Eighteen area men receive papal honors

Eighteen men from the Diocese of Victoria were recently conferred with the honor of knighthood in the Order of St. Gregory prior to Pope Benedict XVI retirement. The Pontifical or Papal Orders of Knighthood are conferred directly by His Holiness the Pope and are directly dependent on the Pope. There will be a formal investiture will follow at a later date. Those being conferred with the honor of membership into the See Eighteen area men, p. 3

Italian cardinal sees holiness, prayer as key to vocations

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A canon lawyer and theologian, Italian Cardinal Mauro Piacenza, 68, saw greater priestly holiness and prayerful support as critical to vocations.

He has led the Congregation for Clergy since 2010, and it was under his tenure there that his office also assumed responsibility for seminaries and the promotion and governance of everything that pertains to the formation, life and ministry of priests and deacons. The task had once belonged to the Congregation for Catholic Education, until Pope Benedict XVI made the changes in 2013.

Cardinal Piacenza had said that his office was well-suited to supervising seminaries around the world and would serve as an “indispensable compass” for planning the preparation of future clergy.

The cardinal suggested a need for increased rigor in seminary admissions, calling for reinforcement of an “authentic profile of priestly identity” and rejecting what he said was a widespread misunderstanding that a vocation to the priesthood is a subjective choice, rather than a “person’s response to an objective call from God, mediated by the church.”

He was heavily involved with providing support for the 2010-11 Year for Priests. On the clergy congregation’s website, he provided numerous reflections in an effort to help priests grow in holiness.

He said the vocations crisis in Europe was linked not just to the decline in birth rates, but also to mistaken efforts “to normalize” the priesthood, thereby stripping it of its sacred and supernatural character.

Note: In a recent homily by Bishop David Fellhauer, he said that this coming school year there was a possibility of six new men entering the seminary for the diocese. With the greater number of vocations the diocese had a special collection on Holy Thursday for the education of the seminarians.

“Habemus papam” We have a Pope

POPE FRANCIS WAVES AS HE APPEARS FOR FIRST TIME ON BALCONY OF ST. PETER’S BASILICA—Pope Francis appears for the first time on the central balcony of St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican March 13. Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio of Argentina was elected the 266th Roman Catholic pontiff. He is the first Jesuit and first Latin American pope. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
By Father Tommy Chen

My friends and I had planned our trip to Assisi and Rome over six months ago for March 4-14. When we found out that those dates could probably coincide with the beginning of the conclave, we were especially excited ... to not only be in Rome, but also to be in Rome at such a historical time in the Church!

We had the privilege of attending the special Mass on Tuesday, March 12 at St. Peter’s Basilica for the Election of a New Roman Pontiff. How awesome and amazing it was to see all the Cardinals of the Church process down the central nave of the grand basilica with a great variety of the People of God: bishops, priests, religious, seminarians, laity from around the world, (and even non-Catholics) looking on in prayerful solidarity with the Cardinals as we all gathered to implore the help of the Holy Spirit before the Cardinals entered into their sacred responsibility of the Conclave.

As I sat there, soaking-in the Liturgy, having visited St. Peter’s tomb through the Scavi Tour just a few days before, looking up at the magnificent dome which floated above the main altar in which the Latin words “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church” are boldly encrusted in mosaic, I thought to myself, “How appropriate to pray for the election of St. Peter’s successor, in the church dedicated to Peter, and above Peter’s tomb. And what a testament to God’s never-ending faithfulness to provide for His Church a Pope to be the vicar of His Son and to be a visible sign of the Good Shepherd’s abiding presence with His Church!”

On the morning of Pope Francis’ election, I had celebrated Mass at one of the side altars in St. Peter’s with my friends. They wanted to stay around St. Peter’s square in order to catch the morning smoke signal. Unfortunately, we took a long leisurely breakfast for 3 hours and missed the morning smoke signal which occurred about 11:45 a.m. Rome time.

So part of our group, determined not to miss the evening smoke signal, decided to “camp out” on the square after we ate lunch. I was not part of that group.

While I was not present on the square when the white smoke billowed from the Sistine Chapel, I was watching it on the television from the apartment where we were staying. It was like I was there.

I really had not expected the Cardinals to elect a new Holy Father so quickly!
SAYING GOOD-BYE—As the March issue of The Catholic Lighthouse was getting printed the chancery staff was bidding Cindy Brewer, editor, (center) farewell. She was honored for more than 10 years of service to the diocese. Also pictured above is Mike Brown, left, and Bishop David Fellhauer, right.

Eighteen area men receive papal honors

Continued from p. 1

order are: Charles Bluntzer of Victoria; Gerald Durocher of Edna; Luis Guerra, Judge Joseph P. Kelly, Harvey Kocian, Ed Lehnert, all of Victoria; Gerry Mikeska of El Campo; John McQuillen, Pete Moya both of Victoria; Garth Myers of Edna; John Porche of Edna; Hal Redmon, Monroe Rieger, John Stevenson all of Victoria; Dr. Bruce Turner of Wharton; Andrew Vasquez of Victoria; Greg Witcher of El Campo; and John Zacek of Inez.

The Order of the Knights of St. Gregory is a pontifical order of knighthood erected by Pope Gregory XVI on September 1, 1831, as a decoration for meritorious services of subjects of the Church, under the patronage of St. Gregory I. A bishop wishing to recommend an individual for this honor will draw up a suitable letter proposing the candidate’s name and forward it with his recommendation to the Apostolic Nuncio and will then usually forward the recommendation to the Secretariat of State. There the candidate’s name is considered carefully and, if approved, a diploma is drawn up in Latin (and the candidates forenames are translated into Latin) and this receives the signature and seal of the Cardinal Secretary of State. Membership in the Order is not now confined to any country, or to Catholics, but is a reward for any meritorious public service which benefits religion and the Holy See. At present there are three classes of knights: (1) Grand Cross Knights; (2) Commanders; (3) Knights.

