



**XI - Jesus is nailed to the cross**

## San Luis' Stations: Colorado's Lenten gift

By Jere Joiner

SPECIAL TO THE CHRONICLE OF CATHOLIC LIFE

A pilgrimage my wife and I took three weeks ago to Hubert Maestas' Stations of the Cross on the hill above San Luis left the two of us in tears.

Maestas, of course, is known around the world for the near life-size bronze sculptures he created as an act of love for parishioners of his own Sangre de Cristo Parish located in San Luis, the oldest town in Colorado.

Since completion, pilgrims, tourists and curiosity seekers by the thousands have trudged the 3/4-mile rock-and-dirt pathway that leads past the stunning, life-like sculptures to *la Capilla de Todos Los Santos (Chapel of All Saints)* built at the top of the mesa.

I had dedicated the pilgrimage for the repose of the soul of a friend's wife — he had no idea what I was doing. I had no idea what a transforming event the pilgrimage would be for my wife and me.

No sooner had we reached the first station — Jesus is Condemned to Death — when a couple walking down the pathway almost disturbed our meditation. I was moved when they waited reverently until our prayers were completed.

It wasn't until the 11th Station — Jesus is Nailed to the Cross — that the full enormity of Our Lord's sacrifice descended on me. I had seen pictures of this station before, but I wasn't prepared for the hammer and the soldier's arm raised against a blue Colorado sky.

I wasn't prepared for the expression on Our Lord's face as the nail was driven through the median nerve at the juncture of his hand and wrist.

Medical doctors say there is no pain more severe. For a respite, I turned away briefly and looked back on San Luis, that dusty little town a thousand feet below. I thought that this must have been what it was like for Christ as he looked down from Calvary on his beloved city of Jerusalem.

Turning back to the crucifixion scene, I realized, as never before, my wife and I truly had been tracing Our Lord's footsteps.

We knelt for the 12th Station meditation — Jesus' Death. We saw the blood draining from his body and staining the dirt around our knees. We sensed his heart slowing. A final tremble and his body sagged downward, held in place only by the nails that had tormented him so.

Our Lord had died for us — my wife and me. And not just for us, kneeling here at his feet, but for the whole world.

The shrine is formally known as "*La Mesa de la Piedad y de la Misericordia*" (*Hill of Piety and Mercy*). We give thanks for the shrine, but also for God's mercy, that he loved us enough to sacrifice his son that we might live. Greater love I could not imagine.

Anyone wanting to experience the judgment, suffering, death and resurrection of Jesus in a real way need only drive south on I-25 to the Alamosa turn-off at Walsenburg. Head west over La Veta Pass to Ft. Garland, then south to San Luis. The Stations are on the right as you enter town. Park on the left side of the road beside the police station.

*Editor's Note: The Stations or Way of the Cross is one of many devotions that came into being during the very late Middle Ages, between 1200 and 1300. During this time, there was political, cultural and religious confusion which made practicing and passing on the faith difficult. The devotional practices that arose were developed to help people live and learn their Christian faith. St. Francis of Assisi and St. Dominic and their followers were among those who popularized such expressions as the creche and the rosary, respectively. The Stations served as a prayer and a way to learn about the suffering and death of Jesus.*

## CHARITY CONNECTIONS:

*To help the people who live in southern and western Colorado live whole and healthy lives.*

*Programs reviewed in relationship to agency's mission*

PUEBLO - Last year CCDP Board members Midori Clark and Denise Beaber, along with CCDP staff member Nadine Triste, participated in Catholic Charities USA Leadership Institute at Notre Dame University.

One outcome of that experience was a complete board review of all the CCDP programs, to better understand their content, their relationship to the agency's Mission and their impact on the community. One program area that caught the special attention of our Board was our Adoption Program.

The cornerstone of our agency since its inception in 1944, our Adoption Program has counseled thousands of birth mothers and Catholic Charities, a licensed Child Placement Agency with Colorado, has placed over 1,000 infants in loving homes throughout our Diocese.

But over the recent years, due to a wide number of societal factors, the number of birth parents seeking a placement for their infant has dwindled. We continue to nurture our Adoption Program because though it is small in numbers, its impact on any one family or birth mother is beyond measure.

