



The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



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Love, Growth, and Faith: An Adoption Story

"To adopt a child is a great work of love. When it is done, much is given, but much is also received. It is a true exchange of gifts."
—St. John Paul II

By Sarita Villafranca Richmond, Editor

On Jan 2, 1986, twin girls were born in Columbus, Ohio to a young, Filipino mother. Circumstances in her life, including already having a child, being a single teenage mother, a limited family support system, and other challenges led her to consider placing her babies for adoption. After they were born, they were immediately placed in foster care. It was a temporary setting that served as a trial period, before choosing adoption. The first year of their lives the girls went back and forth from foster care to birth mother's home.

The foster home chosen for the girls was through the Catholic Social Services in Ohio. Catholic Social Services places infants in approved homes of married couples and single individuals. Families are assessed by agency social workers to determine their ability, readiness, and commitment for life-

time parenting.

Meanwhile, in Westerville, Ohio Mike and Jeanne Gordon were feeling "called" to foster children again in their home. They registered with Catholic Social Services as a foster family. In early February of 1987, the twins arrived at the Gordon's home. They were 13 months old. The Gordons were a devout Catholic family, who already had 2 biological sons who were in their late teens, a daughter who was 9 and a foster daughter who was around 19, all living in the home.

After several years passed the girls were legally adopted by the Gordon family in a closed adoption. Their names were legally changed to Catherine "Katie" after St. Catherine of Siena and Elizabeth "Betsy" after St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

Katie, who today is a mother of 3 daughters, wife to Aaron, and a Labor and Delivery Nurse, joyfully agreed to share the story of her and her sister's adoption journey with The Catholic Lighthouse. She described her childhood, Catholic education, their struggles as bi-racial twins in a white family, finding and meeting her birth mother, and how her faith has developed over the years, especially through her mother's example and devotion to the Blessed Mother.

Katie began, "My parents were in their mid to late 40's when they fostered us. My mom still talks a lot about the day we arrived. She says we were in little lavender snowsuits. Dad took one of us and my brother took another one of us. She said we looked scared and timid. She described the look on our face as very memorable...we looked lost." Katie explained that her mom would tell her and her sister all the time how much their birth mother loved them. During the visits back and forth between foster care and their birth mother's home the two mothers would exchange notes slipped inside the girl's pillowcases about their daily activities, things they were and weren't liking, and nap schedules. Katie shared, "I think these notes were important because it showed how our birth mother deeply cared for us. It must have been a decision that was very hard for her to



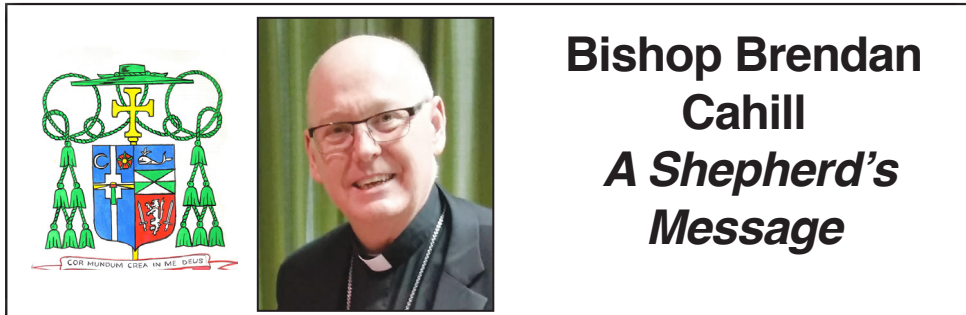
place us for adoption."

In February 1989, when the twins were around three years old, they were legally adopted by the Gordon family. Katie recalls, "I remember that day when we were adopted. We were all at the courthouse together. Our names were legally changed. We became the Gordon Girls! It is important to be mindful, that although it was a happy day for us, it was a sad day for our birth mother."

Catholic education was a priority for Mike and Jeanne Gordon. All of their children went to Catholic school. Katie

and Betsy were enrolled in kindergarten at St. Paul Catholic School, in Westerville, and attended there through 8th grade. This was a nurturing and safe environment for them, but like all adopted children, they experienced their share of struggles. Katie explained, "It became challenging for us because we started to realize we didn't look like our parents or the other kids. It was also different to be adopted; but, from before we can remember, our parents always talked to

See Love, Growth, and Faith, pg. 16



Bishop Brendan Cahill A Shepherd's Message

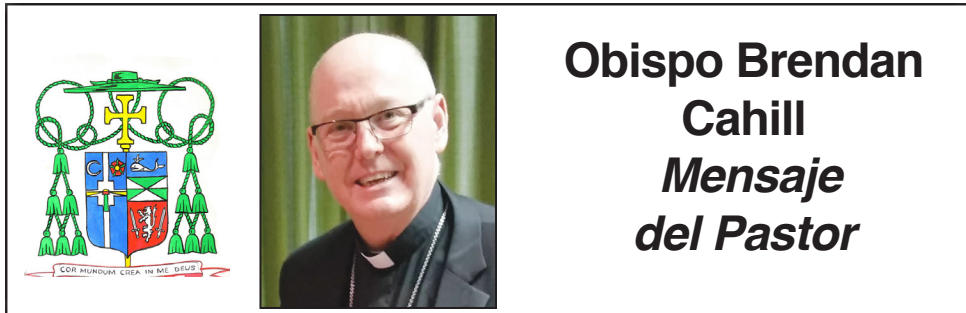
He Lives!

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

At the March for Life in Victoria this year we viewed a movie titled "I Lived on Parker Avenue." The documentary style of the movie portrays the powerful story of a young man named David Scotton. It shows the journey to meet and visit with his biological parents after he had been put up for adoption 19 years earlier. This particular movie displayed many powerful images – most strongly for me, were the gratitude he had in his heart for his biological parents who allowed him to live and for his adoptive parents who took care of him from his infancy. A central message of the

movie is the encouragement of the "adoption option." As part of our pro-life spirituality, we always know there are possibilities for life and new doors that can be open, and David Scotton communicated that to us in a powerful way in this movie. Mr. Scotton's story and the movie can be found at www.ilivedonparkerave.com.

There are many other resources that are communicating our pro-life message in a strong way today. Two particular web sites that a person can go to for legislative updates from around the country are marchforlife.org and humanlifeaction.org. A person can sign up for action alerts from marchforlife.org



Obispo Brendan Cahill Mensaje del Pastor

¡Él Vive!

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

En la Marcha por la Vida en Victoria, este año vimos una película titulada "Viví en Parker Avenue". El estilo documental de la película retrata la poderosa historia de un joven llamado David Scotton. Muestra el viaje para reunirse y visitar a sus padres biológicos después de que lo pusieron por adopción 19 años antes. Esta película en particular mostró muchas imágenes poderosas; lo más importante para mí fue la gratitud que tenía en su corazón por sus padres biológicos que lo permitieron vivir y por sus padres adoptivos que lo cuidaron desde su infancia. Un mensaje central de la película es el estímulo de la "opción de adopción". Como parte de nuestra espiritualidad por-vida, siempre sabemos que hay posibilidades de vida y nuevas puertas que pueden abrirse, y David Scotton lo comunicó a nosotros de manera poderosa con esta película. La historia del Sr. Scotton y la película se pueden encontrar en <https://www.ilivedonparkerave.com>.

Hay muchos otros recursos que están

comunicando nuestro mensaje por-vida de una manera fuerte hoy. Dos sitios web particulares a los que una persona puede acceder para obtener actualizaciones legislativas de todo el país son marchforlife.org y humanlifeaction.org. Una persona puede registrarse para recibir alertas de acción de marchforlife.org que informarán cuándo debemos contactar a nuestros Senadores o miembros del Congreso acerca de un voto en particular. Me encanta contar la historia de cuando me encontré con Congressman Cloud en un avión en enero. Él y su esposa estaban en el vuelo de Victoria a Houston, y yo estaba en el mismo vuelo con otras cuatro personas. Después del vuelo, me acerqué a él (¡en realidad lo perseguí!) me presenté y dije que estaría en Washington para la Marcha por la Vida. Me dijo que ya se había unido al Comité por-vida en el Congreso, por lo que le agradecí. Nuestros políticos, incluyendo nuestros Senadores y Representantes Estatales, escuchan nuestras voces cuando hablamos.

