



# The Catholic Lighthouse

*The cradle of Texas Immigration*



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

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December 2015



## The Diocese of Victoria has a Facebook page!

Like our page to hear messages from Bishop Cahill and news from the Diocese!

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## Bishop Brendan's Message



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In consultation with the Diocesan Liturgical Commission and the Presbyteral Council we have developed a plan to help us celebrate fully the Jubilee Year of Mercy from December 8, 2015 to November 20, 2016. St. Augustine taught about God's mercy in his commentary on Psalm 51. Partly because of this commentary I chose the phrase "Create in me a clean heart, Oh God" as my episcopal motto. As we prepare to celebrate this great year of reflection, renewal and commitment I want to share with you a couple of thoughts from St. Augustine's commentary.

First, who is the "me" of the Psalm? On one hand we can see that it was King David, who acknowledged the gravity of his sins and begged for a new start. In the light of our Christian faith we can also understand this person as the whole Church, formed into one Body by the Holy Spirit. I'd like to invite all of us to pray this prayer as the Church of the Diocese of Victoria - the Body of Christ in this 10-county area who offers our life daily for the salvation of the world. I pray that as we pray for a clean heart, our witness can shine brightly for all the world to see the beauty and truth of God's love for the world.

Second, the Psalm teaches us that no sin is too great for God to forgive and heal. It seems to me that so many people feel bound by a past sin, or caught up in a seemingly hopeless struggle with a cur-

*See Bishop Brendan's Message, pg. 2*



Mary and the child Jesus are depicted in a 17th-century painting by Il Sassoferato. The Feast of the Nativity of Christ, a Holy Day of Obligation, is celebrated December 25. (CNS/Bridgeman Art Library)

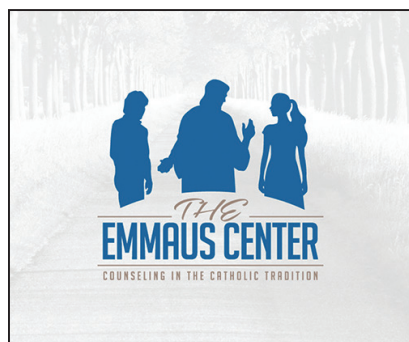
## Diocese Of Victoria Announces Ribbon Cutting Of Counseling Center

The Emmaus Center:  
*Counseling in the Catholic Tradition*

On December 8, 2015, at 2:00 p.m. the Diocese of Victoria will have a ribbon cutting ceremony for the opening of their Catholic-based counseling center, The Emmaus Center: Counseling in the Catholic Tradition. All are invited to attend this event with Bishop Brendan Cahill, Father Gary Janak and the Diocese of Victoria. The Emmaus Center is located in The Laurent Towers office building, 1908 N. Laurent Street, Suite 140, in Victoria, Texas.

The mission of The Emmaus Center

is to assist others on their journey of life, especially during times of hurt, psychological distress and relational instability. It is Jesus who is the Divine Healer and the counseling team of The Emmaus Center seeks to extend a listening heart to those in need.



The Year of Mercy also begins on December 8, for Catholics. Bishop Cahill prays The Emmaus Center will be a place whereby those who are hurting, and in need of spiritual and psychological assistance, will find listening hearts ready to offer to them the support and strength they need.

will find listening hearts ready to offer to them the support and strength they need.

## Pope Francis Announces the Jubilee of Mercy

Dear Brothers and Sisters, I have often thought of how the Church may render more clear her mission to be a witness to mercy; and we have to make this journey. It is a journey which begins with spiritual conversion. Therefore, I have decided to announce an Extraordinary Jubilee which has at its centre the mercy of God. It will be a Holy Year of Mercy. We want to live in the light of the word of the Lord: "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (cf. Lk 6:36). And this especially applies to confessors! So much mercy!

This Holy Year will commence on the next Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception and will conclude on Sunday, 20 November 2016, the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe and living face of the Father's mercy. I entrust the organization of this Jubilee to the Pontifical Council for Promoting the New Evangelization, in order that it may come to life as a new step on the Church's journey in her mission to bring the Gospel of mercy to each person.

I am confident that the whole Church, which is in such need of mercy for we are sinners, will be able to find in this Jubilee the joy of rediscovering and rendering fruitful God's

*See Pope Francis Announces, pg. 5*







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The Diocese of Victoria is comprised of  
more than 50 parishes in 69 communities.

Estimated Catholic population: 107,000.

Bishop Brendan J. Cahill's Official Photo  
© 2015 Kevin Jordan Photography

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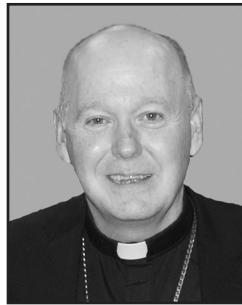
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*Continued from pg. 1*

rent sin. Sometimes people may also feel powerless to forgive a past wound. As we pray for a clean heart I pray as the united Body of Christ we can be an instrument of healing and hope for each person we encounter. Most powerfully in the celebration of the Sunday Eucharist we offer ourselves daily for the holiness of humanity and the glorification of God - may we share with the whole world the knowledge, power and freedom of God's mercy who invites us to a new start every day.

## Bishop Brendan's Schedule

**December**

- 5** 5:30 p.m., Mass & Bishop's Advent Dinner, Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria
- 6** 11:30 a.m., Mass & Groundbreaking Ceremony Our Lady of Victory Activity Center, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
- 8** 8:10 a.m., School Mass & Visit, Nazareth Academy, Victoria  
2:00 p.m., Dedication & Blessing, Emmaus Counseling Center, 1908 N. Laurent St. Suite 140, Victoria
- 9** 6:15 p.m., CCD Night, Sacred Heart, Hallettsville
- 10** 6:00 p.m., Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre Christmas Party, Victoria Country Club
- 11** 5:00 p.m., St. Mary's University Baccalaureate Mass, Bill Greehey Arena, San Antonio
- 12** 5:00 p.m., Procession, Chancery to Cathedral for Opening Door for Year of Mercy, followed by Mass at Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
- 13** 8:30 & 10:30 a.m., Mass, Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Victoria  
6:00 p.m., 2nd Annual Advent Praise & Worship Evening, St. Rose of Lima Church, Schulenburg
- 14** 2:00 p.m., St. Mary Altar Society Meeting, St. Mary Activity Center, Victoria
- 15** 11:30 a.m., Mass & Lunch, Missionary Catechists Sisters, Bethany House, Victoria  
6:00 p.m., Our Lady of Victory Altar Society Christmas Social, Our Lady of Victory School Cafeteria, Victoria
- 16** 2:30 p.m., Finance Board Meeting, 2nd floor Chancery  
4:00 p.m., Building Board Meeting
- 20** 8:00 & 10:30 a.m., Mass, St. Mary Church, Victoria
- 24** 4:00 p.m., Mass, Incarnate Word Convent Infirmary, Victoria  
6:00 p.m., Christmas Vigil Mass, Holy Family Church, Victoria
- 25** 12:00 a.m. Mass, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
- 27** 11:00 a.m., Mass with Seminarians, Holy Family Church, Victoria
- 28** 10:00 a.m., Mass, Feast of Holy Innocents, Raphael's Refuge, Flatonia

**January**

- 3** 9:00 & 11:00 a.m., Mass, Holy Cross Church, East Bernard
- 4-8** Bishop's Retreat, Oblate Renewal Center, San Antonio

## DSA update

**2015 Diocesan Services Appeal**

Diocesan Goal: \$ 1,826,700.00  
Parish Pledge Totals: \$ 958,075.97  
Parish Contribution Totals: \$ 913,569.65  
Number of Parish  
Families Participating: 3,298



**With these hopes I present the following schedule for the Jubilee Year of Mercy:**

- December 8, 2015 - Blessing and Dedication of the Emmaus Center, Counseling in the Catholic Tradition (2:00 p.m.)
- December 12, 2015 - Blessing of the Holy Door of Mercy, Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria (5:30 p.m. Mass)
- March 3-4, 2016 - 24 Hours of Mercy, Sacrament of Penance available for 24 hours in designated churches throughout the Diocese
- May 13, 2016 - Invitation to join in the Consecration to Jesus through Mary on the 99th anniversary of the first apparition of Fatima
- November 10-12, 2016 Healing of the Family Retreat, Holy Family Church, Victoria

In addition to the dates listed above, the following places of pilgrimage for the Holy Year of Mercy have been designated: Holy Cross, Bay City; Holy Cross, East Bernard; Holy Cross, Yorktown; and Raphael's Refuge, Flatonia. I also will be encouraging devotion and prayer to Father Charles Kram, Jr., an inspirational example of the power of holiness shining through personal suffering.

This is just the beginning, more information will follow throughout the year and I'm sure that with the guidance of the Holy Spirit we will have other opportunities open up to celebrate this year fully. Please look on the diocesan web-site (victoriadiocese.org) and the Catholic Lighthouse for more information as we celebrate this year. I write this with deep gratitude for your love lived every day - let's keep one another in prayer!

+ Brendan

***Prayer for Jubilee Year of Mercy – Bishop Cahill***

I open my heart to You, this day, Oh Merciful Father -Send forth Your Holy Spirit into the depths of my being. So that from head to toe I may be an instrument of Your healing and mercy. One Body and One Spirit with my sisters and brothers throughout the Diocese of Victoria. I pray to listen before speaking, To understand before judging, To love before acting. Trusting in the faithful intercession of Mary my Mother I pray in the Name of Your Son Jesus Christ. Who I profess as LORD, living and reigning with You and the Holy Spirit, One God forever and ever. Amen.



## Seminary Burses

Seminary burses are a permanent fund used for the education of future priests for the Diocese of Victoria. The goal of each burse is \$15,000. The interest from this amount is applied yearly to the education of seminarians. The burses are in memory of or in honor of an individual priest or lay persons, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received.

November 30, 2015

	TOTALS
<b>General Seminary Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$108,489.00
Donation in memory of Julius Brzozowski, Jr. by Doris Dold	<u>15.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$108,504.00

<b>Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill, Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas</b>	
Our Christmas gift for Bishop Cahill from a friend	<u>\$1,000.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$1,000.00

<b>Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily Burse #2</b>	
Previously reported	\$3,744.00
In memory of Sister Rita Rose Bily, C.D.P. by her brother,	
Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily	1,000.00
Martin and Mary Luchak	1,000.00
Johnny and Joan Prihoda	25.00
In memory of Lawrence J. Klesel by Eugene and Henrietta Veselka	<u>25.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$5,794.00

<b>Rev. Wayne Flagg and Rev. Philip Brune</b>	
Previously reported	\$4,210.00
In honor of Rev. Wayne Flagg's 60th birthday celebration by	
Daryl and Joan Hill	60.00
Johnny and JoAnn Canik	25.00
Brad and Rachel Klingenberg & Family	20.00
Darry and Barbara Meyer	25.00
Mark Kubicek Family	50.00
James and Janie Hrachovy	50.00
In honor of Deacon Chuck Glynn's 21st anniversary to the diaconate ordination by	
Clarence and Linda Ruether	25.00
In memory of Hugo H. Schertz by the Hugo Schertz Family	<u>100.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$4,565.00

<b>Catholic Daughters of America Our Lady Queen of Peace Ct #1374</b>	
Previously reported	\$7,722.12
Donation in memory of Mary Pratkan by CDA Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374	100.00
Donation in memory of J. J. Bubela by CDA Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374	100.00
Donation in memory of Tom Gold by CDA Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374	<u>100.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$8,022.12

<b>Rev. Jerome J. Stryk Burse #2</b>	
Previously reported	\$1,874.50
Donation in memory of M/M Frank A. Stryk by Daniel Stryk	<u>100.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$1,974.50

<b>Catholic Daughters of America Court St. Ann #369 Burse #2</b>	
Previously reported	\$10,983.99
Donation in memory of Marjorie Steffek by CDA Court St. Ann #369	<u>25.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$11,008.99

<b>St. Anthony of Padua Church, Palacios</b>	
Previously reported	\$2,415.00
Donation by Deacon and Mrs. Mike Vieira	<u>100.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$2,515.00

<b>Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Burse #7</b>	
Previously reported	\$8,765.00
In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters' birthday by	
Roy and Loretta Hardcastle	25.00
Bob and Louise Pesek	70.00
Liz Keepers	100.00
Gene and Gertrude Janak	100.00
Martha Sitka	25.00
Jerry Mikeska	50.00
La Rose Svab	15.00
Rudy and Theresa Bordovsky	20.00
Dennis and Barbara Janak	50.00
Geraldine Janak	40.00
Geraldine Taylor	100.00
Jerry and Margaret Kallus	20.00
Arlyn and Mary Carol Strauss	20.00
Anthony and Joan Corte	25.00
James and Mary Honish	10.00
Rita Wachel	100.00
Mrs. A.R. Wearden and James Wearden	25.00
Josie Zappe	50.00
In memory of Francis Kallus by Michael and Janice Jares	50.00
In memory of Francis Kallus by Leon and Margaret Steffek	<u>10.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$9,670.00