The highest rank, that of Grand Cross, is an exceptional award - less than eight US citizens have received this honor in the past twenty-two years.

Eighteen area men receive papal honors
Seminary Burses

Seminary burses are a permanent fund used for the education of future priests for the Diocese of Victoria. The goal of each burse is $15,000. The interest from this amount is applied yearly to the education of seminarians. The burses are in memory of or in honor of an individual priest or lay persons, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date of Contribution</th>
<th>Benefactor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>As of March 25, 2013</td>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>$102,814.00</td>
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**— General Seminary Burse**

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<tr>
<td>In honor of Rev. Msgr. Gerry Cernoch's appointment as Msgr. by James and Marcia Zabrasky</td>
<td>50.00</td>
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<td>In memory of Adolph Kraatz by M/M Bob Bochat</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$102,814.00</strong></td>
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**— Sr. Denise Bowers, IWBS**

| In honor of Sr. Denise Bowers, IWBS and in memory of Ray and Helen Bowers by the Children of Ray and Helen Bowers | $10,000.00 |
| **Total** | **$10,000.00** |

**— Rev. Msgr. Michael A. O'Shaughnessy**

In loving memory of Rev. Msgr. Michael O'Shaughnessy by:

- M/M Bob Bochat | 25.00 |
- Gary and Sharon Rangnow | 25.00 |
- St. Joseph's Altar Society, Moulton | 100.00 |
- M/M Vernon Matusek | 50.00 |
- Al Hess Family | 20.00 |
- Otto “Jimmy” and Betty Borchers | 20.00 |
- Mrs. Mike (Janet) Mitchell | 10.00 |
- John J. Marek | 100.00 |
- Lee Ann Hatha | 50.00 |
- Bertha McDowell | 200.00 |
- Marlene Polka | 15.00 |
- Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters | 100.00 |
- Joe and Geraldine Jurica | 50.00 |
- Gertrude Elliott | 25.00 |
- Genevieve Wolter | 10.00 |
- Ms. Dolores M. Gabrysch | 20.00 |
- Charles and Sally Scholz | 200.00 |
- Mark and Jennifer Kallus | 30.00 |
- Edward and Marilyn Zolokski | 50.00 |
- Grace Rigamonti | 25.00 |
| **In memory of Benjamin and Dorothy Hyek by Grace Rigamonti** | **10.00** |
| **Total** | **$1,130.00** |

**— Our Lady of Victory Altar Society**

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<td>In memory of Bob Miori by Grace E. Rigamonti</td>
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<tr>
<td>In memory of Marie Zalesak by Grace E. Rigamonti</td>
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<td>In memory of Milton H. VanManen, Jr. by Grace E. Rigamonti</td>
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**— Rev. Msgr. Celestino Say**

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**— Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Burse #6**

| Previous Balance carried forward | $2,069.00 |
| In honor of Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters’ appointment as Msgr. by M/M James Zabrasky | 50.00 |
| David and Joyce Smolik | 25.00 |
| David and Carol Bohuslav | 100.00 |
| Evelyn and Barbara Haas | 20.00 |
| In memory of Ruth Hartenstein by M/M James Zabrasky | 50.00 |
| In memory of Frankie P. Klekar by Lillian Gohlke | 25.00 |
| In memory of Frankie P. Klekar and the deceased members of St. Mary’s Czech Choir by St. Mary’s Czech Choir, Hallettsville | 100.00 |
| Mr. John Hemmi | 100.00 |
| **Total** | **$2,539.00** |

**— Catholic Daughters of America Our Lady Queen of Peace Court #1374**

| Previously reported | $6,537.12 |
| In memory of Viola Bender and Mildred Schmidt by CDA Court | 110.00 |
| **Total** | **$6,647.12** |

**— Josephat R. Janak Burse #2**

| Previously reported | $2,398.77 |
| In honor of Rev. Gary Janak’s birthday celebration by M/M Jimmie Triska | 100.00 |
| **Total** | **$2,498.77** |

**— Knights of Columbus Victoria Council #1329 Burse #3**

| Previously reported | $12,857.50 |
| In memory of Isidore Ozuna by KC Council #1329, Victoria | 100.00 |
| **Total** | **$12,957.50** |

**— Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily**

| Previously reported | $11,349.00 |
| In honor of Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily’s appointment as Msgr. by M/M James Zabrasky | 50.00 |
| Johnny and Cynthia Barton | 50.00 |
| In memory of Ruth Hartenstein by M/M James Zabrasky | 50.00 |
| In memory of Buddy Michalke by Alice Michalke | 300.00 |
| **Total** | **$11,799.00** |

**— Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Bartsch**

| Previously reported | $6,848.00 |
| In loving memory of Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Bartsch on the 3rd anniversary of his death by Verna Goertz | 1,000.00 |
| Midge Christian Elam | 50.00 |
| **Total** | **$7,898.00** |

**— Rev. Monsignor Michael A. O’Shaughnessy**

Rev. Msgr. Michael A. O’Shaughnessy was born to John and Margaret O’Shaughnessy, Bettysty House, Asketon, County Limerick, Ireland on October 30, 1923. He was the sixth child of three girls and four boys. He attended the local National School through eighth grade and his high school was completed at a private Jesuit Boarding School. He graduated from Munster College of Philosophy in May, 1945, and the following year he entered St. John’s Seminary in San Antonio, Texas. He was ordained to the priesthood for the Archdiocese of San Antonio on May 27, 1950 by the Most Reverend Robert Lucey.

He served as parochial vicar in several parishes throughout the Archdiocese including St. Peter’s and St. Leo’s in San Antonio, Shiner, Moulton and Schulenburg. His first assignment as pastor was in Meyersville, then St. John Bosco in Vanderbit and St. Joseph’s in Yoakum. Monsignor was pastor of Our Lady of Victory Church in Victoria when the Church was chosen Cathedral of the newly formed Diocese of Victoria, Texas. He continued as pastor of the cathedral until he assumed duties as pastor of St. Agnes Church, Edna, Texas. He was named a Monsignor, Prelate of Honor to His Holiness, on May 16, 2001.

