



The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



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FEBRUARY 2018

Serra Club of Victoria Promoting Vocations for Over 60 Years

By Sarita Villafranca Richmond, Editor

At the Fall General Assembly in Baltimore on November 15, 2016, Bishop Brendan Cahill joined his brother bishops as they approved the 2017-2020 strategic plan. The plan is centered on five strategic priorities approved by the full body of bishops. These priorities are: Evangelization, Family and Marriage, Human Life and Dignity, Vocations and Ongoing Formation, and Religious Freedom. Bishop Cahill has dedicated himself to support and guide the Diocese of Victoria to focus on these priorities.

One of those priorities, *Vocations and Ongoing Formation*, is one that the Serra Club of Victoria has been supporting for over 60 years. The Serra Club of Victoria began in the fall of 1958 through the vision of the late, Monsignor F.O. Beck who was pastor of St. Marys. He contacted Dr. Joe Hopkins, Frank Fossati, Dion R. Holm Jr., M.V. Sandhofer, and R.A. Stevenson Jr. to help him form the club. On November 2, 1959 the club was sponsored by Dr. John Thiel of Galveston and became club num-

ber 191 with R.A. Stevenson, Jr. elected as first chairman.

Serra USA was formed in 1935 when a small group of lay people in Seattle decided to form an organization to promote and foster vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life. They chose Father Junipero Serra as their patron and named the organization SERRA Club of Seattle.

Junipero Serra was born on the island of Majorca on the East side of Spain on November 24th, 1713. He took the name of Junipero when he entered the Franciscan Order in 1730. Father Serra moved to Mexico City, Mexico on August 28th, 1784. While he was in Mexico all of the Franciscan Monks were asked to take over the missions in Baja California. After these missions were taken over, they became the responsibility of Father Serra. Father Serra is known as the founder of many of the missions in California.

Serra Clubs are known worldwide for their efforts to foster and affirm Catholic vocations to the ministerial priesthood and vowed religious life. Serrans value not only their work, but also the sense of community they receive from knowing that they are not alone in their dedication to the men and women who have dedicated their life in ministry and service to our Church. The current president of the Serra Club of Victoria, JoAnn Bleier has been a member for 18 years. She explained that the club hosts events for the seminarians, sisters and deacons throughout the year to show their support and appreciation to them. They also have two meetings per month. JoAnn shares, "It is a real joy to be around the seminarians and sisters, they are so happy. They are a bunch of young men and women dedicating their lives to God. There is something about them that gives you joy." Another member, John Stevenson has been a Serran for almost 20 years. His father, R.A. Stevenson was one of the founding members. John recalls "growing up" in the Serra Club and how their family vacations were always intertwined



Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated Mass for the Serra Club at their December meeting.



See Serra Club, pg. 20



Bishop Brendan Cahill A Shepherd's Message

Getting Ready for Lent

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In January I had the opportunity to see a performance of "The Music Man" by the Victoria School District. First of all I want to express on behalf of so many of us our gratitude for the teachers, administrators, coaches, parents and students who put so much effort into these performances for the rest of us to enjoy! We are all blessed as a community by the dedicated work of these men and women.

As I was watching the performance I remembered a conference I gave to seminarians a few years ago at St. Mary's Seminary. I began the conference with a five-minute video of a song from "The Music Man." If you know the musical you may remember the song - "Pick-A-Little, Talk-A-Little".

The song had a funny way of illustrating a real thing many of us deal with each day. In the song people can't help but share unsubstantiated rumors and gossip about others. They say things like: "I really shouldn't tell you this, but" One of the things that is so great about some of these musicals is the truth they point out to the audience. The point I wanted to make in the talk at the Seminary was how easy it is for us to slip into the habit of gossiping and talking badly about people.

It almost seems like we're surrounded by gossip every day. Just think about the checkout line at the grocery store - what are the messages on the covers of the magazines that are sitting there? Thinking about this little lesson from the past helped me begin

to think about this upcoming Lent. As we work to cleanse our hearts for the celebration of Easter we could be challenged to cleanse our lips and minds from words that are hurtful for others to words that build up and encourage. Pope Francis offers a beautiful prayer that may fitting for us to pray this Lent:

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Help us to recognize the evil latent in a communication that does not build communion. Help us to remove the venom from our judgments. Help us to speak about others as our brothers and sisters. You are faithful and trustworthy; may our words be seeds of goodness for the world: where there is shouting, let us practice listening; where there is confusion, let us inspire harmony;

where there is ambiguity, let us bring clarity; where there is exclusion, let us offer solidarity; where there is sensationalism, let us use sobriety; where there is superficiality, let us raise real questions; where there is prejudice, let us awaken trust; where there is hostility, let us bring respect; where there is falsehood, let us bring truth. Amen.

Again, I want to particularly thank each of you who have committed to pray the Rosary for the gift of peace in the world and for the family. As St. John Paul II invited us to pray this faithfully, I believe we can maintain our confidence in the power of this prayer - more than we ever know! May God bless you and your families, let's keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan



la conferencia en el Seminario fue lo fácil que es para nosotros a caer en el hábito de chismes y hablar mal de la gente.

Casi parece que estamos rodeados de chismes todos los días. Piensa en la fila en el supermercado - ¿Cuáles son los mensajes en las coberturas de las revistas que están puestos allí? Pensando en esta pequeña lección del pasado me ayudó a empezar a pensar en esta próxima Cuaresma. A medida que trabajamos para limpiar nuestros corazones para la celebración de Pascua podríamos ser desafiados para limpiar nuestros labios y las mentes de las palabras que hacen daño a los demás a las palabras que se acumulan y fomentan. El Papa Francisco ofrece una hermosa oración que puede ser apropiado que oremos esta Cuaresma:

Señor, haznos instrumentos de tu paz. Haznos reconocer el mal que se insinúa en una comunicación que no crea comunión. Haznos capaces de quitar el veneno de nuestros juicios. Ayúdanos a hablar de los otros como de hermanos y hermanas. Tú eres fiel y digno de confianza; haz que

nuestras palabras sean semillas de bien para el mundo: donde hay ruido, haz que practiquemos la escucha; donde hay confusión, haz que inspiremos armonía; donde hay ambigüedad, haz que llevemos claridad; donde hay exclusión, haz que llevemos el compartir; donde hay sensacionalismo, haz que usemos la sobriedad; donde hay superficialidad, haz que planteemos interrogantes verdaderos; donde hay prejuicio, haz que suscitamos confianza; donde hay agresividad, haz que llevemos respeto; donde hay falsedad, haz que llevemos verdad. Amén.

Una vez más, quiero agradecer especialmente a cada uno de ustedes que se han comprometido a rezar el rosario por el don de la paz en el mundo y para la familia. Como San Juan Pablo II nos invita a orar con fidelidad, creo que podemos mantener nuestra confianza en la eficacia de esta oración - más de lo que sabemos! Que Dios los bendiga y a sus familias, vamos a mantenernos en la oración.

+ Brendan



Obispo Brendan Cahill Mensaje del Pastor

Preparándose Para la Cuaresma

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

En enero tuve la oportunidad de ver una actuación llamado "The Music Man" (El hombre de la música) por el distrito escolar de Victoria. En primer lugar quiero expresar en nombre de muchos de nosotros nuestro agradecimiento por los maestros, administradores, entrenadores, padres y estudiantes que ponen mucho esfuerzo en estas actuaciones para que el resto de nosotros puedan disfrutarlo! Todos hemos sido bendecidos como una comunidad por el trabajo dedicado de estos hombres y mujeres.