<b>Holy Rosary Parish – Hostyn Burse #2</b>	
Previously reported	\$325.00
Donation in honor of Cyril and Mary Muras' 50th wedding anniversary by Eugene and Henrietta Veselka	<u>25.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$350.00

<b>Knights of Columbus Holy Family Victoria Council #9088</b>	
Previously reported	\$3,190.00
In memory of George Matula by KofC Holy Family #9088	<u>100.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$3,290.00

**Pray for  
Priestly and Religious  
Vocations**

## Did You Know .... There Are Two Funds For Education Of Seminarians?

The Diocese of Victoria has two funds available to educate our seminarians. Many of you know the diocese has a Seminary Burses Fund. The contributions to the burses are published monthly in *The Catholic Lighthouse*. What you probably don't know is that the Seminary Burses Fund is a permanent endowment fund. This means that only the interest generated from the investment of these funds may be used to offset the cost of educating seminarians. With a current balance of \$1,600,000, the Seminary Burses Endowment Fund generates enough to fund the cost of educating one seminarian. Currently, there are ten men studying to

<b>Rev. Dan Morales Seminary Burse in Honor of his Work for Vocations</b>	
Previous Balance	\$3,281.00
In honor of Rev. Dan Morales by Paz and Andrea Morales	<u>25.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	\$3,306.00

Those wishing to begin a burse or to contribute to an existing seminary burse may do so by sending their contributions with the appropriate burse designation to:

Diocese Of Victoria  
**Seminary Burses**  
P. O. Box 4070  
Victoria, Tx 77903

*Happy Birthday!*



**Peter Oscar Amo** is in his pastoral year at Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria. His birthday is December 6. He is from the Diocese of Cape Coast in Ghana. Please show your support for this seminarian by writing to: Peter Oscar Amo, Our Lady of Sorrows Church, 208 W. River, Victoria, TX 77901.



**Deacon Max Landman** is in Theology IV at Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. His birthday is December 30. Please show your support for this seminarian by writing to: Max Landman, Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43235

become priests for the Diocese of Victoria. The cost of educating the other nine men has to be paid through the Diocesan Services Appeal or the Education of Seminarians Fund explained below. In order for the Seminary Burses Fund to cover all of the expenses of educating our current seminarians, the yield on the Seminary Burses Fund investments would need to be about 22 percent. Of course, this is not possible in today's low rate environment.

In 2008, as a result of a generous bequest, the diocese established a 2nd fund called "Education of Seminarians Fund". All of the monies donated to this fund, as well as the earnings, are available to cover the cost of educating seminarians. The proceeds of the special collection on Holy Thursday are deposited into the Education of Seminarians Fund. The majority of the cost of educating the seminarians since 2008 has been paid from this fund. From 2008 through 2014, the Education of Seminarians Fund provided funds in excess of \$2,000,000 for the education of the seminarians. Without this fund, the goal for the annual Diocesan Services Appeal (DSA) would have been much higher.

The Diocese of Victoria is grateful for the continued support of the Seminary Burses. However, in the future you might want to consider making contributions to the Education of Seminarians Fund. If this fund continues to grow, the need to fund the cost of educating our seminarians through the DSA will continue to be minimal.



**NEW Website!**  
[www.pathwayswithpatti.com](http://www.pathwayswithpatti.com)

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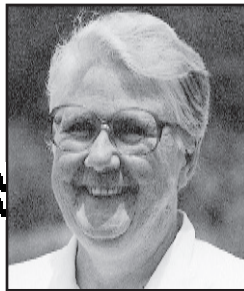
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**Port Lavaca, TX 77979**  
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## SISTERLY THOUGHTS

by Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



### Change, Change, Change

So many things are changing in our Church and society about us. The activities which accompany the season of Advent and Christmas brings a new level of busyness to our already hectic lives. We've been occupied with the Pope's visit and his homilies; we're waiting for the outcome of the Synod on the Family; we're still in the Year of Consecrated Life which ends on February 2 while we're beginning the Year of Mercy on the Feast of the Immaculate Conception. So, reaping the rewards of reflection on all these events, when added to all the activity involved in preparation for Christmas, can be challenging. Looking anew at Church teaching through the eyes of Pope Francis might prompt us to see the need of changing the way we think or act. Sometimes I hear people say, "Why can't things stay the same?" or "Why do we always have to change?"

Maybe it will be helpful to take a careful look at the word "change". The internet version of the Merriam-Webster dictionary has 38 definitions of the word "change"

so all that information can be confusing. However, of all the definitions, I like "transform" the best. If we think of ourselves as being transformed (on the way to holiness), by the opportunities that the Church provides through its kaleidoscope of activity and instruction, we may be amazed as to what is humanly possible to accomplish with God's help. Moreover, if we view these opportunities through open eyes of eagerness and expectation, they can become means of grace to transform us beyond our wildest imagination! May this continuing transformation prepare us for our final goal: complete union with our God for all eternity. Meanwhile, may Advent and Christmas be a time of special blessing for all of us.

### Job Posting

#### Safe Environment Associate Director

The Safe Environment Associate Director is responsible for supplementary oversight, operation, and maintenance of the Diocesan Safe Environment Program which includes assistance in training, program operations, background check operations, compliance monitoring and reporting. Position is approximately 85%-90% computer based. Individual must have working knowledge of all Microsoft programs, especially Microsoft Excel and Word. Knowledge of Power Point helpful. Test on computer knowledge will be administered. Prefer individual who is bilingual (read, write and speak) in English and Spanish and has a current working knowledge of the Diocesan Safe Environment Program.

For more information visit  
[victoriadiocese.org](http://victoriadiocese.org)



### Longest Married Contest

#### World Marriage Day - February 14, 2016

Do you know of a couple you think might be the longest married couple in the Diocese of Victoria? If so, please send their names, name of parish, the number of years married, and the date of their sacramental wedding to *The Catholic Lighthouse* by January 15, 2016! Also, include submitter's contact information. In honor of the World Day of Marriage, an announcement will feature the couple in *The Catholic Lighthouse* February 2016 issue.

#### Youth Office Names Associate Director

Ryan Leos has been an employee of the Diocese of Victoria Youth Office for 2 years. He is a native of Victoria and is a 2011 graduate of St. Joseph High School. He is currently a student at Victoria College where he is pursuing an Associates of Applied Science Degree. Ryan was involved with Life teen at Our Lady of Sorrows throughout Jr. High and High School and was a core member for life teen at Our Lady of Sorrows. He shares, "working with youth was something that I always enjoyed, I never thought I would be put in a position to lead teens throughout the Diocese. When ministering to the youth I try to tell them things I wish someone would have told me when I was there age."



#### To Love as God Loves

The Diocese of Victoria's 1-day marriage preparation program designed for couples 40 years of age and older, couples seeking convalidation of their civil marriages, and couples entering a second marriage. Dates for 2016 are: February 7, May 1 and September 25, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Holy Family Church. For more information, contact the Office of the Chancellor at (361) 573-0828 or visit [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org).

Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.

*The Chancery will be closed for the Christmas and New Year Holidays, 11:30 a.m., Dec. 23 - Jan. 1 and will reopen Jan. 4 at 8:30 a.m.*

#### Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year

#### Feliz Navidad y un Feliz Año Nuevo

#### Giáng sinh vui vẻ và năm mới hạnh phúc

#### Veselé Vánoce a Šťastný Nový Rok

#### Frohe Weihnachten und ein glückliches neues Jahr

#### Wesołych Świąt i Szczęśliwego Nowego Roku

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## Diocese of Victoria Pastoral Institute Extended Program Sacraments of Initiation - The Journey Continues

The Pastoral Institute Extended Program provides adult Catholics the opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith by offering courses on pertinent subjects. Beginning Tuesday, January 5, 2016, the Reverend Bob Knippenberg, pastor of Holy Family Church in Wharton, will teach two six-week courses pertaining to the sacraments. Classes will be offered mornings from 9:15 - 11:30 a.m. and 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. at the following places Holy Family-Wharton, St. Roch-Mentz, Sacred Heart-Hallettsville, and at the Chancery in Victoria.



*Father Bob Knippenberg*

The sacraments are the source of our life in Christ or, as the Catechism of the Catholic Church puts it, "The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us (n. 1131)." In the first six-week course: Sacraments of Initiation, Father Bob will examine grace and the first sin, our responsibilities toward the sacraments, material things as instruments of grace, and what is meant by "efficacious signs of [sanctifying] grace." He will continue by examining the Sacraments of Initiation: Baptism, Confirmation, and Eucharist; the theology of the sacrament, the origins of the sacrament, and the way in which the sacrament is practiced in the Catholic Church.

In the second six-week course the Sacraments of Healing: 1) Reconciliation and 2) Anointing of the Sick and the Sacraments

### Pope Francis Announces the Jubilee of Mercy

*Continued from pg. 1*

mercy, with which we are all called to give comfort to every man and every woman of our time. Do not forget that God forgives all, and God forgives always. Let us never tire of asking forgiveness. Let us henceforth entrust this Year to the Mother of Mercy, that she turn her gaze upon us and watch over our journey: our penitential journey, our year-long journey with an open heart, to receive the indulgence of God, to receive the mercy of God.

of Vocation: 1) Matrimony and 2) Holy Orders will be studied.

The overall objective of these courses is to lead the students into an intimate relationship with Jesus Christ, who is "the key, the center and the purpose of the whole of human history" (Gaudium et spes, n. 10) by helping them more intimately encounter the Christ of the sacraments and the liturgical life of the Church.

For more information call Christella Alvarez at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2225 or Margaret Pruett at ext. 2223. Online registration is available at [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org).



**By Father Gabriel Espinosa, pastor  
Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria**

## Advent the Season of Silence

The Season of Advent though brief, is essential for us to prepare our souls. One simply has to look at all of the violence, the wars, the suffering and senseless degradation of humanity to realize that we need the presence of God more than ever. Advent allows us time to slow down, and reflect on the sacred event that has taken place. God in the person of Jesus Christ comes down to be with his people. He chooses to wrap himself in our humanity. The beautiful world that God has created has become so messy and broken, but it is this same world that he visits; not as an outsider, but to experience as we do. He allows himself to be limited and does not seek an unfair advantage for himself. Advent permits us the opportunity to ponder what the season really entails.

Caryll Houselander the English Mystic, speaks of Advent as the Season of silence, the seed, growth and darkness. We certainly see the days growing shorter and are enveloped by the darkness. As a result, things become quieter. Nature begins to shed her vestments of lush green foliage and trees begin to discard their leaves. There is a starkness in nature as things begin to gradually wither and die. Within the small dark space of Mary's

womb, the Divine Seed of God grows in silence. He develops as all babies do; and Mary must wait as all mothers must wait. Operating on faith, Mary must go about living her life and preparing for the birth of Jesus. "Breaking and eating the bread, drinking the wine of the country, she gave him his flesh and blood; she prepared the Host for the Mass. This time of Advent is absolutely essential to our contemplation too. If we have truly given our humanity to be changed into Christ, it is essential to us that we do not disturb this time of growth."

"It is a time of darkness, of faith. We shall not see Christ's radiance in our lives yet; it is still hidden in our darkness; nevertheless, we must believe that He is growing, in our lives; we must believe it so firmly that we cannot help relating everything, literally everything, to this almost incredible reality." (Houselander, *The Reed of God*, pp. 56-57). Preparation must take place for us to truly welcome God within our hearts. Advent allows us the time to be still, and to reflect on the light that comes to fill our darkness. And as we move closer to celebrating the birth of the son of God, may his holy light, fill us all with the warm radiance of his grace.



**VS.**



## What Is Christmas Anyway?

**By Sr. Digna Vela, IWBS**

Snowmen, reindeer, Santa Claus, shop 'til you drop! What will you do this Christmas to remind yourself, family, neighbors and community about what Christmas is really about, what Christmas means to you?

Every year I feel sad during Advent as I watch the world around me prepare for Christmas. As I take a trip around the city to enjoy the lights and decorations,

visit the mall, or watch the Christmas parade, I feel disappointed that there are few if any signs that this is a Christian feast day celebrating the birth of Jesus, the Son of God and our Savior. I ask myself, what does a snowman or reindeer have to do with Christmas? Are there so few Christian homes in our city? I am even disappointed in the wonderful Hallmark Christmas shows; they seldom if ever mention Jesus or God. Has Christmas truly become a secular winter holiday? What can I/we do about this?

We can begin by decorating our yards and homes with religious Christmas symbols that remind everyone around us about the real meaning of Christmas. How we treat people during these frantic, hectic days before Christmas will be a visible witness of our Christian faith. Those of us who are parents or grandparents can read and talk about the Christmas story with our children and grandchildren; they are not hearing the story in the public schools.