He has served as Diocesan Moderator of Council of Catholic Women, Diocesan Pastoral Council, Personnel Board, and Dean of the Edna Deanery. He was a member of the Knights of Columbus and of the Equestrian Order of the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre.

After 57 years of ministry in the priesthood, Monsignor retired in June, 2007, went to Ireland for five months, but returned in November, 2007 to take up residence at Copperfield Village, Victoria, Texas, an assisted living center. On June 19, 2012, he returned to Ireland and lived out his retirement near his family. He passed away on Saturday, March 2, 2013 in Ireland. Mass of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Asketon, Co. Limerick, Ireland on Thursday, March 7, 2013, with burial in the family cemetery.

He is survived by sisters-in-law and several nieces and nephews.

Condolences may be sent to the family at the following address: Mrs. Nora O’Shaughnessy, Bettysty House, Asketon, Co. Limerick, 061-398185, Ireland.

A Memorial Mass was celebrated at St. Agnes Church in Edna on Wednesday, March 13, 2013. The celebrant was Bishop David Fellhauer, assisted by priests of the Diocese of Victoria and Archdiocese of San Antonio.

Memorial contributions may be made to: Rev. Msgr. Michael A. O’Shaughnessy, Seminary Burse, Diocese of Victoria, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903

**Additional Burses for donations:**

- Rev. Jerome J. Stryk
- Rev. Msgr. Julius Petru Burse #2
- Rev. Joe Levy
- Rev. Marcus Valenta
- Rev. Godfrey F. Kuratko
- Rev. Msgr. John Hanacek
- Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas KJZT Burse #5
- Sophie Schmidt
- Rev. Sean Donohue Burse #2
- Rev. Msgr. Robert Schmidt
- Rev. Msgr. Vaclav Bily
- Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily
- St. Mary’s Church – Praha
- St. Mary’s Church – High Hill
- Holy Rosary Church – Hostyn Burse #2
- Rev. Charles Kram
- William L. Schmidt
- Deceased Priests of Praha
- Sr. M. Perpetua Haves, IWBS
- Jim Vacek Burse #2

- Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Victoria Assembly #1126
- Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Yoakum Assembly #1128 Burse #2
- Knights of Columbus 4th Degree Victoria Council #1329 Burse #3
- Knights of Columbus 4th Degree St. Michael’s Assembly Weimar #1527
- Knights of Columbus Holy Family Council #9088
- Knights of Columbus Council #3204 – Ganado Rev. Joseph Hybner

Those wishing to begin a burse or to contribute to an existing seminary burse may do so by sending their contributions with the appropriate burse designation to:

**SEMINARY BURSES**

DIOCESE OF VICTORIA

P. O. BOX 4070

VICTORIA, TX 77903
Adult Teams — 1st Place
Holy Cross PI’s – Holy Cross, East Bernard
Monica Kubena
Renee Haavinka
Maria Aldana

Family Teams — 1st Place
Wenske Family – St. Joseph, Moulton
Mary Ann Wenske
James Wenske

Teen Teams — 1st Place
Perpetual Motion Squad – Holy Family, Victoria
Cabott Hanes
Alex Pagel

Third Place: Bible Buddies – Sacred Heart, Hallettsville
3rd Place: Blue Albatrosses – Sacred Heart High School, Hallettsville

2013 Catholic Knowledge Bowl Winners

The Sixth Annual Catholic Knowledge Bowl was held March 3 at Holy Family Church in Victoria. This year there were 26 teams from throughout the Diocese of Victoria. There were four teams in the Family division, eight teams in the Teen division and 14 teams in the Adult division. Each team is made up of four individuals. The teams compete in three rounds of questions with 40 multiple choice questions in each round. The questions cover various aspects of the Catholic faith such as sacraments, scripture, church history etc. This year’s winners were:

Adult Teams
1st Place: Holy Cross PI’s – Holy Cross, East Bernard
2nd Place: KC Council #9088 – Holy Family, Victoria
3rd Place: Struggling Disciples – Sts. Peter and Paul, Meyersville

Family Teams
1st Place: Wenske Family – St. Joseph, Moulton
2nd Place: Mary’s Team – Sacred Heart, Hallettsville

Teen Teams
1st Place: Perpetual Motion Squad – Holy Family, Victoria
2nd Place: Blue Jems – Sacred Heart High School, Hallettsville
3rd Place: Blue Albatrosses – Sacred Heart High School, Hallettsville

Death Notice
Father Henry C. Rachunek
Just before going to press with the April issue of The Catholic Lighthouse, we were notified of the death of Father Henry C. Rachunek, 80. He served many parishes in the Arch-diocese of Galveston/Houston and the Diocese of Victoria prior to his retirement in 2010. We will have a full obituary in the May 2013 Catholic Lighthouse.

Looking for alumni of St. John’s / Assumption Seminary
Seminary to celebrate centennial

SAN ANTONIO—From August 2014 to October 2015, St. John’s/Assumption Seminary in San Antonio, will celebrate its 100 years of leadership in educating and preparing men for priestly ministry for the Archdiocese of San Antonio and other dioceses in Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma.

The St. John’s / Assumption Centennial Alumni Association wants to invite former students to participate in this celebration. This will be a year – long happening – beginning August 14, 2014, and concluding October 2, 2015. That October date in 1915, was the founding of the seminary.

Brief History:
The Diocese of San Antonio in 1874 initiated a system for training seminarians. Two years later, however, these early seminarians in San Antonio were transferred to Seguin, where a group of Jesuits exiled from Mexico had founded Guadalupe College. In 1880, students were moved to St. Joseph’s College in Victoria and continued to study there until 1902. Faced with a severe shortage of priests, an average of only one per every 1,000 square miles in the diocese, and a burgeoning population of Catholics intensified by the Revolution in Mexico, Bishop John W. Shaw opened a seminary in his residence in 1915. Five years later, the school was given the name of St. John’s Seminary and was relocated to a site adjacent to Immaculate Conception Mission. To read more about the history of St. John’s/Assumption Seminary go to http://assumptionseminary.org/history.aspx.

