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# The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

VOL. 34, NO. 5

[www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org)



SEPTEMBER 2020

## ALL ABOUT THE FAMILY



Justin Reyes, right, director of Family Evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria, leads a study day for DOV priests to learn about new ministries growing in the diocese. Bishop Brendan Cahill is shown giving an opening address.

### DOV priests hear about new resources

BY JANET JONES

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

Even if the pews are still half full or less, the pastors and all priests are still working hard to tend to the spiritual needs of the Church.

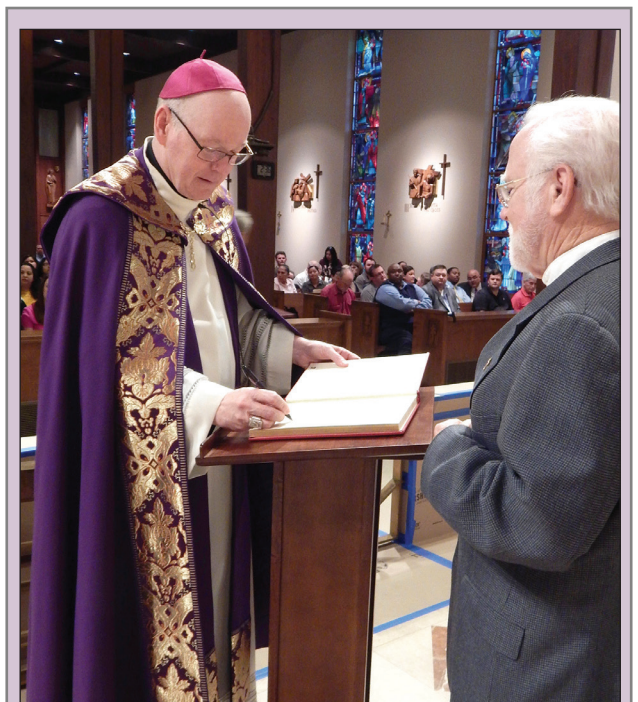
On Aug. 12, many of the priests in the Diocese of Victoria came together for a study day to hear from lay ministers about diocese-wide programs designed to give the Church new avenues to strengthen families' spiritual lives.

Justin Reyes, Director of Family Evangelization for the

Diocese of Victoria, was the presenter for the day and offered ideas to keep families involved in the Catholic Church.

He recalled that when he moved to Victoria last fall, his wife had taken their three small boys to the park to play and another mom who was doing the same thing invited her to go to her non-denominational church. And she went because she was new to town and making friends. What struck her was the effort that went into making her and her little ones

*See All about the family, pg. 16*



Bishop Brendan Cahill signs the "Book of the Elect" for churches RCIA leaders during the beginning of Lent this year. It is when the candidates and catechumens take another step toward coming into full communion with the Catholic Church. (Photo: Janet Jones/Catholic Lighthouse)

## Have you ever asked?

*RCIA is where seekers of faith can get the answers*

BY JANET JONES

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

Just as schools are doing what they can to keep children learning and businesses are doing what they can to keep paying employees and making a profit, our faith formation leaders are adapting to the current circumstances to keep reaching out to people seeking to know more about the teachings of Jesus and the Catholic Church.

*See Have you ever asked?, pg. 16*





# Confirming, renewing and revitalizing

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On May 13, 2007, the Bishops of Latin America began a meeting to discuss the mission of the Church in Latin America. Pope Benedict XVI personally went to this meeting in Our Lady of Aparecida, Brazil, and offered an opening speech to the gathered bishops. The bishops met for weeks, and on May 31 agreed to a document to advance the efforts of evangelization in the Americas, proclaiming Jesus Christ as the Way, the Truth and the Life.

Towards the beginning of this document, they wrote: “11. The church is called to a deep and profound rethinking of its mission and to re-launch it with fidelity and boldness in the new circumstances of Latin America and the world. It cannot retreat in response to those who see only confusion, dangers, and threats, or those who seek to cloak the variety and complexity of situations with a mantle of worn-out ideological slogans, or irresponsible attacks. What is required is confirming, renewing, and revitalizing the newness of the Gospel rooted in our history, out of a personal and community encounter with Jesus Christ that raises up disciples and missionaries. That depends not so much on grand programs and structures, but rather on new men and women who incarnate that tradition and newness, as disciples of Jesus Christ and missionaries of

## A Shepherd's Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



his Kingdom, protagonists of new life for a Latin America that seeks to be rediscovered with the light and power of the Spirit.”

The future Pope Francis was credited as one of the leaders of the bishops who produced this teaching, and on June 29 Pope Benedict XVI approved it, writing: “I have vivid and grateful memories of this Meeting, in which I was united with you in the same affection for your beloved peoples and the same concern to help them to be disciples and missionaries of Jesus Christ so that they may have life in him.

“At the same time, as I express my gratitude for their love for Christ and his Church and for the spirit of communion which marked the above-mentioned General Conference, I authorize the publication of the Final Docu-

ment.”

In August of this year I invited the members of our diocesan family to make the coming year a “Year of the Family” in which we experience ways we can listen to the Lord and proclaim His love and mercy to the world. My hope is that this desire is in communion and the same prayerful line of thought as the Latin American bishops, Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis. Throughout the year in the Lighthouse you will see examples of men and women living their faith and inviting their neighbors to a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

Even in the most challenging of times the love of Jesus Christ reaches out to people. This may explain the reality that the Church is always inviting new members to the fullness

of communion. In this issue, we will highlight the Rite of Christian Initiation – the ancient process by which people who begin with an interest (or sometimes just a curiosity) in the Church are led to a new life in Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist.

I share with you here the prayer of the Latin American bishops that concluded their teaching in Aparecida. May you and your families be blessed with the personal love of Jesus and the newness of life in the Church. Let us keep each other in prayer.

*554. Guided by Mary, we fix our gaze on Jesus Christ, author and perfecter of faith, and we tell him with the Successor of Peter: “Stay with us, for it is towards evening, and the day is now far spent” (Luke 24:29).*

*Stay with us, Lord; keep us company, even though we have not always recognized you. Stay with us, because all around us the shadows are deepening, and you are the Light; discouragement is eating its way into our hearts: make them burn with the certainty of Easter. We are tired of the journey, but you comfort us in the breaking of bread, so that we are able to proclaim to our brothers and sisters that you have truly risen and have entrusted us with the mission of being witnesses of your resurrection.*

*Stay with us, Lord, when mists of doubt, weariness or difficulty rise up around our Catholic faith; you are Truth itself, you are the one who reveals the Father to us. Enlighten our minds with your word, and help us to experience the beauty of believing in you.*

*Remain in our families, enlighten them in their doubts, sustain them in their difficulties, console them in their sufferings and in their daily labors, when around them shadows build up which threaten their unity and their natural identity. You are Life itself: remain in our homes, so that they may continue to be nests where human life is generously born, where life is welcomed, loved and respected from conception to natural death.*

*Remain, Lord, with those in our societies who are most vulnerable; remain with the poor and the lowly, with indigenous peoples and Afro-Americans, who have not always found space and support to express the richness of their culture and the wisdom of their identity. Remain, Lord, with our children and with our young people, who are the hope and the treasure of our continent. Protect them from so many snares that attack their innocence and their legitimate hopes. O Good Shepherd, remain with our elderly and with our sick. Strengthen them all in faith, so that they may be your disciples and missionaries.*

+Brendan

## Four days into new post, Beaumont bishop prepares for Hurricane Laura

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Growing up in Louisiana, Bishop David L. Toups is no stranger to hurricanes. Yet he never expected that less than a week into his first assignment as bishop of the Diocese of Beaumont, Texas, he’d be preparing to face a major hurricane.

Hurricane Laura, by late Aug. 26, had intensified into a Category 4 hurricane and was expected to make a landfall capable of causing major destruction near the Texas and Louisiana border by Aug. 27.

Bishop Toups, ordained and installed as the sixth bishop of the Diocese of Beaumont Aug. 21, almost from the get-go, began closing parish offices due to the storm, helping others evacuate and making plans to help the community after the hurricane passed. And in between, he said he “hopped in my truck and blessed the Neches River with the Blessed Sacrament.”

Beaumont’s Neches River, which he blessed on Aug. 26, is considered one of several potential problem areas during storm surges.



## Official Announcements

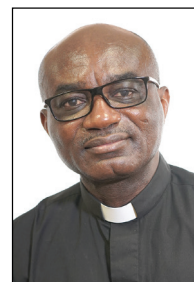
### Father Kirby Hlavaty named Vicar Forane of Edna Deanery



Effective July 16, 2020, the Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, pastor of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, Gando, has been appointed to the office of Vicar Forane (Dean) of the Edna Deanery.

The Vicar Forane is a priest appointed by the bishop to supervise a section or district of the diocese.

### Hallettsville churches get second associate pastor



The Rev. John Afum, 57, of Ghana will become the second associate pastor at Sacred Heart in Hallettsville, effective Sept. 1, 2020. He will be assigned to the four parishes but will be available to assist other parishes in the area where and when needed.





## Bishop Cahill's Schedule

### September

- 4:** 3 p.m. Holy Hour, Chancery  
**5:** Mass with Carmelite Sisters, Meyersville  
**6:** 8:45 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Peter and Paul, Frelsburg  
**9:** Presbyteral Council, Chancery  
**11:** Witness to Love Marriage information session, Chancery  
**12:** Mass with Carmelite Sisters, Meyersville  
**13:** 7 p.m. Rosary Service in honor of Our Lady of Fatima at Our Lady of the Gulf, Port Lavaca  
**14:** 1 p.m. USCCB Pro-life committee meeting, virtual  
**15:** 6:30 a.m. Call in to Relevant Radio Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists, Victoria

- 7 p.m. Women in White – Vocation Ministry Gala, virtual  
**16:** 4 p.m. Building Board meeting, Chancery  
**19:** Mass with Carmelite Sisters, Meyersville  
**20:** Noon Confirmation Mass at St. Joseph Catholic Church, Inez  
**25-27:** Presenter for Intercommunity men and women in formation conference, TBD

### October

- 2:** 1 p.m. Finance Board Meeting, Chancery  
3 p.m. Holy Hour, Chancery  
**3:** Mass with Carmelite Sisters, Meyersville

## Weimar KofCs sign 'resolution of condolence' for Cernoch family

WEIMAR – The Texas Knights of Columbus Council #2153 signed a Resolution of Condolence to the family of Monsignor Gerard G. “Gerry” Cernoch recently. The retired Monsignor Cernoch, who died July 23, was buried in his home town of Weimar. He had served in many parishes in the Diocese of Victoria and the Archdiocese of San Antonio before the Victoria diocese was established. Before retirement, he spent many years as the pastor of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Bay City.

