

# Happy New Year!



## The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



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JANUARY 2021

## Disciples on the Journey reaching a crossroads

**JANET JONES**

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

"Disciples on the Journey" has become a Lenten tradition for many over the past 18 years. Those who have been with the program since the beginning are likely to have an array of the books, printed in different colored covers to make them distinguishable from the previous

year's book.

But this year, people can simply download the book from the Disciples on the Journey website. The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament are not charging but are asking for a free-will offering. The uncertainty that still exists because of the pandemic has made it a reasonable way of distributing

the study. Plus, it costs thousands to produce the book, even though it has made a profit in the past.

Next year is even more uncertain. There's a good chance that this may be the last one, according to Sister Digna Vela, who is the coordinator for the project and one

*See Disciples on the Journey, pg. 7*



## IWBS will sell historic convent to St. Mary Catholic Church

*The former convent of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, which has been on the market for five years, will soon become the property of St. Mary Catholic Church.*



**JANET JONES**

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

VICTORIA — The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament have agreed to sell the 44,000-square-foot convent on the south end of downtown Victoria to St. Mary Catholic Church right next door.

The Sisters have been trying to sell the property for more than five years. According to Sister Kathleen Goike, Superior General of the Sisters in Victoria, there has been a lot of interest in the building, but it has not been the right fit for any potential buyer until now.

"It is a relief," said Sister Goike.

"It's a relief to have it sold. And it's a relief to know that they will uphold the spirituality of the Sisters and what that convent stands for."

Because of their proximity, the church and convent have had a long-time relationship. And this change in ownership seems very natural and may be a relief for many

Catholics who are sentimental about the 115-year-old landmark.

Inside, there are still small, quaint and simply furnished bedrooms upstairs that look like a scene from a different time period.

*See IWBS will sell historic convent, pg. 8*

## Pro-life March set for Jan. 28

**BY BERNIE SEALE**

*Special to the Lighthouse*

Why do we march for life? In the cold, in the rain, and the snow and in the dark, we want to shine a light on abortion and why it is so wrong in every way. We want to open minds and hearts to the truth about abortion.

This year's Candlelight March will take place Thursday, Jan. 28. We will gather at 6:30 p.m. at DeLeon Plaza. The march will begin at 7 p.m. and those participating should bring a candle or flashlight. We will recite a rosary and walk to Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church. Those who cannot walk can meet at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church. Transportation back to DeLeon Plaza will be provided

*See Pro-life March, pg. 7*





# If we want mercy, we must face our faults

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

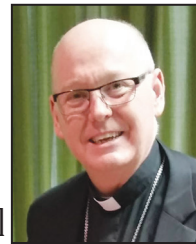
As part of the Ordination Ritual for Deacon, the bishop asks those to be ordained whether they are committed to faithfully praying the Liturgy of the Hours for themselves and for the world.

Replying “yes” to the bishop’s question they accept the responsibility to pray at different hours throughout the day. The prayers that they offer are part of the universal prayer of the Church, so in a beautiful way we can think that people are praying in communion with the whole Church at every moment of the day.

A daily part of the Liturgy of the Hours is called the Office of Readings. These readings include passages from the spiritual tradition of the Church, some going back thousands of years. It sometimes strikes me how something written about a spiritual experience 1,500 years ago is as true today as it was back then. One of my favorite reflections comes from a Christian monk who founded a monastery near Gaza in the Holy Land

## A Shepherd’s Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



around the year 540:

*“Yet the reason for all disturbance, if we look to its roots, is that no one finds fault in themselves.*

*This is the source of all annoyance and distress. This is why we sometimes have no rest. We must not be surprised when we are rebuked by holy men. We have no other path to peace but this.*

*We have seen that this is true in many cases, and, in our laziness and desire for rest, we hope or believe that we have entered*

*upon a straight path when we are impatient with everyone, and yet cannot bear to blame ourselves.*

*This is the way we are. It does not matter how many virtues a person may have, even if they are beyond number and limit. If they have turned from the path of self-accusation, they will never find peace. They will always be troubled themselves, or else they will be a source of trouble for others and all their labors will be wasted.”* (St. Dorotheus of Gaza, Office of Readings, Monday Week 9)

I’ve been thinking about this reading as I prepare to enter into a spiritual retreat of 30 days. The preparations for the retreat, written by St. Ignatius in Spain in the 1500s, offer an outline at the beginning. The outline states that the first week will be spent reflecting on the sins of the retreatant. The wisdom of the ages teaches the Christian the need to acknowledge our own faults first, instead of spending our time focusing on the faults of others. Only by accepting the need for God’s mercy can we open the door of our heart for God.

Please be assured that I will be praying for each of you as I make this retreat, with confidence in the power of the Holy Spirit and the motherly love of Mary, the Queen of Peace. May you and your families experience the peace and joy of Jesus in this Christmas season, knowing that He walks along with you at every moment of your life. God bless you; let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

## Letter to the Editor

Dear Readers,

You are welcome to submit letters of opinion. The deadline is on the 15th of the month for the next month’s edition. Letters should be kept to 200 words or less and should be written in a kind spirit. We reserve the right to reject letters that we consider hurtful, unsuitable or otherwise inappropriate. You must include your name, signature, phone number and e-mail address on the letter so we may verify its authenticity. Letters may be edited to correct grammar and/or spelling errors. Send letters to The Catholic Lighthouse, P.O. 4070, Victoria, TX 77903, or e-mail them to [lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org). For information, contact Janet Jones, editor, The Catholic Lighthouse, at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2231, or [jjones@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jjones@victoriadiocese.org).

## ‘Social justice’ not well-defined

Editor,

At St. Joseph’s High School in the early ’50s, I first encountered the term “social jus-

tice,” created but not defined by Karl Marx.

I noted that “social” is redundant since justice cannot occur unless at least two persons are involved. ALL justice is social.

By the ’80s, the term reappeared in two settings – as a political position of the Democratic Party and in some papal documents.

Nowhere have I found a clear, concise definition of this grammatical malapropism, nor any clue as to who is considered bound to do something, using what criteria, under what circumstances, or who are to be the recipients, or what they must do or be to qualify for it.

In 1988, I read about the term, but got no real guidance in the Catholic Encyclopedia. I still seek a concise definition of the term, concrete examples of how it is to work, the identity and qualifications of the recipients, and the identity and qualifications of the actors. Most importantly, how does the Catholic version differ from the Marxist and Democratic Party’s versions?

The individual Catholic deserves to be informed in precise and understandable language as to how this concept differs from the long-condemned socialism, and how it differs from ordinary justice and charity. Specific examples of it in everyday life are essential.

HELP!

– Jack A. Mullins, The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory parishioner

See Response, pg. 3



### Praha KJZT gives to seminarian education

Bishop Brendan J. Cahill receives a \$1,253.25 donation to the Diocese of Victoria’s fund for seminarian education. Pat Masek, left, and Georgia Cerny presented the check to Bishop Cahill on behalf of St. Anne’s KJZT Society No. 4, Praha. The society raised the money through a “no bake” sale in September and the State KJZT Office in Austin provided matching funds. (Contributed Photo)

## Join in Celebrating Catholic Schools Week January 24 – 30



See Related Story: Catholic school enrollment down slightly, pg. 12



## Bishop Cahill's Schedule

### January

- 1 - 26** 30 Day Retreat  
**27** Catholic Rural Life Executive and Finance Committee; virtual  
**28** 7 p.m. Candlelight March for Life, DeLeon Plaza to Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church, Victoria  
**30** Mass with the Carmelites, Meyersville  
Marriage Ambassador's Gathering, Spiritual Renewal Center  
**31** 9 a.m. Catholic School Week Mass, Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria

### February

- 3** 10:15 a.m. School Mass and visit with St. Joseph High School, Victoria  
**5** 3 p.m. Holy Hour at the Chancery  
**5-7** Retreat master at deacons' retreat, Victoria  
**6** 5 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Ganado  
**7** 6 p.m. World Day for Consecrated Life evening Mass, Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria

## Reply of Letter to the Editor

Dear Mr. Mullins,

What I can offer you is from the Catechism, numbers 1877 to 1948 that deals with the relationship of the person to society.