It is equally important to prepare our own hearts to celebrate this important feast day, the birth of Jesus our savior. All of us can spend time in prayer each day reading Scripture and meditating on the great mystery of God becoming incarnate, becoming a human being like us. Visiting a shut-in or a sick person will bring them Christmas cheer and do wonders for our spirit and enrich our spiritual lives. Donating food, clothes, or gifts to those who really need them can make such a difference and also fill our hearts with so much joy.

Yes, Christmas is a Christian feast, and a very important one, too. How am I going to celebrate it this year?



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**BISHOP CELEBRATES MASS WITH CDA**—Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court St. Ann #369 Memorial Mass was celebrated recently by Bishop Brendan Cahill. Bishop Cahill is pictured above with court officers, left to right, Dorothy Boehm, financial secretary; Claudia Schoener, recording secretary; Bernice Fabian, treasurer; Sr. Louise Marie Jones, spiritual adviser; Joan Schramek, ceremonial coordinator; and Kathryn Ormsby, regent.



**OLV BALLOON ROSARY**—Our Lady of Victory Catholic School sixth grade class released a Balloon rosary in November, as part of the school's monthly praying of the rosary. The rosary that measured 155 feet long, was made up of blue and white helium balloons and a cross. Students, teachers and parents watched in reverend awe as the rosary floated over the school campus and formed into a V letter then passing the campus went back to a line of balloons.

## Seeking Insurance Sales Agent

The Catholic Union of Texas, the KJT is looking for an individual in the Yoakum area to join their family as a KJT Insurance Sales Agent. The KJT Agents work with both prospective and current members to help identify their financial needs and recommend appropriate solutions to their life insurance and/or retirement needs. A sales career with The Catholic Union of Texas, the KJT offers you the ability to earn competitive commissions as well as the flexibility that other positions may not offer while serving your local parish and community. They assist their agents with all training as well as licensing.

For more details, please contact David Wagner by  
email: [insurance@kjt.net](mailto:insurance@kjt.net) or  
call: 1-800-245-8182



**KJT**  
Catholic Union of Texas



Diocesan Catholic principals attending the Region X Leadership Forum were, Gwen Edwards, St. Philip in El Campo, Sister Laura Toman, Our Lady of Victory in Victoria, Inez Kucera, Holy Cross in Bay City, Bill McArdle, St. Joseph High School in Victoria, Carolanne McAfee, St. Michael in Weimar, Sister Evelyn Korenek, Nazareth Academy in Victoria, Rosanne Gallia, St. Rose in Schulenburg, Kevin Haas, Sacred Heart in Hallettsville, Theresa Dent, Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca, Jennifer Saenz, St. Michael in Cuero, John Quarry, School Superintendent and John O'Leary, St. Anthony in Columbus.

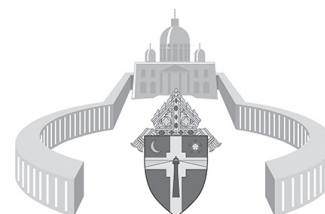
## Leadership Forum Attended by School Administrators

FORT WORTH—The American Airlines Training Center, Fort Worth, was the host site of our Region X Leadership Forum (biennial) held for administrators in the Catholic schools of Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Texas. The featured speaker for the two-day gathering was Sister Patricia McCormack, IHM. Sister Pat is an international formation education consultant, who holds a doctorate in private school administration with a focus on parenting. Currently Dr. McCormack is

director of the IHM Office of Formative Support for Parents and Teachers, Arlington, Virginia. Her talks centered on the parents' collaborative role with our school teams in the education of their children. Sister Pat kept the full house entertained with humor, anecdotal stories from her teaching days, heartfelt appreciation for the job that educators do in our Catholic schools, and tips and food for thought to make us all better, more caring and compassionate educators.

## Diocese of Victoria

### Ninth Annual Catholic Knowledge Bowl



Sunday, February 21, 2016  
Our Lady of Victory - Gym  
1309 E. Mesquite Lane, Victoria  
1:30 - 4:30 p.m.

**Free CKB T-Shirts for the first  
5 teams officially registered!**

**Register Online: [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org)**

**Deadline: February 11, 2016**

**Also for study questions/answers,  
along with the complete rules and procedures.**

**\$25.00 per team**

**Three divisions - four persons per team:**

**Adult teams:** consist of all members over the age of 18

**Teen teams:** consist of youth 13 to 18 years of age, who are in school

**Family teams:** consist of at least one child with adult family members

**\* Payment Must Accompany Registration for  
Team to be Officially Registered**





Diocesan members of the Holy Equestrian Order of Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem met recently in Austin. Top right picture, newly invested Sir Richard Allen Evans and Lady Karen Elizabeth Evans, with Bishop Brendan J. Cahill; top left, members promoted were Sir Otto N. Bleier, Lady Joan C. Bleier, Bishop Cahill, Lady JoAnn Jalufka. Above group photo of those attending, Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters, Lady Joan, Sir Otto, Lady Karen, Bishop Cahill, Sir Richard, Lady Joyce B. Morris, Sir Joseph J. Morris, Sr., Lady JoAnn, and Sir Daniel Jalufka.

## Holy Sepulchre Members Attend Annual Meeting and Investiture

AUSTIN—The Southwestern Lieutenancy of the Holy Equestrian Order of Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem held its Annual meeting and Investiture in Austin, Texas from October 16-19, 2015. The meeting began with a Mass and rosary at St. Mary Cathedral. The principal celebrant was the Most Reverend Joe S. Vásquez, STL, D.D, bishop of Austin. The memorial, promotion and vigil service took place Saturday afternoon at St. John Neumann Church. Bishop Vásquez was the principal celebrant and homilist with concelebrants of the order.

From the Diocese of Victoria, the members promoted were The Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill, KC\*HS, Sir Otto N. Bleier, KC\*HS, Lady Joan C. Bleier, LC\*HS, Lady JoAnn Jalufka, LGCHS. Also, Sir Charles A. Kutchka, Sr., KGCHS, Lady Margot R., Kutchka, LGCHS who were unable to attend. That evening a black – tie reception and dinner was held. Following the dinner, exposition, night prayer and an all-night adoration was held in the hotel.

The Southwestern Lieutenancy annual meeting took place Sunday morning at the hotel. As in the past, it was reported that the Lieutenancy will send \$1,000,000 to the Holy Land for the tenth consecutive year. This contribution helps to support schools, churches, hospitals, seminaries,

and universities to preserve Christianity in the Holy Land. Only a very small percent of the population is Christian.

The Mass and rite of solemn investiture ceremony was Sunday afternoon at St. John Neumann Church. The principal celebrant and homilist was The Most Rev. Michael Sheehan, Archbishop Emeritus of Santa Fe, New Mexico. There were two investees from the Diocese of Victoria, Sir Richard Allen Evans, KHS and Lady Karen Elizabeth Evans, LHS, members of St. Mary's Church, Victoria. A white – tie reception and dinner was Sunday evening for members and spouses. Archbishop Emeritus Sheehan, spoke at the banquet, in his talk he noted for the first time in 2,000 years Mosul, Iraq has not celebrated Mass.

The meeting ended October 19 with a Mass. The principal celebrant was Most Rev. Daniel E. Garcia, DD., Auxiliary Bishop of Austin with other priests concelebrating.

Also attending from the Diocese of Victoria were Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters, KCHS, Sir Daniel Jalufka, KC\*HS, Sir Joseph J. Morris, Sr., KGCHS and Lady Joyce B. Morris, LGCHS.

The next Annual meeting and Investiture will be October 14-17, 2016, in Little Rock, Arkansas.

## IWBS Celebration of Consecrated Life

HALLETTSVILLE—As part of the Year of Consecrated Life, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament invited everyone to come to Hallettsville to “Come and See Who We are and What we do”. The event began with Mass at 10:30 a.m. at Sacred Heart Church celebrated by Bishop Brendan Cahill with Msgr. John Peters and Father Barnabas Kyeah concelebrating. Sisters who are from Hallettsville participated in various roles in the celebration, including reflections given by a couple of them. The Sisters led the music and began Mass with a hymn, “Wake the World with Dawning Joy,” a composition based on the words of Pope Francis to Religious introducing the Year of Consecrated Life. The final hymn was one composed by one of the Sisters, “My Name is Congregation.”

The Sisters prepared more than 20 exhibits in the school showing “Who They are and What they Do.” There were displays of all kinds, articles from their

mission in Africa, posters, books they have published, the various ministries they are in; there were six PowerPoint presentations and videos; door prizes were also given.

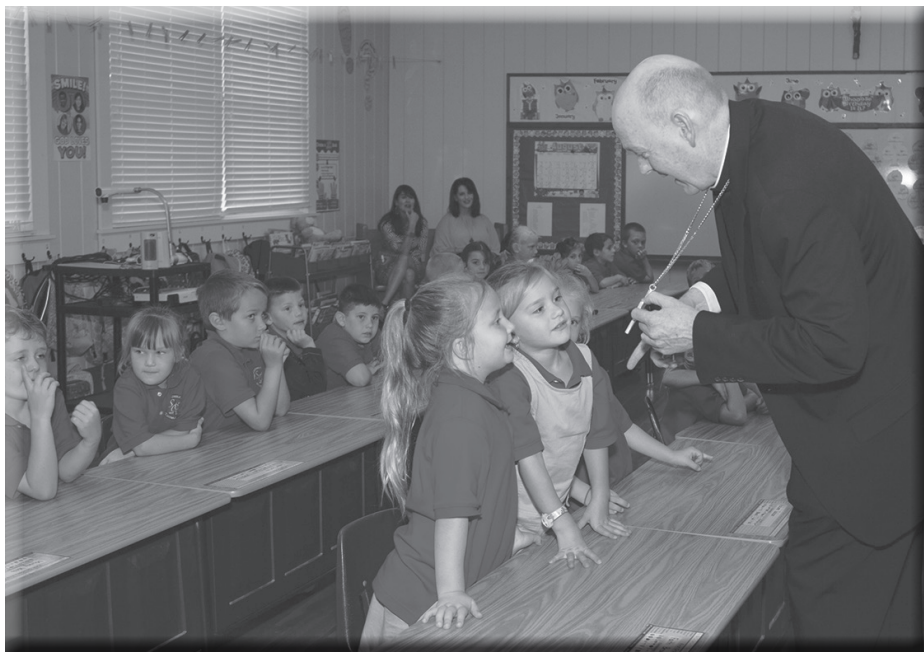
Associates of the Incarnate Word and Serra Northwest assisted in many ways with the celebration. Some of the Ser-rans even learned some of the history of the Sisters and made a beautiful timeline of their history with many stories and pictures. The hallway in the school led the guests into the cafeteria, which was beautifully arranged and decorated.



(left) Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated Mass along with Msgr. John Peters, Father Barnabas Kyeah. (bottom left) Sisters of The Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament attending the Mass. (bottom right) Sister Stephana Marbach explains the history of the Sisters to visitors in the school halls.







**INTRIGUING MINDS**—Bishop Brendan Cahill recently visited Shiner Catholic School. As he went visiting the different classrooms answering questions, these young girls were very interested in his cross that he wears as a bishop.

### *A Parent's Prayer for Their Children*

O Heavenly Father, I commend my children unto Thee. Be Thou their God and Father; and mercifully supply whatever is wanting in me through frailty or negligence. Strengthen them to overcome the corruptions of the world, to resist all solicitations to evil, whether from within or without; and deliver them from the secret snares of the enemy. Pour Thy grace into their hearts, and confirm and multiply in them the gifts of Thy Holy Spirit, that they may daily grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ; and so, faithfully serving Thee here, may come to rejoice in Thy presence hereafter. Amen

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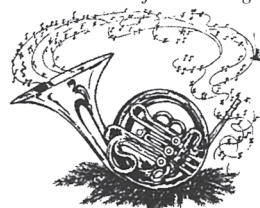
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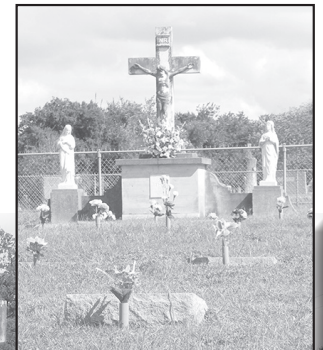
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**COMMUNITY PROJECT**—On November 1, the Diocese of Victoria, Youth and Young Adult Office along with Youth Leadership Team gathered for their monthly meeting. The focus of this month's meeting was service. That day 40 participants helped clean up and put flowers at the Catholic Cemetery No. 3, where many of the priests and religious sisters are buried. They also went and spent time with the residents at Twin Pines Nursing and Rehab; there they played games with the residents and were able to engage in conversation and take a few lessons from the residents.