If you want to be on the mailing list for the various events please send your home and/or e-mail address to: Michael Davis, Assumption Seminary, 2600 W. Woodlawn Ave., San Antonio, TX 78218; e-mail: mike.davis@arcsa.org; phone: (210) 734-5137; or Msgr. John Peters, co-chairman, P. O. Drawer H, Hallettsville, TX 77964; Phone: (361) 798-5888.

DSA & Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign Updates

2013 DSA
Diocesan Goal: $1,721,343.00
Parish Pledge Totals: $243,340.11
Parish Contribution Totals: $1,152,912.35
Number of Parish Families Participating: 1,152

Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign
Diocesan Goal: $9,000,000.00
Parish Pledge Totals: $12,900,917.66
Parish Contribution Totals: $10,959,467.82
Number of Parish Families Participating: 6,769

FOURTH DEGREE KNIGHT—Father David Berger, pastor of the Cuero community was recently made a fourth degree knight in the Knights of Columbus. He was knighted with his own sword given to him by the KC Council #1682 of Cuero.
KC’s hosts catechism contest

The finals of the Sixth Annual Catechism Contest sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council 9088 were held in the Education Building at Holy Family Church in Victoria on February 23. Master of Ceremonies for the event was Clyde Cupo.

1st Wyatt Zimmermann, 2nd Syenna Svetlik, KC grand knight. The judges were Theresa Anderson, Wayne Gonzales and Cheryl Benavidez. Thanks to the generosity of the Knights of Columbus, the following prizes were awarded to each of the winners in grades 1-8. First Place: $100; Second Place: $30; Third Place: $20; and Fourth Place: $10.

Winners were as follows: Grade 1: 1st Wyatt Zimmermann, 2nd Syenna Rodriguez-Sittingdown; 3rd Kayla Immeokus, 4th Ariel Rutherford;

Grade 2: 1st Logan Berger and Joshua Bonorden, 3rd Jaclyn Chacon, 4th Kenna Risinger;

Grade 3: 1st Cassidy Zimmmermann, 2nd Wyatt Borden; 3rd Lucas Meyer; 4th Kiera Grimes;

Grade 4: 1st Xavier Moore, 2nd Emma Pratka; 3rd Megan Mitchell, 4th Kieran Grimes;

Grade 5: 1st Jayden Kueker, 2nd Jake Risinger; 3rd Emilee Lema 4th Branton Winkenwerder;

Grade 6: 1st Alexander Bonorden, 2nd Scott Olsovsky, 3rd Vynz Semilla, 4th Gypsy Leal;

Grade 7: 1st Myah Mallory, 2nd Michael DiSanto, 3rd Dillon Sievers, 4th Meredith Winkenwerder;

Grade 8: 1st Sean Casey, 2nd Andrew Moore; 3rd Brandon Svatek, 4th Benjamin Cupo.

To qualify for the finals, the students took a written test in the classroom and made one of the four top scores in each grade. The students were given a “question-answer” type booklet during the year and encouraged to study ten minutes each night.

Pray for Vocations!

Alonso Gonzales is in College I at St. Joseph Seminary in Saint Benedict, Louisiana. His home parish is St. Mary, Victoria and his birthday is May 1. Please show your support for this seminar by writing to: Alonso Gonzales, St. Joseph Seminary, 75376 River Rd., Saint Benedict, LA 70457.

Kristopher Fuchs is in Theology II at Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. His home parish is St. Michael the Archangel, Needville, and his birthday is May 13. Please show your support for this seminar by writing to: Kristopher Fuchs, Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43235.

Happy Birthday!

Alonso Gonzales is in College I at St. Joseph Seminary in Saint Benedict, Louisiana. His home parish is St. Mary, Victoria and his birthday is May 1. Please show your support for this seminar by writing to: Alonso Gonzales, St. Joseph Seminary, 75376 River Rd., Saint Benedict, LA 70457.

Kristopher Fuchs is in Theology II at Pontifical College Josephinum in Columbus, Ohio. His home parish is St. Michael the Archangel, Needville, and his birthday is May 13. Please show your support for this seminar by writing to: Kristopher Fuchs, Pontifical College Josephinum, 7625 North High Street, Columbus, OH 43235.

SEMINARIANS SERVING AT CHRISM MASS—Diocesan seminarians were able to serve at the Chrism Mass at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral on March 26. The schools give the seminarians an opportunity to go back to their diocese for Holy Week. Those serving at the Chrism Mass this year were, front l-r, Jacob Mendoza, Scott Hill, Francis Nguyen; back l-r, Stephen Vacek, Jacob Koether, Kristopher Fuchs and Philip Brune, who will be ordained as a transitional deacon at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral on May 11, along with Jasper Liggio.

BLESSING OF THE OILS—Bishop David E. Fellhauer blesses the three oils, which will be used by the priests of the diocese in their parishes and ministries. The Oil of the Catechumens is used in baptism. The Oil of the Sick is used in administering the Sacrament of the Sick and Holy Chrism, which is used in baptism, confirmation and when a man is ordained to the priesthood. Here the bishop is pouring balsam into the urn containing olive oil, prior to blessing the oil of the Holy Chrism. Assisting the bishop is seminarian Philip Brune.

Silent day retreat of listening

Amor Meus Spirituality Center invites you to a silent day of listening to the voice of God speaking in the stillness of your heart. The topic of the retreat will be, “Developing and deepening a Love Relationship with God.” Join us on Saturday, April 13, from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Come and enjoy God’s nature and experience peace and quiet. Women and men are welcomed. The day is guided by a retreat director.

For more information call IWBS Convention at (361) 575-7111.
Your Excellency,

His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI was pleased to receive the kind letter which you sent him on behalf of the faithful of the Diocese of Victoria following the announcement of his resignation, and he has asked me to thank you for your expression of support and gratitude. During this Year of Faith he joins you in praying that the whole Church will be strengthened in confident trust in the provident care of her Risen Lord and receive a renewed outpouring of the Spirit’s gifts of holiness, unity and peace.