The resolution states:

“On July 23, 2020, our council sustained the loss of an exemplary Catholic gentleman and worthy Knights of Columbus member. He was an honorary life member, having joined the Weimar Council in March 1956, and chose to remain a member of his hometown Council for 64 years.

“We resolve, that our departed Brother be remembered daily in a special Mass offered for the repose of the souls of all of the deceased Brother Knights at St. Mary’s Church, the birthplace of the Order, in New Haven, Connecticut; be it further resolved, that while we bow in submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, we mourn the loss of our Brother who has been taken from us, and be it further resolved, that this testimonial of condolence, duly signed and sealed, be offered to the family of our departed Brother Knight as an expression of our heartfelt sympathy”.

~ Signed Grand Knight Jack Muggli, Financial Secretary Herb Ulbrich, and Past Grand Knight Martin Luchak



USPS-001015 (ISSN 0894-7740)

**The Catholic Lighthouse** is published monthly at 1505 E. Mesquite Lane, Victoria, TX 77901.

Subscription rates are: \$7 per year within the diocese / \$10 outside the diocese.

E-mail local stories, photos or festival announcements to: [lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org) (361) 573-0828 / (361) 573-5725 FAX • [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org)

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## In Memoriam

### Sister Esther Gerbermann, IWBS

VICTORIA — Sister M. Esther Gerbermann, 83, died Aug. 4, 2020. She was born Nov. 28, 1936, in Nada to the late Alvin Joseph and Anastasia Syring Gerbermann. She comes from a family of two boys and six girls.

Sister Esther completed grammar school at St. Mary’s Catholic School in Nada.

She entered Nazareth Convent and, in 1955, graduated from Nazareth Academy in Victoria. She entered the postulancy in 1954 and after graduating in 1955, she received the habit Aug. 25, 1955, and made first profession of vows Aug. 26, 1956.

She received a Bachelor of Arts degree with a major in history and a minor in English from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio and received her master’s degree in religious education from the University of St. Thomas in Houston.

During her years of ministry as a professed sister she taught at St. Agnes School in San Antonio, St. Michael in Cuero, Holy Cross in East Bernard, Assumption of the BVM in



Sister Esther Gerbermann, IWBS

Ganado, Sacred Heart in Floresville, Blessed Sacrament in San Antonio, Sacred Heart in La Grange, Sacred Heart in Crosby and St. Paul High School in Shiner. She also served as DRE in Holy Cross Parish in East Bernard, St. Philip the Apostle in Corpus Christi, and Vincent De Paul Parish in San Antonio. After retirement, she lived at Incarnate Word Convent and shared in driving, sewing, gardening, the library and household duties. She then moved to the IWC Health Care, ministering in the Apostolate of Prayer and Suffering.

She is preceded in death by her parents; two brothers, Alvin H. and John F. Gerbermann; brothers-in-law, Alvin Wick and Daniel Melnar; sisters-in-law Nina Perez Gerbermann and Anna Mae Mazac Gerbermann. She is survived by her sisters Betty Wick, Lucille Antrich (Rudy), Mathilda Melnar, Theresa Klesel (Melvin), Cathy Hrnair (John); and sister-in-law Grace Gerbermann; many nieces, nephews, grand nieces and nephews, great-great nieces and nephews.

Private funeral services were Aug. 10 at Incarnate Word Convent followed by burial at Catholic Cemetery #3. Memorials may be made to Incarnate Word Convent, Hospice of South Texas or donor’s choice. Words of comfort may be shared with the family at [colonialfuneralhomevictoria.com](http://colonialfuneralhomevictoria.com).

## How to Support DSA

The Diocesan Services Appeal (DSA) is committed to fund administration offices and programs that help bring the light of Christ to each of the priorities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in the Crossroads. Evangelization, Marriage and Family, and Human Life and Dignity are a few that Bishop Cahill has chosen as his focus. DSA also supports the retired and infirm priests, Permanent Diaconate, Spiritual Renewal Center, Emmaus Center, and many other ministries. To support the DSA contact Rene Garcia at 361-573-0828.

*Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria who were ordained during the month of September:*

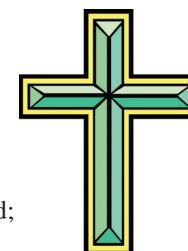
Rev. Wayne N. Flagg	09/24/1988	St. Michael Catholic Church, Weimar
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“If some of you hear the call to follow Christ more closely, to dedicate your entire heart to Him, like the Apostles John and Paul... be generous, do not be afraid, ...because you have nothing to fear when the prize that you await is God Himself, for Whom, sometimes without ever knowing it, all young people are searching.” — Pope Saint John Paul II

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

Rev. Dan Morales	09/03/2016
Rev. Msgr. Werner Bockholt	09/08/1992
Rev. Marcus Valenta	09/09/1984
Rev. Msgr. John J. Hanacek	09/14/1994
Rev. Donald Hayden, O.Ss.T.	09/19/2009
Rev. Jude Belisle, O.Ss.T.	09/24/1994

For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord; so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s. (Romans 14:8)





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 >.**

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

Matthew 4:18-22

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Benedict & Dianna Kallus  
*in Honor of Rev. Daniel P. Kahlich's  
Retirement*

Kolek Family Reunion  
*in Memory of Rev. Charles Kolek, OSB and  
John & Mary Kolek*

Candidate

St. Ann Society, High Hill

Transitional Deacon

~  
Priest  
~

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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 >.**

August 18, 2020

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

*Priest*

Donation by:  
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CDA Court Our Lady Queen of Clergy  
#1990 Seminary Burse

*Lector*

In memory of Janie Munoz, Post Regent  
CDA Court Lady Queen of Clergy #1990  
by Wayne and Jeanette Krenek

• **Rev. Msgr. Joseph Hybner KC #3204 Seminary Burse**

*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Msgr. Joseph Hybner by  
the Robert B. Brzozowski Family

• **Donald F. McDonald Seminary Burse**

*Candidate*

Donation in memory of Donald F.  
McDonald by Olivia G. McDonald

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

*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gerard Cernoch  
In memory of John, Sr. and Augusta Peters  
In memory Raymond J. Spann by  
Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters

• **Elorine Bluntzer Tumlinson Seminary Burse**

*Candidate*

In memory of Elorine Bluntzer Tumlinson  
by Olivia G. McDonald

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

*Lector*

In memory of Leo Hollas by  
Henrietta Veselka

• **Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse**

*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gerard (Gerry)  
Cernoch by Helen and Billy Dolezal  
In memory of Willie Mae and B J (Jeff)  
Cernoch by Helen and Billy Dolezal  
In memory of Michael Ottis by John and  
Micki Krchnak  
In memory of Edward Ottis by John and  
Micki Krchnak

*Candidate*

Donation by Rev. Michael Rother

• **Henry A. Schoenfeld Seminary Burse**

*Acolyte*

In memory of Henry Schoenfeld for his  
birthday and anniversary by  
Bernice Schoenfeld

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# Faith perseveres despite mystery, obstacles

*EDITOR'S NOTE: Father Kram wrote the following sermon for the twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B. He titled it "The Risk of Faith."*

We can know things in either of two ways. One is by personal experience and the other is by faith.

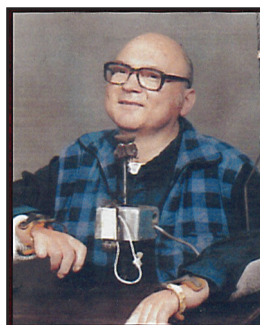
Faith means that we take something on the testimony of someone else. Faith has to rest on two things: that the person who tells us knows what he is talking about, and, second, that he is not deceiving us.

Thus, if our faith rests on a firm basis, we can know by faith just as surely as we can know by sight.

For example, we know that the world is round even though we have never reached the East by sailing west. We know that it is raining outside when someone tells us, even though we have not seen it. We take our medicine with confidence even though we are not trained in pharmacy. All these things are natural to us because of faith.

Sometimes faith involved a certain quality of mystery. Why, for example, do a boy and girl who have know each other for years suddenly fall in love and entrust themselves to each other in marriage without really being able to say why?

Sometimes we even refer to the feminine



1929-2000

## Father Charles Kram Corner

**... God is real, our Savior lives, and truth survives.**

mystique – that certain mysterious quality about womanhood. I once told a girl that I did not know how to deal with women and she replied that even women do not understand women.

And sometimes our attempts at faith come up against obstacles. For example, at a class reunion one classmate asked another, "Frank, why didn't you ever marry?" And Frank replied, "I brought home five wonderful girls and showed them to my parents, but my mother hated every one of them. Finally

I found a girl who looked like my mother, she talked like her, she walked like her, she acted like her, she WAS just like my mother ... but I couldn't marry her either because ... my father hated her."

If we can live by human faith even when it often involves a mystery or meets with obstacles, then how much more can we live by the truths revealed by God. For God knows all things. He cannot deceive not be deceived.

So, what if many ridicule the power of the sacraments, or the real presence of Christ

in the Holy Eucharist, or the resurrection of the body on the last day?

Or as a woman whose dad had died lamented, "What if there is no soul? What if there is no Heaven? What if I never see my daddy again?"

Although unbelievers deny and the faithful sometimes falter, still God is real, our Savior lives, and truth survives.