Mientras miraba la actuación me recorde de una conferencia que di a semi-

naristas hace unos años en el Seminario de Santa María. Empecé la conferencia con un vídeo de cinco minutos de una canción de del musical "The Music Man". Si conoces el drama puede recordar la canción - "Pick-A-Little, Talk-A-Little". La canción tenía una manera divertida de ilustrar una cosa real que muchos de nosotros tratamos con cada día. En la canción la gente no puede dejar de compartir rumores sin fundamento y chismes sobre los demás. Dicen cosas como: "Realmente no debería decirte esto, pero" Una de las cosas que es tan grande acerca de algunos de estos musicales es la verdad que señalan a la audiencia. El punto que quería hacer en



Bishop Brendan's Schedule

February		
3	Men's Conference, Little Rock, Arkansas	19 11:30 a.m. Mass for Region 10 Fiscal Manager retreat/meeting at Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria
4	9:00 a.m. World Day for Consecrated Life Mass at IWBS Convent, Victoria	21 5:30 CCD Visit at Holy Cross, East Bernard
7	6:30 p.m. CCD Visit at Holy Cross, Yorktown	22 Ordination of Bishop Aviles, Brownsville
8	6:00 p.m. Mass of Thanksgiving and Rededication of Church at Our Lady of the Gulf, Port Lavaca	24 4th degree Knight Exemplification at Holy Family, Victoria
9-10	Deacon Retreat at Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria	25 8:30 a.m. Mass at St. Patrick, Seadrift
11	St. Mary's Parish Festival, Victoria	10:30 a.m. Mass at St. Ann, Point Comfort
12	2:00 p.m. Interfaith Meeting	1:00 p.m. Catholic Knowledge Bowl at Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
	5:00 p.m. Diocesan Liturgical Commission	5:30 p.m. Mass at OLV w/ Girl Scout presentation at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
13	Retreat for DOV Staff at the Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria	26 Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists, Victoria
14	12:00 p.m. Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bay City	6:00 p.m. DSAC Strategic Planning Meeting
	5:30 p.m. CCD Visit at Immaculate Conception, Goliad	27 11:00 a.m. Lenten luncheon with the UHV College students, Victoria
17	10:00 a.m. Diocesan Encuentro at St. Robert Bellarmine, El Campo	28 6:30 p.m. CCD Visit at St. Peter, Blessing
	5:30 p.m. Mass 4th Degree Assembly #1131 & 2018 Ladies Night Dinner at St. Philip, El Campo	March
18	2:00 p.m. Rite of Election at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria	2-4 Weekend of Recollection at Holy Trinity Seminary, Dallas
		4-7 Evangelization Conference in South Bend, IN

Official Announcements

Effective January 24, 2018, **Father Philip Brune** has appointed pastor of St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in El Campo, Texas.

Bishop Fellhauer's Schedule

February 10 9:30 Confirmation at Sacred Heart Church, Flatonia



IT'S OFFICIAL—On January 1, 2018, Tony Martinez became the new Chief Financial Officer/ Business Manager of the Diocese of Victoria. Pictured above is Very Reverend Gary Janak, Tony's wife Cindy, and Bishop Brendan Cahill. The Chancery staff gathered as he was officially sworn into his new position.

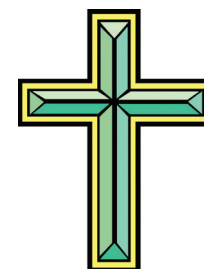
Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria,

Heavenly Father, bless Your Church with an abundance of holy and zealous priests, deacons, brothers, and sisters. Give those you have called to the married state and those you have chosen to live as single persons in the world, the special graces that their lives require. Form us all in the likeness of your Son so that in Him, with Him, and through Him we may love You more deeply and serve You more faithfully, always and everywhere. With Mary we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria, who died during the month of February:

Rev. Daniel O'Brien	02/07/2008
Rev. Eugene Janson	02/17/2005
Rev. Brian Crookes	02/23/2003
Rev. Msgr. Vaclav J. Bily	02/23/1990
Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmitzinsky	02/25/2005
Rev. Jerome Caponi	02/27/2009

"Eternal rest granted unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them. May they rest in peace."



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DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF THE PRECEDING MONTH

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Seminary Endowment Fund

Seminary Endowment Fund (formerly known as Seminary Burses) is 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 person, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received.

Donation Categories: Lector - \$.01 - \$99.99; Acolyte – \$100 - \$499.99; Candidate – \$500 - \$1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – \$1,500 - \$2,499.99; Priest – \$2,500 >.

January 24, 2018

• **General Seminary Burse**
Lector

In memory of Eugene Jirkovsky by Dan Jemelka and Family

• **Rev. Msgr. Arnold Anders Seminary Burse**
Priest

Donation for the men in priestly formation in our diocese by Rev. Msgr. Arnold Anders

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

In memory of Willie C. Migl by Ed and Peggy Scherer
Larry and Doris Grubert, Jr.
Donation by Soila Sanchez
In memory of Lucille Werner by Larry and Doris Grubert, Jr.
In memory of Victoria Orsak by Larry and Doris Grubert, Jr.
In memory of Michael Chovanetz by

Larry and Doris Grubert, Jr.
In memory of John Jr. and Tillie Peters by Deacon Joey and Mary Targac
In memory of Franklin Billimek by Bernard and Mary Grahmann
Donation in honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters by Soila Sanchez

Acolyte
In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters at Christmas by Sacred Heart Catholic School faculty and staff

• **Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse**
Transitional Deacon
Donation in honor of Rev. Michael Rother

• **Henry A. Schoenfeld Seminary Burse**
Candidate
Donation in memory of Henry Schoenfeld by Bernice Schoenfeld and Children

• **Rev. Charles Sonnier Seminary Burse**
Lector
In memory of Hubert J. Smolik by Lillie Janak

• **Rev. Scott Hill Seminary Burse**
Lector

In memory of Oscar Martin Medina, Jr. by Daryl and Joan Hill

• **Rev. Daniel P. Kahlich Seminary Burse**
Lector

In honor of Rev. Daniel Kahlich for Christmas by the KJZT Society #23, Hostyn

• **Rev. Timothy Kosler Seminary Burse**
Lector

In memory of Valeria Anders Tumis by Alvin J. Anders
Acolyte
In honor of Rev. Timothy Kosler by Harvey Michna

• **Rev. Msgr. Robert Schmidt Seminary Burse #2**
Lector

In memory of Loretta Schmidt Lembcke by Willy and Dale Schmidt

• **Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner Seminary Burse**
Candidate

In memory of Rev. Msgr. James Brunner by Leroy and Betty Brunner

• **CDA Court of St. Ann #369 Seminary Burse #2**
Lector

In memory of Janell Kruppa by CDA Court St. Ann #369

• **Rev. Wayne Flagg Seminary Burse**
Candidate

In honor of Rev. Wayne Flagg by Michael and Julie Koch

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

In honor of Rev. Philip Brune's birthday celebration by Mark and Sharon Kubicek

• **St. John the Baptist Church, St. John In Memory of Rev. Brian Crookes Seminary Burse #2**
Lector

In memory of Agnes Schramek by: Eugene and JoMarie Krupala
Albert and Dorothy Olsovsky
In memory of Ladik Valicek by: Albert and Dorothy Olsovsky
Eugene and Joe Marie Krupala
Pam and Robert Besetsny

To contribute to an existing Seminary Endowment Fund send contributions with the appropriate fund designation to:

Diocese Of Victoria
Seminary Endowment Fund
P. O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

Education of Seminarian Fund

The Education of Seminarian Fund is a fund in which **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 when new contributions are received.

Donation categories: Lector – \$.01 - \$99.99; Acolyte – \$100 - \$499.99; Candidate – \$500 - \$1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – \$1,500 - \$2,499.99; Priest – \$2,500 >.

Lector

Deacon Mike & Bonnie Vieira
In honor of Fr. Dominic Trung Nguyen Ordination Anniversary

Barbar Machinsky
Paz & Andrea Morales
In memory of Fr. Dan Morales

Patricia Ann Hessler
M/M Otto Bleier
In memory of Edward Korenek

Acolyte

Jennifer Vincent
Christmas offering for Fr. Kristopher Fuchs

Mark & Julie Goodman
James & Phyllis Stouffer
In memory of Alphalea "Lea" Lenz

Candidate

Buxkemper Family
Emil & Caroline Buxkemper Family Members living & deceased

Transitional Deacon

Priest

Joann Reyes
In memory of Fr. Dan Morales

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



Serran Prayer for Vocations

O God, who will not the death of a sinner but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech you, through the intercession of the Blessed Mary ever Virgin, Saint Joseph, her spouse, St. Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase of laborers for your Church, fellow laborers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.



Letters to the Editor

Editor,

I was delighted to see the article in the January 2018 issue of *The Lighthouse* where Bishop Cahill mentioned Father Kram. I had been wondering about the process of Father Kram being recognized as a saint and do realize it does take years. Thank you Bishop Cahill for mentioning and updating us on Father Kram in your article.