Above runners taking off to the starting sound of a "Shiner Hobo" trumpeter (left) playing "When the Saints Come Marching In". Bishop Brendan Cahill (left) approaches the finish line after completing the 5k. Above right, one of our youngest runners at the finish line.



**RUNNING FOR AWARENESS**—The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Victoria joined together to support and promote our faith in our communities on November 14, 2015, by hosting a 5K and 1 mile run/walk at Riverside Park in Victoria. Participants donated non-perishable food items to the local food banks that were dispersed back into the community. Thank you to all generous sponsors and participation by parents, students, and the community. The 5K/ and 1 mile run/walk was a great success!!





Wendy Eggert, director • Ryan Leos, associate director  
ym@victoriadiocese.org • (361) 573-0828 • [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org)

## Calendar of Events

### 2015

December 10 – Foundations – Prayer and Worship

December 13 – YLT - Ganado

### 2016

January 9-10 – YLT retreat (Cooper Farms)

February 4 – Foundations – Justice and Service

February 28 – Youth Spectacular-El Campo

March 3 – Ethics and Crisis Management – Policy and Procedures

March 6 – Confirmation Retreat (Watch website for updates)

March 11-13 – Abbey Youth Fest (See website for registration)

April 3 – Confirmation Retreat (Watch website for updates)

April 7 – Foundations – Retreat Formation

April 24 – Camp David Planning

June 12-14 – Camp David (Jr. High Session 1)

June 15 – Camp David (Elementary Session)

June 15-17 – Camp David (Jr. High Session 2)

June 20-23 – D-Week

July 9-17 – Rocky Mountain High



**COLLECTION FOR VETERANS**—St. Philip School in El Campo, recently collected items for the Michael DeBakey Hospital as a Veterans Day service project. A total of 1,925 items were collected by students to be delivered to the Veterans!



**SCHOOL VISITS**—Bishop Brendan Cahill came to celebrate the Mass with the students at St. Anthony School in Columbus on Friday, November 13. Following Mass Bishop Cahill visited classrooms, Mrs. Sharon Hajovsky's second grade class.

### Reporting Abuse

*If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by a member of the clergy or other church personnel, you can register a complaint.*

- Call the bishop or the chancellor at the Chancery at (361) 573-0828; **or**
- Call Fr. Gary Janak (361) 575-4741 or Sr. Emilie Eilers (361) 575-7111, Coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach; **or**
- Mark your letter "Personal and Confidential". Write to: Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill, Diocese of Victoria, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903.

We will also help you bring your concerns to Church officials outside the diocese if the abuse occurred elsewhere and you now reside in the Diocese of Victoria. If you are unsure about bringing forth a complaint or need more information, please contact: Fr. Gary Janak at (361) 575-4741.

### Reporting Child Abuse Hotline • 1 (800) 252-5400 • [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org)

If you know or suspect a child or person has been abused or mistreated, you are required to report it to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or to a law enforcement agency within 48 hours.

If the person is in immediate danger, call 911.



**VOCATION DAYS**—On November 3 and 4, 2015, some 200-plus fifth graders from the Catholic Schools in the diocese attended Church Vocation Awareness Days at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. The students heard a number of talks about religious life and the priesthood. They visited the Gift Shop and the Hall of Memories at the convent. The day culminated with a Prayer Service that highlights the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Pictured at the top, Sr. Amata Hollas gives the history of the order in the Hall of Memories; middle picture, Sr. Laura Toman talks to students about missionary work in Africa; bottom picture, students attend a prayer service in the chapel.



The Vocation Awareness Days are sponsored by the Victoria Diocesan Vocation Office, the Serra Club of Victoria, the Knights of Columbus Council #1329, the Catholic Daughters of Court St. Ann #369 and the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.





**BLANCHARD SIBLINGS CELEBRATE**—Celebrating fifty or more years of their wedding anniversaries are (left-right) Mary and Charles Sheblak, Claudia and Ted Sheblak, Stella and Bernard Blanchard, Olivia and Mark Blanchard, Adelene and Francis Blanchard (Mary, Claudia, Bernard, Mark and Francis are siblings.) The youngest sibling, Mark and, his wife, Olivia celebrated their golden anniversary on November 25. Claudia, Ted, Olivia and Mark attend Holy Family in Victoria; Mary, Charles, Adelene and Francis are members of St. Agnes in Edna; and Stella and Bernard are parishioners of St. Catherine of Sienna in Austin.



**MINUTE OF SILENCE**—On November 11, 2015, there was a Veterans Day Parade and ceremony in Downtown Victoria. The Nazareth Academy (NA) band marched in the parade. After the parade a ceremony was held at 11:00 a.m. that began with a minute of silence. Memorial wreaths were laid by patriotic groups. The NA choir performed on the Courthouse steps and Mrs. Garay's 2nd grade class led the Pledge of Allegiance.



**ST. MICHAEL SCHOOL, WEIMAR HONORS VETS**—The students of St. Michael Catholic School in Weimar honored the veterans on Veterans Day with a special prayer service to thank them for their service to our country. The sixth grade students performed a special song with bell chimes and then the fifth and eighth grade students led a special patriotic rosary. Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts presented the colors and led the Pledge of Allegiance.



**KC'S GIVING BACK**—Recently the Knights of Columbus presented Bishop Brendan Cahill a check for his programs in continuing education for priests, extension of lay ministry and evangelization. The money comes from a charities goal that Knights of Columbus meet each year. Every council is encouraged to meet or exceed their charities goal in order to give back to the Diocese of Victoria. It is suggested that seventy-five percent collected be for the Diocese and the remaining twenty-five percent go back to the Knights of Columbus State Council for their programs, such as student education grants, Catholic school grants and more. Presenting Bishop Cahill the check is Alvin Kulcak, Knights of Columbus Diocesan Deputy.

Below, Patrick Gurski speaks at OLV celebration with veterans seated in the back. Right, a vet salutes.



## OLV Veterans Day Celebration

On November 12, the National Junior Honor Society of Our Lady of Victory Catholic School hosted a Veterans Day Celebration. Students, parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins gathered in the school gym to honor 33 OLV family veterans present at the celebration. The Our Lady of Victory Boy Scout Troop 364 provided the color guard for the assembly. They performed a ceremony for the flags of each of the military branches that recognized the veterans from each branch. The guest speaker was Patrick Gurski. He is a member of the Army National Guard and currently works as a prosecutor for the Victoria County District Attorney's Office. The program included a special and

very moving presentation known as the "POW/MIA Table Setting For One." The symbolic manner in which a small, round table set for one, but never occupied, is a tradition started after the Vietnam War and is intended to help us commemorate our fallen and missing heroes who cannot be present at events such as these. Seventh grader Andres Ramos and Jory Stevens played taps during the ceremony. Students sang patriotic songs as they waved their American flags. A reception followed for the veterans and their families. Students made thank you cards for the veterans. The NJHS members created a Wall of Honor display of contributed photos of current and deceased veterans.





**KC'S PRESENT AWARDS**—On October 20, the Knights of Columbus #1329 and Catholic Daughters Court St. Ann #369 held their Annual Awards Banquet. Knights of the Quarter were Joe Rainosek, Frank Nevlud, Richard Gutierrez and Kevin Pfister. Frank Nevlud was awarded Knight of the Year. Families of the Quarter were awarded to Robert and Lisa Stryk, Pete and Susanna Moya, Richard and Selina Gutierrez and Larry and Kathy Ormsby. The Family of the Year was awarded to Pete and Susanna Moya. From left to right, Knight of the Year, Frank Nevlud; Family of the Year, Susanna and Pete Moya and Donny Shellenbarger, Grand Knight.



A Mass was celebrated on November 1, for Día de Los Muertos at Resurrection Catholic Cemetery, Victoria. Bishop Cahill presided over the Mass along with the priests from Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Victoria. Youth from the church dressed as various saints. After the Mass, families went to the gravesites of their loved ones and waited as priests and deacons came to bless the graves. About 350 people were present that afternoon.

## What is Día de Los Muertos?

Día de Los Muertos, also known as Day of the Dead is celebrated throughout Mexico and the Catholic world including Italy, Spain, South America and the Philippines who all celebrate All Souls and All Saints Day on November 1 and 2. A significant tradition of Día De Los Muertos involves making an altar that the

deceased friends or family members can enjoy. These private altars called ofrendas, typically have a picture of the person who died and are decorated with the things that the person liked. Many altars are also decorated with a holy cross, pan de muerto, paper skulls, papel picado, and beautiful marigold flowers.



**NATIONAL READING WEEK**—Friday, November 13, Superintendent, John Quarry joined the students from Nazareth Academy along with other community leaders for National Young Reader's Week.

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## En la Diócesis de Victoria.....

### El Centro Emaús: La Consejería en el Marco de la Tradición Católica

El 8 de diciembre de 2015, a las 2:00 p.m. la Diócesis de Victoria tendrá una ceremonia para la apertura de su centro Católico de asesoramiento, El Centro Emaús: La Consejería en el Marco de la Tradición Católica.

Todos están invitados a asistir a este evento con el Obispo Brendan Cahill, Padre Gary Janak y la Diócesis de Victoria. El Centro Emaús se encuentra en el edificio de oficinas Laurent Towers, 1908 N. Laurent Street, Suite 140, en Victoria, Texas.

La misión del Centro Emaús es ayudar a otros en su camino de la vida, especialmente durante los tiempos de dolor, angustia psicológica y inestabilidad. Asesoramiento en español no se ofrece todavía pero será en el future.

El Año de la Misericordia también comienza el 8 de diciembre, para los católicos. Obispo Cahill espera que el Centro Emaús ofrecerá un lugar donde reciben la fuerza y el apoyo que necesitan.

### La tradición de las Posadas



#### Las Iglesias en la Diócesis de Victoria celebrando la tradición de las Posadas:

- Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bay City
- Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria
- St. Robert Bellarmine, El Campo
- El Presidio La Bahia, Goliad

La tradición de las Posadas se celebra en México y en otros países Latinos. Esta tradición tuvo su origen en 1587 en San Agustín de Acolman, un poblado en el noreste de México, cuando Fray Diego de Soria obtuvo del papa Sixto V un permiso para la celebración en la Nueva España de unas misas llamadas “de aguinaldos”. Se consistían en nueve misas en las cuales se concedía indulgencia plenaria a quienes cumplieran con dicho novenario.

Las Posadas empiezan el dieciséis de diciembre y continúan cada noche hasta el veinticinco. En procesión se reza un misterio del rosario (o los cinco), luego se cantan en latín las letanías a la Sma. Virgen, para finalizar con el canto para pedir posada. Se pueden vestir a dos infantes de María y José o llevar el misterio (figuras de la Virgen y San José) en una charola, encabezando la procesión.

Cada noche hay una celebración. Estas fiestas recuerdan el peregrinaje de María y José desde su salida de Nazaret hasta Belén, donde buscan un lugar para alojarse y esperar el nacimiento del niño Jesús. Se reúnen para visitar varias casas (casi siempre de un amigo íntimo o de otros parientes). Llevando velas y cantando “¿Tienes alojamiento?”, andan a la puerta principal. El amo les canta, “Se vayan. Ésta no es una posada. Es tarde, y les darán una paliza a ustedes si no salen. Después de más estrofas, le convencer de la “importancia” de los viajeros, y él los canta, “Es un honor.” Se abre la puerta principal, y hay mas cantar y regocijar.

Dentro de la casa, les dan a los niños aguinaldos, bolsas llenas de galletas, caramelos y juguetitos. Aunque el carácter de los desfiles y canciones es solemne y religioso, las posadas concluyen en festividades con bocados, bebidas, bailes y el quebrar de la piñata. Las posadas son un medio para preparar con alegría y oración nuestro corazón para la venida de Jesucristo, y para recordar y vivir los momentos que pasaron José y María antes del Nacimiento de Jesús.

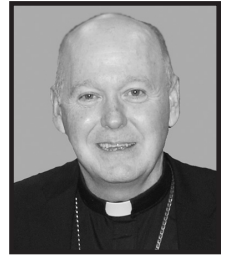
### El Papa Francisco Anuncia El Año Santo de la Misericordia

Queridos hermanos y hermanas, he pensado con frecuencia de qué forma la Iglesia puede hacer más evidente su misión de ser testigo de la misericordia. Es un camino que inicia con una conversión espiritual; y tenemos que recorrer este camino. Por eso he decidido convocar un Jubileo extraordinario que tenga en el centro la misericordia de Dios. Será un Año santo de la misericordia. Lo queremos vivir a la luz de la Palabra del Señor: «Sed misericordiosos como el Padre» (cf. Lc 6, 36). Esto especialmente para los confesores: ¡mucha misericordia!