God is the same yesterday, and today and tomorrow ... and a thousand difficulties do not make a doubt.

And, in the face of mysteries, we do not behave like the man who tore a rose apart because he had to see what made it fragrant, and destroyed it in the process, but rather, we accept and we LIVE by faith.

So today, we, who, without hesitation, believe in those we love, and that the world is round, and in the rain, lovingly rededicate ourselves to firmly accepting those truths that God has revealed, especially those we would otherwise never have known.

*Lord Jesus, thank you for all you have taught us to believe. Help us always to accept firmly and faithfully live up to what we have received. Grant that, one day, our faith will be confirmed by seeing God face to face. Amen*

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# Let the learning continue!

I hate to be wrong when I think of planning ahead in light of conditions that I expect to be in existence in the future. Back in February, we were discussing plans of what we could expect in September. Others in the group were saying that the novel coronavirus would be history by that time. I did not agree with their planning for the future. When they asked me why I did not agree with them, I was hard pressed to give them a better timeline because I just didn't know at the time.

Unfortunately, I was right in that discussion, but I wish that I had been wrong, and that the pandemic would be over by now. But it's not over, so we have to keep wearing our masks, observing social distancing, washing our hands often and carefully, avoiding crowds, and staying home as much as possible.

I especially feel for the families who have small children who are doing online learning. However, due to much hard work and planning by our educators, it seems that the students in our schools are well on the way to a some-what successful, but challenging, school year.

But, what about the rest of us? After all, learning is a lifelong process. How can we keep up with what is going on around us? How can we keep our minds active and healthy in spite of our isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic?

During this Year of the Family, we may

## Sisterly Thoughts

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



think of ways that we can promote activities that help us grow spiritually, socially, academically, and physically. If we have students in our household, we can show an interest in what they are studying — whether face-to-face or online.

I find it fascinating to look at life through the eyes of students. They can give me perspectives that I might have never dreamed of if I had not tried to see things from their viewpoint. Moreover, if by some chance our students have teachers or read articles that look at life differently from the way we do, we can discuss this with them. All of us, whether we have students or not, can learn a lot as we face the challenges of living our Christian life in trying times.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church along with the Vatican Library website ([vatican.va](http://vatican.va)) and the American Bishops' website

([uscceb.org](http://uscceb.org)) are useful resources for discovering what the Church teaches. Moreover, there is information specifically designed for our spiritual development in our Churches. Check out what programs are being offered in our diocese and find out where your service may be needed in your parish. Nothing helps a person learn more than becoming involved in parish religious education programs, online or face-to-face, depending on circumstances.

Look all around. There are learning opportunities for families and individuals all about

us. Pick up the dust-covered musical instrument you always wanted to learn how to play or that incomplete project you once started but dropped because of the duties that were overwhelming you at the time. Start a journal or diary; discover the wonders of creation in our surroundings. Get a hobby; start a garden or if you already have one, plant something that you never tried before. Check out what online information about your special interest is available. Then let the learning continue for all of us — in spite of the pandemic.

## 52-year CDA member of Shiner re-elected as national director

SHINER — Carolyn Malik of Shiner was recently re-elected National Director for the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, one of the oldest and largest organizations of Catholic women in the Americas ([www.catholicdaughters.org/](http://www.catholicdaughters.org/)). She was re-elected via mail-in ballot in July since the organization's 58th Biennial National Convention scheduled to take place in Dallas was cancelled.



Carolyn Malik

Malik is one of nine national directors and part of the top governing National Board of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

Malik, a parishioner at Sts. Cyril and Methodius' Catholic Church, has been a member of Catholic Daughters Court St. Paul #1604, Shiner, for 52 years. She is also a former member of the Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

In addition to being National Director, Malik has held national positions as Chairman of Credentials Committee, the National Nominating Committee and participated in state and national builds for Habitat for Humanity. She has held four state leadership positions including state regent and served as Texas Youth/JCDA Chairman. She has served in all court leadership positions within her local court and served as adult advisor for JCDA in the religious recognition medal program.

Malik is active in her church as an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion, former CCD teacher and cantor, and member of the St. Cecelia Choir.

She is a member of the National Association of Parliamentarians and a Registered Parliamentarian and lifetime member of the San Antonio Livestock Exposition. She is a past president and current member of the Pilot Club and was named Shiner Pilot of the Year in 2002.

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas was formed more than 110 years ago and, today, numbers 63,000 dues-paying members in 1,150 courts (local chapters) in 45 states across the country, Puerto Rico, Mexico, Guam, the Virgin Islands, Kenya and Peru. CDA women share Catholic spirituality, give generously to local and national charities and work hard for their parishes and communities.

For more information about the national Catholic Daughters, or to join, call Executive Director Martha Hamboussi at 212-877-3041, email her at [cdofanat1@aol.com](mailto:cdofanat1@aol.com), or visit [catholicdaughters.org](http://catholicdaughters.org).

For more information about Court St. Paul, contact Shirley Nagelmueller, Regent, 5571 U.S. Highway 90-A West, Shiner, Texas 77984; 361-212-3722.

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For information, visit their Facebook page at Presidio La Bahia - Goliad, Texas.

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## Gabriel Project expects to buy property for Bethlehem Home soon

Even the COVID-19 has not stopped progress on “the road to Bethlehem,” according to Fred Williams, board president of The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads.

He announced that they have a verbal agreement on a property for the Bethlehem Maternity Home for pregnant women in crisis. The property could house six women and maybe more. People in the diocese, especially in Victoria, may be familiar with the property that was once owned by the Poor Clare Sisters, a cloistered community who ran a bakery to support themselves and held Masses and Bible studies in their home.

“We are pleased to inform all our awesome supporters that we have achieved our fundraising goal to meet the operating expenses for the first year for a maternity home. That was Step 1. Step 2 is to hire a director for the home, and we have a couple of awesome candidates.”

Step 3 is acquiring the right property and they are well on their way to checking it off their list, too.

“The owners of this property are retired and will be moving out of the area. They are offering to sell their property to the Gabriel Project of the Crossroads for \$150,000. Real estate analysis indicates that this is an exceptional bargain and an ideal setup for our Bethlehem Maternity Home. The owners are offering to sell the property to us with a down payment and owner finance the remainder at a nominal interest rate. We are currently working on raising the funds for the down payment and praying that our generous supporters will help us to obtain this property for the Bethlehem Maternity Home,” Williams

stated in a press release.

The organization is launching a new campaign where all donations specified for the home will go directly to the down payment, according to Stephanie Yearly Spears, Advancement Director for The Gabriel Project. Their goal is to raise \$50,000 by Sept. 20.

Spears said she has a fundraising program in place for anyone who wants to help raise donations.

So far they have \$36,000 of the \$50,000 raised, Williams said.

Anyone interested in learning more about being a fundraiser, should email Spears at [stephanieyspears@hotmail.com](mailto:stephanieyspears@hotmail.com) or call 361-210-7191.

Online donations are accepted at <https://victoriagabrielproject.org/maternity-home>.

If anyone prefers to send a check toward the down payment, they should write BMH on the memo line of the check and send it to The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads, P.O. Box 345, Victoria, TX 77902-0345.

## Volunteers Needed for The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads

By Stacey Ontai Executive Director

At The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads we often receive kind comments such as, “How can I help? Or, “I’d love to be a part of something like what you do.” Or we might hear, “I wish I could do something, but...”

Allow me to be direct: If you want to make a difference for life, You Can. It is not as time-consuming or as difficult as you may believe. If you care for women and men facing unexpected pregnancies and wish to do something to help, you are well on your way to changing their lives.

You would be stunned to know all the ways you can pitch in as a volunteer at The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads. You do not have to be a certified counselor; and if the thought of talking to someone in crisis is a bit much, do not sweat it. We have plenty of opportunities outside of the counseling room.

Come and see what we are all about at our training session on Saturday, September 26 from 9 to 11:30 am. We will be having an in-person and virtual session. Space is limited so sign up today!

Please contact Stacey Ontai 361-703-2268 or email her at [staceyontai@hotmail.com](mailto:staceyontai@hotmail.com).



**Bethlehem**  
MATERNITY HOME

## Bishop Fellhauer Invitational canceled

*Tournament committee hopes to retain funds for seminarians, youth ministry*

Like many other things, the 23rd Annual Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament will have to wait until next year.

According to Ron Sitka, chairman of the tournament committee, the risks remain too high to have a large group of people gather with COVID-19 cases still being reported. In a letter to the sponsors, supporters and golfers, he stated, “There was also an issue of being able to obtain enough carts for golfers to safely social distance and still play.”

Funds raised by the golf tournament were to go to the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry programs and to help support seminarians in the Diocese of Victoria. The committee has offered to return funds that were sent in, but asked if the funds could remain in the diocese to support the programs.

“Please know that the needs for these programs remain the same, and if you would choose to let us keep your donation, you will be recognized in another manner for your blessed support,” the letter states. Those who would like to have the funds returned have been asked to contact the committee by Sept. 15.

“For those who have not yet sent in your support funding, please know that these programs still need any submittal you could make. We know this may be a difficult time for you emotionally, spiritually and financially. With nine Seminarians, the annual cost to the diocese is approximately \$315,000 per year. We need more priests and your support is greatly needed to help offset the cost of educating these men,” Sitka states in the letter.

The letter goes on to say, “Traditionally our sponsors are recognized by a sign at the golf course on the day of the tournament. Since we will not have an actual tournament

this year, we plan on posting your support on a sign in an upcoming edition of the Lighthouse and on the diocese website. This includes the golfers who will not get to play this year. Please consider sending in what your normal contribution would be on this tournament. We would appreciate those funds by Sept. 15, so we can publish your recognition.

“Thank you for your past and present support for these important programs at the

Diocese of Victoria. We will continue to pray that you all stay safe and healthy until this current situation passes. We look forward to beginning planning the golf tournament for next year, which will be held on April 30, 2021.

“Thank you again and may God bless you all.”