Mary Ann Tichacek

Dear Editor,

I have been a member of Our Lady of Victory Parish since I moved to Victoria in 1963. In 2016, I had to relocate to Vitality Court Senior Living. After reading the article in the December *Lighthouse* about the "Ministry for the Homebound," I felt I would be remiss if I did not tell you about a dedicated and selfless lay minister here at Vitality Court. His name is George Sherman. George comes faithfully, rain or shine, every Sunday at 9:30 a.m. for what we refer to as our Mass, without the consecration of course. We start our services with a song (a little out of tune). The clients do all the daily readings, and George does the Gospel. After the creed and the Lord's Prayer, we then receive the consecrated host. Concluding our service is another song. Because of this ministry, I knew Vitality Court was the place I wanted to be. The attendance has grown so that it has been relocated from the Chapel to a larger room.

On behalf of all the clients here at Vitality Court, let me conclude by thanking George Sherman for his selfless dedication to the "Ministry for the Homebound."

Sincerely,
Imogene Klare

Dear Bishop Cahill,

It was with deep sadness to receive the recent notification of the death of Reverend Monsignor Lawrence John Matula. Please accept my most heartfelt sympathy for you and the entire Diocese of Victoria. May the love of God sustain you and the promises of God comfort you in this hour of sorrow.

I will be praying for the repose of Monsignor Lawrence's soul especially at Holy Mass, giving thanks to our Lord for his many years of faithful dedication and service to the Church, both in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Victoria. Be assured of my prayers for you and the Victoria community during this time of grief.

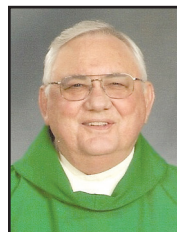
Through the intercession of Our Lady of Sorrows, may our Lord Jesus bless you with peace and comfort.

Faternally yours in Christ,
Most Reverend Gustavo
Garcia-Siller, M.Sp.S.
Archbishop of San Antonio



**Lent Begins on
Ash Wednesday
February 14**

In Memory of ... Rev. Msgr. Lawrence J. Matula



EL CAMPO — Rev. Msgr. Lawrence John Matula, 81, of El Campo, passed away December 25, 2017. He was born May 7, 1936, in Shiner to the late Louis F. and Lillie Hybner Matula.

He was the beloved pastor at St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in El Campo for the past 30 years. He was appointed to Monsignor by Pope Benedict XVI on August 6, 2012. The service of elevation was held November 19, 2012, at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral by Most Reverend David E. Fellhauer.

He attended St. Ludmila Academy until 1950 when he entered St. John's Seminary in San Antonio. In 1955, he entered Assumption Seminary to complete his minor and major Orders. He was ordained to Holy Priesthood on May 26, 1962 by His Excellency, Most Reverend Robert E. Lucey at San Fernando Cathedral in San Antonio. His first assignment was associate pastor at Sacred Heart Parish, where he served for 5 years. During his years in San Antonio, he served at Inner City Apostolate as co-director from 1968-1970 and then at Christ the King Parish as pastor from 1971-1982. During the formation of the Victoria Diocese in 1983, he was assigned

to St. Anthony Parish in Palacios as pastor for 3 years. His last and longest assignment was as pastor to St. Robert's Parish in El Campo.

He is survived by his sister, Theresa Jane Bordovsky and husband Rudy of Yoakum, niece Ann Marie Bludau and husband Paul of Hallettsville, and nephews Andy Bordovsky and Carl Bordovsky and wife Debbie of Yoakum, and R. L. Bordovsky and wife Leah of Victoria; great-nieces and nephews Zachariah Bordovsky (Samantha), Hannah, Isaiah, Joshua, Jacob Bordovsky, Jordan and Lillieana Bludau; Aunts Martha Janota and Jane Pickering of Shiner, and Elizabeth Hybner of Victoria; Uncles Philip Hybner of Lufkin, Daniel Hybner of Lake Jackson.

Funeral Mass was held Friday, December 29 at St. Robert's Catholic Church with Most Reverend Brendan Cahill officiating and his brother priests from the Victoria Diocese concelebrating. Graveside services took place at Shiner Catholic Cemetery.

Serving as pallbearers were Andy Bordovsky, Carl Bordovsky, R. L. Bordovsky, Zachariah Bordovsky, Joshua Bordovsky and Paul Bludau.

Donations in Memory of Msgr. Lawrence Matula may be made to St. Vincent de Paul Society at St. Robert Bellarmine Church in El Campo.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him.

May the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen.

DSA update

2017 Diocesan Services Appeal

Diocesan Goal:	\$ 1,994,298.00
Parish Pledge Totals:	\$ 1,092,952.96
Parish Contribution Totals:	\$ 1,063,311.46
Number of Parish	
Families Participating:	3,125

Updated January 23, 2017



KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS COUNCIL #4307

FISH FRY – AUCTION - RAFFLE SUNDAY, MARCH 11, 2018

**ST. PETER'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
PARISH HALL
BLESSING, TEXAS**

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SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



Love ...

Hurricane Harvey gets a lot of blame whenever we have scheduling conflicts. The events which were scheduled for last fall often were rescheduled for winter because the facilities in which they were to occur were in need of repair from water and/or wind damage. However, most of us had already filled our calendars with ordinarily-scheduled winter events. As a result we have to make decisions as to what to do when. So it is easy to say that it's Harvey's fault when we have these calendar conflicts.

Now there is one conflict for which we can't blame Harvey. We have discovered that St. Valentine's Day falls on Ash Wednesday; or should we say that Ash Wednesday falls on St. Valentine's Day. Either way, there seems to be a conflict because we like to observe both.

Let's look at this dilemma from another angle, remembering that on Valentine's Day various expressions of love are present. Keeping this in mind, it might be very fitting that we commemorate Ash Wednesday as the beginning or intensifying of the greatest Love Story of all time; Jesus' preparation in the desert for his mission of proclaiming God's Kingdom; His actions throughout His ministry; His giving of Himself in the Eucharist and finally His enduring a horrible agony and death in order to redeem us.

Not only does Jesus demonstrate His great love for every one of us, He commands us to "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment". And the second: "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37-40).

What is this love to which we are all commanded? We all know it is much more than the catchy lines on a greeting card or cute little animals wearing cute little valentines, or even a fancy box of chocolates.

While these symbols are fitting reminders; we all know that the love which Jesus talks about is much deeper. It is a self-sacrificing, unconditional love that puts God in first place in our list of priorities.

How can we grow in this love? How about hanging out with God by turning off some of our noisy electronic devices and placing our-selves in God's presence and giving God some silent listening time? It is often

difficult to deepen our emotional connection with God when our minds and hearts are distracted by the continual busyness that is too frequently present in daily life.

Not only are we called to open and develop channels of love between God and ourselves, we are commanded to "Love your neighbor as yourself." Thus, God is calling us to extend this love with those about us. This love, if it is truly God's love that we have, is genuine and self-sacrificing. We know that we cannot love Christ if we do not truly love those about us. Christ demonstrated His love for us by giving up His life; am I willing to share of my time or my possessions without counting the cost. Christ showed His love and humility by washing the feet of his disciples; do we have that same love and humility when we encounter the poor or unfortunate person? Are we willing to forgive others and let by-gones be by-gones? Are we willing to "walk in the shoes" of the down-trodden in order to help them? Are we willing to take time to listen to the "unheard"? Are we willing to be their "voice" when needed?

This is the love which St. Valentine's Day celebrates. So we remember this when we exchange greeting cards with their catchy lines, or cute little animals with their cute little valentines, or chocolates in the fancy boxes. When? Perhaps our Marti Gras celebrations won't mind sharing with the valentine parties; then we'll be ready to join Christ, our Master Lover, in the desert on Ash Wednesday.



Called to be Missionary Disciples of Jesus

The Diocese of Victoria has scheduled a one day conference on May 19, at Holy Family Church Activity Center in Victoria. The conference stems from the convocation conference held in Orlando, Florida summer of 2017 in which fifteen delegates from the dioceses attended. The conference was initiated by the United States Catholic Bishops as a call to all Catholics to evangelize those in the peripheries and young adults. All Catholics in the diocese are invited to attend the May 19, conference. Additional information will be available at a later date.



The Diocese of Victoria 11th Annual Catholic Knowledge Bowl



CKB 2017 was enjoyed by many. Register online to join in the 2018 fun!

