

News in brief . . .

Continued from page 4

warming and strategies for nuclear deterrence, said professors in a range of academic disciplines from Catholic University, Georgetown University and the University of Maryland. The April 27 program in the Dirksen Senate Building drew an invited audience of congressional staffers, representatives of the Obama administration, journalists, students and others.

**FDA' decision on Plan B contrary to common sense**

WASHINGTON – The Food and Drug Administration's decision not to appeal a court decision that the morning-after pill marketed as Plan B should be available over the counter to minors "flies in the face of common sense," said the U.S. bishops' pro-life spokeswoman. "Wider

access to Plan B could endanger the lives of newly conceived children, and will put minors at risk for unnecessary side effects, undermine parental rights and contribute to higher rates of sexually transmitted diseases, said Deirdre McQuade, assistant director for policy and communications at the bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, in an April 23 statement. The FDA announced April 22 that the Obama administration would not appeal a March 23 decision by U.S. District Judge Edward Korman making Plan B available to 17-year-olds without a prescription. A prescription had previously been required for anyone under 18. Korman, a judge in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, said the FDA had "repeatedly and unreasonably" delayed a decision on whether Plan B should be available over the counter and had been swayed by politics in ultimately deciding to make the drug available without a prescription only to those 18 or over.

**Group seeks bilingual Catholics**

English-Spanish bilingual Catholics who feel a call to bring the Word of God to youthful offenders are invited to attend three-day training by Comunidad San Dimas, a Catholic restorative justice and ecumenical volunteer service.

Sessions will be held Saturdays May 30, June 6 and June 13 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at 3371 16th St. in San Francisco. The training will be given in Spanish. Participants must register but there is no tuition.

In addition to being English-Spanish bilingual, volunteers must be at least 18, must complete all three days of training and must attend monthly meetings. Volunteers also must perform a year of service to discern if they are called to jail ministry and mentor youth released from jail on probation or parole in San Francisco, San Leandro or San Mateo.

Prison ministry is challenging and few

are called, said Comunidad San Dimas director Julio Escobar.

The purpose of the ministry, which is approved by the Archdiocese of San Francisco's Office of Public Policy and Social Concerns, is to bring the Word of God to youth in order to give them the strength to change their lives. The ministry serves youth from 11 to 18 years old who are involved in gangs, drugs or violence and who are at risk of entering the adult justice system or becoming victims of violence themselves if they return to the street unrehabilitated.

"Our mission is to prepare them and get them to know more about God in case they go through more challenging times in their lives," Escobar said. "We want to make sure they know more about God because God is with them."

To register call (415) 244-5594 or e-mail at [info@comunidadesandimas.org](mailto:info@comunidadesandimas.org). See website at [www.comunidadesandimas.org](http://www.comunidadesandimas.org).



**On catholic-sf.org**

**HEADLINE NEWS**

**Varieties of intolerance: Religious and secular**

Cardinal George Pell of Sydney, Australia fears that unchecked hate speech against Christianity is rising in the West, noting that religious groups defending the traditional definition of marriage are being subjected to a "prolonged campaign of payback and bullying." Link to the article in Origins, the CNS documentary service, courtesy of the California Catholic Conference.



**CHURCH/VATICAN**

**The Bible and bioethics**

The Papal Biblical Commission is seeking wide distribution of a document on biblical guidance for present moral problems based on conformity to the biblical vision of human dignity and the example of Jesus, Zenit reports from Rome.

**Pius XII:**

**Shedding light on the "black legend"**

The image of Piacelli as "Hitler's pope" is contested by a growing number of scholars, Rome-based journalist Sandro Magister reports.



**WORLD**

**Former gang members form church choir**

Triste is the name of the new choir made up of gang members notorious in this majority-Catholic country for roaming the outskirts of the capital city, the Union of Catholic Asian News reports from Timor-Leste on the island of Timor.