La Pascua se acerca pronto; esta es la

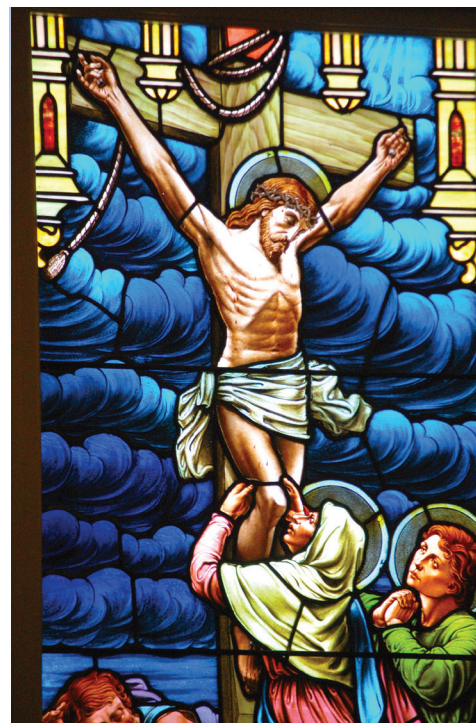
that will inform when we need to contact our Senators or Congress member about a particular vote. I love to tell the story about when I ran into Congressman Cloud on an airplane in January. He and his wife were on the flight from Victoria to Houston, and I was on the same flight with about four other people. After the flight, I went up to him (actually kind of chased him down!) and introduced myself and said I would be in Washington for the March for Life. He told me he had already joined the Pro-Life Caucus in Congress, which I thanked him for. Our politicians, including our State Senators and Representatives, listen to our voices when we speak.

Easter is soon approaching - this is the season in which we proclaim with confidence: "He lives!" There is no power that

can ultimately defeat the power of the mercy of Jesus Christ risen from the dead. As one of the young marchers in Washington declared one time – "We'll keep marching until there's no need to march!" She could say that confidently because she knows we will win because she knows Jesus Christ has conquered sin and death!

Once again I ask that we remain committed to pray especially 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



Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?"

John 11:25-26

Easter Blessings!

Stain glass window from St. Mary, Victoria



**The Chancery Offices will be closed for
Holy Thursday, Good Friday,
and Easter Monday
April 19 - 22**

**Will re-open Tuesday, April 23
at 8:30 a.m.**

temporada en la que proclamamos con confianza: "¡Él vive!" No hay poder que pueda en última derrota el poder de la misericordia de Jesucristo resucitado de entre los muertos. Como uno de los jóvenes manifestantes en Washington declaró una vez: "¡Seguiremos marchando hasta que no haya necesidad de marchar!" ¡Ella podría decir eso con confianza porque sabe que ganaremos porque sabe que Jesucristo ha vencido el pecado y la muerte!

Una vez mas, les pido que sigamos comprometidos a rezar, especialmente 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 sabemos! Que Dios te bendiga a ti y a tus familias, mantengámonos unos a otros en oración.

+ Brendan



Bishop Cahill's Schedule

April		
3	6:30 p.m. CCD visit, Holy Cross, Bay City	19 12:15 p.m. Live Stations of the Cross and Good Friday service, Santísima Trinidad, Victoria
4	6:30 p.m. Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton Award, KC Hall, Shiner	20 8:00 p.m. Easter Vigil, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
6	Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville 5:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass St. Rose of Lima, Schulenburg	21 9:00 a.m. Mass Easter Sunday, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
7	9:15 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Mary, Hallettsville 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Holy Cross, Bay City	24 Noon meal with IWBS Sisters, Victoria 6:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel, Wharton
8	2:30 p.m. Communities of Faith meeting	25 7:00 p.m. 8th Grade Bishop's Award, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
10	2019 Lenten Day of Prayer for Priests in Archdiocese of Galveston Houston	26 Paradisus Dei Board Meeting, Houston
11	East Meets West Gala benefitting educational advancement of Dominican Sisters of Mary Immaculate Province, Houston	26-28 Evangelium Vitae Award Dinner, Center for Ethics and Culture, Notre Dame
12	6:00 p.m. Hear Confessions at St. Robert Bellarmine, El Campo	29 Noon Mass for Missionary Catechists 6:00 p.m. DSAC Meeting, Chancery
13	Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville 5:30 p.m. Ballet Folklorico annual show, Leo Welder Center, Victoria	May
14	9:00 a.m. Palm Sunday Mass, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria	1 Priest Continuing Education, Cathedral Center, Victoria 7:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Parish of the Nativity, Eagle Lake
16	6:30 a.m. Relevant Radio Morning Show 10:00 a.m. Chrism Mass, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria	3 Cahill Classic Golf Tournament, Windrose Golf Course, Houston
17	6:30 p.m. Live Stations of the Cross at Our Lady of Victory - for CCD classes and families	
18	6:30 p.m. Holy Thursday Mass, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria	

Bishop Fellhauer's Confirmation Schedule

April	
27	6:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Immaculate Conception, Goliad
28	10:00 a.m. Confirmation Mass St. Andrew, Hillje 3:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Shiner

Official Appointments

Bishop Brendan Cahill is pleased to announce that after consulting with the Personnel Board he has made the following priestly appointments. May God bless them and those they will serve.



Effective May 22, 2019
Rev. Scott Hill
Parochial Vicar
Sacred Heart, Hallettsville



Effective May 22, 2019
Rev. Max Landman
Parochial Vicar
Our Lady of the Gulf,
Port Lavaca



CATHOLIC ADVOCACY DAY—The Diocese of Victoria was represented at the Texas Catholic Advocacy Day by Bishop Cahill, a group from Shiner Catholic School, and others from the Diocese of Victoria, on March 26, 2019. Thousands of Catholics from across Texas travelled to Austin to meet with their lawmakers in the middle of the 86th Session of the Legislature. This bi-annual rally is hosted by the Texas Bishops to promote the Church's values of Life, Charity, Justice, and Religious Freedom to members of the 86th Texas Legislature.



Chrism Mass

Tuesday, April 16
10:00 a.m.

The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory

All are invited to attend.



Heavenly Helpers



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

*First Communion, Confirmation,
Bibles, Books, Rosaries, Medals,
Statues, Baptism & Wedding Items
Inspirational Gifts*



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(361) 573-0828 / (361) 573-5725 FAX • www.victoriadiocese.org

DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF THE PRECEDING MONTH
Periodical postage paid at Victoria, TX and additional Entry Offices
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903

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Publisher:
The Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill
Managing Editor: Sarita Villafranca Richmond
srichmond@victoriadiocese.org
Staff: Regina Matus-Janak
janakr@victoriadiocese.org





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

Aileen and Irvin Chumcal
in Memory of Ann Kness

Jeanette Gormley
Jeanette and Daniel Pustka
in Memory of Msgr. Casey Jarzombek

Acolyte

KofC St. Isidore Council #4307, Bay City
Cornelius Cattle Co.
CDA Court Our Lady of the Blessings
#2546, Blessing
Bill and Carol Newton
Kenneth Srubar
KofC Fourth Degree, El Campo Assembly
Milton and Diane Rejcek
CDA Court Resurrection #2054, Bay City
Betty and Thomas Orsak, Sr.
in Memory of Msgr. Casey Jarzombek

Grace E. Rigamonti
*in Memory of Max Mayer,
Myrtle Hennessey, Shirley Neumann,
“Miss Beth” Hoffer*

CDA Court St. Joseph Protector of
Mary, Inez

Bob Matula Children
Dorothy and Joe Viktorin, Jr.
in Memory of Patricia Marie Kresta

Candidate

Barbara Hartwell

CDA Court St. Bernadette #1108,
East Bernard

Robert & Kathryn Kennedy

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

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 >.

March 20, 2019

• Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Bartsch
Seminary Burse #2

Lector
In honor of Gary Greive’s birthday by
a friend

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

Lector
In loving memory of Ann Betts by
CDA Court St. Ann #369

• Rev. Charles Owusu Dwomoh
Seminary Burse

Acolyte
In memory of a loving Son and Father,
Greg Chumchal, by Dale, Susan, Gage
and Grant Chumchal

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

Lector
In memory of Leo Hoffer by
Perry and Roxanne Deem and Family
In memory of Adela Grahmann by
Andrew and Jane Pesek
Donation by Soila Sanchez
In memory of Hubert Etzler by
John and Charlene Pillow

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

Lector
In memory of Irene Flagg by
Larry and Jo Dittlinger
In honor of James Dvorak’s birthday by:
Darry and Barbara Meyer
Mark and Sharon Kubicek

• Rev. Timothy Kosler Seminary Burse

Lector
In memory of George Janik by
Henrietta Veselka
In memory of Eugene Berger by
Henrietta Veselka

• Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse

Lector
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Michael Harrold,
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Lawrence Matula
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Casimir
Jarzombek by Annie, Helen and Billy
Dolezal
In memory of Catherine Drapela by
M/M Bernard Rother

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

Lector
In memory of E. J. Haas by Georgia Cerny

Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria, who were ordained during the month of April:

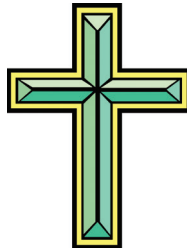
Rev. Timothy Kosler	04/23/1971	St. Rose of Lima Church, Schulenburg
Rev. Msgr. John Peters, VG	04/26/1974	Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville

“Let us pray for more vocations to the priesthood”

