

# Los Pequeños Pepper

*Publication of Los Pequeños de Cristo*

February 2006

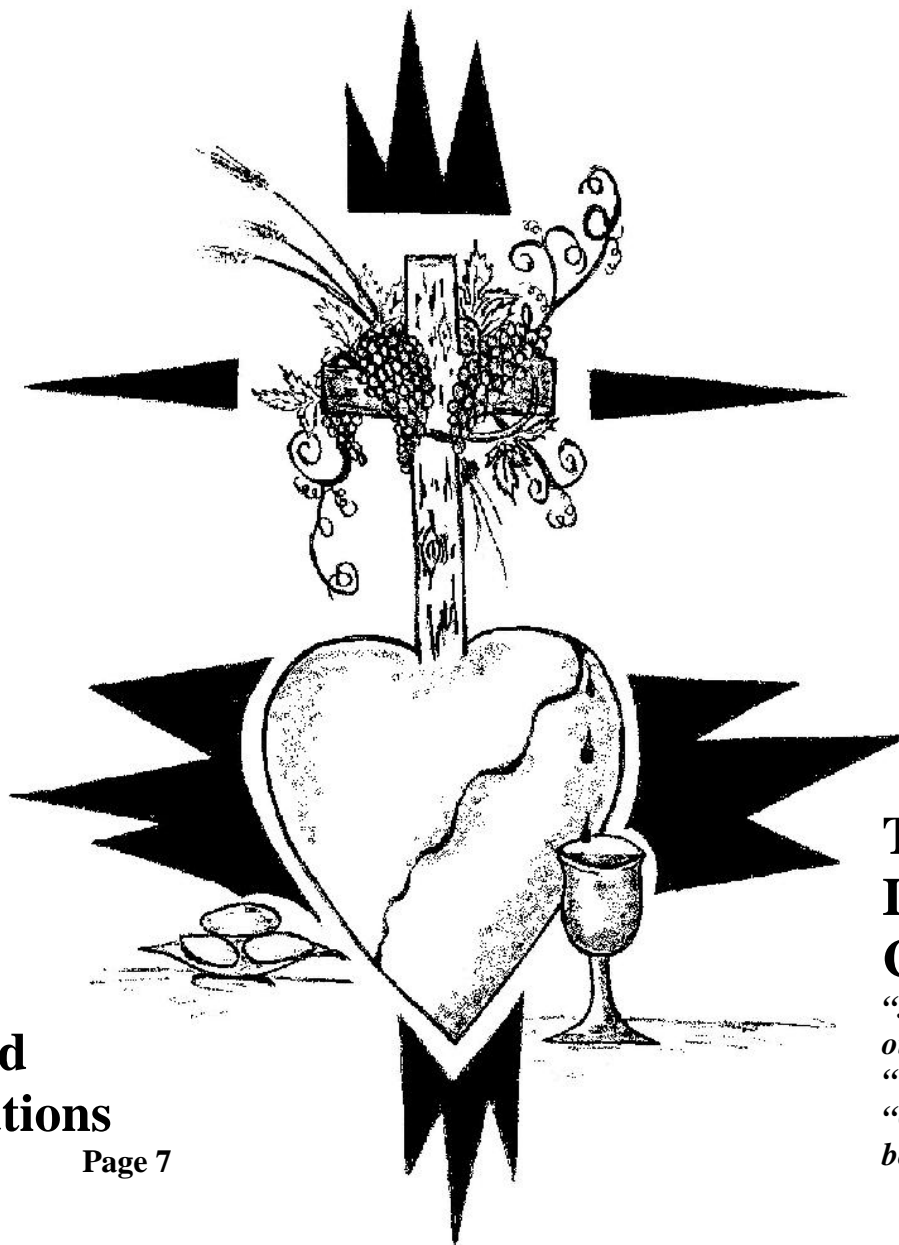
## Retreating into the Darkness

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Anarchy? Idolatry?  
Or just another  
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*“Just kick ‘em  
out!”  
“Who?”  
“Catholic wanna  
be’s, that’s who!”*

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*Cover: Sacred Heart,  
By Frances Castillo*

# *Los Pequeños Pepper*

*Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo*

*February 2006*

*Volume 8, Number 2*

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Newsletter of Los Pequeños de Cristo  
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*We are an Archdiocesan-wide Catholic lay organization committed to a charitable defense of the Catholic Faith by means of education, communication, and prayer. We are devoted to the Roman Catholic Magisterium, the Holy Father, and to the bishops and clergy in union with him. Our members believe what the Church believes and we promote what the Church teaches. To this end, we believe that no individual, whether cleric or lay person, has the right to alter the substance of the gospel message or moral truths which have been inerrantly and infallibly held by the Catholic Church since Her founding.*

# Retreating into the Darkness

*Catechizing nonsense during 2005*

By Stephanie Block

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe lists several retreat centers under the heading of “Other Catholic Resources” in its *2004 Directory*. Three of these are also listed on the Archdiocese’s website – one with a link to outdated information.

The primary sources of advertising for these retreat centers are through *People of God* (the archdiocesan monthly paper), through the *PMD Express* (an inter-archdiocesan mailing that lists activities supported by or through various archdiocesan departments), through the *Catholic Communicator* (a wrap around for the weekly bulletins of many parishes), and through the Internet.