Este Año santo iniciará con la próxima solemnidad de la Inmaculada Concepción y se concluirá el 20 de noviembre de 2016, domingo de Nuestro Señor Jesucristo Rey del universo y rostro vivo de la misericordia del Padre. Encomiendo la organización de este Jubileo al Consejo pontificio para la promoción de la nueva evangelización, para que pueda animarlo como una nueva etapa del camino de la Iglesia en su misión de llevar a cada persona el Evangelio de la misericordia.

Estoy convencido de que toda la Iglesia, que tiene una gran necesidad de recibir misericordia, porque somos pecadores, podrá encontrar en este Jubileo la alegría para redescubrir y hacer fecunda la misericordia de Dios, con la cual todos estamos llamados a dar consuelo a cada hombre y a cada mujer de nuestro tiempo. No olvidemos que Dios perdona todo, y Dios perdona siempre. No nos cansemos de pedir perdón. Encomendemos desde ahora este Año a la Madre de la misericordia, para que dirija su mirada sobre nosotros y vele sobre nuestro camino: nuestro camino penitencial, nuestro camino con el corazón abierto, durante un año, para recibir la indulgencia de Dios, para recibir la misericordia de Dios.

### Un mensaje de nuestro Obispo Brendan



Queridos hermanos y hermanas,

En consulta con la Comisión Litúrgica Diocesana y el Consejo Presbiteral hemos desarrollado un plan para ayudarnos a celebrar el Año del Jubileo de la Misericordia, del 08 de diciembre de 2015 al 20 de noviembre de 2016. San Agustín enseñó la misericordia de Dios en su comentario sobre el Salmo 51. En parte debido a este comentario escogí la frase “Crea en mí un corazón limpio, Oh Dios” como mi lema episcopal. Mientras nos preparamos para celebrar este gran año de reflexión, renovación y compromiso quiero compartir con ustedes unos pensamientos del comentario de San Agustín.

Primero, ¿quién es el “yo” del Salmo? Por un lado podemos ver que era el rey David, quien reconoció la gravedad de sus pecados y pidió un nuevo comienzo. A la luz de nuestra fe cristiana también podemos entender a esta persona como toda la iglesia, formada en un cuerpo por el Espíritu Santo. Les invito rezar esta oración como la Iglesia de la Diócesis de Victoria - ofrece nuestra vida diaria para la salvación del mundo. Ruego que como pedimos un corazón limpio, nuestro testimonio puede brillar para que todo el mundo vea la belleza y la verdad del amor de Dios para el mundo.

Segundo, el Salmo nos enseña que ningún pecado es demasiado grande para

que Dios pueda perdonarlo y sanar. Me parece que muchas personas sienten obligadas por un pecado pasado, o atrapados en una lucha aparentemente desesperada con un pecado actual. A veces la gente también puede sentir incapaz de perdonar una herida del pasado. Al orar por un corazón limpio, como el Cuerpo unido de Cristo, podemos ser instrumentos de sanación y esperanza para cada persona que encontramos. Más poderosamente en la celebración de la Eucaristía dominical nos ofrecemos diariamente por la santidad de la humanidad y la glorificación de Dios, podemos compartir con todo el mundo el conocimiento, poder y libertad de la misericordia de Dios que nos invita diariamente a un nuevo comienzo.

Con estas esperanzas les presento el siguiente calendario para El Año del Jubileo de la Misericordia:

8 de diciembre de 2015 - Bendición y dedicación del Centro Emaús, Asesoramiento en la Tradición Católica 2pm.

12 de diciembre de 2015 - Bendición de la Puerta Santa de la Misericordia, La Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Victoria, Victoria 5:30pm.

3-4 de marzo de 2016 - 24 Horas de la Misericordia, Sacramento de la penitencia disponible durante 24 horas en iglesias designadas a través de la diócesis.

13 de mayo de 2016 - Invitación participar en la consagración a Jesús por María en el 99 aniversario de la primera aparición de Fátima.

10-12 de noviembre 2016 Curación del Retiro Familiar, Iglesia de la Familia Santa, Victoria

Además de las fechas mencionadas, los siguientes lugares han sido designados de peregrinación del Año Santo de la Misericordia:

Holy Cross, Bay City; Holy Cross, continúa en la página 13







## Columnista Invitado

Por Padre Gabriel Espinosa, pastor  
Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria

El estación de Adviento es breve pero necesario para ofrecernos el tiempo de preparar nuestras almas. Necesitamos la presencia de Dios más que nada; especialmente cuando uno mira la violencia, las guerras, el sufrimiento y la degradación de la humanidad en nuestro tiempo. Adviento nos ofrece la oportunidad ir más despacio y reflejar el evento sagrado que ha ocurrido. Dios en la persona de Jesucristo se baja del cielo para estar con su pueblo. El escoja a involucrarse con nuestra humanidad. El mundo tan bello que Dios creó se ha convertido a un mundo quebrado y sucio; pero este es el mismo mundo que Cristo visita para experimentar como nosotros, no como un forastero. Cristo no toma ventaja por si mismo en su vida terrena porque no lo tenemos nosotros. Cristo desea experimentar una vida limitada lo mismo como nosotros. Durante Adviento tenemos el tiempo a contemplar que nos ofrece esta estación.

La mística Inglesa, Caryl Houselander, dice que el estación de Adviento es uno de silencio, de la semilla, el crecimiento y la oscuridad. Podemos anotar que los días son más cortos y que la noche nos cubra más rápido. Resulta en todo poniéndose más tranquilo y silencio. La naturaleza se quita su follaje verde y los arboles desechan sus hojas. Hay algo severo en la naturaleza cuando el pasto y las matas empiezan a morir.

### Obispo Brenda

continuada de página 12

East Bernard; Holy Cross, Yorktown; and Raphael's Refuge, Flatonía. También estaré alentando devoción y oración al padre Charles Kram, Jr., un ejemplo inspirador del poder de la santidad a través de sufrimiento personal.

Esto es solo el comienzo, más información seguirá durante todo el año y estoy seguro que con la guía del Espíritu Santo habrán otras oportunidades celebrar este año. Consulta el sitio web diocesano ([victoriadiocese.org](http://victoriadiocese.org)) y el Faro Católico para obtener más información de como celebramos este año Santo. Escribo esto con profunda gratitud por su amor que viven todos los días - mantengamos uno al otro en la oración!

+ Brendan

Adentro del espacio oscuro y pequeño del matriz de la virgen, la semilla divina crece en silencio. Cristo desarrolla como todos los bebés; y María espera hasta que él está listo a nacer como cada mamá espera el nacimiento de su propio niño. Con fe, María continúa viviendo su vida normal; preparando por el nacimiento de Jesús. “Partiendo y comiendo el pan, tomando el vino del campo, ella le dio su cuerpo y sangre; y preparó la hostia por la misa. Este tiempo de Adviento también es fundamental a nuestra contemplación. Si hemos dado nuestra humanidad para que se convierta a Cristo, es esencial que no molestemos este tiempo de crecimiento.”

“Es un tiempo de oscuridad y de fe. No vamos a ver el resplandor de Cristo en nuestras vidas todavía; todavía es oculto; sin embargo, necesitamos creer que Él está creciendo en nuestra vida, y creerlo tan firmemente que no podemos faltar asociarlo con todo, literalmente todo a esta realidad increíble.” (Houselander, La Lengüeta de Dios, pp. 56-57). Necesitamos prepararnos con tiempo para hospedar Dios en nuestros corazones. Adviento nos permite el tiempo a tranquilizarnos y pensar a la luz que viene a iluminar nuestra oscuridad. Que la santa luz de Cristo nos reconforta con su gracia en el tiempo que esperamos hasta su nacimiento.

### Oración por el Año de Jubileo

*Abro mi corazón a Tí, el día de hoy,  
Oh Padre Misericordioso - Envía tu  
Espíritu Santo a las profundidades  
de mi ser. Así que de pies a cabeza  
pueda ser un instrumento de tu  
sanación y misericordia.*

*Un Cuerpo y un solo  
Espíritu con mis hermanas y hermanos  
en toda la Diócesis de Victoria.  
Ruego me ayudes a escuchar antes de  
hablar, Para entender antes de  
juzgar, amar antes de actuar. Confío  
en fielmente en la intercesión de  
María, mi Madre. Te lo ruego en el  
nombre de tu Hijo Jesucristo, a quien  
profeso como Señor, que vive y reina  
contigo y el Espíritu Santo, un solo  
Dios por los siglos de los siglos  
Amen.*

## Día de Los Muertos



El 1 de noviembre, se celebró una Misa del Día de Los Muertos en el Cementerio Católico de la Resurrección, en Victoria. Obispo Cahill presidió la Misa junto con los sacerdotes de Nuestra Señora de los Dolores, iglesia católica en Victoria. Jóvenes de la iglesia se disfrazaron de varios santos. Después de la Misa, las familias fueron a las tumbas de sus seres queridos y esperaban que sacerdotes y diáconos vinieran a bendecir las tumbas. Unas 350 personas estaban presentes esa tarde.

### Que es El Día de Los Muertos?

El Día de Los Muertos es una celebración mexicana que honra a los muertos, ésta tradición se arraiga desde la época prehispánica aunque hoy en día incorporan elementos también del catolicismo y hasta toques modernos.

En México el Día de Muertos se festeja durante dos días el día 1 de noviembre, llamado Día de Todos los Santos, es cuando llegan las ánimas de los niños y el 2 de noviembre, el día de Muertos, es cuando llegan los adultos.

Según la tradición, durante la fiesta de Día de Muertos las almas de los difuntos salen del lugar donde se fueron al morir y regresan a visitar a sus seres queridos en la tierra.

En México los altares por lo general tienen tres niveles. Uno simboliza el cielo, otro la tierra y otro el inframundo, niveles que los difuntos deben escalar para llegar

al mundo de los vivos.

Para recibir a sus difuntos la gente coloca altares en donde ofrecen a los muertos las cosas que más les gustaban como su comida favorita, bebidas, dulces, juguetes y flores de cempasúchil (Zempoalxóchitl), que ayudan por su color y olor a trazar las rutas a los muertos.

Como lo marca la tradición la ofrenda se debe colocar el 31 de octubre y nadie la puede tocar, ya que los invitados son los difuntos y son ellos los que inician el convite; después, cuando regresan satisfechos al inframundo, los platillos de la ofrenda deben ser compartidos entre los familiares y amigos.

Los cementerios son un punto muy importante de esta celebración; ya que muchas familias se reúnen con sus muertos en estos sitios que se convierten en un verdadero festín entre familiares amigos.



### Si se le acredita como milagro, la beata Teresa podría ser canonizada el 4 de septiembre

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — En el calendario del Vaticano para el Año de la Misericordia deliberadamente dejaron aparte la fecha del 4 de septiembre de posible celebración en honor de la beata Teresa de Calcuta, siempre y cuando su causa de santidad se haya concluido para entonces. La canonización se llevaría a cabo por el papa Francisco en la Plaza de San Pedro,

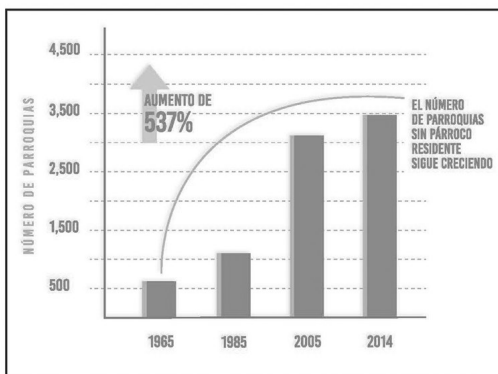
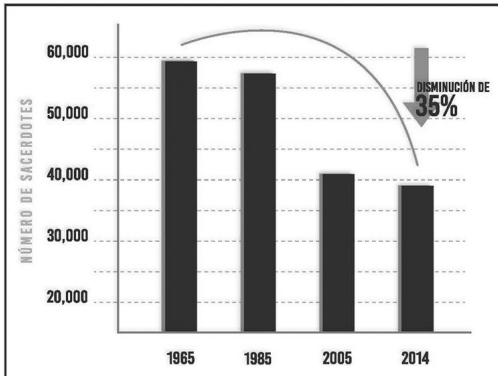
al finalizar tres días de peregrinación de personas, que, como la beata Teresa lo fue, están dedicadas al trabajo corporal de la misericordia. “La fecha del 4 de septiembre se mantiene en hipótesis o plan dentro del calendario del Año de Jubileo”, le dijo al “Catholic News Service” el padre jesuita Federico Lombardi, vocero del Vaticano, el 19 de noviembre.





