The entrance to recently renovated St. Joseph Church in Yoakum.

A Lifetime at the Organ
“... if you play the organ, you pray 3 times!”

By Sarita Villafranca Richmond, Editor
YOAKUM—Mary Margaret Afflerbach McQuillen has spent her life serving God and others through countless hours of volunteering at St. Joseph Catholic Church, St. Joseph Catholic School, and the Yoakum community. One of her many volunteer activities include, playing the organ at Mass.

When Mary began playing the organ at Mass her freshman year in high school, she never dreamed that she would still be playing and sharing her gift of music 73 years later. The Sisters of Divine Providence, who staffed St. Joseph school at the time, were teaching piano lessons to the students. Mary shared, “The nuns were giving music lessons to many kids, and a lot of great musicians came out of St. Joseph School.” There were a lot of opportunities to play, since Mass, at that time, was held every day. Mary said,

“The first time I got up there to play was pitiful; I couldn’t get going….I kept playing and caught on to it finally.”

Mary was born and raised in Yoakum, Texas. She has lived there her whole life and has been a life-long member of St. Joseph Parish. Her family is of German descent, and her mother’s parents came from France. She and her six siblings (3 brothers and 3 sisters) graduated from St. Joseph High School, Yoakum. She graduated as the
DIOCESE

Bishop Brendan Cahill
A Shepherd’s Message

Ordained as Bishop June 29, 2015

“Glory to God in the Highest”

Brothers and Sisters,

Pope Benedict once wrote that most of the best music is Christmas music. It makes sense since the joy of this season makes the heart want to sing with the angels. In this issue of the Lighthouse we will be highlighting the beautiful contribution of one of our musicians to the life of the Church. As we do so I want to honor all our Church musicians and music teachers in this most holy season. Each of you adds so much to our liturgical celebrations, all aimed at giving glory to God in the highest with the hope of bringing lasting peace to the earth.

While I was looking for that quote from Pope Benedict I began to read his Christmas homilies. Funny, I never found the quote that I was looking for, but in looking I found so much more! Here is something that I think can help our prayer this Christmas.

From his 2012 Christmas homily, Pope Benedict gave a beautiful image – in our hearts to “go over to Bethlehem”:

“Let us go over to Bethlehem: as we say these words to one another, along with the shepherds, we should not only think of the great “crossing over” to the living God, but also of the actual town of Bethlehem and all those places where the Lord lived, ministered and suffered. Let us pray at this time for the people who live and suffer there today. Let us pray that there may be peace in that land. Let us pray that Israelis and Palestinians may be able to live their lives in the peace of the one God and in freedom. Let us also pray for the countries of the region, for Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and their neighbors: that there may be peace there, that Christians in those lands where our faith was born may be able to continue living there, that Christians and Muslims may build up their countries side by side in God’s peace.”

As we celebrate this joyful season let us keep our hearts united in prayer for peace, especially uniting our hearts with Mary the Queen of Peace.

This season is a particular season of generosity. Sometimes a person will ask me if I recommend any specific charities to help them with their Christmas giving. My usual answer is to begin with your local pastor. Each Church has specific needs and has developed ministries to assist people in need in the local community. Among ministries that have been serving across the diocese are the Emmaus Center – Counseling in the Catholic Tradition (emmauscounselingcenter.com) and God’s Embrace Discipleship Formation (godsembrace.org). I joined the Board of two other national organizations that will be ministering in the Diocese of Victoria in the coming years, so I think either of these would also be good to support. Echelon USA (echelonusa.org) is a Campus Ministry dedicated to equipping Latino students for leadership. Catholic Rural Life (catholicrurallife.org) is committed to strengthening and sustaining the Church in the countryside across the nation.

Thank all of you for your kindness, prayer and generosity throughout the year. May the Lord bless you and your families with His peace, let us keep one another in prayer.

+ Brendan

Obispo Brendan Cahill
Mensaje del pastor
Ordenado como obispo el 29 de junio de 2015

“Gloria a Dios en el Cielo”

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

El Papa Benedicto escribió una vez que la mayor parte de la mejor música es la música de Navidad. Tiene sentido que la alegría de este tiempo hace que el corazón quiere cantar con los ángeles. En esta edición del Lighthouse estaremos destacando la hermosa contribución de uno de nuestros músicos a la vida de la Iglesia. También quiero honrar todos nuestros músicos y profesores de música de la Iglesia en esta temporada santisima. Cada uno de ustedes aporta mucho a nuestras celebraciones litúrgicas, todos destinados a dar gloria a Dios en las alturas, con la esperanza de una paz eterna en la tierra.

Mientras que yo estaba buscando por la cita de Papa Benedicto empecé a leer sus homilías navideñas. Es curioso, que nunca encontré la cita que yo estaba buscando, sino en buscar encontré mucho más! Aquí hay algo que creo que puede ayudar nuestra oración esta Navidad. Desde su homilía de 2012 para la Navidad, Papa Benedicto dio una bella imagen - en nuestros corazones “ir a Belén”:

“Vayamos, pues, hasta Belén: como decimos estas palabras el uno al otro, junto con los pastores, no sólo debemos pensar de la gran “cruzar” al Dios vivo, sino también de la ciudad real de Belén y todos aquellos lugares donde el Señor vivió, dio ministro y sufrió. Oremos en este momento por las personas que allí viven y sufren hoy en día. Oremos para que haya paz en esa tierra. Oremos para que los israelíes y los palestinos pueden ser capaces de vivir sus vidas en la paz del único Dios y en la libertad. Oremos también para los países de la región, para el Líbano, Siria, Irak y sus vecinos: que pueda haber paz allí, que los cristianos en estas tierras donde nació nuestra fe puede ser capaz de seguir viviendo allí, que los cristianos y musulmanes se pueden acumular sus países lado a lado en la paz de Dios.

Al celebrar esta alegre temporada nos permite seguir nuestros corazones unidos en oración por la paz, sobre todo unir nuestros corazones con María, la Reina de la paz.

Esta temporada es una estación en particular de generosidad. A veces, una persona me pregunta si yo recomiendo alguna obra de benéficas específicas para ayudarles con sus donaciones de Navidad. Mi respuesta habitual es comenzar con su pastor local. Cada Iglesia tiene necesidades específicas y ha desarrollado ministerios para ayudar a las personas necesitadas en la comunidad local. Entre los ministerios que han estado sirviendo por toda la Diócesis de Victoria son el Centro Emaús - Consejando en la Tradición Católica (emmauscounselingcenter.com) y Formación Discípulado del Abrazo de Dios (godsembrace.org). Me uní a la comisión de dos organizaciones nacionales que estarán ministrando en la Diócesis de Victoria en los próximos años, así que creo que uno de estos también sería bueno para apoyar. Echelon EE.UU. (echelonusa.org) es un Ministerio de Campus dedicado a equipar a los estudiantes latinos para el liderazgo. Vida Rural Católica (catholicrurallife.org) se ha comprometido a fortalecer y sostener la Iglesia en el campo en todo el país.

Gracias a todos ustedes por su amabilidad, la oración y la generosidad durante todo el año. Que el Señor les bendiga a usted y a sus familias con su paz, seguiremos orando uno para el otro.

