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Southern Cross a 'top achiever'

STAFF REPORTER

A LEADING publication specialising in marketing news and issues has identified *The Southern Cross* as one of South Africa's few newspapers to have maintained or increased their circulation at a time when most publications are rapidly losing readers.

Marketing Mix magazine featured *The Southern Cross* as one of its "Top Print Performers" of 2009, based on figures from the authoritative Audit Bureau of Circulation (ABC).

The other six weeklies included by *Marketing Mix* were the *Sunday Dispatch*, *Sunday Sun*, *Sondag Son*, *Isolezwe ngeSonto*, *Volksblad Saturday* and *Weekend Post*.

"What makes this all the more of an accomplishment is that *The Southern Cross* has a very limited distribution base. About 10% of our circulation consists of subscriptions and sales in Catholic bookshops; the rest is sales in the parishes," said *Southern Cross* editor Günther Simmermacher.

"Much of the credit must therefore go to all our friends who sell and promote *The Southern Cross* in their churches. That is the person who physically sells the newspaper, the priest who mentions articles of interest in a current issue at the end of the Mass, the person who unpacks the weekly parcels and counts the money, and so on."

Mr Simmermacher also thanked the newspaper's loyal readers, estimated to number around 45 000. "Some tell me that *The Southern Cross* is the only newspaper they bother reading. That is a huge investment of trust in our editorial team, for which we are very grateful."

Mr Simmermacher said he hoped circulation would grow further with the recent introduction of the digital version of the newspaper, which has received "only positive responses so far, with people mentioning its user-friendliness and appearance".



Local schoolchildren play football beneath power lines in Soweto. An investment service owned by the Christian Brothers has tried to persuade international hotel chains to watch out for trafficked children being exploited in their establishments.

PHOTO: DAVID GRAY, REUTERS/CNS

Hotels urged to act on sex slavery

BY MARK PATTISON

DURING the World Cup in South Africa, hotels are being asked to watch for signs of human trafficking, especially child trafficking.

The Christian Brothers Investment Service has contacted eight international hotel chains asking them to take steps to be on guard against human trafficking and children being forced into prostitution.

"The travel and lodging industry is well-positioned to help prevent human trafficking by collaborating and taking steps to stop the use of your hotels for these purposes," said a letter to hotel chains by Frank Coleman, executive vice-president of Christian Brothers Investment Services.

Steps that hotels can take to blunt sex trafficking, Mr Coleman said, include creating an ethical policy against commercial sexual exploitation of children, training hotel staff to help identify human trafficking, creating educational materials for guests, joining with government and social service agencies to stop the trade, and to report progress publicly. The letter was co-signed by 300 leaders of religious orders and institutes whose funds are managed by Christian Brothers Investment Services.

One problem in getting major hotel chains to sign on is that not all of them are publicly traded, according to Julie Tanner, assistant director of socially responsible investing for Christian Brothers Investment Services. Hilton Hotels is privately held, as is Best Western, and neither had responded.

Intercontinental, a British chain, gave what Ms Tanner termed "a non-response...only three sentences." The chain merely said it has a human rights policy and

didn't even address the issue of trafficking.

"We stay in these hotels," Ms Tanner said, noting that the religious orders represented by the letter's 300 signatories account for much business travel. "We want to be perceived as good corporate citizens."

Ms Tanner said Fair Trade in Tourism South Africa, an independent non-profit organisation that promotes equitable and sustainable tourism development in the country, has been working with the United Nations, the UN International Labour Organisation, and public relations powerhouse Saatchi & Saatchi to alert World Cup tourists to the consequences of trafficking.

Using advertisements and brochures to be placed in hotels, the materials warn guests against buying children for sex, or grooming children as sexual objects or commodities. "They are really highlighting the prosecution" aspect of trafficking, Ms Tanner said.

Christian Brothers Investment Services has even drafted letters that World Cup tourists can take to their hotel to prod the management to act.

"As a guest at your hotel, I wanted to share information and learn what you and your parent company are doing to protect human rights and educate your staff," the letter says—noting that the United Nations estimates that about 12 million people worldwide are victims of human trafficking—and recommending steps the hotel can take to deter trafficking.

"By taking these steps immediately, your hotel can signal your commitment to human rights at the World Cup," the guest letter says. "At the same time, I can feel comfortable I am giving my business to a responsible member of our local and global community."—CNS

New bishop for Oudtshoorn

BY MICHAEL RASSOOL

THE newly-appointed bishop of Oudtshoorn was visiting his sister in Bournemouth, England, when the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop James P Green, informed him of his appointment to South Africa's geographically largest diocese.

Fr Francisco (Frank) de Gouveia, a priest of the archdiocese of Cape Town, succeeds Bishop Edward Adams, who steps down after reaching the canonical age of 75, having served the diocese for 27 years.

Bishop-elect de Gouveia (pictured) said he does feel a bit daunted as he doesn't really know what lies ahead of him, noting that there is much to learn. "I feel a sense of both excitement and fear, although I don't really know which is which."



Bishop-elect de Gouveia said his experience of going to new parishes serves him well because, in a sense, it is about moving to a

different place where the same faith is lived out in a different situation. He is aware, however, that communities are more dispersed, which requires travelling from area to area.

The bishop-elect, whose last parish was Fish Hoek, said he had gone to Bournemouth after walking the Camino de Santiago de Compostela, the pilgrim route to the shrine of the apostle St James in north-west Spain, for the fifth time.

Bishop-elect de Gouveia, was born on June 11, 1951 in Cape Town, of Portuguese-speaking parents from Madeira, an island off the African coast.

He attended St Agnes' Primary School in Woodstock and St Joseph's Marist Brothers College in Rondebosch before entering St John Vianney National Seminary in Pretoria. He was ordained on January 11, 1976.

He attended a course on broadcasting in Dublin in 1983 and subsequently studied spirituality and pastoral theology at Loyola University in Chicago, from 1990-92.

Bishop-elect de Gouveia was the rector of St Paul's Orientation Seminary and St Francis Xavier Major Seminary in Cape Town.

He has served in Somerset West, Stellenbosch, Bonteheuwel, Manenberg, Durbanville, Camps Bay and Fish Hoek parishes.

The diocese of Oudtshoorn covers an area of 113 343km² with a population of 850 000, of whom 30 000 are Catholic. Bridging the Western, Northern and Eastern Cape, it extends from Worcester, through Uniondale to Plettenberg Bay. It has 14 parishes, 30 priests (23 diocesan and seven religious), three male religious, four permanent deacons, and 29 religious sisters.

Bishop-elect de Gouveia joked that the experience of the days following his appointment "was the closest one can be to being present at one's own funeral" because of the numbers of well wishers, some of whom he had not spoken to for a long time, who said affirming things about him.

He will be ordained by Archbishop Stephen Brislin of Cape Town, Archbishop Green and Bishop Adams on July 27 at Oudtshoorn's De Jager Sport Centre, starting at 11:00.

Govt ministers join march against human trafficking



Andrea Fox, a Grade 11 pupil at St Joseph's Marist College in Cape Town, is congratulated by the senior school's deputy principal Justin Skeea on retaining her World Karate Championship title at this year's event in Lisbon, Portugal. Andrea retained the Girls' Kumite 16-17 years heavy-weight division title which she had won in Zürich, Switzerland, in 2008. She first participated in the 2006 World Championships in Finland. Besides her interest in karate, Andrea is also an active member of one of the school's marimba bands as well as the senior school choir, while still managing to maintain good academic results.

PHOTO FROM SHERYL GELDERBLOEM

Praying while we blow the vuvuzela

PRAYER booklets for the World Cup prepared by the bishops' Church-on-the-Ball initiative are still available.

Salesian Father Francois Dufour said the *Praying & Playing* booklets, which are free of charge, can be collected for wider distribution from diocesan chanceries (especially in host cities) in Johannesburg from 66 Nelson Road, Booyens.

Fr Dufour said that those who order the booklets by post or courier will need to cover the fees.

The booklet was compiled by Fr Dufour, the SACBC's Office for Communication and Media, and Toni Rowland of the Marriage and Family Ministry (Marfam).

It includes reverent prayers as well as useful information and some humour.

Referring to the vuvuzela, the booklet quotes Psalm 81: "So praise the Lord and blow trumpets at this festival time in his honour."

Contact Fr Dufour at sdbprov@iafrica.com

MIDRAND in Gauteng is regarded as a hotbed of human trafficking, so the Midrand Catholic Justice and Peace Committee (CJPC) organised a march against this form of slavery from the local Holy Trinity church to Rabie Ridge.

A few hundred people, including the minister of Basic Education, Angie Motshekga, walked with the group.

The minister "said she was so proud of the CJPC as we did something besides talk about 'this monstrous crime'," Sr Cora Richardson MSHR said.

In a speech Ms Motshekga said: "Through this gallant march against the malady of human trafficking, we have succeeded in driving home the Gospel truth that says [that] together we can defeat this modern day slavery in all its horrendous forms."

"The selling and buying of women and children as prostitutes, child slaves and drug runners are matters of both national and international concern."

Parish priest Fr James Mitchell MSC opened the march with a prayer.

At Rabie Ridge, the minister of Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities, Noluthando Mayende-Sibiya, said: "We are concerned, as a government, about the challenge of human trafficking, particularly of women and children...during the World Cup."

She stressed that families and communities should take care of



Marchers at a demonstration against human trafficking in Midrand, Pretoria archdiocese. The protest was addressed by two government ministers.

their children, and should report cases of trafficking immediately.

The marchers presented 3 780 signatures supporting a memorandum to Nonku Msomi, director-general of the Department of Justice, asking among other things that the "Prevention and Combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill" be passed as soon as

possible.

At present there is no law targeted specifically at human trafficking.

Sr Richardson pointed out the reality of human trafficking: "In Midrand on that very Saturday, three children were taken from outside their home and they have not been found."

Prison chaplain in fear after brick-throwing incident

BY MICHAEL RASSOOL

CATHOLIC prison chaplain has voiced a suspicion that someone has attempted to harm him seriously because of a case he has pending against correctional service authorities.

Speaking to *The Southern Cross*, a still-shaken Fr Jordan Ngondo, Catholic chaplain of Leeuwkop Prison in Bryanston, Johannesburg, said that an unidentified attacker had hurled bricks at him through a window of the chapel in the prison

grounds while the priest was praying there at night.

Fr Ngondo is the national Catholic prison chaplain, coordinating these efforts from the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference secretariat.