Assuring you and all those entrusted to your pastoral care of a continued remembrance in his prayers, His Holiness cordially joins you in praying that the whole Church will be strengthened in confident trust in the provident care of her Risen Lord and receive a renewed outpouring of the Spirit’s gifts of holiness, unity and peace.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone
Substitute
Secretariat of State

Your Excellency,

At the Holy Father’s direction, I am writing to acknowledge the sum of $49,038.05 which you kindly forwarded to the Apostolic Nunciature as the Peter’s Pence offering of the Diocese of Victoria for the year 2012.

His Holiness thanks you and your people for this charitable contribution, which assists him in the exercise of his ministry. He deeply appreciates your willingness to share in his concern for the needs of the universal Church.

Praying that Almighty God will grant joy and peace to you and to all those entrusted to your pastoral care, the Holy Father cordially imparts his Apostolic Blessing.

Yours sincerely in Christ,
Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone
Substitute
Secretariat of State

Dear Bishop Fellhauer:

On behalf of Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I extend my gratitude for your contribution of $37,571.46 from the 2012 Catholic Relief Services Collection in your diocese.

The collection supports six Catholic agencies whose programs help families suffering from war, famine, extreme poverty, and natural disasters. They also aid the victims of human trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and immigrants trying to reunite with their family members.

Please convey to your priests and parishioners our heartfelt gratitude for their commitment and generosity to The Catholic Relief Services Collection. They demonstrate genuine love and compassion for all who are helped by the collection — our brothers and sisters who are truly Jesus in disguise.

Gratefully yours in Christ,
Most Rev. Dennis M. Schnurr
Archbishop of Cincinnati
Chairman, Committee on National Collections

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS

**Behold, I Make All Things New**

*(Rev 21:5)*

**P**ope John Paul II, of happy memory, wrote that every age the true and perennial “newness of things” comes from the infinite power of God, who says: “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev 21:5). “Newness” is all around us now as the Church celebrates the marvelous Resurrection of Christ who broke through the darkness and emptiness which had shrouded humanity since the fall of Adam and Eve. The hope of generations of believers in the one true God has become a reality! We have been redeemed through the passion, death, and Resurrection of Jesus, our Savior.

Moreover, we have just been blessed with a “new” pope to guide the Church through these tumultuous times. It’s not every year that we celebrate a new pope during the Easter Season. May our faith be renewed as we continue to honor and respect this pope who has been chosen to be the successor of St. Peter whom Christ had commissioned to shepherd his Church. May there be a renewal throughout the whole Church and may all of us be instrumental in the New Evangelization to which all of us are called.

The idea of “newness of time” is also manifested in all of nature about us. The trees are dressed in their bright green finery which is evidence of their new growth which follows the dormancy of the winter.

Therefore we are assured that God is among us taking care of them and each of us. I love to spend part of my personal prayer time in the early morning outdoors. God seems to speak to me—through the magnificence of the sky, the pleasantness of the temperature, the songs of the birds, and the blossoming of the plants—confirming that “newness of things” does indeed come from the infinite power of God, who says: “Behold, I make all things new” (Rev 21:5). Let us all rejoice in this newness!

**Discernment Weekend**

The Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament are hosting a Discernment Weekend for single Catholic women between the ages of 18 and 50 years of age on April 13-14, at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. If you are interested in learning more about deepening your prayer life and about religious life or in discovering if God might be calling you to consecrated life, please call (361) 575-7111 or e-mail iwhsvoc@yahoo.com or check www.iwhsvictoria.org for more information about the Sisters.
**Youth Calendar of Events**

**Saturday, April 13** – Foundations - Retreat Formation  
**Wednesday, April 17** – Deadline to register for Rocky Mountain High Retreat  
**Friday, May 24** – Deadline to register for Camp David  
**Sunday, June 2** – Rocky Mountain High Parent Meeting – 3:00 p.m.  
**Thursday, June 6** – D-Week money due  
**Sunday, June 9** – Tuesday, June 11 – Session 1 for Jr. High Camp David  
**Wednesday, June 12** – Elementary Camp David  
**Wednesday, June 12** – Friday, June 14 – Session 2 for Jr. High Camp David  
**Monday, June 24** – Thursday, June 27 – D-Week  
**Saturday, June 29** – Sunday, July 7 – Rocky Mountain High Retreat  
**Sunday, July 14** – Wednesday, July 17 – Vocation Camp

Find us now on Facebook! At Diocese of Victoria – Youth Ministry

For more information contact:
Wendy Eggert at the Office of Youth Ministry at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2232, e-mail at weggert@victoriadiocese.org
Cassandria Hybner, administrative assistant, ext. 2250 e-mail at chybner@victoriadiocese.org
new youth office e-mail ym@victoriadiocese.org or visit our website at www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice

**ANNUAL DONATION**—Catholic Daughters of the Americas #1374 Regent (and St. Philip 5th grade teacher), Diann Srubar, right, presents a donation of $1,000 to St. Philip Catholic School Principal, Gwen Edwards. The Catholic Daughters budget each year to make a donation to the school. Helping with the presentation are some of Mrs. Srubar’s students.

**Sacred Heart Catholic School hosts their first Catholic Knowledge Bowl**

HALLETTSVILLE – Sacred Heart Catholic School is taking the Year of Faith seriously. To help students and families study their faith in a fun way, a Catholic Knowledge Bowl was held during Catholic School Week. Scattered across Sacred Heart Catholic School gym, on February 1, were clusters of four with siblings, cousins, moms, dads and grandmas seeking to prove that their family is taking this Year of Faith seriously. Nearby teams of junior high and senior high students vied to take the honors of Catholic Scholars. All were excited and eager to get started.