“Dear young people, do not bury your talents, the gifts that God has given you!
Do not be afraid to dream of great things!” -Pope Francis

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

Rev. Msgr. Michael Harrold	04/02/2015
Rev. Henry Rachunek	04/03/2013
Rev. Msgr. Edward Bartsch	04/04/2010
Rev. Peter Kaplinski	04/07/2003
Rev. Michael Malloy, O.Ss.T.	04/12/1986
Rev. Henry Pscencik	04/14/1989
Rev. Msgr. Thomas C. McLaughlin	04/17/2017
Rev. Charles Sonnier	04/22/2016



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



SEMINARIANS ATTEND DINNER—Each year, the seminarians of Holy Trinity Seminary experience one of the most sacred moments of their year during 40 Hours Devotion. This beautiful devotion begins and ends with processions accompanied by incense and bells, and is followed by the seminarians keeping watch with the Blessed Lord as the Blessed Sacrament is solemnly exposed and adored for three days, around the clock. Following the solemn closing of the 40 Hours Devotion, the seminarians gather as a community, along with special friends of the seminary, to enjoy

dinner together. Pictured from left to right: Philippe Dubourdieu (Seminarian for the Diocese of Victoria); Mary Mahaffey (Trinitarian Auxiliary); Father Zach Webb (Associate Director of Formation); Bryce Baumann (seminarian for the Diocese of Dallas); and June and Troy Cooper (Trinitarian Auxiliary).



SCHOOL TRADITION—St. Joseph High School, Victoria, is built on 150 years of tradition. A time-honored tradition is the Junior Ring Ceremony held on the Feast Day of St. Joseph. It is always a great way to honor the junior class and begin to prepare them for their senior year. On March 19, Father Stephen Vacek celebrated a Mass, paid tribute to St. Joseph, and blessed the Class of 2020.

Vocabulary Word of the Day!

Nancy Peters Show
~ Venture into Vocabulary ~

abridge

(verb)

Definition: to make shorter

Hint: A bridge over water shortens the distance to get across. It is much shorter than driving to the end of the river and then back up to the other side.

Synonym: shorten, condense, abbreviate

Antonym: lengthen, expand

Sentence: An abridged dictionary has fewer entries than the unabridged dictionary.



PSIA WINNERS—Students of St. Michael School, Cuero, participated in the PSIA (Private Schools Interscholastic Association) in Austin recently. Two students will be going to State Competition at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. A 4th-grader, Rylie, is competing in Ready Writing and Dictionary Skills, and 1st-grader, Carter, is competing in Creative Writing.



DISTINGUISHED ALUMNI RECOGNIZED—Congratulations to the 2019 Distinguished Alumni Award Recipients. The Diocese of Victoria and the Office of Catholic Schools thanked the honorees for their service and dedication to Catholic education. The honorees for 2019 are: back row (l-r) Dr. John Quarry, Charles Haas (Sacred Heart Catholic School), Annie Coffey (Nazareth Academy Catholic School), Patricia Bodungen (St. Anthony Catholic School), Larry Staff (St. Philip Catholic School), Rick Jahn (St. Joseph Catholic School), Father Greg Nevlud (St. Joseph High School), Bishop Brendan Cahill; front row (l-r) John Kasper (St. Michael Catholic School, Weimar), Dolores Vacek in place of her husband Edwin Vacek (St. Rose Catholic School), Patricia Pesek (Shiner Catholic School), Dr. Linda Stuart (Our Lady of Victory Catholic School), Donna Brandstetter (St. Michael Catholic School, Cuero), and Arthur Milberger (Holy Cross Catholic School).



PRINCIPALS ATTEND RETREAT—The principals of the Catholic schools, of the Diocese of Victoria, attended a retreat from March 19-20, at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The presenter was Father Mark Goring, CC (Companions of the Cross), Director of the Catholic Charismatic Center in Houston. Pictured (l-r) John O'Leary, Father Mark, Theresa Dent, Jennifer Saenz, Neely Yackel, Sr. Evelyn Korenek, IWBS, Kevin Haas, Inez Kucera, Sean Mooney, Sr. Laura Toman, IWBS and Gwen Edwards.



SHS NEW COACH—Sacred Heart School (SHS), Hallettsville is excited to introduce new Athletic Director, Coach Manny Freeland. Manny played quarterback at Edna and Wayland Baptist University, where he began his coaching career. Manny said, "We were actually looking to get back in the area when my wife (Shelby) finishes medical school, which will be in May. I saw that opening and I said, 'Why not?' I went in there and landed it." Principal Kevin Haas, said, "We welcome his talent, passion for the kids and sports, teaching ability, and his Christian aura to our SHS family!"



SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



The Resurrection of Christ – an Awesome Event

We are entering the most emotionally intense time of the season as we contemplate the horrible agonies that Jesus suffered in our stead to save us. In order to enter more deeply into His Passion, let us try to “get into the sandals” of those who were following Jesus at the time.

In your prayer, place yourself in the scenario as a dear friend or as one of the participants in the Gospel narratives.

Then, as we enter the Triduum on Holy Thursday, let us be fully aware of the generosity of Jesus as He gives us the gift of His presence throughout all time by instituting the Holy Eucharist at the Last Supper. Appreciate His action and understand how He must have been preoccupied with dread of the ignominious death that His Heavenly Father was asking of Him in order to achieve our redemption!

On Good Friday, experience the sorrow and anguish that these followers of Jesus experienced as they helplessly witnessed His excruciating pain and humiliation. In the past,

you may have accompanied someone very dear to you during the final days of a very painful journey to the end of their earthly life. Their agony became your agony. So place yourself into the scene and try to enter into the suffering of Jesus as He stumbled

along under the instrument of His execution.

After hearing the Narrative of His death, we enter into the grief that His mother and his dearest friends experienced. I remember the grief that one of my brothers demonstrated

after his wife had died suddenly. At the funeral, he was totally unaware of what was going on. For several days, he didn't touch any food, although his friends repeatedly tried to coax him to take something. You may have personally experienced such grief or known someone who has. For the followers of Jesus, His death had to be very traumatic. Not only had they lost their friend and leader but they thought that they had lost their dream on the Kingdom that Jesus had presented to them.

If we have truly felt the sorrow and grief that the followers of Jesus experienced, we are ready to experience the joy of Easter that filled their hearts and restored their hope. Sometimes I think that we have heard the Resurrection story so often that we take it for granted. I was reminded of this years ago at our Second Chance High School (Now morphed into “Por Vida” Charter School) in San Antonio for young people who had fallen through the cracks of society. Tony (not his real name) was totally unchurched with a long history of car thefts, etc.

When he heard the Easter story, he kept saying, “That’s awesome; is it true?” As he kept following me all day, he kept repeating “That’s awesome.”

I agree; don’t you? Happy Easter!



In Memoriam

Sister Raphael Rose Stewart, IWBS



Sister Raphael Rose, 89, passed away on Thursday, March 21, 2019. She was born October 22, 1929, in Rockport, Texas to the late Alexander and Winona Sweeney Stewart. She was the sixth child in a family of eight children – five girls and three boys.

Sister Raphael Rose completed elementary grades at Sacred Heart School in Rockport and high school at Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville. She became a Sister of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament in Victoria on June 2, 1952, and made first profession of vows on June 3, 1953. She received her BA degree with a major in Math and a minor in Chemistry-Physical Education from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. She received a Masters Degree in Hospital Administration from the University of Notre Dame and Masters Degree in Theology from the Oblate School of Theol-

ogy. She also pursued studies in CPE at MD Anderson and became a certified chaplain.

Sister joyfully shared her ministerial gifts as she ministered at Sacred Heart School in La Grange, St. Michael School in Weimar, St. Leo School in San Antonio, Nazareth Academy in Victoria, and Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio. She served as principal at St. Paul High School in Shiner and Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville. After serving as administrator of Huth Memorial Hospital in Yoakum and studying to become a certified chaplain, she ministered as Director of the Spiritual Care Department at Christus St. Mary Hospital in Port Arthur, Texas and then at Christus Spohn Hospital in Corpus Christi.

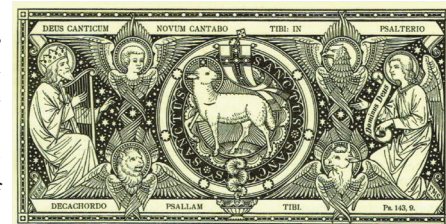
In her retirement she took a Sarah Sabatich to advance her spirituality and spent time at the Manna House of Prayer in Concordia, Kansas followed by her service as chaplain in the Health Care for her Sisters at Incarnate Word Convent. Her last years were spent in the apostolate of prayer and suffering.

