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Fr Matthias Nsamba of St Mary Queen of Apostles parish in Cathcart, Queenstown diocese, stands in the snow in front of the town's Schoenstatt Shrine, of which he is the rector, during the cold front which hit large parts of South Africa in late July. Right: Cathcart's Mary Queen of the Apostles church in a winter wonderland. (Photos: Sr Mary Kathleen Sauren and Fr Matthias Nsamba)



At WYD, pope calls for silence

BY CINDY WOODEN

POPE Benedict has put his own stamp on the Church's celebration of World Youth Day (WYD), and it's especially clear in the gathering's moments of prayer.

In Cologne, Germany, six years ago—Pope Benedict's first WYD as pope—he surprised the youths at the Saturday night vigil by urging them to quiet down.

The Cologne event was where he started a major new WYD tradition: Instead of ending the vigil with a boisterous musical finale—with tens of thousands of young people kneeling silently in a field. The scene was repeated in Australia in 2008.

During World Youth Day 2011, from August 16-21 in Madrid, eucharistic adoration again will cap the pope's participation at the vigil. Adoration and prayer also will continue throughout the night on the edges of the military airport where many of the young people are expected to camp overnight.

In fact, organisers are planning to have 17 tents set up as chapels for all-night adoration.

The visual focal point when the pope leads the adoration and Benediction will be a monstrance set into a towering 16th-century gothic structure of silver and gold usually housed in the Toledo cathedral.

The traditional, solemn sense will be echoed in the papal liturgies throughout the trip, organisers said.

"The point is to highlight that the central person of World Youth Day is Jesus Christ, and the pope is coming to proclaim him," said Fr Javier Cremades, Madrid coordinator of the liturgies.

However, not all of Fr Cremades' plans emphasise the formal. "We'll wake the young people with mariachi music" the morning of August 21, hours before the pope arrives to celebrate the final Mass at the Cuatro Vientos military airport.

"Young people will come to World Youth Day to celebrate with the Holy Father," he said. "If they did not want to attend a liturgy in the pope's style, they wouldn't be coming."

Young women and men will proclaim the Scripture readings at the Mass and read the prayers of the faithful; seminarians will fulfill the role of altar servers. Up to 6000 singers—members of choirs from around the world—will sing the hymns at the Mass.

Bl Pope John Paul II was the pope with the reputation for rallying and energising



FLASHBACK: Youths at prayer at WYD 2008. Pope Benedict encourages praying and eucharistic adoration at the celebrations.

thousands of young Catholics and particularly for drawing energy from them.

But in a passage that sounds like he was surprised about the impact that the celebration had on him, Pope Benedict told an interviewer: "These youth days have actually turned out to be a genuine gift for me."

In the book *Light of the World*, he told Peter Seewald that he was struck by the "intense joy" and "the spirit of recollection that, amazingly, pervades the actual World Youth Days themselves".

Talking about the experience in Sydney at WYD 2008, he said: "It was quite simply the common joy of faith that carried us through and that made it possible for hundreds of thousands of people to remain in silence before the sacrament and so to become one."

Pope Benedict has insisted that real, even prolonged moments of silence be added to every liturgy he celebrates.

Visiting Sulmona, Italy, in 2010, he said: "We live today in a society in which every space, every moment must be 'filled' with initiatives, activities and sound," so that there is no time for listening and dialogue.

Yago de la Cierva, executive director of World Youth Day Madrid, said that while organisers, priests and even the pope cannot control what the Holy Spirit does in the lives of the young pilgrims, they must be serious about preparing an atmosphere where the Spirit's action can be recognised.

"One important thing is to take great care with the liturgy, so the young will say: 'Wow, the Mass is beautiful,'" he said.—CNS

Joy as villagers may use tractors to go to Sunday Mass

FOR some communities, meeting their Sunday obligation of going to Mass is an uphill struggle.

But government officials in Dak Lak province, a rural part of central Vietnam, have waived their normal traffic rules so that Catholics can get to Sunday Mass by tractor.

"We're happy they've allowed us to do this for the villagers, as many of them are elderly people, women and children," said Peter Inuk, one of the tractor owners who provide transportation for Massgoers.

"We use ten tractors altogether, pulling

handmade wagons to transport 200 people to Thuan Phuc church, which is 10km from their village," he said.

"On weekdays, we would be fined if we were caught, as farm vehicles are banned from running on national roads," he added. "We used to be fined 30 000 to 50 000 Dong (R10-17) per tractor, and we had to pay those fines many times a year."

The transport police relaxed the rules after 300 local Catholics, most of them from the Anak Ede ethnic group in the Krong Buk district of Dak Lak, submitted a petition to the district authority.

The petition asked for the villagers' religious freedom to be respected by allowing them to travel to church by tractor because there is no chapel in the village. Previously, people had to walk to the church and often arrived when Mass was nearly over. Often they missed Mass altogether.

With the proviso that the waiver would apply only on Sundays, local officials agreed to the request. The tractors return to their usual tasks of plowing and carrying fertilisers and crops during the rest of the week.

With the system up and running,

thanks to a contribution to cover fuel costs from local Dominican sisters, tractor usage for transportation is becoming more widespread.

"People from other villages are also using tractors to take people to church," said Joseph Ma Pu, another driver.

Fr Francis Xavier Tran Hong Linh, head of Thuan Hieu parish, welcomed the innovation, saying it helps him and one other priest to offer pastoral care to about 8000 Catholics in the area.

■ See also story on jailing of Vietnamese priest on page 4.

Technology the solution to schools' failure

BY CLAIRE MATHIESON

ONLY one in every three children that enter a school in South Africa will complete matric, and more than 30% of those children will start their education in a multi-grade school—an environment where one teacher teaches children of various levels in the same classroom.

Despite this, according to the Centre for Multigrade Education (CMGE), there is no formal policy in place guiding or directing these schools.

Participating in a round table discussion hosted by the Catholic Parliamentary Liaison Office (CPLO), the CMGE's Dr Jurie Joubert said despite nearly three million South African children attending multi-grade schools, the Department of Education "makes no mention of multi-grade schools. Curriculum, learning materials and training to teachers are all geared towards single grade classrooms. So 30% of all schools

in the primary education system are essentially left to fend for themselves".

Dr Joubert works with the CMGE to develop frameworks and policies that promote quality instruction and learning in multi-grade education.

Having travelled to other parts of the world, Dr Joubert said there are many examples of high quality education emerging from multi-grade classrooms in countries such as the Netherlands, Finland, Spain and across South America, but since there is no official framework in South Africa, the quality is unlikely to improve until this is remedied.

The CMGE was established in 2009 through a grant from the Dutch government to enhance the development of these schools. "Most schools in rural areas, where the majority of the country's poor live, haven't changed since 1994," said Dr Joubert.

Poverty and school failure are linked. "A poor child is twice as

likely to repeat a grade, get expelled or drop out of school and a quarter of these children have learning disabilities," said Dr Joubert. But because many of these children attend multi-grade schools, the situation is unlikely to change until the teachers are assisted to deliver quality education.

These children will never be able to "compete on par, they will never get even close to a tertiary institution, and they will never become part of the economy. Eighty percent will drop out before they reach grade 12, they are being educated to perpetuate the same illiteracy and lack of skills that fetter their parents to lifelong poverty," explained Dr Joubert.

HOWEVER, there is a way forward. "Technology is the big solution here," the educator said.

"IT companies have developed all sorts of pieces of technology that will aid children in their education," Dr Joubert said, referring

to e-readers, computers, tablets and cellphones.

Many of these companies have started to develop these devices with solar energy to ensure usability even in remote areas.

IT can help these teachers and learners. An e-reader can hold up to 3000 books and an iPad tablet can accommodate multimedia. "You don't need to train the learners to use these items – children are amazing at learning and using technology they've never used before—this is part of their education," Dr Joubert said.

The CMGE educator acknowledged that the technology is very expensive, but added that it is the way forward.

"We want to encourage a child-centred approach. We want to teach children to take responsibility for their own learning. This is achieved through self-direction and peer-tutoring," Dr Joubert said, reiterating that the child must be at the centre of the learning and not lectured.

He pointed out that multi-grade teachers don't have time to lecture on everything. Their time is divided up between class time, and individual grade time.

There are benefits to multi-grade teaching, Dr Joubert said. "Children are given a brief lesson and then given instruction. They have to teach themselves and find a way. The teacher is there to guide and assist when a learner falls behind."

He pointed out that if a learner is falling behind, the student can simply be moved to a different seat to work with learners of the same level instead of struggling through all the lessons. Not only are there benefits, but for many this kind of education is the only option.

Dr Joubert said priority must be placed on establishing a national policy that needs to help the 3 million learners currently in multi-grade schools and the CMGE was currently working to provide the Department of Education with research to implement a policy.

Founder's weekend at St Dominic's in PE

STAFF REPORTER

ST Dominic's Priory School in Port Elizabeth will celebrate the feast of St Dominic over three days with a Mass, lecture, dinner and derby day.

On August 11 at 18:30, Dominican Father Martin Badenhorst will

deliver a lecture on "The life and Times of St Dominic". It will be followed by a cheese and wine. Admission is R40.

A feast Mass will be celebrated on August 12 at 11:00, followed by tea.

At 18:30 there will be celebration dinner, at R140 per head.

On August 13, starting at 9:00, the school will host an inter-house and past pupils and parents derby day, followed by a transmission of international rugby on the big screen at 17:00.

For more information contact Di Cowie 041392816 or visit www.priory.co.za

Oblate priest ordained in Johannesburg

BY LEBO WA MAJAHE

IN a packed church of St Hubert's in Alexandra, Johannesburg, Archbishop Buti Tlhagale ordained Fr Thabang Nkadameng OMI to the priesthood.

More than 40 priests and many visitors from as far afield as Rome witnessed a moving ceremony.