Sunday, February 25
St. Mary Church, Victoria
1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

Come join in the fun with youth, adults, and families in The Catholic Knowledge Bowl (CKB) which has become an annual diocesan event. Participants from throughout the diocese come together to compete in a friendly contest among peers to test their knowledge of the Catholic faith. The CKB consists of three rounds of competition. Teams are tested on 35 multiple choice questions per round. For study questions visit victoriadiocese.org/rules-details-study-questions-ckb For more information contact Office of Catechetical Ministry (361) 573-0828 or e-mail Christella Alvarez at calvarez@victoriadiocese.org.



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PRAYING FOR LIFE—Eighth grade students from St. Michael, Weimar visited Raphael's Refuge in Flatonia on January 22, for the 45th Anniversary of Roe v. Wade, to pray the rosary in support of life from conception through natural death. Those attending were, left to right, Austin S., Zoe U., Sydney P., Michael K. Jr., and Skylar H.



CZECH CHRISTMAS MASS CONCERT—On Sunday, December 3, at St. Mary's in Praha, Professor Thomas Sovik and four graduate students from the College of Music at the University of North Texas put on a performance of Czech Christmas Mass (Ceska mse vanocni) by Jakub Simon Jan Ryba that was first performed on Christmas Eve 1796 in Rozmítal pod Tremsinem (south Bohemia). Professor Sovik played the organ while the graduate students sang. They were also accompanied by Christopher Phillpott on the cello. All of the participants were dressed in period costumes making for a wonderful site as they performed the Mass hymns. The graduate students who sang were: Soprano Julianna Emanski, Mezzo-soprano Hannah Ceniseros, Tenor Barrett Radziun, and recently graduated student, Bass-baritone Dr. Brock Johnson. A fiery sermon on "The Waste and Folly of the Season" was given in Czech by Professor Thomas Sovik. In attendance at the performance was the Deputy Head of Mission (Deputy Ambassador) at the Czech Embassy in Washington, D.C., Mr. Zdenek Beranek. The parishioners of St. Mary's Church in Praha thanked Professor Sovik, the students and former student of North Texas University for the wonderful performance. We would also like to thank the Dean of the College of Music at The University of North Texas, John Richmond for his support of the performance. We would also like to thank The Czech Educational Foundation of Texas for continuing support of The Czech Heritage in Texas and, in particular, this performance. A reception was held after the performance where those attending were able to visit with the performers, the Deputy Ambassador, the Dean of the College of Music and the representatives from the Czech Educational Foundation.

Knights of Columbus Council Recognized by the City of Hallettsville

By Jimmy Appelt
Hallettsville Tribune-Herald

HALLETTSVILLE—During the Knights of Columbus Father Mathis Council 2433 meeting held Tuesday, December 5, Mayor Stephen Hunter presented the organization with a city proclamation for their service and assistance to Stevens Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (SNRC) of Hallettsville during Hurricane Harvey.

On August 25, Hurricane Harvey struck the mid-Texas coast at Rockport placing it in a direct line of Hallettsville.

Due to the hurricane taking on an erratic turn, our area was spared of major storm damage.

The storm did impact the area with damage to trees and some structures from the high winds.

However, the most significant affect came from the threat of the rising waters of the Lavaca River that occurred due to the continuous and steady rain from the storm. Officially the area received 19.96 inches during its duration with the bulk of the rain falling on August 26 (9.95 inches) and August 27 (5.59 inches).

With the location of the SNRC in close proximity to the western bank of the Lavaca

River and because the water threatened to rise above flood level, it was determined to evacuate the center.

The Knights of Columbus Council 2433 was quick to extend a helping hand and opened its doors to SNRC for several days providing a safe facility to house the center's residents.

At Tuesday, December 5, Knights of Columbus meeting, Mayor Hunter presented the proclamation during a brief ceremony.

"Due to the compassion of Father Mathis Council 2433, the residents of Stevens Nursing and Rehabilitation Center were better protected from the threat of flooding from the Lavaca River," Mayor Hunter said. "The Hallettsville City Council recognizes

the Knights of Columbus Father Mathis Council 2433 for their leadership during Hurricane Harvey and extends its appreciation to Council 2433 for all of their efforts and assistance that they provided to our community."

On behalf of the City of Hallettsville, Mayor Hunter also thanked the club for the use of the hall and supporting the evacuation of the residents during the middle of the night.



From left is Knights of Columbus Father Mathis Council 2433 Grand Knight David Halata and Mayor Hunter.

Journeys of Faith with Ceci

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GABRIEL PROJECT CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION FOR LIFE—Elmcroft of Victoria sponsored a Gabriel Project family for Christmas. They also had four other sponsors that made a great Christmas possible for the Gabriel Project moms and their children! Elmcroft Senior Living, left to right, back row are, Audrey Luna, Kengslee Mitchell, Maegan Coldeway, Courtney Kulcak; front row are Gilbert Charles, and George Vasquez.

Sacred Heart to Host Healing Mission

HALLETTSVILLE—Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville will be hosting a mission, February 19-21. Paul Rymniak will conduct his Healing Mission, which includes the rosary and the Stations of the Cross. He will offer his healing efforts to all who seek it. If you are in need of a healing, whether it be mental, emotional, physical, or spiritual, you might want to consider coming to his healing mission.



Paul Rymniak

Paul will also speak at the weekend Masses of February 17-18, and during the week at 7:00 p.m. is scheduled to have evangelization, individual prayer, and confessions.

Paul conducts his Healing Mission in

approximately 30 churches a year, along with being the director of The Center for Peace. He also publishes a monthly newsletter that reaches thousands of people all over the world. He has written a book about healing called "The Mystery of Healing." This book details his life in the healing ministry along with his own personal story on how it all began.

KJT SUPPORTS EDUCATION—Holy Cross School, Bay City, was presented with a check from KJT Society #139, who applied for a matching grant from the state KJT office. The \$300 donation will go towards technology for the school. Pictured at the presentation of the check, on January 4, were left to right, Cynthia Nemec, Society Sales Representative; Larry Browning, Society President; Vince Nemec, Society Secretary/Treasurer, Inez Kucera, Holy Cross School Principal; and Rev. Greg Korenek, Society Chaplain and Pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church. Not present at the time of the presentation was James Engbrock, Society Vice-President.



READY FOR GAMES—Members of the Holy Family Altar Society in Victoria will host a games party on Thursday, February 22, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. in the Activity Center (707 Mallette Dr.). There will be door prizes, food a silent auction, a raffle and lots of fun. RSVP to Margaret at (361) 575-4997 or Betty (361) 573-5850. Pictured, seated left to right, Mary Ann Ohrt, Father Patrick Knippenberg, parochial vicar at Holy Family, JoAnn Jalufka; standing, Margaret Beekler, Becky Blanton, Kathy Motley, co-chairman, and Jackie Slusher, chairman.



ALTAR SERVERS HONORED BY KJZT—A luncheon was held by KJZT St. Agnes No. 111, for St. Agnes in Edna, altar servers and their families on December 10, 2017. Pictured from left to right are, St. Agnes altar servers for 2017, Roberto Z., Mason G., Gary D., Viviana R., Jacklyn M., Jade W., Katelyn D., Harrison S., Amelia S., Sonia V., MiReyna Z., Father Michael Petering, pastor; Martin G., Stephen W., Melani G., Brenda V., Lesli G., Cameron H., and Kyle W.

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Featuring the Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Victoria

The Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Victoria are featured annually in the February issue of the *Lighthouse*. Bishop Cahill is focusing on 5 priorities for the diocese. They are: Evangelization, Human Life and Dignity, Family Life, Vocations and Religious Freedom. In alignment with his priorities, each school has submitted a picture that depicts one of the following priorities:

Catholic Education = Evangelization ~ Human Life and Dignity ~ Family Life



Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, Texas
Sacred Heart has been educating students for over 130 years
Serves Pk3-12th grades
For more information: Website - www.shschool.org or Call - (361) 798-4251

Evangelization and Human Life & Dignity = This year Sacred Heart Catholic School students and faculty brought joy to children around the world through their participation in Operation Christmas Child through Samaritan's Purse. Samaritan's Purse was founded by Bob Pierce in 1970 after he had traveled around the world and saw the need to provide emergency needs in crisis areas. Faculty members and students donated toys, books, clothing, and personal items for children in other countries. They spent an afternoon filling shoeboxes with the donated items and wrapping the boxes. A total of 142 shoeboxes were sent to children in Mexico, Ecuador, and Zambia. Knowing that these shoeboxes would bring much joy to children who are less fortunate instilled the true spirit of the Christmas season in our students.