## MENOS SACERDOTES PARA MÁS CATÓLICOS

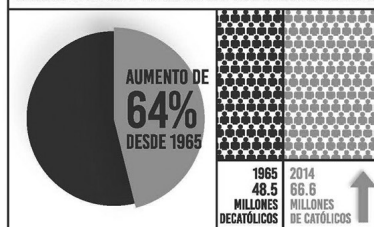
DESDE LA DÉCADA DE LOS 70, LA IGLESIA ESTADOUNIDENSE HA VISTO UNA DISMINUCIÓN CONSTANTE EN EL NÚMERO DE SACERDOTES, MIENTRAS QUE EL NÚMERO DE CATÓLICOS SIGUE CRECIENDO



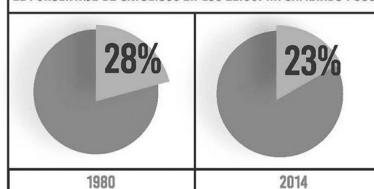
Fuentes: Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate, Georgetown University and Gallup  
© CNS Graphics



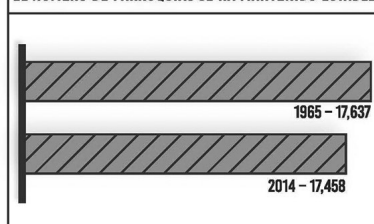
EL NÚMERO DE LOS QUE SE AUTOIDENTIFICAN COMO CATÓLICOS HA CRECIDO



EL PORCENTAJE DE CATÓLICOS EN LOS EE.UU. HA CAMBIADO POCO



EL NÚMERO DE PARROQUIAS SE HA MANTENIDO ESTABLE



## El papa aconseja nuevo obispo tener misericordia, paciencia, homilias cortas

Por Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — Ordenando como obispo auxiliar de Roma a un romano pastor y director espiritual de seminario, el papa Francisco le rogó tener misericordia y ofrecer homilias cortas y claras.

Ordenando al obispo Angelo De Donatis, de 61 años de edad, el 9 de noviembre en la Basílica de San Juan de Letrán, el papa Francisco le recordó al obispo algo que le había dicho anteriormente.

“Deja que tus palabras sean simples de modo que todos puedan entender. No des homilias largas”, dijo el papa. “¡Permíteme pedirte que recuerdes a tu papá y cuán feliz él estaba al haber encontrado otra parroquia en un pueblo cercano donde la Misa era celebrada sin homilía!

“Las homilias deben ser la transmisión de la gracia de Dios. Simples, de modo que todos puedan entenderlas y todos quieran ser mejores personas”, le dijo el papa Francisco al nuevo obispo.

La Misa fue celebrada en la fiesta de la dedicación de la basílica, la cual sirve a la Diócesis de Roma.

Como es costumbre, el papa usó la homilía prescrita para la ocasión por la

conferencia episcopal italiana pero, como lo hace a menudo, él añadió uno cuantos comentarios personales, tales como los del padre del obispo De Donatis.

Después de ungir con aceite al nuevo obispo y darle el Libro de los Evangelios, el papa estaba a punto de entregarle su anillo episcopal, “señal de fidelidad”, pero el papa primero le dijo: “No te olvides: antes de este anillo estaban los anillos matrimoniales de tus padres. ¡Defiende la familia!”.

Durante su homilía, el papa le pidió ser paciente con los sacerdotes, los seminaristas, los pobres y los laicos que vienen buscando ayuda y consejo. “Muchas veces necesitarás mucha paciencia”, dijo el papa, “pero el reino de Dios se edifica de esa manera”.

“Y cerca del comienzo del Año de la Misericordia te pido como hermano ser misericordioso”, dijo el papa. “La iglesia y el mundo necesitan tanta misericordia. Enséñale a los sacerdotes y a los seminaristas el camino de la misericordia con palabras, sí, pero especialmente con tu comportamiento”.

En su misericordia, Dios siempre hace espacio en su corazón para todos, dijo el papa Francisco, de modo que los sacerdotes y los obispos “nunca deberían ahuyentar a nadie”.

## ‘Trato que las películas que hago sean una buena experiencia espiritual’, dice directora de la película ‘33’

Por Mark Pattison  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Patricia Riggen, cineasta mexicanoamericana que dirigió la película por salir “Los 33”, y que trata de los mineros chilenos rescatados en 2010, dijo de la Warner Bros., el estudio en el que se realizó la película, no intentó de ninguna manera debilitar el papel de la fe en la historia de los mineros.

“No fijé ninguna agenda ni di ninguna indicación en Hollywood en cuanto a la forma de presentar esa parte de la historia”, dijo Riggen. “La única orden que tenía en mi corazón era la de presentar la historia bajo el punto de vista de los mineros y escuchar lo que tenían que decir”.

Y añadió ella: “Fui educada en una familia católica. Quiero realizar, y siempre he tratado de hacerlo, películas que lo conviertan a uno en un mejor ser humano. Trato de realizar películas que traigan alguna experiencia espiritual que puedan mejorar nuestro mundo, de hacer lo que el mundo puede llegar a ser, y no el lado oscuro de

los seres humanos. ... Esta película, por supuesto, es una bella historia con la que pude hacer lo que más me gusta”.

En una entrevista llevada a cabo el 30 de octubre, por teléfono, con el “Catholic News Service”, desde Nueva York, en donde Riggen promovía la película, señaló cómo en “Los 33” se pone en evidencia la fe práctica de los mineros.

“La fe de los mineros está presente desde el primer momento en el que entran a la mina. Hay una pequeña estatua de la Virgen María por la que pasan junto. Toca la bocina y rezan, mientras pasan por delante. Y lo hacen todos los días de su vida”, dijo. “Le piden a Dios su protección pues saben que entran a un lugar peligroso”.

Riggen dijo: “Hay una escena en la película que yo llamo ‘la última cena’ en donde todos comparten la última lata de pescado que tenían. Y todos se piden perdón. El valor total de esta cinta es el perdón, junto con la familia y la fe en Dios que yo siento algo muy positivo que transmitirle al mundo. Al final, vemos que



un minero deja un mensaje en el muro que dice: ‘Aquí vivieron 33 mineros. Dios estaba con nosotros’. Y con eso, se termina la película”.

El remate mayor que tenía Riggen era la de conseguir una audiencia con el papa Francisco y los mineros.

“Tenía esta loca idea de que quería mostrarle esta película al Papa, y me dijeron que eso era algo loco, que nunca se lograría, que era imposible de alcanzar; pero en el

mundo de los ‘33’, nada es imposible”, dijo Riggen.

“Escribimos una carta”, y alguien del Vaticano, a nombre del Papa, contestó: “Sí, quiero verla”, dijo Riggen. Y todos pasaron el quinto año del aniversario del rescate, exactamente ese día (14 de octubre), en el Vaticano, saludando de mano al Papa y recibiendo palabras de apoyo.

“Estoy feliz de que les pudimos dar a los mineros ese regalo”.





## Keep Christ in Christmas, fight pressure to conform to world, pope says

By Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Keeping the “Christ” in “Christmas” is part of not giving in to pressure to conform to the “norm” and become like nonbelievers, Pope Francis said in a morning homily.

Giving in to the things of the world is like saying, “Let’s put our ID up for auction. We are the same as everyone,” the pope said.

Celebrating an early morning Mass November 16, Pope Francis warned against the very small, hidden way worldliness takes root in a culture and then leads to apostasy and religious persecution.

In fact, “the liturgy in these final days of the liturgical year” urges people to be careful of the “poisonous roots” that lead people away from God, he said.

The pope focused on the day’s reading from the First Book of the Maccabees in which many “children of Israel” wanted an alliance with the Gentiles in order to be better protected. They abandoned their religious practices and covenant with God, and took to the pagan ways of the Gentiles.

The pope said the reading showed how the king’s order to create one identical people led to apostasy.

“In the history of the church, in history, we have seen — I’m thinking of one example — how the name of religious holidays has been changed — Christmas has

another name, in order to erase identity.”

But this new “humanism” in which differences are not accepted leads to religious persecution, the pope said, as the day’s first reading shows how those who were determined to keep to their religious practices were condemned to death by royal decree.

“It begins with a root, it’s small, and it ends in the abomination of desolation, in persecution. This is the deceit of worldliness,” he said.

Today, too, there is pressure from “this humanism that comes to take the place of the true man, Jesus Christ, that comes to take away our Christian identity and leads us to a single way of thinking: ‘Everyone does it this way, why not us?’”

He said people today must ask themselves, “What is my identity? Christian or worldly? Or do I say I’m a Christian because I was baptized as a baby and I was born in a Christian nation where everyone is a Christian?”

Worldliness seeps into one’s life very slowly and then grows, it seems justified and backed by sound reason, “and in the end it contaminates, and many evils come from there,” he said.

The pope asked that people pray that God protect them from taking on a worldly mentality and the desire to be “normal” and like everyone else. He also asked that the church always keep its identity grounded in Jesus.

## If miracle approved, Blessed Teresa could be canonized Sept. 4

By Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- The Vatican calendar for the Year of Mercy deliberately set aside Sept. 4, 2016, as a possible date for the canonization of Blessed Teresa of Kolkata, if her sainthood cause is concluded by then.

The canonization would be celebrated by Pope Francis in St. Peter’s Square at the end of a three-day pilgrimage of people who, like Blessed Teresa was, are engaged in corporal works of mercy.

“Sept. 4 is a hypothesis or plan within the calendar for the jubilee year,” Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told Catholic News Service Nov. 19.

The Italian news agency AGI reported Nov. 18 that a panel of physicians convoked by the Congregation for Saints’ Causes agreed there was no medical or

natural explanation for the recovery of a Brazilian man suffering from multiple brain tumors. His healing after prayers for the intercession of Blessed Teresa was submitted as the miracle needed for her canonization.

Father Lombardi urged caution, however. “The process is still underway and official communications will be given at the appropriate time.”

Members of the Congregation for Saints’ Causes still must review the physicians’ report on the



*Blessed Teresa of Kolkata, founder of the Missionaries of Charity, is pictured in a 2002 photo. (CNS photo/Thomas Cheng, EPA)*



The Christmas tree is positioned in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican November 19. The tree is an 82-foot spruce fir from Germany’s Bavarian region. It arrived earlier than usual to be ready for the December 8 opening of the Holy Year of Mercy. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

## Vatican Nativity scene, tree to be unveiled early for Year of Mercy

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Christmas tree and Nativity scene in St. Peter’s Square will be set up and unveiled earlier than usual this year to be ready for the opening of the Year of Mercy.

In preparation for the extraordinary event, which begins December 8 with the opening of the Holy Door in St. Peter’s Basilica, Vatican workmen broke through the masonry that had walled off the door.

Cardinal Angelo Comastri, archpriest of the basilica, led a small ceremony that included prayers and a procession November 17, the eve of the anniversary of the basilica’s dedication in 1626.

Four Vatican workmen then used a pickaxe to break through a portion of the wall that covers the Holy Door from inside the basilica. They removed a sealed metal box that, in keeping with tradition, had been embedded in the wall at the end of the Jubilee Year of 2000.

The zinc box, which was opened with a

blowtorch, contained the keys and handles for opening the holy door, commemorative medals and a papal gold coin marking the last Holy Year.

The Vatican also announced November 18 that the traditional tree and Nativity scene that dominate the center of St. Peter’s Square would be ready by December 8, the feast of the Immaculate Conception.

The 82-foot spruce fir comes from Germany’s Bavaria region. The decorations this year were to include painted ceramic ornaments made by children receiving oncological care in a number of Italian hospitals.

The Nativity scene was donated by the northern Italian province of Trent. The 24 life-sized figures carved from wood included Mary, Joseph, the baby Jesus, the Three Magi and a man bending over to help an elderly man in an act of mercy. The surrounding scene and figures were to represent life in the Dolomites in the 1900s.

healing. If the members have no further questions, Pope Francis would be asked to issue a decree recognizing the healing as a miracle worked by God through the intercession of Mother Teresa.

With the decree, the pope would survey the world’s cardinals and set a date for a consistory of cardinals who live in or could come to Rome for the occasion. They would be asked to recommend the

pope canonize Blessed Teresa; if the pope agrees, he would set the date for the ceremony.

AGI had reported the likely date of the canonization would be Sept. 5 -- Mother Teresa’s feast day and the anniversary of her death. However, Sept. 5 is a Monday in 2016 and Father Lombardi said the canonization would not take place on a Monday.





Pope Francis named Msgr. Steven J. Lopes to be the first bishop of the Catholic Church's U.S. ordinariate for former Anglicans living in full communion with the Catholic Church. The appointment of Bishop-designate Lopes, 40, was announced by the Vatican Nov. 24.

## Pope Francis Names First Bishop to Lead Catholics Nurtured in the Anglican Tradition

HOUSTON—Pope Francis has named the Rev. Monsignor Steven J. Lopes to be the first bishop of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter: a structure equivalent to a diocese for Roman Catholics who were nurtured in the Anglican tradition.

The Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter was established by Pope Benedict on Jan. 1, 2012, with its headquarters located in Houston, Texas. Founded to serve Roman Catholics across the U.S. and Canada, it is the first diocese of its kind in North America.