**MULTIMEDIA**

**Bringing the Word of God to young offenders**

The Word can save their lives, says Julio Escobar, who discusses the mission of the Comunidad San Dimas restorative justice ministry. See related article on this page.



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CNS PHOTO/ELIANA APONTE, REUTERS

**People wear medical face masks during Mass at Metropolitan Cathedral in Mexico City April 26. Fears of the spread of the swine flu are keeping millions of Mexicans indoors to avoid the virus.**

## As swine flu spreads Mexican Catholics pray for protection

By Catholic News Service

MEXICO CITY (CNS) – In the nation that is at the center of the swine flu outbreak, Cardinal Norberto Rivera Carrera of Mexico City prayed to Our Lady of Guadalupe and canceled Masses in the archdiocese due to the outbreak of swine flu.

The decision to cancel Masses followed instructions from the local health secretariat that all large gatherings be canceled as authorities raced to contain an epidemic that threatened to spread well beyond Mexico. More than 150 Mexicans had died and more than 1,200 were sick in the Mexican capital. The United States had confirmed more than 60 cases in five states.

Cardinal Rivera celebrated Sunday Mass April 26 behind closed doors in the Metropolitan Cathedral for about 50 people who had been permitted to enter.

In his homily, he called on the Mexican population to never lose hope and to mutually assist each other during the crisis. He also prayed to Our Lady of Guadalupe for intervention, noting that she had helped during pandemics four times since 1554.

“We beg for your protection and help for quickly overcoming the epidemic that has affected our nation,” Cardinal Rivera prayed. “Cover us with your cloak; free us from this evil.”

Later in the day, an image of Christ on the cross – known as the “Lord of Health” – was removed from its spot in the cathedral for the first time since 1850 and carried in a procession around central Mexico City. The “Cristo,” as the image is known, has been credited with past miracles, including intervention in an 1850 cholera outbreak.

Much of the swine flu attention has been focused on Mexico City, but the disease has also claimed lives in SWINE FLU, page 15

# CATHOLIC SAN FRANCISCO

Northern California's Weekly Catholic Newspaper

## Church must adapt to digital world to reach youth, says Pauline Sister

By Michael Vick

Parents and youth ministers must adapt to and embrace new technologies to be relevant to young people, said Pauline Sister Rose Pacatte, director of the Pauline Center for Media Studies in Los Angeles.

“Faith formation has to take place in a digital culture,” said Sister Rose, who led a workshop on media and ministry April 20 at the San Francisco Archdiocesan Pastoral Center. She writes a regular entertainment column for *St. Anthony Messenger* magazine and co-authored the book “Media Mindfulness: Educating Teens about Faith and Media” in 2007. “There is no way to navigate this media culture without spending time with our kids engaged in the media.”

Adults often lag behind young people in technological expertise and this puts the Church at a disadvantage in its quest to remain relevant to youth, Sister Rose said. She said those parishes and schools that do not incorporate technology into their ministry will see dwindling numbers of youth, who will tune out Church messages in favor of more readily available and entertaining content from other

sources. Parishes that do not adequately use media will stunt the moral growth of the few youth who remain because they are not being spiritually fed in a way that resonates with youth culture, she said.

“If we form children and young people to live outside their times, then when they are immersed full-time in the culture, they will struggle to survive psychologically and spiritually,” she said.

In “Media Mindfulness,” Sister Rose and coauthor Sacred Heart Sister Gretchen Hailer, suggest several ways parishes and Catholic schools can engage young people using technology, many of which require little additional investment.

Educators and parish youth ministers can create a movie critics club, selecting age-appropriate films in theaters or on DVD that youth then review. Students would independently select their criteria for judging the film and share their reviews with teachers and fellow critics.

Young people can host a mixed-generation dance with older parish members, selecting danceable tunes from each decade since the 1930s. DIGITAL WORLD, page 15



CNS PHOTO/OWEN SWEENEY III

**Pauline Sister Rose Pacatte talks with a visitor to the Pauline Media Center exhibit at a National Catholic Educational Association convention.**

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