This section of the Catechism is titled "Social Justice" and states:

"1928: Society ensures social justice when it provides the conditions that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due, according to their nature and their vocation. Social justice is linked to the common good and the exercise of authority."

And, though they do not offer specific examples, the following paragraphs explain the elements of the "common good" from the Church's perspective:

1907: First, the common good presupposes respect for the person as such. In the name of the common good, public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person. Society should permit each of its members to fulfill his vocation. In particular, the common good resides in the conditions for the exercise of the natural freedoms indispensable for the development of the human vocation, such as "the right to act according to a sound norm of conscience and to safeguard . . . privacy, and rightful freedom also in matters of religion."27

1908: Second, the common good requires the social well-being and development of the group itself. Development is the epitome of all social duties. Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.28

1909: Finally, the common good requires peace, that is, the stability and security of a just order. It presupposes that authority should ensure by morally acceptable means the security of society and its members. It is the basis of the right to legitimate personal and collective defense.

Your question about social justice as it relates to Marxism and the Democratic Party is another matter with no simple answer. The term "social justice" has been used by many different people and in many different contexts, so it can get confusing.

God bless you and let's keep each other in prayer,

— Bishop Brendan J. Cahill

## In Memoriam

### Sister Mary Jean Bludau's mother passes away

Edna (Klesel) Bludau, 92, of Hallettsville, passed away on November 28, 2020. Edna was born on October 16, 1928 in Schulenburg to Edmund and Anna (Till) Klesel. She was a member of Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Hallettsville.

Edna married Bernie Bludau on October 11, 1948, in Schulenburg at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church, and settled in Hallettsville where they raised their fourteen children.

Edna enjoyed her long life as a wife, homemaker, mom, grandmother and great-grandmother. She especially loved the many gatherings with her family, all of the weddings, births, reunions and parties. She also enjoyed her many years of quilting with the Sacred Heart Quilting Circle.

Edna is survived by: her 13 children,

B.J. Bludau, Sister Mary Jean Bludau, Doris Chandler and husband Dave, Loretta Carpenter and husband Wayne, Mary Mathis and husband Don, Theresa Hunt and husband Johnny, Bernice Bludau, Debbie Wallace and husband Wayne, Cindy Otten, Gerrie Daly and husband John, Stan Bludau and wife Candy, Scott Bludau and wife Kerry and Jennifer Esteves and husband John; as well as her 16 grandchildren and their spouses; and seven great-grandchildren; and sister, Sister M. Claudia Klesel.

Edna was preceded in death by: Bernie in 2009 after 60 years of marriage; son Steve in 1980; five sisters and four brothers.

Burial took place at Sacred Heart Catholic Cemetery.

### Deacon Warzecha's wife passes away

Dawn Sandra Warzecha, 88, passed away Wednesday, December 9, 2020. She was born May 7, 1932, in Santa Maria, California, and often said she got to Texas just as quick as she could.

Dawn proudly served in the United States Army as a Cryptographer. After training in Camp Gordon, Georgia and service in the Pentagon, she was sent to 8th Army headquarters in Yokohama, Japan where she met her future husband, Anthony "Tony" Warzecha who was also a Cryptographer. They married in Yokohama, Japan on August 22, 1953, and honeymooned at the base of Mount Fuji.

In Civilian life, she was a member of the V.F.W. Post 3972, the American Legion Post

3, St. Michael's Altar Society; DeWitt County Wildflower Association, as well as a board member for the Selective Service System.

She is survived by her husband of 67 years, Deacon Anthony "Tony" Warzecha; son, Michael Warzecha of Longmont, Colorado; grandson, Christopher Anthony Warzecha of Texas City and daughter-in-law, Blanca Warzecha of Texas City.

She was preceded in death by her son, Christopher Matthew Warzecha.

Funeral Mass took place at St. Michael Catholic Church with Father Jasper Liggio officiating. Interment followed at Hillside Cemetery.

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

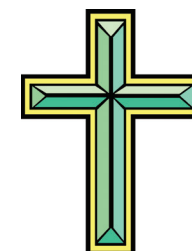
|                           |            |                                       |
|---------------------------|------------|---------------------------------------|
| Rev. Dominic Trung Nguyen | 01/04/2003 | St. Anthony Catholic Church, Palacios |
| Rev. Donald R. Ruppert    | 01/20/1978 | Retired                               |
| Rev. Nelson Gonzalez      | 01/23/2004 | St. Anthony Catholic Church, Columbus |

*Lord, I know you love me and have great plans for me. But sometimes I am overwhelmed by the thought of my future. Show me how to walk forward one day at a time. May I take heart while I search openly for what it is you want me to do with my life. Inspire in me wisdom and understanding to see your vision for my life and respond with openness to whatever you call me to be. Show me your way Lord!*

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

|                              |            |
|------------------------------|------------|
| Rev. Wolfgang Mimms, O.Ss.T. | 01/02/2008 |
| Rev. Jerome Stryk            | 01/05/1999 |
| Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi   | 01/31/2006 |

*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)*



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**DEADLINE IS THE 15th OF THE PRECEDING MONTH**

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Bishop Brendan Cahill blesses the religious Sisters attending the World Day of Consecration Mass this past February at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church. (Photo by Janet Jones)

## Consecrated life celebrated first weekend of February

Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life at the 6 p.m. Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory on Sunday, Feb. 7.

Sisters from the various religious communities in the Diocese of Victoria will be in attendance.

In 1997, Pope Saint John Paul II instituted a day of prayer for women and men in consecrated life. This celebration is attached to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on Feb. 2. This feast is also known as Candlemas Day, the day on which candles are blessed symbolizing Christ who is the light of the world. So, too, those in consecrated life are called to

reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all peoples. The celebration of World Day for Consecrated Life is transferred to the following Sunday in order to highlight the gift of consecrated persons for the whole Church. World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life will be celebrated in parishes on Feb. 6 or 7.

In the Diocese of Victoria, we celebrate the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament (IWBS), the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary (MCSH), Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word (CCVI), Vietnamese Dominican Sisters (OP), and the Carmelites of Mary Ever Virgin.



## Education of Seminarian Fund

The Education of Seminarian Fund is a fund in which **all of the monies** donated to this fund, as well as the earnings, are available to cover the cost of educating seminarians. The proceeds of the special collection on Holy Thursday are deposited into the Education of Seminarian Fund. Publication of this fund will appear when new contributions are received.  
**Donation categories:** Lector – \$.01 - \$99.99; Acolyte – \$100 - \$499.99; Candidate – \$500 - \$1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – \$1,500 - \$2,499.99; Priest – \$2,500 >.