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**Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry**

Wendy Eggert, Director

Shannon Thomas, Associate Director

[ym@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:ym@victoriadiocese.org)

(361) 573-0828

**[www.victoriadiocese.org/youth-young-adult-ministry](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/youth-young-adult-ministry)**





# Five IWBS sisters celebrating jubilees

On June 4, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament celebrated the lives and religious professions of its 2020 Jubilarians.

Those celebrating their 60th anniversaries were Sister Frances Cabrini Janvier, Sister Maria Goretti Warzecha, Sister Bernarda Bludau and Sister Emiliana Grafe.

Sister Mary Jean Bludau celebrated her 50th.

Father Albert Yankey, the Sisters' chaplain, was also honored as he celebrated his 40th anniversary of ordination.

Father Albert celebrated a Mass of Thanksgiving in the Convent Chapel at 5 p.m. and the Sisters celebrating their anniversaries renewed their vows during the liturgy. A festive meal followed in the convent dining room.

After a short program, Father Albert and each jubilarian received a Divine Mercy candle and a Mass offering as a token of appreciation for their years of service. Father Albert said his evening was special because it would be his only celebration after COVID-19 made travel to Ghana impossible. The sisters' Grand Jubilee celebration planned for Aug. 15 at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral was also canceled because of the pandemic.

## 60-year Jubilarians

**Sister M. Frances Cabrini Janvier, IWBS**, daughter of the late Noel and Anna Marie Mueller Janvier, was born in Elsa, Texas. She received her early education at Edouch-Elsa Elementary, Central Elementary and Edouch-Elsa High School and graduated from Nazareth Academy. She entered Nazareth Convent and became a novice on Aug. 5, 1959. She made her first vows on Aug. 6, 1960, and pronounced her final vows on Aug. 6, 1965. Sister earned a BA degree with a major in English and a minor in Spanish from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio and a MA degree with a major in religion from St. Louis University in Missouri. Her Texas Teacher Certificate was for grades 7 through 12.

During her years of ministry, Sister Frances Cabrini taught at Sacred Heart School in Crosby, Holy Cross School in Dallas, St. Ludmila Academy and St. Paul High School in Shiner, St. Joseph High School and Nazareth Academy in Victoria, Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio, and Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville. Sister taught in the



Contributed Photo

*Pictured from left are, Sister Emiliana Grafe, Sister Bernarda Bludau, Sister Mary Jean Bludau, the Rev. Albert Yankey, Sister Maria Goretti Warzecha and Sister Frances Cabrini Janvier. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament shown here are celebrating significant jubilees this year. Father Yankey, their chaplain, celebrates 40 years of priesthood this year.*

Secondary School at Nakuru in Kenya, East Africa, from 1982 to 1989. In 2004, she returned to Africa and was the directress of postulants and assisted with the novices at the CVI Convent in Nairobi for two years. She then served as the Spanish teacher in the elementary grades at Nazareth Academy.

Sister now resides at Incarnate Word Convent where she assists in various duties, does research and keeps in touch with others on the computer. She also assists in doing translations in Spanish and French.

**Sister Maria Goretti Warzecha, IWBS**, daughter of the late Isadore and Clara Brysch Warzecha, is the first born of four children. She and her family were members of Holy Trinity Church in Falls City. As an elementary student, she attended the neighboring Three Oaks country school through eighth grade and graduated as valedictorian from Poth High School. Her summers during high school were spent at a job in San Antonio. Sister entered the convent in 1958, became a novice in 1959, and professed annual vows in 1960 and final vows in 1965.

After attending Victoria Junior College and Annunciation College, she received a

Bachelor of Arts degree in history and a minor in English from Sacred Heart Dominican College in Houston and a Master's Degree in religious education from the University of St. Thomas in Houston. She has elementary and secondary teaching certificates.

During her 60 years of religious profession, Sister Maria ministered as an educator in Nada, Bay City, San Antonio, Shiner, Cuero, Floresville and Victoria. In addition to full time classroom teaching, she served as vice principal at Bay City, Cuero and Floresville. She also taught CCD classes in the abovementioned places and numerous other places during the evenings and some summers. From 1977 to 1979, she lived at Incarnate Word Convent where she served as formation directress for postulants and junior sisters. From 2018 to early 2020 she lived at Promise Pointe in Rasin and assisted in establishing a tiny house community for the homeless of the Crossroads region. Presently, Sister lives at Incarnate Word Convent where she assists in various duties, especially sewing and mending for the sisters in Health Care and occasional volunteering at Promise Pointe. During the pandemic, Sister has made and distributed

more than 1,000 facemasks – a project that is ongoing.

**Sister M. Bernarda Bludau, IWBS**, daughter of the late Andres and Anna Friesenhahn Bludau, was born in Hallettsville. She received her elementary and high school education at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville. She entered Nazareth Convent, became a novice on Aug. 5, 1959, and made her first profession of vows on Aug. 6, 1960. She pronounced her final vows on Aug. 6, 1965. Sister earned her undergraduate degree with a major in history and a minor in English from Sacred Heart Dominican College in Houston, and a Master's Degree in education with a major in administration and a minor in supervision from the University of Houston at Victoria.

Sister Bernarda taught at elementary and high schools in the dioceses of Victoria, Dallas and San Antonio. She served as a principal for 31 years – seven years at St. Michael in Weimar, and 24 years at St. Patrick School in Dallas. Under her leadership, St. Patrick School in Dallas was recognized

*See Five IWBS sisters celebrating, pg. 9*





# Five IWBS sisters celebrating jubilees

*Continued from pg. 8*

as a National Blue Ribbon School.

Sister Bernarda was recently recognized as a Charter Member of the Private Schools Interscholastic Academics (PSIA). For more than 20 years she promoted student participation in PSIA both at the local level and state level.

Sister Bernarda also served her religious community on the Leadership Team and in religious formation and vocation ministry. Currently she resides at Nazareth Convent in Victoria and works in ministry at Nazareth Academy.

**Sister M. Emiliana Grafe, IWBS**, was born in Hallettsville to Victor G. Grafe and Lena Grahmann Grafe. She grew up in a loving family with one sister and three brothers. She received her education at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville, taught by the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament of Victoria. She enjoyed school, and this gave her a love for teaching. As soon as she graduated from high school, she followed God's call to join the sisters in Victoria. On Aug. 6, 1960, she made temporary vows with five other young women and made her perpetual profession five years later.

She received a BA in English with a minor in Spanish from Dominican College in Houston. She completed her teacher certification, and, through a National Science Foundation grant, amassed the hours to teach secondary math. She also acquired the hours to teach theology from St. Mary's University. When she served as a school consultant in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, she continued to study to support and update teaching in the schools.

Sister's ministries have all been in various forms of education. She served as teacher and/or principal at Sacred Heart School in La Grange, Holy Cross School in Dallas, St. Michael's in Weimar and St. Leo's in San Antonio. This was followed by seven years as school consultant before being elected to the Leadership Team in the congregation.

She served the congregation as a member of the Council, as Vocation and Formation Director, and as Educational Consultant before returning to her alma mater to serve as principal at Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville. Sister Emiliana has been the director of the Associates of the Incarnate Word since 1989, when the congregation

formed a branch of this spiritual ministry for adults, first begun by their foundress in 17th century France.

Still enthusiastic about teaching, Sister Emiliana enjoys life more every day. She is happy and fulfilled and so grateful for all the blessings she has received through her family and her vocation as a religious sister.

## 50-year Jubilarian

**Sister Mary Jean Bludau, IWBS**, daughter of Edna Klesel Bludau and the late Bernard A. Bludau, was born in Hallettsville. She completed her elementary education at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville and her high school at Nazareth Academy in Victoria. Sister Mary Jean received her bachelor's degree with a major in education and a minor in English from Incarnate Word College (now Incarnate Word University) in San Antonio. She received a master's degree in religious studies from the University of St. Thomas in Houston.

During her 50 years of religious profession as a Sister of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Mary Jean taught in the following schools: St. Mary School in Nada, Holy Cross School in Bay City, St. Michael in Cuero, St. Basil (CCE) in Angleton and Nazareth Academy in Victoria.

Over the past years, she served as the congregation's Vocation Director, coached sports, coordinated summer Vacation Bible School (music) in several parishes, taught CCD, staffed ACTS retreats, was a choir member at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, and volunteered at Saturday Masses (music) at the Stevenson Unit state prison in Cuero.

Since 1992, Sister Mary Jean has been at Nazareth Academy in Victoria teaching math and religion. Presently, she teaches 6th-, 7th-, and 8th-grade religion and coordinates liturgies and music for the school Masses. She is also a choir member at Holy Family Catholic Church and teaches sacramental classes (CCD) at St. Mary's Catholic Church.

Sister Mary Jean enjoys reading, music, walking and spending time with family and friends.



Contributed Photo

### KJZT giving to churches

GANADO — KJZT Family Life donated \$1,000 to Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church recently. KJZT Family Life is making donations to parishes across Texas to help with financial struggles incurred since the beginning of the pandemic. KJZT Society No. 43, The Purification, of Ganado presented the check to the Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, pastor of the church. KJZT Family Life is a fraternal benefit society founded in 1894 by Czech Catholic women. The organization is celebrating 125 years as a fraternal. For more information on the organization, visit [www.kjzt.org](http://www.kjzt.org). Pictured, from left, are Cecilia French, KJZT Family Life president; Father Hlavaty; Mildred Johnson, and Frances Vesely, all of Ganado.

## Pastoral Institute courses offered in 3 formats

The Rev. Bob Knippenberg will be teaching a six-week course on the Sacraments of Initiation through the Pastoral Institute that starts Sept. 1. These classes have traditionally been offered in person, but with the concerns surrounding the pandemic and social distancing guidelines, the course will be offered in three formats, making it more feasible for the faithful to participate.



Rev. Bob Knippenberg

**In-person:** Participants will meet at the Chancery office in Victoria or Holy Rosary Catholic Church in Hosytn for weekly sessions.