With so much archdiocesan support, one would expect some oversight of the programs. Catholic institutions exist, after all, to evangelize and catechize Catholics in *Catholicism*.

The reality, however, is that some of these retreat centers are equal opportunity resources, available to – and disseminating – a wide range of faiths and philosophies. The table below presents a *sampling* of problematic events that occurred at these centers during 2005. It does not identify *every* problematic event nor does it indicate authentically Catholic activities. Material in brackets shows one or two places that advertised the retreat.



Canossian Retreat Center



Center for Action and Contemplation

**Canossian Spirituality Center:** run by Canossian Sisters

- January 26, 2005: Praying the Labyrinth [Internet]
- March 22-24, 2005: Labyrinth Lenten Retreat [*People of God* 2/05; 3/05]
- **Ongoing First Tuesdays** beginning September 2005: A Day on Centering Prayer [*People of God* 9/05 & *Catholic Communicator* 11/27/05; 12/11/05]
- **Ongoing First Wednesdays** beginning September 2005: Praying the Labyrinth [*People of God* 9/05 & *Catholic Communicator* 11/27/05; 12/11/05]

**Center for Action and Contemplation (CAC);** run by Fr. Richard Rohr, OFM founding director of the Center. All profit from Rohr’s books and lectures goes to the Franciscans of the New Mexico Province.

- December 31, 2004- January 2, 2005: *The Shape of God* with Richard Rohr and Cynthia Beaugeault. CAC website carries Beaugeault talk, “Why Feminizing the Trinity Won’t Work A Metaphysical Perspective,” in which she concludes: “If the feminist dilemma is to be satisfactorily resolved, the real task before us is to have the courage to let go of the Trinity as Christianity’s theological ace of clubs (using it only to prove that a human being was fully God), and to approach it instead in its cosmically subtle role as an ordering and revealing principle, of which Christ is its culminating expression.” [*PMD Express* 12/04 & 1/05; also *Aquinas Newman Center Parish Bulletin* 11/14/04 & 11/21/04; CAC website: [www.cacradicalgrace.org](http://www.cacradicalgrace.org)]

**Madonna Retreat and Conference Center (Catholic Center):** run by the Archdiocese of Santa Fe in Albuquerque and advertised on the Archdiocesan website without providing retreat schedule information.

- February 4-6, 2005: *Yoga On and Off the Mat - A Wisdom and Wellness Weekend*. The weekend included “yoga for all levels, meditation, breathing techniques, mind-body practices, time for silence and reflecting, and vegetarian meals.” [[yogasimpleandsacred.com/allretreats.htm](http://yogasimpleandsacred.com/allretreats.htm)]
- March 26-27, 2005: Mexican American Cultural Center, hub of Liberation Theology in North America [*PMD Express* 4/05]
- April 21-26, 2005: *Vipassana Buddhism - Five-day silent retreat on Radical Acceptance*, lead by Tara Brach, a Vipassana teacher and founder of the Insight Meditation Community in Washington DC, and James Baraz, a founder of Spirit Rock Meditation Center in the CA bay area with thirty-years of Vipassana practice influenced by the Advaita and Dzochen traditions. [Albuquerque Vipassana Sangha - [www.cs.unm.edu/~richards/sangha/previous\\_retreats.html](http://www.cs.unm.edu/~richards/sangha/previous_retreats.html)]

**Dominican Ecclesial Institute:** run by Dominicans

- November 16, 2005: Fr. Robindra Martin Ganeri, OP speaking on *God in Ramanuja and Aquinas*. Ramanuja was an 11<sup>th</sup> century mystic who sought initiation into the sacred Mantra of eight letters, *Om Namō Narayanaya*. Instructed to keep his knowledge secret, Ramanuja wanted everyone to “enjoy the eternal bliss of Lord Narayana. He realized that the Mantra was very powerful. He immediately called all people, irrespective of caste and creed, to assemble before the temple. He stood on top of the tower above the front gate of the temple, and shouted out the sacred Mantra to all of them at the top of his voice.” Though he knew he was courting trouble for his act, Ramanuja said: “I will gladly suffer the tortures of hell myself if millions of people could get salvation by hearing the Mantra through me.” [Sri Swami Sivananda, “Ramanuja,” [www.dlshq.org/saints/ramanuja.htm](http://www.dlshq.org/saints/ramanuja.htm); *PMD Express* 10/05]

**The Spiritual Renewal Center:** run by Dominicans [Archdiocesan website: linked to outdated information]

- January 7-9, 2005: Unity Santa Fe – “Unity is a religious movement that began over a century ago. In the 1880's Charles and Myrtle Fillmore, co-founders of Unity, began to work with some new ideas that they had found about life.... If you are not healthy and happy, it can only be because you have separated yourself from God in mind -- the only place you can separate yourself from God and God's good. You have only to reunite in mind with God, and your life is certain to be full and fulfilling.” [excerpt from Unity Santa Fe website, [www.unitysantafe.org/aboutunity.html](http://www.unitysantafe.org/aboutunity.html); *People of God* 1/05]
- January 14-16, 2005: Yoga Retreat [*People of God* 1/05]
- January 20, 2005: *Experimental Counseling* with Gretchen O’Hara, a member of the Center for Interpersonal Growth, promoting “Carl Rogers’ person-centered philosophy of self determination and self responsibility in collaboration with others.” [excerpt from Center for Interpersonal Growth website [www.person-centered.org](http://www.person-centered.org); *People of God* 1/05]
- January 21-23: Finding God’s Word in Dreams [*People of God* 1/05]

