has just journeyed toward the light, encountered the word, been cleansed by the water and fed at the table.

And mission is how we, God’s Easter People, are now called to live.
Un encuentro con el Señor resucitado

Los jóvenes Arco Iris de Dodge City y Liberal se preparan para el Encuentro durante las vacaciones de primavera en la Catedral de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe del 12 al 15 de marzo. El segundo Encuentro, programado para la siguiente semana en Garden City, fue cancelado debido a la pandemia del coronavirus.

La experiencia del Encuentro sigue el modelo de los retiros de Cursillo para adultos, ofreciendo un ambiente de celebración y alabanza en el que los jóvenes se forman en su fe para convertirse en líderes en la Iglesia. Los objetivos de Arco Iris son cuatro: 1) adolescentes que evangelizan a adolescentes; 2) adolescentes evangelizando a sus familias; 3) promover vocaciones al sacerdocio y la vida religiosa; y 4) promover el movimiento Arco Iris.

Durante casi 20 años, el programa ha invitado a jóvenes a un intenso retiro de cuatro días donde mezclan actividades profundamente espirituales con lecciones importantes en temas sociales, creando una combinación de formación espiritual y cívica.

“Arco Iris” no termina cuando concluye el retiro de cuatro días. A partir de ese momento, los participantes asistirán a sesiones de oración y reuniones grupales cada semana durante el tiempo que quieran, incluso hasta la edad adulta. Y aquellos que ya asistieron a el retiro original de cuatro días ayudarán a presentar retiros posteriores a los nuevos participantes.

“Fue increíble”, señaló un estudiante que asistió el retiro. “No esperaba que fuera tan conmovedor. Pero se sintió increíble. En realidad, sentí que Dios vino a mí y... sentí... ¡guau! Fue lo más hermoso que me ha pasado”. Otro estudiante comentó: “Para mí, significó mucho. Fue una cosa muy hermosa. Aprendes a respetar a tus padres, ser una mejor persona. Simplemente te abre los ojos a muchas cosas... Te hace apreciar todo. Realmente no puedes explicar cómo te sientes porque fue simplemente increíble. No hay palabras para describirlo.”

OY ES EL DÍA QUE LA IGLESIAS CATÓLICA celebra el sentido de la Fe, porque festeja el Domingo de la Resurrección de Jesús o de Pascua, cuando Cristo triunfante sobre la muerte abre las puertas del cielo.

Durante la celebración eucarística se enciende el Cirio Pascual que permanecerá encendido hasta el día que se conmemora la Ascensión de Jesús al cielo.

Esta fiesta celebra la derrota del pecado y de la muerte, con la resurrección del todo sufrimiento temporal adquiere sentido con la vida eterna.

Es un día de fiesta de gozo, Cristo ha Resucitado, la Tumba está vacía, la humanidad está salvada, ahora es momento de abrazar esa salvación testificando una verdadera vida cristiana.

Fotos por 
Gentry 
Heimerman
Sí usted sospecha abuso o descuido de un menor en Kansas y el menor está en un peligro inmediato hable al 911 o al departamento de policía local.

Si usted tiene alguna sospecha de que un menor está siendo abusado o descuidado haga un reporte confidencial al Departamento de Kansas Centro de Reportes Para Protección de Niños y Familias, 800-922-5330 o al KBI Hotline, 800-KSCRIME (800-572-7463), o mandando un correo electrónico a clerger@kbi.state.ks.us.

Si usted sospecha abuso por parte del personal de la iglesia, aparte de hacer un reporte a las autoridades civiles, por favor comuníquese con el Señor Charles Befort, un representante del Consejo de Revisión que recibe y da seguimiento a los reportes. Su información de contacto es cberfort@cox.net, 620-285-3219. También, el Señor Befort ofrecerá la ayuda del Ministro de Asistencia cuya meta es de ser alguien que escuche y fomente la sanación.

El Consejo de Revisión está compuesto por católicos laicos y un acreedor que aconsejen al Obispo en su evaluación de cada acusación de abuso sexual, revisan las políticas diocesanas para tratar con el abuso sexual de menores y ofrecen asesoramiento sobre todos aspectos que involucran casos de abuso sexual tanto retrospectiva como prospectivamente.