Shiner Catholic School in Shiner, Texas
St. Ludmila Elementary has been educating students for over 120 years
and St. Paul High has been educating students for over 50 years
Serves Pk3-12th grades
For more information: Website - www.shinercatholicsschool.org
Call - (361) 594-3843 or (361) 594-2313

Evangelization = St. Paul Student Council members delivered 175 Christmas goodie bags to soldiers and their families at Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), located in San Antonio before their Christmas break. They visited the Fisher House, a place where "wounded warriors" and their families are given an opportunity to heal, in a warm, supportive environment. What a wonderful way for the students at Shiner Catholic School to say thanks to our military men and women for their service to our country and to spread God's love through service to others.



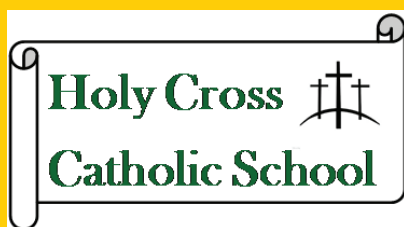
St. Michael School in Cuero, Texas
St. Michael has been educating students for over 140 years
Serves Pk3-5th grades
For more information: Website - www.stmschoolcuero.org or Call - (361) 277-3854

Human Life and Dignity = After Hurricane Harvey, the students at St. Michael's Catholic School in Cuero collected canned food and other nonperishable items. The students donated the items to Camel House, which is a food pantry that serves the needy in the community. During time off from school, many of the students and their families helped their neighbors with cleanup from the storm. The students showed compassion and kindness for people in need in the community.



Family Life = St. Philip Catholic School recently held a Science Night offering a fun, family, educational opportunity for students and their parents. Hosted by the PTC, this event encouraged family participation in academic experiences modeling examples of a learning atmosphere where learning can be fun! The smiles tell a great story!

St. Philip School in El Campo, Texas
St. Philip has been educating students for over 65 years
Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - www.stphilipschool.org or Call - (979) 543-2901



Human Life and Dignity = At the beginning of this school year, the third grade students chose to each spiritually adopt an unborn child. Each student named their unborn baby, wrote the baby a prayer and placed it in a baby bottle that had been decorated by the student. Daily, at 2:30 p.m. when the entire school is praying a decade of the Rosary, the third grade students are praying for their spiritually adopted unborn child. On January 22, students in grades 3-6 went out to the Cemetery of the Innocent (Field of Crosses) to pray the rosary. The 6th grade students annually make baby blankets and donate them to the local Women's Pregnancy Center. These same students also sew adult bibs and then take them to a local nursing home and pass them out to the residents while visiting them.

Holy Cross School in Bay City, Texas
Holy Cross has been educating students for over 75 years
Serves Pk3-6th grades
For more information: Website - bholycrossschool.org or Call - (979) 245-5632



Evangelization = The tragedy of Hurricane Harvey provided many evangelization opportunities for Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic School such as donating over \$950 via the NCEA Student to Student campaign, taking in 5 students from the Catholic School in Rockport until they could return back to their hometown, partnering with other area churches to collect and distribute emergency supplies for families impacted, donating new library books to the Catholic School in Rockport, and even dedicating the 2017 Christmas OLG Christmas pageant to a Mariner alumni family that lost their home during the storm and presenting them with a special Christmas Tree of student-handmade ornaments to replace the ones they lost. The students learned that even the hardest of times can result in beautiful acts of kindness and joy, through the Grace of God.

Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic School in Port Lavaca, Texas
Our Lady of the Gulf has been educating students of the area for over 20 years
Serves Pk4-8th grades
For more information: Website - olgmariners.org or Call - (361) 552-6140



CATHOLIC SCHOOL

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 11 — February 2018



Our Lady of Victory School in Victoria, Texas
Our Lady of Victory has been educating students for over 60 years
Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - www.ourladyvictory.org or Call - (361) 575-5391

Human Life and Dignity: Our Lady of Victory Catholic School offers crocheting to eighth grade students as an elective class. This semester's class used their crocheting skills to make 27 scarves and delivered them to the residents of Twin Pines North Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in December. Students also have crocheted caps for premature babies at The Women and Children's Center at DeTar Hospital and cancer patients at MD Anderson in Houston. Our Lady of Victory Catholic School instills in its students that every human person has dignity at whatever stage of life from infancy to the elderly, whether healthy or sick. We teach our students that all people are worthy of respect and love.



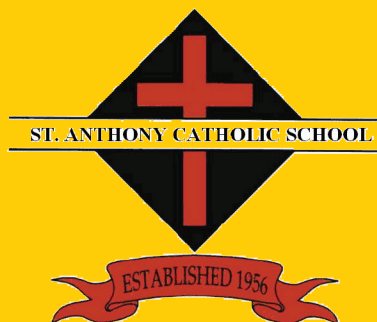
St. Joseph High School in Victoria, Texas
St. Joseph has been educating students for over 145 years
Serves 9th-12th grades
For more information: Website - www.stjvictoria.com or Call - (361) 573-2446

Evangelization = It's a tradition at St. Joseph High School for the school to present each new student with their own copy of the holy bible at a special New Student Bible Mass. This year STJ's Chaplain, Father Stephen Vacek, celebrated Mass and blessed the bibles for 74 freshmen and 10 transfer students. The bibles are a gift, given to the students to use in their theology classes throughout high school and beyond. The gift of the holy bible provides every student who attends St. Joseph High School with scripture to study, and furthermore, serves as a resource to help share the Good News of Jesus. Pictured is Father Stephen with a group of the new students who received bibles on October 4, 2017.



St. Joseph School in Yoakum, Texas
St. Joseph has been educating students for over 125 years
Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - www.stjcatholicsschool.org or Call - (361) 293-9000

Evangelization = November 1, All Saints Day, students, teachers, friends and families of St. Joseph School in Yoakum were invited to the school library to attend a saintly social. Each seventh grade student dressed up and gave an oral and visual presentation about a saint of their choice. Learning about the life of the saints inspired the students toward Christian values and the Gospel.



St. Anthony School in Columbus, Texas
St. Anthony has been educating students for over 60 years
Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - www.stanthonycolumbus.net or Call - (979) 732-5505

Evangelization = The St. Anthony student council students are pictured with the Columbus Mayor, Dwain Dungen to promote Catholic education and Catholic Schools Week. He signed a city proclamation promoting January 28-Feb 3 as Catholic Schools Week in Columbus. The students of St. Anthony evangelize by serving the community. They help with drive-through dinners for the KC and Catholic Daughters, participate in the Columbus Pro-Life March sponsored by St. Anthony Church, prepare the liturgy for Friday Masses, and prepared 11 recordings at KULM to be played during Catholic Schools Week promoting Catholic Education and St. Anthony School.

Photograph Courtesy
Colorado County Citizen



Evangelization = Students at St. Michael Catholic School in Weimar collected and delivered food items to replenish the food pantry in La Grange after Hurricane Harvey wreaked devastation in this neighboring community. The 8th grade students volunteered at Second Chance, a La Grange ministry assisting those in need, by sorting boxes of donations made to Harvey victims. The students recognized how blessed they were to have fared well during the storm and were eager to help those who were devastated by this natural disaster.

St. Michael School in Weimar, Texas
St. Michael has been educating students of the area for over 125 years Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - stmichaelswords.org or Call - (979) 725-8461



Evangelization = The heart of our mission statement is evangelizing and we strive to be God's presence in the world in all we do. Students share the faith with weekly liturgies, seasonal prayer services, frequent reception of the sacraments and adoration throughout the school year. Service projects such as our Thanksgiving food drive, Change 4 Change donation and nursing home visits encourage students to live the corporal works of mercy and share God's love in their community. This authentic witness to the faith is the true gift of Catholic Education. The start of the school year began much like this scripture passage as Father Ty Bazar gathered the children at the altar for a blessing. Extending his hands upon them he asked for God to bless and protect them, to guide and instruct them. This is the heart of evangelization, that we place Jesus Christ at the center of our lives and bring his message to the world in all we do.