*...[S]ome of these retreat centers are equal opportunity resources, available to – and disseminating – a wide range of faiths and philosophies.*

***With such  
widespread  
spiritual  
ignorance about  
Catholic teaching,  
why does Church  
leadership satisfy  
itching ears with a  
salve of poison  
ivy? Who's in  
charge here?***

- January 28-30, 2005: Reiki 1 [*People of God* 1/05]
- February 19-20, 2005: Buddhists Silent Vipassana Retreat [*People of God* 2/05]
- March 18-20, 2005: Church Unity – Santa Fe [see Jan 7-9; Center newsletter, Spring 2005]
- April 1-3: Centering Prayer Retreat [*People of God* 4/05]
- April 7, 14, 21, 28, 2005: Tai Chi Class [*People of God* 4/05]
- April 22-24: Course in Miracles Retreat. From volume 3 of the *Course*: “Helpers are given you in many forms.... Their names are legion, but we will not go beyond the names the course itself employs. ...The name of *Jesus* is the name of one who was a man but saw the face of Christ in all his brothers and remembered God. So he became identified with *Christ*, a man no longer, but at one with God. The man was an illusion....” [*People of God* 4/05]
- May 6-8, 2005: Meditation Practice (Qigong) Retreat. Practitioners of Qigong claim: “Qigong is a self-healing art that combines movement and meditation. Visualizations are employed to enhance the mind/body connection and assist healing.” [Center newsletter, Spring 2005]
- July 22-27, 2005: Enneagram Institute Workshop & Training [Center newsletter, summer 2005]
- September 9-11, 2005: Yoga Retreat [*People of God* 9/05]
- September 23-25, 2005: Enneagram Retreat [*People of God* 9/05]
- September 30-October 2, 2005: Reiki II Training Retreat [*People of God* 9/05]
- October 7-9, 2005: *The Feminine Aspect of God* [*People of God* 10/05]
- November 4-5, 2005: Centering Prayer [*People of God* 11/05]

**Santa Fe Institute for Spirituality:** Founded by Christian Brothers and operating, according to an Institute brochure, with “the encouragement and approval of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe.”

- July 8-9, 2005: CTA’s FutureChurch, Christine Schenk – Mary Magdalen [Institute brochure; *PMD Express* 6-7/05]

The faithful are justified in asking why these programs are permitted on Catholic property. With such widespread spiritual ignorance about Catholic teaching, why does Church leadership satisfy itching ears with a salve of poison ivy? Who’s in charge here? All reasonable questions. ★

# THE MASS AND THREE ADORATIONS: Angel, Shepherd, King

By Marie P. Loehr

*“Venite, adoremus! Come, let us adore Him...”*  
- “Adeste Fideles,” *The St. Gregory Hymnal*

The three adorations of the Nativity, angels, shepherds, kings, appear in the Mass both implicitly and explicitly. They teach us how we are to approach Christ in the Mass.

Many modern commentators on the Mass stress the Mass as a simple meal where we share a communal memorial of the Last Supper in common brotherhood with Christ. These commentators abhor any suggestion of the placement of the tabernacle as central in the sanctuary. They stress the signification of the altar as a table, nothing particularly sacred. They minimize the consecration as central to the Mass, and transubstantiation to mere sign or static memorial. They work to minimize or eliminate the adoration of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine at the Consecration. They banish adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Benediction to the janitor’s closet. To be put out with the discarded daily trash, perhaps?

Of course these same commentators denigrate the opening of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke as “Infancy Narratives:” the fabulous mythic ornament that all credulous ancient authors used to describe the birthday of some royal personage. This contradicts Catholic teaching, past and present, of course.

The chapters of the Gospels dedicated to describing Christ’s birth and the events surrounding it, before and after, are essential not only to our understanding of who Christ IS, but how we are come into His presence.

We are come before Him, as “Adeste Fideles” says, “...let us adore Him, as the “Tantum Ergo” proclaims, “...down in adoration falling.” As noted in a previous column, adoration does indeed involve either a partial or a total prostration, a genuflection, kneeling or falling on our faces before He Who IS. In fact, as Moses and Peter both discovered, to come into the presence and a personal awareness of the living God is to find prostration exigent.

God confronts our emptiness with His fullness. His Otherness, His Being crashes into our contingency and sinfulness like a mountain falling on us. One way or the other, we cannot help but fall down before Him, and adore in astonished love or appalled fear. Those who do not understand this, who dismiss this, do not know God.

These three strands of Christmas adoration are woven through the Mass implicitly in the persons involved in the celebration of the Mass. Who participates in the celebration of the Mass?

To enter into the church and participate in Mass is not only to be present here and now. It is to enter into the courts of heaven.



