



The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



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MARCH 2019

Good Works of Lent

By Sarita Villafranca Richmond

As Lent approaches this year, many will begin to ask themselves questions like: What will I give up for Lent this year? What habits do I want to change? How can I be a better person?



On his online blog, *The Purpose of Lent*, Brother Henderson shares “It’s important to remember that our word ‘Lent’ comes from the Old English word for ‘springtime.’ This gives us a wonderful insight into what the days between Ash Wednesday and Holy Thursday are all about: a season when faith and the virtues of the Christian life grow and flower within our hearts and souls. The good works of prayer, almsgiving, and fasting help us focus our attention on what is most important in life. And, if we can think of our Lenten penance as a ‘good work’ to be taken on, and shift our focus away from what we ‘give up,’ we will find that our Lenten prayer and devotions will be richer and more fruitful.”* *Good work* is exactly what Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church, in Shiner is doing. In July of 2018,

See Good Works of Lent, pg. 16



The students and chaperones of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner are pictured in front of the a large mosaic mural of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle, in San Juan, Texas.





Bishop Brendan Cahill
A Shepherd's Message

Spiritual Warfare of Lent

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Some of my first experiences of the Diocese of Victoria came when I joined a group of other priests on “the circuit.” Priests from Ft. Bend and Wharton counties would schedule Penance Services and help each other out for a few weeks every Advent and Lent. One of my best friends was the pastor in Richmond so I would make sure to schedule times to help out. Many of your parish bulletins are now publishing special times or services for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. I hope this can be a time of spiritual renewal.

The First Sunday of Lent tells the Gospel account of Jesus going into the desert and being tested by the devil. Though He was sinless, He freely chose to experience the temptation in the desert and enter into our spiritual battle. He entered into our battle and ultimately emerged victorious! Think about it - none of us can make the legitimate

claim to be sinless yet Jesus offers to fight our battles by our side. We are never alone.



Lent is the annual season where we journey in the desert and acknowledge that the devil still tests us and we are still in need of God’s healing grace. Last year I mentioned a teaching that has been helpful to me over the years. Sometimes it can be difficult to do a good examination of our conscience, and I found something from the early church that helps me out. Pope St. Gregory the Great wrote years ago about the spiritual warfare that each soul battles, and the enemies to be fought he identified as the seven sins of pride.

Pope St. Gregory wrote:
“*For pride is the root of all evil.... But seven principal vices, as its first progeny, spring doubtless from this poisonous root, namely, vain glory, envy, anger, melancholy, avarice, gluttony, lust. For, because He grieved that we were held captive by these*

seven sins of pride, therefore our Redeemer came to the spiritual battle of our liberation, full of the spirit of sevenfold grace.” (Morals on the Book of Job: Vol. 3, pp. 489–490. Oxford; London: John Henry Parker; F. and J. Rivington) [1]

May God bless you and your families in this holy season. 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! Let’s keep one another in prayer with the confidence that Jesus our Savior is victorious.

+Brendan



Obispo Brendan Cahill
Mensaje del Pastor

Guerra Espiritual de Cuaresma

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

Algunas de mis primeras experiencias de la Diócesis de Victoria era cuando me uní a un grupo de otros sacerdotes en “el circuito”. Sacerdotes de los condados de Ft. Bend y Wharton programaban Servicios de Penitencia y se ayudaban unos a otros durante unas semanas cada Adviento y Cuaresma. Uno de mis mejores amigos era el Pastor en Richmond, así que me aseguré de programar tiempo para ayudar. Muchos de los boletines de su parroquia están publicando horarios o servicios especiales para el Sacramento de la Penitencia y la Reconciliación. Espero que este sea un tiempo de renovación espiritual.

El primer domingo de Cuaresma cuenta el relato del Evangelio de Jesús entrando al desierto y siendo tentado por el diablo. Aunque no tuvo pecado, eligió libremente experimentar la tentación en el desierto y entrar en nuestra batalla espiritual. ¡Entró en

nuestra batalla y finalmente salió victorioso! Piénselo: ninguno de nosotros puede hacer la reclamación legítima de no tener pecado, pero Jesús se ofrece a pelear nuestras batallas a nuestro lado. Nunca estamos solos.

La Cuaresma es la temporada anual en la que viajamos en el desierto y reconocemos que el diablo todavía nos pone a prueba y todavía necesitamos la gracia sanadora de Dios. El año pasado mencioné una enseñanza que me ha sido útil a lo largo de los años. A veces puede ser difícil hacer un buen examen de nuestra conciencia, y encontré algo de la iglesia primitiva que me ayuda. El Papa St. Gregory the Great escribió hace años acerca de la guerra espiritual que lucha cada alma y los enemigos a ser combatidos que él identificó como los siete pecados del orgullo.

El Papa San Gregorio escribió:
“*Pues el orgullo es la raíz de todo mal*

.... Pero siete principales vicios, como su primera progenie, sin duda surgen de esta raíz venenosa, principalmente, la vana-gloria, la envidia, la ira, la melancolía, la avaricia, la gula, la lujuria. Pues, porque El Afligido que estuvieron cautivos por estos siete pecados de orgullo, por lo tanto, nuestro Redentor vino a la batalla espiritual de nuestra liberación, lleno del espíritu de gracia de siete veces.” (Morales el libro de Job: Vol. 3, pp. 489-490 Oxford; London: John Henry Parker; F. y J. Rivington) [1]

Que Dios te bendiga a ti y a tus familias en esta temporada santa. 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 por la familia. Cuando San Juan Pablo II nos invitó a rezar esto fielmente, creo que podemos mantener nuestra confianza en el poder de esta oración, ¡más de lo que nunca sabemos! Mantengámonos unos a otros en oración con la confianza de que Jesús nuestro Salvador es victorioso.

+ Brendan

Fasting and Abstinence

When do I ...?
Fast and Abstain:
Ash Wednesday and Good Friday


Abstain:
All Fridays during Lent

Who has to ...?
Fast: Catholics who are 18 years of age, but not yet 59, are obliged


Abstain: observed by all Catholics 14 years-old and older

What is ...?
Fast: eating one full meal, as well as two small meals that together are not equal to a full meal

Abstinence: refrain from eating meat



Note: Persons that are exempt from fasting include: the physically or mentally ill, individuals with chronic illness, and those pregnant or nursing.



All parishes take up a weekly rice bowl collection during Lent - all those collections go to CRS. People may also donate directly online at <https://www.crs.org/>

CRS Rice Bowl is Catholic Relief Services’ Lenten faith-in-action program. It offers opportunities for your family to engage daily with the spiritual pillars of Lent: prayer, fasting and almsgiving. It is 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.



Bishop Cahill's Schedule

March

2	Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville	11-12	USCCB Pro Life Committee Meeting, Washington, DC
	11:00 a.m. Mass for Deacon's Retreat at Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria	12	6:00 p.m. Echelon Board Meeting, Houston
	4:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Mary, Victoria	14	10:00 a.m. Presbyteral Council
4	Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists	16	Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville
	6:00 p.m. Distinguished Alumni Award Dinner at The Hilton Garden Inn, Victoria	18-21	Catholic Rural Life Strategic Planning Meeting, Minneapolis
5	11:30 a.m. Luncheon at Our Lady of the Gulf School, Port Lavaca	23	Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville
	6:00 p.m. Adult Confirmation at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria	24	10:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Michael, Weimar
6	6:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Wharton followed by CCD visit	25	Texas Conference of Catholic Bishop's Meeting, Austin
7	4:30 p.m. Supper with IWBS Healthcare Sisters	26	Catholic Advocacy Day, Austin
8	Lenten Day of Prayer for Chancery Staff	27	Holy Trinity Seminary Advisory Board Meeting, Dallas
9	Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville	29	7:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bay City
	10:00 a.m. Ven y Sígueme Spanish conference, St. Robert Bellarmine, El Campo	30	4:00 p.m. Confirmation at St. John Nepomucene Church, New Taiton
10	9:00 a.m. Mass with Girl Scout recognition afterwards at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria	31	11:30 a.m. Presidio La Bahia Reenactment, Goliad
	3:00 p.m. Rite of Election at Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria	31-4/2	Visit Josephinum Seminary, Ohio

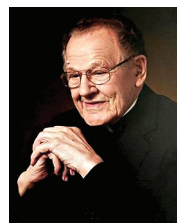
Bishop Fellhauer's Confirmation Schedule

March

31	10:00 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Holy Cross Church, East Bernard
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In Memoriam

Reverend Monsignor John Wagner



Reverend Monsignor John August Wagner was born on May 27, 1925, to John J. and Cecilia Jiral Wagner on the family farm near Poth, Texas. He passed away on Saturday, January 26, 2019, in San Antonio.

He was the sixth of seven children and grew up working in the cotton and onion fields on the farm. As a small boy, he would often go upstairs in the family home, build "little bitty altars" and play priest. At the age of fourteen he entered St. John's Seminary in San Antonio.

In May 1949, John was ordained a priest and celebrated his first solemn Mass at Blessed Sacrament Church and first assigned to Sts. Cyril and Methodius, in Shiner. He then went to St. Philip in El Campo and returned to San Antonio.