St. Rose School in Schulenburg, Texas
St. Rose has been educating students for over 125 years Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - www.strosecardinals.org or Call - (979) 743-3080



Evangelization = Before the Christmas holidays, Nazareth Academy students, faculty, and school community conducted two separate drives: A soup and sock drive and a food drive. Approximately 600 pounds of food were given to VCAM and St. Vincent de Paul to be distributed to the needy in our area. They also donated 966 cans of soup and pairs of socks to Angels Care Home Health to be given to the elderly. Through their participation, the students truly learned that "There is more happiness in giving than in receiving." Acts 20:35

Nazareth Academy in Victoria, Texas
Nazareth Academy has been educating students for over 150 years Serves Pk3-8th grades
For more information: Website - www.nazarethacademy.org or Call - (979) 743-3080



Celebrate Catholic Schools Week 2018

January 28 – February 3
#CSW18



SACRED HEART BEST IN COUNTRY—The Sacred Heart Senior Environmental Science class recently won “Best in Country” and “Best Video” for the 8th Annual Rio Research Roundup which was held on October 11, 2017. The Rio Research Roundup is an annual student water testing project put on by the Rio Grande International Study Center that involves nearly 80 student teams from the United States and Mexico. As part of the Roundup, student teams use water testing kits, provided to them by RGISC, and on a given day in October, test the waters of their local river. Students report and analyze data for water quality parameters that include bacteria, nitrates, phosphates, oxygen, turbidity, pH, temperature and others. Additionally, students submit artwork, a video, public service announcement, and write an essay about their particular river. Students include Jordan J., John B., Ms. Alyson Klimitchek, class instructor; Annie B., Adam K., Jonathan J., Simon M., Kaitlyn R., Arin S., Maci G., Reese W., Dusty B., and Reid T.

Catholic School Statistics

Local:

Enrollment for Diocese of Victoria Catholic Schools for School Year 2017-2018 – 2,820
Number of Diocese of Victoria Catholic Schools – 15 on 13 campuses

National:

National Secondary School Graduation Rate in Catholic Schools – 99.3%
Students enrolled in Catholic Schools nationwide Nearly – 1.9 million

a dozen reasons to choose Catholic Schools



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World Marriage Day ~ February 11

World Marriage Day (WMD) is always the 2nd Sunday in February. This year it will be February 11, 2018. In observance of World Marriage Day the Diocese of Victoria wanted to recognize the longest married couple in the Diocese of Victoria. John J. and Hazel L. (Doerrich) Kobersky of Holman have been married for 75 years. They were featured in the January 2018 *Lighthouse*. Many blessing to all married couples of the Diocese of Victoria.



Prayer - "Father, as we prepare for WMD, we thank you for your tremendous gift of the Sacrament of Marriage. Help us to witness to its glory by a life of growing intimacy. Teach us the beauty of forgiveness so we may become more and more One in Heart, Mind and Body. Strengthen our dialogue and help us become living signs of your love. Make us grow more in love with the Church so we may renew the Body of Christ. Make us a sign of unity in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Brother. Amen" - Fr. Bill Dilgen, S.M.M.

Looking for a Special Way to Begin the New Year with Your Spouse?

How About Enrichment Retreat For Marriages?? The next Choosing to L.O.V.E. Retreat is February 16-18 at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more information Application forms are available at the parish offices of The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory in Victoria and St. Philip in El Campo, or by emailing jvincent@olvcathedral.org.

Choosing to L.O.V.E. is a retreat for couples seeking to enrich their marital

commitment by focusing on what brought their covenant into existence - their marriage vows. It is not a weekend for couples experiencing serious problems in their relationship, but for couples seeking to be faithful to their marriage vows and desiring to strengthen the core of who they are as husband and wife.



FOR LENT FOR LIFE

Lenten Rice Bowl Collection

CRS Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services' Lenten faith-in-action program. It offers opportunities for your family to engage daily in the spiritual pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. And, it's an opportunity for us as a parish/school to come together as a community and reflect on what it means to live out our Gospel call to go out and encounter those most in need.

The Season of Lent if Upon Us

The 2018 Lenten season begins on Ash Wednesday, February 14, for Latin-rite Catholics with Easter Sunday on April 1.

During Lent, we are asked to devote ourselves to seeking the Lord in prayer and reading Scripture, to service by giving alms, and to sacrifice self-control through fasting. Many know of the tradition of abstaining from meat on Fridays during

Lent is a favorable season for opening the doors to all those in need and recognizing in them the face of Christ."

~ Pope Francis

Lent, but we are also called to practice self-discipline and fast in other ways throughout the season. Contemplate the meaning and origins of the Lenten fasting tradition in this reflection. In addition, the giving of alms is one way to share God's gifts—not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents. As St. John Chrysostom reminds us: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs." (Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 2446).

In Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholics.

Catholics are also encouraged to make going to confession a significant part of their spiritual lives during Lent.

Fortify your Lenten journey with the words of the church fathers and Pope Francis featured on a lent calendar found on the USCCB website at www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/liturgical-year/lent/lent-calendar.cfm, and contemplate the suggestions for prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Print the calendar in English and Spanish and post it in a prominent place to remind you of your commitment to raise up, sacrifice, and offer, during this Lent.

Church Regulations Regarding Fasting and Abstinence

Abstinence from meat (beast or fowl) is to be observed by all Catholics fourteen years old and older on Ash Wednesday, Good Friday and on all the Fridays of Lent. This obligation prohibits the eating of meat, but not eggs, milk products or condiments of any kind, even those made from animal fat. **Fasting** means limiting oneself to one full meal, on a given fast day. Catholics who are eighteen years of age, but not yet fifty-nine, are obliged to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. On fast days, two additional smaller meals are permitted, if necessary, to maintain strength. However, the two smaller meals together may not equal one full meal. Moreover, eating solid foods between meals on fast days is not permitted.



Reglas de la Iglesia Sobre Ayuno y Abstinencia

Se les oblige **ayunar** el Miércoles de Ceniza y el Viernes Santo a personas de diez y ocho años y que no han celebrado sus sesenta años. Ayunar es comer solamente el almuerzo regular con el desayuno y cena con porciones más pequeños. Se les obliga **abstenerse** de comer carne el Miércoles de Ceniza y todos los Viernes de Cuaresma, de los catorce años y más. (Puerco, Chorizo/Salchicha, Tocino, Rez, Venado, Pavo y Pollo son carne). Por esas personas de sesenta años y mayor, no tienen la obligación de ayunar; pero todavía son obligados de no comer carne en el Miércoles de Ceniza y todos los Viernes de Cuaresma.



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In-flight Nuptials: Pope Didn't Glide over Church Requirements

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis' decision to convalidate the marriage of two flight attendants in the air sent waves of turbulence through the Catholic blogosphere, where respected canon lawyers and pastors raised serious questions about the pope sending a message that marriage wasn't so serious.

But three days later, the pope gave reporters more of the background, demonstrating that he did not make the decision on the

The next day, both attendants were on duty. They told the pope they had planned to marry in the church, but early in the morning the day of the wedding, Feb. 27, 2010, a massive earthquake struck Chile and the church collapsed.

The couple ended up marrying in a civil ceremony, and they have two daughters. They told the pope they planned to reschedule the church ceremony but just kept putting it off.

"I questioned them a bit and their answers were clear, it was for life, and they



Pope Francis performs an impromptu wedding ceremony for Latam Airlines employees Carlos Ciuffardi Elorriaga, 41, and Paula Podest Ruiz, 39, aboard the pontiff's flight from Santiago, Chile, to Iquique January 18. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano)

fly and neither did the couple.

"I judged they were prepared, they knew what they were doing," the pope told reporters Jan. 21 on his flight back to Rome. "Both of them had prepared before God — with the sacrament of penance — and I married them."

The blessing of the marriage of LATAM flight attendants Carlos Ciuffardi Elorriaga and Paula Podest Ruiz took place during the pope's flight Jan. 18 from Santiago, Chile, to Iquique.

When the couple went to the back of the plane and told reporters about it, the whole thing had sounded very spontaneous.

But Pope Francis told reporters later that Ciuffardi also worked on the papal flight to Temuco the day before; Podest, whom he had married civilly in 2010, was not working the Jan. 17 flight.

So the groom had a chance to speak to the pope alone. "Later, I realized he was checking me out," the pope told reporters. They spoke about life, marriage and the family. "It was a nice conversation."

told me they had done the pre-marriage course," the pope told reporters. Also, he said, "they were aware that they were in an irregular situation."

In a story Dec. 19 about the crew chosen to work the papal flights, *El Mercurio*, a Chilean newspaper, had interviewed the couple. Already then, they raised the hope of Pope Francis blessing their union in flight. "We would love it, it's our place, it's our second home," Podest was quoted as saying.