Un Ministro de Asistencia ayuda con el cuidado pastoral de las personas que afirmaran haber sido abusadas sexualmente cuando eran menores de edad por un miembro del clero o un miembro del personal de la iglesia, sin importar que el abuso haya ocurrido recientemente o muchos años atrás.

Protegiendo a los Niños de Dios
La Diócesis requiere a todos los empleados y voluntarios que trabajan con menores a asistir a las sesiones de conscientización de Proteger a los Niños de Dios. Estas sesiones de conscientización están disponibles en ambos inglés y español. Son conducidas por un miembro de nuestra Diócesis especialmente entrenadas como facilitadoras. Las sesiones se publicarán en las parroquias, escuelas, el periódico Southwest Kansas Catholic y la página electrónica de la Diócesis. www.dcdiocese.org/protectionchildren.

¡NO TEMAN! ¡ÉL HA RESULTADO!

M ientras Magdalena y la otra María lloraban la muerte de su Maestro. Estaban conmocionadas por los acontecimientos en la tumba, y tenían miedo cuando el ángel se les apareció. Estas emociones se convirtieron en alegría cuando el ángel dijo que verían a Jesús. Cuando volvieron a contar a los discípulos esta realidad de la Resurrección, se encontraron con Jesús, cayeron al suelo y lo adoraron.

Lamentamos la muerte y el sufrimiento, y estamos conmocionados y temerosos durante esta terrible tragedia del Covid-19. ¿Qué nos deparará el futuro? ¿Cuándo se calmará esta situación? ¿Cómo vamos a hacer frente a esto? Como lo hicieron las mujeres del Evangelio: buscamos al Señor, seguimos las enseñanzas de Dios, adoramos a Jesús, nuestro Salvador resucitado. Esto nos dará paz y alegría en medio de esta emergencia sanitaria. Nos acercamos a los demás con compasión, como lo hizo Jesús: “Miren como lo amaba” (Juan 1, 16). Algunas ideas para llegar a los demás en esta época de crisis:

- Llame o envíe un correo electrónico (o un mensaje por una red social) a sus padres e hijos, parientes y a cualquier que se sienta aislado, que viva solo o que pueda ser susceptible al coronavirus, para dar una palabra amable, para ver qué ayuda necesitan o para darles su amor y apoyo en estos días tan difíciles.
- Ofrezcase para conseguir comida u otras cosas necesarias para aquellos que no pueden salir.
- Verifique si los que viven solos necesitan algo (llame antes).
- Recé a nuestro amado Dios.
- Tenga compasión por los que corren más riesgo y defienda a las poblaciones vulnerables de la sociedad (los ancianos, los pobres, las personas sin hogar, los discapacitados, los que ya están enfermos u hospitalizados, los que tienen el sistema inmunológico comprometido, los que no tienen Internet, entre otros). (Del Catholic Current de la Conferencia de los Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos, https://catholiccurrent.org/covid19/; vea este sitio web para muchas otras ideas y recursos religiosos).

Alegrémonos de que el Señor haya resucitado. ¡Una Pascua bendita y alegre para ustedes!

S sombras de la gloria

No hay palabras humanas, ni superlativos, ni metáforas, ni analogías... ninguna de ellas puede siquiera acercarse a decir lo que Dios ha preparado para nosotros. Una sola palabra ha encontrado el favor de los cristianos.

Una palabra aparece una y otra vez en las Escrituras y en la tradición cristiana. Ha llegado a ser aceptada como la forma de describir lo indescriptible, no de describir lo que no tiene palabras humanas, ni de compararlo o de metáforas, ni de analogías… ninguna de ellas para los griegos, como la palabra «kabod» para los hebreos, «dóxas» para los griegos, «gloria» para los latinos y en español.

El Cristo que conocemos en los Evangelios es ahora el Cristo resucitado, es ahora el Cristo con un cuerpo glorificado. Nuestras madres y padres en la Fe llegaron a pensar que el cuerpo glorificado tenía cuatro cualidades especiales.