### Lector

Paz & Andrea Morales  
*in Memory of Father Dan Morales*

### Candidate

KJZT Family Life #4 St. Anne Praha, TX

### Transitional Deacon

Anonymous Donation

### Priest

~

### Acolyte

Amanda Marshall  
*in Memory of Carol Lehnert*

Dorothy & Robert Vincent

Harvey Michna  
*in Honor of Father Tim Kosler*

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

Diocese Of Victoria  
**Education of Seminarian Fund**  
P. O. Box 4070  
Victoria, TX 77903

## Seminary Endowment Fund

Seminary Endowment Fund (formerly known as Seminary Burses) is a permanent fund used for the education of future priests for the Diocese of Victoria. The goal of each burse is \$15,000. The **interest from this amount** is applied yearly to the education of seminarians. The burses are in memory of or in honor of an individual priest or layperson, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received. **Donation Categories:** Lector - \$.01 - \$99.99; Acolyte – \$100 - \$499.99; Candidate – \$500 - \$1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – \$1,500 - \$2,499.99; Priest – \$2,500 >.

December 9, 2020

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

In memory of Rita Vackar by CDA Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374

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

In honor of Deacon Andrew Nunmaker's Diaconate Ordination by Linda and Clarence Ruether

In honor of Deacon Andrew Nunmaker's Diaconate Ordination by Jim and Michelle Kubicek

• **Josephat R. Janak Seminary Burse #2**  
*Lector*

In memory of Brandon Allan Janak by Helen and Billy Dolezal

• **Rev. Robert Knippenberg Seminary Burse**  
*Acolyte*

Christmas remembrance of our chaplain, Rev. Robert Knippenberg, by Hostyn KJT Society #3

• **Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Burse**  
*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by K of C Council #3371, Nada

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

In memory of James Parma, Jr. by his Family  
In memory of Brother Knight Paul Veselka by K of C Council #2902, Schulenburg

• **Rev. Michael Lyons Seminary Burse**  
*Acolyte*

In honor of Rev. Michael Lyons' birthday by Sts. Peter & Paul Altar Society, New Ulm

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

*Acolyte*

In memory of Allan Lanik by his Family

• **Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse**  
*Transitional Deacon*

In honor of Rev. Michael Rother by a friend

• **Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmidtzensky Seminary Burse**

*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmidtzensky by K of C Council #3371, Nada

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

*Acolyte*

In memory of M/M Frank Stryk by Daniel Stryk

• **Rev. Joe Vrana Seminary Burse, In Honor of his Golden Jubilee Year**  
*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Joseph "Joe" Vrana by K of C Council #3371, Nada

• **Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville Seminary Burse**

*Priest*

In memory of Willie J. Barborak and wife, Albina Barborak, Irene Barborak, George Barborak and Willie E. Barborak from the Estate of Willie E. Barborak

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

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



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

Matthew 4:18-22





# Diving deeper into Scripture a worthy goal for a new year

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The following sermon was written for the third Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle C. Father Kram titled it "God's Word."*

Words are powerful. Politicians use words to get themselves elected, lawyers use them to win cases, and preachers use them to change people's lives.

Libraries are full of books that express in print the thoughts of men long dead.

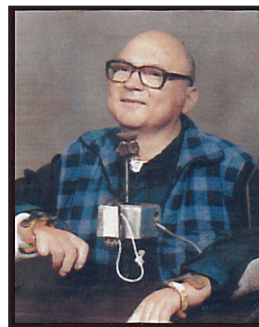
Hitler's book, "Mein Kampf", led millions to their deaths in World War II. The words of Bishop (Fulton J.) Sheen and Billy Graham have moved many to rethink their lives.

The book that has made the greatest impact on mankind is that best seller of all time, the Bible.

As literature, the Bible contains just about every form of literary expression known to man. As the inspired Word of God, it conveys God's message to man.

God wishes to speak to us through the Bible. Therefore, anyone who wants to benefit from the Scriptures must bear in mind that the sacred passages must be read prayerfully and must be meditated upon and applied to the reader.

One can pick a book of the Bible and



1929-2000

## Father Charles Kram Corner

read a chapter or so each day, first saying a prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to make the mind receptive to His message. A Scripture commentary can help in the understanding and application.

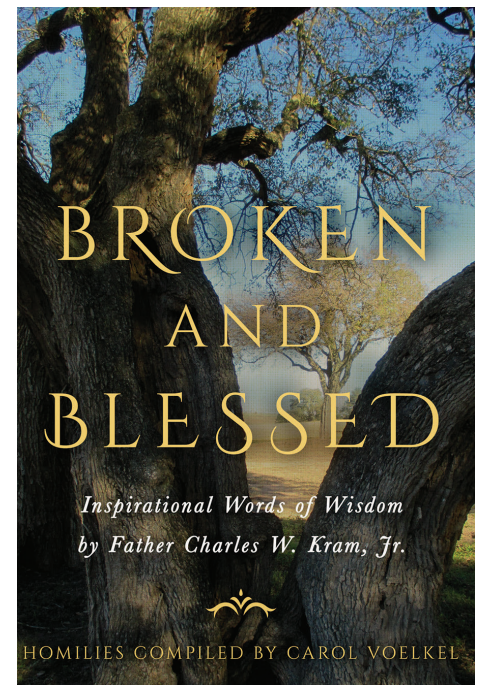
Also, there are little booklets available that suggest a reading for each day and give a thought-provoking commentary on it.

Today would be a fine day to review our attitude toward the reading of Scriptures. During Mass, when the Scriptures are being read, why not always make a special effort to listen attentively to see whether God has some special message for you. You will be surprised how, every once in a while, a verse

of Scripture will seem to be really meant for you. Or you might try listening carefully with the intention of finding some thought to take home with you and remember.

The person who spends even a little time with the Scriptures every day and listens for God's voice will find that God does indeed speak to us through the sacred words.

*Lord Jesus, thank you for showing us by your example how to read and respect the Scriptures. Help us also to read them with thoughtfulness and devotion. Grant that by applying what we read, we might advance far along the path of holiness. Amen.*



## New book compiles Father Kram homilies

"Broken and Blessed," is a new book that compiles Father Charles Kram's homilies into a format that allows readers to use it for daily reflection.

According to Carol Voelkel, the editor who compiled the sermons and added forwards by the Most Rev. Brendan Cahill and the Very Rev. Gary Janak, it is compiled in a "Chicken Soup for the Soul" fashion.

"Our goal was to provide an easy to read 'prayer guide' that is usable in everyday life -- and to recognize that we're all broken, but through our brokenness, we are ultimately blessed by God's Word on a daily basis," Voelkel stated.

The proceeds from the sale of the book, which is available on Amazon and at the parish office of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church in Shiner, will go to the Father Kram Project, promoting the cause for his sainthood.

In the words of Bishop Cahill, Voelkel "provides a valuable service in this book ... by introducing to a broader audience the man that many of us already consider a saint."

Those who want to read about his life can also look for "Gladly Will I Glory in My Infirmities," that tells about his faith and how he continued to be strong in spite of the polio that crippled his body.

## Women treated to a spiritual spa day

By **ARLENE ZAPALAC**  
*Special to the Lighthouse*

Have you longingly wished for a whole day of respite from your normal day to day activities?

Well you're definitely in the majority of women who venture off to the spa for a pedicure, manicure, massage, facial or any other revitalizing effects affordable to you.

Sometimes the allure is being pampered, and sometimes it's the quiet and solitude that makes spa treatments so desirable.

While refreshing our bodies and minds helps us refocus our efforts into all that demands our attention, there is more to consider when it comes to renewal. In Genesis, God created us in His "likeness" and "image" and Thessalonians 5:3 teaches us that we are made of body, soul and spirit. Bearing this in mind, a "spiritual spa day" was created



*Women chosen by their pastors for their commitments to their parish communities were treated to a "spiritual spa day" in November. The retreat was designed as a calming way to nurture them in mind, body and spirit. (Contributed Photo)*

by the Women's Discipleship Team, a newly organized group stemming from the Office of Family Evangelization at the Diocese of Victoria. We seek to expand opportunities

for all of us to walk our faith journey together inspired the Gospel.