The angels have a particular role to play in the Mass. St. Paul speaks of their concern for the proper decorum and dignity of the liturgy in 1 Cor. 11, verse 10: he says it is right for a woman to have a sign of authority over her head, "because of the angels." The Confraternity footnote adds that this means the angels who assist in the liturgy want all to be done properly. We remember in Isaiah 6 that the Seraphim in his vision veil themselves in adoration of the Most High.

In short, although invisible to our bodily eyes, the angels are present with us at Mass, assist at Mass, and fall down in adoration, veiling themselves before the glory of God, assisting the priest in carrying our prayers and offerings from the temporal altar to the heavenly Holy of Holies. We join them in singing: "Glory to God in the highest," and the "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. Heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest!" of Isaiah's vision.

Where do we find shepherds at Mass, kneeling down in response to the angelic invitation to seek the Babe in the manger?

The shepherds are very much present at the Mass in the persons and presence of bishop, priest, deacon. These are the ordained shepherds who guide the flock of the baptized. These are the men who have heard the angelic *gloria*, and answered it. The answer is their vocation to priesthood and its rigors, as shepherds and fathers to his people. Here is the fullest witness to the adoration and testimony of the original shepherds.

And the kings? Where do we see the adoration of the Wise Men and Kings from the East, in the Mass?

The kings represent all the people at Mass, with all our worldly occupations and concerns and cares. The kings represent the laity, who live in the world, but who must see beyond the merely temporal condition and seek God in himself, as well as in his Creation and its goods. This is the kings' response to and adoration of Wisdom and Sovereignty. Thus in our worship, we represent the three wise kings. We bring to the altar the gold of our work and its profits. We bring the wealth of our own effort and God's generosity to us, spiritual and material. We offer the interior gold of our prayers and works, joys and sufferings. We bring the frankincense of our faith, hope and charity, our various ministries carried out in all our professions and milieus: whatever, whenever, wherever, however – all our lives in nature and grace is the frankincense of the kings, rising up to God. We bring the myrrh of our fears and failures, sins and repentance, purgation and transfiguration. We bring the preservative of our humility and reparation to God. The Offertory and Communion are most particularly the moments when we re-member the adoration of the three wise kings at Mass.

Three temptations, three adorations: point, counterpoint to ponder in our hearts as we journey from the oasis and light of Christmas into the desert and dark night of Lent... \*



# Around the World

## Birth control in Mexico

The Population Research Institute (PRI) asked Mexican women what, specifically, they needed in their health care. Despite a program formulated by Mexico's National Population Council (CONAPO) in consultation with the U.N. Population Fund (UNFPA) to pressure acceptance of sterilization or IUDs, when PRI conducted a survey of women in Guadalajara, a Mexican city of 4 million people, the women expressed concern about disease prevention, potable water, maternal and neonatal care, and domestic abuse – but little interest in contraception and sterilization. “The Mexican women we surveyed would prefer almost any kind of health care to the kind of ‘either-IUD-or-Ligation’ programs that they have been forced the past few decades.”

PRI observed: “the people of Mexico have a far better understanding of the differences between Natural Family Planning and reproductive health care than the controllers. And they vastly prefer a method over which they have intimate control - NFP - to the permanent, or semi-permanent methods imposed by the National Population Council and the U.N. Population Fund. ....Their interest in NFP centered on the fact that they themselves, and not some distant, even foreign, government agency, would determine the number and spacing of their children.”

# Around the Nation

## Priest announces during Mass he is gay and leaving priesthood for “loving relationship”

The pastor of Holy Savior Catholic parish in Marathon, Ontario, Rev. Scott Gale, announced to his parishioners during Masses on New Years Day that he is a homosexual and can no longer stand the Church's requirement that he remain celibate. Citing his “longing for a loving relationship,” Gale told his parishioners that he was quitting. “It has become increasingly difficult for me to be an official representative of a Church which does not accept and value my sexual orientation,” he said, reading from a 2-page letter.

According to the *Chronicle Herald*, a local paper, Bishop Fred Colli was aware Rev. Gale's decision. The Bishop was reported to have said: “I admire (Gale) for having the courage to say, ‘This is who I am.’ ...I have accepted his decision to resign and I sincerely hope that he will find the happiness and peace he is looking for in his life.” He also said that Gale could have remained an active priest as a gay man if he had reaffirmed his commitment to celibacy.

In August 2003, LifeSiteNews.com reported that the *Toronto Star* published a homily of Gale's in which he excoriated Church teaching on human sexuality, saying that he hoped for a “re-examination of the Church's attitudes regarding homosexuality and those persons with a homosexual orientation.” Bishop Colli took no action at the time.

## New US Nuncio

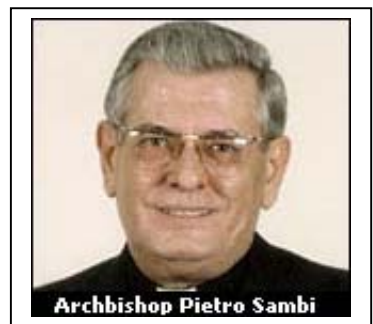
Pope Benedict XVI appointed **Archbishop Pietro Sambì** as the new Apostolic Nuncio to the United States. Sambì was born in Italy and was ordained a priest in 1964. He joined the Vatican diplomatic service in 1969 and served in the Nunciatures or Apostolic Delegations to Cameroon, Jerusalem, Cuba, Algeria, Nicaragua, Belgium, and India. In 1991 he was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Indonesia and in 1998 was appointed Apostolic Nuncio to Israel and Apostolic Delegate to Jerusalem and Palestine.