+ Brendan

Feliz Navidad y Próspero Año Nuevo
Bishop Brendan’s Schedule

December
6
5:30 p.m. Holy Sepulchre Dinner at Victoria Country Club, Victoria
20
5:00 p.m. Advent Reflection at St. Philip’s, El Campo
8
5:30 p.m. Immaculate Conception Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
21
4:00 p.m. Building Board meeting, Chancery Office
9-11
Our Lady of Guadalupe Feast Day Celebration, Covington, LA
24
4:00 p.m. Mass for the infirmary sisters at IWBS Convent, Victoria
13
Confirmation Mass at Stevenson Unit, Cuero
25
Midnight Mass The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
15
6:30 p.m. Visit Holy Family RCIA, Victoria
27
6:00 p.m. Serra Club Christmas Dinner
17
2:00 p.m. IWBS Convent Open House, Victoria
28
11:00 a.m. Mass with seminarians at Rafael’s Refuge, Flatonia
18
9:00 a.m. Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
January 2017
1
9:00 a.m. Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
2-6
Bishop’s Retreat
13
3:00 p.m. Interfaith Meeting, Victoria
20
8:30 a.m. Mass and School visit at St. Philip School in El Campo

Father Ralph Baidoo, O.Ss.T. Obituary

GOLIAD—Father Raphael entered St. Theresa’s Minor Seminary in Ghana in 1963, and then went on to St. Peter’s Regional Seminary in Cape Coast in 1967, where he received all the minor orders, but left it in 1970 for he had a longing to be a missionary priest. He entered the novitiate of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity and of the Captives August 14, 1973, and made simple profession of vows August 17, 1974, in Pikesville, MD at the motherhouse. He studied at St. Mary’s Seminary in Roland Park, where he received the M.Div. in Theology, and made his solemn profession of vows December 16, 1976, in Pikesville, MD. Father Raphael was ordained a deacon by Bishop Francis Murphy, December 18, 1976, and to the priesthood, also by Bishop Murphy April 2, 1977 in Baltimore, MD. After his ordination he served as a conventual at Holy Trinity Monastery in Pikesville for 6 months, then as associate pastor at St. Lawrence Martyr Parish in Jessup, MD, until his death on November 30, 2016. Father Raphael was a polyglot who spoke Fanti, French, English and Pigeon, and at one time or another used all of them in service of the Gospel. All who knew Father Raphael knew him to be a gentle, warm, loving priest, who always was ready to help anyone in distress. He was indefatigably humorous, always smiling and making others smile. His constant faith in God gave him the courage to go to the farthest ends of the world in service to God’s people, and in our own homeland, into prison cells and small parishes often overlooked. He was respected by all who knew him.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Father Ralph Baidoo, O.S.S.T., pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Goliad. Funeral arrangements are as follows: vigil service/roary: December 12, 2016 at 7:00 p.m. at Immaculate Conception Church in Goliad. Funeral Mass: December 13, 2016 at 11:00 a.m. at Immaculate Conception Church in Goliad, with burial in Maryland at the Monastery Cemetery.

Advent Message

BE INSPIRED! Watch Bishop Brendan’s Advent messages during the 2016 Advent season. The videos will be available each Monday on the Diocese of Victoria website and Facebook page. The following link may also be followed: https://vimeo.com/193920413. Please share on your parish, school and private Facebook pages and websites.

as well as prison chaplain there, through 1980. In 1980 he was able to fulfill his dream of becoming a missionary priest when he volunteered to go as a missionary to Papua New Guinea, in the Diocese of Rabaul where he served several islands of local Catholics through 1991. From 1991 through 1993, he served at Holy Family Church in Wharton, Texas, whereupon he was assigned to St. Mary’s Church in Victoria, Texas as associate pastor. In 1994, Father Raphael was made temporary administrator of Immaculate Conception Church in Goliad, Texas, where he was later named pastor and where he remained until his death on November 30, 2016. Father Raphael was a polyglot who spoke Fanti, French, English and Pigeon, and at one time or another used all of them in service of the Gospel. All who knew Father Raphael knew him to be a gentle, warm, loving priest, who always was ready to help anyone in distress. He was indefatigably humorous, always smiling and making others smile. His constant faith in God gave him the courage to go to the farthest ends of the world in service to God’s people, and in our own homeland, into prison cells and small parishes often overlooked. He was respected by all who knew him.

Please pray for the repose of the soul of Father Ralph Baidoo, O.S.S.T., pastor of Immaculate Conception Church in Goliad.

Comments from Facebook:
– “Our friend the Bishop of Goliad. We will miss your smiling face. Eternal rest unto him may you Rest In Peace.”
– “First priest that I spent time with when I came back to the Catholic Church. His sermons and spiritual direction helped me so much. He will be greatly missed.”
– “Fr. Ralph, I will miss your funny stories. May you rest in the arms of Jesus.”

Father Ralph Baidoo with Father Stan De Boe prior to a Chrism Mass.
Seminary Endowment Fund

Seminary Endowment Fund (formerly known as 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 29, 2016

**Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily Seminary Burse #2**

Previously reported $10,379.00

In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Bily’s retirement by

- Martin and Mary Luchak 1,000.00
- In memory of Monica Bily Melnar, sister of Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily by Martin and Mary Luchak 1,000.00

Total $12,379.00

**Rev. Wayne Flagg Seminary Burse**

In memory of Neal Flagg, father of Rev. Wayne Flagg by

- Martin and Mary Luchak 1,000.00
- In honor of Rev. Wayne Flagg’s installation as pastor of St. Michael Church, Weimar by
  - Martin and Mary Luchak 1,000.00

Total $2,000.00

**Rev. Wayne Flagg and Rev. Philip Brune Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $10,280.00

In memory of Neal Flagg by

- K of C Council #5157, Frelsburg 500.00
- In honor of Rev. Michael Lyons’ birthday celebration by St. Ann’s Altar Society, Frelsburg 100.00
- In memory of Neal Flagg by Paul, Cathy and Molly Michalsky 25.00
- In memory of Neal Flagg by Brad and Rachel Klingenberg Family 50.00

Total $10,955.00

**Rev. Roman M. Janak & Rev. Msgr. Hubert J. Janak Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $14,424.84

Donation by Joe and Cecelia

- Fikac Children 50.00
- Donation by J.W. and Angus Janak Cousins Reunion Fund 676.00

Total $15,150.84

**Rev. Kristopher L. Fuchs Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $1,525.00

In honor of Rev. Kristopher Fuchs’ priestly ordination by CDA Court Our Lady Queen of the Clergy #1990

Total $1,525.00

**Louis and Edith Hickl Family Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $13,800.00

In memory of all deceased family members of Louis and Edith Hickl by Edith Hickl

1,200.00

Total $15,000.00

**Rev. Charles Sonnier Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $9,555.00

In memory of Hubert Janak by

- Harry and Vernel Mack 50.00

Total $9,605.00

**Cora Wosterek Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $8,200.00

In loving memory of Cora and Justin Wosterek by

- Mike & Lisa Moeller Family 200.00

Total $8,400.00

**Rev. Scott Hill Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $1,742.00

In memory of Rev. Joe Vrana by

- Daryl and Joan Hill 25.00

Total $1,767.00

**Rev. Msgr. Roy Rihn Seminary Burse**

In memory of Rev. Msgr. Roy Rihn by the Dick Wearden Family

200.00

Total $200.00

**Rev. Timothy Kosler Seminary Burse**

Correction to previously reported $1,380.00

In memory of Albert J. Heinrich, Sr. by

- Henrietta Veselka 25.00

Total $1,405.00

**Rev. Dan Morales Seminary Burse in Honor of his Work for Vocations**

Previous Balance $5,918.00

In memory of Rev. Dan Morales by

- Pazz and Andrea Morales 25.00
- In memory of Rev. Dan Morales for his time as our Chaplain by Court Daughters of the Holy Family #2665, Victoria
- In memory of Michael Janish by Berendette Merta 25.00
- In memory of Rev. Dan Morales by K of C Council #5157, Frelsburg 500.00

