



**COVERING THE HOMELESS** — The youth group from St. Nicholas Parish, Rupert, made tied quilts March 29 for the residents of Valley House Homeless Shelter in Twin Falls. The quilts were all child- and infant-sized. The parish youths, including Emmanuel and Yesli Ruiz, above, specifically wanted to help the children who are residents of this shelter. (ICR photo courtesy of St. Nicholas Parish)

## Address challenges graduates to share their brilliance

*We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.*

- U.S. Catholic Bishops

**By Michael Benton  
Director, Parish Life and  
Faith Formation**

In calling us to care for Creation, our bishops recognize this "requirement of faith" as interconnected with all other elements of Catholic social teaching.

During his May commencement address at the University of Portland in Oregon, Paul Hawken challenged graduates to pursue their callings with this same awareness.

For the sake of space, his comments are excerpted here. For full text, go to the U of P Web site, [www.up.edu](http://www.up.edu) and enter "commencement" in the search box.

"You are Brilliant, and the Earth is Hiring."

"Forget that this task of planet-saving is not possible in the time required. Don't be put off by people who know what is not possible. Do what needs to be done, and check to see if it was impossible only after you are done.

"What I see everywhere in the world are ordinary people willing to confront despair, power, and incalculable odds in order to restore some semblance of grace, justice and beauty to this world.

"No one knows how many groups and organizations are working on the most salient issues of our day: climate change, poverty, deforestation, peace, water, hunger, conservation, human rights and more. This is the largest movement the world has ever seen. Rather than control, it seeks connection. Rather than dominance, it strives to disperse concentrations of power. Like Mercy Corps, it works behind the scenes and gets the job done. Large as it is, no one knows the true size of this movement. It provides hope, support, and meaning to billions of people in the world. Its clout resides in ideas, not in force.

"Millions of people are working on behalf of strangers, even if the evening news is usually about the death of strangers. This kindness of strangers has religious, even mythic origins, and very specific 18th-century roots. Abolitionists were the first people to create a national and global movement to defend the rights of those they did not know. Enslaving each other was what human beings had done for ages. The abolitionist movement was greeted with incredulity. Conservative spokesmen ridiculed the abo-

litionists as liberals, progressives, do-gooders, meddlers and activists. They were told they would ruin the economy and drive England into poverty. But for the first time in history, a group of people organized themselves to help people they would never know, from whom they would never receive direct or indirect benefit. Today, tens of millions of people do this every day.

"The living world is not "out there" somewhere, but in your heart. In the words of biologist Janine Benyus, life creates the conditions that are conducive to life. I can think of no better motto for a future economy. We have tens of thousands of abandoned homes without people and tens of thousands of abandoned people without

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"You can print money to bail out a bank but you can't print life to bail out a planet. We can just as easily have an economy that is based on healing the future instead of stealing it. One is called restoration and the other exploitation. Whenever we exploit the earth, we exploit people and cause untold suffering. Working for the earth is not a way to get rich; it is a way to be rich.

"Ralph Waldo Emerson once asked what we would do if the stars only came out once every thousand years. No one would sleep that night, of course. The world would create new religions overnight. We would be ecstatic, delirious, made rapturous by the glory of God. Instead, the stars come out every night and we watch television.

"You are graduating to the most amazing, stupefying challenge ever bequeathed to any generation. The generations before you failed. They didn't stay up all night. They got distracted and lost sight of the fact that life is a miracle every moment of your existence.

The most unrealistic person in the world is the cynic, not the dreamer. Hope only makes sense when it doesn't make sense to be hopeful. This is your century. Take it and run as if your life depends on it."

## Nampa student receives prestigious award

By Father Saul Reyes

NAMPA — Cristina Medrano of St. Paul Parish was recently awarded a \$220,000 Gates Millennium Scholarship to pursue higher education.

Funded by Microsoft founder Bill Gates and his wife Melinda, the scholarship targets students from low-income families who show significant academic achievement, leadership skills and community service.