***If you are interested in adoption or know of someone who might need decision making counseling, please contact our Adoption Placement Supervisor, Linda Youngs, LPC, at our office by telephone at 719-544-4233 or if you live outside Pueblo call toll-free 1-800-544-4215.***

In addition to maintaining our commitment to our Adoption Program we also decided to place a new emphasis in the area of fatherhood.

As you know, we have a broad array of parent support programs, but in talking with community members and surveying the landscape, we realized that there is a

### *Durango celebrates Scout awards*

DURANGO - This year at Sacred Heart Parish in Durango, both Cub Scouts and Boy Scouts gathered together to celebrate Scout Sunday on February 4 with Cole Crawford who received his Parvuli Dei Emblem.

Rev. Antonio Flores, CR, Administrator, presented the emblem to Cole and his parents during the 9 a.m. Mass. Cole is the son of Penny and Bruce Crawford and a member of Pack 509. He is a seasoned and trusted altar server and an active participant in the parish religious education program.



*l-r: Rev. Antonio Flores, CR, Administrator, Raymond Schneyer, Cole and his brother Josh in the foreground, James Ouellette and Cole's mother Penny Crawford in the background, and Ken Ouellette on the right.*

### *Phone cards collected, distributed for troops serving overseas*

Lucie Olivas, left, Louise Sanchez and Father Bill Gleeson review handfuls of phone cards they distributed to troops serving overseas/ During the holidays, Father Gleeson got the idea to provide phone cards so that military service personnel could communicate with home. He added he also wanted to express appreciation to those serving our country. During a Mass at Sacred Heart Church in Alamosa, Father Gleeson collected \$550 and was able to buy 57 phone cards. He distributed them to the troops, regardless of denomination or religious affiliation. Valley families with service personal serving overseas called to provide the names and addresses of their loved ones to Olivas and Sanchez who mailed the cards to the troops.

*Photo courtesy of Ruth Heide, Valley Courier*



*Catholic Charities' Adoption Placement Supervisor, Linda Youngs, LPC*

tremendous gap, a nearly total lack of support for men, young and old, who parent, especially if they are single. And though the obvious focus might be the young man, probably a teen, who is struggling to co-parent, we also know there are lots of grand fathers raising grandchildren and single dads of all ages.

So, with the help of Dan Chavez, Prenatal Case Manager at Parkview Medical Center and a longtime community advocate for the Fatherhood Initiative, we are developing a curriculum designed to provide information and support to fathers, stepfather, uncles and grandparent who are in the role of primary caregiver for a child.

In addition to strengthening parenting skills the class will focus on communication skills, legal rights and obligations, and education and employment.

And we need your help. One of our goals is to recruit a few good men to participate in the class as role models and sponsors. Being a sponsor means that you would participate in each of the six sessions, help facilitate discussion and also stay in touch with a couple of the participants during the week, even as simple as through a phone call.

We hope to create as sense of community because it is our observation that men who parent, especially if they are single and estranged from the co-parent, are very isolated.

We are piloting this program in Pueblo County but, if successful and needed, we hope to expand the project to other communities throughout the Diocese.

So we need your help, in our continued commitment to creating strong families.

Linda Youngs will be leading this effort for Catholic Charities, so if you would like to help, or know someone who might want to participate, please contact her.

Sincerely,  
*Jayne Mazur*  
Executive Director



### Montrose presents Scout awards

MONTROSE- Montrose-area Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts gathered at St. Mary Church on Sunday, February 11 to celebrate Scout Sunday Mass. Scouts from various local Cub Scout Packs, Boy Scout Troops, a Venturer Crew and Girl Scout Units were represented.

Local scouts and their adult leaders assisted at the Mass as altar servers and Extraordinary Ministers of Holy Communion. St. Mary's administrator, Father Don Malin and Deacon Mike Rovella, Diocesan Scouting Chaplain, presented the *Parvuli Dei Religious Emblem* to Cub Scouts Andrew Locke and Ricky Padilla.

Sigmund Lesniewski and Christopher Padilla received the *Light of Christ Emblem*. All are from Cub Pack 490 chartered by St. Mary Catholic Church.



*Sigmund Lesniewski and Andrew Locke.*