He was not seriously harmed, as he had managed to dodge the bricks. One brick hit him on the back, causing some bruising.

He managed to get to his prison premises where he called for help and contacted the police.

The ordeal has left him fearful of

his safety, because he believes the attempt is related to a case he has pending against the prison authorities about conditions of service, details of which he would not provide because of its sensitivity and procedural protocol.

A national Church prison ministry workshop that took place at the Sekwele Centre for Social Reflection in Bethlehem diocese in 2008, a follow-up to one held in Johannesburg the previous year, was told of lack of support by corrections bureaucracy and the nega-


tive attitude of some officials towards chaplains.

Fr Ngondo, who is receiving counselling for post-traumatic stress, said he believes the attack was premeditated because he had seen the bricks which were hurled at him before the attack on the ground below the chapel window. Usually no bricks are kept at that location, so Fr Ngondo suspects they may have been placed there with the purpose to attack him.

He said police are investigating. Fr Ngondo said the incident has

served to underscore the vulnerability of priests, and is a reminder of the random killings of clerics that have taken place over the last few years, especially his friend Missionary of Africa Father Louis Blondel who was shot dead in his presbytery in Diepsloot, Pretoria last December.

Department of Correctional Services spokesman Simphiwe Kondleka said he had advised Fr Ngondo to follow procedures to lay a complaint with his prison bosses, *The Sowetan* reported.



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Church to Zuma: Intervene in Swazi crisis

BY BRONWEN DACHS

THE president of the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (SACBC) has asked President Jacob Zuma to intervene in a political crisis in Swaziland, where an anti-monarchy activist died in police custody last month.

Archbishop Buti Tlhagale of Johannesburg, president of the SACBC, said he "was shocked to hear of the death in detention" of Siphoshe Jele, who was arrested for wearing a T-shirt for the People's United Democratic Movement (Pudemo), during the May Day

celebration in Manzini.

Authorities in Swaziland, an absolute monarchy, "are claiming that he committed suicide" in custody, but his family and civil society organisations dispute this.

Pudemo was banned as a "terrorist group" in Swaziland in 2008.

"State repression in Swaziland has increased" since the constitution that became law in 2006 "maintained and strengthened the status quo and disregarded any input that came from civil society organisations," Archbishop Tlhagale said.

No opposition to King Mswati III is allowed in Swaziland, where two-thirds of the population of about 1 million people live in chronic poverty, according to the United Nations.

"There has been an influx of activists from Swaziland seeking refuge in South Africa this year," Archbishop Tlhagale said.

"I have written to President Zuma to ask the South African government to take part in normalising the situation before it resembles what happened in Zimbabwe," he said.

"I have asked President Zuma to

consider a mediating role to facilitate a climate of dialogue among all stakeholders in Swaziland," the archbishop said, noting that the bishops of Southern Africa "support the call by our brother, Bishop Louis Ncamiso Ndlovu of Manzini, Swaziland, for the creation of a climate of dialogue between all parties concerned, including the Swazi government".

Swaziland is one of three countries represented in the SACBC. South Africa and Botswana are the others.

"We also support and endorse [Bishop Ndlovu's] call for an inde-

pendent body to be put in place to hold the inquest into the cause of death of Siphoshe Jele," he said.

Amnesty International said in a statement that there was "independent medical corroboration" that Mr Jele had been "subjected to torture" in 2005 after his arrest on treason charges.

Amnesty questioned why an inquiry into the torture allegations had not been made public, and called on Swazi Prime Minister Barnabas Dlamini to ensure that the inquest into Jele's death is "conducted fully, impartially and in an open manner".—CNS



Former Bafana midfielder Thabo Mnongemi dictates play as Youth Unlimited staffer Denzel Swartz is covering ground during a celebrity football festival at Hartleyvale Stadium, Cape Town, organised by Youth Unlimited, a Catholic organisation committed to supporting youth at risk. After two games featuring boys' and girls' teams (one of which culminated in a penalty shoot-out), Youth Unlimited staffers played against a celebrity side that also included Santos FC legend and former Bafana player Duncan Crowie, ex-Kaizer Chiefs star Jerome McCarthy (Benni's brother), and e.tv sports presenter Gershawn Coetzee. The Youth Unlimited team won 3-2 after being two goals down. Plans are already underway for a second celebrity match day in December, with the aim to attract international players.

Noted scholar set for SA lectures

BY CHRIS CHATTERIS SJ

THE internationally renowned Australian Scripture scholar Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ, is due to arrive in South Africa for the Jesuit Institute's 2010 Winter Living Theology course.

This is Fr O'Collins' first visit to the land of Bafana Bafana, the Proteas and the Springboks.

The aim of the course is to give clergy, religious and laypeople a fresh perspective on the life and person of Jesus through the most current insights of sacred scripture.

According to Fr O'Collins, "The mystery, or deep truth, of the identity of Jesus and his redeeming work for us, can never be summed up once and for all. Jesus shows us many richly different and beautiful faces".

The Jesuit said that he chose "The Many Faces of Jesus" as the theme of his talks because "the relationship to the Lord is utterly central for all Christians... They relate to him in differing personal ways."

The figure of Christ has an eternal quality, of course—rather like an icon in the Oriental churches—but our understanding of it is always unfolding. Hence the "faces" which Fr O'Collins has chosen for contemplation are "Jesus Our Hero", "Jesus Our Priest", and "Jesus Our Friend".



Fr Gerald O'Collins SJ, the noted Scripture scholar who will lecture in four South African cities.

The day components of the 3-day courses are for priests, people in ministry and those with a particular interest in scripture and theology.

In addition there will be evening talks which will also explore the identity of Christ but in a way which is more accessible to non-specialists.

Fr O'Collins' distinguished academic career began with a PhD at the University of Cambridge in 1968. He then taught for 33 years

at the Gregorian University in Rome—the *alma mater* of Archbishops Denis Hurley and Oscar Romero. He was the dean of the theology faculty from 1985-91. Today he is writer-in-residence at the Jesuit Theological College, Melbourne, Australia.

Fr O'Collins has published 55 books. Recent titles include: *Catholicism. A Very Short Introduction* and *Seek God Everywhere*. Soon to appear is a response to a new book by the anti-religious writer Philip Pullman (well known for his novel *The Golden Compass*, which was turned into a film starring Nicole Kidman, a Catholic).

Mr Pullman's latest novel, *The Good Man Jesus and the Scoundrel Christ*, ventures into an area very familiar to Fr O'Collins, namely Christology. Fr O'Collins' reply will be published by Darton Longman and Todd.

The dates and locations of the Winter Living theology course are:

Johannesburg/Pretoria: Mazenod Centre, Germiston; July 20-22

Bloemfontein: Donovan Hall (Cathedral) (TBC); July 27-29

Cape Town: Schoenstatt, Constantia; August 3-5

Durban: Glenmore Pastoral Centre, August 10-12

■ For more details about Winter Living Theology and to book contact admin@jesuitinstitute.org.za

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African university graduates must become part of the peace solution

BY SR GRACE CANDIRU

CATHOLIC university administrators in East Africa have begun a broad evaluation of the content of their educational programmes in an effort to urge their graduates to become involved in finding solutions to the violence and severe poverty that afflicts much of the continent.

Fr John Maviiri, vice-chancellor of the Catholic University of Eastern Africa in Nairobi, Kenya, told Catholic News Service that the effort by the members of the Association of Catholic Universities and Higher Institutes of Africa and Madagascar arises from concerns that some graduates of member institutions hold high-ranking posts in government and business, but have done little to resolve the dire conditions that millions of Africans confront.

At the opening of a three-day symposium sponsored by the association in late April, the Ugandan priest said that peace-building, conflict resolution and reconcilia-

tion must become integral to Catholic higher education across Africa.

"Education for peace should not be mere words or formula, but it should be introduced in our curricula," he said. "Our universities must promote peace and security in Africa through education, training and research on peace-related issues."

After that gathering, a committee was challenged to pursue the issues raised, particularly sensitising member schools to focus attention on curricula that would instill values of peace and justice in students.

"We wanted a curriculum that caters [to] the integral development of the student, one which encompasses the social doctrine of the Church," he said.

In his presentation to delegates from South Africa, Cameroon, Congo, Egypt, Ivory Coast, Kenya, Sudan, Tanzania and Uganda, Fr Maviiri challenged the educators to develop innovative ways to involve both perpetrators and victims of

conflict in reconciling their differences.

The peace-building theme was echoed by Tanzanian Cardinal Polycarp Pengo, president of the Symposium of Episcopal Conferences of Africa and Madagascar (Secam), who said that while a university education offered a special opportunity to evangelise Africans, it tended to lead people away from God.

"Education has become divorced both from human and Gospel values," he said.

The cardinal said for many years that higher education in Africa had been elitist and that he found educated people in Africa were among the most corrupt, using their knowledge to simply enrich themselves at the expense of others.

Cardinal Pengo said the challenge facing Catholic higher education was to make education relevant to African needs.

"Do not produce misfits that harm society, but form responsible and ethical people who will take leadership as a service," he said.



The team of the Neocatechumenal Way's seminary celebrates winning the Clericus Cup—the football competition for Rome's seminaries. It was the third time that the Redemptoris Mater team, who were the defending champions, won the cup. In a replay of last year's final, they beat the NAC Martyrs of the Pontifical North American College 1-0, again with a goal from a corner, scored by the same player. The NAC team did win one award: for "Best Fans". Fans dressed as super heroes such as Superman, Spider-Man and Captain America turned out for every game, waving American flags and rallying the fans. Elvis Presley, King Kong and the Chiquita Banana made special appearances for the final. The Clericus Cup tournament for priests and seminarians studying in Rome was first held in 2007.

PHOTO: ALESSIA GIULIANI, CATHOLIC PRESS PHOTO/CNS

Pope's high-powered team to help Irish Church in crisis

BY CINDY WOODEN & MICHAEL KELLY

POPE Benedict has named nine Church leaders to begin an apostolic visitation of the Catholic Church in Ireland aimed at helping the Church address the sexual abuse scandal, improve assistance to victims and perfect preventative measures.

The Vatican announcement said that the visitation would begin in the northern autumn and that no deadline has been set for its conclusion.

"Through this visitation, the Holy See intends to offer assistance to the bishops, clergy, religious and lay faithful as they seek to respond adequately to the situation caused by the tragic cases of abuse perpetrated by priests and religious upon minors," the Vatican said.

"It is also intended to contribute to the desired spiritual and moral renewal that is already being vigorously pursued by the Church in Ireland."