**Virtual:** Adults can register to participate in live sessions, with the opportunity to ask questions and enter into the discussions. A web link and password will be given to those who register.

**Webinar:** Participants will have the opportunity to view and listen to the weekly-recorded sessions, in a password-protected site.

The sessions are on Tuesday mornings

from 9:15 to 11:30, and Thursday evenings, 7-9:15.

Online registration is available for all three formats. Cost is \$30 for the six-week course. The textbook (optional): "The Sacraments" is available from Midwest Theological Forum.

Call the Pastoral Institute office at 361-573-0828 for more information or to register.

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## Slowing down can enrich family life

When I joined the diocese last October, we launched a survey asking families what they felt were pressing needs. The overwhelming response was in the area of parenting. Why might this be? Well, as parents we face unprecedented challenges nowadays. Because of these challenges, the survey also revealed the top three issues facing families: overly demanding schedules, overuse of technology and financial difficulties.

In nearly a year of being here, and another year of experience in parenting myself, one phrase comes to mind again and again for parents: “SLOW DOWN!” I think we are having challenges because we are just moving too fast, trying to do too much, and trying to be too much for our children. For example, do our children need to be in three or four different after-school clubs/sports, or just one? Does our family really need to take four vacations this year? Do Mom and/or Dad really need to take that extra shift at work in order to buy a new car or afford an addition to the house?

Sometimes we cause our own problems because our priorities get mixed up. I’m guilty as charged at times, with service to the church, community or time with friends getting in the way of what should always be my primary focus: my relationship with God

and my family.

So families, I invite you to just slow down. Take a breather. Re-examine what is really important, then adjust your time, talent and treasure accordingly. As Dave Ramsey says, “Don’t try keeping up with the Joneses, because the Joneses are broke!” I think this advice applies to us not just financially, but also spiritually and emotionally. Many families are exhausted just because they are trying to keep up with everyone else. Don’t worry about any home but your own. Stay focused on what God has given you, and you will find true joy.

To help families slow down, and to help parents gain some vital skills, we recently hosted three online workshops called “Be an Amazing Parent!” covering topics including marriage, communicating with your children, and creating a family culture. The final one took place Sept. 2. You can access recordings of all three sessions for just a \$10 donation at [www.victoriadiocese.org/amazing-parents](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/amazing-parents).

God bless!

• *Justin Reyes is the Director of Family Evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria in Texas. E-mail Justin at [jreyes@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jreyes@victoriadiocese.org). He welcomes discussion on any of his topics. You can call to speak with him at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2265.*



## On the Table

By Justin Reyes

## Sunday Readings from September 13 - October 11

September 13 ~ Twenty-fourth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Sirach 27:30—28:7  
Psalms 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12  
Romans 14:7-9  
Matthew 18:21-35

September 20 ~ Twenty-fifth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 55:6-9  
Psalms 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18  
Philippians 1:20C-24, 27A  
Matthew 20:1-16A

September 27 ~ Twenty-sixth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Ezekiel 18:25-28  
Psalms 25:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14  
Philippians 2:1-11  
Matthew 21:28-32

October 4 ~ Twenty-seventh Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 5:1-7  
Psalms 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20  
Philippians 4:6-9  
Matthew 21:33-43

October 11 ~ Twenty-eighth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 25:6-10A  
Psalms 23:1-3A, 3B-4, 5, 6  
Philippians 4:12-14, 19-20  
Matthew 22:1-14

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## Helpful information about upcoming Catholic Conference

BY CHRISTELLA ALVAREZ

In recent days, the entire world has experienced fear, pain, and loss in tragic and unforeseen ways, due to the epic pandemic of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). As each day unfolds, we continue to adapt in various ways to stay safe and healthy and we adhere to guidelines and advice from medical professionals to keep others from possible harm of the deadly virus.

Through all the added stresses, we continue to see the good that is all around as well. From essential workers to healthcare providers, and each person trying in his or her own unique way to be a source of hope to those in need, during these uncertain times.

Therefore, we continue to stay positive and we look with hope at what lies ahead. Each year the annual conference brings people from across the diocese, to gather for a day of fellowship, workshops and prayer.

On Saturday, Oct. 17, the annual conference for 2020 – “Communion: Together in Christ” will take place, but with a very different format. The following information gives the basic structure for this year.

**Locations:** Five locations are available. English sessions are at St. Joseph High

School in Victoria, Sacred Heart in Hallettsville and St. Philip the Apostle in El Campo. Spanish sessions are at Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria and St. Robert Bellarmine in El Campo.

**Participants:** We can have 50 participants per location due to COVID-19 safety measures. All participants must wear facial coverings throughout the entire conference. Participants will be asked to fill out a form/waiver pertaining to COVID-19.

**Presentations:** The schedule includes the major keynote address; morning and afternoon workshops and a final keynote address and blessing.

Cost: \$15 per person. Register online <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/19-conference-registration>

Food and beverages: Due to COVID-19, food and beverages will be determined at each location.

Hand sanitizer will be available. All social distancing guidelines will be followed.

• *Christella Alvarez is the director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry for the Diocese of Victoria.*

**See the conference web page for complete details.**  
**Call the Catechetical office at 361-573-0828 or email [calvarez@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:calvarez@victoriadiocese.org) for more information.**

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# Confirmando, renovando y revitalizando

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

El 13 de mayo de 2007, los obispos de América Latina iniciaron una reunión para discutir la misión de la Iglesia en América Latina. El Papa Benedicto XVI asistió personalmente a este encuentro en Nuestra Señora de Aparecida, Brasil, y ofreció un discurso de apertura a los obispos reunidos. Los obispos se reunieron durante semanas y el 31 de mayo acordaron un documento para avanzar en los esfuerzos de evangelización en las Américas, proclamando a Jesucristo como Camino, Verdad y Vida.

Hacia el inicio de este documento, escribieron: “11. La iglesia está llamada a un replanteamiento profundo y profundo de su misión y a relanzarla con fidelidad y audacia en las nuevas circunstancias de América Latina y del mundo. No puede retirarse en respuesta a quienes solo ven confusión, peligros y amenazas, o quienes buscan encubrir la variedad y complejidad de situaciones con un manto de consignas ideológicas gastadas o ataques irresponsables. Lo que se requiere es confirmar, renovar y revitalizar la novedad del Evangelio arraigado en nuestra historia, a partir de un encuentro personal y comunitario con Jesucristo que suscita discípulos y misioneros. Eso depende no tanto de grandes programas y estructuras, sino de hombres y mujeres nuevos que encarnan esa tradición y novedad, como discípulos de Jesucristo y misioneros de su Reino, protagonistas de una nueva vida para una América Latina que busca ser redescubierta con la luz y el poder del Espíritu.”

El futuro Papa Francisco fue acreditado como uno de los líderes de los obispos que

## Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill



produjeron esta enseñanza, y el 29 de junio el Papa Benedicto XVI la aprobó, escribiendo: “Tengo un recuerdo vivo y agradecido de este Encuentro, en el que me uní a ustedes en el mismo cariño por vuestros pueblos amados y la misma preocupación por ayudarles a ser discípulos y misioneros de Jesucristo para que tengan vida en él.

“Al mismo tiempo, al expresar mi gratitud por su amor a Cristo y su Iglesia y por el espíritu de comunión que caracterizó a la Conferencia General antes mencionada, autorizo la publicación del Documento Final”.

En agosto de este año invité a los miembros de nuestra familia diocesana a hacer del próximo año un “Año de la familia” en el que experimentamos formas en las que podemos escuchar al Señor y proclamar Su amor y misericordia al mundo. Mi esperanza es que este deseo esté en comunión y en la misma línea de pensamiento orante que los obispos latinoamericanos, el Papa Benedicto XVI y el Papa Francisco. A lo largo del año en el Faro verás ejemplos de hombres y mujeres que viven su fe e invitan a sus vecinos a un encuentro personal con Jesucristo.

Incluso en los momentos más desafiantes, el amor de Jesucristo llega a las personas. Esto puede explicar la realidad de que la Igle-

sia siempre está invitando a nuevos miembros a la plenitud de la comunión. En este número, destacaremos el Rito de Iniciación Cristiana, el antiguo proceso por el cual las personas que comienzan con un interés (o, a veces, simplemente una curiosidad) en la Iglesia, son conducidas a una nueva vida en el Bautismo, la Confirmación y la Eucaristía.

Comparto con ustedes aquí la oración de los obispos latinoamericanos que concluyeron su enseñanza en Aparecida. Que ustedes y sus familias sean bendecidos con el amor personal de Jesús y la novedad de vida en la Iglesia. Mantengamos el uno al otro en oración.

554. Guiados por María, fijamos los ojos en Jesucristo, autor y consumidor de la fe, y le decimos con el Sucesor de Pedro:

“Quédate con nosotros, porque atardece y el día ya ha declinado” (Lc 24, 29).

Quédate con nosotros, Señor, acompáñanos aunque no siempre hayamos sabido reconocerte. Quédate con nosotros, porque en torno a nosotros se van haciendo más densas las sombras, y tú eres la Luz; en nuestros corazones se insinúa la desesperanza, y tú los haces arder con la certeza de la Pascua. Estamos cansados del camino, pero tú nos confortas en la fracción del pan

para anunciar a nuestros hermanos que en verdad tú has resucitado y que nos has dado la misión de ser testigos de tu resurrección.

Quédate con nosotros, Señor, cuando en torno a nuestra fe católica surgen las nieblas de la duda, del cansancio o de la dificultad: tú, que eres la Verdad misma como revelador del Padre, ilumina nuestras mentes con tu Palabra; ayúdanos a sentir la belleza de creer en ti.

Quédate en nuestras familias, ilumínalas en sus dudas, sostenlas en sus dificultades, consuélas en sus sufrimientos y en la fatiga de cada día, cuando en torno a ellas se acumulan sombras que amenazan su unidad y su naturaleza. Tú que eres la Vida, quédate en nuestros hogares, para que sigan siendo nidos donde nazca la vida humana abundante y generosamente, donde se acoja, se ame, se respete la vida desde su concepción hasta su término natural.