Total $6,568.00

**Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Bartsch Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $13,814.00

A special intention by

- Allan and Cynthia Stryk 250.00

Total $14,064.00

**Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Seminary Burse #7**

Previously reported $11,200.00

In memory of Paul Renger, III by Soila Sanchez

10.00

Total $11,210.00

**Rev. Jerome J. Stryk Seminary Burse #2**

Previously reported $2,434.50

In memory of Jalayne Tupa by

- Daniel Stryk 50.00
- In memory of M/M Frank Stryk by Daniel Stryk 100.00
- In memory of Louis G. Stryk by
  - Stanley D. Stryk and Family 100.00
  - Stephen and Bernadette Muras 50.00
  - M/M Andrew Stryk 100.00
  - Eugene and Carol Patalik 50.00

Total $550.00

Those wanting to contribute to an existing Seminary Endowment Fund may do so by sending their contributions with the appropriate fund designation to:

Diocese Of Victoria

Seminarian Endowment Fund

P. O. Box 4070

Victoria, TX 77903

Education of Seminarian Fund

The Education of Seminarian Fund is where 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 Seminarian Fund. Publication of this fund will appear periodically when new contributions are received.

**Donations:**

- Glenn and Deborah Machiecek 1,200.00
- Madeline and Danny Bourg 100.00
- Mark and Julie Goodman 100.00
- Johnny and Linda Veselka 50.00
- Linda Sandeolovic 100.00
- Joann Reyes 50.00
- Incarnate Word Prayer Group 100.00
- J.N. and Janet Tisdale 100.00
- KJZT Lodge No. 9 100.00
- Victor and Gail Dvorak 25.00
- Alphonse and Josie Kubenka 20.00
- Edward and Cynthia Koncaba 50.00
- Mrs. Julia Stryk 25.00
- Henry and Loretta Kutac 20.00
- Georgia Cerny and Stazy Hajek 25.00
- M/M Edwin Stryk 25.00
- Lawrence Stryk 100.00
- M/M Scotty Brossman 10.00
- Perry Muras 25.00
- Tom and Phyllis Teykl 20.00
- Jonathan and Peggy Kalich 20.00
- Mark Muras 40.00
- Bob and Donna Bizzell 20.00
- M/M Rudy and Jean Okruhlik 25.00
- Helen Muras Family 100.00
- Total $3,509.50

To contribute to the Education of Seminarian Fund, send contributions to:

Diocese Of Victoria

Education of Seminarian Fund

P. O. Box 4070

Victoria, TX 77903

NOTICE!

Changes to be Made

Changes are coming effective January 1, 2017 to the way the Seminary Endowment Fund, formerly known as Seminary Burses, is published. Individual contributions will no longer be listed. They will be published by level categories. We will also include donations made to the Education of Seminarian Fund with the exception to donations made through the Holy Thursday Collection.

Breaking News!
Christmas Day Mass will NOT be broadcast on TV.

It will be livestreamed.

Christmas Day Mass will not be aired this year on the ABC Network due to the Disney Parade that will be aired instead. It will still be recorded and streamed on the internet. Those who have an internet connection may watch it at http://ourladyofvictori sermon.net/main/main/20593802.

DSA update

2016 Diocesan Services Appeal

Diocesan Goal: $1,936,221.00
Parish Pledge Totals: $921,013.35
Parish Contribution Totals: $868,330.77
Number of Parish Families Participating: 3,022
PASTOR READY FOR KITCHEN DUTY—Father Bryan Heyer, Pastor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church in Shiner was in the kitchen helping bake strudels for the annual sale that took place on Saturday, November 12. For the 30th year volunteers have gathered to make thousands of the Shiner version of the traditional homemade apple strudel.

EDUCATING SEMINARIANS—Representing the KJZT Society #9, St. John the Baptist, Msgr. John Peters, right, presents a check to Bishop Brendan Cahill, left, for the Seminarian Education Fund.

RETIRING—St. Philip in El Campo had the privilege of saying THANK YOU to “retiring” Read-A-Thon chairman and cafeteria manager, Mrs. Kim Socha. Mrs. Socha is an alumni of St. Philip Catholic School and has continued to model the school motto of “To Know, Love, and Serve God and Others” for many years first as a parent, then later in any capacity needed. She has given countless hours volunteering her time to St. Philip School for which they are so appreciative. Thank you for your service and dedication, Mrs. Socha!

Knights of Columbus 4th Degree at Veterans Day program pictured left to right: Tompo Kuhn - Fayetteville, Ed Hughes - Cistern, Francis Janacek - Weimar, Bishop Brendan, Martin Luchak - Weimar, Philip Rocha - La Grange, Ted Bratton - Flatonia; Top and middle row from left: Tim Leihardt - Weimar, Charles Youngblood - Cistern, Doug Baker - Schulenburg, Dennis Olsovsky-Schulenburg, Bill Psenck - Cistern, Ray Tompkins, who is behind the Bishop’s staff is from Cistern, Benedict Kallus - La Grange, Jared Surman - La Grange, and Patrick Janda - La Grange.

KC 4th Degree Participate in Veterans Day Program

PRAHA — The Knights of Columbus, 4th Degree served as honor guard for the Most Rev. Brendan Cahill, Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria. All were in attendance at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Praha to honor all veterans, especially the nine young men from Praha who gave their lives in World War II.

The KC 4th Degree also participated in the Veterans Day Services at the cemetery after Mass.

Attending Sir Knights were from Saint Michael Assembly #1527 of Flatonia, Schulenburg, Weimar, and Bishop Odin Assembly #1095 of Cistern, Fayetteville, and La Grange.
READING TO STUDENTS—National Young Readers Week is an annual event that was co-founded in 1989 by Pizza Hut and the Center for the Book in the Library of Congress. It always takes place the second week of November. To make this week special, many schools recruited local “celebrities” to read aloud a favorite children’s book to classrooms. One of the readers that joined the students at Nazareth Academy was Bishop Brendan Cahill, pictured above. Other guest readers included Dr. John Quary, Superintendent of Catholic Schools and Sister Stephana Marbach, IWBS, General Superior for the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters.

SCHOOL VISIT—Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated Mass and visited Our Lady of the Gulf School in Port Lavaca. Students from all grades enjoyed his visit.

FUN READING—Sacred Heart, Hallettsville, elementary students enjoyed celebrating their “F-READ-OM” to read during National Young Readers Week. Students had fun dressing up to remind them that reading can take you places, it can be done anytime, and it’s fun!

GIVING TO THOSE IN NEED—Students of St. Rose of Lima, Schulenburg, collected non-perishable items to donate to those who did not have food for Thanksgiving. Many schools throughout the Diocese of Victoria collected items for the less fortunate.

It is not what we say about our Blessings but how we use them, that is the true measure of our Thanksgiving.

The Catholic schools in the Diocese of Victoria joined together for the 2nd year on November 5, 2016, and hosted a 5K and 1 mile run/walk at Riverside Park in Victoria. Thank you to all who helped make this a successful event.
VOCATION AWARENESS DAYS AT IWBS CONVENT—On November 8 and 9, 2016, approximately 210 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 IWBS Gift Shop and the Hall of Memories at the convent. The day culminated in a prayer service that highlighted the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These Vocation Awareness Days were sponsored by the Vocations Office of the Diocese of Victoria, the Serra Club of Victoria, Knights of Columbus Council #1329, the Catholic Daughters of Court St. Ann #369, Rosewood Funeral Chapel, and the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.