Tenía «impassibilitas», decían: era un cuerpo real, pero estaba libre de la lentitud y la pesadez de movimiento que «agilitas» pero estaba libre de sufrimiento y muerte. Tenía «claritas», decían: era un cuerpo real, pero libre de todo defecto, lleno de toda belleza, radiante y brillante, atrayendo todas las miradas.

Cuando leas las historias de las apariciones del Cristo Resucitado en el Nuevo Testamento, verás algunas de estas cualidades obrando en ellas. Pero, ¿qué hay de nosotros, que fuimos sumergidos en la muerte de Cristo en nuestro Bautismo, y que resucitamos con Él a la novedad de la vida? Manteniendo la debida proporción, ¿no deberíamos conocer también algo de estas cualidades especiales?

Serán muy sutiles al principio, seguramente. Vendrán a nosotros poco a poco. Nos robaremos por sorpresa. Pero en un día bueno y claro, tal vez podamos tener un vistazo pasajero de tal gloria moviéndose entre nosotros.

Cuando nuestro espíritu, en un abrir y cerrar de ojos, controla los impulsos y deseos de nuestro cuerpo; cuando ya no nos importa el sufrimiento que soportamos mientras éste ayude a alguien a quien amamos; cuando nuestra habitual pesadez de cuerpo se mueve de repente con la velocidad y el poder de un atleta de clase mundial; cuando vemos el brillo de un bebé recién nacido, o el resplandor de una novia recién casada... tantos signos, todas estas cosas, de un cuerpo que se está «levantando», de un cuerpo en las etapas preliminares de ser glorificado.

Mira los signos de tu propia vida ascendente mientras disfrutas de este tiempo de Pascua.

¡ALELUYA! ¡PASCUA JESÚS RESUCITADO!

AMOR ESPIRITU

M. GilMORE, Obispo Emérito de la Diócesis Católica de Dodge City

Rev. RONALD M. GILMORE, Obispo Emérito de la Diócesis Católica de Dodge City

¿No deberíamos conocer también algo de estas cualidades especiales?
Founder of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary declared Venerable

On January 23, 2020 the Holy Father, Pope Francis, authorized the Congregation for the Causes of Saints to promulgate the decree of heroic virtues of Joaquín Masmitjà, Canon of the Cathedral of Gerona, Spain and founder of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (IHM).

With this promulgation, Father Masmitjà was declared “venerable” and moved one step closer to canonization.

As a parish priest in mid-nineteenth century Spain, Father Masmitjà frequently encountered among his parishioners the reality of poor formation in the Faith. Catholic culture had disappeared; secularism was gaining ground and morality was eroding.

His concerns so closely resemble the needs of our own time; in fact, his priestly heart’s overriding concern was for the salvation of souls and how seemingly impossible it was to pursue holiness amidst the secularism of his day. He established the 40 Hours devotion in his parishes, trained catechists, and hosted missions for his parishioners, most notably given by St. Anthony Mary Claret, his good friend. But this, he found, was not enough.

In 1848 Venerable Joaquín Masmitjà founded the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary to teach and form the young in the truths of our Catholic Faith and to pray for the conversion of sinners. By 1870 their reputation had grown and they were asked by Bishop Thadeus Amat of Los Angeles-Monterey to come to the new world and teach on the West Coast. In 1871, following the encouragement of St. Anthony Claret, Father Masmitja sent 10 Sisters.

The community grew in number as well as in reputation and by the 1960’s, numbering 600, they were teaching throughout California and beyond. In 1976, three Sisters of the California Institute, desiring to preserve the charism of Father Masmitja, asked The Most Reverend David M. Maloney, Bishop of Wichita, if they could come to his diocese and open a foundation. He welcomed their presence and their apostolic work. In 1979 under the direction of the Holy See, the Sisters in Wichita separated from the Institute in California.

In today’s world, with society promoting vice as virtue and teaching that tolerance — not charity, truth and zeal for souls — is seen as a good, praying for the conversion of sinners is not as well-known as in previous decades. And yet, a true love for souls is the motivation to pray and work for their salvation. The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, 172 years after their foundation, continue, in union with Our Lady, to pray and teach, to sacrifice and work, for the salvation of souls.