We hosted the first retreat Nov. 12 at God's Embrace Renewal Center in High Hill.

Those attending were chosen by their parish priests in honor of their service to their faith communities. We gave them the opportunity to experience a combination of spa treatments that included pampering with massage and essential oils and added a new dimension with spiritual counseling, SoulCore exercise and a time for adoration using imaginative prayer.

The day began with a specialty coffee offering and light breakfast and opened with a general session of spiritual counseling given by Valeria Dubourdieu, who spoke of

*See Women treated to a spiritual spa day, pg. 9*





# We can make next year better

What a year 2020 was! Thinking of the year just finished -- a year of isolation, fear, and social and political unrest -- I am reminded of a quote by St. Augustine some 1,600 years ago. He wrote, "For the human race is, more than any other species, at once social by nature and quarrelsome by perversion."

The past year, 2020, with its social restrictions placed upon us, has certainly challenged our need for close relationships with those near and dear to us. Just look at how many large gatherings, maskless faces, and close contacts violated the restrictions that so many of us endured, and continue to endure, in order to protect ourselves and one another from the current pandemic. While our need for human interaction was partially met by technology, which was available to some of us, many are currently suffering from being separated from loved ones.

We all agree that we are a social species,

## Sisterly Thoughts

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



however, some of us could wonder about the label of being "quarrelsome by perversion." To answer, we just need to look at our nation: political animosity without respect for the dignity of the person who may look at things differently from our own viewpoint; violence in the streets; shuttered businesses, schools and houses of worship; unemployment, lack of respect for the "other" and deteriorating

environmental conditions.

You may ask yourself, "What can I do about the current situation?"

Excellent question, as we face the beginning of a new year. May hope spring in each of our hearts as we make resolutions to do our part in making conditions better in 2021.

Let's begin by looking at our relationship with God in the midst of trying circumstances. With God's help, we've survived times of trial before -- as individuals and as a world. God continues to care. How many times do we hear "Be not afraid!" reiterated in God's Word to us in Sacred Scriptures as we face challenges in our quest to make the reign of God a reality for all of humanity?

Moreover, God, who often works through creation, does not make conditions better alone. God needs the cooperation of each of us. So let's make our New Year's resolutions with this in mind. We can resolve to hang in

there and abide by the restrictions placed upon us as we struggle -- along with hoped-for vaccines -- to overcome COVID-19.

We can resolve to continue to reach out to those who are suffering. Let us recognize our fellow human beings as our brothers and sisters and treat them with dignity. And let us prepare to peacefully voice our opposition to political policies that may conflict with our moral standards. Together let us strive to make resolutions that will bring us to a future founded on a faith-anchored God, the welfare of all our brothers and sisters, and the care of our planet earth.

### Happy New Year!

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# Disciples on the Journey reaching a crossroads

*Continued from pg. 1*

of the people who created the study.

The first time the diocese had small groups doing a faith-sharing program for Lent the Paulist Community's "Disciples in Mission" was used. Many people didn't think it would work and said so. But they were wrong.

"It was like a Pentecost experience for this diocese," said Christella Alvarez, the director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry for the Diocese of Victoria. "It woke us up. We were alive. We were energized. It got peoples' attention."

Sister Digna Vela, director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry in the diocese back

## Spiritual Renewal Center

The Spiritual Renewal Center (SRC) is located on approximately 40 acres nestled along the banks of the San Antonio River and about a 25-minute drive from Victoria.

The SRC participates in the mission of the church of Victoria as well as the universal Catholic Church by providing a place apart from the demands of everyday life where individuals may go seeking God more deeply in their lives.

The SRS is open for small or large group which can be a one-day or over night with a kitchen staff to provide meals. There is also an open pavilion for outdoor activities.

Handicap accessible.

For more information or to reserve the SRC contact Matthew Boyle, director, by email [mboyle@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:mboyle@victoriadiocese.org) or at 361-572-0836.



then, remembers it well. There was a meeting about how to follow the Paulist program. "If God didn't have everybody in that room that I needed ...!" she said. With the blessing of Bishop (Emeritus) David Fellhauer, Disciples on the Journey's first edition was put together for the next Lenten journey in two months' time.

It was not an easy two months. Besides the normal office hours, nights and weekends were consumed with the effort to get the project off the ground.

"We birthed it," said Alvarez, who was Sister Digna's assistant at that time.

Before the study, Sister Digna said, many Catholics had not cracked open the Bible and, in fact, they discovered that lots of people didn't own one.

Alvarez remembers having to guide Catholics in their purchases because many bought Protestant Bibles.

With the support of the bishop and the hard work of the writers and editors, "Disciples on the Journey" went far and wide. The creators reached out to every diocese in the U.S. and eventually were selling the books in 46 states and a few foreign countries.

Sister Digna and Alvarez credit Laurie Bautista, who owned an advertising and printing company, for making the project professional and sellable. Sister Miriam Perez helped translate it into Spanish when there were not many Spanish-language resources out there. And Sister Donna Bonorden, with an eye for editing and a mind for theology, also worked on the content.

When Sister Digna left her post at the diocese, she took the project with her and the IWBS sisters have kept it alive over the years.

Alvarez said the thought of "Disciples on the Journey" being in its final year makes her feel a little sad because of all the memories attached to its "birth." But, she added, like everything else, it, like everything else has to change with the times.

But for now, people can celebrate the fact that it's a new year and a new online book.

"The Sisters hope by the time Lent comes, people will be able to meet in small groups to share faith with one another physically or virtually," according to Sister Digna.

Another service is provided for families to share the Gospel readings with their children and for teen groups to share physically or virtually. Go to [www.disciplesonthejourney.org](http://www.disciplesonthejourney.org) for free downloads for Family and Teen groups in English and Spanish for the six-weeks of Lent Cycle B.

# Pro-life March set for Jan. 28

*Continued from pg. 1*

At the church, we will hear from this year's speaker, Laura Reyes.

God's immeasurable mercy was poured unexpectedly upon the life of Reyes after years of living a disorderly life. As a young woman she entered into a toxic relationship that led her into an unwanted pregnancy at the age of 17. Pressured by her parents and having no support from anyone else, she decided to have an abortion and continue living a "normal" life.

Ten years passed since the abortion and after having experienced several of the pleasures of the world, Laura found herself empty, ashamed and lonely. God used her brokenness to show her His love, mercy and restorative power by literally transforming her life overnight through the power of the Holy Spirit.

After experiencing the power of God's mercy and forgiveness she entered in a relationship with Jesus Christ and fell deeply in love with Him. It was this new love she found in Christ that led her to make radical decisions about several areas in her life, one of which was repenting from sin and receiving healing from her abortion. By God's grace, she is now married in the Catholic Church, a proud mother of three boys, with a fourth boy on the way, and she is unapologetically pro-life.

Laura's story is a reminder that through God's love, anything is possible.

Please join us to show your commitment to the Right to Life Movement. Everyone who is pro-life is encouraged to come.

Physicians, biologists, and other scientists agree that conception marks the beginning of

the life of a human being – a being that is alive and is a member of the human species. There is overwhelming agreement on this point in countless medical, biological, and scientific writings.

To have an abortion, even if the law says it is legal, doesn't change the fact that abortion is wrong. Taking away the life of another human being is, to put it more bluntly, murder.

Let's shine a light on abortion by bringing the truth into the light. Every human being deserves to live and be alive as much as you and I. We do not have the right to take that

life away.

So bring your flashlights and candles and let your light shine for all to see.

Together let's take a stand for the unborn.