KJT SUPPORTING HOMETOWN SEMINARIAN—East Bernard KJT St. Wenceslaus Society #40 hosted a pastry raffle for member Deacon Stephen Vacek. The State KJT Home Office matched $250.00 in funds. President, Edwin C. Marik presented the check to Deacon Vacek at the Holy Cross Bazaar held on Sunday, October, 11 at Riverside Hall. Left to right, Vice President, Sandy Hogan, Edwin C. Marik, Deacon Stephen Vacek, Chaplain, Rev. Don Ruppert and Secretary, Mark Dujka.

How to Promote Vocations to the Priesthood and Religious Life

Teach young people how to pray. Pope Benedict XVI said that unless we teach our youth how to pray, they will never hear God calling them into a deeper relationship with Him and into the discipleship of the Church.
‘TIS’ THE SEASON TO GIVE!—Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas #206 from Yoakum, made a donation to the Yoakum Food Pantry at their November meeting. Carolyn Strong, director and volunteer of the food pantry, was there to accept a check for $300 and informed the members about how the food pantry serves the community.

STUDENTS DONATE—St. Michael School in Weimar collected books as a book fair service project. Students collected new books to donate to M.D. Anderson Children’s Cancer Center in honor of Damon Billeck (cousin to four SMCS students) and other young cancer survivors.

We pray for those of us with warm houses and comfortable beds that we not be lulled into complacency and forgetfulness. Jesus, help us to see your face in the eyes of every homeless person we meet so that we may be empowered through word and deed, and through the political means we have, to bring justice and peace to those who are homeless. Amen.

The Abbey Youth Festival is an apostolic service of Saint Joseph Abbey and Seminary College. It is designed to provide young people with an opportunity to experience a day of prayer and faith formation with an exposure to the Benedictine tradition.

The Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry is very excited to offer 40 teens the opportunity to attend Abbey Youth Fest at St. Joseph Seminary, where some of our diocesan seminarians are currently studying. For more information contact https://victoriadiocese.org/abbey-youth-fest or contact Wendy Eggert at weggert@victoriadiocese.org or Ryan Leos at rleos@victoriadiocese.org or call the office at (361) 573-0828.

INTERFAITH GROUP SERVES AT CHRIST’S KITCHEN—Compassion is Contagious is a diverse group of Victorians from various races, religions and cultures coming together to serve others. The Diocese of Victoria and Catholic communities are a part of this group. Together the group served approximately 200 Victorians in need at Christ’s Kitchen on November 21. Care packages containing toiletries, socks, winter caps, and snacks were handed out and everyone received winter coats or blankets.
SISTERLY
THOUGHTS
by Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS

One Hundred Fifty Years Completed

(This article completes a series commemorating the 150th anniversary of the arrival of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters in Victoria, Texas.)

For a time the 1904 building, the current Nazareth Convent, which is now called our “Old Convent”, relieved the Sisters of the worry about classroom space for their educational endeavors. However, as had happened before, adequate space again repeatedly became a challenge. With increasing enrollment and the need to adjust the curriculum to meet current needs, more space was needed. Each time the challenge was met; and finally in September of 1951, a new school, the current Nazareth Academy, with ample and spacious classrooms, opened! Some years later space for physical education, fine arts and assemblies was provided by the construction of the gym building in 1958! Currently, the Sisters along with a dedicated lay staff carry on the tradition of quality education of the whole person which develops faith-filled citizens of Church and country.

During the Wreaths Across America ceremony held last year in Hungerford, military representatives hung wreaths marking branches of the U.S. Armed Forces. From left are Fred Pyka, Air Force and Charles Orsak, Navy.

Veterans will be honored at ‘Wreaths Across America’ Ceremony

On December 17, volunteers across the nation will take a break from the hustle and bustle of the holiday season to lay a fresh green wreath on the graves of our veterans. The event is part of Wreaths Across America Day, when similar ceremonies are held in 1,100 additional locations across the U.S.

Thanks to the efforts of Wharton County volunteers, 73 veterans buried in St. John’s Catholic Church cemetery in Hungerford will be honored. The wreath-laying ceremony begins at noon.

“The Wreaths Across America program encourages us to remember, honor and teach about the service and sacrifices of veterans, active military and their families,” explained Dorothy Viktorin, who has chaired the Hungerford fundraising effort for the last four years, in conjunction with Sarah Hudgins. Others involved include the American Legion #87 of Wharton, the ROTC of Wharton High School, Father Charles Dwomoh, pastor at St. John’s, and community members.

“Everyone is invited to come out and see the presentation of flags, hear a speaker and see the laying the seven commemorative wreaths for each branch of the military and the POW/MIA,” said Viktorin.

Wreaths Across America has been placing wreaths on graves since 1992. This year, more than 800,000 volunteers are expected to place a wreath on a veteran’s grave. For more information, visit www.wreathsacrossamerica.org

Meanwhile, the living quarters for the Sisters at the “Old Convent” was bursting at the seams. The parts of the convent that had been built in the 1800’s (before the 1904 building) were deteriorating and inadequate. So in faith and in trust in the Incarnate Word and with the support of many generous friends, a new convent was built on land that had been bought in 1880 by the Sisters to grow food for the Sisters and the girls who were boarding with the Sisters. That building, Incarnate Word Convent at 1101 N.E. Water Street, which opened in 1963, continues to serve as the “motherhouse” (headquarters) for the Victoria Congregation of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.

From it, go forth messengers of the love of the Incarnate Word as far away as Africa. Within it year-round are Sisters who are involved in general administration, and initial formation, and Sisters in the Health Care Center whose prayer ministry supports so many of the petition requests we receive. Some of the Sisters live here and commute to their ministry sites. Many of the Sisters who are no longer able to perform full-time external ministry are serving through their prayers and domestic duties. Some do part-time ministry through tutoring and mentoring of students, and other needs that arise.

Currently, part of the building houses our Amor Meus Spirituality Center which seeks to extend the Sisters’ charism of Incarnational Spirituality to individuals and groups who desire to deepen their spiritual growth and love of God. It offers a variety of opportunities such as retreats, special prayer events, and individual spiritual direction. For more information about these opportunities, go to www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org.

All are invited to visit the Incarnate Word Convent at 1101 N.E. Water St. on Saturday, December 17, from 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. for an Open House. This is part of the 150th year celebration of IWBS in Victoria.

Pictured is the back side of Nazareth Convent facing Bridge Street in 1956. The top floor was the Novitiate (added in 1885); the bottom floor (1880) was the dining room for the Sisters. Underneath was the basement which was used for the laundry. To the left on the top floor was the novitiate dormitory and on the bottom floor was the kitchen (1872). This part of Nazareth Convent was condemned due to safety issues and consequently demolished after the Sisters moved their headquarters to the newly-built Incarnate Word Convent on Water Street.

Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament

Invite you to an OPEN HOUSE
1101 N. E. Water St.
December 17, 2016 2:00 – 5:00 PM

Stocks Bonds CDs Mutual Funds IRAs

Kenneth J. French, Sr.
1501 E Mockingbird, Ste 102
Victoria, TX 77901
(361) 576-0178
kenny.french@edwardjones.com
All Saints and All Souls Days Celebrated Throughout the Diocese

1. & 2. Nazareth Academy, Victoria with Bishop Cahill
3. St. Philip School, El Campo
4. Sacred Heart School, Hallettsville
5. & 7. Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Victoria
8. Our Lady of Victory School, Victoria
SERRA CLUB AWARDED —
Margaret Dornak of Hallettsville and Charter Member of The Serra Club of Victoria Northwest, received an appreciation plaque from Msgr. John Peters for over 20 years of active participation and generous support of the club.