Father Masmitjà believed in and promoted the powerful intercession of the Immaculate and Sorrowful Heart of Mary. He also wanted with all of his might to protect that Heart from the cruel sword that pierces it when sinners renew the passion and death of her Son by refusing His mercy and forgiveness.

The declaration of his heroic virtue is a good reminder to renew the commitment to pray for hardened sinners that they may know the forgiveness of God and the tender love of their Heavenly Mother.

The Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary invite you to pray through the intercession of Venerable Joaquin Masmitjá for all of your intentions. Reporting to the Sisters any favors or miracles received could possibly further his cause for beatification.

For holy cards or more information please Mother Mary Magdalene at (316) 722-9316 or email her at mmm@SistersIHMofWichita.org.

General Superior of the Sisters of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
3550 N 1671th Street W., Colwich, KS 67030
STORIES FROM THE SPANISH FLU PANDEMIC OF 1918

On March 4, 1918, Albert Gitchel, a cook at Camp Fuston in Kansas (located on Fort Riley, southwest of Manhattan), was afflicted by coughing, fever and headaches. His was one of the first established cases in the history of the so-called Spanish flu. Within three weeks, 1,100 soldiers had been hospitalized, and thousands more were affected.

In Europe, the disease spread through France, Great Britain, Italy and Spain, causing havoc with First World War military operations. Three quarters of French troops and more than half of British troops fell ill in the spring of 1918.

In May, the flu hit North Africa, and then Bombay in India; in June, the first cases were recorded in China, and in July in Australia. By the end of September, the flu had spread to almost all Europe, including Poland and Russia. From Russia the epidemic spread throughout northern Asia, arriving in India in September, and in October it flared up again in China.

Also known as the 1918 flu pandemic or La Pesadilla (Spanish for “The Nightmare”), the Spanish Flu was an unusually deadly influenza pandemic. Lasting from January 1918 to December 1920, it infected 500 million people – about a quarter of the world’s population at the time.

The death toll is estimated to have been anywhere from 17 million to 50 million, and possibly as high as 100 million, making it one of the deadliest pandemics in human history, possibly as high as 100 million, making it one of the deadliest pandemics in human history, possibly as high as 100 million. Bradford never married.

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EVELYN JOSEPHINE PENKA, 92, of Prince of Peace Parish at St. Patrick Church, Great Bend, died March 28, 2020. Evelyn married Edward Lambert Penka Oct. 15, 1947. He died October 17, 2007. She was a long-time checker at Dillons and had a home cleaning service. She was a member of the Altar Society. Survivors include her three children, Karen Wallace, Kenneth Penka and Kathy Penka; one sister, Arlene Stoss; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and two step-great-grandchildren. Father Don Bedore presided.

RANDALL JAY DUMLER, 58, of St. John the Evangelist Parish, Hoisington, died March 21, 2020. A longtime resident of Hoisington, Randy worked as a valve assembler for Cashco for 30 years. On Sept. 25, 1999, he married Mary Smith. She survives, along with his mother, Marilyn K. Dumler; siblings, Jan Thorne, Donald Dumler, and Karla Bennett; children, Nicholas Lomas, Alexander Lomas, Erik Simpson, and Connie Graffia; and six grandchildren. Father Anselm Eike presided.

NIKI LEONE MURRAY, 75, of St. Mary Parish, Holyrood, died March 20, 2020. She was born in Brisbane, Australia to John Vincent and Diane (Tattersall) Murray. Survivors include two daughters, Desiree Werth and Michelle Washington; seven great-grandchildren; and one sister, Jacqueline Yager. Father Don Bedore presided.

ROBERT “BOB” JAMES HOLT, 59, of Prince of Peace Parish at St. Patrick Church, Great Bend, died March 16, 2020. On Jan. 8, 1983, Bob married Tammy (Spray) Holt. Bob earned his B.S. in Business Administration from the University of Kansas in 1983. Among the many committees on which he served was that of pastor composition. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, and had served on several community boards, including the Chamber of Commerce. Survivors include his wife, Vicki; three children, Erica Musgrove, Kyle Rindt, and Andrea Smith; a sister, Carol Maybee; and six grandchildren. Fathers Warren Stecklein and Michael P. Hermes presided.