In 1958, Archbishop Robert E. Lucey assigned him to be executive secretary for

the United States Bishops Committee for the Spanish Speaking. He worked with Sen. Ted Kennedy on establishing the Peace Corps, Sen. Robert Kennedy on issues regarding migrant farm workers, and Martin Luther King Jr. in the civil rights movement. Father John was involved in the founding of the National Council for the Spanish Speaking, the War on Poverty, and the Bracero Program.

Father John was sent to care for parishioners in Nixon, Smiley and Westhoff, followed by other parishes in San Antonio. For a number of years he served as Chaplain to the San Antonio Police Department, was a long time member of the Knights of Columbus and an active member of the KJT.

During his stay at Casa de Padres, he enjoyed doing yard work and looking after flowers and plants. As his eyesight and health began to overtake him, Msgr. Wagner moved to Padua Place.

To make a donation send it to Padua Place, 80 Peter Baque Rd, San Antonio, TX 78209.

Reverend Monsignor Casey Jarzombek



BAY CITY - Reverend Monsignor Casimir Jarzombek, 85, of Bay City passed away on Friday, February 15, 2019. He was born August 15, 1933, in Falls City, Texas to the late

Thomas Jarzombek and Elizabeth "Lizzie" Wollny Jarzombek. He is preceded in death by his sister Florence Jarzombek Dugi and brother-in-law Frank Dugi. A vigil, rosary, and Memorial Mass was held at Holy Cross Church in Bay City, with Bishop David Fellhauer, celebrant and Bishop Brendan Cahill, concelebrant. The Funeral Mass was held at Holy Trinity Church in Falls City, with Bishop Cahill, celebrant. Interment followed at the Holy Trinity Church Cemetery. He attended Holy Trinity School during his elementary grades. He desired to become a priest beginning in the fifth grade. His pastor, Father Theo Janysek was his inspiration and gave him much encouragement. In 1948, his ninth grade year, he entered St. John's Minor Seminary in San Antonio. In the fall of 1953, he decided to pursue and was accepted by the Benedictine Order in Corpus Christi. He entered the Subiaco Abbey in Arkansas where he began his formation for the Benedictine Order. He made his first profession of religious vows and took the name of Casimir. During the occasional volleyball game, at the Abbey, the monks would call him "Casey". This name would be his for the remainder of his life. On May 26, 1960, he was ordained to the priesthood at St. Theresa Church in Corpus

Christi, by Bishop Mariano Garriga. From 1961-1969 he was involved in education either as a teacher or a student. He was sent to the University of Dayton in Ohio to attend a government-sponsored Spanish Language course taught by professors from Spain, Argentina, Chile, Colombia and other countries. This was, in Monsignor Casey's own words, "very interesting to say the least". He left the Benedictine Order in 1970. He went to the Diocese of Pueblo in Colorado. He served two parishes, along with serving in the campus ministry at Adams State College in Alamosa, Colorado. In 1974, Father Theo Janysek, who was Father Casey's true source of inspiration and encouragement, strongly urged him to return to the Diocese of San Antonio. He met with Archbishop Furey in San Antonio and was accepted as a priest in the San Antonio Diocese. He was assigned as associate pastor of St. Mary Church in Victoria. He also worked with the youth and served in campus ministry at Victoria College and the University of Houston Victoria Campus. In 1976 he was incardinated in the Archdiocese of San Antonio as a diocesan priest. He became involved with World Wide Marriage Encounter in 1979. He presented many Marriage Encounter weekends in Victoria and many different cities throughout Texas, Oklahoma, Arkansas, and Georgia. He continued his involvement until last year, when he became ill. He loved every aspect of his work with Marriage Encounter, he loved the couples he served, his brother-

See Reverend Monsignor Casey Jarzombek, pg. 8



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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

CDA #559 Court of St. Michael, Weimar

Paz and Andrea Morales
in Memory of Fr. Dan Morales

Mary Ann Henneke
in Memory of Dixon Atchetee

Ruth and Buck Boettcher
Tim and Mary Duyka
Mark and Lisa Doguet
Danny and Patsy Marburger
Dolores Koenig
Shirlene Lowdermilk
Bruce and Cara Herlin
Ronnie and Gayla Shimek
Mildred Naiser
Alan and Lillian Lockley
Jimmie and Donna Chambers
Bill and Alene Hubenak
in Memory of Gladys Gavranovic

Dolores Koenig
in Memory of Mary Hohensee

CDA #1108 Court of St. Bernadette
*in Honor CDA #1990 Court Our Lady
Queen of the Clergy*

CDA #1190 Our Lady Queen of the Clergy
*in Memory of: Ramona Ramirez,
Antonia Lozano, Della Morris, and
Ella Engbrock*

Acolyte

Paul and Denise Francouer
Wadler, Perches, Hundl, and Kerlick Attys

Jeff Hodge
Delia Perches
Paul Hlavinka

A & W Turf
Sharon Sipes, Suzie and Mark Danton
Hlavinka Equipment Co.
Randall and Hilda Jasperson
in Memory of Gladys Gavranovic

Wearden Family
in Memory of Zula Wearden

Gary and Rhonda Moritz
Robert and Pat Abbot
in Memory of Darlene Garza

Gary and Rhonda Moritz
in Memory of Mary Ann Kubena

Candidate

Transitional Deacon

Priest

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



SEMINARIANS TAKE STEP FORWARD TO PRIESTHOOD—Luke Prihoda, Adam Shimek and Ryan Kapavik received the Ministry of Lector from Bishop Michael Mulvey, of Corpus Christi, on Sunday, February 10. Lector is a Ministry of the Word of God and is the first ministry a seminarian receives on his way to the priesthood. Acolyte is the next step, then Transitional Deacon, before being ordained to the priesthood.

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 layperson, 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 >.

February 18, 2019

• **CDA of the Americas Court Our Lady
Queen of Peace #1374 Seminary
Burse**

Acolyte
Donation by CDA Court Our Lady Queen
of Peace #1374, El Campo

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

Lector
In honor of Rev. Philip Brune’s birthday
celebration by:
Mark and Sharon Kubicek
Robert and Carol Schertz
In memory of Alvin J. Wick by
Daniel and Mathilda Melnar

Acolyte
In honor of Rev. Philip Brune’s birthday
celebration by St. Ann’s Altar Society,
Frelsburg

• **Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Seminary
Burse #8**

Acolyte
Donation in memory of Royce Schulte

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

Lector
In memory of Wilbert Kalinec by
Donald and Karen Kutac

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

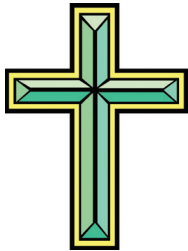
Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria,

God our Father, thank you for our Priests and for calling the Diocese of Victoria Seminarians to prepare for priesthood and grant them the grace to grow closer to You through daily prayer. Help them to form their personality as a credible witness to others. Bless them while they study Your word and the teachings of the Church and give them a generous heart to serve Your people. Amen

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

Rev. Msgr. Michael O’Shaughnessy 03/02/2013
Rev. Daniel Giorgi 03/22/2007

“May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace.”



Happy Birthday to Our Seminarians

Chase Goodman is in Theology III this year at the Pontifical College Josephinum, in Columbus, Ohio. Chase’s hometown is Victoria. His birthday is March 22. Write to Chase at: Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 N. High St., Columbus, OH 43235.



James Dvorak is in Theology III this year at St. Mary’s Seminary, in Houston. James’ home town is Frelsburg. His birthday is March 24. Write to James at: St. Mary’s Seminary, 9845 Memorial Dr., Houston, TX 77024.



“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:18-22



FISHING TOURNAMENT BENEFITS SCHOOL—Knights of Columbus (KC) Council #1582 in Yoakum gave \$5,000 to St. Joseph Endowment Fund and \$10,000 to St. Joseph School from their annual Hook Em & Cook Em Fishing Tournament held last May. Pictured are (left-right) KC Grand Knight Daniel Driskell, St. Joseph Principal Sean Mooney, and KC Recorder Alan Migl. The two KC members are the chairmen of the fishing tournament.



KJT SUPPORTS CATHOLIC EDUCATION—Holy Cross School received a matching grant donation from KJT Society #139. The donation will be used towards curriculum resources. Pictured (l-r) are Father Greg Korenek, pastor, James Enbrock, Larry Browning, Vincent Nemec, Inez Kucera, principal, and Cynthia Nemec. Thank you, KJT #139!



(above) Sadie is pictured at the San Marcos Regional Airport before flying over Shiner for her night flight and in the cockpit of a plane (right).



Hello From the Flight Deck

My name is Sadie. I am 18 years-old and a Senior, at St. Paul High School, in Shiner. I plan on attending LeTourneau University in Longview, Texas to study Aviation Management with a Professional Flight Concentration. There I will receive all of my Federal Aviation Administration certifications required to be a commercial pilot.

My career choice to be a commercial airline pilot may come to a shock to those around me, especially the area. (My family is full of farmers and ranchers.) It all started with a thought. I have always wanted to see the world, and I love to travel. When everyone else was worried on plane rides to places, I truly enjoyed them — even the turbulence. I have quite the travel bucket list. I would love to travel to all 50 states (I want to scratch all of the states off of my scratch off map). Scotland is one of my top choices because that is where my grandparents are from. I want to see London, Paris, China, Peru, and many many more. I want to be one of those people that pop up on social media at different places all of the time. I also hope that my travels will inspire the next generation of young aviators.