In his homily, Archbishop Tlhagale described priests as brokers between God and his people. He said that priests are not just liturgical functionaries but mediators who are expected to keep the state of holiness.

He described compassion as a quality that every priest should possess.

As the ordination Mass concluded, all the priests gathered around the altar and sang the Salve Regina.

Fr Nkadameng studied theology at the Gregorian University in Rome and took media as his interest. He did broadcasts for Vatican Radio while in Rome. In keeping with the new priest's interest in

broadcasting, his ordination was covered by Radio Veritas.

It was a special celebration for the parishioners of Alexandra because Fr Nkadameng is their first contribution to the priesthood, with two other seminarians still in the pipeline.



Fr Thabang Nkadameng OMI is ordained at St Hubert's in Johannesburg.

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Bishop Wood retires from Diakonia

STAFF REPORTER

BISHOP Barry Wood, auxiliary bishop of Durban, has stepped down as chairman of the Diakonia Council of Churches, an ecumenical organisation for social justice based in Durban, founded by the late Archbishop Denis Hurley.

Communications coordinator Kudzai Taruona said the bishop decided to step down after serving the organisation "with distinction" for two terms—the maximum length of time according to the council's constitution.

Bishop Wood said he was happy to have served on the council and wished his successor, Rev Ian Booth of the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, well in the "demanding position".

Diakonia's Executive director, Nomabelu Mvambo-Dandala said the council was an agency of ordinary human beings, "trying to work with God in the project of making a better life for all. We thank Bishop Wood for having served the organisation with distinction for the past five years".

Currently, the Diakonia Council has six Catholic representatives,



Bishop Barry Wood of Durban has retired as chairman of the Diakonia Council of Churches.

the largest contingent of all the churches. It includes Cardinal Wilfrid Napier of Durban.

A new Catholic member will be appointed soon to replace Bishop Wood. The bishop said he would continue his involvement in the council, but in a different capacity.

Umzimkulu youth play sports to commemorate 1976

STAFF REPORTER

YOUTH from different parishes of Umzimkulu Diocese gathered at the local sports fields in Harding to compete in different sports and games to commemorate the 1976 youth protests.

With the reminder of the many who lost their lives protesting against the use of Afrikaans in schools, the diocesan youth chaplain Fr Raphael Phiri encouraged young people to use all the opportunities to develop themselves and become the leaders of youth and of country.

The youth were also warned of the dangers of using of alcohol and drugs. They were encouraged to look to the future through education and search for support other than that which the local municipalities were offering. Fr

Phiri said the youth can make it happen themselves.

The sports games gave the participants an opportunity to get to know each other and create unity and a common purpose among the youth.

"It was a great and enjoyable day and we are grateful to all organisers from our diocesan youth structures, volunteers and Umuziwabantu municipality for offering us the sports fields," said the chaplain.

He added that while the children had an enjoyable time, many were without sports shoes or appropriate clothing.

The diocese is encouraging donations to assist the development of the youth through sport.

■ *For more information on the development of youth through sports contact 039 433 1421 or visit www.umzimkulu.org.*

South African rosary a gift to Monaco's royals

BY CLAIRE MATHIESON

THE archdiocese of Durban has presented a unique hand-crafted rosary to Prince Albert and Princess Charlene of Monaco.

The "Our Lady Queen of Africa Rosary" was designed and manufactured by Adam Bremner of AB Jewellery and was described as "stunning and uniquely African" by the archdiocese.

"It is a standard five decade rosary that has been hand-crafted in sterling silver and using garnet beads," Mr Bremner said. He added that it was important that only local materials were used. Garnets are indigenous to Africa and are mined specifically in South Africa, Tanzania and Madagascar.

The gift was intended as a token of good will to the princess, who grew up in South Africa, and as a wedding gift.

Mr Bremner added that it was not only a South African gift, but also something special for the Princess Charlene—a new convert to the faith.

The time between deciding to proceed with the gift and the time



The special South African rosary presented to the royals of Monaco.

to manufacture it was just five days.

Mr Bremner, who creates sacred jewellery full time, has embarked on a new project that will see exclusive jewellery designed for Catholic organisations. He has already designed diocese-specific pins for World Youth Day pilgrims

and is currently manufacturing a piece for the Catholic Women's League.

"I want to produce sacred jewellery for Catholics and their organisations," the jeweller said.

His pieces are currently available in exclusive, classic and affordable ranges and a percentage of every piece sold goes towards the Priest Education Fund—which Mr Bremner himself once benefited from as a former Redemptorist seminarian.


"I want my jewellery to be more than just something attractive. When one buys a rosary there is a special intention and focus. You get to contribute to the education of priests and support a local organisation," Mr Bremner said.

The Carmelite sisters, who also receive a percentage of the proceeds, have also been assisting Mr Bremner with the manufacturing of pieces.

Mr Bremner said he was excited that he could be a part of the royal wedding celebrations through his work.

■ *For more information on sacred jewellery by Mr Bremner visit www.abjewellery.co.za*

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Church decries Hindu instruction

BY ANTO AKKARA

CHURCH officials in India's southern Karnataka state have joined growing protests against the compulsory teaching of Hindu scripture in government-run schools.

The vocal demonstrations have developed since June 9 when the state's education department announced it would allow Hindu groups to conduct classes on Bhagavad Gita, one of the Hindu scriptures.

The Karnataka government is ruled by the Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party.

"A secular government should never try to impose or promote one religion alone," said Archbishop Bernard Moras of Bangalore, which falls within Karnataka state.—CNS



A bell is rung at the cathedral of the Assumption in Leon, Nicaragua. The cathedral, built between 1747 and the early 19th century, recently was named to the World Heritage List maintained by UNESCO. (Photo: Oswaldo Rivas, Reuters/CNS)

Papal charity plans to give out anti-Aids drugs

BY JOHN THAVIS

A PAPAL foundation dedicated to Aids patients may expand its services to include a global programme of distributing anti-Aids drugs, a Vatican official said.

The initiative would respond to the shortage of antiretroviral and other drugs in poorer countries, where the vast majority of Aids patients receive no adequate treatment, Mgr Jean-Marie Mupendawatu, secretary of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry, told the Vatican newspaper *L'Osservatore Romano*.

Mgr Mupendawatu is a delegate to the Good Samaritan Foundation, established by Blessed John Paul II in 2004 to provide economic support to the sick who are most in need, particularly those suffering from Aids.

Mgr Mupendawatu said the foundation planned to strengthen its activity, especially in Africa, by increasing its promotion of donations of pharmaceutical and medical material, and by working more closely with local Catholic leaders to place the Church in the forefront of the care for Aids patients.

To support these efforts, he said, the foundation may open offices on every continent, which would function in coordination with the central office in Rome.

"The foundation is also study-

ing the possibility of creating its own 'pharmaceutical centre' which would allow the collection and distribution of medicines in poor countries," he said. The centre would work in cooperation with other church agencies.

Mgr Mupendawatu said that while more than 25% of the global health care to Aids patients is provided by Catholic institutions, the Church needs to do even more in the face of the epidemic, which infects about 7 000 additional people each day.

One of the Church's priorities is to help make "universal and free access to treatment" a reality for all those infected with Aids, he said. Today, only about 5% of people with HIV/Aids receive adequate care, he said.

"It's enough to realise that the majority in Africa live on a dollar a day and cannot afford any treatment. Therefore, it's necessary to reach the essential goal of no-cost drugs," he said.

Mgr Mupendawatu said the Church's insistence that education in responsible sexuality be part of any anti-Aids strategy has found appreciation in scientific circles. The Church's position is that effective prevention of Aids must include the abandonment of high-risk behaviour and the adoption of a "balanced sexuality" based on premarital chastity and marital fidelity, he said.—CNS

Pro-democracy priest back in jail

AN ailing priest who is one of Vietnam's most well-known democracy activists has been returned to prison, more than a year after he was sent home to seek treatment for a brain tumor, a prison official said.

Fr Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, 64, was escorted by police from his home at a church in central Hue city to Ba Sao prison outside the northern capital of Hanoi, said the official.

The priest's eight-year prison sentence for subversion had been suspended in March 2010 to allow him to seek treatment for his illness. The Asian Church news agency UCA News reported that Fr Ly's condition was unknown when he was taken away.

However, the official said the priest, who uses crutches to help him walk, was in "normal health condition" after making the 450km trip from Hue to the prison.

"His health is better than [at] the time when he was released, but for a man who had suffered strokes, it's hard to recover fully," the official said.

The government accused Fr Ly of distributing anti-government writings.

An official told the Associated Press that the priest's one-year medical parole expired on March 15 and that he defied a court order to return him to jail. The official said authorities forcefully removed the priest from his residence within the compound where Archbishop Etienne Nguyen Nhu The of Hue resides.

Fr Ly was released from prison in March 2010 to seek treatment for a brain tumor and three strokes he suffered during his three years in prison.

He has been in and out of prison and house arrest for years, most recently for helping found a group called Bloc 8406, which promotes multiparty democracy.

A longtime supporter of religious freedom and human rights, Fr Ly was sentenced to eight years in prison and five years of house arrest in March 2007 for alleged anti-government activities. He has denied the charges.

Human rights organisations worldwide have called for Fr Ly's immediate release, citing health concerns and violations of basic human rights.—CNS



Fr Thadeus Nguyen Van Ly, who has been returned to jail.

Oz Church apologises for forced adoptions

BY KERRY MYERS

THREE Catholic entities in Australia have apologised "with a deep sense of regret and heartfelt sorrow" over forced adoption practices involving thousands of single mothers that occurred in past decades.

The practices involved separating unmarried mothers from their newborn babies immediately after birth and handing them

to adoption agencies.

The apology came jointly from Catholic Health Australia, the Sisters of Mercy and the diocese of Maitland-Newcastle, about 150km north of Sydney.