Dale G. Zimmermann, 54, passed away March 26, 2020. He was born in Great Bend, the son of LaVerne and Dianna (Diehl) Zimmermann. He was a repairman for Sears for 23 years. Survivors include, his parents; wife, Candy; and one sister, Patricia. Memorials are suggested to the Cancer Fund at GBFC, in care of Bryant Funeral Home.

STEPHEN JOHN ECK, 98, of St. Boniface Parish, Sharon, died March 24, 2020. He was born in Sharon the son of Peter John Eck and Mary (Ast) Eck. On Jan. 15, 1947, he married Helen (Spray) Holt, and four siblings: John (Suzy) Holt, Adamle. Also surviving is his wife, Sandra Carrasco; two brothers-in-law, Kip (Kelly) Spray and Chris (Julie) Spray. Bob was an uncle to nieces and nephews.

SERGIO ALFONSO CARRASCO, 55, died Thursday March 19, 2020 in Finney County, Kansas. He was born in Juarez, Mexico the son of Francisco and Rosa Maria (Hernandez) Carrasco. Mr. Carrasco was currently employed by Caro Electric, but his passion was as a landscaper. Survivors include his wife, Sandra Carrasco; children Ricardo, Beatrix, Sergio Jr., Francisco Javier and Perla Ivonne and Luz; and two sisters.

DARYL E. RINDT, 66, of St. Dominic Parish, Garden City, died March 10, 2020. Daryl grew up in Herrington where he attended school and graduated from high school in 1971. He graduated from Emporia State University in 1976 with a B.S. degree in Business Administration. On Sept. 25, 1976, he married Victoria H. “Vicki” Hermes. Upon his retirement from State Farm in January 2020, he was serving as Fire Claim Superintendent, and was part of the Catastrophe Team and was a Team Leader. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus, and had served on several community boards, including the Chamber of Commerce. Survivors include his three children, Karen, Kathy Penka; one sister, Arlene Stoss; 10 grandchildren; 11 great-grandchildren; and two step-great-grandchildren. Father Don Bedore presided.
Sister Bernice Taylor, teacher, humorist, storyteller dies

Sister Bernice Taylor, ASC, a teacher who saw the humor in life and loved to tell stories, died Tuesday, March 10. She was 100 years old and had lived 78 years as a professed Adorer of the Blood of Christ.

She was born December 25, 1919 to Frank and Mary Anna (Kotrba) Taylor, a farm couple in Canute, Oklahoma, and was baptized Angeline Marie the next day at St. Francis Church. She was bilingual and proud of her Czech heritage.

Early thoughts of entering the convent after eighth grade were shelved when older siblings, Leonard and Regina, encouraged her to give such an important decision a little time.

She developed Rayna as a high school student and, in prescribed whiskey tonics when a blizzard kept the family from church, encouraged her to develop her skill at telling a yarn, dancing, and storytelling, likely where she developed her skill at telling a yarn.

"I think she was a storyteller, but she enjoyed and laughed so much during her stories I often lost the story line," U.S. Regional Leader Sister Vicki Bergkamp, ASC said. "To see the humor in life, to share it with others through stories, and to enjoy your own stories, what a great example of grace she gave to us."

For three years after high school, Bernice did housekeeping, cooking, and child care before traveling to Wichita with her family and pastor to meet the Adorers.

She became a postulant in September 1940, pronounced first vows in August 1942, and final vows five years later. Bernice began her long teaching career in 1943 in Colwich, Kansas. She attended college classes in the summers for her first degree, a bachelor’s in education from Saint Mary College in Leavenworth, Kansas, in 1953, then earned a master’s in education from Saint Louis University in 1959. She spent the next 50 years as an elementary school teacher, principal, assistant professor in the graduate student teaching program at Newman College, now Newman University, and as a volunteer at Newman library.

She taught more than 25 years in Kansas and Oklahoma elementary schools. She assisted in Newman University’s education department for seven years and helped the library transition to the Library of Congress classification system.