WE’RE THE 401(k) & IRA ROLLOVER SPECIALISTS

3.40%* APY

**Includes current yield + 1.35% first year additional interest

Case Hollub
GENERAL AGENT
(979) 725-1111

EAST BERNARD
Albert Smiastrla, FIC
(979) 335-4473

EL CAMPO/Nada
Diane Shimek Cerny
(979) 541-6346

EL CAMPO
Calvin Pfeil, FIC
(979) 541-6520

HALLETTSVILLE
Wendy Janak, FIC
(361) 798-4311

HALLETTSVILLE
Charles Leopold, FIC
(361) 798-4311

NADA/GARWOOD
Chris Merta, FIC
(979) 543-1059

SCHULENBURG
Royce Shimek, FIC
(979) 743-4313

SHINER
Patrick Klozik, FIC
(361) 594-8160

VICTORIA
Robert Melnar, FIC
(361) 578-2957

VICTORIA
Eugene Rehak, FIC
(361) 575-4982

WEIMAR
Karen Kutac, FIC
(979) 725-8919

WEIMAR
Mike Scardino, FIC
(979) 725-8860

YOAKUM/PORT LAVACA
Bert Kenna, FIC
(361) 293-9657

*Interest rates are subject to change. Minimum guaranteed rate is 1.50%

Home Office: San Antonio, Texas  #ASU 4.16

Honoring Our Veterans

CATHOLIC LIFE INSURANCE
Meet a Deacon
(a TCL series)

Deacon Anthony “Tony” Warzecha

When I awake each morning, as my feet hit the floor in search of my slippers, I greet God and announce that I come to do His Will. That opens my life to all kinds of surprises for we cannot and do not know what He has planned for us for that day.

That happened to me in January 1953 in Yokohama, Japan when I met my bride-to-be, Dawn, in the Army Signal Corps Cryptographic Center where we were both assigned when I was transferred from Korea to Japan. We have been happily married now for over 63 years. God looked at what He had done and He was pleased.

Similar happenings have occurred all my life when I have made myself available and open to do God’s work. When I have ventured out on my own, following my own choices and desires, I have really caused problems.

When the dust settled from the Second Vatican Council, some laymen were invited to participate in the Liturgy as Lectors and Commentators (who explained to the people what their role was in the Liturgy). I was one of those participants at our church in Beeville where we were living at the time. As my employer moved us around the state, I served the church wherever we were (in Portland, Conroe, Beaumont, and Friendswood) in every ministry open to laymen.

Finally, in Cuero in 1996 at the age of 65, I felt God calling me to prepare for service as a deacon. I sought the counsel of my pastor, Father Johnson Owusu-Boateng. When I raised the question “Why is God calling an old man like me to the diaconate?”, he responded “How dare you question the motives of God!” That set the tone for the rest of my life. What a journey that has been. Father Gabriel Maison and the professors at University of St. Thomas in Houston did their best to prepare 7 men for service to God as deacons. As we were nearing the end of our formation program, we tried to convince Father Gabriel that we were modern versions of the Seven Gifts of The Holy Spirit, but he had a different description of our group. I won’t repeat it.

I must admit that, as well as they prepared us for our journey, I was not prepared for the awesome experiences God had in store for me.

The beauty and grandeur of the ordination Liturgy is overwhelming. The feeling of inadequacy standing at the altar elevating the chalice with the Blessed Blood of Christ is humbling. Officiating at the baptism of a newborn baby is gratifying. Preparing and delivering a homily before the congregation is challenging. Praying the Rite of Committal at a burial is a combination of joyful and sorrowful. The range of feelings experienced in various ministries is without limits.

Someone recently asked me to tell him about my most defining moment or experience during my ministry and I had to think about it.

Was it my ministry of catechesis during the 10 years I answered parishioners’ questions in an insert in the weekly bulletins at St. Michael and Our Lady of Guadalupe Churches in Cuero, when I answered over 800 questions about our faith, devotions, practices, and customs?

Or was it when I went to the bedside of a dying mother of two teenagers as she lost her battle with breast cancer? When I arrived at her bedside, we greeted each other warmly. She told me she was very tired and I comforted her and suggested we pray the rosary together. She smiled and agreed that would be fine. With a room full of family and friends kneeling at her bedside, we prayed her into eternity. That was awesome.

Or was it when I retired from active parish ministry and a group from Shiner, who were working on preserving the memory of Father Charles Kram, asked me to write his biography? You can’t imagine the blessings I have received from writing Gladly Will I Glory In My Infirmities which was sub-titled “A Joyful Journey Through Life Despite Enormous Suffering.” And now, Bishop Cahill has opened an investigation into the possibility of Father Kram being raised to the altar as a saint in heaven. This is more than I could ever imagine when I entered into God’s service as a deacon.

With the hand of God guiding me through these and all my other experiences, I have enjoyed some really beautiful moments in my ministry.

I urge each of you to open your heart and mind and soul to dedicate every day to do God’s Will for you no matter where He will take you. My journey has been a pleasant one when I am doing things His way, but a rough road when I do things my way.

I could not have done any of my ministries without the loving support of my wife, Dawn, or the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Truly, God is Good.

Dawn and I, both now in our mid-80s, are completely retired (we think). We have moved to Copperfield Village, an independent living facility for retirees in Victoria. We presently worship and try to keep a low profile at Holy Family Church and we constantly thank God for all His gifts to us. Our sons, Mike, and his wife live in Colorado and Chris and his wife are in Texas City. Our grandson, Chris, lives in Dickinson.

Please pray for us and all the servants of God, clergy and religious and laity. Also please pray for the success of our diocesan effort to sponsor the canonization of the late Father Charles Kram, Jr. Peace and Blessings and Love to everyone.

Meet a Deacon
(a TCL series)

Deacon Warzecha and Family c. 1986

Journeys of Faith with Ceci

Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Holy Land - with Bishop Cahill
January 23 - February 3, 2017
Registrations still being accepted

All Things Are Possible pilgrimage to the Holy Land with John Michael Talbot & Fr. Gary Janak
March 9-18, 2017
Pre-pilgrimage retreat at Mt. of Beatitudes - March 6

8-Day Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi!
with Fr. Kristopher Fuchs
April 23-30, 2017

Remember - the perfect gift for Christmas is the gift of a pilgrimage!

Ceci Triska • (979) 543-8575 (leave message) ceci.triska@gmail.com • www.selectinternationaltours.com

Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center
Visit the 19th Century! See living historians, artisans, and more!

The Presidio, located in Goliad, is the only Spanish fort in the possession of the Catholic church in North America and is a National Historic Landmark.
The museum is open 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and is closed on major holidays.
For more information, call (361) 645-3752 or visit www.presidiolabahia.org.
Pregnant? Need Help?

Confidential and caring assistance available for the following needs:
- emotional
- material
- spiritual
- educational
- providing immediate and practical help.

We have a special concern for you and your unborn child.

Gabriel Project
Toll Free 1-866-MARY AID
1-866-627-9243

How To Reduce Stress

If you are stressed out, then try these strategies for a while and see if they don’t help.

• Practice not worrying about things you can’t control.