• *Bernie Seale is a member of St. Gianna Beretta Molla Pro-Life Ministry at Holy Family Catholic Church and one of the organizers of the annual event.*



*Laura Reyes will be the guest speaker at the Candlelight March for Life in Victoria on Jan. 28. She is shown here with her three sons, and she and her husband, Justin, have a fourth son on the way. (Contributed Photo)*

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## IWBS will sell historic convent to St. Mary Catholic Church

*Continued from pg. 1*

The original decorative tile on the foyer floor is still intact and in good shape. Artwork by many of the Sisters who have lived there still hangs on some walls. It seems to tell the story of its occupants of the past.

The building evokes waves of nostalgia for those who grew up in Victoria and, especially those who had a chance to live there. “A lot of the sisters did their novitiate there,” Sister Goike said, adding that she plans to have some sort of “letting go” ritual for the Sisters who are able to come and celebrate the changing of hands.

The Rev. Kristopher Fuchs, pastor of St. Mary’s, plans to preserve the building’s historical, cultural and architectural values.

Father Fuchs said one reason the church has now decided to purchase the building is the receipt of a sizable bequest from a parishioner. The building needs upgrades, and fundraising efforts will begin immediately. It will be a major project that will be done in phases. “There are many potential uses for the building,” said Father Fuchs. “It could be used for parish and private events, parish office space, classrooms space, and smaller retreats.”



*Shown here is the foyer of the historic convent on Church Street in downtown Victoria. The age of the building and its configuration for religious purposes makes it a treasure in the Catholic community. It is being sold by the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, but will go to St. Mary Catholic Church next door and its historic and cultural significance will be preserved. (TCL file photo from 2015)*

Furthermore, taking over the building will “help to satisfy the desires of many people,” said Fuchs.

First of all, the DeLeon family gave the block of property to the church in the 1800s, and, since that time the property has always been used for Catholic institutions. “Remembering that legacy and contribution – that is

important,” he said.

Historic preservation is another concern. “That is certainly something that we want to embrace,” said Father Fuchs. The building is already configured for religious use, so transferring ownership to the church is the most natural transition.

Also, Father Fuchs thinks there is some

real opportunity to enhance the development of downtown by opening the building up for public events or tours. “We have a lot to show here.”

Though the church and the Sisters have made a contract for the sale, they have agreed that ownership will not change hands until after the 2020-21 school year for the smoothest transition. The building is currently used for housing four Sisters on the second floor and classroom space for the preschool children at Nazareth Academy next door. After the end of the school year, the programs for Nazareth Academy currently taking place at old convent will be relocated.

Father Fuchs plans to showcase the building and its potential during St. Mary’s church festival on Jan. 31 at the Victoria Community Center. For \$300, attendees can buy a table for six and be seated with family or close friends. Individual tickets are not being sold. The change in format is because of COVID-19 restrictions on crowd size. Those attending the noon dinner will be served at the table to help maintain a social distance to make everyone comfortable. The last day to purchase a table is Jan. 28.

The festival also will include to-go barbecue plates for \$10 each, an online auction and a raffle. Information on how to participate is on the church web site [www.stmvictoria.org](http://www.stmvictoria.org) or can be obtained by calling the church at 361-573-4328.

Because the building is going to remain a Catholic institution, it can remain a presence and a support for Nazareth Academy, its other neighbor that still makes use of the building. Father Fuchs said it would have been odd to have any other type of commercial investor take over the property.

Now it’s going to be “an institution renewed,” according to Father Fuchs. “It’s the story of the Catholic faith here in Victoria, it’s our history, so we will certainly preserve our history.”



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### Family gives to Gabriel Project

CUERO — The family of Joe and Tracy Trevino of Cuero donated baby items to the DeWitt chapter of The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads in Cuero. The donations were made in honor of their daughter, Katelyn. These items will be given to pregnant mothers in need. Trevino family members pictured with Janet Adamek, center, are, from left, Joseph, Kaylee, Kendal and Kirsten. The Trevino family attends St. Michael Catholic Church in Cuero. Adamek is one of the coordinators of the Gabriel Project at St. Michael. (Contributed Photo)



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# Arise in your faith this year

When a New Year comes along, we always welcome it with New Year's resolutions. I invite you to consider making one of your resolutions to ARISE anew in your faith this year. Our diocese is hosting two events to help make this possible for you.

On Feb. 20, the second annual diocesan men's gathering will take place in Victoria, and the headliner is the Rev. Mitch Pacwa, a very well known EWTN personality. He will speak to men about the need to ARISE and take on the leadership roles in our lives while living our Catholic faith boldly.

On April 24, the first diocesan women's



Rev. Mitch Pacwa

gathering will take place in Victoria, and the headliner is also an EWTN personality – the Rev. Cedric Pisegna, CP.

Father Cedric will encourage attendees to let the Holy Spirit ARISE in their lives, giving them the hope, strength and encouragement they need.

Both planning teams have been working for several months to coor-



Rev. Cedric Pisegna, CP

## On the Table

By Justin Reyes



dinate these incredible events. We will have world-class speakers right here in our diocese. Additionally, our bishop, the Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill will be present at both gatherings, leading us in the celebration of

Mass. What a wonderful shepherd we have, that he is willing to be present for both.

Please, don't delay in making these events a priority for yourself this year. We have created them for you, to help you take your faith to new heights.

Registration is available online at <http://www.victoriadiocese.org/arise>. Tickets are just \$25. If you buy four tickets, you get a fifth ticket free. This is a great event to invite

family members or friends to, especially if they need encouragement right now and a reminder of how much God loves them, as well as a reminder of the treasure we have in the Catholic faith.

We hope 2021 will be a year in which all men and women of our diocese ARISE anew in their faith, living it proudly – with boldness, joy and conviction.

Until next time, I hope you do well with your other resolutions for 2021, and if you have any questions at all about these events, please reach out to me at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2265.

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).

## Women treated to a spiritual spa day

Continued from pg. 5

our value as a single, a wife, a mother, a friend or a grandmother in the domestic church and in our parish families. She emphasized God's love and the beauty in which we are created by Him – each with our own unique gifts – making us special in His plan of salvation.

Following this presentation, the ladies participated in a small group rotation of three stations. The first was SoulCore exercising; praying and moving with the rosary. The second rotation included massage therapy and making an essential oils scented sugar scrub or bracelet along with quiet reflection time for spiritual reading. Participants were given the book "Glorious Holy Spirit" by the Rev. Cedric Pisegna, CP, who will be the featured speaker at the upcoming Women's ARISE conference in April.

The third station, everyone's favorite, was

Eucharistic Adoration with the Rev. Kristopher Fuchs in the Little St. Mary's Chapel where participants sang praise, worshiped and were invited to imagine themselves in the scene of the woman at the well meeting Jesus.

The day concluded with small group debriefing of the day's activities focusing on adoration time and the fruits of the spa day.

In closing, an invitation was given for all to join us on Facebook as the Women's Discipleship Team where more plans are being made to encourage and support all of the beautiful ladies of our diocese desiring to grow in their faith and beauty in Christ.

• Arlene Zapalac is a member of the Women's Discipleship Team for the Diocese of Victoria.



# MEN

FEB 20, 2021

# WOMEN

APR 24, 2021



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# Si queremos misericordia, debemos enfrentar nuestras faltas

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,

Como parte del Ritual de Ordenación del Diácono, el obispo pide a los que serán ordenados si están comprometidos a rezar fielmente la Liturgia de las Horas por ellos mismos y por el mundo.

Respondiendo “sí” a la pregunta del obispo, aceptan la responsabilidad de orar a diferentes horas del día. Las oraciones que ofrecen son parte de la oración universal de la Iglesia, por lo que de una manera hermosa podemos pensar que las personas están orando en comunión con toda la Iglesia en cada momento del día.