She moved to the Wichita Center in 2000 and was a vibrant community member living mission in daily life.

She was preceded in death by her parents and two siblings, and is survived by nieces and nephews, and her ASC community.

Following a wake and Mass of Christian Burial at the Wichita Center’s Chapel of the New Covenant, burial was in the community cemetery.

Donations in memory of Sister Bernice Taylor may be sent to the Adorers at 4233 Sulphur Avenue, St. Louis, MO 63109 or made online at www.adorers.org.

Obituary Policy

Obituaries are always listed free of charge, but must be edited for space and SKC style. If you see that a listing has been missed, contact Dave at (620) 227-1519, or email skregister@diocese.org.

OBITUARIES
Continued from preceding page

of Harry and Irene (Heatherman) McAdam. Gene was the fourth oldest of 10 children. He married Maxine Struble on Jan. 26, 1948. They lived at Kingman until they moved to Cimarron in 1969. After serving in the Army Air Corps during World War II, Gene spent his adult life working in the insurance industry. He was a well-known and highly respected member of the crop insurance industry throughout the state and nation, serving on the executive committees of the Crop Hall Insurance Actuary Association, the National Crop Insurance Actuary, and National Crop Insurance Services from 1981-1985. He also served on the Cimarron City Council for several years. Gene is survived by two sons Dan and Jim; three daughters, Michelle Leatherwood, Jill Leis, and Carrie Marx; two sisters, Doris Winchester and Peg Freiden; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Please pray for all those who have died, their friends and loved ones, that they might find comfort in the promise of New Life bought by our Risen Lord at Easter.

Tony Reidel

The Southwest Kansas Catholic would like to remember Tony Reidel, who was featured in an article in the May 2009 issue. He died Feb. 26, 2020.

Anthony (Tony) Riedel, 92, was born Oct. 19, 1927, in Yocometo, Kansas, son of Alex and Anna Riedel. Tony was raised in Ellis, Kansas and moved to Johnson in the early 40s. On Oct. 25, 1948, he married Lucille Kippe. Tony farmed with R.H. Trosle for over 50 years, after which he retired. He will be remembered as an accomplished carpenter, building numerous pieces of furniture for family and friends. Survivors include daughter Teresa McGregor, daughter-in-law Rose Riedel, brothers Alex, Paul and Joe, and grandchildren Brandon, Chyna, Myriah, and Orion.

The following story ran in May of 2009.

Tony Riedel helped build St. Bernadette Church, and didn’t stop for 60 years

by David Myers

Southwest Kansas Catholic

It happened to be from St. Bernadette Church in Johnson all the items built or re-furbished by resident Tony Riedel over the last 60 years, you’d have a nearly empty church. In fact, you may not have a church at all.

Take back all the money Tony Riedel received for his work on and in the church, and you’d have ... well, you wouldn’t have had the church, because Riedel never accepted a penny for his efforts.

Since those busy weeks begun so long ago -- 60 years ago May 7 (2009), to be precise -- when he was one of many community members who volunteered their time helping build the church, Riedel has rarely gone long without swinging a hammer, raising a saw, or taking sandpaper to some part of the church, within or without.

“I’ve worked on just about everything, even the pews,” he said. When the church needed to make room for wheelchair accessibility, Riedel went to work cutting pews in half, and used the extra wood for other projects in the church.

He built the altar, and then when Vatican II turned alters around so the priest would face the congregation, Riedel built another to suit — the wood for which was purchased by parishioner Ralph Amerin, who then donated the altar to the church.

Riedel built tables, pedestals, the baptismal font and podiums. He built the cross for the body of Christ, the tabernacle, and a cabinet for the holy oils.

To not mention — with the help of other volunteers — he helped build the church itself after a contractor was reported to have skipped town with their construction funds and those of several other communities.

Riedel proudly attended the first Mass at St. Bernadette, celebrated Dec. 4, 1949, as well as the dedication by Bishop Mark K. Carroll of Wichita on April 18, 1950, one year before the Diocese of Dodge City was established. Prior to completion of the new church, Mass was celebrated in the garage of W.E. Niles.