Despite the apology, Archbishop Barry Hickey of Perth said he has "little evidence" of forced adoptions in decades past. He told the Australian Broadcasting Corporation that he had spoken with the Sisters of Mercy, who

"said that it wasn't their policy to do that, but you can't control everybody, I suppose".

The practice of forced adoption was reported by the ABC in a story on its website after an investigation into claims of abuse and trauma in Newcastle. The story said it was believed that at least 150 000 Australian women had their babies taken against their will by some churches and adoption agencies.—CNS

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Vatican works on more translations

BY CINDY WOODEN

AS English-speaking parishes around the world await delivery of the new translation of the Roman Missal, the Vatican's Vox Clara Committee already is at work on additional texts.

The committee, which advises the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments on English translations, said in a statement that members have been working on a new translation of the prayers bishops use for the chrism Mass, the Holy Week liturgy where the oils used in the sacraments throughout the year are blessed.

To avoid a situation in which bishops would need to pull the old missal off the shelf for the solemn Mass in 2012, the congregation commissioned its own draft translation of the prayers.

The translation was reviewed by the International Commission on English in the Liturgy (Icel)—which normally drafts the translations—and was revised in consultation with Vox Clara, the statement said. The new text "should be available in the first months of 2012", and bishops' conferences can decide whether to adopt the new text for use in their countries, a Vatican official said.

Members of Vox Clara also "approved plans for several future publications on behalf of the congregation, most notably an interim edition of the *Roman Pontifical*", which contains prayers and rites usually reserved to bishops. In most countries, the chrism Mass blessing of oils is included in the book, rather than in the missal.

The statement said the committee also supported the congregation's authorisation of several editions of the *Missale Parvum*, an abridged version of the Missal traditionally used by priests who are travelling.—CNS



Protesters take to the streets of Malawi's commercial capital Blantyre. With 18 people dead and up to 50 others injured in two days of countrywide protests in late July against rising food and fuel costs, Malawi's bishops have called for urgent dialogue between the government and concerned parties. (Photo: Eldson Chagara, Reuters/CNS)

Bishops respond to Malawi riots

BY BRONWEN DACHS

WITH 18 people dead and up to 50 others injured in two days of countrywide protests in late July against rising food and fuel costs, Malawi's bishops have called for urgent dialogue between the government and concerned parties.

The Episcopal Conference of Malawi said in a statement signed by its president, Bishop Joseph Zuzo of Mzuzu, also urged Malawians to immediately stop "any form of violence and looting".

President Bingu wa Mutharika's government should immediately "initiate and open clear and verifiable lines of dialogue with all concerned parties" involved in the

protests against price increases as well as persistent fuel and foreign exchange reserve shortages, the bishops said.

"The government should listen attentively and honestly to the cries of the people and ensure that people's property and lives are safeguarded," the bishops' statement said, noting that the Church is "deeply concerned" at the turn of events surrounding the demonstrations.

"What was supposed to be a peaceful demonstration regarding economic and governance issues has been marred by court injunctions, counter-meetings, violence, loss of lives and looting," it said.

"These contravene the com-

mandments of God and stand in the way of genuine peace and mutual respect befitting sons and daughters of God," the statement added.

The bishops "pray that the peace and calm that has been characteristic of Malawi as a nation will continue to prevail in our country and that we will all avail ourselves, wholeheartedly, as instruments of the same peace," the bishops said.

Malawi's political woes have prompted Britain to indefinitely suspend aid to the southern African country. Malawi is one of the world's poorest countries with an estimated 75% of the population living on less than \$1 a day.—CNS

Two veteran cardinals die at 89 and 96

BY CINDY WOODEN

THE former papal master of ceremonies and archpriest of St Peter's basilica and a Belarusian cardinal once interred in a Soviet labour camp have died.

Retired Italian Cardinal Virgilio Noè, a liturgist, died on July 24 at the age of 89.

The Italian had spent more than 45 years in liturgical work, beginning a decade before the Second Vatican Council reformed the Mass.

He had served as secretary of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments and was the master of liturgical ceremonies to Popes Paul VI and John Paul II.

Three days after Pope John Paul formally inducted him into the College of Cardinals in 1991, he

named him the archpriest of St Peter's basilica, papal vicar for Vatican City State and placed him in charge of the Fabbrica di San Pietro, the office responsible for the basilica's upkeep.

Two years before taking the reins as the master of ceremonies for papal liturgies in 1970, he was named to a commission charged with updating papal Masses in line with the liturgical reforms of the Second Vatican Council.

For much of his time as pontifical master of ceremonies, he also doubled as undersecretary of the divine worship congregation. In 1982, Pope John Paul named him an archbishop and congregation secretary, a post he held until 1989.

Cardinal Noè was born in 1922

in northern Italy. He was ordained a priest for the diocese of Pavia in 1944 and taught Church history and liturgy in diocesan seminaries. In 1964, he was named secretary of the Italian bishops' Liturgical Action Centre and began organising national liturgical weeks.

Cardinal Kazimierz Swiatek of Minsk-Mohilev, Belarus, died on July 21 at age 96. He retired just five years ago after more than 65 years of active ministry and several run-ins with the Soviet police.

He was born in 1914, into a Polish family in Valga, now in Estonia. When he was a young boy, he and his family were exiled to Siberia by the Russian czar.

The whole family was allowed to return to Belarus after the 1917

Russian Revolution, and he was ordained to the priesthood in 1939. Two years later, he was arrested by Soviet police and condemned to death as a "reactionary cleric".

He escaped and resumed his pastoral work when Nazi Germany's army invaded in June 1941. But in 1944, when Belarus changed hands again, he was arrested again, sentenced to ten years in a labour camp and sent back to Siberia.

Released at the end of his sentence in 1954, Cardinal Swiatek ministered in Pinsk until 1991 when Pope John Paul II created the archdiocese of Minsk-Mohilev and named him archbishop.

Created a cardinal in 1994, he continued to serve as archbishop



Cardinals Noè (left) and Swiatek, who have died.

until 2006 when he was already past the age of 91.

In 2004, he was honoured by an Italian Catholic foundation as a living witness of the faith; in his acceptance speech he said that in Belarus "every parish, every village, every family has its witnesses of faith who suffered, some even offering up their lives for their faith".—CNS

Chinese govt slams Vatican over 'unreasonable' excommunications

THE Chinese government has criticised the Vatican for excommunicating two bishops who were ordained without papal mandate.

The state-run Xinhua News Agency published a statement by the State Administration for Religious Affairs saying that the Vatican's action was "extremely unreasonable and rude", reported the Asian Church news agency UCA News.

"If the Vatican has the sincerity to improve relations, it should revoke the excommunications and return to the right track of dialogue in a practical manner," the Chinese news agency quoted a SARA spokesman as saying.

The Vatican said Frs Joseph

Huang Bingzhang and Paul Lei Shiyin were automatically excommunicated when they were ordained as bishops in July and June respectively.

The Vatican also said it deplored the way the Church was being treated by Chinese officials in carrying out the ordinations.

The Vatican has expressed deepening concern over such ordinations and emphasised that willing participants in such ceremonies face severe penalties under church law, including automatic excommunication for the ordained bishop and the consecrating bishops.

The Vatican's action seriously hurt the Church in China and saddened clergy and the

faithful, the Chinese government spokesman said.

The two priests are devout and capable candidates for ordination and are supported by their fellow priests and the faithful, the spokesman added.

Citing similar Vatican action in 1950s when the first two "self-elected and self-ordained" bishops were created without papal approval, the spokesperson stressed that "history has proved that China Church would not be held up by the Vatican's threat."

The clergy and faithful will "walk, in a firmer attitude, the path of 'independent, autonomous and self-governing' church principle and 'self-election and self-ordination' of bishops," the spokesman said.



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The Southern Cross

Editor: Günther Simmermacher

The rights of women

IT is almost 40 years ago since the Second Vatican Council in its closing message predicted: "The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of women is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which women acquire in the world an influence, an effect and a power never hitherto achieved."

There have been great advances in the pursuit for social equality between women and men since those heady days of transformation. At least in westernised society, many women are occupying, in unprecedented numbers, positions of influence and power—albeit, appallingly, often without their remuneration reaching parity with that of men in equivalent positions.

In westernised culture particularly, there is a growing understanding that regards the social equality of the sexes as self-evident, and the discrimination of women as unjust—less than a century after women were given the vote. This is welcome, but we must continue to challenge all notions that women are somehow inferior to men.

Of course, for Catholics and other believers, the rights of women, as all rights must be, is balanced against the rights of others. In that way, Catholic thought is incompatible with certain issues that are often seen to form part of the women's rights programme, such as abortion. While Catholics cannot support some elements of that programme, their support for the legitimate aspirations of women and opposition to their discrimination must not be diminished.

The Church has a special appreciation of women's procreative and nurturing functions, but it also encourages women to make a significant contribution in the public domain.

Pope John Paul II in apostolic letter *Mulieris Dignitatem* (1988) wrote: "When women are able fully to share their gifts with the whole community, the very way in which society understands and organises itself is improved, and comes to reflect in a better way the substantial unity of the human family. Here we see the most important condition for the consolidation of authentic peace. The growing presence of women in social, economic and political life at the local, national and international levels is thus a very positive development."

South African women have made great progress in occupying leading positions in politics, business and the media. The days when the appointment of a woman was seen as an extraordinary event are fading.

Sadly, there still are times when the gender of a leading woman provides the premise for attacks on her. So it was shocking when Democratic Alliance leader Helen Zille was insulted in coarsest misogynist terms by political opponents earlier this year.

The verbal violence directed at Mrs Zille echoes the physical, sexual and emotional violence, or the perpetual fear of it, experienced by very many South African women. A country in which a reported 60% of women may expect to become a victim of sexual violence cannot consider itself as being anywhere near accomplishing gender justice, regardless of the number of female politicians, CEOs and newspaper editors.