In his March letter to Catholics in Ireland, Pope Benedict had announced plans for a visitation, saying it was "intended to assist the local Church on her path of renewal".

Vatican spokesman Fr Federi-

co Lombardi SJ said the apostolic visitors are not taking over the responsibilities of the bishops, seminary rectors or religious superiors in Ireland; the Vatican is not "substituting the authorities in place, but adding a presence that, by coming in from the outside, could be in a better position to objectively gather information and make useful evaluations".

The visitation will begin with Ireland's four archdioceses: British Cardinal Cormac Murphy-O'Connor, retired archbishop of Westminster, will conduct the visitation of the archdiocese of Armagh, Northern Ireland; Cardinal Sean O'Malley of Boston will visit the archdiocese of Dublin; Archbishop Thomas Collins of Toronto, Canada, will conduct the visitation of the archdiocese of Cashel; Archbishop Terrence Prendergast of Ottawa, Canada, will visit the archdiocese of Tuam.

Pope Benedict also named Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, former rector of the US seminary in Rome, to lead the visitation of the Irish seminaries, including the Pontifical Irish College in Rome.

Pope Benedict also named two priests and two religious

women to lead the visitation of Irish religious orders.

The Vatican said that before the four begin visiting religious orders, a questionnaire would be sent to the superiors of orders in Ireland to get "an accurate picture of the current situation", including their opinion of how to improve the Church's norms for child protection.

The bishops visiting dioceses will report their findings to the Congregation for Bishops. Archbishop Dolan will report to the Congregation for Catholic Education, which oversees seminaries. The religious will report to the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life.

Archbishop Diarmuid Martin of Dublin called the visitation "an important element in the broad process being set in place by Pope Benedict to assist the Catholic Church in Ireland in its renewal".

He also said because of Cardinal O'Malley's experience taking over the archdiocese of Boston in 2003 after its sex abuse crisis, he can help Catholics in Dublin address "the truth of a dark moment in its history" as it "undertakes a period of conversion, purification and renewal".—CNS

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Praise for Jesuit pioneer missionary

BY SARAH DELANEY

POPE Benedict has praised an Italian Jesuit missionary for his unique and effective evangelisation in 16th-century China and for opening dialogue between China and the West.

Addressing a group of pilgrims from Italy's Marches region, where Fr Matteo Ricci was born, the pope said that the Jesuit was able to win the hearts and minds of his Chinese hosts by throwing himself into their culture with respect and openness.

The pilgrims were at the Vatican to mark the 400th anniversary of Fr Ricci's death.

The Jesuit, who came from Macerata in central Italy, represented "the fortunate synthesis of proclaiming the Gospel and of dialogue with the culture of the people who are receiving it, an example of balance between

doctrinal clarity and prudent pastoral action", the pope said.

Fr Ricci not only learned the Chinese language, but he adopted the style of life and customs of cultured Chinese people and, so, was "accepted with respect, not as a foreigner, but as 'Great Master of the West'".

Because Fr Ricci and his companions were able to start a dialogue with the Chinese, the pope said, their era marked "one of the highest and happiest points in relations between China and the West".

Fr Ricci is also known for having brought European scientific instruments and knowledge to China, opening up a scientific exchange between the two continents, the pope said. But Fr Ricci "didn't go to China to bring science, but to bring the Gospel, to bring God".

The pope pointed out that Fr Ricci is one of only two West-

erners honoured on the Millennium Monument in Beijing—the other is Marco Polo—and that he was buried in Chinese soil, an unheard-of honour for a foreigner.

Fr Ricci entered China in 1583 and began writing a catechism in Chinese ten years later. His insistence on respecting Chinese culture and customs, and even tolerating forms of ancestor veneration by Chinese who had been baptised, placed him at the centre of a huge Church debate on culture and religious practice.

A sainthood cause opened for him in 1984 was almost immediately closed when questions were raised about his commitment to pure Christianity.

However, at the beginning of the year-long 2010 celebration for Fr Ricci, the sainthood cause was officially reopened.—CNS

Pope: abuse scandal must inspire purification

BY CAROL GLATZ

THE scandal of clerical abuse of minors must inspire bishops and priests to rediscover the need for penitence, purification, forgiveness and justice, Pope Benedict told Italy's bishops.

The Church's desire to engage in a new evangelisation of the world "does not hide the wounds scarring the Church community, [wounds] caused by the weakness and sin of some of its members," he said in an audience with members of the Italian bishops' conference.

While the pope did not specifically mention the crisis of sex abuse in the Church, he briefly referred to it in his 20-minute speech to the bishops, who were holding their general assembly in the Vatican synod hall.

The pope said the Year for Priests, which he will close with a Mass on June 11, has served as a reminder for the need for deep spiritual renewal within the priesthood.

The "humble and painful admission" of the sins of some of the Church's members should not obscure the good and saintliness of so many others, including lay faithful and priests, he said.

"That which is cause for scandal must translate for us into a reminder of the 'profound need to relearn penance, to accept purification, to learn on the one hand forgiveness but also the necessity of

justice,'" he said, repeating remarks he made to journalists aboard the papal plane to Portugal in May in reference to the clerical sex abuse scandal.

As bishops' conferences across Europe are coming to grips with the sex abuse crisis, the head of the Italian bishops' conference said it was possible there were cases of clerical sex abuse in Italy that were covered up.

Responding to reporters' questions, Cardinal Angelo Bagnasco of Genoa said: "It's possible that there have been cover-ups of sex abuse in Italy, too."

If the Church ever verifies the cover-up of a case of clerical sex abuse, he said, the Church would clearly condemn such concealment as being "something that is wrong and which must be corrected and overcome".

He said the "natural" person for a victim of abuse by a member of the Church to turn to is the bishop who "will receive [the victim] immediately day or night."

The Italian bishops' conference revealed for the first time that about 100 cases of alleged abuse had been handled by Italian Church courts in the past decade.

"In general and factual terms, there are about 100 cases relative to canonical procedures carried out during the last ten years," said Bishop Mariano Crociata, general-secretary of the Italian bishops.



Pope Benedict greets bishops during a general audience in St Peter's Square at the Vatican. Addressing Italy's bishops, the pope said that the Church's desire to engage in a new evangelisation of the world "does not hide the wounds scarring the Church community". PHOTO: PAUL HARING, CNS

Responding to journalists' questions, Bishop Crociata did not respond to queries about the number of cases that ended in a guilty verdict or how many were turned over to the police.

In his opening remarks to the general assembly, Cardinal Bag-

nasco said that "a person who abuses minors needs to be concurrently brought to justice and receive treatment and mercy".

He added: "Healing cannot replace punishment, let alone remit the sin."

Cardinal Bagnasco said the

Church has never sought to underestimate the severity of the sex abuse crisis and called on families "to recognise that we, the Church, will do everything to always, and increasingly, merit their trust."

The bishops' meeting came just as three priests were facing accusations by civil authorities for the sexual abuse of minors. A 73-year-old priest of the diocese of Lodi was arrested on charges of sex with a minor, and a priest in Savona went on trial for allegedly sexually violating a young girl.

In late May, at the trial of a Rome priest accused of sexual violence against seven boys, the current bishop of Porto-Santa Rufina, who was the accused priest's pastor, said that although he received complaints about the priest, he did not tell the Vatican because he did not think there was sufficient proof. He said he did not tell Italian police because he was not sure about the procedures to follow. It was another parish priest who reported the alleged offender to the authorities.

The promoter of justice in the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, Mgr Charles Scicluna, said in mid-March that in Italy, "the phenomenon [of priestly sexual abuse of minors] does not seem to have dramatic proportions, although what worries me is a certain culture of silence, which I feel is still too widespread in the country."—CNS

Row over in vitro treatment statement

BY JONATHAN LUXMOORE

MEDIA and some Catholics have criticised a Polish bishops' family council statement that seemed to equate in vitro fertilisation with abortion.

The bishops issued their statement amid controversy over government plans for a new bioethics law that would allow in vitro treatment to be funded from the state health budget.

"The Church always defends the weakest, especially the totally defenceless, who include conceived children," the family council said in a statement.

"Those who kill them, and those who actively participate in this killing or make laws against conceived life—including the life of a child in embryonic state, which is largely destroyed by in vitro procedure—stand in open conflict with the Catholic Church's teaching. They cannot receive holy Communion until they change their attitude."

Poland's *Rzeczpospolita* daily said Catholic canon law made no reference to in vitro fertilisation and did not "recognise an analogy" between abortion and the in vitro-related destruction of excess embryos.

The chairman of Poland's

Helsinki Human Rights Foundation, Halina Bortnowska, told the *Gazeta Wyborcza* daily: "IVF does not have to lead to the liquidation of embryos, which people value and often have a very emotional attitude to."

"I don't think you can exclude someone from the sacrament because of their view about something which isn't dogmatic in character," Mr Bortnowska said.

A member of the bishops' bioethics team, Fr Franciszek Longchamps de Berrier, told the Polish Church's Catholic information agency that no bishops' council "had a right to issue doctrinal declarations", adding that the family council statement should be treated "solely as the view of its members".

"The Code of Canon Law asserts that those who kill conceived life or participate in its killing exclude themselves from the Church community, as does a person who allows such acts," the adviser said.

"But this is a question of attitudes and the actions of particular people, and above all a matter between these people and their confessors. A confessor can set conditions of penance but cannot declare them publicly," he added.—CNS

Help migrants, pope urges

BY CAROL GLATZ

WITH no sign that globalisation and migration will slow down, the future of most societies clearly depends on effectively welcoming and integrating migrants and refugees, Pope Benedict has said.

"The future of our societies rests on the encounter between peoples [and] on dialogue between cultures with respect for identities and legitimate differences," the pope said during a meeting with participants in the plenary assembly of the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travellers.

Pope Benedict praised the efforts of organisations and international bodies to build a world marked by peace, fraternity and cooperation

while simultaneously striving "to resolve the crucial questions of security and development to the benefit of all".

But some parts of the world have been avoiding "the assumption of responsibilities that should be shared" when it comes to migration policies and assisting refugees.

States and organisations can promote social stability and harmony, he said, by creating policies or plans that help welcome and integrate foreigners, give them "opportunities to obtain legal status, promoting the fair rights to family reunification, asylum and refugee status, compensating for necessary restrictive measures and opposing the appalling trafficking of human beings".—CNS

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Priests: These are our their lives

The Year for Priests officially ends this month. Six priests tell MICHAEL RASSOOL, LUCY RUBIN and GÜNTHER SIMMERMACHER of their lives and ministry.