See Sister Raphael Rose Stewart, pg. 7

Carmelites Offer Prayers in Easter Octave

The mystery of Our Lord's Resurrection permeated the Liturgy and life of the Ancient Carmelite Order. In thanksgiving for the brilliant Light of His Victory over Satan, sin, and death, and in supplication that the Power of His Resurrection may touch many souls, the Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin will be chanting Monastic Vespers throughout the Easter Octave (April 21-28, 2019). The Sisters gladly will include

in these eight days of Paschal prayer any personal prayer intentions that they receive. These intentions will be placed on the altar in the Sisters' chapel. Prayer intentions may be mailed to the Sisters, dropped in the Prayer Request box at the Sisters' residence, or submitted through the prayer request form on their website: Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin, 11220 FM 237, Meyersville, TX 77974; www.MaryEverVirgin.org.



PREPARING TO BE RECEIVED IN THE CHURCH—The Rite of Election is the second major ritual of the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults. On March 10, 2019, Bishop Brendan Cahill admitted the candidates into the Elect, those to be fully received into the Church at the Easter Vigil, at Our Lady of Sorrows, in Victoria. The Deaneries in attendance were Cuero, Edna, El Campo, Hallettsville, Schulenburg and Victoria.

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SEALED WITH THE GIFT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT—On March 2, Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated Mass and confirmed a group of young adults from St. Mary, Victoria.



BISHOP VISITS CCD CLASS—St. Joseph Parish CCD classes, in Yoakum, were blessed to have Bishop Brendan Cahill visit on February 20. They learned more about his family, his faith journey to the priesthood, things he likes to collect, saints and stories he tries to model and prayer - specifically the prayer of St. Augustine! They thanked him for his time, wisdom and conversation — and GO ASTROS!

Sister Raphael Rose Stewart, IWBS

Continued from pg. 6

She is preceded in death by her parents and brothers, John B., and Jim D., and sisters, Theresa Hemmi, Gertrude Stewart, Maryan Shaw, and Marge Rehm.

She is survived by her brother, Alex L. Stewart and many nieces, and nephews.

The Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at Incarnate Word Convent with Bishop Ermeritus David Fellhauer as the main celebrant assisted by Msgr. John Peters and Father Phi Nguyen. Burial followed at Catholic Cemetery No. 3. Pallbearers were Joe Hemmi, Ronnie Rehm, Gary Shaw, John Francois Stewart, John B. Stewart, Pete Moya, Bill McArdle, and David Smolik. Honorary pallbearers were her nieces and other nephews. Memorials may be made to Incarnate Word Convent, Hospice of South Texas, or donor's choice.

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 (students entering sixth or finishing eighth grade). Registration Open Now! Save the dates: Jr. High- Session 1: June 9-11 / Jr. High-Session 2: June 12-14 Elementary-Session: June 12

Letter to the Editor

Dear Diocese of Victoria Parishioners,

The 22nd Annual Bishop David E. Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament is coming up on April 26, and I would like to ask for your support. You do not have to be a golfer to contribute to this great cause for the Diocese of Victoria. You can contribute and come join us on the patio at the Club at Colony Creek for Monroe and Otto's world-famous gumbo and bread pudding, while you enjoy the festivities; or you can just contribute and do not have to participate in any of the activities. Your donation will still be GREATLY appreciated. All proceeds from this tournament go to support our seminarians and the youth programs of the Diocese of Victoria. And WOW, we currently have fourteen seminarians in different stages of their education towards Priesthood!

A little history of this event: Back in 1997 the diocese started a fundraising golf tournament at Victoria Country Club as a modest fundraising event; the proceeds were directed by the bishop. Around the same time, the Knights of Columbus Council 9088 started a fundraising golf tournament at The Club at Colony Creek. The Knights donated some of their proceeds to the diocese for worthy causes as directed by the bishop. Then in 2007, these tournaments were combined into one and called the "Annual Bishop David E. Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament." It has continued to grow in popularity and contributions to the diocese ever since, and so has the number of seminarians and youth programs that it supports. Since its inception, this golf tournament has raised and donated over \$600,000 to the diocese in support of the seminarians and youth programs.

The different levels of participation are:

- Bishop Level-\$1,000-Contributors at this level designate a specific seminarian to support and the money goes to them for their pastoral education.
- Monsignor Level-\$500-Proceeds are split between the seminarians and the diocesan youth programs.
- Priest Level-\$200-Contributors at this level and above get first preference for a team to be entered to play in the tournament. Proceeds are split between the seminarians and the diocesan youth programs.
- Deacon Level-\$100-Proceeds are split between the seminarians and the diocesan youth programs.
- Seminarian Level-\$50-Proceeds are split between the seminarians and the diocesan youth programs.

The entry to play in the golf tournament is completely separate from the above contributions. Entry fee for a four-player team in the tournament is \$400. Teams that give an additional contribution of Priest Level or

higher get first preference to enter the field if it is full. All the donation and team entry forms can be found on the Diocese of Victoria website. For any questions or further clarification please call Ron Sitka, Chairman at (361) 550-1314. Please consider a contribution. Thank you for your generosity and God Bless.

Ron Sitka

Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament

April 26 • 1:00 p.m.

*The Club at Colony Creek
~ Victoria ~*

More information at: victoriadiocese.org/bishop-david-fellhauer-invitational-golf-tournament

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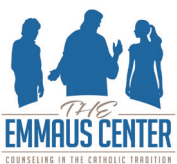
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OLV STUDENTS QUALIFY FOR PSIA STATE COMPETITION—Our Lady of Victory Catholic School, Victoria, held the 2019 Private Schools Interscholastic Academic (PSIA) District 7AA Meet on Saturday, February 16. Twenty four students from Our Lady of Victory qualified to compete in 34 events at the PSIA State Meet on Saturday, April 27 at Texas Christian University, in Fort Worth. These students qualified by placing first or second individually in one or more contests at the District Meet. State qualifiers are (bottom l-r) Haylee H. (alternate), Bodie M., Claudia T., Mandeep J., Cecilia O., Thomas T.; (2nd row) Oliver J., Jordan Y., Luke S., Kennedy K., Trisha P., Heidi T.; (3rd row) Abigail B., Kelly F., Hailey U., Addison H., Connor R., Jason T.; (top row) Luis R., Hannah Z., Ella S., Thomas C., Emmett L., Benji C. and Kaylen S.

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.



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SEMINARIANS ATTEND WORKSHOP ON POVERTY—The seminarians of Holy Trinity Seminary immersed themselves in an intensive 11-day program of formation with special attention given to building community. This program included a visit to Catholic Charities of Dallas, where the seminarians attended a workshop on poverty. Photo: Caleb Krischke (Seminarian for the Diocese of Victoria), along with his brother seminarians, visits Catholic Charities of Dallas.



Seminary Dedicates New Building

IRVING—The Most Reverend Edward J. Burns, Bishop of the Diocese of Dallas, announces the completion and dedication of the Cardinal Farrell Student Center at Holy Trinity Seminary, Irving. Bishop Burns presided at the dedication ceremony on March 3, where he offered a special blessing of the building.

The 24,000 square-foot center, the first new construction in the seminary's 52-year history, consists of an assembly room, class-

room, a full gym and fitness center, game room, media rooms, lounge and kitchen, as well as patios and an outdoor sports court. Funded through the Diocese's *Our Faith ... Our Future* capital campaign and through the generosity of individual donors, the center is named after Cardinal Kevin Farrell who, as bishop of the Diocese of Dallas and now assigned to the Vatican, was a great supporter of the seminary, helping it grow, strengthening its programs and staffing, and blessing the project of a new student center.

The Cardinal Farrell Student Center affords seminarians a place to form fraternal bonds, recreate together, stay fit, and gather for presentations dealing with their human, spiritual, intellectual, and pastoral formation.

The Diocese of Victoria currently has two seminarians attending Holy Trinity Seminary.



RELIGIOUS SISTERS HONORED—National Catholic Sisters Week was March 8-14. The Office of Catholic Schools and the Chancery staff hosted an appreciation lunch for the sisters. The following orders who serve the Diocese of Victoria are: Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament (IWBS), Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary (MCSH), Vietnamese Dominican Sisters (OP), Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (CCVI), and Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin.



Meet a Deacon (a TCL series)

Deacon Guadalupe “Wally” Rodriguez



My name is Guadalupe Rodriguez, but everyone knows me as Walley. I grew up in Edna, Texas and attended St. Agnes Catholic School from the first grade to the sixth grade. I am the last of eight children, six boys and two girls, of Pedro and Nieves Rodriguez, of Edna. My parents grew up in Edna, and dad would tell me that he would pick up mom in a buckboard wagon and they would go to school. They were married in 1939 and remained in Edna their entire lives.

I grew up around priests and sisters because they were good friends with mom and dad. Dad worked around the church and was involved in the *Cursillo Movement*. The *Cursillo* is a Spanish evangelization movement that started in Spain in 1944 and eventually made it to the United States, where it continues to flourish. Dad also worked around St. Agnes Catholic School and on the convent. The nuns were from the Order of Cordi Marian Sisters out of San Antonio. The convent in San Antonio continues to function as a retreat center.