The Ordinariate was created to provide a path for groups of Anglicans to become fully Roman Catholic, while retaining elements of their worship traditions and spiritual heritage in their union with the Holy Roman Church.

Msgr. Jeffrey N. Steenson, the leader of the Ordinariate since 2012, will introduce Bishop-elect Lopes at a live news conference at 10:30 a.m. CST at the Chancery Offices of the Ordinariate, 7730 Westview, Houston, Texas. A telephone news conference for media will also be held at 12 p.m. CST.

With this appointment, Pope Francis affirms and amplifies Pope Benedict's vision for Christian unity, in which diverse expressions of one faith are joined together in the Church. By naming Bishop-elect Lopes, the Pope has confirmed that the Ordinariate is a permanent, enduring

part of the Catholic Church, like any other diocese — one that is now given a bishop so that it may deepen its contribution to the life of the Church and the world.

Bishop Lopes' appointment comes just five days before the Ordinariate begins using *Divine Worship: The Missal*, a new book of liturgical texts for the celebration of Mass in the Personal Ordinariates around the globe. The texts were approved by the Vatican for use beginning the first Sunday of Advent, Nov. 29, 2015.

Bishop-elect Lopes was directly involved in developing these texts for worship; since 2011, he has served as the executive coordinator of the Vatican commission, *Anglicanae Traditiones*, which produced the new texts.

The new missal is a milestone in the life of the Ordinariate, since the Ordinariate's mission is particularly expressed through the reverence and beauty of its worship, which shares the treasury of the Anglican liturgical and musical traditions with the wider Catholic community.

Pope Benedict's vision for Christian unity and the concrete ways that Pope Francis is implementing that vision demonstrate that unity in faith allows for a vibrant diversity in the expression of that faith. The Ordinariate is a key ecumenical venture for the Catholic Church and a concrete example of this unity in diversity.

## Faith leaders say refugees from Syria, elsewhere require compassion, acceptance

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A Boston cardinal and the Maryland Catholic Conference were among hundreds of faith leaders who called for compassion in addressing the world refugee crisis and stressed the importance of developing a national immigration policy based on humanitarian need. Acknowledging that the times are "dangerous" and that "enhanced security procedures are needed," Cardinal Sean P. O'Malley in a statement Nov. 19 cautioned that in developing an immigration policy, "decisions concerning the specific measure taken require careful deliberation." The Maryland Catholic Conference, which includes the Baltimore and Washington archdioceses and the Diocese of Wilmington, Delaware, in a statement Nov. 18 called on the country to welcome "those feeling persecution in other countries, including refugees seeking asylum from Syria." The statements came as lawmakers in Congress and governors opposed measures to resettle Syrian refugees in response to a string of extremist attacks in Paris Nov. 13 that left 130 people dead and hundreds more injured. Republicans in the House of Representatives Nov. 19 won a veto-proof majority, 289-137, on a bill blocking Syrian and Iraqi refugees from entering the U.S. The bill's status in the Senate was uncertain, however. In addition, governors in at least 30 states have called for an end to Syrian resettlement until security concerns can be addressed.

## Pornography, politics statements take center stage at USCCB

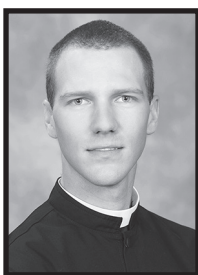
BALTIMORE (CNS) — The U.S. bishops approved a formal statement on pornography and additions to their quadrennial statement on political responsibility at their Nov. 16-19 fall general meeting in Baltimore. The votes were made during the public portion of the meeting, which ran Nov. 16-17. The bishops met in executive session Nov. 18-19. The 2015 version of political responsibility document, "Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship," passed 210-21 with five abstentions, and a separate vote on the statement's introductory note passed 217-16 with two abstentions; two-thirds of diocesan bishops, or 181 votes, were needed for passage. Additions to the document were made to reflect the teachings of Pope Francis and the later encyclicals

of Pope Benedict XVI. But some bishops said the document does not adequately address poverty, as Pope Francis has asked the church to do. The most vocal critic was Bishop Robert W. McElroy of San Diego, who said he was concerned that because poverty and the environment did not receive the same priority as abortion and euthanasia, that some people "outside of this room" would "misuse" the document and claim other issues did not carry the same moral weight. The pornography statement, "Create in Me a Clean Heart: A Pastoral Response to Pornography," says that "producing or using pornography is gravely wrong" and is a "mortal sin" if committed with deliberate consent and urges Catholics to turn away from it. Approval of the statement came on a vote of 230-4 with one abstention, with 181 votes needed for passage.

## Bishop disturbed by calls to end resettlement of Syrian refugees in U.S.

BALTIMORE (CNS) — The head of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Migration said he was disturbed by calls from federal and state officials for an end to the resettlement of Syrian refugees in the United States. "These refugees are fleeing terror themselves — violence like we have witnessed in Paris," said Seattle Auxiliary Bishop Eusebio Elizondo, chairman of the migration committee. "They are extremely vulnerable families, women, and children who are fleeing for their lives. We cannot and should not blame them for the actions of a terrorist organization." In a statement issued Nov. 17 during the bishops' general assembly in Baltimore, Bishop Elizondo offered condolences to the French people, especially families of the victims of the Nov. 13 attacks in Paris in which at least 129 people were killed and hundreds were injured. He said he supported "all who are working to ensure such attacks do not occur again — both in France and around the world." But addressing calls from some governors and federal officials — including House Speaker Paul Ryan, R-Wisconsin — to pause or halt refugee resettlement until the U.S. can ensure the safety of its citizens, Bishop Elizondo said refugees "must pass security checks and multiple interviews before entering the United States — more than any arrival to the United States. It can take up to two years for a refugee to pass through the whole vetting process. We can look at strengthening the already stringent screening program, but we should continue to welcome those in desperate need."





## Meet a Seminarian (a TCL series)

By James Dvorak  
Studying at St. Mary's Seminary in  
Houston

## The Marriage Promises

Recall from last month's article on how a promise can elevate a good act. With that understanding in place, we are now in a position to consider the promises made in marriage. Before we look at how the marital promises are the greatest action that a person can make to achieve his or her perfection, I will first explain the specific promises that are made in a marriage. As is evident from the vows that are made, each spouse declares his or her consent to marry the other by making three promises before the Church. Consider the following:

I, N., take you, N., to be my wife/husband. I promise to be true to you in good times and bad, in sickness and in health. I will love you and honor you all the days of my life.

First, there is the promise of fidelity. When a man takes a woman to be his wife or when a woman takes a man to be her husband, he or she promises fidelity, i.e., to be faithful as a spouse. The husband gives himself to his wife alone, and the wife gives herself to the husband alone. Second, there is the promise of unity. The book of Genesis states that a man leaves his parents and clings to his wife, and the two become one flesh. Each spouse is united to the other, no matter the conditions: good or bad times, richer or poorer times, and so forth. This reveals the truth of their new identity as persons, namely,

as spouses. The third promise is that of permanence. The relationship of the two spouses is for the entirety of their earthly lives, so long as both are alive, and in no way can this bond be broken or altered.

These three promises are not to be taken lightly. They are vows made in the sight of God. They should be made, then, with utmost reverence and sincerity. Next month we will look at how these three promises constitute one's greatest natural attempt to achieve perfection and salvation.



### New York church choir produces CD to counter secular spin on the season

RYE, N.Y. (CNS) — The secular world ignores Advent, begins celebrating Christmas the day after Halloween and packs up the holiday before the New Year, Paul J. Murray said.

The director of music at a midtown Manhattan parish thought the Advent message was getting drowned out by the noise of commercialism, so he decided to make a CD recording of his choir singing sacred Advent and Christmas music.

"The church keeps Advent as a very special season to prepare and wait for the coming of Christ at Christmas and his second coming at the end of time. Music is a subtle reminder that we are preparing for something greater," Murray told Catholic News Service Nov. 20.

Murray is the director of music for the parish of Our Saviour, St. Stephen and Our Lady of the Scapular, and Chapel of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary. He directs the Choir of the Church of Our Saviour, which released "Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding," a 19-track disk recorded in the church during the last week of October.

"The recording is a means of evangelization to share the music of Advent and Christmas with the community-at-large," Murray said.

It will be distributed by CD through the parish, a website and iTunes.

## Sunday Readings from Dec. 6 - Jan. 10

December 6 - 2nd Sunday  
of Advent  
Baruch 5:1-9  
Psalms 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6  
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11  
Luke 3:1-6

December 27 - The Holy Family of  
Jesus, Mary and Joseph  
Sirach 3:2-6, 12-14  
Psalms 128:1-2, 3, 4-5  
Colossians 3:12-21  
Luke 2:41-52

December 13 - 3rd Sunday  
of Advent  
Zephaniah 3:14-18A  
Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:10-18

January 1 - The Octave Day of Christmas  
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary,  
the Mother of God  
Numbers 6:22-27  
Psalms 67:2-3, 5, 6, 8  
Galatians 4:4-7  
Luke 2:16-21

December 20 - 4th Sunday  
of Advent  
Micah 5:1-4A  
Psalms 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45

January 3 - The Epiphany of the Lord  
Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalms 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13  
Ephesians 3:2-3A, 5-6  
Matthew 2:1-12

December 25 - The Nativity Of The Lord  
(Christmas) - Mass at Mid-night  
Isaiah 9:1-6  
Psalms 96: 1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-14

January 10 - The Baptism of the Lord  
Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7  
Psalms 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10  
Acts 10:34-38  
Luke 3:15-16, 21-22

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit  
[www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings).

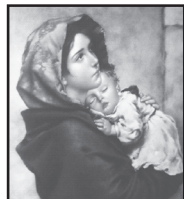
Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign



## Christmas Prayer

Lord, in this holy season of prayer and song and laughter, we praise you for the great wonders you have sent us: for shining star and angel's song, for infant's cry in lowly manger. We praise you for the Word made flesh in a little Child. We behold his glory, and are bathed in its radiance.

Be with us as we sing the ironies of Christmas, the incomprehensible comprehended, the poetry made hard fact, the helpless Babe who cracks the world asunder. We kneel before you shepherds, innkeepers, wisemen. Help us to rise bigger than we are. Amen.



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## Journeys of Faith with Ceci UPCOMING 2016 PILGRIMAGES

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## Our Lady of Guadalupe shouldn't be viewed as just a Mexican tradition

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe has been a religious and cultural hallmark for Mexican Catholics for centuries, but the custom received little attention from Anglo Catholics in the U.S. before the last few decades.

With the growing Latino population in the United States, the presence of Hispanics has steadily increased in Catholic churches throughout the country, creating a greater awareness of Our Lady of Guadalupe, the patroness of the Americas.

Catholic scholars say the significance of her feast day, Dec. 12, has risen beyond the Americas with the emergence of the Latin American church on the world stage.

The dark-skinned image of Mary, known as Our Lady of Guadalupe, also has been identified by leaders of the universal Catholic Church as the face of the new evangelization.

The story of how Mary appeared to a poor Aztec Indian in 1531 near present-day Mexico City brought more than 6 million indigenous people into the Catholic faith within a decade.

The image of Mary dressed in a way Aztecs could relate to her is credited with more than evangelization. It's also an acknowledged factor

in the easing of tensions between the native people of that region in the Americas and the European settlers.

Latinos living in the U.S. celebrate the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe with zeal.

Their fervor for the feast day is a great example for Anglo Catholics, attracting more of them to the celebrations, said Archbishop Joseph E. Kurtz of Louisville, Kentucky, who is president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The Latino presence in the U.S. has helped educate more Anglo Catholics about Our Lady of Guadalupe, Archbishop Kurtz told Catholic News Service, and he said he

hopes more will embrace this part of the Catholic tradition.

"Our Lady of Guadalupe is really for everybody, certainly the people of the



*Pope Francis passes an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe as he leaves after celebrating Mass at the Pontifical North American College in Rome May 2. It was the first papal visit to the U.S. seminary since 1980. At the end of Mass, Pope Francis said the visit to the seminary was "a beautiful and meaningful introduction to my apostolic visit to the United States of America." (CNS photo/Paul Haring)*

Americas," and not just Hispanic Catholics, said Bishop Peter F. Christensen of Boise, Idaho, a statewide diocese where Latinos now make up the majority of Catholics.

When Mary appeared to St. Juan Diego, the Spaniards and Aztecs were on the brink of war, and scholars believe it would have been brutal. Many have suggested the result of such a war could have diminished Christianity in the region.

Instead, the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe brought an end to the Aztec's worship of stone gods and the practice of human sacrifice, said Father Michael

Witczak, an associate professor of liturgical studies at The Catholic University of America in Washington.

When the indigenous people embraced Catholicism, the religion of the Spaniards, the two groups discovered a way of living together in relative harmony, Father Witczak said.