Questions covering all aspects of the Catholic Faith: Scripture, sacraments, liturgy, saints, Catholic identity, Church history were read and projected on screens for the team members to decide which answer they thought was correct. At the end of each session, while the answer sheets of the 30 competing teams were graded, participants and audience alike were given the correct answers to see how they did. After an hour and a half, the three rounds were over and all awaited the announcement of winners with anticipation. Prizes were awarded to the winners in each division.

**High School division:** First place: Team Awesome- Megan Harper, Calen Janak, Stephanie Sykora, Elizabeth Wysocki; Second place: Gold Team- Colton Bludau, Danson Bludau, Sabrina Koerth, Michael Zaruba; and Third Place: The Marshmellows- Lucas Allen, Cole Easterling, Chris Kunz, Brady Stika.

**Junior High division:** First place: Smolik’s Angels-McKenzie Bludau, Jylann Hicks, Emilie Mudd, Abigail Ross; Second place: Magi Masters-Jordan Janak, Cullen Mikes, Cole Mullen, Jacob Rivers; Third place: Religious Boys- Lane Leopold, Ryan Mudd, Connor Popp, Blake Shimiek.

**Winners in the Family division were:** First place: The Harper Harpers-Ella, Luke, William and Mrs. Dorothy Harper. They were also the overall winners with the highest score, having missed only two of the 60 questions! Second place: Burroughs Bunch-Anna Marie, David, Dusty, and Mrs. Colette Burroughs; Third place: The Prayerful Posse- Macy, Melea, Kim and Robert Henke.

Our congratulations to all who participated. Many are already talking about next year’s Catholic Knowledge Bowl. Several teams did not wait and participated in the Diocesan Bowl in Victoria held on March 3. See page 5 for results.

**OLV TO COMPETE AT PSIA STATE MEET**—Forty-six students of Our Lady of Victory School in Victoria will compete at the 2013 Private Schools Interscholastic Association Academic State Meet on April 27 at Texas Christian in Fort Worth. These students advanced to the State Competition by placing first or second in their grade-level contests at the PSIA District Meet held at Our Lady of Victory School in February. State qualifiers are Bottom row (l to r)- Mia Mabray, Aleeza Malik, Anjali Gaalla, Samantha Blackwood, Sarah Ybarra, Jackson Stefka, Rishabh Kathpalia, Hannah Zimmerman, Emma Koch, Alexis Garza, Kaitlyn Hermann; 2nd row-Neha Chandna, Alex Angerstein, Hannah Haug, Andres Ramos, Matthew Janak, Carson Young, Ricky Gonzales, Pranav Jain, Kelsey Ellett, Grace Hammad, Robbie Alcasabas; 3rd row-Nick Soto, Collin Omecinski, Seth Theriot, Michael Choi, Conner Schilhab, Jacob Bordovsky, Hayley Fleener, Sarah Rosas, Gina Tames, Alisa Novosad, CJ Wagner; Top row-Connor Velasco, Alex Corpuz, Helena Varando, Angelina Vincent, Benjamin Boyle, Shubham Kathpalia, Logan Rivera, Teresa Nguyen, Sarah Sabbagh and Jyotirmaya Jain. Not pictured are: Elisison High, Lauren Theriot and Taylor Dohmann.

**Prayer Before Leaving for the Day**

Dear God,
Please bless each of us as we leave today to go to (name destination). Please help us remember that you go with us wherever we are. Help us to bring you to others and see you in the people we are with today. And please keep us safe until we are back together again. Amen.

Reprinted from Amen! prayers for families with children
We have a Pope

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS)—Here are excerpts of statements from U.S. Catholic leaders released in reaction to the March 13 election of Argentine Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio as pope. He chose the name Francis, after St. Francis of Assisi. His election came on the first full day of the conclave on the conclave’s fifth ballot:

- Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston: “I rejoice with all the Catholics of the world in the election of Pope Francis. His life as a disciple of Jesus Christ and his service as a Jesuit priest and as Archbishop of the local Church of Buenos Aires have prepared him for his universal pastoral service as successor of St. Peter. His great sense of humility, his eloquent preaching of the Faith and his life of simplicity and dedication to the poor already mark him as a fitting Bishop of Rome and Pope of the Universal Church. May I also add how privileged I was to participate in the conclave. It was a humbling and enriching experience.”

- Archbishop John J. Myers of Newark, N.J.: “I believe His Holiness has the qualities needed for the papacy today. He has a pastor’s heart. He has administrative skills needed to address the issues of the church’s administration. He also has a significant understanding of the Vatican. ... His Jesuit training and experience as a teacher will serve us all well. ... That he comes from a different part of the world shouldn’t surprise anyone.”

- Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami: “A simple man. A humble man. A man of God. The first Jesuit, the first Argentine, the first pope from the New World, and the first to take the name Francis. The Holy Spirit is capable of rendering great surprises! ... The Holy Spirit has spoken. The Holy Spirit remains with Christ’s church and his people.”

- Archbishop Jose H. Gomez of Los Angeles: “I have had the privilege of knowing our new Holy Father through our work together on the Pontifical Commission for Latin America. It is a beautiful sign to have a new pope who is the first pope from the Americas, from the New World. The election of Pope Francis is a call for all of us to strive for holiness and to work to make our countries and our continents a ‘new world of faith.’”

- Ukrainian Archbishop Stefan Soroka of Philadelphia: “The vision of the Catholic Church breathing with two lungs, both East and West, advocated by Blessed Pope John Paul II will undoubtedly be fostered by the Holy Father. The hierarchy, clergy, religious and faithful of the Ukrainian Catholic Church in the United States of America pledge our love and our loyalty to the new Holy Father.”

- Cardinal Sean P. O’Malley of Boston: “At Caesarea Philippi, Jesus commissioned St. Peter, the rock upon which the church would be built. Pope Francis continues that mission in an increasingly secular culture, where many people have not come to know or have forgotten that Jesus is our savior and redeemer. ... We pledge our faithful support for the Holy Father as he leads the church in proclaiming the new evangelization, inviting all people to develop a closer relationship with Christ and to share that gift with others.”