I have great memories of time spent with the priests and the sisters from when I was a child. We would take the nuns on picnics in the middle of summer and they would play soccer in their full habits and they loved it. Their faces were red and covered in sweat, but they also had a big smile. Our pastor in Edna was Father “Balty” Janacek and Father Patrick Flores of Ganado. (Father Flores was the former archbishop of San Antonio.) I will never forget Father Janacek’s station wagon. I remember when the eye of Hurricane Carla was over Edna and here comes Father Janacek in three foot of water, in the station wagon, going to help someone. Father Flores would tell mom, “Nieves, tienes seis, danos uno.” (Nieves you have six sons, give the church one). I guess I was as close as they would get to have a priest in the family.

Growing up I learned that priests and nuns were normal people. They have feelings just

like us and are doing their best to do the will of God. I feel that they are a chosen few that God has called to a very difficult vocation, especially in today’s world. Much is expected of them and they are often under-appreciated.

I am married to Rosemary Ybarra from Bay City and this is where we made our home. We have one daughter, Yolanda and three grandchildren Noah, Luke and Bella. I met Rosemary at Wharton Jr. College and in 1975, we were married at Holy Cross, by Father Charles Sonnier. I was taught by my parents that you need to get involved in your

parish ministries and we must take care of our parish. I took this to heart and decided to get involved in the Catholic school, Knights of Columbus, and altar servers training. I was becoming more and more involved in the parish and in 1988 Monsignor James Brunner became the pastor at Holy Cross. He had the biggest impact on my life because I loved his homilies. He lit a fire in me and all of a sudden I needed to know more about our faith, the Bible, and the saints. I started reading everything I could get my hands on

Deacon Rodriguez baptizing his granddaughter.



and with approval from Monsignor Brunner, I started a bible study that continues to meet every Monday. In 1995 Monsignor Brunner asked if I would attend diaconate formation classes. I had no idea what a deacon was much less what he did. I saw this as an opportunity to learn more about the Catholic faith. It would be with this in mind that I would start attending the diaconate preparation classes.

I never thought that I was good enough to become a deacon, so I never thought about God calling me. The second year when I received the letter from Father Gabriel Mason, who was our diaconal formation leader, things changed. I could no longer attend classes just to learn more about our faith...I need to discern if I was being called to be a deacon. I prayed for four years asking God for an answer but it never came. I realized that God had placed this in front of me and it was my decision. He wanted me to become a deacon, but ultimately the decision was up to me. When asked by Father Mason if I was ready for ordination...without hesitation I said yes. I was ordained in June of 2001, by Bishop David Fellhauer, at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, in Victoria, and my life has never been the same.

While on the road to ordination there were many ups and downs. I learned so much about the church and myself. Some of what I saw in myself I did not like, but with the help of Father Mason, and Michael Fonseca, our spiritual guide, I was able to overcome many of those things. The greatest part

throughout formation were the relationships that Rosemary and I made with the other couples. We grumbled, laughed, we cried, we consoled, and we shared. A bond was formed that will never go away.

I am assigned to Holy Cross Church, in Bay City, where I perform the normal deacon duties. I do benediction, funeral vigils, Communion to the homebound and whatever Father Greg Korenek asks of me. When I perform these duties many people thank me for what I do. I say thank you but the one they really need to thank is my wife Rosemary. She is the one that at times I leave at home. I have learned that being a deacon and a husband, father or grandfather is a delicate balance. Rosemary helps me maintain a sense of stability and keeps me grounded in both worlds.

I have always enjoyed attending Mass because it brings me a sense of peace. During the Eucharistic Prayer, I am in total awe of what is taking place right before my very eyes. Whether I am in the pews or functioning as a deacon, I am blown away. I even had a good friend once tell me that during the Eucharistic prayer I needed to close my mouth! The hardest part of being a deacon is ministering to the dying and funerals. You talk with parishioners at the grocery store, the hardware store or wherever you run into them. You know which Mass they attend and where they sit. So, at funerals there is always a sense of loss.

The diaconate formation classes can only do so much to prepare you for being a deacon. In many ways, I was not ready to perform the duties of a deacon. My homilies were awful and I made many mistakes, but the people of Holy Cross were and still are very patient and understanding with me. My dad told me a long time ago that I needed to do my best and pray a lot. Father Casey Jarzombek became pastor at Holy Cross in 2000 and he taught me how to trust the Holy Spirit and let go. This is how I approach my diaconate responsibilities. *I do my best and I pray a lot, but eventually, I must step aside and let the Holy Spirit guide me.*

To receive information on how to become a permanent deacon in the Diocese of Victoria, the formation program and more contact:

Deacon Charles Glynn, Director
2668 Zimmerscheidt Rd
Alleyton, TX 78935
deaconchuck@live.com
(979) 253-9616



Deacon Guadalupe is pictured with his wife, Rosemary, his daughter Yolanda and her children.



Catholic Rural Life - Victoria

The Blessing of Seed and Rain

Our health and our lives depend on the sprouting of seeds and water to ensure their growth. Through the nurturing of seeds, then harvesting and eating of their produce, we receive God’s choicest blessings. Saving some of the new seeds allows us to continue this miraculous cycle each year.

Just as seeds cannot grow without water, so the cycle of rain blesses us, and allows the water to be replenished in the ground. From the beginning, God called us to the honored task of being workers in your garden. Let us seek God’s guidance in planting seeds of love in our lives that will grow through the years into living words of your Son.



Let us pray. Loving God, the Spirit of Life hovered over the waters and began the great work of creation. Bless the waters of this earth. Let them fall again from the sky at the proper times so that our gardens and fields may yield abundantly, and all growing things may thrive. Bless also the seed, pregnant with life. Let them show us the Easter mystery of new life coming from death and burial. May they burst forth soon with verdant growth from earth, rain, and sun. Through the rain and these seeds, bring us to a new awareness of your presence in and around us, as we joyfully live in the knowledge of eternal resurrection. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Bishop Guillory Honored

HOUSTON—Most Reverend Curtis J. Guillory, S.V.D., honored for a lifetime of leading diverse faith communities. He was recently honored with *Catholic Extension’s 2019 Spirit of Francis Award*. The third annual award dinner was held at the Houstonian Hotel in Houston. Cardinal Daniel DiNardo is the honorary chair.

Bishop Guillory is a member of Catholic

Extension’s Board of Governors, is the first African American ordinary in the state of Texas. He was ordained a bishop in 1988 and served in the then Diocese of Galveston-Houston before serving his current diocese, the Diocese of Beaumont. Bishop Guillory is the longest-serving bishop in Beaumont, and he is the only bishop to have guided Southeast Texas through three major storms - Rita, Ike and Harvey.

Looking for a Dozen “Angels”

Do you have a heart for women in a crisis pregnancy? Do you have a few hours a month to help?

Volunteers (women, 21 years of age or older) to become “angels” who will journey with our mothers through their pregnancy are needed.

For nearly 17 years, The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads (formerly Victoria Gabriel Project) has helped pregnant women in need. There are chapters in Victoria and the surrounding counties of Calhoun, DeWitt, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda and Wharton. Our “angels” meet with the mother on a regular basis and encourage her to take care of herself and her growing baby. They also provide information on baby care and

offer a limited supply of baby items.

In 2018, The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads serviced 160 mothers across the Crossroads. This was a 17% increase from 2017. Thus, more volunteers are needed. Besides “angels”, we need volunteers to help maintain inventory, deliver items, answer phones and provide administrative assistance.

A Volunteer Training Session will be held on Tuesday, April 30, from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m. at 101 W Convent St., Victoria, Texas. Dinner and training materials will be provided. Space is limited so please reserve your spot by contacting Stacey Ontai at (361) 703-2268 or email her at stacey.ontai@victoriagabrielproject.org.



HONORING ST. JOSEPH— On the solemnity of St. Joseph, Father Tommy Chen, pastor of Our Lady of the Gulf, in Port Lavaca, Mr. Blackburn (server), all parishioners, and Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic School students gathered around St. Joseph’s altar for a blessing.

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The Importance of Faith

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

We all pray from time to time, sometimes we pray to praise God, sometimes we pray to thank him for favors received, sometimes we pray to express sorrow for our sins and sometimes we pray to ask a favor.

Probably most of our prayers are prayers that ask for something. This is not necessarily selfish. God knows we have many needs. In fact, Jesus taught us to seek if we wish to find, to knock if we wish to have the door opened, to ask, if we wish to receive. The implication is that the less we seek or knock or ask, the less we will receive.

The Red Cross and the Cancer Society and the bishop's appeal and all those other worthy causes presume that people will respond if asked. When your children need or want something, don't you often wait until they ask, even though you know what they want?

We are God's children. He knows what we need before we ask, but he wants to be asked. But sometimes we do not receive what we ask for. There are several reasons for this.