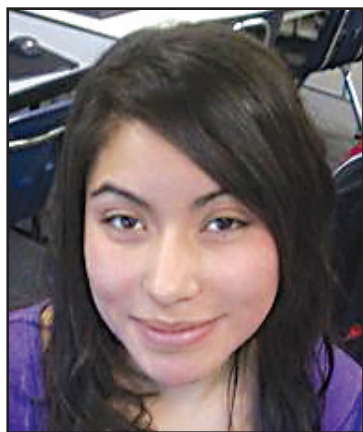
At St. Paul's, she is a lector at a weekly Spanish Mass and was a Confirmation sponsor for a young woman this spring. She also was a member of Cantares de Cristo choir. She attributes her strength to her personal relationship with God and says her faith has been her sustaining force. She is a fine example of what a young Catholic should aspire to be involved in her parish and a faithful follower of Christ. She has lived in the U.S. for six years, and did not know a word of English when she arrived.

Cristina comes from a large family with eight brothers and sisters. She was born in Mexico and came here with her parents. She has lived in both Caldwell and Nampa. She had received a scholarship in Mexico for her exceptional academic performance.

When asked what her biggest challenges were upon coming to the U.S., she said that learning the language was very hard. Also, expectations from her family and the community were for her to get married and raise a family. Some family members had doubts that she could succeed in school, but she proved it was possible. Her family now totally supports her desire for higher education.

When Cristina was young, she thought she might be called to religious life as a missionary. Now she has realized that she wants to be an electrical engineer. She hopes to serve as a catechist in a parish near her school in the fall to fulfill her desire to share the faith with others.

She enjoys studying, poetry and folkloric ballet. She also likes



Cristina Medrano

to run, read and being social with large groups of people.

Cristina hopes her success will be an example to others in her family and in the community. She hopes she has been a role model and that her

efforts will convince others that anything is possible through hard work. She recognizes that she could not have done any of this without the love and support of her family and the community. She also credits her faith and her love for God. Cristina is the first one in her family to graduate from high school. She will continue her studies at Utah State University in Logan this fall.

"When you have goals and dreams, you must fight for them," she said. "On the road to success, you will find difficult circumstances and challenges. You shouldn't let them stop you, but you should use them as your motivation. You should continue with faith in God, yourself and your family and from this, you will gain much success."

## Estudiante de Nampa recibe premio prestigioso

Por el Padre Saul Reyes

NAMPA — Cristina Medrano fue galardonada con la Beca Gates Millennium, que otorga una cantidad de 220 000 dólares que serán utilizados para alcanzar sus estudios de educación superior. Financiada por Bill y Melinda Gates, la beca está dirigida a estudiantes de familias de bajos ingresos que muestran importantes logros académicos, cualidades de liderazgo y servicio a la comunidad. Esta notable joven es una feligrés de la parroquia de San Pablo en Nampa. Desarrolla el ministerio de lectorado semanalmente y acaba de ser madrina de una joven que fue confirmada recientemente. Antes de desarrollar el ministerio de lectora formó parte del coro "Cantares de Cristo" perteneciente a la parroquia de San Pablo. Ella atribuye su fortaleza a su relación personal con Dios y dice que su fe ha sido el alimento de su fuerza. Cristina es un buen ejemplo de cómo una joven católica debe

participar en su parroquia y ser un fiel seguidor de Cristo. Ella ha vivido en Estados Unidos sólo por los últimos 6 años y cuando llegó por primera vez a este país no sabía una palabra de Inglés.

Cristina proviene de una familia numerosa que tiene 9 hijos, donde ella es la penúltima de ellos. Nació en México y vino aquí con sus padres, ha vivido en Caldwell y Nampa. En México recibió también una beca por su rendimiento académico. Cuando se le preguntó que cuáles eran sus mayores desafíos cuando llegó a los Estados Unidos, comentó que el aprendizaje de la lengua había sido muy duro, pero sobre todo la expectativa, tanto de su familia como la comunidad en general, de que ella simplemente se casara y no terminara de estudiar. Su familia tenía dudas sobre si éste era el camino que ella tenía que seguir. Sin embargo a través de la tenacidad y el esfuerzo que ha realizado se ha demostrado a sí misma y a otros que todo esto era posible.