"The story is captivating," he told CNS. "That whole image of this 57-year-old Aztec Christian encountering this woman and not wanting to get involved with something he knew would be viewed with great skepticism. Yet, (the news) was eventually seen as a miracle that helped spread Christianity throughout the Americas."

It's a story that should enrich the faith of all American Catholics, Archbishop Kurtz said.

Nevertheless, many Anglo Catholics either don't know the story or understand the significance Our Lady of Guadalupe has in American Catholicism.

Father Adrian Vazquez, the administrator of four Idaho parishes in St. Anthony, Driggs, Island Park and Rexburg, said that every year as Latino parishioners prepare for the Dec. 12 feast day, many Anglo Catholics approach him to learn more about Our Lady of Guadalupe.

"Yes, some (Anglo Catholics) are already participating, but many of them just don't know the story," he said. "But, they do see the excitement among the

Latinos and it makes them curious. Once they learn about the story, they are much more open to bringing it into their own faith tradition."

Father Robert C. Irwin, pastor of St. Jerome Church in Jerome, Idaho, said he was unaware of the story of Our Lady of Guadalupe as a boy growing up in the U.S.

What he did know was that his friends with Mexican ancestry often paid homage to an image of Mary that didn't look very much like the paintings of the Mother of God he had been accustomed to viewing during his religious education.

Pope Francis celebrated the feast day at St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City in 2014.

During his homily, the pope said the dark-skinned image of Our Lady of Guadalupe — traditionally believed to have been miraculously impressed on Juan Diego's cloak — proclaimed to the indigenous peoples of the Americas "the good news that all its inhabitants shared the dignity of children of God. No more would anyone be a servant, but we are all children of the same Father and brothers and sisters to each other."

Both Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis have celebrated the feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe at St. Peter's, signaling to Catholics worldwide its importance in the universal church, Father Witczak said.

"She's not just the patroness of Mexico, but the patroness of the Americas," he said.



Bishop Brendan Cahill's crosier was created by a team led by carpenter Raul Oviedo, who is a member of the St. Joseph-St. Stephen Merger Committee which Bishop Cahill was the moderator. It has the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Queen of Mexico and Empress of the Americas, as well as the special patroness of the Diocese of Victoria. The grooves of the wood, which is made out of walnut, run up and down the crosier, symbolizing the Mexican immigrants in the early years when they were moving up and down, looking for where they belong. Also, engrained in the bottom of the crosier is also the letter "V" for Victory. (Courtesy The Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston)





# EVENTS

The Catholic Lighthouse  
Page 19 — December 2015

## Meals • Picnics and more

### December

**New Taiton**—St. John's Scholarship Games Party, Dec. 6 at 6:00 p.m. at the Taiton Community Center. Enjoy an evening with your family playing games, door prizes, drawings, auctions and plenty of refreshments. Proceeds benefit the youth of St. John Parish.

**Victoria**—KJZT #101 and KJT#115 joint Christmas party Dec. 6 starting at 2:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Victory School Cafeteria. Bring a covered dish (meat provided) for meal at 5:00 p.m. RSVP by calling (361) 573-2669.

### January

**Edna**—Saint Agnes Church, will sponsor a "Celebration of Life" program for all denominations, the youth, parents, ministers, and the general public of Jackson and surrounding counties on Wednesday, January 27, 2016, at the Jackson County Services Building, 411 N. Wells Street, Edna, Texas, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. The program will show the need to safeguard the dignity and sanctity of every human person, the need for respect and justice for the unborn and all life, and the value of faith in today's families. Bishop Brendan Cahill, will be a guest speaker. Refreshments will be served and admission is free. For questions, call Madeline Novian at (361) 782-2933.

### February

**Victoria**—St. Mary's Parish Festival Feb. 14 at the Victoria Community Center. Serving from 11:00 a.m. -1:30 p.m. a roast beef dinner along with potatoes, green beans and squash casserole at \$9 p/p. The auction begins at 12:30 p.m.

## PASTORAL INSTITUTE Short Term Program



*Echoes of Faith 3.0* is being made available through funds from the Capital Campaign at NO COST to catechists and parish catechetical leaders in the Diocese of Victoria. Register for a *free* one-year subscription at [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org) (home page scroll down to the Echoes link). For more information, contact Christella Alvarez at (361) 827-7171, [calvarez@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:calvarez@victoriadiocese.org) or Margaret Pruett at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2223, [pisecretary@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:pisecretary@victoriadiocese.org).

### Amor Meus Spirituality Center Events

1101 N E Water Street – 361 – 575 – 7111 email - [amormeus@yahoo.com](mailto:amormeus@yahoo.com)  
[www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org](http://www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org)

**GUIDED ONE DAY RETREAT:** December 12, from 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

**Theme:** "God So Loved the World." The retreat will include at least two reflections, liturgy or prayer service and ample time for personal prayer, walking and reflecting. To register or call for more information.

**SOLEMN VESPERS** – The Liturgical Evening Prayer of the Church prayed with people of all faith traditions – December 6, 13, and 20. 5:00 p.m. – 5:45 p.m.

**SPIRITUAL DIRECTION** – On-Going opportunity for guidance and discussion on one's spiritual journey with an experienced Spiritual Director. Call for appointment.

For details or more information, contact Sister Emilie or check the website.

## Conferences • Masses • Retreats and more

**El Campo**—Seminar and Mass with healing prayer at St. Philip the Apostle Parish, Dec. 11-12, with Father Joseph Nguyen, C.S.Sp. of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. Mass times are Friday, 7:00 p.m. and Saturday, 5:00 p.m. The Seminar is Saturday from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. For more information or to register contact Gwen Edwards at (979) 637-0277 / [dennisle@sbcglobal.net](mailto:dennisle@sbcglobal.net) or Jan Dorank at (979) 541-3609 / [jan.hair@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jan.hair@sbcglobal.net).

**Schulenburg**—An evening of prayer and reflection on Advent and Christmas with Bishop Brendan Cahill and Dr. Michael Fonseca on Dec. 13 at 6:00 p.m. It will take place at St. Rose of Lima Church with praise and worship led by the God's Embrace Music Ministry. For more information call (979) 561-8883 or [www.godsembrace.org](http://www.godsembrace.org).

**Flatonía**—The ninth annual Mass for the Feast Day of the Holy Innocents at Raphael's Refuge will be held Monday, Dec. 28. Rosary will begin at 9:30 a.m., followed by announcements and introductions. Bishop Cahill will celebrate the Mass at 10:30 a.m. Light refreshments will be served. For more information, contact Midge at (361) 865-3021, or (361) 258-1514, or visit [www.raphaelsrefuge.org](http://www.raphaelsrefuge.org).

**Victoria**—"Come and See" Discernment Weekend for single Catholic women 18 to 50 years of age on December 5 - 6, at Incarnate Word Convent. For more information call (361) 575-7111; email: [iwbsvoc@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc@yahoo.com) or website: [www.iwbsvictoria.org](http://www.iwbsvictoria.org).

**ACTS Retreats**—For information, visit [www.actsmissions.org](http://www.actsmissions.org).

**Tivoli**—Our Lady of Guadalupe Church celebrates the Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament the 1st Friday of each month at 6:00 p.m. Mass begins at 7:00 p.m. at 501B William St. with Father Paulson Panakal. Mark your calendars now for next month. For more information, call (361) 237-3634.

**Victoria**—Our Lady of Lourdes holds Healing Mass and Prayer the 1st Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at 105 N. William St. with Father Phi Nguyen, chaplain of IWBS Convent. Mark your calendars now for next month. For more information, contact Sr. Louise Marie Jones at [iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com).

**To submit Calendar of Events  
for the newspaper e-mail to  
[lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org)**

## Ministries • Ongoing Activities

**Catholic Family Services**—To find Catholic organizations which focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at [www.nacflm.org](http://www.nacflm.org).

**Courage**—Ministers to persons with same-sex attractions and their loved ones. The ministry also has an outreach, Encourage, which ministers to relatives, spouses, and friends of persons with same-sex attractions. It is a Roman Catholic Apostolate endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family. For more information, visit [www.couragec.net](http://www.couragec.net).

**Engaged Encounter**—Jan. 29-31 - Registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For more information, call (361) 573-0828 ext. 2230 or visit [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org).

**Gabriel Project**—Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy- an alternative to abortion. Meetings are the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 101 W. Convent. Light supper included. For angel workshop/training dates, contact Barbara at (361) 649-1612 or [barbaramccain85@yahoo.com](mailto:barbaramccain85@yahoo.com). Holy Family, Wharton, meetings are the 4th Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. Sts. Peter and Paul, Meyersville, meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. For more information, call (979) 532-3593, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

**Grief Ministry**—Meetings are the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in conference/brides' room at Holy Family Church, Victoria. Before attending, call Sharon at (361) 578-7572.

**Hospice of South Texas**—Volunteer to provide continuity of inpatient care, home care, and bereavement services. Free grief support group meetings are the 2nd Monday of each month at 10:00 a.m. in Victoria and the 4th Tuesday of each month at 5:30 p.m. in Hallettsville. For more information, call 1(800) 874-6908, (361) 572-4300, or visit [www.hospiceofsouthtexas.org](http://www.hospiceofsouthtexas.org).

**Incarnate Word Prayer Group**—Praise and worship on Mondays 7:30-9:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water Street. For more information, contact Sr. Louise Marie Jones at (361) 575-7111 or [amormeus@yahoo.com](mailto:amormeus@yahoo.com).

**Marriage Encounter**—This program is no longer offered in the Diocese of Victoria. Replacing it is Retrouvaille (see below). To find a Marriage Encounter weekend outside of the diocese, visit [www.wmme.org](http://www.wmme.org).

**Natural Family Planning**—NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. To learn about the sympto-thermal method in the Victoria area and NFP class schedules, contact David and Annie Coffey at [victorianfpteachers@yahoo.com](mailto:victorianfpteachers@yahoo.com). In Wharton, contact Susanne Koch at (505) 710-0903 or [susannekoch614@gmail.com](mailto:susannekoch614@gmail.com).

**Raphael's Refuge**—RR's mission is to build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Flatonía. Peer counseling and spiritual direction are available for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death, or abortion. For more information, contact Midge Elam at (361) 865-3021, (361) 258-1514, or visit [www.raphaelsrefuge.org](http://www.raphaelsrefuge.org).

**Retrouvaille**—Retrouvaille, meaning rediscovery, is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at [jbvjov@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jbvjov@sbcglobal.net) or (361) 580-2770; call (800) 470-2230; or visit [www.helpourmarriage.org](http://www.helpourmarriage.org) or [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org).





Above are just a few pictures from the conference. (Clockwise from top) Father Bob Knippenberg talking with someone at the Ceci Triska table about her trips; Father Robert Guerra in a discussion group during a workshop; Bishop Brendan Cahill giving his keynote address in English; and Bishop Oscar Cantú giving his keynote address in Spanish.

## XXVIII Annual Conference for Catechesis and Ministry Safeguarding the Dignity of Every Human Person

Over 300 people from throughout the Diocese of Victoria attended the annual diocesan conference at Holy Family Catholic Church in Wharton, Texas, Saturday, October 24, 2015. The Most Reverend Oscar Cantú, bishop of the Diocese of Las Cruces, New Mexico presented the major keynote address: Safeguarding the Dignity of Every Human Person in English and Spanish. Newly ordained bishop of the Diocese of Victoria, The Most Reverend Brendan Cahill, also offered a keynote ad-

dress in Spanish and English, "Religious Liberty and True Tolerance", referring to the writings of American theologian, Father John Courtney Murray.

The day-long conference provided twenty-four workshops on various topics in English and Spanish, for the conference participants. Catholic publishers and vendors displayed books, religious articles, and other resources. The conference concluded with the Sunday liturgy presided by the Most Reverend Brendan Cahill.



Bishop Brendan Cahill spoke about the Vatican II Declaration on Religious Liberty. This document declared that every human person has the right to religious freedom. This right has its foundation in the very dignity of the human person.

Since all have this right to religious freedom, even a person who is wrong has rights that we must respect, even those whose religions that are in error, because we must respect a person's right of conscience. Religious rights include not only being allowed to attend the church of one's choice, but also expressing one's belief in public and to be respected for it. True tolerance excludes using harsh and divisive language even if it is right.



## Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Bishop Brendan Cahill and the Chancery Staff

*Rene Garcia, Regina Janak, Ryan Leos, Father Gary Janak, Angela Martinez, Sarita Richmond, Janie Carales, Pauline Castaneda, John Quarry, Chris Alvarez, Sherry Kainer, Margaret Pruett, Gloria Aparicio, Zoila Martinez, Melissa Perales, Wendy Eggert, Gary Rangnow, Jeri Joseph and Mike Brown*  
Also, Father Dan Morales and Father Tommy Chen