On February 7, I decided to fly over the top of my school for my night flight section. The first thing I thought, “It’s so tiny!” I have flown next to big cities and Shiner is very small in comparison. I decided to fly over the school because it made me into the young woman I am today. My classmates,

my teachers, and the environment encouraged me to be a strong, independent, and an innovative person, that in which I can attribute to the school. Most of my classmates want to go into the medical field, education, engineering, or construction, but I wanted to be different.

I wanted to stand alone. The more I researched “commercial airline pilot,” the more enticing it became. After I came to my parents with my research, they blessed me with the opportunity to start to live my dream — they sent me to flight school. All of my classmates and teachers have been very encouraging throughout my endeavors and some have asked, “So when will you take me up?”

This year I have learned so much, especially about myself. I found that when I fly I feel closer to God. All of my worries disappear. I am privileged to see the beauty of God’s creation around me from above. It can bring tears to my eyes at times. God blessed me with a family and school that supports me in all that I do.

Isaiah 40:31~“But those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint.”

Job OPENING

Holy Cross School Seeking Principal for 2019-2020

Holy Cross School is a Catholic elementary school located in Bay City, Texas, in the Diocese of Victoria. For job description, qualifications, education requirements, and application form go to www.victoriadiocese.org/employment-opportunities.



SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



Observance of Lent – Timeless and Timely

The basic beliefs of our Catholic Christian faith endures throughout the ages; however religious practices and attitudes may be modified according to the shifts of emphasis in our society and in response to the contemporary needs of said society. For example, we all continue to believe and defend all the tenets of the Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed. However, during my lifetime I have seen many changes in the way we relate to and show our reverence for God, one another, and all of God's creation. Those of you who have been practicing Catholics for many years may remember the confusion that was experienced when the liturgical language was changed from Latin to the vernacular language of the worshipers so that we could more fully understand, appreciate, and mean what we were praying. (Actually the liturgical language of the early Church was the vernacular language of the worshipers of that time- mostly Aramaic and Greek). We were used to the Latin prayers and it was rather comfortable while traveling to go to other countries and attend Mass in Latin. I myself loved the Latin, but in time I understood the wisdom of public prayer in one's own language.

Other changes followed and we are encouraged to develop a closer relationship with God, and to find God in one another and in all of God's awesome creation. Along with our developing awareness of our role in bringing about the reign of God, emphasis has been placed on the Social Teachings of the Church which are current applications of the time-

less Gospel values found in the Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy, which are summarized from gleanings from Scripture such as the command to love God and your neighbor, the Beatitudes, and more personally in (Matt 25:35) "For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me."

So the same applies to our practice of Lent. In my lifetime, I have seen a shift from preoccupation of what we were doing (or not supposed to be doing) during Lent, to what can we do as a result of our ever-increasing relationship and love for Jesus, who suffered so much to bring about our salvation. We show our love and thanksgiving through our loving prayer, penance, and alms-giving. I know that many of our readers have been and plan to continue to be very generous in their donations of time and treasure; now the question is: Are we realizing that these actions are being done to Jesus himself? Let us keep in mind the words of Jesus, "When I was- hungry, thirsty, homeless, etc...." Then any such sacrifices that we make during this Lenten season will be joyful (yes, we can be joyful even during Lent) actions showing our love for our God, our neighbor, and God's creation. (Pope Francis added "Care for Creation" as one of the Works of Charity because of the great need for modern civilization to protect our earthly home.) As we embody the timeless values that Lent represents, let us view this season of prayer, service, and alms-giving through the lens of the social teachings of the Church.



Students from St. Michael School, Weimar, collected \$300 to pay 1 month's rent for a Promise Pointe resident who might be having difficulty paying their rent initially. Receiving the donation was Sr. Rebecca Janacek and Sr. Maria Goretti Warzecha.

Helping the Homeless

Promise Pointe is a non-profit 501(c) (3) organization whose purpose is to provide permanent affordable housing and a supportive community for the chronically homeless in Victoria, Texas and the Crossroads region. This new project for the homeless is being sponsored and pulled together by a group of local business and ordinary people who have felt the tug on their hearts to care for the homeless. The new adventure is a transformative residential community for the homeless. It is non-denominational, faith-based and is aimed at the chronically homeless who wish to get off the street and make a new start. Promise Pointe offers permanent affordable housing and most importantly, a supportive community. It is being modeled on the Community First! Village outside of Austin, Texas. The plan is to create a community of 20-23 single-person 'tiny homes' to house the residents in 2 phases. A twelve-acre piece of property outside of Victoria, in the small community of Raisin, was purchased by for this purpose.

Phase 1 has begun and Promise Pointe is accepting applications from potential residents. The first residents were accepted in mid-November of 2018. Promise Pointe is working closely with the Victoria Homeless Coalition (made-up of government, church and non-government organizations who are helping the homeless throughout the 8 counties making up the Victoria Crossroads region) and have asked Mid-Coast Family Services of Victoria to assist in the initial assessment and careful screening of potential residents. This

opportunity may be available to single adult individuals, who are chronically homeless and who are willing to follow the basic rules of: obeying the law, paying rent (\$300/month), and obeying the rules and regulations as set by the Promise Pointe resident community.

Each tenant is housed in a small cottage that is a single room of roughly 300 square feet and is furnished with electricity, air-conditioning/heat, a bed, a small table with 2 chairs, a comfortable lounge chair, a microwave oven and a refrigerator. Kitchen, bathroom and laundry facilities are shared among a group of 4-5 people. Initially each person will receive a welcome package which includes, linens, bedding, toiletries and a start-up kitchen pantry and kitchen supplies. Tenants cook for themselves in the communal kitchen and are responsible for purchasing their own groceries and necessities.

They are highly encouraged to work at some job and develop microenterprises to support themselves and the community. With the idea of encouraging the 'old neighborhood' mentality each cottage has a large front porch with 2 chairs. What makes Promise Pointe different from other organizations in the area who are helping the homeless is that there is no time-limited. If the resident wishes to live there permanently, they can as long as they pay the rent and follow the rules.

Promise Pointe is not part of any government programs unless the individual receives funding to help pay their rent. The goal is to grow a neighborhood in which trust, respect and concern for each other is primary.



During Catholic Schools Week students from Our Lady of Victory School, Victoria, collected \$1,351 for Promise Pointe. Accepting the donation was Sr. Rebecca Janacek, left, from Sr. Laura Toman, school principal.

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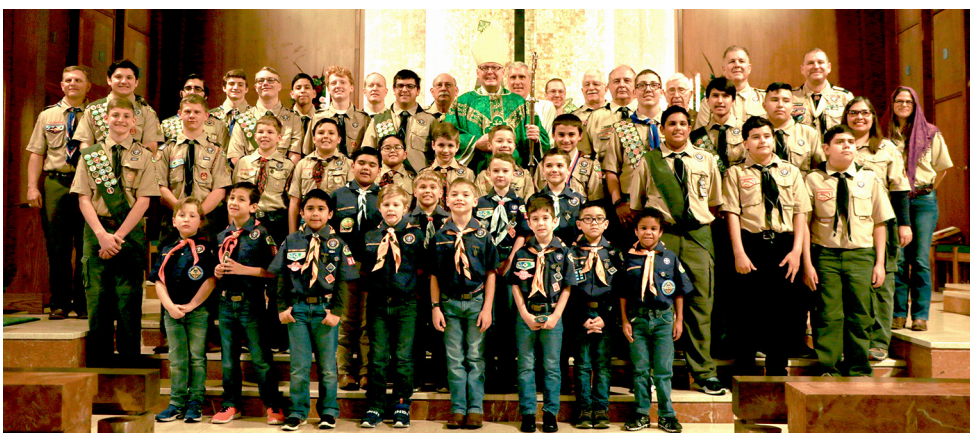
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BISHOP VISITS BLOOMINGTON CCD STUDENTS—Bishop Brendan Cahill visited with the CCD students of St. Patrick's, in Bloomington. The students presented Bishop Cahill with a poster in appreciation of visiting and offering a Mass for them. Also, pictured is Father Samuel Appiasi, pastor.



N.E.T. TRAVELS THROUGHOUT DIOCESE—National Evangelization Teams (N.E.T.) Ministries visited various parishes throughout the Diocese of Victoria. One of their stops included St. Patrick's, in Bloomington. On Wednesday, February 6, N.E.T. Ministries team presented a retreat to the CCD students from grades 9th to 12th. N.E.T. Ministries challenges young Catholics to love Christ and embrace the life of the Church. Every August, 175 young Catholics ages 18-28 leave behind their jobs, school, family, and friends to devote nine months to serving with N.E.T. Divided into 16 teams, they travel across the United States to share the Gospel with young people and their families. Since 1981, N.E.T. teams have led over 32,000 retreats and ministered to more than 2 million young Catholics.



A SCOUT IS REVERENT—Our Lady of Victory's Cub Scout Pack 364 and Boy Scout Troop 364, with their leaders celebrated Scout Sunday, on February 10, 2019, at The Cathedral of Our Lady Of Victory. Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated the Mass and Father Gary W. Janak con-celebrated. Thirteen religious medals were presented to Cub Scouts.



Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament

April 26 • 1:00 p.m.