Both Jews and Palestinians regarded Archbishop Sambì as a courageous, uncompromising voice for peace, and as scrupulously fair with both sides. He negotiated to free the Basilica of the Nativity in Bethlehem after it became the site of a standoff between Palestinian militants and Israeli forces.

Archbishop Sambì is particularly interested in priestly formation and Catholic higher education and, as Nuncio, he has involved himself in priestly formation in all of the countries he served.



**Bishop Fred Colli**



**Archbishop Pietro Sambì**

## **Bishop Thomas Doran, Bishop of the Diocese of Rockford, on the New Instruction**

[After quoting extensively from the *Instruction Concerning The Criteria For The Discernment Of Vocations With Regard To Persons With Homosexual Tendencies In View Of Their Admission To The Seminary And To Holy Orders*, Bishop Doran writes:]

***....As a bishop of the Church I cannot admit to the seminary or to Holy Orders those who***  
***a. practice homosexuality,***  
***b. present deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or***  
***c. support the so-called gay culture.***

**Bishop Thomas Doran,  
Bishop of the Diocese of  
Rockford**

“....As a bishop of the Church I cannot admit to the seminary or to holy orders those who (a) practice homosexuality, (b) present deep-seated homosexual tendencies, or (c) support the so-called gay culture. In this it seems that the Holy See is most wise. A candidate who clearly falls into one or more of those three categories cannot be admitted to the seminary or advanced to the priesthood. In order to make these determinations, those charged with the admission of candidates to the seminary and to Holy Orders must use all of the resources at their disposal to examine each prospective candidate individually and to make a determination based upon the information legitimately obtained. The Code of Canon Law, can.1052 §3, states that if “the bishop doubts for specific reasons that a candidate is suitable to receive Orders he is not to promote him.”

“I take up so much time and space on this issue because all of this has been so horribly mutilated in both the secular and religious press. It is important for each devout Catholic to be sure of what has been required by the Holy See before forming an opinion about it. In our devolving society, evermore dedicated to an oppressive moral relativism, the setting of any limits is regarded as intrinsically unjust.

“But this age will pass as other hedonist ages have. What must remain constant is the teaching of the Church which, left in the hands of the apostles and their successors by our Lord himself, has always taken seriously its duty to lay hands not lightly on any man so as to be sure that those called to the priesthood are, insofar as it is possible for humankind to determine, apt for bearing the responsibilities they are asked to discharge. All of these things give us added reason to pray for seminarians and priests; first, so that God will call them in sufficient number to do His work, and then that these candidates may show themselves equal to the high calling to which they aspire.”

## **Around the Archdiocese**

### **Madonna Retreat Center 2006**

The flier reads: Retreat with Taj Inayat, A Three Day Retreat in the Desert for Sufi Order Mureeds, Feb 2-5, 2006, Madonna Retreat Center. “Taj,” the flier explains, “is the Vice President of the Sufi Order International, and the long time spiritual companion of Pir Vilayat. She is a co-founder of Sufi Retreats, a process of unfoldment based on the teachings of Hazrat -Inayat Khan and the insights of modern psychology. It is time... to go within and drink freshness from our deep inner Being... to awaken and behold the wondrous mystery around us... to practice the art of self intimacy...to unveil our hearts and become shy again... to look with new eyes, to hear with new ears. To experience our never-born, never-dying soul marrying our perishable personhood, thus giving birth to the Divine-Human.”

God have mercy.

### **Archbishop Michael Sheehan Celebrates Pro-Life Mass**

On the Feast of the Holy Innocents, December 28, 2005, a Pro-life Mass and Rosary prayer vigil was held across the street from Planned Parenthood on San Mateo. Archbishop Sheehan and Father Rick Zerwas celebrated Mass for the special intention of ending abortion. \*



**Archbishop Michael Sheehan and  
Rev. Fr. Rick Zerwas lead a Rosary  
Prayer Vigil for an end to abortion.**

# Ite Missa Est

By Jason Moser

Every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation, over one billion Catholics attend the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass. Some even venture into the pious realm of attending daily Mass. However, how many of us know what the Mass means to us in our Catholic lives? How many Catholics take the time to study the vocation given to each of us when the priest or deacon pronounces the charge at the end of Mass? For most Catholics attendance at Mass is an obligation that either we meet or suffer the pains of mortal sin. Some Catholics attend Mass because they were raised to do so. However, if we are to fully actualize the Mass in our lives then we must fulfill the call of the Second Vatican Council and live our lives as an extension of the Holy Mass. While it is true that going to Mass on the appointed days is an obligation, it is much more. It is in and through the Sacred Liturgy that we encounter the *Sacra Doctrina* of our faith.