Una parte diaria de la Liturgia de las Horas se llama Oficio de Lecturas. Estas lecturas incluyen pasajes de la tradición espiritual de la Iglesia, algunos de los cuales se remontan a miles de años. A veces me sorprende cómo algo escrito sobre una experiencia espiritual hace 1.500 años es tan cierto hoy como lo era entonces. Una de mis reflexiones favoritas proviene de un monje cristiano que fundó

## Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill



un monasterio cerca de Gaza en Tierra Santa alrededor del año 540:

*“Sin embargo, la razón de todos angustia, si miramos a los raíces, es que nadie se culpa a sí mismo.*

*Esta es la fuente de todas las molestias y angustias. Es por eso que a veces no descansamos. No debemos sorprendernos cuando seamos reprendidos por hombres santos. No tenemos otro camino hacia la paz que este.*

*Hemos visto que esto es cierto en muchos casos y, en nuestra pereza y deseo de descansar, esperamos o creemos haber entrado en*

*un camino recto cuando estamos impacientes con todos y, sin embargo, no podemos soportar culparnos a nosotros mismos.*

*Así somos nosotros. No importa cuántas virtudes pueda tener un hombre, incluso si están más allá del número y el límite. Si se ha apartado del camino de la autoacusación, nunca encontrará la paz. Él mismo siempre estará preocupado, o de lo contrario será una fuente de problemas para los demás y todo su trabajo será en vano”. (St. Dorotheus de Gaza, Oficio de Lecturas, Lunes, Semana 9)*

He estado pensando en esta lectura

mientras me preparo para entrar en un retiro espiritual de 30 días. Los preparativos para el retiro, escritos por San Ignacio en España en el siglo XVI, ofrecen un esquema al principio.

El esquema establece que la primera semana la dedicaremos a reflexionar sobre los pecados del participante. La sabiduría de las edades le enseña al cristiano la necesidad de reconocer primero nuestras propias faltas, en lugar de perder nuestro tiempo enfocándonos en las faltas de los demás. Solo aceptando la necesidad de la misericordia de Dios podemos abrir la puerta de nuestro corazón a Dios.

Tenga la seguridad de que estaré orando por cada uno de ustedes al hacer este retiro, con confianza en el poder del Espíritu Santo y el amor maternal de María, la Reina de la Paz. Que tú y tus familias experimenten la paz y la alegría de Jesús en esta temporada navideña, sabiendo que Él camina contigo en cada momento de tu vida. Dios te bendiga; mantengámonos una a las otra en oración.

+Brendan

## ‘Discípulos En La Jornada’ en una encrucijada

JANET JONES

The Catholic Lighthouse

“Discipulos En La Jornada” se ha convertido en una tradición de Cuaresma para muchos durante los últimos 18 años. Aquellos que han estado en el programa desde el principio probablemente tengan una variedad de libros, impresos en portadas de diferentes colores para distinguirlos del libro del año anterior.

Pero este año, la gente puede simplemente descargar el libro del sitio web Disciples on the Journey. Las Hermanas del Verbo Encarnado y el Santísimo Sacramento no cobran, sino que piden una ofrenda voluntaria. La incertidumbre que aún existe debido a la pandemia la ha convertido en una forma razonable de distribuir el estudio. Además, producir el libro cuesta miles, a pesar de que ha obtenido beneficios en el pasado.

El año que viene es aún más incierto.

Hay muchas posibilidades de que este sea el último, según la hermana Digna Vela, quien es la coordinadora del proyecto y una de las personas que crearon el estudio.

Pero por ahora, la gente puede celebrar el hecho de que es un nuevo año y un nuevo libro en línea.

“Las Hermanas esperan que para cuando llegue la Cuaresma, las personas podrán reunirse en grupos pequeños para compartir la fe entre sí física o virtualmente”, según la Hermana Digna

Se brinda otro servicio para que las familias compartan las lecturas del Evangelio con sus hijos y para que los grupos de adolescentes las compartan física o virtualmente. Visite [www.disciplesonthejourney.org](http://www.disciplesonthejourney.org) para descargas gratuitas para grupos de Familia y Adolescentes en inglés y español durante las seis semanas del Ciclo B de Cuaresma.

### Office of Family Evangelization



Justin Reyes, Director  
(361) 573-0838  
Ext. 2265  
email: [jreyes@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jreyes@victoriadiocese.org)  
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### DIOCESE OF VICTORIA



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Questions? Contact Justin Reyes, Director of Family Evangelization at 361-573-0828 x 2265 or [jreyes@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jreyes@victoriadiocese.org)







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#### 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  
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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).



### Year of the Family fun

VANDERBILT — Cynthia Adams, takes a fun photo of her family's "socially distanced" Thanksgiving meal with her husband, Todd, and their children, Sarah and James. The Adams are members of St. John Bosco in Vanderbilt. *(Contributed Photo)*



### Festive family project

VANDERBILT — Emexis Zertuche, parishioner and confirmation student at St. John Bosco, hangs a wreath on the door of the church. Emily Benavides, the parish catechetical leader for St. John, said the confirmation class does community service yearly at the church picnic. Since they didn't have the picnic, they helped by decorating the church for the Advent season. Benavides said the sponsors and families participated as well. *(Contributed Photo)*

## Sunday Readings from Jan. 3 through Feb. 14

January 3 ~ The Epiphany of the Lord  
Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalms 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13  
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6  
Matthew 2:1-12

January 10 ~ The Baptism of the Lord  
Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7  
Psalms 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10  
Acts 10:34-38  
Mark 1:7-11

January 17 ~ Second Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
1 Samuel 3:3b-10, 19  
Psalms 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10  
1 Corinthians 6:13c-15a, 17-20  
John 1:35-42

January 24 ~ Third Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Jonah 3:1-5, 10  
Psalms 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9  
1 Corinthians 7:29-31  
Mark 1:14-20

January 31 ~ Fourth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Deuteronomy 18:15-20  
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-7, 7-9  
1 Corinthians 7:32-35  
Mark 1:21-28

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

February 14 ~ Sixth Sunday  
in Ordinary Time  
Leviticus 13:1-2, 44-46  
Psalms 32:1-2, 5, 11  
1 Corinthians 10:31 — 11:1  
Mark 1:40-45


### Special Days in the Catholic Church

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


For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit  
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## 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.





# Catholic school enrollment down slightly

**JANET JONES**  
*The Catholic Lighthouse*

Enrollment in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Victoria is down by 6.3 percent this school year, overall, although a couple of schools saw a slight increase in enrollment. Dr. John Quarry, superintendent of the Office of Catholic Schools, said the COVID-19 pandemic and all of its fallout is likely to have caused this decline.

“I think that some of it had to do with just the uncertainty – the risk of having their youngsters exposed,” he said. He said a few may have considered leaving because of financial concerns as some people lost their livelihoods during the shutdown, but with an eye toward returning them to the Catholic schools at some point.