At the root of gender imbalances in South Africa is a patriarchal society in which women, even if protected by civil law, are commonly prevented from exercising their rights, in particular their sexual autonomy.

Nor can the Catholic Church present itself without qualification as being at the vanguard of the struggle for gender equality. Leaving aside the divisive issue of the ordination of women to the priesthood (which in any case is grounded in a theological framework), the scarcity of women in key positions in the Church should be a source for determined reflection.

The hierarchy's attitude to gender finds expression not only in statistics.

For example, the recent instruction by the Pontifical Commission *Ecclesia Dei*, which banned altar girls in the Tridentine Mass, communicates that for some in the Catholic Church, negligible matters of liturgical culture precede the advancement of gender equality. The decision did little to make female Catholics feel any more like full members of the Church.

The Church must include women—religious and lay—in decision-making positions, and argue forcefully for the emancipation of women where they are subjugated, and the equality of women where they are discriminated against.

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.

Dogmatic definition

THE report on my talk (June 22) was of necessity too brief to give the justification of my assertion that the absence of unanimity amongst the faithful regarding a particular belief indicates that it has not yet achieved the status of a dogma. Franko Sokolic (July 20) sees in this a disregard for the criteria of establishing what is or is not a dogma, or *de fide*.

The issues here are too complex to deal with briefly but let me simply do what he does and appeal to Vatican II's *Lumen Gentium*, para 12: "The body of the faithful as a whole, anointed as they are by the Holy One cannot err in matters of belief...it manifests this unerring quality when, 'from the bishops down to the last member of the laity', it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals".

From this it follows that if that universal agreement is absent then it does not "manifest this unerring quality".

This does not mean that the belief is false. Nor does it mean that the Church's magisterium may not teach it. But it does mean that it is

not clearly and indisputably one of the Church's dogmas, the denial of which would be heresy.

There was good reason behind the old Canon Law's pithy but crucially important assertion: "Nothing is to be regarded as dogmatically defined, unless it is quite clear that such is the case" (Can 1323 #3).

If anything is clear about the teaching of *Humanae Vitae* on contraception and that women cannot be ordained priests it is this: the recent papal teaching has never itself claimed to be defining a dogma. This does not mean that one could not appeal to tradition to argue that it is part of the deposit of faith. But such appeals are not always easy to justify.

When I was a student, a conservative theologian concluded that the teaching that only men could be ordained was "indisputed"—which is very different from *de fide*. What is or is not a dogma usually becomes crystal clear only when a dispute about a long held belief occurs and a council is convoked to deal with the matter and issues decisions which are clear from the wording to be *de fide* declarations.

There is a disturbing incongruity in what is happening in the Church these days as regards certain teachings. We are in effect being asked to regard them as dogmas when it is still unclear that they are such both because of the lack of a formal dogmatic definition by council or pope and because there is a clear division amongst the people regarding their rectitude or dogmatic status.

The magisterium can easily sort it out by defining them as dogmas—or openly admitting that they are not. But it has not taken that route and the result is a mess.

In my talk I therefore proposed that the proper way for the pope to serve the Church's unity in such a situation is to abandon the policy of "thou shalt not question or discuss the truthfulness of such teachings" and enforce the exact opposite: "thou shalt discuss in a responsible and open and prayerful way the issues that are dividing us at the moment on these beliefs".

If done with genuine acceptance of each other's sincerity and with as much openness to the Spirit as one can muster, we will arrive at the truth—or rather find ourselves led to it.

Brian Gaybba, Grahamstown

Setting the record straight

IN response to Fr Hans Leu (July 126), the SACBC Foundation is set up and governed according to South African law. As with all the trusts administered by the SACBC, such as the Seminaries trust or the Opus Securitatis trust, the metropolitan archbishops are the trustees—in conformity with the Code of Canon Law about the governance of the Church and stewardship of goods.

The management committee of the Foundation is made up of a number of highly qualified men and women who effectively govern the trust. The Trust is also overseen by the fundraising committee of the SACBC, headed by Cardinal Wilfrid Napier, and made up of lay experts, religious and clergy with experience in fundraising.

So Fr Leu's statement about the SACBC having missed a chance to show that the Church takes the laity seriously is without basis. It is precisely because of specific competence of lay men and women that the day-to-day management of the trust is not in the hands of the met-

ropolitan archbishops.

Fr Vincent Brennan SMA, SACBC Secretary-General, Pretoria

The youth need some direction

ARCHBISHOP Buti Tlhagale's *Ahomily* ("Youth also have issues", June 8) emphasised the importance of paying attention to the needs of the youth.

I believe that the youth need to be listened to, to be loved, challenged and also encouraged.

Reflecting deeply I realised the importance of education for our youth are of course the future of the Church. I listened to how the archbishop was shocked to hear of a school at which 68 learners had fallen pregnant. The youth indeed have issues and is the priests', teachers' and elders' duty to work and direct the youth.

Sr Martha Mapasure SND, Johannesburg

The state of Catholic education

I FOUND the 16-page Catholic Education supplement (June 8) less than convincing despite spacious coverage and an abundance of words such as "ethos" and "values".

I attended a Marist college way back in the preconciliar days where the entire teaching staff, except the sub-grade teacher, were qualified brothers backed by a resident priest (none of whom would ever appear

in public other than in clerical attire). Catholic boarders attended Holy Mass daily and Benediction on Sunday evenings in the chapel while Holy Rosary and religious instruction were part of the week-day curricula.

A large statue of Our Lady, erected in front of the main building, presided over the playing fields while every classroom, dining hall and dormitory displayed a crucifix prominently.

That, to my mind was Catholic education. Some questions need to be asked.

WE Muller, Centurion

A touchy affair

I THINK that to shake hands as a sign of peace is nonsense. Our hands are the biggest carriers of germs and viruses.

How many times does one see people blowing their noses in church and putting the dirty handkerchief or tissue in their pocket or pushing a used tissue up their sleeve? They then invariably touch their face and use that same "filthy" hand to shake the hand of the person next to them. How disgusting!

With so much 'flu and head colds around, especially in winter, I actually cringe when it comes to the sign of peace.

To make matters even worse these nose-blowers also have the audacity to receive the Blessed Eucharist on their "filthy hands".

Surely a gentle nod or wave to the person next to you could suffice.

Albert Vianello, Northern Cape

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Doing small things with great love

I WAS raised in a matriarchal home. And all around me, in my parish and in my community, I saw similar pictures of mothers who were the centre of their homes, some to a greater and others to a lesser degree. But all of them, in their particular way, ensured the stability, comfort and smooth running of their homes.

I have always taken in the words of Mother Teresa: "In this life we can do no great things, only small things with great love." But it is only at this stage of my life that I can look back and see these words in action in the lives of these women.

We were a big family, and my mother had neither the energy nor the time to dote on us and give us individual attention all the time; but what we knew for sure was that we had a good mother. Why? Because we experienced it in the small things which she did a lot of.

We always had the most delicious meals to eat, which she made herself with creativity and lots of imagination; we were always warm enough, secure enough and entertained enough.

She was the disciplinarian. My father was a present father, always there, a refuge

to turn to when mother's orders became too much.

My mother would encourage us to be creative with our skills and our talents. Being a big family we could easily organise and perform a concert for the entire evening which we enjoyed and loved doing. And, like the Von Trapp family, we were called upon by my mom to perform to friends and family who visited us, and on a regular basis to the nuns and priests who frequented our home. Those were blissful days; small things we did, but with my mother's great heart behind it.

I can see these words of Mother Teresa in action again when I remember my visits to the home of a fellow parishioner. She was a humble woman, in a humble home. But when you came through the front gate, you saw a colourful garden, small but well-kept. On the front stoep would be containers (coffee tins) of healthy growing plants which she still had time to plant amidst a myriad of other chores she had.

I remember seeing stacks of neatly ironed clothes on a chair in the corner of the kitchen. But when I was there, she would drop everything and spend time

Judith Turner

On Faith and Life



with me as if she had nothing else to do. She would make me a lovely cup of tea and serve it with delicious home-baked ginger biscuits, and then ask me about my family and how things were at home.

She had a husband, children, grandchildren and foster children whom she took care of, but she had the time for a descent visit with real conversation when I was there. When I left her house, I would inevitably have either a batch of biscuits or a tin with a beautiful plant to take with me. These were the small things this humble woman did with great love for others.

During this month of August, which our country dedicates to women, let us remember all the women that you and I grew up with; the women who disciplined us, who fed us, who cleaned us, who took care of us, who educated us, who shaped our conscience—the women who taught us how to do small things with great love.

Michael Shackleton

Open Door



Why Scripture translations differ

The second book of Maccabees 12:42-45 is often quoted in support of the Catholic belief that earthly prayer can contribute to releasing the dead from their sins. Protestants do not accept the books of Maccabees as part of their Bible and therefore cannot believe how our prayers can help release the dead from Purgatory. Why do their translations of the Bible include Maccabees and ours do not?

W Vincent

THE reason goes way back to the 6th century BC when King Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem and deported its leaders and inhabitants to Babylon. By the time the Jews eventually returned home, many of them had strayed to other lands. This was the beginning of the dispersion of the Jews, also known as the diaspora.

Living abroad, these dispersed Jews could no longer attend worship in Jerusalem's temple where Hebrew was the liturgical language. They flocked to Sabbath services in local synagogues instead. Surrounded by Greek-speaking people, they became Greek-speaking, and lost the use of the sacred language of their homeland as well as the ethos of the Holy City.

To serve their needs, the scriptural texts were translated into Greek with rabbinic approval and so the new Greek Bible was developed, known as the Septuagint. This became widespread and it was the Bible that St Paul used when he went on his missionary journeys around the Roman Empire, where Greek was still largely the spoken language.