"One of you said I was crazy to do this," the pope told reporters. But "they were prepared, and if the priest says they are prepared and I decided that they were prepared ... the sacraments are for the people."

"All the conditions were there, that is clear," he said. So, "why not do it today," otherwise they could have put it off for another 10 years.

"The pope saw an opportunity and he worked it," said Cardinal Kevin J. Farrell, prefect of the Dicastery for Laity, the Family and Life.

Sunday Readings from February 4 - March 11

February 4 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Job 7:1-4, 6-7
Psalms 147:1-2, 3-4, 5-6
1 Corinthians 9:16-19, 22-23
Mark 1:29-39

February 11 ~ Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46
Psalms 32:1-2, 5, 11
1 Corinthians 10:31 — 11:1
Mark 1:40-45

February 14 ~ Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:12-18
Psalms 51:3-4, 5-6AB, 12-13, 14, & 17
2 Corinthians 5:20 — 6:2
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18


February 18 ~ First Sunday of Lent
Genesis 9:8-15
Psalms 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
1 Peter 3:18-22
Mark 1:12-15

February 25 ~ Second Sunday of Lent
Genesis 22:1-2, 9A, 10-13, 15-18
Psalms 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19
Romans 8:31B-34
Mark 9:2-10

March 4 ~ Third Sunday of Lent
Exodus 20:1-17
Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 11
1 Corinthians 1:22-25
John 2:13-25

March 11 ~ Fourth Sunday of Lent
2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23
Psalms 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6
Ephesians 2:4-10
John 3:14

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

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"What he is saying to the priests and to the church is that God's time to bestow his blessings upon anybody does not necessarily depend on a rule or a regulation," the cardinal told Catholic News Service Jan. 23.

Cardinal Farrell said that as bishop of Dallas, he would not allow couples to get married on a ranch or in a park. But the pope was not celebrating a wedding on the plane, he was convalidating a marriage, and Cardinal Farrell, like most priests, has done that in a variety of settings, including hospital rooms. "He did what any good pastor will do."

"I thought it was an example that the pope set for all of us — that we should not be waiting for the people to come to us, but we should be going to the people," the cardinal said. "He came out of the sacristy" as he has urged priests to do.

Convalidating a marriage on a plane "is not the general norm, but it is a way of bringing people back into the church, into the fold," the cardinal said. "Why would we not do that?"

Msgr. Cuong M. Pham, an official at the Pontifical Council for Legislative Texts, was grateful Pope Francis provided extra details after the event. But even before knowing those details, it was clear that "the Holy Father, of all people, would take it seriously."

"It is the task of the priest who officiates to take responsibility and be morally certain that couples who ask to be married are prepared and ready for the sacrament," he said. That certainty is something that outside observers cannot presume to have.

Besides, he said, "as supreme legislator,

the Holy Father has the authority to dispense from and even change merely ecclesiastical laws, if he judges it appropriate," including canon law's expectation that weddings take place in a church. Still, the pope's officiating at a convalidation in midflight is "not meant to be replicated," Msgr. Pham added.

But, he also said he hoped the pope's outreach to the couple would encourage priests to be more solicitous toward other Catholic couples who have been married only civilly, finding ways to facilitate the convalidation of their unions as well.

Cardinal Farrell said he hoped other Catholic couples who have married outside the church would see what the pope and flight attendants did and realize that "the mercy of God and the blessing of God and the compassion of Christ is open to everybody."



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Diocese of Victoria Marches for Life in Washington, D.C.

By Sarita Villafranca Richmond, Editor

“Love Saves Lives”, what a perfect theme for the 45th Annual March for Life! The March for Life, which started in 1973 as a response to the Supreme Court’s decision in Roe v. Wade legalizing abortion in all 50 states, is an annual gathering in Washington, D.C., of pro-life leaders and organizations from around the country. On Friday, January 19th, thousands gathered on the National Mall for the Nation’s largest pro-life event.

This year, the largest group ever from the Diocese of Victoria made the pilgrimage to Washington D.C.. There were more than 90 people from Victoria, Cuero, Shiner, Hallettsville, Ganado, El Campo and Bay City who were blessed to attend. The majority of the group consisted of young people from the diocese, adults, priests, and Bishop Cahill.

Arlington National Cemetery

Early Thursday morning the group visited Arlington National Cemetery. Everyone stood quietly in the frigid morning air as the changing of the guard took place. The Tomb of the Unknown Soldier is guarded 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and in any weather by Tomb Guard sentinels. Two wreaths were then placed at

the grave and taps was played. Four boys from Sss. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner were honored to lay a wreath at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. As we were leaving we heard the cadence of a drum and around the corner came a funeral procession with horses pulling a casket. Sandy Muñoz, a parishioner of Our Lady of Victory shared, “I remember visiting as a young teenager. This time it was different as I appreciated it all in a different way. It was so real as the funeral unfolded in front of me: the silence, the drums, the horses and the procession. It was awesome. God puts us in certain places at certain times for a reason.” Arlington National Cemetery conducts



between 27 and 30 funeral services each weekday.

Vigil Mass for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Shrine

Thursday evening they attended the Vigil Mass for Life at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, where Bishop Brendan Cahill, Father Jasper Liggio and Father Michael Rother concelebrated. The Basilica is the largest Catholic church in the United States. Archbishop Timothy Dolan, from New York was the celebrant and in his homily told the crowd of about 20,000, “We are here to give thanks to God for the gift of human life. Tomorrow we shall overcome!” Mary Machacek who attended the Mass with a group from Shiner shared, “When we came together for Mass at the Basilica there were so many priests and bishops! I felt a sense of unity; our church is universal.” One of the girls on the trip shared, “Mass was amazing! I am discerning religious life. It was inspiring to see so many nuns and from so many orders.”



at the National Mall to secure a spot close to the stage. As they anxiously waited for the march to begin, Plumb, a Christian singer performed a few songs. Everyone waited patiently and finally around 12:30 p.m. various speakers took the stage. Some speakers included: House



Speaker Paul Ryan, Pam Tebow, mother of former NFL quarterback Tim Tebow, Sister Bethany Madonna of Sisters of Life and President of the United States Donald J. Trump, via video satellite.

March for Life Rally and March

Friday morning the groups arrived early

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Diocese of Victoria Marches for Life in Washington, D.C.

Continued from pg. 16

President Donald Trump made history as the first sitting President to ever address the rally via a live video broadcast from the White House Rose Garden. The crowd listened intently as they could see him on a jumbotron at the front of the rally. He shared, "Because of you, tens of thousands of Americans have been born and reached



their full God-given potential. Because of you." One of the students from Cuero said, "I like that we have a president in office that is pro-life."

Sister Bethany Madonna shared a heart-warming story about a young woman who was pregnant and on her way to her doctor appointment. She entered the elevator with someone who happened to mention that she was considering an abortion. She spoke out about life to her and how she would have a girl. She told her, "Name her Raquel after me, oh and my middle

name is Jasmine." A few years later, she ran into this woman again, who had not one, but two beautiful girls. She had twins and named them Raquel and Jasmine. One of the girls on the trip found this story to be particularly touching. She shared, "I

loved the story about Raquel and Jasmine. Sometimes you don't think you can make a difference but she proved that one person can make a difference."

The speakers concluded and the Diocese of Victoria group unrolled their



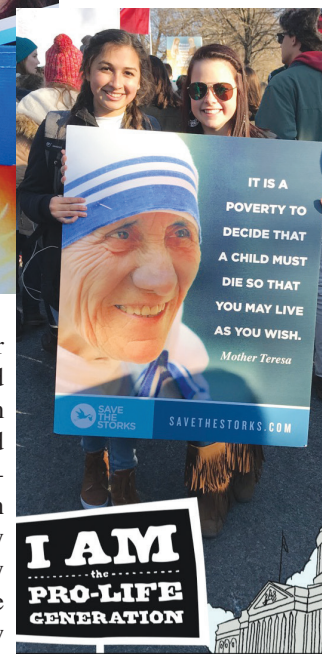
beautiful pro-life banner with Our Lady of Guadalupe on one side and the Immaculate Heart of Jesus on the other. They slowly stretched across the length of the street holding the banner and began the march with thousands of people. As they marched everyone prayed a rosary led by Father Michael Rother. One student from Cuero was amazed how they were marching with so many people for one purpose. Another student from Shiner shared, "I was inspired by the large group of kids my age all coming

together for one purpose, to fight for the unborn." Kathy Gibbs, a parishioner of St. Michael in Cuero was particularly touched by the march. She shared, "What stands out to me are two signs I saw during the march. 'If You were Born after 1973 You are a Survivor' and 'I am the Pro-Life Generation'. Our kids and most of the young people out there were survivors; they'll be the ones that see this through to an end."