The Club at Colony Creek
~ Victoria ~

For more than 20 years, individuals and businesses from all over the Diocese of Victoria have supported the seminarians and youth by contributing to the Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament. The average cost to educate one seminarian a year is \$35,000. There are currently 14 seminarians studying for the Diocese of Victoria. There are several different sponsorship levels available for the tournament. Every "Bishop" level sponsorship of \$1,000 goes directly to the education fund for seminarians. Half of the remaining proceeds benefit the Office of Vocations while the other half benefits the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry. The contributions received help fund scholarships making it more affordable for youth to attend retreats such as Camp David, Rocky Mountain High, and March for Life. Please prayerfully consider how you can best support this event.

Sponsorship levels:
Bishop ~ \$1,000
Monsignor ~ \$500
Priest ~ \$200
Deacon ~ \$100
Seminarian ~ \$50

Mail
Sponsorships to:
Diocese of Victoria
P. O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

Deadline:
April 17, 2019



More information at: victoriadiocese.org/bishop-david-fellhauer-invitational-golf-tournament
or call the Youth Office at (361) 573-0828

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Wendy Eggert, Director
Shannon Thomas, Associate Director
ym@victoriadiocese.org
(361) 573-0828
www.victoriadiocese.org/youth-young-adult-ministry

Upcoming Events

- Campus Ministry - Text @csagroup to the phone number 81010 to sign-up for text updates about Mass at Victoria College and other ministry updates and events
- Rocky Mountain High - Registration is now OPEN! RMH Retreat July 13 - July 21
- Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament, April 26
- Camp David is a fun-filled retreat offered for junior high age (student entering sixth or finishing eighth grade). Registration coming soon! Save the dates: Jr. High- Session 1: June 9-11 / Jr. High-Session 2: June 12-14



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Making a Difference

A State of the Union Address for the Poor and Vulnerable



By Tony Magliano

My fellow Americans and fellow citizens of the world, the greatness of a nation is not measured by its military or economic power, but to the degree it is willing to help the poor

and vulnerable.

Tragically, however, to a very significant extent the United States continues to ignore the poor and vulnerable.

Since the 1973 legalization of abortion in the U.S., approximately 60 million unborn babies have been brutally

dismembered and killed through this barbaric practice. A civilized society does not kill babies.

And so tonight I urge the Congress to completely de-fund Planned Parenthood – the nation's largest abortion provider – and to move quickly in passing an amendment to the U.S. Constitution granting full protection to every human being from conception

to natural death.

Over 40 million Americans live below the poverty level – including 13 million children. Many impoverished families have at least one adult working full time for very low wages.

Therefore, I urge the Congress to pass legislation raising the minimum wage from \$7.25 to \$15.00 an hour.

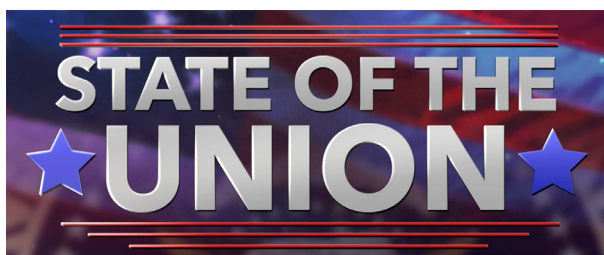
Over 27 million Americans do not have health insurance. To remedy this ill, I ask Congress to make Medicare available to every person residing in the U.S.

The famous Trappist monk Thomas Merton said, "The God of peace is never

glorified by human violence." Yet, many in the U.S. and world glorify violence instead of God.

Gun homicide rates are far higher in the U.S. than in any other high-income country. Therefore, I call upon the Congress to pass universal gun registration and background check legislation.

Terrorism is being fueled by the count-



Reverend Monsignor Casey Jarzombek

Continued from pg. 3

hood of Marriage Encounter priests and the many friends that worked side by side with him. Other parishes that he served at were, Holy Cross Church, Yorktown and its two mission churches San Luis in Yorktown and

St. Ann in Nordheim, St. Anthony Church in Palacios. In 1998 he was assigned to Holy Cross Parish in Bay City. Where he served as Pastor until his retirement in 2012, and he remained there until his death.

Monsignor Casey was a member of the Bay City Knights of Columbus, Council 3070, he attained a Fourth Degree with the El Campo Assembly 1231. He was very involved in the A.C.T.S. movement and Life Teen at Holy Cross parish. He was instrumental in beginning Perpetual Adoration at Holy Cross as a shared worship with Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish. His love for Holy Cross Catholic School, the students and teachers brought such joy to his heart. He will be remembered for his quick wit, phenomenal sense of humor, captivating smile, a welcoming confessor, and loving soul.

He is survived by a plethora of friends who loved him dearly. We now celebrate the beauty and blessing of his life that we were fortunate to share. In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the Education of Seminarians of the Diocese of Victoria.

The Emmaus Center



The Emmaus Center provides individual, couple, family, adolescent and children's counseling as well as specialized support groups from a Catholic perspective. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (361) 212-0830.

Save the Date
Friday, May 10

2nd Annual Roast and Toast
Benefitting The Emmaus Center
Honoree will be
Bishop Brendan Cahill

less deaths of innocent civilians caused in many instances by the ongoing wars America continues to fight; as well as the presence of U.S. military forces in many countries where such forces are often viewed as supporting American corporate interests like oil.

Tonight I put before my fellow citizens a far better response to terrorism than flexing military muscles and waging war. Instead, let us undertake the highly moral and good-will creating cause of the total elimination of global poverty and hunger by 2025.

Therefore, I urge Congress to annually transfer \$100 billion dollars from the astronomical \$700 billion military budget to be used for this life-saving endeavor.

And I am issuing an executive order halting all sales and gifts of weapons abroad, the closing of the 800 military bases around the world, and the complete withdrawal of all U.S. forces worldwide.

Also, I have instructed our ambassador to the United Nations to sign the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons which is designed to eliminate all nuclear weapons from the face of the earth. And I urge the Senate to quickly ratify it.

Desperate people fleeing violence and

poverty are at our southern border begging for help. As Pope Francis teaches, let us build bridges instead of walls. Congress needs to pass just, comprehensive immigration reform legislation this year.

Nearly all climate scientists agree that the catastrophic dangers of global warming are caused overwhelmingly by human use of oil, coal and gas.

Therefore, I urge Congress to pass a Green New Deal bill designed to move America toward totally clean energy – provided by wind, solar and geothermal renewable sources.

Let us ask God for the courage to move from nationalism to global solidarity, from militarism to multi-lateral disarmament, and from greed to an equitable sharing of the world's resources.

God bless America and all the people on planet Earth!

Tony Magliano is an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings. Tony can be reached at tmag@zoominternet.net.



How to Support Programs in Your Parish

The Diocesan Services Appeal (DSA) is committed to fund administration offices and programs that help us bring the light of Christ to the priorities of the Crossroads. The Diocesan Services Appeal has been mailed. If you did not receive yours you may download one at: <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/diocesan-services-appeal> or call (361) 573-0828.

Our Lady of Lourdes Holy Name Society



Sponsors 54th Annual Chicken / Sausage Dinner

BBQ Chicken or Sausage, Cole Slaw, Potato Salad and Beans
\$10 per plate • All Plates are to-go

Sunday, March 31 • 11 a.m. – 1 p.m.

Our Lady of Lourdes Church
105 N. William St.

Plates may be taken into the basement to eat.



Supreme Court Rejects Abortion Groups' Attack on Texas Bishops

Leaves in place lower court's ruling protecting church leaders' right to private religious discussions

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Moments ago, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected an attempt by abortion groups to pry into Texas Catholic bishops' private discussions about religious doctrine. In *Whole Woman's Health v. Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops*, several abortion advocates targeted and subpoenaed Texas' Catholic bishops to demand their internal deliberations regarding abortion. Last year, a three-judge panel of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in New Orleans rejected the surveillance attempt as intimidation and an invasion of the church's right to privacy. Today's Supreme Court ruling finally puts an end to the abortion group's intrusion efforts.

In 2016, Whole Woman's Health, a Texas-based abortion facility chain, sued over a state law that would require hospitals and abortion facilities to dispose of aborted human remains by burial or cremation, rather than in a landfill or the sewer, as is currently allowed. Because of the Catholic Church's pro-life stance, the Texas Catholic Church's leadership—the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops—acted according to its faith and offered to provide burials to all unborn children who were aborted. Although the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops was not part of that lawsuit, last year the abortion groups retaliated against the bishops by subpoenaing decades of internal religious deliberations among the bishops regarding abortion.

"Thank goodness the Supreme Court saw this appeal for what it was: a nasty attempt to intimidate the bishops and force them to withdraw their offer to bury every child aborted in Texas," said Eric Rassbach, vice president and senior counsel at Becket, which represented the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops. "Abortion groups may think the bishops 'troublesome,' but it is wrong to weaponize the law to stop the bishops from standing up for their beliefs."

Last June, a trial judge ordered the bishops to hand over their internal communications about abortion to Whole Woman's Health—even though they had already provided 4,000 pages of external communications. The bishops appealed to the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals, which granted them permanent protection from the order. The court ruled that the bishops' claims "go to the heart of the constitutional protection of religious belief and practice as well as citizens' right to advocate sensitive policies in the public square." Whole Woman's Health asked the full Fifth Circuit to rehear the case. The full court rejected their request. They then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court, which today also rejected the group's bid.

The Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops is also represented by Steven Levatino and Andrew McRae of Levatino | Pace PLLC in Austin, Texas.

Texas Locality Orders Popular Catholic Center for Migrants to Vacate

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A group of city commissioners in the border city of McAllen, Texas, voted in mid-February to remove from a building a popular Catholic-administered center run by Sister Norma Pimentel, who has been praised by Pope Francis for her work with migrants. McAllen city commissioners voted February 11, to vacate within 90 days the building that Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley uses to provide temporary shelter for immigrants who cross from Mexico into the United States but who have been released by federal authorities. Sister Pimentel, who has won national and international praise for the type of work that takes place at the center, is the executive director for the charitable agency that runs the temporary shelter, which provides food, clothes, a shower and other necessities for migrant children and adults passing through the city in the Diocese of Brownsville, Texas.



BISHOP SWORN AS TEXAS HOUSE CHAPLAIN—Bishop Joe Vásquez of the Diocese of Austin was sworn in on February 19, by Speaker Dennis Bonnen, as the new Chaplain of the Texas House of Representatives. In this role he will serve Texas legislators during the 86th Session of the Texas Legislature. Please pray for Bishop Vásquez and for all lawmakers, that they may serve our state and their constituents well.

USCCB Issues Statement on McCarrick

WASHINGTON — Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston and President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, has issued the following statement upon the decision of the Holy See announced today regarding Theodore McCarrick.

Cardinal DiNardo's Full Statement Follows:

"The Holy See's announcement regarding Theodore McCarrick is a clear signal that abuse will not be tolerated. No bishop, no matter how influential, is above the law of the Church. For all those McCarrick abused,

I pray this judgement will be one small step, among many, toward healing. For us bishops, it strengthens our resolve to hold ourselves accountable to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. I am grateful to Pope Francis for the determined way he has led the Church's response.

If you have suffered sexual abuse at the hands of someone within the Catholic Church, I urge you to contact local law enforcement and your local diocese or eparchy. Victims Assistance Coordinators are available to help. We are committed to healing and reconciliation."



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Catholic Rural Life - Victoria

Blessings of Wind

Wind, our heavenly companion which we cannot see but feel and know its effects. A reminder of the gift of God's loving presence to each of us as it breezes into woodlands, soars past mountaintops, sweeps over plains and deserts, and skims the oceans. The wind is sometimes gentle, sometimes harsh, and wanders to the ends of the earth. In appointed service, the wind swoops up fertile pollen and airy seed and grandly ushers in misty clouds and then deposits them all in fruitful wonder.

As St. Francis states in the Can-

ticle of the Sun: Praised be You, my Lord, through Brothers Wind and Air, and fair and stormy, all weather's moods, by which You cherish all that You have made.



Let us pray: Lord of Wind and Air, bless the wind in its fertile vocation as it swirls through crops and hearts bearing gifts of heaven and earth. Let us rejoice in its animation and experience the liveliness of your Spirit. Blow into our hearts with your life giving Word. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen



REPAIRS BEGIN—The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory is undergoing renovations following damage from Hurricane Harvey. Floors will be replaced, pews refinished, murals restored, and more. Mass is temporarily being held at the Cathedral Center next door.





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Penance and the Forgiveness of Sin

The following sermon was written by Father Charles Kram from the Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B.

The world is full of signs and symbols—the peace sign, the national flag, the wedding ring, the long stemmed rose. We like symbols because they express and stir up feelings, sometimes much more effectively than words ever could.

The miracles that Jesus worked were also signs; signs that prefigured and symbolized the reign of God which was coming upon the world through his death and resurrection.

The sacraments are also signs. They are SPECIAL signs, to which the Lord Jesus has given the power to bring about what they signify.

For example, the water of Baptism washes the sin of Adam away, the bread of the Eucharist nourishes us and makes us grow, the oil of the Anointing of the Sick heals the illness of body and soul.

We are now approaching Lent, that special season of penance and reconciliation. So this is an appropriate time to consider that special sign of forgiveness, the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We used to call it simply, Confession. Now we put emphasis where it belongs, namely, on reconciliation, that is, on the fact that the person who receives it worthily, is forgiven his sins and is reinstated

into harmony and good relationship with God and with his fellow man.

In the past, when co-operation among the various denominations was not so strong among us, we Catholics were often accused of sinning freely during the week, telling our sins to the priest during the weekend, and then feeling free to sin again.

But obviously, confession without repentance is worthless. Without repentance there is no forgiveness. Repentance includes sorrow for having offended God and a firm intention of changing one's life.

But many people today have lost their sense of sin. Many things which were recognized as morally wrong just a generation ago are now done without a thought.

The new Rite of Reconciliation stresses the fact that every sin weakens or destroys the harmony that should prevail in the spiritual world. It also reminds us that we can just as easily sin by what we FAIL to do, as by the wrong we DO. And another thing, it also reminds us that we should consider the reasons WHY we act as we do, including the BAD ATTITUDES which may lie at the root of our sins.

Have you ever gone to confession face-to-face? If not, you might try it sometime. Once an elderly patient did it that way for the first time in his life in the hospital, and when he finished he said, "Say, I enjoyed



that." Even persons who have no use for the Catholic practice of confessing one's sins to a priest, will not hesitate to talk about them to their psychiatrist. A Methodist minister whom I knew, who had been a campus minister for 25 years, once told me, "I heard many a confession in those days."

If God has, down through the ages, chosen certain individuals to be instruments of healing of the ailments of the body, why can't he also grant to certain chosen ones the power to heal souls. Healing of the soul is not visible to the eye like the healing of physical illness is, but this does not make it any less real.

Consider that just after the Resurrection, Jesus appeared to the apostles and breathed on them and said, "Receive you the Holy Spirit; whose sins you shall forgive they are forgiven them." Our faith teaches us that in doing this he left to the Church the power

to forgive sins, and that having given it, he meant it to be used.

If you have not been to confession for a long time, why not make the 2000 the year of new beginning. If it means a long journey back, remember the old saying, "Even the longest journey begins with that first step."

Lord Jesus thank you for having provided us with a special sign that gives us deep assurance of forgiveness. Help us to repent sincerely, so that we may more and more be freed from our sins and their consequences.

Grant that through this Sacrament of peace and reconciliation, the grace you have won for us through your death and resurrection may come upon us in great profusion, and make us ever more worthy to be numbered among your saints.

Amen



KJT DONATES—Kevin Kana, State Secretary/Treasurer of the Catholic Union of Texas, KJT is pictured with Bishop Brendan Cahill with two donations. One was for the Priest and Religious Retirement Fund, and the other was for the Education of Seminarian Fund. The funds were raised from donations from the KJT societies located within the Diocese of Victoria.

Join Bishop Cahill for Catholic Faith in Action Advocacy Day



Bishop Brendan Cahill has committed 100 participants from the Diocese of Victoria for Catholic Faith in Action Advocacy Day on March 26, 2019 at the Texas Capitol,

in Austin, Texas. Participants from the Diocese of Victoria will join with thousands of Catholics, from the 15 dioceses in Texas, to advocate for policies promoting life, justice, charity, and religious freedom and to educate our legislators and other state leaders in a better understanding about what we believe as Catholics. A select group of volunteers will also be prepared to visit with the elected state legislators who represent the ten counties of the Diocese of Victoria.

Commitments are needed ASAP in order to plan travel and logistics. If you are interested in participating register online or call Sherry at (361) 573-0828.

SCAM ALERT

We have been notified by several parishes of an active texting/emailing scam targeting pastors and parishioners. In the fraudulent texts/emails, the pastor, mentioned by name, asks for donations of gift cards. Please be aware that this is a scam and do not respond. The Diocese of Victoria and our priests will not solicit donations in this way.

Save the Date
Sunday, April 28

St. Michael Weimar



Spring Festival

Fried Chicken & Sausage Dinner

Polka Mass / Auction / Games

Music:

Czechaholics & Broken Alibi



Sunday Readings from March 3 - April 14

*March 3 ~ Eighth Sunday
in Ordinary Time*
Sirach 27:4-7
Psalms 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16
1 Corinthians 15:54-58
Luke 6:39-45

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

March 10 ~ First Sunday of Lent
Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Psalms 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
Romans 10:8-13
Luke 4:1-13

March 17 ~ Second Sunday of Lent
Genesis 15:5-12, 17-18
Psalms 27:1, 7-8, 8-9, 13-14
Philippians 3:17—4:1
Luke 9:28B-36


March 24 ~ Third Sunday of Lent
Exodus 17:3-7
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9
Romans 5:1-2, 5-8
John 4:5-42

March 31 ~ Fourth Sunday of Lent
1 Samuel 16:1B, 6-7, 10-13A
Psalms 23: 1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6
Ephesians 5:8-14
John 9:1-41

April 7 ~ Fifth Sunday of Lent
Ezekiel 37:12-14
Psalms 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8
Romans 8:8-11
John 11:1-45

*April 14 ~ Palm Sunday of the
Lord's Passion*
Luke 19:28-40
Isaiah 50:4-7
Psalms 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24
Philippians 2:6-11
Luke 22:14—23:56

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

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Journeys of Faith with Ceci

Experience pilgrimage in a whole new light!