But tensions began to arise between the Hebrew-speaking Jews of Palestine and the Greek-speaking Jews of the dispersion. The Palestinians doubted that the Septuagint was the inspired word of God because, although most of it was a translation from Hebrew, some of its books were not written in Hebrew and on the sacred soil of the Holy Land. Also, it appears that devout Jews could not agree with Christians making use of their Greek Bible.

After intense rabbinical study, the Hebrew Bible was accorded official approval by the Jewish authorities, omitting the books in the Septuagint of Greek authorship, such as Maccabees and certain other texts.

The Protestant Reformers, probably because Catholics still accepted the Septuagint, adopted the Hebrew Bible, and that is why their versions generally omit Maccabees and the other texts. Some Protestant-approved Bibles include them under the name of apocryphal writings, meaning that Protestants admit them as having the capacity to edify the reader but not to impart any doctrine.

Send your queries to Open Door, Box 2372, Cape Town, 8000; or e-mail: opendoor@scross.co.za; or fax (021) 465 3850. Anonymity can be preserved by arrangement, but questions must be signed, and may be edited for clarity. Only published questions will be answered.

New realities in pastoral care

MY friend Zachariah once shocked me when he said that he wanted to be a catechist.

Zach had completed his degree months back and embarked on a career in banking. I couldn't figure out the idea of a banker teaching the faith to kids and new converts. Moreover, I had no picture in my head of a young catechist—with a university degree to boot.

Catechists, as I knew them, were venerable elderly men (always men) of limited education who conducted Sunday service when there was no priest and prepared kids for the sacraments by leading them in reciting rudiments of the faith, which they themselves did not appear to fully understand. Church authorities seemed quite fine with that arrangement. Zach's suggestion would be seen as revolutionary.

But I let him explain it. He would take part-time catechetical training and thereafter offer his services at his parish during his free time. That would be his direct contribution to evangelisation.

My friend later dropped the idea. I haven't asked him why, but it is not difficult to guess. Quite apart from the fact that the catechist seems to have been cast in stone (as a venerable elderly man with limited education), institutions here generally do not offer part-time catechetical formation, even in this age of distance and online education.

Yet the need for well-formed catechists is obvious. The pastoral care of millions of believers is largely in their hands. In vast and populous parishes where many people cannot cover the long distances to attend Mass every Sunday, it is the catechist who conducts worship in addition to preparing converts for the sacraments.

As the pastoral agent closest to the

faithful, he offers spiritual help and generally leads the affairs of the local Christian community. Now such a preacher, teacher, counsellor and leader surely needs proper education.

The respected Kenyan professor of religion Jesse Mugambi, himself a former primary school teacher, once told us that to preach is to affirm to believers what they know already; but to teach is to tell people something new. It follows therefore that a good preacher must also be a good teacher.

I think it is that idea which inspired Zach's wish to become a catechist: to be able to share the faith in a passionate and knowledgeable way.

This is becoming increasingly critical in our rapidly changing societies. According to Kenya's new constitution, we will have 47 self-governing counties which shall be the primary loci of development and political participation.

A consequence of this is that the best-educated people won't have to move to Nairobi and the major towns looking for jobs and other opportunities. Many will live and work in the counties in the public and private sectors that are expected to expand fast.

That in turn will transform the rural areas, where at the moment the most educated person around could be the diploma-holding school teacher or nurse. The point I'm making is that the intellectual landscape of Kenya is about to change. With modern communications, ideas that were unknown in rural villages will find their way there. How is the venerable catechist going to engage the hearts and minds of his increasingly sophisticated faithful?

The second example of change is in higher education. Again until a few years ago, young people used to come to Nairobi

Henry Makori

Letter from Nairobi



and a few other towns for university education where the institutions were based. But we are now experiencing fast expansion of public and private universities to meet growing demand.

Within the past year, a university campus has been established in my small home town. Soon there will be more university campuses in our diocese than there are parishes. University students and scholars will be a part of local communities around Kenya. Liberal or radical ideas—some anti-Christian—will find their way into the pub and market, and from there to the village.

These are signs of our times. How is the Church prepared to cope? Will it still rely on the elderly catechist to preach and teach the faith and lead the local Christian community?

This year the regional grouping of bishops, the Association of Member Episcopal Conferences of Eastern Africa (AMECEA), is marking 50 years. I was going through a booklet about the anniversary when I came across a congratulatory message by the Missionaries of Africa (formerly White Fathers). It said in part:

"An important service AMECEA could offer concerns formation of pastoral workers which cannot always be done at diocesan or even national level...it might be helpful to organise short courses (few weeks) for different ministers at diocesan level who, in turn, could help form ministers for Small Christian Communities."

And there will be Christians—like Zach a few years ago—who will be ready to take the courses and help spread the Gospel in their own rapidly changing communities.

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The Missionary Sisters of the Precious Blood of Mariannhill celebrated the jubilee of seven sisters. Photographed are (from left) Srs Conrada Bauernfeind, Dorothy Mokhere and Dagmar Walz who celebrated their 50 years of profession. The other sisters were Srs Virgo Krause (70 years), Ingrid Robert (60 years) and Maria Theresis Balz (50 years). (Submitted by Sr Marie-Therese)

IN FOCUS



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

Edited by Lara Moses



Durban central and north deanery youth entered a Battle of the Choirs which was attended by Bishop Barry Wood, who was also one of the judges. The competition was won by Our Lady of Fatima parish in Durban North. (Submitted by Catherine Abraham)



A Jesuit meets a Franciscan at this year's Winter Living Theology, which is presented by Irish Jesuit Father Jim Corkery and will still come Cape Town from August 16-18. Fr Corkery (left) will be talking about the Second Vatican Council; Franciscan Father Bonaventure Hinwood, a former *Southern Cross* columnist, was actually in Rome at the opening ceremony of Vatican II in 1962.



The parishioners of St Anthony's church in Sedgefield celebrated Corpus Christi with a procession through the local streets. Fr Dominic Zekoundi led the procession carrying the monstrance, followed by deacons. (Submitted by Bobbi Morgan-Smith)



Archbishop Buti Tlhagale of Johannesburg confirmed 65 youth from St Patrick's parish in La Rochelle and Marian College in Linnmeyer. They were prepared for the last three years by parish catechist and teacher Joyce Coertze. Frs Donald McLoughlin, Malcolm McLaren and David Dryden SJ also concelebrated the Mass. (Submitted by Marco dos Santos)



The cathedral of Christ the King in Johannesburg welcomed a Malawian community choir to its Sunday Mass, with children from the congregation. (Submitted by Daniel Phiri)

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Leading women to lead in SA

South Africa needs more women leaders, and CLAIRE MATHIESON spoke to one who aims to prepare women for leadership.

THERE are simply not enough female leaders in the country, Natasja Nelson-Solomon has said. She is leading the way and is encouraging other women—young and old—to do the same in their communities.

Ms Solomon currently heads up the Elsie River Community Development Centre, part of Catholic Welfare and Development's (CWD) outreach in the Western Cape. "I think being the eldest [child] makes you a 'natural' leader. Being raised by a single mother and being tasked with many small responsibilities surely brought about my own leadership style," said Ms Solomon. She realised from a young age that "all of us are leaders, from a young age, no matter what the task was a hand".

The 31-year-old said that all youngsters arrive at junctures in their lives, sometimes small and seemingly insignificant, where they are able to take on leadership roles and become positive elements in their families and communities.

Ms Solomon said that leadership comes down to "the old-fashioned strategies of awareness, consciousness raising and developing self-esteem".

At some point, most of us experi-

ence these feelings and it's what you do with them that counts, the centre manager said.

Ms Solomon herself started quite modestly. From being a classroom monitor in her school days to becoming a parish youth leader and later a part of the Archdiocesan Youth Council. Using the opportunities presented to her, Ms Solomon was the youngest person to attend the first Archdiocesan Synod in 2007. She has since dedicated herself to raise awareness on women's leadership and continues to mentor other young girls/women on a less formal basis.

Today she oversees one of CWD's nine community development centres which run a variety of programmes focusing on women, children and youth development, health and food security as well as economic empowerment.

Many of her previous leadership roles have prepared her for her current position. However, the depth of one's leadership potential comes from locating the inner strength to stand up for what she believes in.

"What I also know is that God did not make us to fit in, but to stand out. And I've always been one of those that stand out," Ms Solomon said.

But the most important thing, she said, was that with time whatever role one might have in life, "becomes what you make of it". It's this attitude she's trying to instil in the women she works with.

"The way we look at ourselves as woman needs to change. The notion of 'barefoot, pregnant and in the kitchen' is still very real for many women simply because they allow it." She added that while the role of motherhood is vitally impor-

tant, "God has designed us for more than just that".

South Africa's women are not heard as much as they could be. "I think that countries have to adjust their stance on women's leadership and realise that marriage and motherhood are not at odds with women's leadership development in the workplace," Ms Solomon said.

Many women, she pointed out, have proved that they are able to multitask and that they are coping. She said more men and women need to encourage leadership development, and that is not age bound. "I would like to encourage women, younger and even older than me, to unite when it comes to standing up for what is right. I believe women need each other, for no one can understand a woman like another woman."

There is also a place and a duty for women in the Church. Ms Solomon said the closing message of the Second Vatican Council was inspiring as the Church then acknowledged a new awareness of dignity and equality of women. The Vatican II message said: "The hour is coming, in fact has come, when the vocation of woman is being acknowledged in its fullness, the hour in which woman acquire in the world an influence, an effect and power never hitherto achieved."

"I would encourage women to engage in discussion with clergy and create an awareness in the roles women can play in the Church," said Ms Solomon. "Women need to continue asking how we can help build the kingdom of God," and continue to be active in the Church. Ms Solomon said she feels privi-



Natasja Nelson-Solomon heads the Elsie River Community Development Centre, part of Catholic Welfare and Development's (CWD) outreach in the Western Cape, which runs a variety of programmes focusing on women, children, youth development, health and food security as well as economic empowerment.



leged to hold her current position as she gets to "do work I love and make a positive contribution to people's lives. At the same time, though it's not always easy, I am able to strike a fulfilling balance between my work and my family life. This is especially important as I want to be a positive role model for the next generation of young female leaders."