The first is that the thing we ask for would harm us. It is like the situation of a mother who denies her child a pair of scissors, or the family of an alcoholic who out of love stop helping and making excuses for him that would enable him to continue in his alcoholic rut. It is out of his great love for us that God will not give us things that will hinder us.

Accordingly, we should ask unconditionally for things that we know God wants us to have, and we should ask conditionally for

things that God may not want us to have.

So, for example, we may say, "Lord, forgive me my sins and give me the grace to remain faithful," because we know that such things are God's will, but if we pray for such things as health or wealth or someone to marry, we should say, "If it is your will."

We sometimes wonder whether hardship and failure and pain can be a part of God's will. The answer is yes. God is the maker and the owner of the universe and everything in it and nothing escapes his control. It would be against God's nature to will moral evil, that is, sin, but he certainly can will even such physical evils as storms and accidents. Jesus saw his Father's will in his own dreadful suffering and death. God's will works in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform—same rain that ruins your picnic makes your garden grow.

A second reason why we do not succeed in our prayers is that we lack faith, that is, we doubt that we will be heard. The scriptures relate how on one occasion Jesus could work but few miracles simply because the people in that area did not believe in him. Unbelief blocks the power of prayer. Therefore, when you pray, pray with the firm expectation that you will be heard. Ask God to strengthen your faith in prayer.

But sometimes we pray and beg and cry but no one seems to be listening. For twenty years St. Monica prayed for the conversion of her son Augustine. His attitude was, "Sure, it's a great idea for later." For those twenty years, God was working in the background. When the time was right, Augustine turned his life around and became a great saint. So we can say that a third reason for unanswered prayer is that God is preparing



a better answer.

In the face of such considerations about prayer, we can conclude that we must pray as though everything depended on us and trust as though everything depended on God.

So today would be a fine day to review our attitude in prayer. When you ask for something, expect to be heard, but let God decide what the answer shall be. If your prayers don't seem to be working, have patience. Keep praying. Be prepared for a surprise. Don't give up. Ask and you will receive.

Lord Jesus,

Thank you for teaching us the importance of faith. Help us to trust completely, so that your power may work in us to the fullest. Grant that through our trust in you all things necessary and worthwhile may come to us.

Amen



ALTAR SOCIETY PRESENTS A GIFT—
Our Lady of Lourdes Altar Society officers (l-r) Claudia Schoener, treasurer, Diane Heller, secretary, Connie Novak, president, and Josie Berger, vice president presented Father Albert Yankey, pastor, a new paschal candle stand for the parish.

St. Michael Catholic Church Weimar, Texas

Spring Festival

Sunday, April 28, 2019

Fried Chicken & Sausage Dinner

11:00 a.m. - ADULTS \$10.00 - CHILDREN \$5.00 (12 & under)
PLATES-TO-GO (Main Serving Line) \$10.00

* Veteran's Memorial Park - Weimar, Texas *

**DRIVE-THRU TAKE-HOME PLATES WILL BE AVAILABLE
AT ST. MICHAEL FAMILY CENTER ONLY \$10.00**

POLKA MASS

10:30 a.m.

featuring: The Lost Cause Band

AUCTION

1:00 p.m.

BINGO

2:00 - 6:00 p.m.

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4:00 p.m.

* COUNTRY STORE

* CAKE WALK

* TREASURE CHEST

KIDS GAMES

* FISH POND

* TRAIN RIDE

* PLINKO & MORE

* HAMBURGERS

* COLD DRINKS

* SNOW CONES

Music By: Czechaholics & Broken Alibi

11 a.m - 8:30 p.m.



Sunday Readings from April 7 - May 12

<i>April 7 ~ Fifth Sunday of Lent</i> Ezekiel 37:12-14 Psalms 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 Romans 8:8-11 John 11:1-45	Reading 4: Isaiah 54:5-14 Psalms 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13 Reading 5: Isaiah 55:1-11 Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6 Reading 6: Baruch 3:9-15, 32C4:4 Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 11 Reading 7: Ezekiel 36:16-17A, 18-28 Psalms 42:3, 5; 43:3, 4 Epistle: Romans 6:3-11 Gospel: Luke 24:1-12
<i>April 14 ~ Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion</i> 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	<i>April 21 ~ Easter Sunday The Resurrection of the Lord</i> Acts 10:34A, 37-43 Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23 Colossians 3:1-4 John 20:1-9
<i>April 18 ~ Holy Thursday Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper</i> Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14 Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16BC, 17-18 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 John 13:1-15	<i>April 28 ~ Sunday of Divine Mercy</i> Acts 5:12-16 Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-2 Revelations 1:9-11A, 12-13, 17-19 John 20:19-31
<i>April 19 ~ Good Friday of the Lord's Passion</i> Isaiah 52:13—53:12 Psalms 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25 Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9 John 18:1—19:42	<i>May 5 ~ Third Sunday of Easter</i> Acts 5:27-32, 40B-41 Psalms 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13 Revelations 5:11-14 John 21:1-19
<i>April 20 ~ Easter Sunday The Resurrection of the Lord at the Easter Vigil in the Holy Night of Easter</i> Reading 1: Genesis 1:1—2:2 Psalms 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35 Reading 2: Genesis 22:1-18 Psalms 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11 Reading 3: Exodus 14:15—15:1 Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18	<i>May 12 ~ Fourth Sunday of Easter</i> Acts 13:14, 43-52 Psalms 100:1-2, 3, 5 Revelations 7:9, 14B-17 John 10:27-30

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

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HOLY SPIRIT COME UPON US—Bishop Brendan Cahill and Father Wayne Flagg, pastor of St. Michael Church, in Weimar, are pictured with the young adults of the parish who were confirmed on March 24.

Catholic School Students Pray for Mosque Shooting Victims, Peace

HYATTSVILLE, Md. (CNS) — A week after the mosque shootings in Christchurch, New Zealand, and almost 9,000 miles away from this tragedy, Catholic school students in Maryland gathered to pray for the victims and to recommit themselves to ending hate. The St. Francis International School students were reminded March 22 that the previous week's shootings that killed 50 people took place "on the other side of the world" and even though they probably do not know anyone impacted,

it was important to both pray and take action to prevent the hatred that has led to recent mass shootings. "We can't fix the world, but we can fix our community," the school's assistant principal, Adam Kampia, told the elementary school students, reminding them: "It's our duty to stop hate." The students have been through this before, taking part in a similar prayer service last November in response to the shooting at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and in a service after the Parkland High School shooting last February.

Pope Urges Officials to Preserve Rome's Historic, Spiritual Traditions

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As the capital of Italy and center of Catholicism, the city of Rome must work with the Catholic Church to preserve and defend its rich historical and spiritual traditions, Pope Francis said. Throughout its nearly 3,000-year history, Rome also has become a symbol for the world of the universal call to "welcome and integrate different populations and people from all over the world," the pope said March 26 during a visit to Rome's City Hall. Rome "has a universal vocation, it is the bearer of a mission and an ideal capable of crossing mountains and seas and being proclaimed to everyone, near and far, whatever people they belong to, whatever language they speak and whatever the color of their skin," he said. Making his morning visit to Rome's Capitoline Hill, the pope was welcomed by Mayor Virginia Raggi to the city's administrative offices overlooking the ancient ruins of the Roman Forum.

LA's Newest Bishop, a Proud Filipino Immigrant

LOS ANGELES—When then-31-year-old Alejandro "Alex" Aclan left his native Philippines for Southern California in 1982, he came as an immigrant seeking a better future.

More than three decades later, that future is still bearing surprises.

On March 5, the Vatican announced that Pope Francis had tapped the 68-year-old priest to become the newest auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of Los Angeles, where Msgr. Aclan has served as a priest for 25 years.

Aclan's nomination makes him the second Filipino-American priest to be named bishop in the U.S. The first was Bishop Oscar Solis, who served as an auxiliary bishop in Los Angeles from 2004 until 2017, before Francis named him Bishop of Salt Lake City. The Los Angeles area is home to the largest Filipino immigrant community in the United States.

He said he sees his new appointment as part of a peculiar pattern of surprises in his life. "This was not part of my plan in any way," Aclan told *Angelus News*. "But, then, being a priest was not part of the plan either."