A unique Holy Land Pilgrimage to Pray with all God's Gifts May 15 - 26 ~ \$3,995

This pilgrimage will be highlighted with dramatizations by Father Michael Sparough from Shalom World TV, spiritual interpretive dance by Betsey Beckman and music with Vallimar Jansen. This makes a great first time or second time pilgrimage! See Holy Land in a new light!



Pilgrimage to Poland and Prague September 18 - 28 ~ \$3,795

Join Father Dan Cambra and Catholic singer/songwriter Anna Nuzzo and visit Warsaw, Czestochowa, Auschwitz, Krakow, the Salt Mines, Lagiewniki-the boyhood home of St. John Paul II! We visit the Divine Mercy Shrine built at the convent where St. Faustina received the Divine Mercy Image and Prayers. Concludes with a beautiful drive through the Czech Republic to Prague. Register before June 1, to receive a free copy of Anna Nuzzo's *Divine Mercy* CD featuring Father Dan Cambra (limit one CD per household).



Advent in Holy Land Pilgrimage & Choir Tour November 29 - December 9 ~ \$3,395

Come with Catholic Singer Anna Nuzzo and Father Domenic Roscioli to the Holy Land during this very special Season of Advent! In addition to the traditional Holy Land tour, option to join the American Noel Choir and sing with Anna at the Christmas Tree Lighting in Nazareth! Choir concerts in Bethlehem and Jerusalem where one can sing with the Arabic Catholic Choirs. Singing in the choir is optional!



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Letter to the Editor

Dear Ms. Richmond, Editor

I was encouraged to read Tony Magliano's column (February 2019 *Lighthouse*) recognizing the anniversary of Roe v. Wade and the annual local, state and national marches which many participate in. He noted that more needs to be done the rest of the year in terms of prolife representation at abortion clinics, communication with legislators to enact prolife laws and education for the public as to the reality of abortion.

He recognized the contribution the Knights of Columbus has made in providing 1,000 ultrasound machines to pregnancy centers and pro-life health clinics in the US and several other countries. This will enable women to view their babies, recognizing that they are living beings not just "products of conception".

Mr. Magliano stated that "abortion centers have very few people standing in peaceful, prayerful witness on behalf of the unborn babies..." I would like to bring to your attention the work of 40 Days for Life, a movement that is active here in Texas and worldwide. Individuals pledge to pray, fast and stand at abortion clinics. This movement has been instrumental in the closing of many abortion clinics I including the one at College Station as many women change their minds about aborting their babies.

Our own Bishop Cahill has stood before the largest abortion clinic in the western hemisphere in Houston with a group of youth and adults representing the Diocese of Victoria. He is to be commended for this display of leadership. Check out www.40Daysforlife.

com to find a center near you.

Another area of concern that Mr. Magliano raised is the "need to put political pressure on our elected officials to do the morally right thing." There is a very easy way to keep up with the current laws being considered and make your voices heard! EWTN (Eternal Word Television Network) a worldwide Catholic media service which is available via cable for TV, the EWTN website or my favorite as an app on your phone, has a weekly show called *Prolife Weekly*. It is very simple to sign up for "action alerts" of any laws concerning abortion (pro or anti life) and then follow the prompts to reach your lawmaker.

Finally, the column addressed "education at all levels regarding the barbaric reality of abortion."

He provided several internet links and this is very helpful but I would like to add that a movie is due to be released in late March called "Unplanned". This story chronicles how Abby Johnson, a Planned Parenthood director for 8 years realized the twisted truth of her believing that she was helping women in crisis and that she had participated in the abortion of 22,000 babies. She left the clinic and now promotes the pro-life cause and assists abortion workers who are afraid to leave the industry.

We are blessed to have the courageous leadership of our bishop and so many resources available to make it easy to participate in the pro-life cause, not just for unborn babies, but from conception to natural death.

Michele Carpenter
Holy Cross Parish, East Bernard



WORLD DAY FOR CONSECRATED LIFE CELEBRATED—On Sunday February 3, 2019, Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated Mass for World Day for Consecrated Life, at Our Lady of Lourdes, in Victoria. We pray for all who serve the diocese through religious vocations. Five religious congregations are represented in the Diocese of Victoria. They are: Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Hearts of Jesus and Mary; Vietnamese Sisters of the Incarnation, Consecration, and Mission; Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament; Carmelites of the Ever Virgin Mary (cloistered); Vietnamese Dominican Sisters.



Letter to the Editor

Power in My Hands

Dear Lighthouse Readers,

This is a true story. We can tell you this, because it happened to us. This is a story of how a small group of friends formed with the intention of praying a daily family rosary for our Church in their homes, the domestic church. It is a story of how these friends came to truly hear the call of Our Lady: "... pray the rosary every day in honor of Our Lady of the Rosary in order to obtain peace in the world...because only she can help you." (Our Lady in Fatima, July 13, 1917)

V, like many of our generation, grew up praying the rosary in public before Mass, at a funeral visitation, or in the car on their way to Mass, but not in the home. Growing up, they never knew the order of the mysteries or even that they should take time to meditate on them. When she began her own family, they tried to attend daily Mass as much as possible and to pray the rosary when they could, usually in the car, but never an entire rosary at home as a family.

M did not pray the rosary growing up, except at the few funeral visitations she attended. In fact, because of some family friends telling her that as Catholics they worshipped Mary, she was afraid to. It was not until, while starting their family, when she read St. Louis de Montfort's "*True Devotion to Mary*," that she came to have a real and deep love for our Blessed Mother. At this time she began praying the rosary with her children daily. They had already begun attending daily Mass, and kept both of these practices as part of their daily life as much as possible.

V and M met through a day retreat they both attended and from there a friendship of families began. It wasn't until 2017, the centennial of Our Lady of Fatima and the arrival of Hurricane Harvey, that they realized how central the rosary should be or would become in their lives. V's family continued their practice of the rosary while they were able leading up to 2017, while M's family had fallen away from praying it with any regularity over 2015-16.

When Bishop Brendan Cahill brought the beautiful statue of Our Lady of Fatima to St. Mary's Church in Victoria, Texas, it was a beginning of a beautiful journey for V and M and their families. Through the monthly rosaries in honor of Our Lady of Fatima and her message, and then a 54 day rosary novena they both decided to participate in, their families had the jump start they needed

to begin praying the rosary again.

Then Hurricane Harvey hit. Both families joined in prayer as the eye passed over their homes, and in thanksgiving they committed to praying the rosary every day. V and M became rosary buddies, texting each other when they were successful and prayed their family rosary. When an opportunity for the National Pilgrim Virgin Statue to come to Victoria came up, they thought it would be a wonderful time to encourage all of their friends to go see this statue of Our Lady and



to start praying a family rosary.

Last spring as the news of the scandals of the church began to be revealed, V and M felt convicted that we as the laity are not doing enough to lift our bishops, our priests, our religious and our seminarians up in prayer. They believe that God has inspired them with a plan. It has taken a year, but they needed to be in the habit of praying, before they could ask anyone else to join them.

V found a lovely tapestry of Our Lady of the Rosary of Pompeii and began asking families from all over the diocese to host the tapestry in their home with the intention of praying the family rosary every day as an answer to our Lady of Fatima's requests to pray the rosary daily for peace. Not just for physical peace in our world between nations, but peace in our souls, in our families, in our local church and in the universal church. To pray, as well, for healing and support of the victims of clerical sexual abuse and for the conversion and just punishment of the perpetrators and concealers of sexual abuse. For the strength of the bishops to be holy shepherds in protecting and leading our sheep from all harm.

The response has been humbling to see how Our Lord and Our Lady are working in the families who have joined us. One family says, "The rosary unites our family and has created a special bond among us. It brings us peace and calm even on the most hectic days. I can't imagine not praying it now. We've

only missed two days in four months due to sickness, so I feel we are pretty consistent."

When Bishop Cahill approached us with regards to the movie *Power in My Hands* and his desire to get it out to the diocese, we felt that this was just another way that Our Lord was working to get the rosary into the life of more families. Bishop Cahill has generously purchased the license and materials to make the viewing of this movie possible for everyone in our diocese. Our hope is that all families in our diocese will get out to see this movie when it is shown at the upcoming diocesan events. Then more will view it at each parish or through organizations they are involved in. Finally, that through religious education programs and individuals at different parishes the movie will make its way into the homes of families and will inspire them to take up the rosary as a daily habit, protection, and weapon.

All around us a spiritual warfare goes on and is in full force attacking our families. As Father Donald Calloway says, "Slay the dragon with the sword, the rosary is our sword." If you get out to see the movie, you will hear his incredible story. Please, see the movie. Pray the rosary.

Blessings,
Virginia Pilkington & Marie Immenhauser

Note: During an interview on the Morning Air show, Bishop Cahill spoke about the movie "Power in My Hands." Later this spring, the Diocese of Victoria is bringing this movie to the diocese. Movie locations and viewing times will be available on the victoriadiocese.org website and Facebook.