- Leadership Conference of Women Religious: “(Cardinal Bergoglio) demonstrated great dedication to the mission of the church during his leadership in Argentina. As he serves in the papacy, we trust that his many gifts will continue to be spent on behalf of the universal church, and most especially for people who live in poverty in all parts of the world. As a conference of leaders of orders of Catholic sisters in the United States, we ... look forward to working with him in carrying forth the Gospel message.”

- Conference of Major Superiors of Men: “As men called to consecrated life in service to the church, we find in your election a moment of encouragement, inspiration and challenge. Recognizing your training and spiritual heritage as a member of the Society of Jesus, we are encouraged that you will have special insight into our lives as consecrated persons.”

Bishop David E. Fellhauer

Election of Latin American pope called ‘beautiful sign’ for the church

Like many others, I was somewhat surprised and greatly delighted at the election of Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio, Pope Francis. Our Catholic faith assures us that the Lord Jesus is always with His Church, guiding it and filling it with His grace and presence. We can be confident that the Holy Spirit was at work in the deliberations and voting of the Cardinal electors. I trust that the new Pope will be foremost in our prayers these days, that God will give him peace, enlightenment, and courage as he begins his Petrine ministry.

Bishop David E. Fellhauer
Changes in style send clear message from Pope Francis

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis had been pope for less than six days when he was formally installed March 19, but he had already made a distinctive and overwhelmingly favorable impression on the world.

That is an especially remarkable accomplishment given that, until his election, the former Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio had been practically unknown to the public outside his native Argentina.

His abrupt change in style from the previous pontificate has overwhelmingly charmed the press and the public. But among the hierarchy, off-the-record sentiments seem to be more mixed: admiration at the ease with which Pope Francis has assumed his new role, alongside doubts that he can or should keep up such an unconventional approach for long.

The new pope made an immediate impact with his extraordinary gestures of humility: bowing and asking the crowd’s blessing on election night, paying his own hotel bill and eschewing papal regalia such as red shoes and a gold pectoral cross; and with his displays of spontaneity, such as straying from prepared texts and stopping to greet the crowd on a Rome street.

Especially within the Vatican, there are surely many who inwardly regret the clear signs that informality will be the rule in this pontificate. After all, honors and decorations are among the few worldly rewards legitimately available to those in the hierarchy. More importantly, anyone who understands the significance of appearances in Italian and thus in Vatican culture understands that Pope Francis’ changes indicate a threat to something more vital than vanity.

As pastor of the universal church, a pope must consider how his gestures, statements and decisions will be received by the widest possible audience. Pope Francis’ shows of humility and accessibility plainly underscore his avowed desire that the church be close to the poorest and least powerful, a message he reinforced explicitly in the homily at his installation Mass.

Vatican workers join pope for early morning Masses

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Dressed in orange safety vests, green jumpsuits or other workers’ attire, Vatican gardeners, garbage collectors and cleaning crews joined Pope Francis for a 7 a.m. Mass March 22.

Usually in the Vatican, “we’re the invisible ones,” Luciano Cecchetti, coordinator of the Vatican gardeners and sanitation workers, told Vatican Radio after the Mass. “To find ourselves before the Holy Father, at a Mass for us, is something that doesn’t happen every day. I turned and looked at the faces of the employees: We all left there misty-eyed,” he said.

After the Mass, there was time for private prayers, Pope Francis joined the others, going to a seat in the last row of chairs in the chapel of the Domus Sanctae Marthae, where he is staying.

Before the employees headed back to work, Pope Francis greeted each one of them.

Almost all of the gardeners, Cecchetti said, offered to give the pope a guided visit of the Vatican Gardens. “He didn’t say no,” he said.

Father Lombardi said the pope also had special guests at Mass March 21: the cooks, cleaning crew and other staff of the Domus Sanctae Marthae.

Pope explains how he chose St. Francis of Assisi’s name

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis said that “as things got dangerous” in the conclave voting, he was sitting next to his “great friend,” Brazilian Cardinal Claudio Hummes “who comforted me.” When the former Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio went over the 77 votes needed to become pope, he said, Cardinal Hummes “hugged me, kissed me and said, ‘Don’t forget the poor.’”

Pope Francis told thousands of journalists March 16 that he took to heart the words of his friend and chose to be called after St. Francis of Assisi, “the man of poverty, the man of peace, the man who loves and protects creation,” the same created world “with which we don’t have such a good relationship.” “How I would like a church that is poor and that is for the poor,” he told the more than 5,000 media representatives who came from around the world for the conclave and his election. The pope acknowledged how difficult it is for many media to cover the church as a spiritual, rather than a political institution, and he offered special thanks “to those who were able to observe and recount these events in the story of the church from the most correct perspective in which they must be read, that of faith.” The church, he said, “is the people of God, the holy people of God, because it is journeying toward an encounter with Jesus Christ.” No one can understand the church without understanding its spiritual purpose, he said. Thanking the reporters for all their hard work, Pope Francis also asked them to continue trying “to discover the true nature of the church and its journey through the world, with its virtues as well as its sins.”

Pope Francis to live in Vatican guesthouse, not papal apartments

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis has decided not to move into the papal apartments in the Apostolic Palace, but to live in a suite in the Vatican guesthouse where he has been since the beginning of the conclave that elected him, said Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman.

“He is experimenting with this type of living arrangement, which is simple,” but allows him “to live in community with others,” both the permanent residents – priests and bishops who work at the Vatican – as well as guests coming to the Vatican for meetings and conferences, Father Lombardi said March 26.

The spokesman said Pope Francis has moved out of the room he drew by lot before the conclave and into Suite 201, a room that has slightly more elegant furnishings and a larger living room where he can receive guests.

The Domus Sanctae Marthae, the official name of the guesthouse, was built in 1996 specifically to house cardinals during a conclave.

Pope Francis has been there since his election March 13, taking his meals in the common dining room downstairs and celebrating a 7 a.m. Mass with Vatican employees in the main chapel of the residence.