• Remember that you are wonderful and lovable, even if imperfect.

• Laugh.

The Spirit of Advent ~ Pray throughout the season
Bless your Advent wreath. Light one of the violet candles marking the season’s first week as you sing a verse of “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel.”

Consider adding a Jesse tree, depicting the relationship of Jesus with his ancestor Jesse, to your family’s Advent traditions. Learn about Jesse trees.

Today is “Giving Tuesday,” a global day of giving fueled by social media and collaboration. Consider a gift to one of the national collections that support the Church’s works of social justice, evangelization, and education.

On this Feast of St. Andrew the Apostle, contemplate the “Great Call of Apostleship.”

“Today is the World Day for the battle against HIV/AIDS. We express our closeness to all people where it has affected, especially children.” (Pope Francis, Dec. 1, 2013)

“What is the meaning of ‘Prepare the way of the Lord?’ It means: make ready for the reception of whatever Christ may wish to do.” (St. Cyril of Alexandria, Commentary on Luke, 6)

On this feast day of the great missionary St. Francis Xavier, read about how each baptized Catholic is called to be a missionary disciple of Christ, to proclaim the love of God they have experienced.

Light the second violet candle on your Advent wreath. Pray the Rosary and meditate on the Joyful Mysteries with your family.

“If we love God and our brothers and sisters, we walk in the light; but if our heart is closed . . . then darkness falls within and around us.” (Pope Francis, Dec. 24, 2013)

On this feast of St. Nicholas, the 4th century bishop known for his abundant generosity to the poor, pray for an end to global poverty.

Today we remember St. Ambrose who once wrote, “Nothing graces the Christian soul so much as mercy—mercy as shown chiefly toward the poor.” (St. Ambrose, On the Duties of Clergy, 1.11.36)

On this Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception, reflect on St. Augustine’s words: “Mary is more blessed in receiving the chief of Christ, than in conceiving the flesh of Christ.”

(St. Augustine, On Holy Virginity, 3)

On this day in 1948, the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Read about Catholic social teaching on human rights and responsibilities.

On this Gaudete (Rejoice) Sunday, light the third (rose-colored) candle on your Advent wreath, and give generously to the collection for retired religious.

“On this Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, let us . . . gratefully remember her visit and maternal kindness . . . and let us entrust the life our peoples and the continental mission of the Church to her.” (Pope Francis, Dec. 12, 2014)

Today is the feast day of St. Lucy, who suffered martyrdom during the Diocletian persecution. She is mentioned by name in the Roman Canon and is best known as the patron saint of the blind.

On the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love,” wrote St. John of the Cross, a founder of a Carmelite order known for his poetry and mystical writings, whose feast day is today (Dichos, no. 54).

“Exceeding gently, the finger of your justice, in love and compassion, touches the wounds of one who is to be healed” (St. Ephraem of Syria, Nisibene Hymns, 11.4). Pray today for the people of war-torn Syria.

Today, many Central & Latin American countries begin to celebrate Las Posadas—reenactments of the Holy Family’s journey to Bethlehem. Learn more about this and other cultural Advent traditions.

On this day including the “O Antiphons,” which accompany the Magnificat canticle of Evening Prayer from December 17-23, as part of your table or bedtime prayers.

Light the final candle on your Advent wreath and assemble and bless the family crèche. Remember to hide the baby Jesus figure until Christmas!

“For the great human family it is always necessary to rediscover the common horizon toward which we are journeying. The horizon of hope!” (Pope Francis, Dec. 1, 2013)

“Surely in her heart she said to the baby in her womb: ‘Come, I want to see your face, for they have told me you will be great’.” (Isaiah, 7.13-14). Meditate today on the birth story of Jesus.

Today is the feast day of St. Peter Canisius, a renowned Jesuit preacher and Doctor of the Church. In his memory, pray today for vocations to the priesthood and religious life.

“With your honorable conduct and your irreproachable deeds, prepare the Lord’s way, smooth out his path so that the Word of God may act in you without hindrance.” (Oriigen, Homilies on Luke, 21)

Today we remember St. John of Kanty, a Polish priest whose personal devotion and humility were examples to all who knew him. Celebrate the virtue of humility in your prayer today.

“This is how the liturgy of this holy Christmas night presents to us the birth of the Savior: as the light that pierces and disperses the deepest darkness.” (Pope Francis, Dec. 24, 2014)

Beginning the Church’s liturgical year, Advent (from, “ad-venire” in Latin or “to come to”) is the season encompassing the four Sundays (and weekdays) leading up to the celebration of Christmas. The Advent season is a time of preparation that directs our hearts and minds to Christ’s second coming at the end of time and also to the anniversary of the Lord’s birth on Christmas. The final days of Advent, from December 17 to December 24, focus particularly on our preparation for the celebrations of the Nativity of our Lord (Christmas). Advent devotions including the Advent wreath, remind us of the meaning of the season. The Advent calendar above can help you fully enter in to the season with daily activity and prayer suggestions to prepare you spiritually for the birth of Jesus Christ.

Lord our God, we praise you for your Son, Jesus Christ: he is Emmanuel, the hope of the peoples, he is the wisdom that teaches and guides us, he is the Savior of every nation.

Lord God, let your blessing come upon us as we light the candles of this wreath. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ’s promise to bring us salvation. May the wreath and its light be a sign of Christ’s promise to bring us salvation. May he come quickly and not delay. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.
Sunday Readings from - December 11 - January 15

December 11 - Third Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 35:1-6A, 10
Psalms 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10
James 5:7-10
Matthew 11:2-11

December 18 - Fourth Sunday of Advent
Isaiah 7:10-14
Psalms 24:1-2, 3-4, 5-6
Romans 1:1-7
Matthew 1:18-24

December 25 - The Nativity of the Lord
Mass during the Night
Isaiah 9:1-6
Psalms 96:1-2, 2-3, 11-12, 13
Titus 2:11-14
Luke 2:1-14

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

January 8 - 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

January 15 - Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 49:3, 5-6
Psalms 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10
1 Corinthians 1:1-3
John 1:29-34

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings.

Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign

FAITH

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 15 — December 2016

FAITH

DECEMBER 11, 2016
3RD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
READING I – ISAIAH 35:1-6A, 10

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: The desert and the parched land will exult; the steppe will rejoice and bloom. / They will bloom with abundant flowers, and rejoice with joyful song. / The glory of Lebanon will be given to them, / the splendor of Carmel and Sharon; / they will see the glory of the Lord, / the splendor of our God. / Strengthen the hands that are feeble, / make firm the knees that are weak, / say to those whose hearts are frightened: / Be strong, fear not! / Here is your God, / he comes with vindication, / with divine recompense / he comes to save you. / Then will the eyes of the blind be opened, / the ears of the deaf be cleared; / then will the lame leap like a stag, / then the tongue of the mute will sing. / Those whom the Lord has ransomed will return / and enter Zion singing, / crowned with everlasting joy; / they will meet with joy and gladness, / sorrow and mourning will flee.