Presidio LaBahia

Goliad Massacre and Living History Program

Reenactors and living historians from across Texas gather at Presidio La Bahia to recreate the final days of Col. Fannin's Command. This event will be held at the Presidio La Bahia, in Goliad, Saturday, March 30, from 9:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. and Sunday, March 31, from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. For more information see www.presidiolabahia.org or call (361) 645-3752. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4.50 for seniors, \$2 for children 6-11, and under 6 are free.

Office of Catechetical Ministry

Chris Alvarez, Director
calvarez@victoriadiocese.org
(361) 573-0828, ext. 2225
www.victoriadiocese.org/catechetical-ministry

The **Rite of Election** will be celebrated Sunday, March 10, at Our Lady of Sorrows Church (208 W. River Street) in Victoria at 3:00 p.m.

A reception will follow at Trinity Hall. For more information, call Mary Reyes at (361) 482-9932 or visit Rite of Election.

Pastoral Institute– Discipleship Formation Program (Extended Program)

Psalms and Wisdom is a six-week course for all adult Catholics. Parish Catechetical Leaders, Catechists, and Catholic school religion teachers are highly encouraged to attend. In this course, they will look at the Book of Psalms, Israel's prayer book, and the Wisdom literature of Israel, which includes the Book of Job, Proverbs, the Book of Wisdom, Ecclesiastes, Sirach, and the Song of Songs. Cost is \$30 per six-week course. Study Bible (optional) is \$30. Register before or after classes have started on-line or call the office. Classes are held at the Chancery Office in Victoria.

-Tuesday mornings February 26 – April 2
Time: 9:15 – 11:30 a.m.

-Thursday evenings February 28 – April 4
Time: 7:00 – 9:15 p.m.

Catechist Training Program

All Parish Catechetical Leaders are encouraged to schedule a Catechist Training course in their parish.

The Vocation of the Catechist course is available and *Communicating the Faith* will be available soon. Each course is four-hours; materials will be provided for parish catechetical leaders, catechists, aides, and others involved in catechetical ministry, who attend the sessions.



Heavenly Helpers

Christian Store
(979) 543-2850
1603 N Mechanic
El Campo, TX 77437
M-F 9:30 - 5:30 Sat. 9:30 - 3:00

*First Communion, Confirmation,
Bibles, Books, Rosaries, Medals,
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Clase en Español

Ven y Sígueme: Primer curso al discipulado

Sesión 2: *La Biblia: Mensaje de Salvación y Fuente de Oración*

Presentador: Obispo Brendan Cahill

Donde: St. Robert Church, 512 Tegner St., El Campo, TX 77437

Cuando: 9 de marzo, 10:00 a.m. a 4:00 p.m.

Estas clases se llevan a cabo sin costo alguno para usted vengan y pasen un día explorando su fe. Se dará la comida de mediodía. Guardería de niños está disponible.

Para más información contactar a:
Diocese of Victoria/Sister Rosario (361) 573-0828 ext. 2216; Sister Miriam Perez, MCSH: (361) 676-9302; Mauricio Santiago: (979) 616-0421; Heriberto Castillo: (361) 208-5014



JUEZ DE TEXAS PERMITE LA ENCUESTA DE PROPIEDAD DE LA IGLESIA — Un dique, que actúa como un muro fronterizo, se ve en esta foto de el sector del Valle del Río Grande, cerca de McAllen, Texas, el 4 de abril de 2018. Un juez en Texas dictaminó el 6 de febrero que la Diócesis de Brownsville debe permitir que funcionarios federales inspeccione el terreno alrededor de una histórica capilla católica donde tiene planes de construir el muro fronterizo. (Foto CNS-Loren Elliott, Reuters)

Don de fidelidad en el matrimonio y sacerdocio sí es posible, dice el papa

Por Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — La unidad y la fidelidad son pilares indispensables del matrimonio cristiano — dijo el papa Francisco.

Qué dos personas se unan generosamente como una y prometan un amor fiel de por vida, no solo debe ser “adecuadamente explicado a los que se van a casar”, estos valores también requieren el cuidado pastoral de los miembros y ministros de la iglesia, dijo el papa, dirigiéndose a los miembros de la Rota Romana, un tribunal que gestiona la mayoría de los casos vinculados con matrimonios.

De hecho, las parejas casadas que viven su matrimonio “en generosa unidad y con amor fiel” son “una preciosa ayuda pastoral para la iglesia” y nos ofrecen a todos “un ejemplo de amor verdadero”, dijo el 29 de enero en una audiencia con ocasión del inicio del año judicial de la corte del Vaticano.

Estos importantes modelos enseñan en silencio, dijo, y desafortunadamente, “no se convierten en titulares, mientras los escándalos, separaciones y divorcios sí son noticia”.

El mundo de hoy cada vez más secularizado, dijo, “no favorece el crecimiento de la fe, lo que ocasiona que los fieles católicos tengan que batallar para dar testimonio de un estilo de vida acorde al Evangelio, incluso en lo que respecta al sacramento del matri-

monio”. Esa es la razón por la cual la iglesia necesita encontrar formas para ofrecer un adecuado apoyo espiritual y pastoral, agregó.

“Así que esto puede ser un legítimo acuerdo, el matrimonio requiere que se establezca en cada futuro cónyuge una plena unidad y armonía con el otro de modo que, por medio del intercambio mutuo de sus respectivas riquezas espirituales, morales y humanas — casi como vasos comunicantes — los dos esposos se conviertan en uno”, dijo.

Unidad y fidelidad no son solo “los dos pilares fundamentales” del matrimonio, sino de la Iglesia de Cristo misma, dijo.

El papa Francisco explicó que las parejas necesitan “una triple preparación” que es “a distancia, cercana y permanente” de modo que puedan crecer concientes de los valores y compromisos pertinentes al matrimonio.

“Los cónyuges que viven en unidad y fidelidad reflejan bien la imagen y semejanza con Dios”, dijo. “Esta es la buena noticia: la fidelidad es posible porque es un don, tanto en los esposos como en los sacerdotes”.

“Esta es la noticia, que también debemos hacer a la feligresía y al amoroso ministerio evangélico de los obispos y sacerdotes más fuertes y más consoladores”, dijo.



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.



Reporting Procedures for Suspected or Known Sexual Abuse of a Minor (person under 18 years of age) or Vulnerable Adult by a Member of the Clergy

Contact:

• The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, within **48 hours**, at (800) 252-5400, www.txabusehotline.org, or local police department. **If person is in immediate danger call 911.**

and

• Vicki Pyatt, LMSW, Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Outreach, Diocese of Victoria, (361) 827-7186, pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.

or

• Bishop or Chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria, (361) 573-0828. Written allegations can be mailed to Office of the Bishop, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 marked “Personal and Confidential”.



If sexual abuse by a member of clergy has occurred in another diocese, the Diocese of Victoria will help bring your concerns to church officials. For assistance contact Vicki Pyatt at (361) 827-7186 or pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.



Masses • Retreats and more

ACTS Retreats—Victoria—The Cathedral of OLV Mens Retreat May 16-19 at the Spiritual Renewal Center. Registration forms are available at olvcathedral.org or the parish office. For more information, call Jeremy at (361) 935-3473. Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS Retreats in the diocese should email dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org.

Inez—St. Joseph Parish is hosting a mini Lenten retreat, *Forgiveness and Healing* on the first Sunday of Lent March 10, presented by God's Embrace. Call the parish for more information at (361) 782-3181.

El Campo—St. Philip Parish Mission - *God's Healing Love*, March 25-27, from 7:00 to 9:30 p.m. each night in St. Philip School Gym. Each night Father Greg Bramlage of the Missionaries of the New Evangelization will open us up to a deeper understanding of God's magnificent love and to his desire to heal us in every way. For more information contact the parish at (979) 543-3770 or email apostle@stphilipapostle.org.

Bloomington—Tu, Yo y Cristo Couples Retreat April 6-7 at St. Patrick's Church. There is no fee. For more information, (361) 218-8320 or (361) 648-5791.

Meals • Picnics and More

March

Victoria—KC Council #9088 Annual Fat Tuesday Fundraiser Tuesday, March 5, serving begins at 4:30 p.m. at the Holy Family Activity Center. Fried chicken plates \$10 p/p with dine-in or to-go available. Proceeds benefitting KC's charities.

Victoria—Our Lady of Sorrows Fish Fry March 6 at Trinity Hall, 12:00-2:00 p.m. and 5:00-9:00 p.m. dine-in or take-out available. The meal will be fish, fries, hush puppies, and cole slaw.

Blessing—KC Council #4307 Lenten dinner, auction, and raffle March 10, St. Peter's Parish Hall. Shrimp etouffe, and gumbo dinner served from 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Plates - \$10 p/p (includes dessert and tea/coffee). An auction and raffle will also be held.

Victoria—KJZT #101 Bake Sale, March 23-24, after Masses at Holy Family. Proceeds benefit Sr. Rebecca with Promise Pointe.

Victoria—Our Lady of Lourdes Holy Name Society Annual Chicken/Sausage Dinner, March 31, at the church (105 N. William St.) from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. The plates are \$10 p/p (all plates are to-go only). See ad on pg. 8.

April

Cuero—Knights of Columbus Council #1682 Annual Shrimp Dinner (rice, cole slaw, and hush puppies) April 7, 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at St. Michael's Church Hall. Plates-to-go only. Advance tickets for \$10 are available at the St. Michael Church office, or any KC member. Cost at the door is also \$10. Benefits Cuero KC scholarship program and special projects for St. Michael Church and school. For more information call Gerald at (361) 243-1914 or Anthony at (361) 564-8989. See ad on pg. 10.