Fr Simon Donnelly (centre) with Fr Thabo Lesenyehlo of Bloemfontein and Fr Justin Wylie of Johannesburg. The three priests are currently studying in Rome.

Fr Simon Donnelly
FATHER Simon Donnelly swapped an academic career in linguistics for the priesthood.

Ordained for the archdiocese of Johannesburg last September, Fr Donnelly said that the seeds God had planted for his vocation "began to push shoots up into the soil of my being" until he felt he could respond "in freedom".

"I wanted to serve the Triune God and the People of God with all my heart and all my soul, as we yearn together for everlasting life," the Cape Town-born priest said.

As a new priest he looks to brother priests for strength and courage. "I have so much to learn from them as they have laboured long before me in the Lord's vineyard, often very quietly, almost out of sight, priestly lives lived in faithfulness and prayer."

He said that prayer is at the heart of a good priesthood. Prayer, prayer, prayer and entreaty, "aloud and in silent tears". The Divine Office of the Church, the psalms and other Scripture readings the Church's ordained ministers pray every day, for the sanctification of the Church and the world.

"And we need more: humility, charitable self-criticism, lots of hope, great love for the people that the Lord sends to us—young or old, healthy or sick or dying. And we ourselves need to frequent the beautiful sacrament of penance."

"Obedience is surely the glue of the priestly life, that binds me in love to the bishop of Rome, to my own bishop, and to the whole body of Christ's bride, the Church."

He said he draws strength from the celebration of the Mass, silent adoration of the Blessed Sacrament, and communal praise given in the daily prayer of the Church.

"The prayers of many people sustain me: most especially religious sisters, but many other laity and clergy too."

His devotion to "the Mother of the Church" also sustains him. "She is my intercessor, my guide, my life, my sweetness, my hope, my queen, my mother."

The son of Catholic journalist Gene Donnelly, who has worked

for *The Southern Cross* for 41 years, is currently continuing his studies in Rome in preparation for pastoral life in South Africa.

He celebrates Mass every day, and offers a weekly Mass "for young people from many countries at the Vatican Youth Centre, which is cared for by the Emmanuel Community, a new community of priests, consecrated and lay people begun in France".

Every Sunday morning, after an early Holy Mass in a large parish in the Portuense area of Rome, he hears confessions for three hours.

"It is a tremendous grace to receive and to be part of this sacramental life," Fr Donnelly said.

Fr Solomon Mphela OFM

FATHER Solomon Mphela, a Franciscan priest who serves the Sebokeng community in Johannesburg archdiocese, sees the priestly life as joyful, but with its own challenges.



After his ordination in 2002 he served as curate in Matatiele parish, Kokstad diocese, and then for five years in Ladysmith parish in the diocese of Dundee. While there, he also served as youth chaplain and helped run Education for Life, a national sexuality programme directed at teenagers. Currently he helps to run the youth deanery of the Vaal Triangle.

He currently serves two parishes

in the Vaal Triangle township—Zone 12: Nyolohelo parish and Zone 14: Emmanuel parish—and serves on the South African Franciscans' executive committee.

He understands the priestly role to mean serving the People of God, one that is not easy to fulfil. According to him, priests sometimes need consoling, especially since being a priest can be lonely.

This is why, the concept of "the wounded healer" appeals to him so strongly—it resonates with the life of Christ. He said it also draws him to reflecting on the history of the Church as the Body of Christ, one that is betrayed especially in this "revolutionary age".

Fr Mphela referred to the origins of the Franciscans as a mendicant order fighting an essentially complacent medieval Church interiorly, and how it has always seen itself as trying its best to rebuild a broken Church.

It is in this spirit that he sees his own role, which is to "rebuild the Body of Christ". Fr Mphela emphasised an essentially Franciscan approach in his priestly aim is to "stay with the people of God in their own situations, as Christ did".

He quoted from Matthew's gospel when dealing with the question of vocations: "Many are called but few are chosen" (22:16). To him this means the essential aspect of having strength of commitment and purpose in one's service. "The challenge is upon one to examine one's vocation every day. After all, renewal is a daily thing."

He doesn't fear for the future of the priesthood, especially when being a priest also gives opportunity to empty oneself and look interiorly in order to examine one's heart. "The moment when one's own faith is shaken is also a time for growing stronger," Fr Mphela pointed out.

He believes that in many ways priests nowadays are in a better situation than before. Among the fruits of the Spirit, the priest said, is all the bad that is finally being exposed.

For many, the hurt caused by the abuse scandal in the Church runs very deep. Fr Mphela said it does serve to challenge one to ask: "Why is God doing this to us, to me?"

A significant part of his priestly challenge concerns the parishioners and how best to serve them—both those who are educated and those who do not have much schooling. "How does one serve both of them?"

The issue of serving youth prompts him to reflect on the changing nature of life; society changes, economic life is changing. "So how does one read the signs of the times? And how does one teach them revealed truths knowing these signs? Are we following the world, or the other way round?"

He said as priest all nine fruits of the Spirit—joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance—should be seen in the cleric's way of life. As the apostles so acutely felt at Pentecost, to the point where they were able to speak in different tongues, one should feel a measure of that Spirit at work, Fr Mphela said.

"We must be positive that God is talking to us, and that we are responding to him as God."

Fr Mphela cited Pope Paul VI who, addressing religious leaders at the time of Vatican II, told them to return to their roots to learn how to live the life they are called to live.

"It is how we live the life of St Francis, Mother Teresa or St John Vianney now in 2010," he said.

Bishop Erwin Hecht OMI

RETIRED Bishop Erwin Hecht of Kimberley said he discerned his vocation as a "naughty boy" attending first the Oblate of Mary Immaculate primary school in Obermedlingen in Bavaria and then high school in Westphalia.



After matriculating, he joined the Oblates. During his studies the desire to do missionary work already took a hold, but after ordination in 1959 he was appointed to teach in the south of Germany.

Eventually he volunteered as a missionary in South Africa, arriving in November 1961. He learnt Tswana and served in Galeshewe in Kimberley diocese. He was also involved in ministering to schools.

After ten years, he became provincial of the local Oblate community, and a year later, in 1972, was named auxiliary bishop of Kimberley. He was installed as the diocese's bishop in November 1974. Until his retirement last December, he was Southern Africa's longest-serving bishop.

While Archbishop Jabulani Nxumalo of Bloemfontein has since been appointed administrator of the diocese, Bishop Hecht still keeps an eye on the running of things and still performs certain pastoral duties. Although he would love to remain in South Africa, much depends on

the quality of services available for retired Oblates like him.

Bishop Hecht said his long pastoral experience has left him with no other perspective than to regard the priestly vocation as a gift from God. He said it is a gift to be able to help the people in various ways, not only spiritually, and through the sacraments, but also through social activities, especially at the time of apartheid, and providing care for children.

As a missionary priest he felt a limitation of always being a foreigner, socially and culturally not being able to integrate with the people fully, despite such efforts as learning indigenous languages, and so on. This is why he advocates continued efforts for local vocations.

Bishop Hecht believes the challenge for priests in South Africa today resides in working to bring the different races together. The role of a bishop in particular is to engage on a wider basis, being a mediator and unifier who is accessible to all people and who has good contact with them all.

Vocations concern him, not least because of the rampant materialism and a culture of opportunism in the world. Corresponding with this trend, the bishop said, is a "growing lack of pastoral responsibility among young people", which to him implies a lack of spirituality in their lives. He said there is a tendency among the young to compartmentalise life, not integrating the spiritual and the various other aspects of it.

This does not mean that he is against recreation and having a range of interests, Bishop Hecht said. A pastoral approach to young people should involve engaging them directly in the things that interest them. But, he added, the all-important aspect of that approach is prayer and promoting the things of God in a way that also captures their imagination.

Fr Maurice Kalino

FATHER Maurice Kalino of St Paul's parish in Jouberton, Klerksdorp diocese, is originally from Malawi and serves in South Africa as a missionary. Since his ordination in 1990, he has worked in various parishes, both in his home country and South Africa.



He views the priestly role as answering the Lord's call to serve him through the people entrusted to him—through prayer, the sacraments, and visiting the sick, abandoned and unloved.

Fr Kalino believes that over the last 20 years no gift from God could possibly be greater than his priesthood. He believes the happiness a priest feels should be sublime, where the joy is deep and about bringing a sense of joy and hope into others' lives, making them realise they have to love God more, and to follow him.

Continued on page 7

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In the modern world, where the traditional way of perceiving the priest is diminished, the kinds of sacrifices associated with the priesthood tends to be seen as abnormal and even disparaged. "Values have changed," Fr Kalino said, "and the very idea of living alone without intimate companionship is unthinkable to so many." Moreover, he added, the call for service towards others is ridiculed.

Fr Kalino also decried the levels of material support that priests receive from their parishioners, which do not take into account real costs of living and working. He said this trend does not reflect any significant desire by the local Church to become self-reliant.

"Many people are far too accustomed to being helped, not the other way round," the priest said. "We need a change in mindset, which is something that the local Church should promote."

As a priest for 20 years, Fr Kalino has no fear for the future of the institution. He said that, apart from being human and material, the Church is also divine, filled with the Holy Spirit, so he doesn't believe that the Church can be destroyed. As long as the Church exists, so will the priesthood.

"The Holy Spirit guides the Church and protects it, including the institution of the priesthood."

But Fr Kalino has misgivings about the effects of a changed world on vocations, especially the lack of interest in the idea of a calling, of sacrifice. He pointed out that the Church continues to help youth who simply "do not see the bigger picture".

The Catholic Church is sacramental, the priest said, and no vocations mean no sacrament, and therefore no Church.

"After all, it's a sacrifice, a beautiful gift to God of self," he said.



Mgr Marc De Muelanaere with his foster children Marc, Phindi and Didi.

PHOTO FROM LUCY RUBIN

Mgr Marc de Muelanaere

MONSIGNOR Marc de Muelanaere of Pretoria arrived from Belgium in 1952, with his eight brothers and three sisters.

His father was a medical practitioner, who provided for his family by living off his savings for three years until he was allowed to practise in South Africa. He went on to form the Muelmed heart clinics in Pretoria which to this day remain active.

Even as a young boy, Marc had wanted to enter the priesthood. He could not imagine the many paths which God would lead him on.

After 42 years in the priesthood, Mgr de Muelanaere, who is fluent in eight languages, describes himself as a "jack of all trades".