Today, Riedel’s wood-working tools have been retired. Instead, Riedel spends much of his time waiting on and old truck he was shot down over Germany where he was stationed in Japan barely a year after the atomic bombs fell.

"We went right into Nagasaki and Hiroshima," he said. "They dropped them in '45, so '46 there wasn’t anything there yet; just ruins, ashes. The Japanese did the rebuilding themselves. We just made sure they behaved. I was in the Second Armored Division when I took my training, but when we got overseas they put us where we were needed. My brother was a tail-gunner and was shot down over Germany where he was a prisoner of war."

When asked what he thought of Riedel’s wood working, Father Francis Khoi Nguyen, who serves the mission parish, said, "Oh, wonderful. Very talented. He’s a very nice man. Any time we need help, he’s ready. He’s never said no to one thing in the nine months I’ve been here. He’s wonderful. He has done a very, very good job."
ACROSS
4. 6 AM prayer time
9. The last John
10. Sea of __
11. Galilee, for one
12. Sister of Judah
13. A Sunday in Lent
14. ___ Being
17. The Archdiocese of Oslo is found here
19. Chi
21. Catholics Pavarotti, Carreras, or Domingo
22. Canonized one
23. ___ of Contrition
25. A river of Eden (Gen 2:11)
26. Word of praise
29. Altar perfume
31. Rite in the Church in the West
33. The ___ Dolorosa
34. Peter and Andrew may have used this
35. Prepare to pray
36. Commits a capital sin

DOWN
1. Second book of the Bible
2. ___ of the Cross
3. This was offered to the risen Jesus (Lk 24:42)
4. Prayer book
5. Hell
6. Catholic columnist Bombeck
7. Book attributed to John
8. Son of Abraham
15. Papal
16. “...thy will be done on ___”
18. They were found in Juan Diego’s cape at Guadalupe
20. In ___ Signo
21. Biblical liar
22. ___ of Contrition
23. Biblical liar
24. Jesus was crucified between
27. Patron saint of beer brewers
28. ___ Stein
29. Altar perfume
30. Vocational
31. Genesaret, for one (Lk 5:1)
32. Jesus found Nathanael under two of these

EASIER THE FIRST:
The shaded Y and the six letters surrounding it spell ADVANTAGE, which matches one of the clues below. In the same way, find a 7-letter word for each of the remaining clues. Keep track of the center letter for each answer you find.

1. diversity VARIETY-Y
2. two-wheeler
3. semi-solid protein
4. tiny canned fish
5. clearness
6. in place of something
7. tooth doctor

Now find the BUZZWORD for this puzzle by unscrambling all 7 of the center letters to spell the answer to this clue: ___ of Contrition

LEFT: Fill all empty squares so that the numbers 1 to 9 appear exactly once in each row, column and 3x3 box, and the sum of the numbers in each area is equal to the clue in the area’s top-left corner.
The Southwest Kansas Catholic April 12, 2020 Page 23

**Copies Still Available!**

“Catholic Place Names in Kansas” by Tim Wenzl, is a 145-page book chronicling more than 300 communities and geographic sites bearing a name associated with the Catholic faith, in particular names of saints, popes, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars; religious sisters, nuns, explorers, frontiersmen, and ordinary Catholics.

This amazing gazetteer documents the establishment of Catholic settlements in Kansas, and how many Catholics contributed to the history of the state.

Contact the author at twenzl@dcdiocese.org for an autographed copy for $24 (includes postage). Can also be purchased on amazon.com or barnesandnoble.com.

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**Word Search**

**“M” IS FOR MARTYR**

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**Movie Reviews**

Laughter eases anxiety, heals the spirit

The humor of Pope Francis

The following is an excerpt from an article presented by Alive Publishing.

The joy of holy people springs from the depths of their being. Indeed, it is their being,’ writes Timothy Radcliffe.

Pope Francis would seem to prove him right, but then, St. Francis of Assisi whose moniker the pope chose, was a man of exuberant joy. Cardinal Basil Hume, when Abbot of Ampleforth, once counselled his monks: “Take life seriously. Take God seriously. But don’t, please don’t, take yourselves too seriously.” From his very first days as pope, Francis has shown he has a sense of humor, which is one of the ways he reveals God’s love.