Quédate, Señor, con aquellos que en nuestras sociedades son más vulnerables; quédate con los pobres y humildes, con los indígenas y afroamericanos, que no siempre han encontrado espacios y apoyo para expresar la riqueza de su cultura y la sabiduría de su identidad. Quédate, Señor, con nuestros niños y con nuestros jóvenes, que son la esperanza y la riqueza de nuestro Continente, protégelos de tantas insidias que atentan contra su inocencia y contra sus legítimas esperanzas. ¡Oh buen Pastor, quédate con nuestros ancianos y con nuestros enfermos. ¡Fortalece a todos en su fe para que sean tus discípulos y misioneros!

+Brendan

# Información útil sobre la próxima Conferencia Católica

BY CHRISTELLA ALVAREZ

En los últimos días, el mundo entero ha experimentado miedo, dolor y pérdida de forma trágica e imprevista, debido a la épica pandemia del Coronavirus (COVID-19). A medida que transcurre cada día, continuamos adaptándonos de varias maneras para mantenernos seguros y saludables y nos adherimos a las pautas y consejos de los profesionales médicos para evitar que otros puedan sufrir el daño del mortal virus.

A pesar de todas las tensiones añadidas, seguimos viendo lo bueno que nos rodea también. Desde trabajadores esenciales hasta proveedores de atención médica, y cada persona que intenta a su manera única ser una fuente de esperanza para los necesitados, durante estos tiempos inciertos.

Por lo tanto, seguimos siendo positivos



**El 17 de octubre Llegará  
A un lugar cercano**

y miramos con esperanza lo que nos espera. Cada año, la conferencia anual reúne a personas de toda la diócesis para un día de compañerismo, talleres y oración.

El sábado 17 de octubre tendrá lugar la conferencia anual de 2020 - “Communio: Juntos en Cristo”, pero con un formato muy diferente. La siguiente información da la estructura básica para este año.

**Ubicaciones:** Hay cinco ubicaciones

disponibles. Las sesiones de inglés son en St. Joseph High School en Victoria, Sacred Heart en Hallettsville y St. Philip the Apostle en El Campo. Las sesiones de español son en Our Lady of Sorrows en Victoria y St. Robert Belarmine en El Campo.

**Participantes:** Podemos tener 50 participantes por ubicación debido a las medidas de seguridad de COVID-19. Todos los participantes deben usar cubiertas faciales

durante toda la conferencia. Se les pedirá a los participantes que llenen un formulario / renuncia relacionada con COVID-19.

**Presentaciones:** El programa incluye el discurso principal principal; talleres matutinos y vespertinos y un discurso de apertura final y bendición.

**Costo:** \$ 15 por persona. Regístrese en línea <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/19-conference-registration>

**Alimentos y bebidas:** debido a COVID-19, los alimentos y bebidas se determinarán en cada ubicación. Habrá desinfectante de manos disponible. Se seguirán todas las pautas de distanciamiento social.

• Christella Alvarez es la directora de la Oficina del Ministerio Catequético de la Diócesis de Victoria.





## OLV librarian retires after 48 years

BY JANET JONES

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

Norma Smolik has known for a long time that she had the perfect job as the school librarian for Our Lady of Victory Catholic School. But she won't be back for the 2020-2021 school year. She retired with 48 years of good memories.

If not for the coronavirus pandemic, she would still be making those sweet memories.

"The unknown and the safety for my family made the decision for me," she said. "It is a very trying time for everyone, but I know it will pass."

Gwen Hall, who has been a colleague of Smolik's for all those years called her "irreplaceable."

"Norma Smolik has been a friend of mine – truly I'd say she's more like a sister – since I graduated from college," Hall said. "I had the privilege of teaching Norma's three children, and that was truly a blessing for me."

Hall added that you could not find a more compassionate or caring teacher who treated every child with dignity.

Smolik said she has enjoyed seeing so many children grow up, mature and, many times, return to enroll children of their own. Of her coworkers she said, "It's not a faculty; it's a family." Having her unique role in the library, she has had the special privilege of being a "sounding board" for the many teachers who have served there, she said. When they were sad or frustrated, they had a shoulder to cry on and a friend to talk things over with in confidence.

"Working with such a wonderful faculty and administration has been golden," Smolik said. "Watching so many students grow through the years and see their successes have been priceless and a joy."

She recalled a third-grader running down the sidewalk and saying, "I need a hug, Mrs. Smolik." She also can't forget a certain kindergarten boy who reminded her of a teddy bear grabbing her hand as he left the library and saying, "Mrs. Smolik, I have a phone and I'm going to send you a text." She smiled at him and said, "I'll be waiting for it."

When recalling those brief vignettes



*Norma Smolik sits outside of Our Lady of Victory School (OLV). She retires from the school after serving as librarian for 48 years. Inset: Mrs. Smolik first year at OLV as librarian.*

**... "irreplaceable ... you could not find a more compassionate or caring teacher who treated every child with dignity"**

**~ Gwen Hall**

in time, she said, "Those are the times you know you are working in the perfect job. So many memories and good times; I will miss it every day."

She said she's proud to know each and every student that has gone through the school and her prayers are with the entire school each and every day.

OLV secretary Dorothy Gehrke said, "The faculty of Our Lady of Victory School is like a big family and Norma has been a member of that family for so many years. I always enjoyed listening to Norma talk about the OLV days when her children went to

school here. Now she has great-grandchildren. We will miss her."

In Shiner, long-time parish and school staff member Andrew Kocian head of maintenance, is retiring after 37 years. He was known as a diligent groundskeeper for the school, church and entire parish plant.

An item published in the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church bulletin, stated that Kocian "was the 'go to' person as he was always ready to do what was needed and what was asked of him during his tenure. May God bless him with many happy retirement years."

There have been others in the diocese retiring as well after the last school year. Sandra Tomek, fourth-grade teacher from Holy Cross in Bay City, retired after 17 years there and seven years in public school before Holy Cross.

"Sandra has a passion for teaching children, instilling faith, respect and values in each child she encounters. She was a well-respected staff member who had a contagious laugh that could brighten everyone's day. She has always represented our school in a very positive way and is missed by all," according to a statement from the Holy Cross office.

Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville said goodbye to Spanish teacher Irene Matula who spent 15 years at SHS and 30 years in public school before that. Balbina Cash, pre-K aide also retired after 13 years at SHS.

St. Joseph High School had longtime math teacher Sylvia Martinez and longtime tech teacher Gaylen Gerdes

retiring after many years.

Nazareth Academy Principal Sister Evelyn Korenek offered well wishes to several who retired after the 2019-2020 school year including Yolanda Hernandez, Diane Bollom, Mark Blanchard, Billie Hungerford, Lorraine Williams and Jerry and Anna Ortiz.

"We wish them well and want them to know that they remain a part of the Nazareth Academy school family," she stated.

*See related story: New faces in the DOV schools, pg. 13*

## Safe Environment

### 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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org).







## New faces in the DOV schools

Below is a list of new hires in the Diocese of Victoria schools this year:

**Holy Cross in Bay City:** Martha Hurta, pre-K teacher; Melissa Stroud, pre-K4 teacher; Brooke Tomek, first-grade teacher; Dianna Widemon, fourth-grade teacher

**Nazareth Academy in Victoria:** Diana Pagel, sixth through eighth grade science teacher; Amanda Beck, math coordinator and teacher for grades five and six; Virginia Coffman, office aide and cafeteria monitor; Heather Miori, part-time speech therapist; John Villafranca, athletic director and coach; Larkann Steffens, pre-K3 aide; Carolyn Reyna, Pre-K3 and Pre-K4 after care and lunch recess monitor; Jocelyn Rodriguez, Spanish; Ruben Gonzalez, maintenance

**Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca:** Grant Gray, elementary PE and marketing; Leah Suarez, music; Michelle Madsen, fourth grade; Sister Ann Catherine Vu, Pre-K aide; Sister Theresa Vu, middle school religion and art; Rosie Padron, pre-K aide.

**Our Lady of Victory in Victoria:** Tara Janak, third grade; Matina Weempe, second grade; Katy Hoodenpyle, junior high science; and Kuntal Patel, math

**Sacred Heart in Hallettsville:** Steffin Medina, band director; David Husmann, athletic

director and head football coach; Geraldine Ivy, cafeteria assistant

**St. Anthony in Columbus:** No staff changes

**St. Joseph High School in Victoria:** Benjaminn Boyle, math; Brenna Flynn, math; James Duprie, athletic director, PE and history

**St. Joseph in Yoakum:** Michael Malik, Pre-K aide, PE and athletics

**St. Michael in Cuero:** Chris Kinzie, sixth-grade teacher

**St. Michael in Weimar:** Kim Lofland, fifth-grade English, reading and science, and kindergarten, first- and second-grade PE; Kaylyn Tousek, first-grade teacher

**St. Philip the Apostle in El Campo:** Jessica Drapela, first grade; Ashley Fyke, first grade; Debbie Michaelson, third grade

**St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg:** Allison Mican, teacher aide; Lydia Esquivel, custodian; Sarah Liere, custodian; Goeffrey Schiffli, tech teacher

**Shiner Catholic Schools (St. Ludmila and St. Paul HS):** Alyssa Kutak, Pre-K4 and coach; Christina Williams, fourth grade; Karlie Rodriguez, junior high and high school coach, health; Lauren Siegel, Pre-K3; Patrick Chumchal, maintenance; Sister Marie Martha Le, Pre-K religion and Pre-K aide; Morgan Malik, pre-K aide and after-school care



*St. Rose of Lima staff include, from left, front row, Jeannie Mican, Paige Berger, Rosanne Gallia, Jaime Rainosek, Matt Bonner; second row, Jennifer Moeller, Rachel Guentert, Kacy McBride, Cynthia Fogleman, Allison Mican; third row, Laura Fogle, Carmen Stoner, Carolyn Osina, Lindsey Schiffli, Ina Waltz; fourth row, Donna Kunz, Dennis Olsovsky, Virginia Olsovsky, Melissa Schmidt, Sandy Zaruba; back row, Paulette Valis, Hannah Ahrens, Wendy Becka, Sheila Klimitchek, Cindy Carter, Lydia Hernandez. Not pictured are Sarah Liere and Stacy Oeding. (Contributed Photo)*

## School 'felt like home' upon return

The St. Rose School family gathered in spirit and faith with excitement and masks on Aug. 10, for the annual orientation. It looked different this year with virtual open house videos by teachers online and a staggered pickup schedule for materials at the gym

The school distributed family information packets and gave families an opportunity to

meet faculty and support organization representatives.