Weimar—St. Michael Spring Festival, April 28. See ad on pg. 11.

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.

Crisis Pregnancy Center of Victoria—An organization staffed by volunteers that offers help to girls and women who find themselves in a difficult situation due to an unplanned pregnancy. Office located at 1501 E. Red River, is open 1:00-4:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. A free pregnancy test is offered and medical referrals are made for prenatal care. They are a sister organization to the Gabriel Project. New volunteers are welcome. For more information call (361) 575-6171.

Emmaus Center—Offers individual, couple, family, adolescent and children's counseling as well as specialized support groups. Spiritual direction is also available on request. Appointments may be made by calling (361) 212-0830. For more information see pg. 13.

Engaged Encounter—2019 Dates: April 5-7, May 31-June 2, Sept. 20-22, and Nov. 15-17, 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. **Victoria:** Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 101 W. Convent. Light supper included. For angel workshop/training dates, contact Lisa Kainer (361) 676-3264 or lisa_heysquierdo@yahoo.com; **Meyersville:** Sts. Peter and Paul, meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:00 p.m. (during the school year) at 11220 FM 237 (77974), the coordinators for DeWitt Chapter are Wayne and Margie Smith (361) 564-3742; **Lavaca County:** Meets 6:00 p.m. (during the school year), contact Julie Kubena Lavaca County Coordinator at (361) 798-3579 for dates and location. See ad on pg. 13.

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. Adults

who have experienced the death of a loved one, may attend (after three months have passed). Please call Sharon at (361) 578-7572 before attending.

i.d.9:16 Ministry—For adults in their 20s-30s, single or married. 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. Childcare 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. 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 Flatonina. 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

Contact: Sr. Emilie Eilers at (361) 575-7111

e-mail: amormeus@yahoo.com

website: www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org

IWBS Convent • 1101 NE Water St. • Victoria

Guided One-Day *Becoming Spiritually Deeper and More Generous Disciples* – Sister Marian Sturm, IWBS Saturday, March 9, 9:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m. Includes at least two reflections, ample time for personal prayer, walking and reflecting. A box lunch is available for \$5.

Solemn Lenten Vespers: March 10, 17, 24, 31, April 7, 14, from 5:00 - 5:45 p.m. Vespers closes with Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament.

God's Embrace

For more information call (979) 561-8883

e-mail: info@godsembrace.org

website: www.godsembrace.com

Upcoming Events: Weekly Prayer: Mondays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Adoration in GEM Chapel, Tuesdays, noon-3:00 p.m. Retreats: March 9 a day retreat for Lent, *The Divine Emptying*; Silent Retreat for women - April 26-28; Seminar: A School of Prayer and Holiness - April 6

Pilgrimages

Holy Land Pilgrimage with Rev. Charles Otsiwah, pastor of Holy Cross, East Bernard. Walk the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ on April 29-May 9, 2019. For a full itinerary, please contact Dora Silva at (361) 550-0103 or Dsilva4415@gmail.com. Cost is \$3,599 – includes airfare, hotels, breakfast, and dinner.

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land October 30-November 10, 2019, with Bishop Brendan Cahill and the Southwestern Lieutenancy of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre. Some locations to be visited are Jerusalem, Nazareth, Bethlehem, Mt. Beatitudes, Sea of Galilee, Gethsemane, and Tiberias. Departing from Houston, with daily Mass, three meals daily, and more. For further information, contact Michele Malloy at (713) 819-7318 or email mmalloylaw@gmail.com.

For more pilgrimages, see Nativity Pilgrimage, pg. 9 and Journeys of Faith with Ceci on pg. 12.



Shiner group cleaned sleeping mats and mopped floors at the Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley Humanitarian Respite Center.



Good Works of Lent

Continued from pg. 1

Father Bryan Heyer was on a retreat with Bishop Daniel Flores, bishop of Brownsville. While visiting, Father Bryan began inquiring about immigration and the borders, and asked if there was anything his parish could do to help. Bishop Flores responded by saying, “Really, we just need people.” Inspired by that, Father Bryan returned to Shiner with the desire to *humanize a political situation* and planned their first mission trip, of 10 adults. It was such a great experience, that they decided to plan a 2nd trip for a senior class retreat and have a 3rd adult trip in the works.

Eight seniors, from St. Paul High School, their pastor, Father Bryan Heyer and a few adult chaperones travelled to San Juan, Texas from January 18-20 for a spiritual mission/pilgrimage trip. The *spiritual pilgrimage* portion of the trip was centered on the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle, and the *mission* portion of the trip centered around their volunteer work at the Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley (CCRGV) Humanitarian Respite Center, serving the many immigrant families of the area.

For centuries Christians have made pilgrimages with a spiritual purpose to holy places. In Texas, thousands of pilgrims visit the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle in the Rio Grande Valley.

The origins of the devotion to Our Lady of San Juan del Valle are found in San Juan de los Lagos, Mexico, a town founded near Guadalajara. Spanish missionaries placed a small image of the Immaculate Conception in the church of San Juan de los Lagos. In 1623, an acrobat traveling with his wife and children stopped in San Juan de los Lagos to give a performance. While practicing their act, the youngest daughter lost her balance and was killed. An Indian woman, who was the caretaker of the church, begged the par-

ents to place the image of the Virgin Mary over their daughter’s body and prayed for the Virgin’s intercession. The child was then brought back to life. As word spread of the miracle, the devotion to Our Lady, under the title of “La Virgen de San Juan”, started to grow throughout Jalisco. Today, she is recognized by many people throughout Mexico as well as the United States. *More history can be found at <https://www.olsjbasilica.org/about-us/history>.*

The Shiner group was given a tour and the history of the Basilica. They also experienced reflective Stations of the Cross while walking along the Basilica’s life-size Stations on the grounds. One of the adult chaperones said, “Evening reflection was a time for the group to realize how their work that day, even though small gestures, was a blessing for each person that they served.”

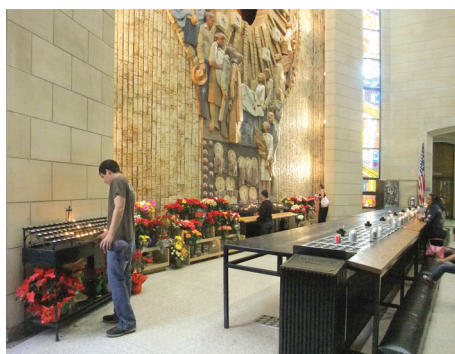
During the day, the students volunteered at the CCRGV Humanitarian Respite Center. This center serves at least 200 people per day. Father Bryan observed, “The students were able to see that what is portrayed by media isn’t really a reality. The reality is that the majority of immigrants are families with children, seeking peace, safety and stability in their lives.” Father Bryan could tell that the students enjoyed the interaction with the immigrants, especially the younger ones. He shared, “The smiles and high fives that they received made up for the language barrier.” The entire senior class provided donations of various toiletries and personal items as well as monetary donations for additional needs of the immigrant families. One of the senior girls, Hope, shared, “We started helping out immediately and my first job was to clean the rooms and sleeping mats used by the immigrants. Later I helped make food bags filled with snacks and drinks that the families are

given when they leave the facility. My favorite job there was serving lunch and dinner to the adults and children.” Hope knew the people were all very appreciative and grateful for their help. She said, “I do not speak very much Spanish, but like Father Bryan said, all

we need to speak is love through our smiles and open hearts.”

Sunday, the last day in San Juan the group began the morning with a moment of prayer in the Basilica and the lighting of a vigil candle by each person in the group. At the Basilica thousands of candles are lit every week when prayer requests are brought to the intercession of Our Blessed Virgen de San Juan del Valle. The trip then ended with the celebration of the Mass.

This mission/pilgrimage trip gave all the students greater insight to how others live. Hope described how she felt saying, “By seeing how they had little to no personal possessions with them made me think about during



(above) Inside the Basilica thousands of candles are lit each week by visitors with prayer requests. (right) Pictured is the outside of the Basilica where an average of 20,000 people visit per weekend.

our Lenten journey we are asked to give up our conveniences and indulgences and learn to live with less. These people were just happy to be there even without having any of their own possessions. Many times people think that worldly things are



On the grounds of the Basilica of San Juan del Valle there are 30 life-size bronze figures with solid oak crosses for each Station of the Cross.

what bring happiness to our lives; however, this experience showed it is not the things that make a difference, but how we are loved and show love to others that brings true happiness.”

From Brother Henderson’s blog we conclude that, “Each one of

us lives with needs—physical needs and the need for love, security, and community—that we often bury or try to hide by filling our lives with ‘stuff’ and relationships that can never really make us happy or give us peace. And so, Lenten fasting means that we set aside those things with which we self-medicate so that we can be free to recognize what our real hungers and desires are—including our desire for God. Only God can truly satisfy the deepest desires and needs of our hearts.”*

**Henderson, Brother Silas, SDS. (2017, March 19). The Purpose of Lent. Connect! Sunday Reflections. Retrieved from <http://4lpi.com/blog/the-purpose-of-lent/>*