*See Catholic school enrollment, pg. 13*



## Holiday cheer

SCHULENBURG – The Junior High students at St. Rose of Lima Catholic School decorated yard signs for the residents of Schulenburg Regency Nursing Home to spread Christmas cheer. The 40 signs will be placed outside residents’ windows and around the property by nursing home staff because the students are unable to visit this year due to COVID-19 restrictions. The school hopes their students’ artwork brings joy to the nursing home residents and staff this holiday season. *(Contributed Photo)*



Adalyn Pohl, a Sacred Heart School student from Hallettsville, left, drops off the coats and socks at Perpetual Help Home in Victoria. Receiving the donation are Jessica Vasquez, a resident of PHH, center, and Bethany Castro, PHH Director. *(Contributed Photo)*

# Warm gift gets a warm welcome

*Sacred Heart student organizes coat drive for women’s ministry*

**BY BETHANY CASTRO**  
*Special to the Lighthouse*

When Adalyn Pohl, an eighth-grader at Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville, called our office and shared her idea to hold a coat drive for Perpetual Help Home this Christmas season I had two thoughts: First, I was super impressed that a 13-year-old would cold-call an office and propose such an idea out of the blue. And, second, I thought, “Hey, why not? Of course!”

We don’t usually take on large drives of clothing or items because our ladies are required to work and save money to purchase their own items, but the cold-weather season always seems to catch us – our ladies, and their children – off-guard.

During a speaking engagement, I explained to the Green Leaves Hallettsville 4-H club, where Adalyn is a member, coats, sweaters, hoodies and heavy socks are not items that the homeless population in Texas make sure to hang onto for those few weeks when it gets cold during the year. Unlike those of us who are housed, the homeless do not have a closet to “put things up” until the cold weather strikes. For this reason, I thought that

Adalyn’s idea of a coat drive was spectacular and perfectly timed.

Adalyn’s coat drive wrapped up on Dec. 9, and she was able to collect 124 coats and 25 pairs of socks for Perpetual Help Home. We are so blessed by her idea and the generosity of her school and community.

Perpetual Help Home is a Christian-based, restorative justice organization assisting women in breaking the cycle of incarceration, drug addiction and homelessness through making life changes, regardless of race, color or creed. We help women become productive members of society with transitional support, new life-skills training and permanent supportive housing. We offer 17 rooms for women who are doing the hard work of putting their lives back together. Women stay an average of four months but there is no end-date on how long they can stay as long as they are progressing. We are celebrating 25 years of existence in 2020. Our namesake is Sister Perpetua Hawes who was a PHH founder and member of the Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.

• *Bethany Castro is the Executive Director of Perpetual Help Home.*

**TUES, JAN 19 • 6:30PM**

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## Discover Catholic Schools Week and Mission Week

WEIMAR—St. Michael Catholic School celebrated Discover Catholic Schools Week and Mission Week Nov. 15-20. Discover Catholic Schools Week helps showcase what makes Catholic schools the best when families are looking to find the right school for them, and Mission Week emphasizes our school's mission statement to be "Friendly, Respectful, Responsible, and Christ-Like." During weekend Masses on Sunday, eighth-grade students presented a slideshow about SMCS and spoke about what they like about their school.

*Monday (Friendly), each class dressed up as their favorite friendly squad from a book or movie. Kindergarten students dressed the part of "101 Dalmatians." From left are, front row, Kassie Moeller, Mason Bittner, Jesse Janecka, Grant Janecka, Lane Anders and Finley Marshall, and, back, Myla Pavlu, Mrs. Ann Barlow and Beau Anders.*



*Tuesday (Respectful), students and faculty came dressed in their "fancy" clothes and discussed why it is important to look and act respectfully. Sixth-graders shown are, from left, front row, Trey Silcox, Dylan Moeller and Emma Koeth, and back row, Madelyn Rerich, Trevor Bentley, Hunter Shupak and Tucker Janak.*



*Wednesday (Responsible), the school celebrated heroes of all kinds. Eighth-graders, dressed as their heroes, are, from left, Lily Berger, Claire Pavlu, Hannah Hillje, Logan Kainer, Jonathan Shupak, and Adela Rubio.*



*Thursday (Christ-Like), students performed service projects all around the SMCS campus. Students from 3K taking a break from picking up trash around their building are, from left, Luke Janecka, Henry Janecka, Will Prihoda, Kylan Grohmann, Jentry Schimcek and Avery Bittner.*



*Friday (Christ the King), students learned about the Feast of Christ the King and made crowns that were displayed at St. Michael Catholic Church. Some of the fifth-grade students showing the crowns they made, from left, are Dawson Brandt, Hudson Hillje, Cullen Marek, Victoria Sherwood, Ella Herzik and Dayson Mace.*



(Contributed Photos)



### Feeding the hungry

SCHULENBURG – The St. Rose of Lima Catholic School family donated 13 complete Thanksgiving meal baskets for the Family Crisis Center at their Thanksgiving Mass on Nov. 19. They also collected 287 pounds of canned goods and \$62 in cash for the Schulenburg Area Food Pantry. (Contributed Photo)

## Catholic school enrollment down slightly

*Continued from pg. 12*

Dr. Quarry said he is proud of the teachers and administrators who have been determined to keep children in school. "They have done a yeoman's job of learning to do remote learning. It's much more involved and it doubles a teacher's workload."

Some articles published by the National Catholic Education Association have hinted that the pandemic might end up creating a greater enrollment in Catholic education in the long run as the schools were more ready and willing to open their doors in August and operate as

normally as possible with new health and safety guidelines being employed.

Catholic Schools Week this year kicks off Jan. 31 and goes through Feb 6. The National theme for this year is, "Faith. Excellence. Service."

The Diocese of Victoria will also celebrate the 25th anniversary of the Office of Catholic Schools. Dr. Quarry said to look for the number 25 popping up in various promotions of Catholic education that will, hopefully, result in better enrollment numbers for the coming year.



### Open House

Pre-K3 through 8th grade

Sunday, January 24

1:30 p.m.

The Cathedral Center

For Prospective Families

**RSVP by January 15**



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### 'Talk of the Town'

YORKTOWN – Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Holy Cross #1598 enjoyed the opportunity to put on their annual Santa Café and Bake Sale recently. The organization puts on an annual craft show, where vendors can sell homemade goodies, quilts, wood working items, crocheted items, jewelry and many other things. The CDA also sells homemade potato soup, chicken noodle soup, chili soup, chicken salad sandwiches, ham salad sandwiches, and hot cheese sandwiches. The event is on the first Saturday of each December and the ladies say it is the talk of the town. (Contributed Photo)

### 12-week Ignation retreat planned



Amor Meus Spirituality Center is offering a 12-week virtual Ignation Retreat, "Finding Christ in the World," Jan. 6 through March 24. Participants will meet virtually either on Wednesday mornings 9:30-10:30 a.m. or Wednesday evenings 6:30-7:30 p.m. The retreat moves through 12 themes for prayer. The persons making the retreat pray at home each day with a given Scripture passage and meet for one hour each week to share. Brief notes help move the retreatants into prayer. To register or to inquire about the retreat, call Sister Digna Vela at 361-485-0866. The retreat is limited to no more than 10 persons, so anyone interested should call early to secure a space.



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# Blessing of Silence and Rest

*EDITOR'S NOTE: The following is a short selection from the "Calendar of Blessings" of the Catholic Rural Life organization. For the complete January service, go to [www.catholicrurallife.org](http://www.catholicrurallife.org).*



The start of a new year: a time to renew and get back on track. But before carrying out our resolve for the year, it serves to remember that rest and silence are also valuable.

Winter's natural stillness allows a welcomed pause to the frenzied pace of our lives. As the activities of the year come to an end, we may also feel the need to slow down. The boisterous hum of family life and work is now replaced by quietness, if only for a moment.

The month of January is a good time to avail yourself to silence and rest. Do these appear as strangers to us? With practice, silence and rest can become trusted friends that fill us with deeper awareness, recharge us, and provide greater creativity for the tasks that await us in the coming spring.