After completing seven years at the John Vianney Seminary in Pretoria, he completed a canon law degree in Canada in just three years, the fastest in the Colleges history. But on his return to South Africa, he was sent to Groblersdal, a small rural community north-west of Pretoria, where canon law was

not in much demand.

When he arrived at Groblersdal, he could not have envisaged that part of his duties would be to help raise three young children, paying for their education (initially with the help of a large bursary from the Dominican St Paulus Primary School) and sometimes even babysitting.

He notes with happiness that the eldest, Didi, is nearing the final stages of human resources degree. "The youngest, Mpho Marc, was named after me," the priest noted.

For the past 16 years, Mgr de Muelanaere has served the 6000-strong Lynnwood parish in Pretoria, where he places a great value on reaching out. The parish feeds 78 AIDS orphans and their families every month, and gives R330 000 per year to the archdiocese to fund outlying districts.

"Our parish could definitely be described as generous, and in the world in which we live and the needs that come with the maintenance of just one life, this is greatly encouraging," he said.

The attribute of a good priest, he

said, is "to serve people always, to have a sense of the divine as well as the needs of the human".

The highlight of his priestly life is the Mass. "This is where I draw my strength. This is where we all draw our strength."

Fr Maximilian Kolbe Jacobs OSB

AS a religious priest, Benedictine Father Maximilian Kolbe Jacobs finds that there is a tension between the pastoral life and the monastic life in community.



Discovering God in an enclosed environment, such as the Benedictine abbey in Inkamana, Eshowe diocese, which has a more prayer-based lifestyle, is different from experiencing God in a pastoral environment.

While each experience has its own kind of joy and sublime rewards, Fr Jacobs said he has yet to marry the two effectively, to "strike the right balance between Martha and Mary". Yet, his pastoral activity does feed from the prayer life and actually emanates from a need for community, although parish work does tend to predominate.

"The focus should be to create a spiritual centre, or a 'powerhouse', in which people can experience aloneness in God, and from where they go out with God, in God and through God," Fr Jacobs said.

The Cape Town-born Benedictine is currently pastor of St Thomas More church in Vryheid, having served for some years the community of St Francis in Richards Bay.

Fr Jacobs is well-loved by the parishioners he has served, and has a reputation as an inspired retreat

and pilgrimage director, two activities that he attributes to the Benedictine charism.

He said it is important to give people a "transfiguration experience", equipping each one to meet the challenges and problems of carrying on "in the market of ordinariness", to be a "contemplative in the heart of the world".

In the diocese of Eshowe, Fr Jacobs said, members of the Benedictine community there are often asked to help out with pastoral work. Like others from his community, he has "found himself stuck in the system". However, he has observed a gradually increasing presence of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate and Franciscans in the diocese.

He does understand pastoral work as "entering into the presence of another, after which one is supposed to leave in a better state for having met another spirit".

For Fr Jacobs the joys of the priesthood consist in "tasting the crucifixion of Christ and being transformed by it", in terms of becoming a better person, a better priest, because "if one is not united with Christ, one cannot cope with the problems and challenges that could lead to weakness and sin".

He decries the practice of some priests to fill the silence with noise, activity, pastoral work, alcohol and, in some cases, even womanising. When priests prefer business rather than "beingness", he said, they resemble the world. The challenge is to create a new model of being priest, Fr Jacobs said.

One sure lifeline consists in prayer, community, the Lectio Divina (the ancient Christian practice of scriptural reflection and prayer), and the breviary, he said. It's a system that feeds and helps him to live a life he was called to live as closely as possible.

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- to develop new models of spreading Catholic news by using new technology, especially the Internet.

All these needs require continuing support!

The global economic crisis is affecting *The Southern Cross*. Even as we are holding our circulation steady – one of the very few South African newspapers to do so – and advertisers have remained loyal, rising production and distribution costs are hurting us.

But with the Associates' Campaign we are also looking to the future. We know how important it is to reach young people with Catholic news, reflections and discussions, all of which help in the on-going formation of our youth. We already have developed some means of reaching young Catholics through the Internet, and the next new frontier will be cellphone technology.

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Chris Moerdyk
(Chairman)

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The Southern Cross

Editor: Günther Simmermacher

After the Year for Priests

THE Church is concluding the special Year for Priests, but the focus on the priesthood must not be allowed to dissipate.

For the past 12 months, the Church has prayed in a special way for the world's 400 000 priests, and reflected in many forms and from different perspectives on the nature of the priestly ministry and on the future of the priesthood.

The intentions behind the Year for Priests will not be accomplished by a closing ceremony, however; the reflections, introspections and prayers of the past year must serve as a foundation in our communal endeavour to perfect the priesthood.

We have prayed for our priests, as a collective and as individuals in the selfless service to the People of God who continually seek renewal in their commitment to give witness to the Gospel. Our prayers will have intensified as a result of the abuse scandals, which have tarnished the reputation and dignity of the clerical office, unfairly so but perhaps irrevocably.

The scandal doubtless deflected our focus from many important issues, and certainly diminished what should have been a pure celebration of our priests.

At the same time, however, it will have concentrated prayers for that great majority of priests that is living Christ's call to serve and to strive for sanctity with fidelity. Perhaps for the first time, many people will have seriously examined what it means to be a priest. Priests themselves, much hurt by the poisonous atmosphere of the scandal, must be encouraged by the support they receive from parishioners who stand by them.

Significantly, Pope Benedict seems to have anticipated that the abuse scandal would be present in our celebrations of the priesthood,

though he might not have foreseen the extent of that presence.

Opening the Year for Priests on June 19, 2009, he said: "Nothing makes the Church and the body of Christ suffer so much as the sins of its pastors, especially those who transform themselves into 'robbers of sheep'."

The scandal has given the calls for a reform of the priesthood new impetus. While those who call for reform, clergy among them, are not challenging the nature of the sacramental priesthood, they are seeking a new understanding of the priesthood's ministerial nature. Fair discussions on this theme, including the complex question of obligatory celibacy in the Latin-rite Church, should not be discouraged.

Indeed, there are leaders in the Church, such as Austrian Cardinal Christoph Schönborn, a long-standing confidant of Pope Benedict, who are calling for a prudent review of various areas of Church life—even obligatory clerical celibacy.

But such debates must also be mindful of Pope Benedict's warning that diluting the priesthood could destroy it. And without the priesthood there would be no Mass and no Eucharist, and therefore no Church.

The priesthood does not exist in a vacuum, however. Having focused on the clergy, the Church surely would profit from a Year for Laity and, indeed, a Year for Religious.

The Year for Priests was instituted to mark the 150th anniversary of the death of St John Marie Vianney, the patron of priests. That celebration may be over, but Catholics must continue to support and pray for our priests in their sacred calling and various ministries, and for young men to hear Christ's call to follow him.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor reserves the right to shorten or edit published letters. Letters below 300 words receive preference. Pseudonyms are acceptable only under special circumstances and at the Editor's discretion. Name and address of the writer must be supplied. No anonymous letter will be considered.

Take stock of priests' special year

AS the Year for Priests is coming to an end, it is opportune to reflect on how that special year has affected us, personally and on a parish level.

Was there any change in our relationship with our priests and did priests derive any real benefit from this year dedicated to them? Was it business as usual?

Hopefully, through our actions, we have shown priests some appreciation and deep gratitude for their dedicated service to their communities.

At the Chrism Mass before Easter we were reminded of our priests "sacrificing privileges and ambition". Many have left their loving families and have obediently travelled to destinations quite alien to them and sometimes very danger-

ous. The parish community should become that loving family giving support and encouragement.

We are constantly reminded every year on Stewardship Sunday to assist the Church and in so doing our priests by cheerfully giving of our time, talents and treasures which our Loving Father has so abundantly blessed us with. But what is the reality?

From talking to various people, on a relative basis, Catholics generally give substantially less to their Church than adherents of other denominations give to theirs. Yet we demand the world from our priests and expect them to be on stand-by 24/7. Less of everything means that representatives of Christ suffer as a result. In short, generally our priests and needy communities bear the brunt

of our stinginess.

From a financial support point of view, we need to reflect and be guided by what the Bible advises in Malachi 3:8-10.

We have been praying for vocations to the priesthood for decades with no real solution in sight. Why would our prayers to our Holy Lord for this noble cause go unanswered? Or could it be that our prayers have been granted, but we don't like the answer. Maybe the solution is on earth not in heaven. Maybe if we change the environment in which our priests have to operate by being a more supportive community it may enkindle in the hearts of young men the spark of a vocation.

Parents would then surely be more eager for the honour of giving helpers to the Church in the work of tomorrow.

Terry Kingston,
King Williams Town

Choosing bishops

AN issue of great concern for me as a Catholic is the appointment of bishops by Rome, in particular for the Church of Southern Africa.

It would be useful if the apostolic nuncio, Archbishop James P Green, could outline to us the process and criteria used in the selection of candidates and appointment of bishops.

In my observation there are two things that most of the bishops appointed in Southern Africa have in common: one, they studied in Rome; second, they taught at the seminary, or both.

Though I respect the chosen men, it registers two major concerns with me. Firstly, are they appointed for Rome (we know by Rome) or for the local Church? Secondly, are they truly the most suitable appointment for the local Church? Does Rome not overlook priests who may not have a licentiate from Rome or speak Italian, but are true shepherds in the local Church?

The era of us kissing the bishop's ring (though we respect the office) and bishops simply pontificating on behalf of Rome is long gone. Maybe it is time for Rome to wake up to this reality and appoint bishops from among the priests who are truly our beloved shepherds, who love and serve us well and never left the borders of their parishes or diocese.

Dr Sibongile Mphande,
Boksburg

The *cappa magna*

WHAT dismayed Gerald Davis (May 19) is good news for others.

The *cappa magna*, as the vestment referred to by Mr Davis is called, has already been used of late by various bishops, including cardinals, when celebrations take place using the traditional (extraordinary) rite of the Church.

In Florence in March, Cardinal Franc Rode ordained eight Franciscan Friars of the Immaculate to the priesthood in the traditional rite. He used the *cappa magna*.

The Sisters of the Benedictine Congregation gave Bishop Finn of Kansas a train as a Christmas gift, which he used when some young women were received as novices in January.

Jan Reilman, Ramsgate

Why the selling?

ONE wonders why the national liturgy department finds it necessary to continue to "sell" us the new missal.

Surely if the revision is so well done, people will be clamouring to have it. Who would not want something that is a work of beauty, that will feed our thirsty souls, that would give new images, texts and understanding to our spiritual lives and be a source for our meditation and delight for years to come?