Although different, principal Rosanne Gallia said, "It felt like home being back together."

Students at St. Rose of Lima Catholic started back to school on Wednesday, Aug. 12, and celebrated a school Mass on Thursday.

### Sept. 20 is Catechetical Sunday

From [www.usccb.org](http://www.usccb.org)

The Church will celebrate Catechetical Sunday on Sept. 20, 2020, under the theme of "I received from the Lord what I also handed on to you." On this day, catechists are formally commissioned for ministry to the community. Catechetical Sunday is a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each baptized person plays in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Catechetical Sunday is an opportunity for all to rededicate themselves to this mission as a community of faith.

## Holy Cross Catholic Church

### Fall Festival Turkey Dinner

Sunday, September 27, 2020

Knights of Columbus Hall  
63 CR 216 (Nichols Rd), Bay City, TX

[charityauction.bid/HCCC FALLFEST](http://charityauction.bid/HCCC FALLFEST)

### Turkey & Dressing Dinner

Drive through only 11:00AM to 2:00PM or until we run out

Turkey - Holy Cross Famous Homemade Cornbread Dressing  
Potatoes - Green Beans - Cranberry Sauce - Dessert

**\$10.00 per plate**

Raffle Winners Announced Today!!!

**EVERYONE WELCOME  
FUN FOR ALL!!!**

For large orders (10 or more plates)  
call church office 979-245-6379

## Nazareth Academy Catholic School

### Big Red Raffle



Nazareth Academy is pleased to announce that it will be having a **2020 Big Red Raffle!** This will be in place of the traditional Fall Festival. There will be chances to win many fun and exciting prizes! Additionally, there will be an opportunity for Friends of Nazareth to purchase raffle tickets online and/or directly contribute to the Festival/Raffle Fund online, if they wish.

We prayerfully ask that you consider purchasing more raffle tickets this year than normal in place of what you would have spent on meal tickets, game tickets, adopt-a-turkey and auction items at the festival, as this will be our biggest fundraiser for the year. The success of the **Big Red Raffle** depends greatly on **YOU!**

Raffle Tickets go on sale September 11, 2020.

Drawing on Sunday, November 1, 2020, and streamed via Facebook Live on Nazareth's school web page.

[www.nazarethacademy.org](http://www.nazarethacademy.org)

More information about the **Big Red Raffle** coming soon, check the school website and Facebook page for updates!

Your support is greatly appreciated!

**\$5 PER TICKET OR 6 TICKETS FOR \$25**

Nazareth Academy Catholic School  
206 W. Convent St. • Victoria, Tx 77901 • 361-573-6651





## Office of Catholic Schools welcomes new employee

Mrs. Ashley Novosad joined the Diocese of Victoria's chancery staff on Aug. 17 as the executive assistant to superintendent of schools for the diocese. No-



Ashley Novosad

vosad will directly report to Dr. John Quarry, superintendent, and is responsible for the administrative support duties for the superintendent, Diocesan School Advisory Council (DSAC) and the Catholic schools.

She is replacing Janie Carrales, who is retiring after 13 years in that position.

Dr. Quarry offered many thanks to Carrales for her years of service and said she has been looking forward to enjoying her retirement, which began Aug. 31.

Novosad is an alumnus of Nazareth Academy, St. Joseph High School and the University of Texas at Austin. She and her husband, Joel, have two daughters who, she said, are a daily source of inspiration and strength. They are active members of their home parish, Holy Family Catholic Church in Victoria.

Ashley is eager to use her analytical and planning skills from the private capital project sector to promote and advance the mission of Catholic schools in the diocese.

Ashley's email address is [anovosad@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:anovosad@victoriadiocese.org), and her phone number is 361-573-0828, Ext. 2213.



Dr. John Quarry, superintendent of Catholic Schools, sings a version of "Happy Trails" for his retiring assistant, Janie Carrales during a surprise party Aug. 25.

## OCS assistant retires after 13 years



The Diocese of Victoria would like to extend warm wishes and congratulations to Mrs. Janie Carrales as she begins her retirement on Sept. 1. Janie has worked in the Office of Catholic Schools as Administrative Assistant for the last 13 years. We would like to thank Janie for her years of service working with Dr. John Quarry, the Catholic schools, principals, school secretaries, teachers, and chancery office staff.

May God bless Janie and her family. We wish her well in her new journey of retirement.

## Pro-life advocate takes heat for speaking at RNC

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Abby Johnson, former director of Planned Parenthood and convert to Catholicism, addressed the Republican National Convention Aug. 25 in a video message that emphasized President Donald Trump's actions for the pro-life cause.

The outspoken pro-life advocate said: "For most people who consider themselves pro-life, abortion is abstract. They can't even conceive of the barbarity ... but for me, abortion is very real."

Johnson came under criticism ahead of the speech for tweets she made earlier this year, including one where she said the police would be "smart" to racially profile her son, who is biracial, and another where she advocated "household voting," as in one vote per household.

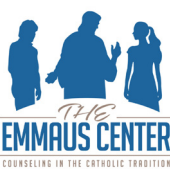
She responded to criticism on Twitter, saying supporters of legal abortion are scared of her speech and "are scrambling to try to find anything to detract people from my message."

"Well, guess what?? You can dredge up whatever old tweets you want. I'm still speaking," she tweeted.

In a statement to Catholic News Service Aug. 26, she said she has "no desire to remove a woman's right to vote. I simply think it is an interesting idea. It was an old tweet from a silly thread where I was asking people to post their most controversial thoughts and opinions. It is not a policy statement and was not meant to be taken seriously." She also said the criticism was "merely a distraction from the truth-telling, historical speech" she gave.

## 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.



## Heavenly Helpers



### Christian Store

(979) 543-2850

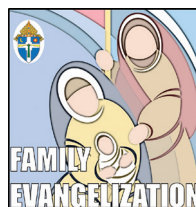
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El Campo, TX 77437

M-F 9:30 - 5:30 Sat. 9:30 - 3:00

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Statues, Baptism & Wedding Items  
Inspirational Gifts

## Office of Family Evangelization



### Justin Reyes, Director

(361) 573-0838

Ext. 2265

email: [jreyes@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jreyes@victoriadiocese.org)

[victoriadiocese.org](mailto:victoriadiocese.org)

website: [www.victoriadiocese.org/office-of-family-evangelization](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/office-of-family-evangelization)

## HOLLUB AGENCY

OUR TEAM: Monica Stock, Rebecca Klima, Case A. Hollub, Lupe Mata & Carol B. Hollub



During these uncertain times, our team has maintained "in person" regular hours and personal appointments for our client's convenience.

**Call 979-725-8459**

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Credited rates effective 08/01/2020 and are subject to change without notice. Single Premium deferred annuity rates are guaranteed for the full term of 3, 5, 7, 10, 15 or 20 years. Should you choose to continue the annuity after the initial term, new guaranteed rates will be declared at that time. Quoted rates do not reflect optional riders. If you choose to add any of the available riders the credited interest rate will be reduced accordingly. Early withdrawals may be subject to Surrender Charges and Market Value Adjustments. The IRS may impose penalties for early withdrawals from qualified plans. Contracts issued by Upstream Life Insurance Company, Dallas, Texas. Annuity products are not FDIC insured. Annuity products contain charges, fees and limitations. Annuity products and/or features may not be available in all states and rates may vary by state. Life Insurance contracts issued on form number ICC18-ULSF-MYGA 18-S or variations by state.



Join in listening to Bishop Brendan Cahill every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 a.m. on *Relevant Radio Morning Air with John Harper*. Listeners can call in with questions or comments. You can listen to past podcastS online.

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## Meals • Picnics and More

## September

**Shiner**—Sts. Cyril and Methodius Sept. 6, with no picnic there will be online auction, raffle tickets and food to go. For more information visit their website at [www.sscmshiner.org](http://www.sscmshiner.org), Facebook page at Shiner Catholic Church Picnic.

**Hallettsville**—Sacred Heart Parish, Sept. 6, Fall Picnic has been cancelled. There will be a raffle drawing at 5p.m. and accepting No Picnic Donations and for the Pastor's Cake.

**Cuero**—Our Lady of Guadalupe Annual Jamaica cancelled for Sept. 6. In lieu of the Jamaica raffle tickets available, tamales, and BBQ brisket plates to go from 11a.m.-1p.m. at \$10 p/p.

**Victoria**—Nazareth Academy Raffle Drawing, tickets on sale from Sept. 11-Nov. 1. See ad on pg. 14 for more information.

**Wharton**—Knights of Columbus Council 3262 Meal/Raffle Fundraiser Sept. 13. A BBQ chicken and sausage dinner for \$10 p/p, drive-thru serving only begins at 11a.m. at the KC Hall (2820 N. Fulton St.).

**Bay City**—Holy Cross Fall Festival Turkey Dinner, Sept. 27 at the KC Hall 11a.m.-2p.m. Drive-thru plates to go only. There will be an online auction. See ad on pg. 14 for more information.

**El Campo**—St. Philip drive-thru meal fundraiser Sept. 27. Watch Facebook and website ([www.stphilipapostle.org](http://www.stphilipapostle.org)) for details.