While at Mass we enter into the abiding Pasch of Christ. Because the Lord was both God and Man all of His actions were both in time and outside of time and as a result we are able to tap into this timeless mystery and actualize the saving graces that were won for us on the Cross. As we have been told countless times it is at the sacrifice of the Mass that we kneel at the foot of the Cross and behold the Lamb upon His throne. This is all made possible by the Incarnation – the timeless Word of the Father taking flesh to Himself in time.

Yet the Mass does not end or even begin with the Cross. Through the liturgy, we are taken on the path that was walked by the Patriarchs and Prophets of old. We rejoice with David in his psalms and we weep with sorrow for our sins and the sins of others as the Israelites did when taken into captivity on account of their many faults against God. We partake in all of these events at every liturgy with the purpose of pointing us to our salvation that was won at the price of His sacred blood as He hung upon the Cross. But the Lord walked with His people as He walks with us now in our liturgical journey.

As the gifts are brought to the altar, the fruits of our labor are placed upon the paten. Wheat and grapes given by God but made into bread and wine by human labor gives us a sense of our participation in the economy of salvation. By this action we are true co-workers with the Lord in the life of grace. And when the priest lifts up the Sacred Victim we view in awe the means of our salvation and exclaim “My Lord and my God!”

After the reception of our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament is received by those who are properly disposed the Mass quickly comes to a close ... or so it seems. In the English language we are treated to a closure of the Liturgy. The words are spoken, “The Mass is ended; go in peace.” Unfortunately this closing misses one of the most crucial aspects of the Mass. From this ending it would seem that the sacred act that has just taken place has an end and that our obligation is fulfilled and we run to our cars to escape the parking lot. Yet the words in Latin are, “*Ite missa est*,” Go; it is sent! Instead of an ending, we find a beginning. We have gone to Mount Tabor with the Lord to be transfigured and are charged to bring this holy and sacred gift of Christ, whom we have just received. We are now Moses, with the stone tablets descending Sinai to bring the Word of God to the people. We are now in solidarity with Aaron who was to minister to the people. And most importantly, we are now like Our Blessed Mother – Theotokos (God Bearer) – and must present the Lord within us to the people around us. This sending is most important because it teaches us that our Catholic life does not cease when we leave the property of the Church. We now bear Our Lord within us and are charged with a sacred task to share Him with all we meet on our mortal journey. We must infuse all of society with the saving actions found in the Divine Liturgy. As is said so beautifully in the Byzantine Liturgy, we cast away our fear as we “lay aside all earthly cares” and in emptying our hearts of the trifles of life we are empowered to respond in full measure to this obligation gifted to us as we are sent.

The priest is told to celebrate this Mass as if it were his first Mass, as if it were his last Mass. Such advice should extend to each of us. We, too, should pray this Mass as if it were our first Mass, as if it were our last Mass. We must take the time to rest in the lessons being given us in the liturgy. We must listen as the Apostles teach us about the Christ they knew and loved. Here the Fathers explain the mysteries of the Faith as the martyrs give their testimony of blood. By this, our experience of the liturgy, we should not fear our calling to be different than the world. We should be able to say that we are truly Catholics because of the Mass and not Catholics because we go to Mass.\*

## Latin Mass

Archdiocese of  
Santa Fe

Fr. Millan Garcia,  
celebrant

Sunday: 12 Noon  
San Ignacio  
Church  
1300 Walter NE  
Albuquerque, NM

For more information:  
Ph. (505) 720-5277

(High Mass every  
first and third  
Sunday of the  
month)

# The Inclusive Church

*Let's be honest*

By Stephanie Block

It doesn't matter who, but the speaker was a priest of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe and the remark was occasioned by a woman making inquiries about converting to Catholicism.

Referring to her, Father told his congregation during a weekday Mass, "I don't know why anyone would want to enter the Church, because it isn't *inclusive*, you know."

That isn't true, of course. The Church is the most inclusive body on earth, welcoming – yearning for – every man and woman, from every tribe and nation, from every station of life, and from every conceivable background. Those who aren't in the Church because they can't accept the idea of moral purity, Trinitarian doctrine, the Primacy of Peter, or a given discipline, exclude themselves – not because the Church wouldn't have them but because they won't have the Church.

To say "the Church isn't inclusive" is code for a *feminista* and/or a pro-homosexual agenda. What rankles Father, if you pushed him to explain himself, isn't that the Church excludes anyone – because it doesn't – but that it isn't officially and openly ordaining gays and is very officially *not* ordaining women.

Don't for one minute imagine that Father is advocating the preposterous idea of a universally open priesthood in which anyone who "feels a call" may be ordained. Not at all. There are all sorts of people he would fight tooth and nail to keep from being priests. The issue isn't open ordination but the nature of gender.

Listen, before we misunderstand one another, this isn't a call for anyone's collar. It's a call for intellectual honesty. The history of the Church throughout the centuries has been amazingly well documented by its lovers and its detractors. There may have been instances of women seeking priesthood, and instances of a community here and there admitting all manner of "irregular" sexual behavior, but they're oddities. One can argue that Catholicism is wrong to not have accepted these aberrations but one cannot argue that the Church *did* accept them. It didn't.