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

San Luis
Yorktown
Annual Jamaica
~ April 28 ~
Parish Grounds
502 East 2nd Street

8:00 a.m. Mass in the Church
11:00 a.m. Carne Guisada Dinner
served with rice and beans
\$10 p/p Dine-in or Take-out

Music • Bounce House • Bingo
Horseshoe/Washer Tournament

Noon Registration
2:00 p.m. Food Booths • Cakewalk
3:00 p.m. Live Auction





HOLY SATURDAY – EASTER VIGIL READING I – GENESIS 1:1, 26-31A

A **reading** from the **Book** of **Genesis**: In the **beginning**, when **God** created the **heavens** and the **earth**, / God said; “Let us **make** man in our **image**, after our **likeness**. / Let **them** have dominion over the **fish** of the sea, / the **birds** of the air, and the **cattle**, / and over **all** the wild animals / **and** all the **creatures** that crawl on **the** ground.” / God created **man** in his image; / in the image of God he **created** him; / **male** and **female** he created them. / God **blessed** them, **saying**: / “Be **fertile** and **multiply**; / **fill** the earth and **subdue** it. / Have **dominion** over the fish of the **sea**, the birds of the **air**, / and all the living **things** that **move** on the earth.” / God also **said**: / “See, I **give** you every **seed-bearing** plant all **over** the earth / and every **tree** that has seed-bearing **fruit** on it to be your **food**; / and to all the **animals** of the **land**, all the birds of the air, / and all the **living** creatures that **crawl** on the **ground**, / I give all the **green plants** for food.” / And so it **happened**. / God **looked** at **everything** he had **made**, and he **found** it very good.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Parish: _____

Age, if 18 or under: _____

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

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

We will be publishing a puzzle quarterly in English and Spanish.

Presidio LaBahia

Fire on the Border

Living historians and reenactors gather together to bring the exciting history of the Punitive Expedition (1916-1917) to life! Immerse yourself in this wild period of U.S.-Mexican border history. This event will be held at the Presidio La Bahia, in Goliad, Saturday, April 27, from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sunday, April 28, from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

Cinco de Mayo

Living historians and reenactors gather together to commemorate the French Intervention and celebrate the Mexican victory of the Battle of Puebla. This event will be held at the Presidio La Bahia, in Goliad, Saturday, May 4, from 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. and Sunday, May 5, from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m.

For more information about the events at the Presidio La Bahia 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.

Meet the Nuns

Single Catholic women 18 to 40 years of age are invited to come meet nuns (Sisters) at a “Come and See” Retreat and examine their call to make Jesus, the Incarnate Word, known and loved. Explore your own call to follow Jesus through marriage, single state, or religious life on April 27-28, at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. For more information call (361) 575-7111; email iwbsvoc@yahoo.com or visit www.iwbsvictoria.org.

Office of Catechetical Ministry

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

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.



Pregnant? Need Help?

Confidential and caring assistance available for the following needs:
• Emotional • Material • Spiritual • Educational • Providing immediate and practical help.
We have a special concern for you and your unborn child.

Victoria Gabriel Project

Toll Free 1-866-MARY AID

1-866-627-9243

www.victoriagabrielproject.org



St. Patrick's Catholic Church

Sunday, April 28, 2019

10:00 a.m.

Free Admission



1/2 Lb BBQ Brisket
Potatoes, salad, beans, bread & desert
\$10/Plate

In-side serving line begins at 10:30 a.m.
Plates to go at 10:00 a.m.

Pre-order whole cooked brisket \$10/lb
contact
Thomas Pribyl
(512) 657-1795
by April 14th.



Grand Prize \$1000 Visa Gift Card

Raffle tickets available from Church members or on the day of the festival.
Tickets: 3 for \$5 or \$2 per ticket



Live & Silent Auction
at 11:30 a.m.

*** Country Store**

*** Sweets & eats**

*** Cake Walk**

Something for everyone!

*** Children's Games**

*** Refreshments and much more!**

13316 State Hwy 185, Bloomington, Texas 77951

All activities will be held in the parish hall.

For more information call: (361) 897-1155, on the day of the festival call: (361) 897-1398

www.saintpatrickschurch.net [f /stpatrickbloomington](https://www.facebook.com/stpatrickbloomington) [@ saintpatricks@triplejreal.com](mailto:saintpatricks@triplejreal.com)



Letter to the Editor

Dear Editor-in-Chief,

I recently came across an article in The Catholic Lighthouse by Tony Magliano and was mortified that the article was allowed to be printed in a Catholic publication. His socialist/communist views were glaring and really upset me. Here are a few issues I was most angered about:

1. Medicare for all residing in the United States. Socialized medicine has not worked in other countries and will not work here. I do not want it. This country cannot afford across-the-board coverage for everyone. The insurance industry needs to be reformed. Doctors should be allowed to return to practicing medicine, not filling out paperwork. Why are we even having a conversation about something so communist?

2. Global warming. This lie was debunked decades ago but continues to be propagated by the LEFT. Following the global warming agreement written in Kyoto, Japan in December 1997, more than 30,000 scientists petitioned the United States government to reject that agreement because

there is no convincing scientific evidence to support the charges made. The cost of that petition project was paid by private donations – not the result of a lobbying effort or deal made to get rich. Visit <http://www.petitionproject.org/> for a copy of the petition itself, the names of the signers, and scientific evidence backing up why they signed the petition. It is pathetic that a Catholic publication should be promulgating such error.

3. Open borders. We need a wall to control who is coming into our country. My aunt and uncle own property in Sealy. Illegal aliens stole a vehicle, were running from the police, turned onto their property tearing down their fencing. The guys ditched the vehicle and ran off. A cousin of mine is a farmer in the Pierce area. His wife was at home alone with the children. They live out in the country. Illegal aliens were peeking in through the windows, and she was scared to death. Why would anyone be against checking out who is coming into our country? This is again something from the LEFT (the Democrat party). It is not cruel or unjust to

monitor the immigrants coming in.

4. Green New Deal bill. Mr. Magliano has not done his homework. Wind and solar energy are unsustainable because weather is inconsistent and uncontrollable. Ask people who live in states where solar and wind have been forced upon them. There is no consistent energy pulse. An alternative source (like natural gas) must be ready to take over when there is no sunshine (like every night) or wind. Wind turbines and solar panels kill enormous numbers of birds not to mention the noise wind turbines make.

5. Move from nationalism to global solidarity. It's not nationalism, it's patriotism. God wants everyone to love his country, to be a good citizen, and to fight for it. Global solidarity is an error. The U.S. would lose its sovereignty. WE DO NOT WANT ONE WORLD GOVERNMENT UNDER THE UNITED NATIONS. Every nation should remain sovereign because each nation will/should have its own citizens' best interests at heart. No group should be in total control over the entire world. God is not in favor of that. If a nation follows God's laws, He will prosper it and protect it. The U.S. is the light on the hill, the example to other countries how a REPUBLICAN form of government works when Christianity thrives. The decline of Christianity in the U.S. has opened us all up to this erred thinking. The Church is at fault because it has succumbed

to political correctness (out of fear). Things had better change soon, or the Church will be persecuted here as it has been in foreign countries. The clergy will be the first to be carted off to jail or hauled out into the streets.

Saint Pope John Paul II must be turning over in his grave to see how the Church has shifted from freedom to communism. Trying to be politically correct has caused so much damage. The Church used to be respected, even if not agreed with, because it stood firm on moral issues. That is no longer the case.

I want to give Mr. Magliano the benefit of the doubt and think he is simply not informed. Otherwise, he is intentionally using Catholic publications as a forum for his leftist (Democrat/communist) views. His article should have been discarded to begin with because it is fraught with error. Just reading it in a Catholic publication makes it appear that the diocese, if not the entire Catholic Church, shares his views.

Please forward my letter to Bishop Cahill as I do not have an email address for him.

Respectfully although very upset,
Reene Terrell

To submit a letter to the editor
write to:

Sarita Richmond

P O Box 4070

Victoria TX 77903

or srichmond@victoriadiocese.org

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!



Ceci Triska · (979) 543-8575 ~ Select (800) 842-4842
ceci.triska@gmail.com · www.selectinternationaltours.com
You can follow Journeys of Faith with Ceci on Facebook!



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.



Meals • Picnics and More

April

Nada—Knights of Columbus Fish Frys April 5, April 12, and April 19 at the Nada Community Center. Dine-in for all you can eat (\$13 p/p for adults and \$6 p/p for ages 6-11) and plates-to-go for \$10 p/p from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Catholic Daughters will sell homemade desserts.

Wharton—Holy Family Lenten Fish Frys April 5 and April 12 at the Family Life Center. Dine-in for all you can eat or plates-to-go available at \$10 p/p (adult), child's plate 6-10 at \$5 p/p. For more information, call (979) 532-3593.

Blessing—Catholic Daughters Court #2546 of St. Peter's Church is sponsoring a Chicken Spaghetti dinner on April 7, at the parish hall. Serving begins at 11:00 a.m. until sold out. Plates are \$8 p/p (dine-in or to-go). A raffle will also be held during the afternoon. The proceeds will benefit the Catholic Daughters scholarships and charities.

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. Cost at the door is also \$10. For more information call Gerald at (361) 243-1914 or Anthony at (361) 564-8989.

Moulton—St. Joseph Easter Picnic April 21, beginning with Mass at 10:00 a.m. followed by an Easter Egg Hunt. Picnic at the Social Center with a fried chicken dinner (\$10 p/p) beginning at 10:30 a.m., dine-in or drive-through plates to-go available. A mini-auction, Music by Charles and the Fabulous 4, refreshments and fun throughout the afternoon.