Ms Solomon herself said she is grateful to her mentors over the years from teachers, to family members and to members of staff who have encouraged her. Among them is *Southern Cross* columnist Judith Turner.

"I have a personal vision: self-transformation helps others to grow—my own words," said Ms Solomon. She keeps those words close. "I have it up in my office to remind myself that it all starts with me."

Self-transformation is an active decision and one that will benefit both the individual and community. Becoming a leader means educating yourself and "women can never stop learning", she said.

"Neither gender, age, nationality, or any other demographic makes a good leader; it is the integrity of your agenda and your passion that matters," Ms Solomon said.

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How scandalous were the Borgias really?

The TV series *The Borgias* will hit South African TV screens on M-Net this month. MARK PATTISON investigates whether the drama about the scandalous 15th century Pope Alexander VI is anti-Catholic.

THE television series *The Borgias* may be interpreted less as a swipe against the Catholic Church than the desire for the American Showtime channel to produce a follow-up in the same vein as its racy predecessor, *The Tudors*.

"They're going for the flamboyant, the exotic, the erotic," said Timothy Thibodeau, a history professor at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York.

"Everybody's heard of Henry the Eighth," the central character in *The Tudors*, Prof Thibodeau said. While Rodrigo Borgia (who became Pope Alexander VI) is a figure "a lot of people have never heard of, for most historians he's very well known".

It's because of this, Prof Thibodeau said, that leads him to doubt whether *The Borgias* "will present anything new that will stand the test of time".

The Borgias is scheduled to debut on August 9 at 2:30 on pay channel M-Net.

Jeremy Irons, who plays Pope Alexander, is "a magnificent actor, it may well be a great performance on his part," said Prof Thibodeau, who for the past five years has conducted a seminar on how history is portrayed in film and television. The problem, he cautioned, is "taking on a historical role and being faithful" to all of its elements.

Many elements of the Borgia reign in Rome are salacious enough. Pope Alexander, who had four children at the time of his election as pontiff, "probably bought the papacy", Prof Thi-

bodeau said. "That's called simony."

Two of those children, Cesare and Lucrezia, were "celebrities, for better or worse", he added.

Further, Pope Alexander had a penchant for seizing the assets of cardinals for the pope's treasury, according to Prof Thibodeau, who is internationally recognised as an expert on the history of Christianity.

But Lawrence Duggan, a professor of Renaissance and Reformation history at the University of Delaware, said much of the vitriol directed at the Borgias was levelled out of ethnic spite.

"The Borgia family were not even Italian—they were Spanish—and they were regarded as outsiders," Prof Duggan said. "The Borgias were a focal point of hostility, like the Clintons [in the United States]; people were rabid in their hatred of Bill Clinton and wanted to take him down even before he became president."

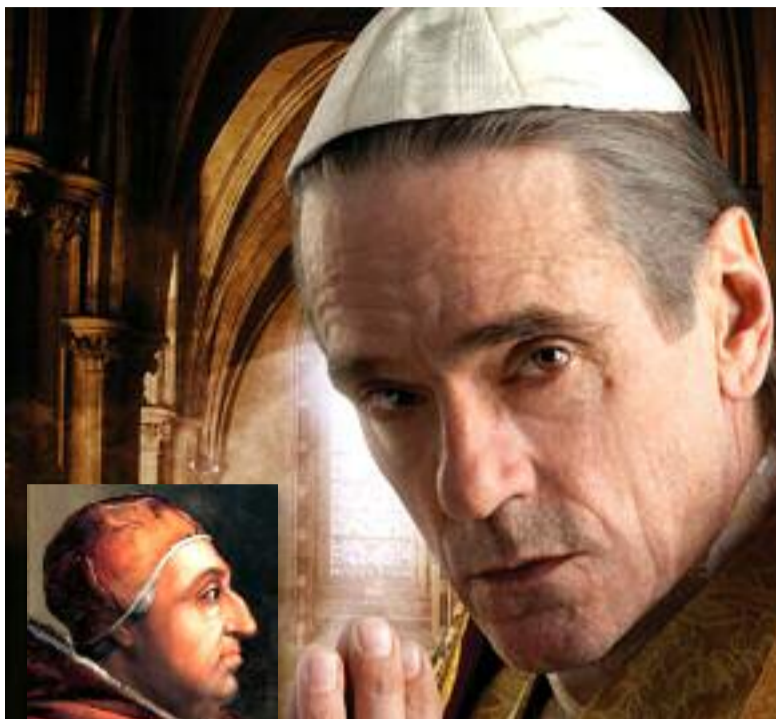
According to Prof Thibodeau, the most enduring fruit of the Borgia years—Pope Alexander reigned 11 years, from 1492 to 1503—was, ironically, the Reformation. Pope Alexander was "very responsible" for creating the conditions railed against by Martin Luther.

"The pope, as a CEO, was a promoter of a number of practices that were detrimental to the Church. One was nepotism. Cesare, the son of Rodrigo, was made a cardinal and a bishop to enlarge their income and their estates," he said.

Prof Duggan called it "standard papal practice [at the time] if you had a family".

The Latin rite of the Catholic Church has made celibacy a condition for ordination for centuries. But in the early Church in distant regions from Rome—and even in Rome itself—the rule was often ignored.

In the late 15th and early 16th centuries, many top Church leaders, including popes, paid lip service to the requirement while liv-



Jeremy Irons as Pope Alexander VI in *The Borgias*, a TV drama series that will be shown on M-Net as of August 9; and (inset) the real Alexander VI.

ing with mistresses and fathering children.

The first written rule was apparently a product of the Council of Trent, which was held between 1545 and 1563, although local rules on celibacy had been enacted since the 4th century.

Another dubious practice, Prof Thibodeau said, was "pluralism", to be a bishop for more than one place. "Some people were made bishops in two or three or four places," he added. "How can you be pastoral if you're not living in that diocese?"

Perhaps most injurious to the Church, according to Prof Thibodeau, was "the buying and selling of Church offices", which Pope Gregory XIII in the 16th century declared a mortal sin. "The most widely known [practice] was the sale of indulgences

by Pope Leo X, which pales in comparison" to Pope Alexander's corruptions.

"This fueled a lot of the propaganda and a lot of the polemic about the Reformation," Prof Thibodeau said.

Prof Duggan added: "The Protestant reformers have a vested interest in depicting the Borgias as vilely as possible."

He said a 1969 book by scholar Michael Mallett debunked many myths that grew up around the Borgias.

"There's no evidence whatsoever for the most lurid of the stories, that the father [the pope] and the son, Cesare, had incestuous relations with [Lucrezia]. She doesn't become prominent until the 19th century. The responsibility for that lies largely with Victor Hugo in his book *Lucrezia Borgia*," he said.

But the French invasion of Italy and the start of the Spanish Inquisition, both in 1494, also hurt popular perceptions of the Borgia reign, Prof Duggan said. "There weren't that many contemporaries who spoke well of them."

One unfortunate exception, according to Prof Duggan, was Niccolo Machiavelli, whose writings on political intrigues later earned him an adjective based on his surname.

Their excesses brought about, at least indirectly, the Council of Trent, which instituted much-needed reforms, Prof Thibodeau said. "Less than two generations [after Pope Alexander's reign], one of the most important events in the life of the Church takes place. What came out of that was a [Catholic] Church that looked radically different. I tell my students: 'You don't belong to the Church of Alexander VI.'"

According to Prof Thibodeau, the greatest achievement in the reign of the Spanish-born Pope Alexander may have been dividing between Spain and Portugal their territorial New World claims so the two Western European powers would not go to war with each other over them.

A side benefit of the ill-gotten gains of the Borgias was the seed money that financed the construction of many of the buildings in the Vatican.

"Rome as a city was behind the curve when it came to the Renaissance; it began in Florence," Prof Thibodeau said. "The Roman papacy and the Roman aristocracy realised it was taking place in the north and were in effect playing catch-up. It really picked up with Alexander; Pope Julius (who succeeded Pope Alexander following the one-month reign of Pope Pius III) commissioned St Peter's basilica."

Even here, though, problems abounded. "Cost overruns were endemic. He wanted to build the biggest and best," Prof Thibodeau said. "This led Pope Leo to sell indulgences."—CNS

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Review: Prurient new TV drama of no historical value

THE BORGIAS: M-Net on Tuesdays, starting August 9

Reviewed by John Mulderig

THE name of Rodrigo Borgia (1431-1503)—who reigned as Pope Alexander VI from the momentous year of 1492 until his death—will forever be associated with one of the most deplorable periods in the long history of the Church and with the manifold ecclesiastical abuses that helped to provoke the crisis of the Reformation.

But Alexander's name—together with those of at least two of his children, Cesare and Lucrezia—has also been linked to lurid charges that the historical record of the time fails to support.

Both this infamous family's genuine misdeeds and some of their merely alleged dark doings are showcased in the drama series *The Borgias*.

While lavishly presented—with a few scenes skillfully recalling the splendid Renaissance art of which Pope Alexander was an early patron—director and co-writer Neil Jordan's production sometimes degenerates from an intriguing study in power politics (however misplaced and lamentable) to an obvious exercise in sensationalism.

Typical of the latter tendency is a bedroom scene featuring the world-weary pontiff, intensely impersonated and given gravelly voice by Jeremy Irons, and his mistress, Guilia Farnese (Lotte Verbeek).

Though accompanied by dialogue that aptly captures the paradoxes of the era—"God's work", Alexander insists, "can be done by the most unlikely of his servants"—the spectacle of the Church's most prominent priest cavorting with another man's wife is hardly calculated to appeal to the viewer's highest instincts. All the more so since it is preceded by Guilia's sacramental confession to Alexander and partly played out to the strains of sacred chant. Subsequent encounters involving purely secular characters are even more intrusively graphic.