FE E B L E T F H E C I O J E R E
J D E Z L E M A R A C O T O U N G E
D F E X V I N D I C A T I O N T L
E D I N U E Q R A F L O W E R S F
N J E R W L S A S Z I O N K G Y L
E J S A M O T E I Z E O O A S O O
P G N N F E R F T Y R O T G P J R
O L E S R T E C E A B S N X L W D
S A P O E U N S H G N I D A E R C
T D M M T M G S P H S L L A N D L
E N O E U B T E O T E S K L D G E
P E C D R L H M R A D A E Y O S A
P S E J N O E A P N Q B R D R O R
E S R A E O N L A S A V E T U N E
S E E N K M Q H G N M E E T S G D
G L O R Y S T R O N G W O R R O S
D N I L B X D N T R E S E D N O T

Name: __________________________
Address: ________________________
Phone number: ___________________
Parish: __________________________
Age, if 18 or under: ______________

Although the above material is copyrighted and copying of it is prohibited by law, the author does offer use of the material for educational purposes under an Educators Program. If you are interested in using this puzzle or book for educational use or for more information, contact Elie’s Spiritual Treasures at (361) 894-7274, elies_spiritual_treasures@yahoo.com or visit www.searching-for-jesus.com.

There will be a drawing from those who send the above entry form with crossword puzzle to The Catholic Lighthouse, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 for a chance to win an Elie’s Spiritual Treasures Bible Word Search book. Drawing will be held on December 23.

We will be publishing a puzzle quarterly in English and Spanish, the next Spanish puzzle will be in February and the English puzzle in April.

YEAR OF MERCY CLOSES—The Holy Doors of the Chapel of the Holy Innocents at Raphael’s Refuge in Flatonia were closed by Father Tommy Chen, pictured above, after Mass on November 18. Father Eddie Winkler, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Flatonia was a concelebrant at the Eucharist. The Chapel was filled with an overflowing crowd of pilgrims from the Victoria, San Antonio, and Austin Dioceses. Friends of Raphael’s Refuge provided a meal following the service.

Year of Mercy Closes

Began December 8, 2015
Ended November 20, 2016
U.S. Bishops To Launch Nationwide Consultation And Missionary Effort With Latino Catholics

- Fifth National Encuentro to focus on Latino youth and families
- Four-year process to identify over 20,000 emerging Hispanic Catholic leaders nationwide
- Consultation to involve more than 1 million Catholics from all walks of life

Baltimore — Catholic dioceses around the country will soon be involved in an intensive consultation and missionary effort called the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic/Latino Ministry.

Drawing inspiration from Pope Francis, the theme of the V Encuentro is Missionary Disciples: Witnesses of God’s Love. The main goal of the V Encuentro is to discern ways for the Church in the United States to better respond to the ever-growing Hispanic presence, and to help Hispanics Catholics to strengthen their Christian identity and their response as missionary disciples for the entire Church.

The Encuentro starts at the grass-roots level and calls for the development of resources and initiatives to better serve the fast-growing Hispanic population in parishes, dioceses, ecclesial movements, and other Catholic organizations and institutions while at the same time promoting the development of Latino leadership within the Church.

“The Fifth Encuentro is a time of grace”, said Bishop Nelson Pérez, auxiliary bishop of Rockville Centre, New York, and chairman of the USCCB Subcommittee on Hispanic Affairs. “It is a great opportunity for the Church to reach out to our Hispanic brothers and sisters with Christ’s message of hope and love. It is a time to listen, a time to develop meaningful relationships, a time to learn and bear abundant fruits, and a time to rejoice in God’s love.”

Bishop Perez’s report on the V Encuentro to the Fall General Assembly of Catholic Bishops in Baltimore, November 15, serves as the official launching of this wide-ranging USCCB initiative, which will start in parishes and dioceses across the country during early 2017 and continue for several years. After the parish, diocesan and regional phases of consultation, reflection and missionary activity are concluded, the process will reach its zenith at the National V Encuentro gathering to be celebrated in late September of 2018 in the Fort Worth area, with approximately 3,000 delegates from participating dioceses across the country. After that, a time for reflection on the findings, identification of good ministerial practices and implementation strategies at the local level will follow.

Bishops Urged to Walk with Young People, Bring Them to Deeper Faith

By Carol Zimmermann
Catholic News Service

Baltimore (CNS) -- Archbishop Christopher Pierre, the new apostolic nuncio to the United States, urged U.S. bishops Nov. 14 to pay close attention to young Catholics to both learn from them and help them to deepen their faith.

“Many young people are not allergic to the truths of the faith or to the church, but they simply don’t know anything or know very little about the faith,” he said, urging bishops to take steps needed to help them.

The archbishop, who addressed the bishops at the start of their fall general assembly in Baltimore, also noted that it is difficult for today’s young people to live out their faith in today’s modern world and they need to know they are welcome in the church.

His remarks were geared to encouraging bishops to prepare for the October 2018 Synod of Bishops, which has the theme of accompanying young people on the path of faith and in discerning their vocation, announced by the Vatican this October.

“We know that youth are critical to the life of the church,” he stressed, adding that they often “find themselves at the peripheries of both the church and society. We must go out to them.”
Bishops’ Committee on Migration:

We would first like to congratulate President-elect Donald J. Trump and give our support for all efforts to work together to promote the common good, especially those to protect the most vulnerable among us. I personally pledge my prayers for Mr. Trump, all elected officials, and those who will work in the new administration. I offer a special word to migrant and refugee families living in the United States: be assured of our solidarity and continued accompaniment as you work for a better life.

We believe the family unit is the cornerstone of society, so it is vital to protect the integrity of the family. For this reason, we are reminded that behind every “statistic” is a person who is a mother, father, son, daughter, sister or brother and has dignity as a child of God. We pray that as the new administration begins its role leading our country, it will recognize the contributions of refugees and immigrants to the overall prosperity and well-being of our nation. We will work to promote humane policies that protect refugees and immigrants’ inherent dignity, keep families together, and honor and respect the laws of this nation.

Serving and welcoming people fleeing violence and conflict in various regions of the world is part of our identity as Catholics. The Church will continue this life-saving tradition. Today, with more than 65 million people forcibly displaced from their homes, the need to welcome refugees and provide freedom from persecution is more acute than ever and 80 of our dioceses across the country are eager to continue this wonderful act of accompaniment born of our Christian faith. We stand ready to work with a new administration to continue to ensure that refugees are humanely welcomed without sacrificing our security or our core values as Americans. A duty to welcome and protect newcomers, particularly refugees, is an integral part of our mission to help our neighbors in need.

We pray for President-elect Trump and all leaders in public life, that they may rise to the responsibilities entrusted to them with grace and courage. And may all of us as Catholics and Americans remain a people of solidarity with others in need and a nation of hospitality which treats others as Americans. A duty to welcome and sacrificing our security or our core values as Americans. A duty to welcome and protect newcomers, particularly refugees, is an integral part of our mission to help our neighbors in need.

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.

LOUISIANA EVANGELIZATION — An unidentified woman with religious floats along the Bayou Teche in Louisiana on a pontoon during a mile-long eucharistic procession to Catholic churches Aug. 15, the feast of the Assumption, in the Diocese of Lafayette, Louisiana. (CNS photo/courtesy Father Michael Champagne)
El tiempo de Adviento es un tiempo de preparación que dirige nuestros corazones y mentes a la segunda venida de Cristo al final de los tiempos y también para el aniversario del nacimiento del Señor en la Navidad. Los últimos días de Adviento, el 17 de diciembre a la 24 de Diciembre, se centran sobre todo en nuestra preparación para las fiestas de la Natividad de nuestro Señor (Navidad).

Devociones de Adviento, incluyendo la corona de Adviento, nos recuerdan el significado de la temporada. Nuestro calendario de Adviento anterior puede ayudarle a entrar completamente en la temporada de actividad y de oración sugerencias diarias para prepararse espiritualmente para el nacimiento de Jesucristo.