Do you imagine yourself a reformer, Father, seeking to restore the Church to some imaginary golden age when Jonathan and David were more than friends and Mary Magdalene was the first pope? It never existed. Or do you whisper to yourself that you are prophetic – a midwife to a new church with ideology that is not, and never has been, in the mind of Christ's Church? You are neither a reformer nor a prophet, but are milking the Church for your livelihood, for your social standing, and for Her Eucharist while disdaining Her teaching. It's an untenable and hypocritical position.

The irony is cosmic. You have chosen for yourself membership in and service to a Church that you deny another. Decrying "exclusiveness," you have driven away one who came to you, seeking inclusion. Sad. \*



## Letter to the Editor

...The last Pepper is a good example of your hatefulness towards homosexuals. You talk as if homosexuals were the only people who are pro-abortion, when in fact the majority of people who believe it's a woman's right to choose are heterosexual. - HM [This is a reference to Cecilia H. Martin's "A Right Way of Relating," *Pepper*, January 2006. In her article, Martin asks: "Are homosexual/gay priests unable to connect emotionally with the reproductive act that produces a child who may become an abortion statistic?"]

**Martin responds:** I wasn't saying homosexuals are *pro-abortion* (although most gay and lesbian groups are for sexual freedoms in all respects), I was asking if homosexuals are unable to emotionally connect with women in crisis pregnancies and therefore do not become involved in the pro-life cause. HM switched the subject from being unconnected to the pro-life cause to being pro-abortion. Two different things.

**The Pepper editor adds:** One must also point out that clergy and religious have a good deal of influence. Parishes with strong pro-life leadership have fewer couples contracepting and better support systems for women in "crisis" pregnancies. It's fair to ask why some – too many – priests fail to exert this influence, particularly as this issue isn't "out there," in the amorphous "community," but one that concretely and irrevocably touches the majority of people in every congregation.

For the record, there are some gay pro-life groups. The Pro-Life Alliance of Gays and Lesbians (PLAGAL) began in 1990 from local groups in Washington DC and Minneapolis and has marched in several Washington DC Marches for Life.

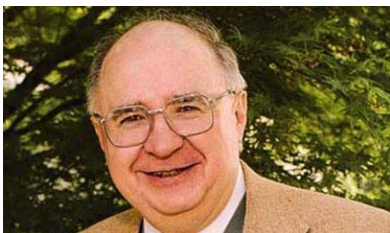


## More Around the Archdiocese: Fr. Michael Himes

The Archdiocese of Santa Fe's Office of Formation for Christian Service is offering a 7-week video course titled *Catholic Beliefs* by Fr. Michael Himes as a "good formation for the ministers in your parish." [January 2006 *PMD Express*]

It doesn't sound as though the formation will be particularly *Catholic*, however. Himes' problematic views are well documented. His book, *Doing the Truth in Love: Conversations about God, Relationships, and Service* (Paulist Press, 1995), was reviewed by *Catholics United for the Faith*, which found the following:

- In discussing the Trinity, Himes writes that we should "think of God not as a person but as a relationship between persons" (p. 16). However, the Church has always taught that God is personal, not just relational (cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 252).
- "There is no all-wise, all-powerful person named God who has a plan for us. God is not another person out there." (p. 55). Again, this contradicts a basic truth of the Faith, that God is three Persons wholly possessing one divine nature, i.e., He is personal. He is also almighty and all-knowing (Catechism, no 268). Scripture tells us that God does have a plan for us (Jer. 29:11). God



**Fr. Michael Himes**

***The Catechism lists four reasons for the Incarnation: to reconcile us with God, to show us God's love, to be a model of holiness for us, and to make us partakers in the divine life (nos. 457-460). All four reasons are for us. God became man for our sake, not His own.***

has a plan not only for us individually but for all of creation. He created the world in a state of journeying, and will see this journey completed through His divine providence (Catechism, no. 3 02).

- "...believe that you are of such extraordinary value that God has chosen to become what you are rather than remain in the form of God" (p. 31). Rather than pointing out man's need for salvation and God's gratuitous gift and self-donation, Fr. Himes presents God as choosing to become human simply because He wanted to be human. The Catechism lists four reasons for the Incarnation: to reconcile us with God, to show us God's love, to be a model of holiness for us, and to make us partakers in the divine life (nos. 457-460). All four reasons are for us. God became man for our sake, not His own.
- Fr. Himes makes service the central issue of faithful Christianity. While service certainly is important, it is not the sole issue of our faith nor the sole manner in which to carry out the faith. He does not encourage prayer or catechesis, just service to others. In fact, he claims that one can only know the truths of faith through service (cf. p. 20). The Catechism and the constant teaching of the Church, of course, maintains that divine revelation, which comes to us through Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, is necessary for a proper understanding of God. The truths about God come from Him, not from us.

After the Vatican's 1998 *Instruction on Certain Questions Regarding the Collaboration of the Lay Faithful in the Sacred Ministry of the Priest* (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) and Vatican agencies) was published, Himes was quoted by *The Tidings*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, as saying: "It's worse than wrong; it's stupid." (January 16, 1998). The Instruction was intended to curb abuses and answer questions that had arisen regarding the degree to which the laity may participate in the ministerial mission of the Church.