## October

**Mentz**—St. Roch Annual Picnic COVID Edition, Oct. 4 on the parish grounds. See ad below for more information.

**Columbus**—St. Anthony Fundraiser, Oct. 11, watch their Facebook and visit their website for more information. See ad on this page.

**Victoria**—The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory Fall Festival, Oct. 11 going virtual. See pg. 6 for more information.

# 166th ANNUAL MENTZ PICNIC

St. Roch Catholic Church — Mentz, Texas  
Join us for the Sacrifice of the Mass at 10:30 a.m.

**SUNDAY, OCTOBER 4<sup>TH</sup>**

**BBQ BEEF, PORK & SAUSAGE** Serving at 11:00 am

❖ ALL PLATES \$13.00 ❖

~Drive-thru

~Pre-packaged to-go plates served on-site to enjoy an outside socially distanced meal.

**What to expect:**

\*Seating will be outside only.

\*Bring a lawn chair to help social distance.

**LIVE AUCTION**  
1:00 p.m.

**RAFFLE**

**What to expect:**

\*There will NOT be any kid or adult games.

\*Masks/neck gaiters are highly encouraged.

The chairmen will continue to monitor the current situation. Please check our Facebook page for updates. (Saint Roch Mentz)

## Ministries • Ongoing Activities

*All Ministries and Ongoing Activities at this time are scheduled to change with the pandemic. Before attending a meeting please call ahead to verify that the meeting is being held.*

**ACTS Retreats**—Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS Retreats in the diocese should email [dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org).

**Catholic Family Services**—To find Catholic organizations that focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at <http://www.nacflm.org>.

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

**Crisis Pregnancy Center of Victoria**—A sister organization to the Gabriel Project 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 1-4 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Free pregnancy tests offered and medical referrals are made for prenatal care. New volunteers are welcome. For 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 if requested. To make an appointment, call 361-212-0830.

**Engaged Encounter 2020 Dates**—Sept. 18-20 and Nov. 13-15. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For information, call 361-573-0828 or visit [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org).

**Gabriel Project of the Crossroads**—Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy as an alternative to abortion. Victoria: Meetings are the second 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](mailto:lisa_heysquierdo@yahoo.com); DeWitt County: Meetings are the third Monday of each month

during the school year at 5:30 p.m. at the Yorktown Public Library, 103 W. Main St. Coordinators for DeWitt Chapter are Wayne and Margie Smith 361-491-0067; Lavaca County: Meets 6 p.m. (during the school year), contact Julie Kubena Lavaca County Coordinator at 361-798-3579 for dates and location.

**Grief Ministry**—An ongoing Grief Group meets at the Holy Family Church conference room in Victoria at 7 p.m., on the first and third Thursdays each month. Adults who have experienced the death of a loved one may attend (after three months have passed). Call Sharon at 361-578-7572 before attending.

**id.9:16 Ministry**—For adults in their 20s and 30s, single or married. Held at Holy Family in Victoria every first Thursday of the month. Starts with 6 p.m. Mass followed by dinner and a talk live streamed from the headquarters in Michigan and fellowship. Childcare available to those who RSVP. It is open to all young adults of the diocese. For information, or to RSVP for events, e-mail [id916victoria@gmail.com](mailto:id916victoria@gmail.com).

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

**Mothers of Grace**—A new mothers' group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For information, contact Jennifer Ruiz at [book.leslie@gmail.com](mailto:book.leslie@gmail.com) or visit their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/Mothersofgraceolv/](http://www.facebook.com/Mothersofgraceolv/).

**Natural Family Planning**—NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. For the CREIGHTON MODEL Fertility Care System (CrMS) featuring NaPro TECHNOLOGY™ contact Susanne Koch in Wharton at 505-710-0903 or [susannekoch614@gmail.com](mailto:susannekoch614@gmail.com). Also in the Cuero area contact, Ashley Rodriguez at 361-293-0700 or [ashleyfay09@gmail.com](mailto:ashleyfay09@gmail.com).

**Raphael's Refuge**—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 information, contact Midge Elam at 361-865-3021, 361-258-1514, or visit [www.raphaelsrefuge.org](http://www.raphaelsrefuge.org).

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

## What's on the web?

Ever since the community has been limited in its ability to participate in services on church grounds, the diocese has made great efforts to feed spiritual needs through the Internet. Justin Reyes, director of family evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria has initiated several new online features:

## Cinco Preguntas

This is a Spanish-language series during which five questions are asked and answered by Bishop Cahill, a parish priest or another minister. You will also find these on the Diocese of Victoria Family Evangelization Facebook page.

## Fully Alive Video Series!

Conversion stories of local men that can help others in their journey of faith—new video released every Friday with accompanying resources and questions for men to discuss in groups or on their own: <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/fully-alive>

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# ALL ABOUT THE FAMILY

*Continued from pg. 1*

feel welcomed.

“I want every Catholic to feel like they can invite their friends to church, too,” Reyes said. “I want people to make that invitation that my wife received at the playground.” He said if everyone would have the courage to bring other people to the Mass, we would see “a renewed church.”

## “A Place for Them”

Reyes said church families need to be very intentional about welcoming new families to the church through family-friendly events, offering childcare if possible, and making sure there is “a place for them,” meaning all ages.

He referenced a coloring book version of the Consecration to Mary in one of the church foyers. He said he went to a church in Orlando that was very intentional about putting signs in the pew to put young parents at ease about bringing their babies and toddlers to church – reassuring them that the church is there to help them.

Reyes also talked about the FIAT (Families in Action Together) program that just started at St. Mary’s in Victoria to organize events in which whole families will enjoy participating.

## Resources

Since the beginning of the Family Evangelization office several resources have been developed. Men were the first to be addressed, and a Men’s Discipleship Team was formed. After a virtual men’s gathering in March, the diocese saw at least three new men’s groups forming in parishes.

And a new Women’s Discipleship Team is blossoming. Laura Reyes, Justin’s wife, is on that team and said they had a retreat about two months ago at the Spiritual Renewal Center. “We had a lot of time to think, pray and dream,” she said.

The group presented the plan for a Spiritual Spa Day for women who work in ministry to be refreshed. “I realized (at the recent retreat) how much the women need each other. Not only do they need each other, they need our Lord and the sacraments.”

Family ministries were represented, in-

cluding Retrovaille, a retreat for hurting marriages. Jenny and John Vincent, who head this retreat with the Very Rev. Gary Janak, said their July retreat had the most couples of any retreat so far – with 18 registering.

V Encuentro presented their idea for a new all-Spanish language retreat called Kerygma. V Encuentro is a newer mission of the church forming leadership teams in parishes to reach out to the Hispanic population who may feel estranged from the Church. The first Kerygma is planned for Oct. 24 and 25 this year.

## Year of the Family

Starting Oct. 4, the same day the Rosary Congress begins, the diocese will celebrate Year of the Family and each month will have a special theme and suggested activities to keep families nurturing their Catholic faith at home.

Shannon Thomas, assistant director of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry for the DOV, presented the plans during the priests’ study day. She said the theme is going to be “Pray, Eat, Play,” all of the things

families can do together to become closer.

At the end of the study day, the priests were asked for feedback, including what fruits they expected from having a Year of the Family. The answers included:

stronger marriages, “a spirituality that is broader than particular ministries or retreats,” families praying together, more at-home formation and prayer, more participation in parish activity and the liturgical life of the Church, better relationships between children and parents, increased Mass attendance and stronger families with faith as the foundation.

The Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, pastor of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Ganado said it will be interesting to see what unfolds through the programs and the Year of the Family.

“It’s good to have something like that” to reach out to the families, Hlavaty said. “I think families need to recapture the priority of faith over other worldly things.”



*Bishop Brendan Cahill calls forward the candidates and catechumens during the Rite of Election on March 1 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. (Photo: Janet Jones/Catholic Lighthouse)*

# Have you ever asked?

*Continued from pg. 1*

Each year, thousands of people join the Church through the process of RCIA – the Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults. Most programs in the Diocese of Victoria begin in the fall and on the Easter Vigil, those who are ready, receive their sacraments, entering into full communion with the Church.

Practicing Catholics who were raised in the church since infancy might not know what RCIA is all about. But understanding RCIA can prepare practicing Catholics to help others join the church. They also have the chance to take the journey with someone as a sponsor.

Holy Family Catholic Church in Victoria has distributed a letter to its parishioners to bring RCIA to their attention and to their personal responsibility to help bring others to Christ.

“Don’t be afraid to ask! Don’t be afraid to invite,” the letter states. “We are all called to evangelize and you never know until you ask!”

The letter also gives ready answers those who might be asked, “Why should I become Catholic?” The first answer is the Eucharist, the real presence of the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus offered at each Mass. The letter also discusses the sacrament of penance, the universality of the Church, the Church’s roots that go back to Christ Himself, and devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

RCIA is primarily for adults who are not already Christian and have not been catechized.

It is also for those who have received a Christian baptism, but have had no formal faith instruction and have not received any

other sacraments; those who are practicing members of other Christian churches who seek to enter the Catholic Church; and, finally, for those who want to strengthen their own Catholic faith or who want to support someone else joining the faith as a sponsor.

Those who join RCIA go through a four-stage process that begins with a search for God, or the “inquiry” stage. During this stage catechists answer basic questions about the Catholic faith. After this stage, the person decides whether to continue with their faith formation in the Church.

The second stage, called “the catechumenate” is a period of learning about the faith through the Gospels and about the Catholic tradition.

Typically during Lent, catechumens undergo the period of “purification and enlightenment,” during which they begin a deeper reflection as they prepare to receive the sacraments at the Easter Vigil Mass.

“Mystagogia,” the final stage, is a period of time after the Easter celebration to learn how to live their mission as Christians.

Paul Barrett, who instructs RCIA and Bible study at St. Philip the Apostle in El Campo said he tells his students, “To bring others to the faith, live your life in a way that glorifies God.”

He points out this verse: “You yourselves are our letter, written on our hearts, known and read by everyone. You show that you are a letter for Christ, the result of our ministry, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts.” (2 Corinthians 3:2-3)