Humor is one of the most important things in everyday life. It is through humor that we can really see and appreciate the best and most beautiful things in life: love and friendship. Indeed, scientific research has suggested that people feel less pain after a good laugh, because it may cause the body to release chemicals that act as a natural painkiller.

Professor Robin Dunbar of Oxford University, who led research published in 2011, believes that uncontrollable laughter releases chemicals called endorphins into the body which, as well as generating mild euphoria, also dull pain. Anthropologists believe that laughter dates back millions of years, we were laughing long before we were verbally communicating; indeed, babies learn to laugh before they learn to speak. At its base, humor is a connection between people that goes far beyond language.

Professor of psychology and neuroscience, Robert R. Provine, has said, “We laugh 30 times as much when we’re with other people than we do when we are alone. Laughing is not a solo activity.” Laughter then, it would seem, is about community and bonding.

A day or two after the election of Pope Francis we began to hear stories about his sense of humor. There’s the one about how he turned to his fellow cardinals after his election and said impassively, “May God forgive you for what you have done.” The pope’s spontaneity was publicly revealed when he cracked two jokes after his very first Angelus in front of thousands. In fact, if you type “the humor of Pope Francis” into an online search engine, there are numerous examples of quips he has made and anecdotes about his sense of humor: Archbishop Mario Poli, who succeeded him in Buenos Aires, told an Argentine news agency that on a visit to Rome, Pope Francis joked that he hadn’t moved into the plush papal apartments because he was worried about getting mugged; in July last year he joked with the crowd at the Basilica of the Madonna of Aparecida during a visit to Brazil asking their permission to speak Spanish instead of “Brazilian”; and in 2013 Pope Francis appeared at the Vatican and put on a red nose to congratulate a couple getting married there who were from the Rainbow Association Marco Iagulli Onlus, a charity which brings clown therapy to sick children.

On one Valentine’s Day, 25,000 people who were engaged to be married were invited to a gathering with Pope Francis in St. Peter’s Square where the Pope delivered a mostly improvised speech to the couples, and underscored his point that they should not be afraid of the difficulties that they might encounter during their married life with a mother-in-law joke: ”We all know the perfect family does not exist. The perfect husband does not exist and the perfect wife does not exist,” he said. Then, after pausing as if for comic effect, he added: “Let’s not even talk about perfect mothers-in-law.” The crowd roared with laughter.

As it says in the book of Ecclesiastes: “There is a season for everything, a time for every occupation under heaven.” Indeed, it is written that there is “A time for tears, a time for laughter; a time for mourning, a time for dancing.” (Eccl 3:1-8).

The pope’s sense of humor is very special and has much to teach us. Pope Francis is probably the most humble and accessible Pope in modern history. He is a keen Twitter user himself and regularly posting tweets on his own feeds in nine languages which boosts more than 10 million followers. It would seem that he is genuinely funny and laughs easily.

Pope Francis moves through life with the blessedness of a man who knows that even if he’s the Supreme Pontiff, his life and fate is not a solo act and it is not a solo act.” Laughter when we are alone. Laughing is not a solo activity.” Laughter then, it would seem, is about community and bonding.

Italian priest makes social media gaffe while live-streaming Mass

With so much bad news coming from the lockdown in Italy during the Covid-19 pandemic, we all need a bit of light relief.

An Italian priest in Salerno has come to our rescue by live-streaming Mass to the faithful on Facebook but forgetting to turn off the cartoon filters on his smartphone.

Father Paolo Longo, parish priest at the Church of S. Pietro e S. Benedetto di Polla, has made headlines around the world and the video has gone viral in recent days.

Throughout the 45-minute Mass, Don Paolo appears wearing various animated guises including as an astronaut, gangster, cat and wizard. At one point he even sports a big pair of googly eyes. Unaware that he had activated the filters himself, the annoyed priest believed he was the victim of a prank. “The person who keeps ‘drawing’ on my face obviously likes to make jokes,” he said.

Afterwards however, when it was pointed out to him that he was the one to blame for the filters, he laughed off the funny mistake which was of course made in good faith.