If however, the intent is to awe us with the accuracy of its Latin translation, I fear no amount of selling will convince us, and the impulsive adaptation your editorial of May 26 rightly mentions, will be the response.

Archbishop Denis Hurley did say that a new translation must be undertaken, and for the next 18 years led ICEL in that work. How tragic that it came to naught.

Sr Judith Coyle,
Johannesburg

A false Vat 2 spirit

ISTRONGLY disagree with Fr Russell Pollitt's "Point of Debate" article (May 5).

There were many dissenting voices at the Council who hurriedly implemented their own "vision" which became labelled "the spirit of Vatican II".

Most of these had little to do with the actual findings of Vatican II and in many cases actually opposed them. This action caused much confusion and upset to many loyal Catholics, some of whom actually blamed the Council for the resultant problems.

Many of these dissenting voices continued their dissent into open rebellion when Pope Paul VI published his encyclical *Humanae vitae*, which accurately prophesied many of the social problems of today.

While it is true that sexual issues are a great problem in the Church, it is primarily due to poor selection and poor formation in many "permissive" seminaries, as well as due to the ignorance (either intentional or otherwise) of most, to the true teaching of the Church on sexuality, so beautifully put by our beloved

Pope John Paul II in his teaching on Theology of the Body. The poor selection and poor formation was introduced into the Church and seminaries by its disobedient members who rejected *Humanae vitae*.

Why is it that so few understand that Jesus gave his authority to Peter and that Benedict XVI to this day carries this authority? Or is it that many of us are still blinded by the original sin: "No Lord, not your way but mine"?

We must realise that no human organisation has survived 500 years remaining loyal to its founding principles, whereas the Church has now survived and flourished for 2000 years. Obviously this can only be thanks to the guidance of the Holy Spirit as promised by Jesus.

I believe now is the time for courage; the courage to repent, to unite behind the Holy Father and support him to the full, to grow smaller so the God can grow larger, to combat the radical feminism, the ultra-liberal and permissive left, the "politically correct" and "inclusive language" agendas, and to remember that a house divided against itself falls.

Robert Barlow, Durban

Giving thanks

AMID much priestly controversy in the Catholic Church, I feel the need to say something positive.

My daughter was confirmed in Bothasis parish, Cape Town, on Pentecost Sunday and it was a dream come true for her as she had her beloved Archbishop Henry, her beloved parish priest, Fr John Keough, and her beloved sponsor, Fr David Anderson, celebrating the day with her.

We, as a family, have always been blessed with the priests in our lives and I would like to take this opportunity to thank the priests of Goodwood parish in the 1960s and '70s, the priests of Green Point parish in the 1980s and '90s and the priests of Bothasis from 1993.

Thank you, too, Archbishop Henry for having been a wonderful shepherd to Cape Town Catholics for so many years.

Thank you to the nuns and teachers at Holy Cross Convent, Brooklyn, the catechists and parishioners of Bothasis parish, my late mother, aunts, sister and my husband.

Because of all of these, I and my three daughters believe we have a special relationship with God.

Most importantly, thank you God for our wonderful Catholic faith.

Helen Sherriff, Cape Town

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Thank you!

Henry Makori

Reflections of my Life



Time for Church's painful rebirth?

I AM still thinking about Pope Benedict's visit to Portugal last month. He said some things I have never heard. He chose his words and it was obvious the pope is deeply troubled.

To begin with, it is clear that the Church is facing its worst crisis in centuries over the handling of the delicate matter of clerical sexual abuse—in addition to the inexorable wave of new movements and secularism that is emptying churches in many places.

When was the last time anyone heard lawyers preparing lawsuits against a pope, or Christians saying they were leaving the Church because they did not trust its leadership? Or a respected newspaper reporting that part of the Third Secret of Fatima revealed to the three Portuguese children Jacinta, Francisco and Lucia in 1917 was that the Church could collapse under a pile of scandals?

The present crisis has deeply hurt the pope and the Church. He told journalists he was going to Portugal to pray before Our Lady of Fatima. A Christian's first and most important response to a crisis is to pray. Obviously, Pope Benedict has been praying a lot about the present situation, so why go to Fatima?

The apparitions of Fatima nearly a century ago, he told reporters, had far more profound meanings than the suffering of Pope John Paul II who interpreted his shooting in 1981 as having been foretold by the Blessed Virgin.

In the visions, the pope said, "an indication is given of realities involving the future of the Church, which are gradually taking shape and becoming evident. So it is true that, in addition to the moment indicated in the vision, there is mention of, there is seen, the need for a passion of the Church, which naturally is reflected in the person of the Pope, yet the Pope stands for the Church and thus it is sufferings of the Church that are announced".

And then the pope added something very startling: the greatest threat to the Church is from within it, not from outside. The authorities have often given the impression that the Church's problems were the handiwork of enemies out there.

Here are the Pope's exact words: "As for the new things which we can find in [the Fatima] message today, there is also the fact that attacks on the pope and the Church come not only from without, but the sufferings of the Church come precisely from within the Church, from the sin existing within the Church.

"This too is something that we have always known, but today we are seeing it in a really terrifying way: that the greatest persecution of the Church comes not from her enemies without, but arises from sin within the Church, and that the Church thus has a deep need to relearn penance, to accept purification, to learn forgiveness on the one hand, but also the need for justice. Forgiveness does not replace justice. In a word, we need to relearn precisely this essential: conversion, prayer, penance and the theological virtues."

There is no mistaking the meaning of these words: the Church is on a dangerous slide due to internal institutional failings. Is this not what some Christians have been saying, that the Church needs to change and become a listening, open and participatory community of forgiven sinners gathered around Christ?

The pope told pilgrims at the chapel of Apparitions in Fatima that in our time the faith in many places seems like a light in danger of being snuffed out for ever. And in his meeting with the bishops of Portugal, Benedict said that the faith cannot go anywhere "by means of simple speeches or moral appeals", important as these are. "What attracts is, above all, the encounter with believing persons who, through their faith, draw others to the grace of Christ by bearing witness to him."

That is exactly why the unfortunate incidents of clerical sexual abuse and other failings are a real blow to the Church, because they deeply undermine the credibility of its Christian witness.

The pope again told the bishops of Portugal: "As you see, the pope [and one could add the entire Church] needs to open himself ever more fully to the mystery of the Cross, embracing it as the one hope and the supreme way to gain and to gather in the Crucified One all his brothers and sisters in humanity."

In other words, the time has come for the Church's painful rebirth. Could we please start by opening up?

Benedict's choice

THE past few months have marked an irreversible change in the Catholic Church. The credibility of the Vatican is ruined and many structures of the Catholic Church will change.

There are signs that Pope Benedict has undergone a deep change. Visiting Malta in April, he met and wept with survivors of clerical sexual abuse. He came back to Rome and confessed that the Church is wounded and sinful. If he stands by that confession and those tears he could become one of the most important popes in history.

Just as Mikhail Gorbachev led the Soviet Union out of communism, and FW de Klerk, once seen as a *verkrampde* leader in the National Party, led South Africa out of apartheid, so it may take the man once thought to be God's Rottweiler to lead the Catholic Church out of the stranglehold of a bureaucracy claiming it could do no wrong. The alternative is to be the Church's Richard Nixon, drawn deeper into denial and lies.

Pope Benedict has given some signs that he may choose to transform the Church rather than drive it into suicidal denial.

His first encyclical, on love, surprised some. His recent defenders have pointed out that he started to take measures to deal with clerical sexual abuse soon after he became pope, having been limited by other curial officials in responding when he was still Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. It's still not enough by any means, but there are glimmers. The current crisis may encourage him to admit real daylight. To some believers, that will mean admitting real grace.

The changes the Church needs are profound. The sickness of the Church is deep and worldwide. The scandals in North America, Australia, Canada and Europe have spread to India and Brazil and will soon, no doubt, be revealed in Africa and in other countries in Asia and Latin America.

Few of the scandals revealed so far expose how priests have abused girls and women, but these are also coming to light.

The Vatican may say these scandals have nothing to do with celibacy and blame homosexuality. But who now can believe what the Vatican says? The sickness of the Church goes deeper than its rules and teaching about sexuality.

Until his confession that the

Rose Moss

Point of Debate



Church is wounded and sinful, Pope Benedict seemed to believe that claims of understanding and promises would suffice. But abuse survivors want more. They ask for bishops to be punished, and some have already resigned.

If Pope Benedict follows the path of repentance by demonstrating a real purpose of amendment, he will ask more to resign, and when they resign he will not keep them, as his predecessor did with Cardinal Bernard Law. Cardinal Law resigned as archbishop of Boston after it was revealed to what extent he covered up the abuse of children, and quietly re-assigned abusing priests to parishes where they would abuse again, without warning parents about the kind of priests they were receiving in their communities.

Today, Cardinal Law is lavishly housed in Rome, has been appointed archpriest of one of Rome's four major basilicas, is a member of several curial dicasteries, and still is entitled to vote for the next pope.

Even dismissing complicit bishops by inviting their resignation will not work and Pope Benedict may know that. Many people are now calling for another Church Council.

Right now, Pope Benedict needs the advice of all the world's bishops. A Council has more authority than the Vatican. If Pope Benedict summons a Council, he will answer those who call for him to resign, and surprise those who regard him as a discredited pope heading a shrivelling Church.

He has a chance to lead the Church from its downward spiral to new vigour. If he remains true to his Malta tears and insights about the sin from within the Church which he raised at Fatima in May, he could become one of the most important popes in history.

That, now, is his choice.

■ *Rose Rappoport Moss is a Johannesburg-born author who has lived in the United States since 1964. Her most recent book, In Court, was published as a Penguin Modern Classic. She teaches creative writing at the Nieman Foundation and at Harvard Law School.*

Joel Davidson

Point of Reflection

Christ trusts the untrustworthy

IS the Catholic Church separate from the sins of her members? In one sense she is not. The wounds inflicted by one member affect all others, sending shock waves through the whole community.

It is even more difficult when the Church's spiritual leaders are implicated in grave sins, especially when believers have turned to them for leadership, wisdom and in moments of great joy and sorrow. We are embodied, relational beings, and it is impossible to untangle personal faith from our experience as fellow believers.

That being said, our faith is not in people. If it were, the Church would have fallen to pieces at its conception.

During Jesus' ministry, the first Apostles shamelessly argued among themselves over who would have greater authority in Christ's kingdom. They turned away children only to have Jesus take them in. When Jesus was seized in the garden to be crucified, Peter lashed out with the violence of the sword, while many of his fellow disciples ran in fear and utter confusion.