The narrative is on solid ground as it opens with the circumstances surrounding conclave at which Alexander was elected, a gathering during which he played to great advantage on the ambition and greed of his fellow cardinals. But when Cesare (Francois Arnaud) afterward turns the tables on a cardinal (Derek Jacobi) attempting to poison his father we're back in the realm of racy but unsubstantiated rumours.

While a scandalous saga, the story of the Borgia dynasty is one that, if approached with prudent restraint, can provide a good deal of instruction, if little in the way of edification. (The exemplary life of Alexander's great-grandson, St Francis Borgia, proves, of course, a notable exception.)

But this exploitative account of their activities is too prurient to be recommended for audiences of any age.—CNS

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Fr Kevin McElhatton SJ

JESUIT Father Kevin McElhatton, who died on July 8 at the age of 77, was proud of being a "Geordie", a native of Tyneside in the north-east of England.

He entered the Jesuits in 1951 and was ordained in 1963. His life's work was in parish ministry, formation, retreats and spiritual direction. He was a young and rather formidable assistant to the novice director when the present writer entered the Society of Jesus in 1968.

Fr Kevin later stepped into the novice master's shoes. As a pastor he worked with great success in different parts of Britain, from Clitheroe in rural Lancashire to Brixton in gritty South London. He frequently also gave retreats and helped many people with spiritual direction.

He came to South Africa in 1992 and served in Johannesburg at Holy Trinity parish in Braamfontein and St Martin de Porres in Orlando West, Soweto. His influence was always wider than the boundaries of his parish. Priests have testified to his inspiration as a model and father figure to many of them. One said that he was the best spiritual director he ever had.

After Orlando West he moved to St Kizito's National Orientation Seminary, first at Oakford near Durban, and then in Port Elizabeth. He had a deep influence on the seminarians. Once, when the rector asked one student what the seminary needed, he replied: "Four Fr Kevins!"

He left the seminary and returned to Britain when his health declined due to a recurrence of cancer. For a while he helped out at the Jesuit parish in Wimbledon. Later he went to the Jesuit retirement home on the English south coast where he died.

Fr Kevin was quite a paradox. He had strong opinions yet was pastorally sensitive. He was quiet and unassuming and yet displayed his talents by skillfully re-ordering buildings (St Martin de Porres parish has a fine church which was enlarged under his inspiration). He never learned to drive and yet he managed to make pastoral visits.

He frequently felt downcast, but he could be delightfully cheerful and entertaining. He believed in the ascetical life and yet he smoked and could never resist a full English breakfast. When he was in hospital he told me that he had congratulated



his surgeon on making him do what his Catholic faith had rarely succeeded in making him do - fast!

His preaching was simple but powerful. He never learned a local language but Fr Kevin always seemed to be able to communicate easily with anyone. He definitely possessed the "common touch". He struggled to care for his own needs while always seeming to know exactly how to respond to the needs of others. This is what many people will remember him for - as a compassionate pastor.

Chris Chatteris SJ

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DEATH

POLLITT—Valerie Joan. Beloved wife of Mervyn, mother of Michael and Jennifer, mother-in-law to Grant and grandmother to Kyle, Vaughn and Chevonne. Passed away on July 15 after a brave acceptance of incurable cancer. Val will be greatly missed by her family and friends. Safe in the arms of Jesus we commit a courageous Soul.

WERNBERG—Denis Jacques. 03/01/1926 - 08/07/2011. Beloved husband, father, grandfather and great grandfather passed away peacefully on 8/7/2011. A loving, gentle man of great integrity loved and respected by all who were privileged to know him. He will be sadly missed and his memory will be cherished always by his wife Connie and his children, Mary Anne, Philip, David, Kevin, Stephen, Libby and their families.

wish we could have him back again. Old times we recall of things he used to say and do. We miss your tender voice, infectious laugh; your smile has gone forever and your hands we cannot touch. Looking back upon the path you tread we bless each hour spent with you and thank Our God. Treasure him dear Lord in your garden of rest for on earth he was truly our very best. We keep in our heart the love of the past, there it was planted forever to last. Rest in peace my love until we meet again. Yours always Maria, Joanna, Angelo, Eddie and all the family.

IN MEMORIAM

CERFONTYNE—In Loving Memory of our dear son and brother Michael who passed away July 26, 2010. We will always love and keep you in our hearts. Mom, Dad, Heidi & Carla

DU PLESSIS—Dion. 31 May 1975 - 27 July 2007. You are always in our thoughts and prayers. Lovingly remembered and deeply missed. Mom, Dad, Paige, Neil and Charlotte.

FR JIM McCAULEY—Fr Jim is remembered with love and a big hug. Maureen Mayes and the family.

GOUVEIA—Edwardo. 30.07.2010. Dear God, please take this message to our precious Dad in heaven above. Tell him, how much we miss him and give him our love. A year has passed and our entire family is still feeling the pain. We miss him in so many ways and

SANVIDO—Tony. In loving memory of my dear husband, our father and grandfather who passed away August 1, 1998. Forever in our hearts. Always remembered with love by his wife Nancy, his children and grandchildren. RIP

PERSONAL

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Family Reflections

July 31 18th Sunday. The Lord who feeds us. Like any loving parent God feeds us because he loves us, even making miracles happen to do so. Why not organise a special tea or meal for grandparents, or other older people to express gratitude for their love and care. Older people too can take some time to give of themselves and share their wisdom with their grandchildren.

Liturgical Calendar Year A

Sunday, July 31, 18th Sunday
Isaiah 55:1-3, Psalm 145:8-9, 15-18, Romans 8:35:37-39, Matthew 14:13-21

Monday, August 1, St Alphonsu Liguori
Numbers 11:4-15, Psalm 81:12-17, Matthew 14:22-36

Tuesday, August 2, Ss Eusebius of Vercelli, Peter Eymard
Numbers 12:1-13, Psalm 51:3-7,12-13, Matthew 15:1-2, 10-14

Wednesday, August 3, feria
Numbers 13:1-2, 25-14:1:26-29, Psalm 106:6-7, 13-14, 21-23, Matthew 15:21-28

Thursday, August 4, St John Vianney
Numbers 20:1-13, Psalm 95:1-2, 6-9, Matthew 16:13-23

Friday, August 5, Dedication of the basilica of St Mary
Deuteronomy 4:32-40, Psalm 77:12-16, 21, Matthew 16:24-28

Saturday, August 6, Transfiguration of the Lord
Deuteronomy 7:9-10, 13-14, Psalm 97:1-2, 5-6,9, Matthew 17:1-9

Sunday, August 7, 19th Sunday
1Kings 19: 9,11-13, Psalm 85:9-14, 15-18, Romans 9:1-5, Matthew 14:22-33

Community Calendar

To place your event, call Claire Allen at 021 465 5007 or e-mail c.allen@scross.co.za, (publication subject to space)

CAPE TOWN:

Fundraiser Car Boot Sale and morning market at St Brendan's church, Cnr Longboat Rd (off Ou Kaapseweg) and Corvette Street, Sunvalley, Fish Hoek, Last Saturday every month. All welcome. Info and stall reservations: Maggi-Mae 021 782 9263 or 082 892 4502 mvidas@mweb.co.za

KIMBERLEY:

The St Boniface Past Students' Union is busy preparing to celebrate its 60th anniversary on September 24. Past

students are requested to contact Union's PRO & Chairman of the Board, Mos-alashaping Morudi 073 768 3653, John Siyoko 079 181 5716 or Kagisho Mogamisi 082 451 5893 or sbonifa@iafrica.com

MAFIKENG: Annual diocesan music festival, September 3, admission R350, closing date for booking August 27. Choirs throughout Kimberley Diocese are eligible to take part. Contact 072 569 7531 or 058 861 4411.



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Word of the Week

Rubrics: The rules laid down for the recitation of the Divine Office, the celebration of Mass, and the administration of the sacraments. **Application:** When to sit, stand, kneel or bow during Mass is part of the rubrics of the Catholic Church.

Southern CrossWord solutions

SOLUTIONS TO #455. ACROSS: 1 Fume, 3 Probable, 7 Vandals, 8 Found, 10 Mockingbird, 11 Novice, 13 Shinto, 15 Psalm number, 17 Spurt, 18 Killing, 19 Distress, 20 Ages. **DOWN:** 1 Five minutes, 2 Manic, 4 Resign, 5 Bounden, 6 Latin chant, 8 Faithfully, 9 Discourages, 12 Vapours, 14 Smokes, 16 Bring.

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20th Sunday: August 14

Readings: Isaiah 56:1, 6-7; Psalm 67: 2-3, 5-6, 8; Romans 11:13-15, 29-32; Matthew 15:21-28

God's salvation is for everyone

IF God is the Creator of the entire universe, then how can God be the God only of a special people (Jews and/or Christians)? Once you put it like that, then the answer is obvious. Next Sunday's readings deal with the question.

In the *first reading*, the instruction is for everybody to "keep righteousness, do integrity, for my salvation is near", not just for the people of Israel, but also for "foreigners who join themselves to the Lord to minister to him". This does not mean that anything goes, however; for they have to "love the name of the Lord" and to "keep the Sabbath", and then "I shall bring them to my holy mountain, and make them rejoice in my house of prayer".

The *psalm*, of course, is one of the hymns written for singing in the Temple in Jerusalem, but that does not mean that gentiles are excluded, even though they were not permitted to go all the way into the inner sanctuary; for the poet prays that "your ways may be known on earth, and your salvation to all the gentiles".

Everyone is to be invited to "rejoice and

Nicholas King SJ

Sunday Reflections



be glad", and "let all the peoples praise you, O God, let all the peoples praise you...let all the ends of the earth revere him".

So this is a God who speaks to all of creation, not just the chosen race.