In the spirit of this month's blessing, consider fasting or preparing a simple meal on the day of the blessing. Gather with family or friends in the early evening. Light a candle. After a moment of silence, begin this service:

#### OPENING PRAYER

*Loved ones, let us open our hearts. God of the ages, You call your people to seek You in the quietist of places. Free us from what detracts and blinds us; let us behold your marvelous Presence. Renew us by the teachings of your Word so that we may live more abundantly. When life around us appears dark, make us a harvester of Light. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

\*\*\*

Song of Praise: Verses from Psalm 62 (2-3, 8-9, 11-12)

Response: Only in God will my soul be at rest.

Selective readings from Scripture: Exodus 20:8-11; Psalm 62:1-2, 5; Psalm 116:7; Isaiah 40:28-31; Matthew 11:28; 1 John 3:19; Philippians 4:6-7.

Followed by silent reflection or sharing.

\*\*\*

#### CLOSING BLESSING

*(Invite everyone to gather around a lit candle. Dim or turn off other lights.)*

*Let us pray: O Lord, we long for your peace. We come to you like Martha, racing about with busy hands and minds, but with our hearts that are left closed and empty.*

*We also come to you in silence, like Mary who ceased all activity to sit at your feet and listen, ready and willing to receive what you alone can give.*

*Bless this silence. Teach us to recognize the treasures it gives and to desire it more often.*

*Bless this rest. Help us to trust it with the same faith which we give to work. Strengthened by our participation in holy silence and rest, may we come to see in winter not a death that is a final ending, but rather an opening that leads to the next life.*

*We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.*

Do you have any  
calendar of events for the  
Lighthouse?

Submit to  
[lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org)

**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)



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## Meals • Picnics and More

January

**Catholic Schools** – Considering sending your child to a Catholic School? Visit their websites for the 2021 open houses.

**Victoria**—St. Mary Parish Festival, Jan. 31, at the Victoria Community Center. For \$300, attendees can buy a table for six and be seated with family or close friends. **Individual tickets are not being sold.** The change in format is because of COVID-19 restrictions on crowd size. Those attending the noon dinner will be served at the table to help maintain a social distance to make everyone comfortable. The last day to purchase a table is Jan. 28. The festival also will include to-go barbecue plates for \$10 each, an online auction and a raffle. Information on how to participate is on the church web site [www.stmvictoria.org](http://www.stmvictoria.org) or can be obtained by calling the church at 361-573-4328.

## Diocese organizing a virtual 5K to benefit moms in need

The Office of Pro-Life Ministry invites everyone to make plans to support the Bethlehem Maternity Home by participating in a virtual 5K wherever you wish to walk or run.

The Bethlehem Maternity Home aims to help women in crisis pregnancies in need of stable housing. Donations from this fundraiser will help with costs for purchasing furniture, utilities, and upkeep of this much-needed new home in our community.

*Dates:* Jan. 21-29

*Entrance Fee:* \$15 for individuals or \$25 for the whole family. (This is a suggested donation level, so you may give more.)

*Registration:* There are two registration/donation steps:

1. Complete the registration form on the Diocese of Victoria website. The link to that is here: <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/pro-life>. Fill in the parish line as your parish or Bethlehem Maternity Home.

2. Once you complete the registration form, you will see a highlighted word: “LINK” that will take you to the Gabriel Project/Bethlehem Maternity Home’s website. You will then make your donation directly to the Bethlehem House for your 5K registration. Scroll down almost to the bottom of the page until you see the “Donate” button (through PayPal or Credit Card). Click on the “Donate” button. Select “Bethlehem Maternity Home” and enter your donation amount.

Please include your name and that you are donating for the 5K in the “Notes” section of the donation page.

*Participation:* Participants will send in a screen shot of your time/distance to [sthomas@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:sthomas@victoriadiocese.org) for credit of participation. Within your email, please write down everyone from your registration form that participated with you.

*Parish-based Winners:* There will be two parish winners for the 5K.

1. The parish who raises the most money. (Help your parish win by donating, even if you don’t want to walk or run!)
2. The parish who has the most participation.

*Questions?* Contact Shannon Thomas: 361-573-0828 or [sthomas@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:sthomas@victoriadiocese.org).

## 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.

## School Fundraisers

**Victoria**—Our Lady of Victory Catholic School’s VIRTUAL Gala will be held Friday, Feb. 5. Event will feature Dinner-to-Go, Virtual Auction, Raffle, and Teacher & Campus Improvement Wish Wall. Sponsorship opportunities available. More information at [www.ourladyvictory.org](http://www.ourladyvictory.org).

## What’s on the web?

### Weekly Wednesday Webchats

Each week Justin Reyes, director of Family Services, posts an interview with someone in our diocese. Sometimes he will interview a member of the clergy, and sometimes it is the personal story of one of the faithful. One Wednesday a month he will post “Cinco Preguntas!” a Spanish-language interview featuring a local minister.

### Bite-Sized Catholic

Check out this new Facebook page that helps explain Catholicism a bite at a time. This was created to help Catholics share their faith with others who may be seeking answers. It is a good way to engage in conversations about what we, as Catholics, believe. Visit [www.facebook.com/bitesizedcatholic](http://www.facebook.com/bitesizedcatholic).

### Year of the Family Prayer Jar

Did you know we have a prayer jar for special intentions during this Year of the Family? Place your intentions in the prayer jar by going to <https://forms.gle/UGR46RC739AntJbp8>. Visit [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org) to learn more about the Year of the Family resources.

**Engaged Encounter** 2021 Dates: January 15-17, April 16-18, June 4-6, September 17-19, November 12-14. 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 Leslie Book 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 CREIGTON 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).





# Christmas at sea project spreads joy to seafarers

Rhonda Cummins, coordinator of the Christmas at Sea project of the Stella Maris organization, shows the gifts that were collected at the Diocese of Victoria Chancery office.



Chancery office employees and others gathered much-needed items for people who work at sea. The items are being delivered to ports along the Texas Coast and other places as part of the Christmas at Sea program

## Ring Out, Wild Bells

By Alfred, Lord Tennyson

Ring out, wild bells, to the wild sky,  
The flying cloud, the frosty light:  
The year is dying in the night;  
Ring out, wild bells, and let him die ...

Ring out false pride in place and blood,  
The civic slander and the spite;  
Ring in the love of truth and right,  
Ring in the common love of good.

Ring out old shapes and foul disease;  
Ring out the narrowing lust of gold;  
Ring out the thousand wars of old,  
Ring in the thousand years of peace.

Ring in the valiant man and free,  
The larger heart, the kindlier hand;  
Ring out the darkness of the land,  
Ring in the Christ that is to be.



## Here are some January resources for Year of the Family

Mary’s “fiat” changed the eternal fate of humankind. In a similar, but lesser way, God will use our “Yes” to His invitations to change the hearts and souls known to Him. But, remember; God will not use us, if we say “no” to Him. Pray that we may never let our selfishness and fear deprive us of the privilege of being part of God’s perfect plan.

### Pray:

- Pray a Hail Mary for Moms (birth, adopted, spiritual, and others!).
- Pray for an end to abortion.
- Start a prayer chain at your New Year’s meal. Have each person at the table say one thing for which they are thankful.
- Pray the Angelus at a set time (6 a.m., noon, or 6 p.m.) daily for a week.

### Eat:

- Take pictures as you cook a meal together!
- Take time to write out a family recipe to share with someone else.
- Make a St. Basil’s Jewel Cake for the new year. Details on our website.

### Play:

- Participate in the virtual 5K benefitting the Bethlehem Maternity Home. Details on the website!
- Pick a patron saint for your family for the year.
- Celebrate a saint’s feast day with a fun dessert or special meal. Watch a video about a saint’s feast day this month. Some January feast days are listed on our calendar on our website!