And just moments before, some of the disciples fell asleep while attempting to pray with Jesus as he pleaded with the Father on the eve of his crucifixion.

And who can forget Judas—from Christ's inner circle—the man who betrayed the Lord for a bribe of 30 pieces of silver?

Then we read again of Peter, the one Jesus chose to be the rock of the Church—the first pope. Peter denied Christ three times, as the Lord laboured up the tortuous road to Calvary. Later, the apostle Thomas doubted whether Christ really rose from the dead.

From the very beginning, the Church was a tangle of human confusion, fear and weakness. Left to her own devices, it is hard to see how she could have lasted a decade, let alone 2000 years.

But in all these instances, it was Christ who was the trustworthy guide. He continued to forgive and sanctify. He met his disciples in their weakness and strengthened them for the great work that lay ahead.

For his part, Judas did not return to Christ. Even after sitting at the feet of the Lord, he chose his own way, took his life and lost the call to be one of the first ministers of the Church.

Scripture does not whitewash the Church's history or make her appear spotless and without sin. Rather, she is seen as completely dependent on the grace of God.

Certainly, circumstances have changed over the past 2000 years. The Catholic Church is now a global entity with 1,15 billion followers and more than 400 000 priests and bishops. Yet, as in biblical times, human sin still wounds her and causes great suffering.

Sin and suffering, however, have never been the final words. Christ takes broken humanity and redeems it, and from the tangle of sin he still calls for great saints to radiate his presence to the world.

He has done this for 2000 years and is still sanctifying today.

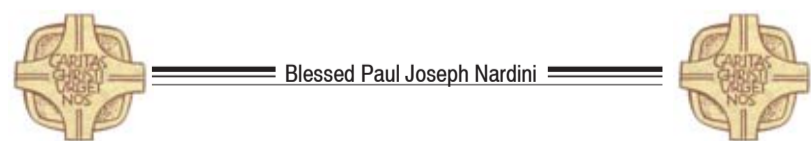
Yes, we suffer, but not without the unfailing hope that Christ is more powerful than our sin. He established this Church to proclaim the message of salvation and freedom. In his infinite wisdom, Christ chose a broken band of followers to launch this great mission.

Our hope today is the same as theirs. We are weak, but Christ is strong and he has promised to remain with his Church always.

In this time of purging and healing, let us turn to the one who began this work and who will see it to completion.

■ *Joel Davidson is the editor of the Catholic Anchor, newspaper of the Archdiocese of Anchorage, in which this article first appeared.*

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Catechumen from St James' parish in St James on Cape Town's False Bay after receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation.

SUBMITTED BY MARIA WAGENER




Nelspruit parishioners celebrated the feast of the Divine Mercy at St Peter's church. Representatives of nine communities were present. Pictured are Katja Kowolec, Bishop Giuseppe Sandri and Matthew Barton.



Liturgical dancers from Holy Cross parish in District Six, Cape Town, with their teacher Aneen Abels and Archbishop Stephen Brislin, after the Cape Town deanery Mass at St Agnes church in Woodstock.

SUBMITTED BY CINDY SAYERS

Edited by Nadine Christians



Send photographs, with sender's name and address on the back, and a SASE to: *The Southern Cross, Community Pics, Box 2372, Cape Town, 8000* or email them to: pics@scross.co.za



The archdiocese of Bloemfontein ended its Year for Priests programme with a talk and Mass at Christ the King church in Heidedal, Bloemfontein, celebrated by Fr Larry Kaufmann, the Redemptorist provincial. Pictured are priests from the Bloemfontein archdiocese.

SUBMITTED BY CLIVE SOLOMON



A group of pilgrims from various parishes in Durban visited the Marian shrine of Ngome in Eshowe diocese, KwaZulu-Natal. Pictured are members of the group, which included parishioners from Christ the King parish in Wentworth and St Anne's parish in Sydenham.



A day of recollection for extraordinary ministers of the Eucharist from Rivonia parish in Johannesburg was held at De Mazenod Retreat Centre in Germiston. SUBMITTED BY LILY LOO



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Thoughts for the Week on the Family

FAMILY CALENDAR

2010 FAMILY THEME:
"Families Play the Game."

JUNE THEME: The Parenting Game

June 11: Start of the World Cup. Pray for the success of this event using the Church-on-the-Ball World Cup prayer book, *Praying & Playing* (www.churchontheball.com).

June 13, 11th Sunday of the Year, St Anthony. The gospel tells a very colourful story of a woman who has a bad reputation but is converted and comes to show her tremendous love for Jesus. Her tears fell on Jesus' feet and she wiped them away with her hair. Jesus tells the guests that her many sins are forgiven because of her great love. We don't know what caused her to change her life. How can we help to bring sinners to Jesus rather than condemn them?

St Anthony is revered as one who helps find things that are lost. At this hectic time with many people travelling about pray that he will keep all children safe and help find any who are lost.

June 16, Youth Day. This is a not a liturgical day but still a very significant one for families. Way back in 1976 young people spearheaded the process of change towards the end of apartheid and coming of democracy. They took the initiative away from their parents. Those young people are now the parents of today. How do today's parents look at their young people now? Do parents share their stories with their children and invite them to ever greater maturity in a changing world?

Fr Jack Robinson

CAPE Town-born Fr Jack Robinson died on May 7 in Australia at 84.

Born in 1925, his father died when he was four months old, and he and his brother were brought up by their mother Eileen.

A well-known member of St Mary's cathedral parish, Mrs Robinson spent the last 12 years of her life as Sr Mary Elizabeth in the Capuchin Adoration Convent, Swellendam, where she died in December 1967.

Educated at Holy Cross Convent, Maitland, and St Aidan's College, Grahamstown, Jack joined the South African Air Force for four years of active service, and then worked in several parts of the world.

Finally, in Australia he volunteered for a stint as a lay missionary in Papua-New Guinea.



After three years there he started studying for the priesthood and for qualification as a teacher.

He was ordained in July 1969 at Yule Island, Papua-New Guinea, and served in the jungle of Papua for some 25 years, returning to Australia when non-local clergy were asked to leave.

For the rest of his life he worked in various remote parishes, mostly in New South Wales.

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BLAND—Roxanne Jane, born Sunday, 23 May 2010 at 02h00 at Olivedale Hospital. Congratulations to parents Paul and Fiona and little brother Robert, Grandparents Ken and Anne (R.I.P.), Ivan and Anne and all family members. Grateful thanks to Our Lord Jesus and Our Lady for prayers answered for the safe arrival of our newest family member.

IN MEMORIAM

SEMPER (Bland)—Tracy. In loving memory of a wonderful daughter, mother, sister and friend who was called to her heavenly home three years ago on 14/05/2007. Always in our hearts and remembered daily by Ken, Kirsty, Carol, Jennifer, Mathew, Paul and family and friends. Rest in peace with Mom and Our Lady and her beloved Son, Jesus.

PRAYERS

HOLY St Jude, apostle and martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke you, special patron in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg you to come to my assistance. Help me now in my urgent need and grant my petitions. In return I promise to make your name known and publish this prayer. Amen. LMF

HOLY St Jude, apostle and martyr, great in virtue and rich in miracles, kinsman of Jesus Christ, faithful intercessor of all who invoke you, special patron in time of need. To you I have recourse from the depth of my heart and humbly beg you to come to my assistance. Help me now in my urgent need and grant my petitions. In return I promise to make your name known and publish this prayer. Amen. EH

O MOST beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendour of Heaven, blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me where you are, Mother of God. Queen of heaven and earth I humble beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity. There is none who can withstand your power, O Mary conceived without sin, pay for us who have recourse to thee. Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands. *Say this prayer for 3 consecutive days and then publish.* Thank you for prayers answered. Gino.

O MOST beautiful flower of Mount Carmel, fruitful vine, splendour of Heaven, blessed Mother of the Son of God, Immaculate Virgin, assist me in my necessity. O Star of the Sea, help me and show me where you are, Mother of God. Queen of heaven and earth I humble beseech you from the bottom of my heart to succour me in my necessity. There is none who can withstand your power, O Mary conceived without sin, pay for us who have

recourse to thee. Holy Mary, I place this cause in your hands. *Say this prayer for 3 consecutive days and then publish.* Thank you for prayers answered. Tia.

PERSONAL

ABORTION WARNING: 'The Pill' can abort, undetected, soon after conception (a medical fact).

BIRTHRIGHT: Pregnant? We care. ☎ 011 403 1718, 031 201 5471.

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VILLA SUMMERTON, Port Elizabeth: B/B—2 en-suite rooms, fully equipped, private entrance. Tel: 041 379 3805 or 072 550 9298

WILDERNESS: Self-catering house, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms. Sleeps 8/10, indoor braai, pool table, DStv. Contact Julia, e-mail progalu@netactive.co.za

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

BETHLEHEM:

☐ Shrine of Our Lady of Bethlehem at Tsheseng, Maluti mountains; Thursdays 09:30, Mass, then exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. ☎ 058 721 0532

CAPE TOWN:

☐ Holy Hour to pray for priests of the diocese, 2nd Saturday monthly at Villa Maria shrine Kloof Nek Rd 16:00-17:00.
☐ St Pio Holy Hour. June 20 at 15:30 at Holy Redeemer, Bergvliet.

JOHANNESBURG:

☐ First Friday Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament 10:30. First Saturday: Devotions: Our Lady's Cenacle, Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament and Rosary, 15:00-16:00. Special devotion to Our Blessed Lady for her priests. Our Lady of the Angels, Little Eden, Edenvale, ☎ 011 609 7246

To place your event, call Nadine Christians at 021 465 5007, or e-mail pics@scross.co.za

Mass readings for the week

Sundays year C, weekdays cycle 2

Sun June 13, 11th Sunday of the Year:
2 Sm 12:7-10.13; Ps 32, 1-2.5-7.11; Gal 2:16.19-21; Lk 7:36-8.3

Mon June 14, feria:
1 Kgs 21:1-16; Ps 5:2-3, 5-6, 7; Mt 5:38-42

Tue June 15, feria:
1 Kgs 21:17-29; Ps 51:3-4, 5-6, 11, 16; Mt 5:43-48

Wed June 16, feria:
2 Kgs 2:1, 6-14; Ps 31:20, 21, 24; Mt 6:1-6, 16-18

Thur June 17, feria:
Sir 48:1-14; Ps 97:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7; Mt 6:7-15

Fri June 18, feria:
2 Kgs 11:1-4, 9-18, 20; Ps 132:11, 12, 13-14, 17-18; Mt 6:19-23

Sat June 19, St Romuald:
2 Chr 24:17-25; Ps 89:4-5, 29-30, 31-32, 33-34; Mt 6:24-34

Sun June 20, 12th Sunday of the Year:
Zec 12:10-11; Ps 62:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9; Gal 3:26-29; Lk 9:18-24

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June 9 to June 15, 2010

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12th Sunday – Year C (June 20)
Readings: Zechariah 12:10-11; 13:1;
Psalm 63: 2, 4-6, 8-9; Galatians 3:26-29;
Luke 9:18-24

GOD is different, does things differently from us. That is the unmistakable message from next Sunday's readings.