An estimated 100,000 people prayed and marched together that day. "Love Saves Lives", the theme of the 2018 March for Life was a powerful expression for the thousands who peacefully prayed together, whether present at the march or not.

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place, when I was woven together in the depths of the earth. Your eyes saw my unformed body; all the days ordained

for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. Psalm 139:13-16



CNS photo/Eric Thayer, Reuters



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.
For further assistance please contact Vicki L. Pyatt.



Meals • Picnics and More

February

Wharton—Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Our Lady Queen of the Clergy #1990, Mardi-Gras dance, raffle, cake auction, silent auction on Saturday, Feb. 10, 8:00 p.m.-12:00 a.m., KC Hall (2820 N. Fulton St.). Music by: LEGACY featuring Classic Country, Polka, and Waltzes. Admission, \$10 single; \$15 per couple. Public is Invited, for Information call (979) 532-1466. Proceeds go toward scholarships and local charities.

Victoria—St. Mary Parish Festival, Feb. 11, at the Community Center. A roast beef dinner will be served from 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at \$9 p/p. Live auction begins at 12:30 p.m. Games, booths, silent auction, and more.

Victoria—Holy Family Altar Society games party, Thursday, Feb. 22. See pg. 8 for more information.

March

Blessing—K of C Council #4307 Lenten fish fry, auction, and raffle March 11, St. Peter's Parish Hall. Fried catfish dinner will be served from 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Plates - \$10 p/p (includes dessert and tea/coffee). A live auction and raffle will also be held during the event. The proceeds will benefit Knights of Columbus scholarships and charities.

Conferences • Masses • Retreats

Victoria—All are invited to a Lenten Mini-Retreat at Holy Family on Feb. 10, beginning with Mass at 8:00 a.m., and concluding with lunch served at noon. Fr. Patrick Knippenberg will lead the retreat in St. Peter's Hall, sharing reflections on uniting our lives to Christ's Passion through the Stations of the Cross. The retreat is being sponsored by the Holy Family Altar Society, and there is no fee to attend. Please R.S.V.P. by leaving a message at (361) 576-6508.

Victoria—Single Catholic women 18 to 50 years of age are invited to come meet nuns (Sisters) and to explore their own call to follow Jesus through marriage, single state, or religious life on February 24-25, at Incarnate Word Convent. Call (361) 575-7111, email: iwbsvoc@yahoo.com, or visit www.iwbsvictoria.org for more information.

ACTS Retreats—For information, visit www.actsmissions.org.

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. For more information, contact Sr. Louise Marie Jones at iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com.

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.

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.couragerc.net.

Emmaus Center—Offers individual, couple, 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 Appointments may be made by calling (361) 212-0830.

Engaged Encounter—2018 Dates: April 13-15, June 1-3, September 21-23, and November 16-18, registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For more information, call (361) 573-0828 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. For more information contact Jennifer Ruiz at jenniferschobey.ruiz@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 victorianfpteachers@yahoo.com. For the CREIGTON 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 jbvjov@sbcglobal.net or (361) 580-2770; call (800) 470-2230; or visit www.helpourmarriage.org or www.retrouvaille.org.

Amor Meus

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Spirituality Center Lenten Vespers: Feb. 18, 25, March 4, 11, 18, and 25. Vespers is the Liturgical Evening Prayer of the Church and concludes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament at 5:00-5:45 p.m. in Convent Chapel. For more information contact Sr. Emilie Eilers

Taizé Prayer Service: It is a meditative Christian experience of prayer that includes sung and chanted prayers, meditation, and periods of silence, reflection and liturgical readings. It will be held Tuesday, Feb. 20, 7:00-8:00 p.m. in Amor Meus Prayer Room (please park in the back).

Silent Guided Day Retreat—Feb. 24, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. at IWBS Convent. Retreat theme: "The Potter's Clay." Given by Sister Lois Marie Etzler and Sister Clare Underbrink, IWBS. Retreat will include two presentation, Liturgy of Eucharist or prayer service with ample time for private prayer, walking and reflecting. Box lunch will be available for \$5 or you may bring your own. The suggested donation for the retreat is \$25 or a love offering. Please park in the front parking lot.



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Serra Club of Victoria Promoting Vocations for Over 60 Years

Continued from pg. 1

with the Serra International Conventions held each summer. It wasn't until he was an adult that his father invited him to join the Serra Club. He shares, "I have stayed because the club has Catholic adults who

own Christian vocations to service. These needs have not changed. The Serra Club has 3 objectives that Serrans throughout the world are committed to following.



Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated Mass at the December Serra Club meeting. In his sermon he shared that God invites us to be peaceful. He spoke of the importance of prayer and having faith that God has a greater plan for us. Pictured above are Serra club members. To the right is a Serra member and seminarian James Dvorak.

are engaged and support vocations. Being a part of Serra Club is a reinforcement of my Catholic faith." Serra Club members are encouraged to pray the 2 vocations prayers daily and to attend a daily Mass once a month to pray for vocations.

The original Serra Club was founded to fill two great needs of the Church: to support dedicated priests and the religious and to bring together informed Catholic lay leaders who understood and lived their

Father Kristopher Fuchs, the current Chaplain of the Serra Club of Victoria attended the January 2018 Serra Rally with member John McQuillen. He explained that the Chaplains at the Rally gathered and discussed how they can meet the needs of the members as Chaplains. He shared, "Although the club is created to support vocations it is important to realize that the club also exists to support the personal holiness of its members. "In my role as Chaplain, I can help most with the 3rd objective. I am the spiritual support." Father Kristopher had never heard of the Serra Club until he entered the seminary. He explained, "My first summer before I entered the Seminary I came to Victoria and lived at Our Lady of Lourdes while working at the Chancery. Father Dan brought me to one of the Serra

Club meetings. I was surprised that there was a worldwide organization dedicated to promoting religious vocations. I could see the love the members have for vocations by their support, encouragement and prayers for us."

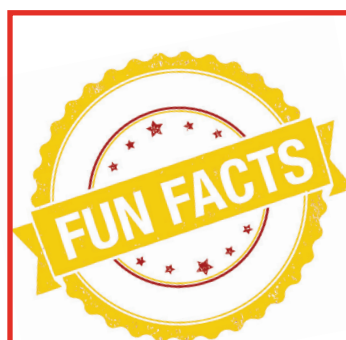
The Serra Club of Victoria is one of the largest clubs in the United States. John McQuillen who has been a member of Serra Club for almost 25 years recalls being invited to a Serra Club meeting by Joe Morris Sr. in 2009. He shared, "I saw a group of like-minded Catholics who were dedicated to supporting vocations; I joined right away. It has been a privilege to 'get to know' the seminarians and sisters

personally. Serra Club helps me live out my faith." The Serrans of Victoria are a part of 20,000 lay Catholics serving as disciples of Christ, living out by word and deed their love and support for seminarians and those in religious formation in the Diocese of Victoria.

As quoted by Pope Francis, "A disciple of Christ gets involved by word and deed in people's lives. A disciple of Christ is supportive and stands by people at every step of the way." We pray for the present and future members of the Serra Club of Victoria as they continue to support all religious vocations.



In 2008, at a Christmas party charter members were honored. Pictured, left-right, Bishop David Fellhauer, Otto Bleier, Gladys Vrazel representing her husband, Ervin Vrazel, as a charter member but had passed away earlier in the year; Dr. R.E. Stevenson who was the last living charter member at that time, (deceased now); Msgr. Eustace Hermes, (deceased now) was the chaplain; and JoAnn Bleier. Inset: Beatrice Trevino (deceased) past Serra Club of Victoria president.



- ~ Meet 2 times a month. 1st and 3rd Friday at Colony Creek Club. In one hour there is a Mass, lunch, a speaker and announcements.
- ~ Beatrice Trevino was the first woman President of the Serra Club
- ~ The Victoria Serra Club is one of the largest in the US.
- ~ Msgr. Hermes served 60 years as Chaplain of the Victoria Serra Club. This was the longest serving club chaplain in the world at that time.
- ~ For membership information please contact JoAnn Bleier (361) 575-0718 or any Serra Club Member.