El tiempo de Adviento es un tiempo de preparación que dirige nuestros corazones y mentes a la segunda venida de Cristo al final de los tiempos y también para el aniversario del nacimiento del Señor en la Navidad. Los últimos días de Adviento, el 17 de diciembre a la 24 de Diciembre, se centran sobre todo en nuestra preparación para las fiestas de la Natividad de nuestro Señor (Navidad).

Devociones de Adviento, incluyendo la corona de Adviento, nos recuerdan el significado de la temporada. Nuestro calendario de Adviento anterior puede ayudarle a entrar completamente en la temporada de actividad y de oración sugerencias diarias para prepararse espiritualmente para el nacimiento de Jesucristo.
**December**

Yorktown—Christmas Craft Show sponsored by the Holy Cross Catholic Daughters #1598 on Saturday, Dec. 10. See their event page on Facebook, Christmas Craft Show and Café - Holy Cross CDA.

Victoria—The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, continue their Celebration of 150 Years here in Victoria, they invite you to an OPEN HOUSE at 1101 N. E. Water Street on Saturday, Dec. 17, from 2:00 –5:00 p.m. All are welcome!

**January**

Victoria—Benefit dinner for the Missionary Catechism of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary Sisters, Jan. 15, 2017. A carne guisada dinner to be served. See ad on pg. 20 for more information.

Edna—St. 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 18, 2017, at the Jackson County Services Building, 411 N. Wells Street, Edna, from 7:00-8:00 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. Refreshments will be served and admission is free.

East Bernard—Catholic Daughters Court St. Bernadette #1108, annual Chicken Noodle Soup and Sandwich Supper on Wednesday, Jan. 25 at the American Legion Hall (Hwy. 60). Serving begins at 5:00 p.m. until sold out. Soup, $3 per bowl and $3 for a chicken salad sandwich. Variety of pastries available. Also a silent auction.

Victoria—Candle Light March will be on Thursday, Jan. 26. Gather at 7:00 p.m. in DeLeon Plaza downtown to march to Our Lady of Sorrows where the featured speaker will be State Representative Gennie Morrison.

**Pilgrimages**

Spiritual Director: Father Kristopher Fuchs (OLV) – 12 Day Pilgrimage to Portugal, Spain & France visiting Lisbon, Aljubarrota, Vilahnos, Fatima, Santiago de Compostela, Burgos, Leon, Lourdes, Zaragoza & Madrid on June 14-27, 2017. For a copy of the itinerary, please email Dora Silva at dsilva4415@gmail.com. Deposit and payments must be submitted to Little Flower Tours & Travel, for further payment information please contact Susan at (888) 843-7373.

Spiritual Director: Bishop Brendan Cahill – Holy Land Prayer & Encounter Jan. 23-Feb. 3, 2017, to walk in the footsteps of Jesus. Registrations still being accepted. Contact: Ceci Triska by email at jctriska@sbcglobal.net or call (979) 543-8575. See ad on pg. 12.

Spiritual Director: Father Gary Janak and John Michael Talbot - All things are possible pilgrimage to the Holy Land - March 9-18, 2017, contact: Ceci Triska by email at jctriska@sbcglobal.net or call (979) 543-8575. See ad on pg. 12.

Spiritual Director: Father Kristopher Fuchs – 8-Day Pilgrimage to Rome and Assisi - April 23-30, 2017, contact: Ceci Triska by email at jctriska@sbcglobal.net or call (979) 543-8575. See ad on pg. 12.

**Catholic Family Services**—To find Catholic organizations which focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at 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.couragecr.net.

**Emmaus Center**—Ofers Individual, Couples, Family, Adolescent and Children’s counseling as well as specialized Support Groups for Men, Women and those afflicted by Grief. Spiritual Direction is also available on request. The Emmaus Center is located at 1908 N. Laurent St., Suite #140 (behind the VA Clinic). Appointments may be made by calling (361) 212-0830.

**Engaged Encounter—2017 dates:** Jan. 20-22, April 21-23, May 26-28, Sept. 22-24, Nov. 17-19 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.

**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. 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**—An on-going Grief Group meets at Holy Family Church, Victoria in the Conference Room, 7:00 p.m., on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. Every adult, who has experienced the death of a loved one, may attend (after three months has passed). Please call Sharon at (361) 578-7572 before attending.

**i.d.9:16 Ministry**—For adults in their 20s-30s, single or married. Is held at Holy Family in Victoria every first Thursday of the month. Starts with the 6:00 p.m. daily Mass, dinner, a talk live streamed from the headquarters in Michigan followed by fellowship. Child Care is available to those who RSVP. It is open to all young adults of the diocese. For more information or to RSVP for events email id916victoria@gmail.com.

**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.

**Mothers of Grace**—A new mothers’ group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. They meet every Tuesday at 6:30 p.m. in the Early Childhood Center. For more information contact Jennifer Ruiz at jeniferschoebyruiz@yahoo.com.

**Natural Family Planning**—NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. To learn about the NFP class schedules in the Victoria area, contact David and Annie Coffey at victorianfptravelers@yahoo.com. For the CREIGHTON MODEL Fertility Care System (CrMS) featuring NaPro TECHNOLOGY™ contact Susanne Koch in Wharton at (505) 710-0903 or 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 Flatonia. 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.

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

**St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans—**For dates, contact Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858 or visit www.lostrescompaneros-sfo.org.

**Amor Meus**

Solemn Lenten Vespers: December 11, & 18 from 5:00-5:45 p.m. Solemn Vespers is the Liturgical Evening Prayer of the Church. This prayer focuses on praying the psalms, giving thanks for the day and offering praise to God. Solemn Evening Praise closes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. Call for appointment, register or more information. All the events are held at Incarnate Word Convent/Amor Meus Spirituality Center, 1101 N.E. Water St., Victoria, TX 77901; (361) 575-7111; email: amormeus@yahoo.com website: www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org

Submit Calendar Events to lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org
Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year From


A Lifetime at the Organ

Continued from pg. 1

Mary Margaret McQuillen playing the organ at St. Joseph Church in Yoakum. Mary says, “The Holy Spirit guides me; I just play.”

Valedictorian of the Class of 1947. Mary attended Our Lady of the Lake University, in San Antonio, for a short time, then enrolled in banking courses in Victoria. She married her late husband, James, who everyone called Jimmy, and together they raised 5 children: John McQuillen, Scott McQuillen, Margie McQuillen Brogger, Amy McQuillen Hull, and Colleen McQuillen Carroll (deceased). In addition to being a housewife, Mary worked at First State Bank for more than 24 years as Vice-President and Loan Officer.

Mary has been retired over 20 years from her career, but is still very involved in her parish and community. She has served as regent several times with the Catholic Daughters, is a member of the St. Joseph altar society, an associate of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, has served as President of the Yoakum Community Hospital Auxiliary, has been a CCD teacher and a member of the Chamber of Commerce. When she isn’t at the church and helping in the community, Mary enjoys reading magazines, historical novels, and embroidering for the Yoakum Community Hospital Auxiliary gift shop.

First Fridays at 6:30 a.m. and Saturdays at 5:00 p.m., you will find Mary playing the organ at St. Joseph Church. Some of her favorite hymns are Be Not Afraid, Holy God We Praise Thy Name, On this Day Oh Beautiful Mother, and Taste and See.

Mary shared, “The Holy Spirit guides me; I just play. I encourage anyone who plays piano or organ to offer it up for the greater honor and glory of God. Whoever sings, prays twice, and if you play the organ, you pray 3 times!!”