Victoria—St. Mary's Games Party April 23 from 11:30 a.m.-4:00 p.m. at the Activity Center. For more information go to www.stmvictoria.org.

Victoria—Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament, April 26. For more information see pg. 7.

Bloomington—St. Patrick's Spring Festival, April 28 serving BBQ brisket (1/2 lb. meat) plates for \$10 p/p. Live and silent auctions, country store, games and more. For more information, see ad on pg. 13.

Weimar—St. Michael Spring Festival, April 28. A fired chicken and sausage dinner served for \$10 p/p. Polka Mass at 10:30 a.m. Auction, bingo, cakewalk, and games. For more details see ad on pg. 11.

Yorktown—San Luis Annual Jamaica, April 28 on the parish grounds. Mass will be at 8:00 a.m. A Carne Guisada dinner will be served beginning at 11:00 a.m. for \$10 p/p dine-in or take-out available. See ad on pg. 12.

May

Victoria—Holy Family Festival May 5, at the Community Center. BBQ brisket dinner will be served beginning at 10:30 a.m. Dine-in or take-out is available at \$10 adults/\$6 children. Live auction begins at 1:00 p.m. There will be games, silent auction, and country store.

Victoria—Emmaus Center Roast and Toast, May 10. See ad on pg. 8.

Wharton—CDA Pre-Mother's Day Bake Sale, May 10, Holy Family Life Center starting at 7:30 p.m. For more information contact Bessie at (979) 532-4369.

Hallettsville—Sacred Heart Parish Picnic, May 26 at the KC Hall.

Shiner—Sts. Cyril and Methodius Picnic, May 26 at the KC Hall.

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. 8.

Engaged Encounter—2019 Dates: 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:** 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.

id.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 jd916victoria@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 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

Contact: Sr. Emilie Eilers at (361) 575-7111
e-mail: amormeus@yahoo.com
website: www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org
IWBS Convent • 1101 NE Water St. • Victoria

Solemn Lenten Vespers: April 7 and 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: Silent Retreat for women - April 26-28

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.

Victoria—Single Catholic women 18 to 40 years of age are invited to come meet nuns (Sisters) at a "Come and See" Retreat on April 27-28, see pg. 13 for more information.

Pilgrimages

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 Journeys of Faith with Ceci on pg. 14.



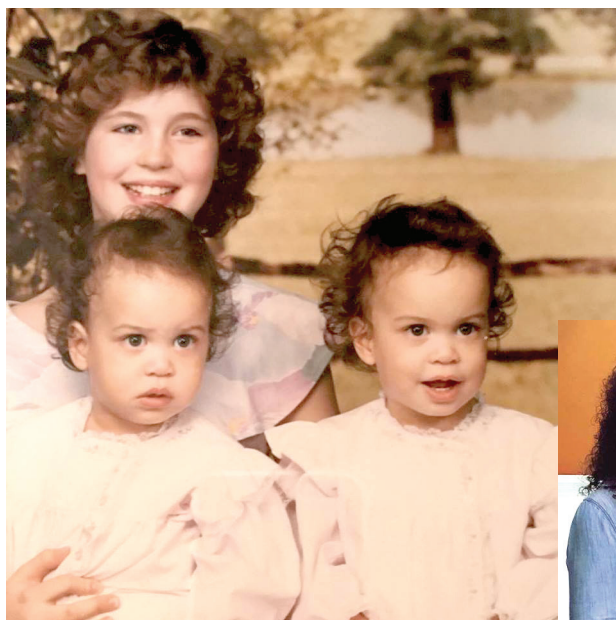
Love, Growth, and Faith: An Adoption Story

Continued from pg. 1

us about being adopted. It never came as a surprise. They encouraged us to talk about it and ask questions.” When it came time for high school Betsy and Katie were enrolled at St. Francis de Sales in Columbus Ohio, where they attended from 9-12 grades.

Katie and her twin did everything togeth-

like Betsy’! It was emotional. I had waited for this moment for so long. She spent hours at our house that day. We learned about her life: that she had married and that we had 3 more siblings. We also learned that day that our true home and family was with the Gordons. This meeting solidified that our



(left) Pictured are (l-r) twin sisters Katie and Betsy with their older sister.

(below) Pictured are (l-r) twin sisters Betsy and Katie pregnant together in Spring of 2018.



er from their sacraments to dance lessons. In high school, they were really involved in theatre, public speaking, acting, dance, and artistic outlets. Through these busy years it never left their minds about meeting their birth mother.

Katie remembers her parents saying that a good time to look into meeting their birth mother, if they wanted to, would be when they were around 17 or 18 years old. Their mom and dad knew her name, Anna. Katie’s mom and older sister were able to locate an address they thought might be hers; they took a chance and sent a letter to Anna. Katie shared, “The letter was sent the week I went to a teen retreat called *Kairos*. The whole time I was at the retreat I wondered what would become of this letter...many thoughts were going through my mind. When they went to pick me up from the retreat mom let me know Anna had called. The *Kairos* retreat changed my life. It was impactful. I was finding my identity, my faith was becoming independent of my parents, and I was going to soon meet my birth mother--two days later we met our birth mother.”

Fear, uncertainty, and doubt were among a few of the girl’s feelings on the day they met Anna. Katie said, “You’re never ready. Part of our plan in meeting her was for her to be included in our life and other upcoming events (like graduation). She came to our home. I thought to myself, ‘She looks a lot

parents are and always will be our parents.”

The next several years had ups and downs as Katie and Betsy got to know Anna. She had her life and a Betsy and Katie went back to their normal routines. Katie shared, “There was a lot of pain and happiness all at once. Adoption has many layers that take years to unfold.”

In May 2008 Katie graduated with her nursing degree from Mount Carmel College of Nursing, located near the Ohio State University Campus. Upon graduating from nursing school Katie decided to fulfill her dreams of becoming a labor and delivery nurse and took a one-year nursing contract in Texas. Her twin sister Betsy finished her undergrad at Wright State University in Dayton, Ohio and completed her Masters in Education at Ohio University. Betsy would marry her high school sweetheart, Francis, and together they have two beautiful children, Lorenzo (4) and Paloma (7 months).

In 2008 a job opportunity as a traveling nurse brought Katie to Victoria, from Ohio,



(left) Katie and her husband Aaron are pictured introducing their new baby, Veda, to her sisters.

(below) Mike and Jeanne Gordon pictured with their children.



where she met her husband, Aaron Saenz. In July 2013, their first daughter Ruby Elizabeth was born. She explained, “When I became a mom I had a very new perspective on adoption through the eyes of my birth mother. I kept imagining how difficult this must have been for her.” Katie loves being a mom and her parenting and instilling the Catholic faith is very important to her. At bedtime she and the girls listen to the rosary through an app called “Holy Rosary Audio App”.

She shared, “I love being Catholic because we love Mary! My mom had a strong connection to Mary. She always encouraged us to pray through her intercession. We always had the Madonna in our home and I think of my mom when I see her. My mom was impactful on my faith journey because she included it in every moment of her parenting. Being Catholic and being adopted resonates for me because being Catholic was such a big part of my adoption and my upbringing. If it hadn’t been for Catholic Social Services my path and fate would have been different.” Katie and Aaron would welcome two more precious girls into their family, Luella Rose in December 2016 and Veda Josephine in November 2018.

Faith is now “center” to their family. Katie and Aaron are active members of Holy Family Catholic Church. Katie described Aaron as a cradle Catholic. She said, “He fell away from the church in teens and early 20s, then when we met we recommitted as

a couple to bring our Catholic faith into our lives. It has been gradual for Aaron but, each Sunday is a step closer to his faith. It is a journey.” Aaron shared why his Catholic faith and family are important saying, “To me, it unifies our family. When each of our daughters were baptized as babies it made me so proud, like we were doing something right as parents. Being Catholic feels good to me because it feels like home even when you are away for a little bit.”

Katie’s advice for those considering adoption is to pray about it. She shared, “Adoption is a beautiful gift, but like all life it has its challenges. It is not easy. Adoption is a loss of a family for the gain of a family. Respecting both aspects of that is important. When you adopt a child you are opening your heart to an adoptive family.” The choice by the Gordon family to adopt was life-changing for their family and not only for them but for Katie and Betsy. In God’s timing and through the guidance of the Holy Spirit they have all been blessed beyond measure by the gift of adoption.

Blessed Saint Joseph Prayer

Christ Jesus humbly accepted you as his earthly father and was obedient to you and the Blessed Virgin Mary. In turn, you raised Jesus as your own son, protected him from harm, provided for his daily needs and loved him with all your heart. Pray for all adopted children – infants, children, and teens. Hear the desires deep in their hearts for acceptance and love, and keep them safe from all anxiety. And when they pray, intercede for them before the Father St. Joseph, Guardian of the Christ Child, pray for us. Amen.