In the *second reading*, the outreach to the Gentiles is absolutely taken for granted. Paul is talking directly to the Gentiles, to the non-Jews in the Roman Church.

Much of the letter has been taken up with insisting that the gospel is for the Gentiles, not just for Jews, but in the present section of the letter he is trying to make sure that those Gentiles do not get above themselves.

Paul is, he says "an apostle of the Gentiles, and I glorify my ministry"; but he also wants to make "my fellow-Jews jealous, and bring some of them to salvation".

The important point (and one that we may never allow ourselves to forget) is: "God's gift and summons are not for changing." So we are not permitted to suppose that God offered the covenant first to the Jews and then, when they failed, to us; God does not change his mind.

So both Jews and Gentiles "will receive mercy; for God has enclosed everyone in disobedience, in order to show mercy to everyone". God's purpose is to bring everyone into the kingdom, including those of whom you most disapprove.

And that is the dramatic picture of the *gospel* for next Sunday. Jesus has strayed out of Jewish territory, wanting to have a bit of peace, but that turns out not to be possible. Not surprisingly, he now meets a foreigner, who is doubly an outsider because of being also a woman.

She has a lesson to teach him. She "came out and was crying out, saying, 'Have mercy on me, Lord, Son of David! My daughter is in a bad way with demons'."

Rather to our surprise, Jesus "did not answer her a word", until his disciples got into the act; "they approached and started

asking him, saying, 'get rid of her, because she is crying out after us'." Jesus, to our surprise, makes a very dismissive response: "I was only sent to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

She is not put off one whit, however, and "came and worshipped him" (which in Matthew's gospel means that you have understood who Jesus is), and said, "Lord, help me".

Jesus' answer is decidedly discouraging: "It is not good to take the bread of the children, and throw it to the dogs", but she is not put off, and quick-wittedly responds "Yes, Lord; but the dogs eat from the crumbs that fall from the tables of their lords." That stops Jesus in his tracks, and he says: "O woman, great is your faith; let it happen to you as you wish." And the gospel concludes, "and her daughter was healed from that moment".

We are all somewhat inclined to assume that it God's message is only for people like us. But that is not God's view. Who are the people whom you instinctively suppose to be outside God's reach?

This week, why not look out for the God who is also at work in them?

Living the Leviticus way

MY father was a wise man, as legions of matric pupils at Pretoria Boys' High School will attest. I remember with gratitude two specific pearls of wisdom he imparted.

The first was to approach everything in life with moderation—particularly moderation. And the second was not to take things literally but to rather look for the meaning of the message than take at face value of the message itself.

Perhaps that would have been sage advice for US talk-show host, Dr Laura Schlessinger who made the comment that as an observant Orthodox Jew, homosexuality was an abomination according to Leviticus 18:22 and could not be condoned under any circumstance.

This evoked a delightful, tongue-in-cheek response which has been attributed to a number of people.

My father would have loved this open letter, which was posted on the internet. The point of using it for this column is not to challenge the Church's teachings on homosexual acts or to mock the Old Testament, but to make us think about how easy it is to take things out of context.

"Dear Dr Laura,

Thank you for doing so much to educate people regarding God's Law. I have learned a great deal from your show and try to share that knowledge with as many people as I can.

When someone tries to defend the homosexual lifestyle, for example, I simply remind them that Leviticus 18:22 clearly

Chris Moerdyk

The Last Word



states it to be an abomination. End of debate.

I do need some advice from you, however, regarding some other elements of God's Laws and how to follow them.

1. Leviticus 25:44 states that I may possess slaves, both male and female, provided they are purchased from neighbouring nations. A friend of mine claims that this applies to Mexicans, but not Canadians. Can you clarify? Why can't I own Canadians?

2. I would like to sell my daughter into slavery, as sanctioned in Exodus 21:7. In this day and age, what do you think would be a fair price for her?

3. I know that I am allowed no contact with a woman while she is in her period of menstrual uncleanness (Lev 15:19-24). The problem is how do I tell? I have tried asking, but most women take offence.

4. When I burn a bull on the altar as a sacrifice, I know it creates a pleasing odour for the Lord (Lev 1:9). The problem is my neighbours. They claim the odour is not pleasing to them. Should I smite them?

5. I have a neighbour who insists on working on the Sabbath. Exodus 35:2 clearly states he should be put to death. Am I

morally obligated to kill him myself, or should I ask the police to do it?

6. A friend of mine feels that even though eating shellfish is an abomination (Lev 11:10), it is a lesser abomination than homosexuality. I don't agree. Can you settle this? Are there "degrees" of abomination?

7. Leviticus 21:20 states that I may not approach the altar of God if I have a defect in my sight. I have to admit that I wear reading glasses. Does my vision have to be 20/20, or is there some wiggle-room here?

8. Most of my male friends get their hair trimmed, including the hair around their temples, even though this is expressly forbidden by Leviticus 19:27. How should they die?

9. I know from Leviticus 11:6-8 that touching the skin of a dead pig makes me unclean, but may I still play football if I wear gloves?

10. My uncle has a farm. He violates Leviticus 19:19 by planting two different crops in the same field, as does his wife by wearing garments made of two different kinds of thread (cotton/polyester blend). He also tends to curse and blaspheme a lot. Is it really necessary that we go to all the trouble of getting the whole town together to stone them (Lev 24:10-16)? Couldn't we just burn them to death at a private family affair, like we do with people who sleep with their in-laws (Lev 20:14)?

I know you have studied these things extensively and thus enjoy considerable expertise in such matters, so I'm confident you can help.

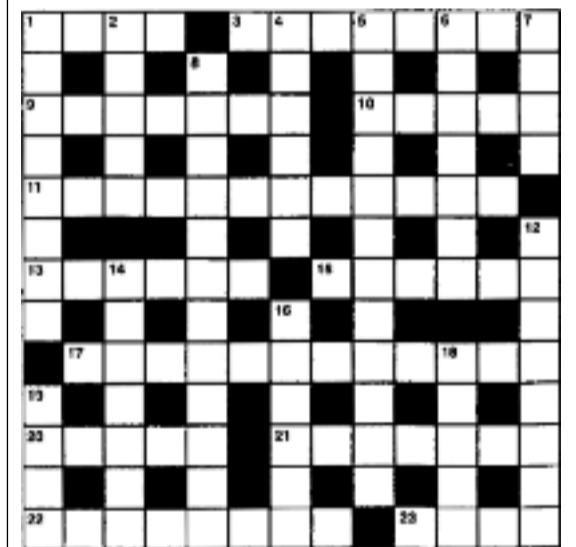
Thank you again for reminding us that God's word is eternal and unchanging."

The point here obviously is that we cannot pick some scriptural injunctions and ignore others if we want to present a consistent argument, and that our understanding of the lessons in the Bible can and does change over time.

My father also had the gift of written communication—and brevity. When anxious parents used to write to him to complain that their sons were not selected for the first rugby team or had not got a part in the school play or had not been given the marks they deserved in an examination, my father used to simply mark their letters out of ten and comment: "Coming along nicely, but your punctuation needs work."

He and whoever wrote that letter to Dr Laura would have been great friends.

Southern Crossword #456



ACROSS

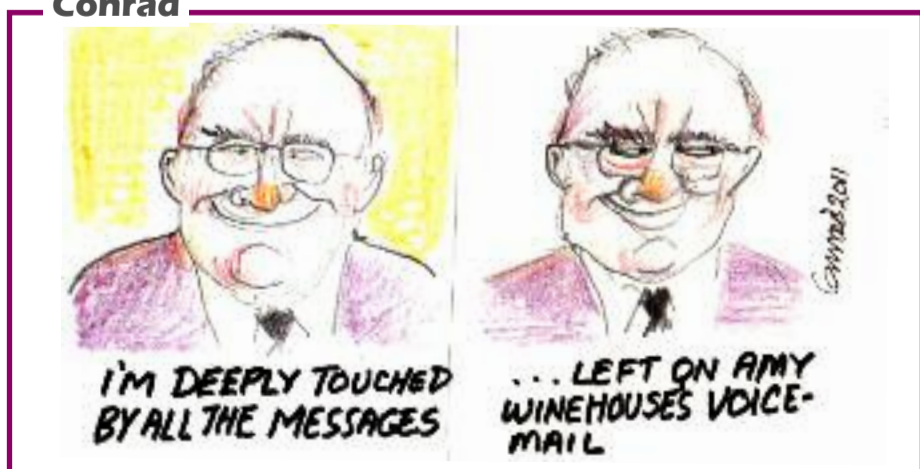
1. It could be sharp or flat (4)
3. Confuse (8)
9. Not indoors and lacking something (7)
10. City of St Ambrose (5)
11. From ill mate I find I'm everlastingly with God (8,4)
13. Gadget used in heraldic design (6)
15. Sad Don amalgamates (4,2)
17. They won't brighten the altar (5,7)
20. Glamorgan's the place for church instrument (5)
21. Compassionate pope? (7)
22. Took a leisurely walk (8)
23. It is legally concealing water around it (4)

DOWN

1. Archaeological fresh discoveries (3,5)
2. Pole confused by motet (5)
4. Cricketer who's bowled (3,3)
5. Meal for parents and children (6,6)
6. Raises heart and mind (7)
7. Perfectly cooked (4)
8. Kind of service for the prisoners (12)
12. Liqueur from St Aniene (8)
14. Drink for crucified Jesus (Mt 28) (7)
16. It may hang around in winter (6)
18. Vegetables sounding like dripping (5)
19. Theatre gallery for divine ones (4)

Solutions on page 11

Conrad



CHURCH CHUCKLE

FATHER Hendriks answers the phone. "Hello, is this Father Hendriks?" "It is!" "This is SARS. Can you help us?" "I can!" "Do you know a Tuys van Tonder?" "I do!" "Is he a member of your congregation?" "He is!" "Did he donate R10 000 to the church?" "He will."

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