The *first reading* presents us with a picture of the prophets sent by God who have been rejected by Israel; but because God is God, that is not to be the end of the story, for, as God says, "I shall pour out on the house of David, and on the one who dwells in Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication; and they shall look on the one whom they have pierced, and mourn for him as for an only son". God can heal even the consequences of the horrible things that we have done in response to his generosity. It is a lovely picture, and we must reflect on this generosity of God.

Equally beautiful is the *psalm* for next Sunday, which gives utterance to our deep longing for God, "my soul thirsts for you, my flesh faints for you". The poet visualises us as a desert without God, "like a dry and weary land, where there is no water". But there is great hope in this song: "Since you have been my help, and in the shadow of your wings I sing for joy", and also a determination to stay with God: "My soul clings to you, your right

Who do you think Christ is?

Fr Nicholas King SJ
Scriptural Reflections



hand holds me up".

In the *second reading* we continue our journey through Galatians. At this point in the letter, Paul is trying to explain to his readers (with whom he is rather cross) what God has done for us in Christ. He explains it to us in terms of "adopted sonship" (though we are all sons and daughters it is important to use the word "son", not because God only loves the males, but because of the way the idea of adoption works in Roman and Greek Law). The result is that "you are all sons [and daughters] of God through faith in Jesus Christ".

This is God's gift; but the effect does not stop there. Paul explains for them (and for us) the effects of baptism: "Any of you who have been baptised into Christ, have put on Christ", he writes, using the image of an

actor in a Greek play, who puts on the costume that turns him into the character he is playing; so baptism makes us into someone different.

But it does not stop there, for "in Christ", all our artificial divisions are cancelled out, so "there is no such thing as Jew or Greek" (thus all racial and religious divisions are abolished at a stroke); "no such thing as slave or free" (so all economic and social distinctions are ruled out); and "there is no such thing as male and female" (so there are no second-class citizens in the Church—and would that we had always managed to live in that way!), "for you are all one in Christ Jesus".

That is something that we are going to have constantly to remember.

And something else follows, according to Paul, that "if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise". So the ancient story of God and of the People of God now becomes our story also. It is a wonderful idea this, and we should rejoice as we listen.

Next Sunday's *gospel* is Luke's account of the episode that Mark and Matthew place at Caesarea Philippi. It is characteristic of Luke that he does not tell us where it happened,

but simply says that Jesus "was praying on his own". The disciples do not, apparently, have much sympathy with this sort of behaviour, and intrude on his meditation; so he asks them, perhaps to get them thinking: "Who do the crowds say I am?" They offer various suggestions of an appropriately religious sort: "John the Baptist, Elijah, one of the ancient prophets"; and then he insists on their own insight.

In the name of all of them, Peter gives an answer which we know to be correct: "the Messiah of God". Luke however has Jesus "scold" them, and tell them not to tell anyone.

Why is this? It turns out that it is because he is a different kind of Messiah from that which most people would have expected: "The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed—and on the third day be raised".

And what is the consequence for us? We must listen carefully as Jesus continues: "If someone wants to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross each day, and follow me. For anyone who wants to save their life will lose it, but anyone who loses their life for my sake, that one will save it."

Our God, and his Messiah, are very different.

Reasons to believe in SA

IFIND it depressing that so many people in this country are negative about it. It took an e-mail from a fellow Catholic to lift my spirits and waft into my life like a breath of fresh air.

I had never heard of Byron John. But I know now that he is a young marketer with such positive passion and enthusiasm that if I was in charge of some big brand somewhere, I would hire him in a heartbeat.

This is what he wrote:
 "I am a South African by birth and have lived here my whole life. I am not a celebrity nor do I work for either the government or Fifa. I am also not a professional musician or videographer, but I have put together a song and music video that will hopefully make a small difference.

"I would just like to share this message with the whole world, and if it makes a positive impact for just one person, then all the work is worth it.

"I love my country because of the people. Sure, the weather is awesome, the beauty is unparalleled, but it is the people that make this country what it is. Unfortunately, you will not see them making headlines in the media, or taking up space in the columns of the newspapers. They are the people I meet every day at work, at

Chris Moerdyk
The Last Word



the shops or at a braai, at social events, at the sports stadium or through friends of friends or through family friends. These encounters happen daily. They are pockets of people of all different colours and race who are not ruled by the limitations of their exterior or cultural differences.

"This is the South Africa I know. I need only surf online through the photo gallery of all my Facebook friends to see what a richly diverse and amazing country I live in and what the world might never see."

Byron acknowledges that South Africa has very serious problems.

"My family and I—yes, too many South Africans—have been sadly affected by crime...but I am truly lucky to be living in South Africa. Despite the daily dose of pessimism...I am honoured to be living with such resilient and amazing people. We are a tough nation, and because of adversity,

we really know how to enjoy ourselves."

A resilient nation will conquer the obstacles and, Byron predicts, host a great World Cup, no matter what the sceptics believe.

"This World Cup is somewhat clouded across the media spectrum by a dark sense of fear and insecurity painted by foreign prophets of doom, and, worse still, by too many South Africans. Yes, the mood is a bit 'tense' here in South Africa, but it is only part of what is actually happening on the ground. Everyone is getting excited and I have a good feeling [that] the success of this next awesome chapter in our history will exceed many expectations."

So Byron's message to South Africans is this:

"Be positive. Be 'champions' for our country. We have faced adversity. All of us. No country has gone through or is going through what we are enduring as a country right now. 'Show them!' that we are amazing people...not because we want to be, but because we are. Our foreign friends from all over the world are coming soon, not only to encounter our celebrities and politicians, our flag, or our Table Mountain...but they are coming to meet us! We must wow each person that comes here. It is a history-making opportunity that we can all affect."

And his message to tourists:
 "When I went to visit London, Ireland and Italy some time back, the advice I got was simple: 'Stay together in groups, never go off on your own or go looking for trouble either. Be careful when people offer you things. Get information from the proper officials before accepting anything from anybody. Don't trust too quickly. Watch your money and never leave your belongings lying around for people to be tempted.'

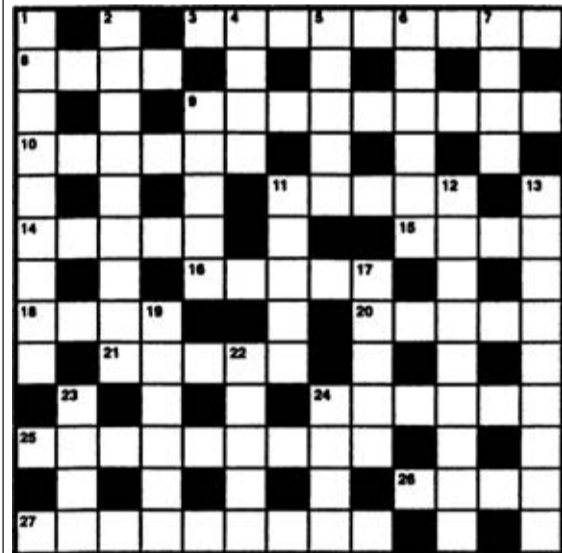
"This is the exact same advice I'm giving you when you come to South Africa." Byron has uploaded a song on YouTube (http://bit.ly/Champions_Song) which he hopes will show "what an awesome country this place is because of its people".

He hopes that visitors "will encounter a taste of the hospitality and friendship that makes this country so awesome".

Now, I suppose there will be those cynics who will claim that Byron is looking at the world through rose-coloured glasses and has his head in the sand, ignoring the crime and corruption that is going on around him.

I don't believe he is. I believe he is simply looking at what he can and can't do to change things, and I reckon if there was less bitterness and more Byron Johns around, this country would be an even better place.

Southern Crossword #395



ACROSS

3. Insect that bothered St George? (9)
8. Mosque leader (4)
9. Heart born to make you loathe it (9)
10. Set of millions of stars in Creation (6)
11. A high anaesthetic? (5)
14. Kind of cassette you can hear (5)
15. Tiramisu filling grips Muslim mystic (4)
16. The nine goddesses of the arts (5)
18. Lazy-sounding graven image (4)
20. Save us from...and from woe (hymn) (5)
21. Prepared to read at the year's start (5)
24. Flinches (6)
25. She gave birth to her son, her... (Lk 2) (5-4)
26. Swimming competition (4)
27. It indicates a wide variation (9)

DOWN

1. Monarch of Israel (4,5)
2. Demanded to be summoned (6,3)
4. Initially, run under bridge, you'll find her (4)
5. Spooky spirit (5)
6. Annoyingly, someone may get on yours (6)
7. Fast time (4)
9. It is self-evidently true (5)
11. Composition sounds like South Africa (5)
12. Curia Brin studies rubrics (9)
13. Where you can sit in church or theatre (5,4)
17. Land of St James of Compostela (5)
19. One who holds the lease (6)
22. Amounts owing (5)
23. Fifi jives around island (4)
24. Legal document could be biblically holy (4)

SOLUTIONS TO #394. ACROSS: 4 Ephesus, 8 At last, 9 Problem, 10 Decade, 11 Eleven, 12 The power, 18 Rhetoric, 20 Sacred, 21 In debt, 22 Curator, 23 Settle, 24 Heaten. DOWN: 1 Mandate, 2 Slack-er, 3 Used to, 5 Perverse, 6 Emblem, 7 Uneven, 13 Wardrobe, 14 Priests, 15 Scythes, 16 Mature, 17 Breast, 19 Tinsel.

CLASSIC CONRAD



CHURCH CHUCKLE

Without God our week would be Sinday, Mournday, Tearsday, Wasteday, Thirstday, Fightday and Shatterday.
 Remember: Seven days without God makes one weak.

Send us your favourite Catholic joke, preferably clean and brief, to The Southern Cross, Church Chuckle, PO Box 2372, Cape Town, 8000.