Charles A. Coulombe, a writer for the Los Angeles Lay Catholic Mission reviewed the video *Tradition*, which was written and narrated by Father Michael Himes. Coulombe makes the following observations:

- In the film, Father Himes compared the Church to a store which, in order to stay at the height of fashion, must always change.
- Tradition is not maintaining the Faith unchanged since the time of Christ ("as Catholics often said when I was growing up"), but altering practices and dogmas in accordance with time and place.
- Father Himes' view of the Communion of Saints is a "conversation" between those living here today and those who lived elsewhere and at other times....Indeed, said Himes, any manner of understanding the Faith in any given time and/or place is insufficient to grasp the "Mystery."
- The magisterium of the Church is not a body of clergy with "a privileged access to the Faith;" rather, all Catholics who have ever lived or who ever will live - the entirety of the People of God - define the Faith in what they believe and how they practice their religion.
- Father Himes sternly cautioned against defining the Faith by what's in a catechism.
- Himes quoted "the eminent Lutheran scholar, Jaroslav Pelikan, a professor at Yale University, who tells us that 'tradition is the living faith of the dead, while traditionalism is the dead faith of the living.'"

If Himes' video, *Catholic Beliefs*, follows the same pattern, the lay ministers of local parishes should be getting an excellent formation in Catholic dissent.\*

# Bishops Discuss Translation

*The Adoremus Bulletin* ([www.adoremus.org](http://www.adoremus.org)), *Online Edition*, December 2005-January 2006 carried a transcript of the US bishops' November 2005 discussion on the latest draft translation of the Order of Mass.

The discussion began with Bishop Donald Trautman of the Erie Diocese and Chair of Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy (BCL) explaining the work of his committee to assist the bishops in reviewing and eventually approving or emending proposed texts.

He summarized responses of the bishops to the texts up to this point, demonstrating a serious split among them, with 53% of the bishops finding the translations excellent or good and 47% finding them fair or poor. The difficulty they face in approving these texts is to balance fidelity of translation and other concerns raised by *Ratio Translationis* and *Liturgiam authenticam* with "pastoral" concerns. In the words of one bishop, despite the instruction of *Liturgiam authenticam* to the contrary: "The people own the present translation, even though it may be deficient..."

Then there was the question of authority. Some bishops seemed to feel that *Liturgiam authenticam* is an example of Roman interference in the life of the local church.

At this point, several bishops expressed concern that the BCL was usurping their responsibility to approve the translations. Bishop Allen Vigneron of Oakland, for example, noticed that panel recommendations often failed to reflect the bishops' suggestions.

Bishop Trautman defended the Committee's decisions to ignore those suggestions, arguing that unless there were doctrinal issues at stake, it was pastorally insensitive to change the "people's parts."

When Chicago's Cardinal George got the floor he retorted: "The principle that the people's parts should not be disturbed presupposes that you have an adequate translation. In the case of a number of people's parts right now the translation is not adequate." He wryly noted that when the bishops approved earlier, unofficial translations, there was no similar concern about changing the people's parts.

Bishop Carl Mengeling of Lansing was even more pointed: "When we think of the sensitive pastoral concerns, I'm concerned about, and I think many others are: is this a temporary compromise we're making? Is this going to surface again five years from now?" And further, "Does the sensitivity of the pastoral situation -- and we're all very aware of it with the low percentage of people coming to Mass, and how this is going to impact the ones who are still coming, and the rest of it. Does that justify this compromise, you know, when you try to make an equation of the two?"

Another said: "Thirty-five years ago we changed texts that had been in use for four hundred years. Now, that upset many people, but we did that for strong reasons. And I think we shouldn't say: 'Well, we're not going to do it now because that will upset people.' If we have defective translations, or translations that could be improved, I think we should do that now. Sort of bite the bullet. Get it done, and get it done right. And so we can live with that for a long period of time."

There will be no easy or swift resolution to the bishops' concerns; there is too much division among them. The *Adoremus* transcript of the bishops' November meeting makes this all too clear. But there's optimism expressed, as well: "I think this translation process should be an effort for us all to try to re-educate, not only ourselves, but our priests, and try to restore a little bit of unity. Our people put up with quite a bit of variation right now."

Amen!\*

## February Calendar

### Los Pequeños Monthly Meeting Friday, February 24, 2005:

6:30 PM – 9:00 PM.  
Call (505) 293-8006 for information.  
All members welcome.

### Pro-life Prayer:

Planned Parenthood Abortuary  
701 San Mateo Blvd.  
Catholic Knights Chapel: (505) 266-4100

12 noon, Thursday  
Mass at the Catholic Knights of America  
Chapel

Fr. Stephen Imbarrato  
For more information, call  
(505) 266-4100



*Please consider a  
donation to Los  
Pequeños.*



LPC still has several copies of Gerard Keene's book, *Creation Rediscovered: Evolution and the Importance of the Origins Debate*.

\$15/copy

Keane examines the two basic Evolution theories, the concept of "Special Creation," the discoveries of science, the fossil record, genetics, entropy, the age of the universe, pointers to a Creator, and the way evolutionary theory has infected Catholic thought.



### White Mass

Celebrated to honor physicians, dentists, medical students and healthcare professionals in their work with the sick.

Saturday, February 11, 2006 – 10 AM  
Our lady of the Annunciation Parish  
Call (505) 298-7533 or (505) 321-5283 for further information.