He will be the first pope in 110 years not to live in the papal apartments on the third floor of the Apostolic Palace.
At first Angelus, Pope Francis says God never tires of forgiving

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Citing a distinguished German theologian and an anonymous elderly penitent from Argentina, Pope Francis told an overflow crowd in St. Peter’s Square never to despair of God’s mercy to sinners. “The Lord never tires of forgiving,” the pope said March 17, before leading his listeners in praying the midday Angelus. “It is we who tire of asking for forgiveness.” Pope Francis, who was elected March 13, spoke from his window in the Apostolic Palace for the first time. Despite gray skies, a crowd easily numbering 150,000 turned out to see the pope for his first scheduled appearance in St. Peter’s Square since the night of his election. He opened with an expression of what has already become his trademark informality, greeting listeners with a simple “buongiorno!” Commenting on the day’s Gospel reading (Jn 8:1-11), Pope Francis noted that Jesus addresses a woman caught in adultery, not with words of scorn or condensation, “but only words of love, of mercy, which invite her to conversion: ‘Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin any more.’” Pope Francis referred to a book on the subject of mercy by German Cardinal Walter Kasper, retired president of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, whom he described as a “superb theologian. This book has done me so much good,” Pope Francis said, apparently referring to a work published in 2012 under the German title “Barmherzigkeit” (Mercy). “Cardinal Kasper said that to feel mercy, this word changes everything,” the pope said. “A little mercy makes the world less cold and more just.”

Pope pleads renewed cooperation, Jewish leaders praise election

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis said he plans renewed cooperation to further Catholic-Jewish relations and hopes to contribute to a world where all people live in harmony with the “will of the creator.” In a message to Chief Rabbi Riccardo di Segni of Rome, the pope said he “profoundly hopes to be able to contribute to the progress that Jewish-Catholic relations have seen starting from the Second Vatican Council, in a spirit of renewed collaboration.” He said he also hoped to be “at the service of a world that may grow in harmony with the will of the creator.”

The pope sent his “cordial greetings” to the head of Rome’s Jewish community the evening of his election March 13 and told the rabbi his installation Mass would be held March 19. The Vatican released a copy of the message to journalists March 15. The Vatican newspaper, L’Osservatore Romano, “reported Rabbi di Segni planned to attend the installation Mass. The rabbi sent his best wishes to the new pope hoping his leadership would be graced with “strength and wisdom in the formidable task that has been entrusted” to Pope Francis.

Pope Francis will lead era of new evangelization, says Knights leader

ROME (CNS)—The pontificate of Pope Francis will be one of new evangelization and one that will “reach out in new ways to laymen and laywomen,” said Carl Anderson, supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus. Anderson noted that already the pope has given the laity an “urgent call” in his first words, stressing the need for “a more active and intense shouldering of the works of charity.” The laity must “stand up and shoulder that responsibility, and I think we have a Holy Father who will lead us in that direction,” he told Catholic News Service March 18. He said the cardinals’ election of Argentine Cardinal Jorge Mario Bergoglio as pope makes it seem as if they were focusing on retired Pope Benedict’s 2009 encyclical, “Caritas in Veritate” (“Charity in Truth.”) He said Pope Francis has a “unique solidarity with the poor and those in need” that he hopes will impact the church, especially affluent Catholics in North America, to begin to have solidarity with those in poverty and in need of help.

“Pope Benedict told us in his encyclical that the church is one big family and that no one should lack the necessities of life, so I hope with this new pope, Pope Francis, we will begin to live that out in even greater ways,” he said.

PRIVATE MEETING BETWEEN EMERITUS POPE AND POPE—Emeritus Pope Benedict XVI talks with Pope Francis at the papal summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, March 23. Pope Francis travelled by helicopter from the Vatican to Castel Gandolfo for a private meeting with the retired pontiff. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano via Reuters)

Pope meets with Argentine president, superior general of Jesuits

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis held an informal, private meeting and lunch with Argentine President Cristina Fernandez de Kirchner March 18. The previous day, the pope met with the superior general of the Jesuits, Father Adolfo Nicolas, but the Vatican released no information about that meeting. The closed-door meeting with Fernandez was held in the Vatican’s Domus Sanctae Marthae residence March 18. The meeting lasted about 15-20 minutes, said the Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi. The pope also greeted Fernandez’s presidential delegation at the residence, where he is living until the papal apartment has been renovated. Father Lombardi told journalists there would be no official communique from the Vatican about the meeting since the encounter was “very informal.” Pope Francis and “Los Kirchner” – Fernandez and her late husband, former President Nestor Kirchner – occasionally clashed over social issues such as gay marriage and abortion. During one Mass for public officials, Pope Francis criticized perceived corruption, and the presidential couple reportedly began attending Mass outside the city. Nestor Kirchner, who died in 2010, served as president 2003-2007, when he was succeeded by Fernandez. However, Pope Francis also spoke out against corruption in governments prior to the 2001 Argentine economic crisis, said Sergio Berenzstein, an independent political analyst in Buenos Aires.

Pope Francis calls his predecessor, wishing him happy name day

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Pope Francis telephoned retired Pope Benedict XVI, the former Joseph Ratzinger, to wish him a happy “name day” on the feast of St. Joseph. Pope Benedict has been following the many events taking place in Rome, especially the Mass, March 19, which formally marked the start of his successor’s ministry as bishop of Rome and as pope, the Vatican said. The retired pope, who has been living at the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo, outside Rome, since Feb. 28, “has followed with strong interest the events these past days, especially this morning’s celebration” inaugurating Pope Francis’ ministry, the Vatican said in a written statement March 19. Pope Benedict assured “his successor of his continued closeness in prayer,” the statement said. Pope Francis called the retired pope in the late afternoon March 19 to send him best wishes on the feast of St. Joseph “and show him once more his and the church’s gratitude for his service,” the Vatican said. The telephone conversation was “lengthy and cordial,” the Vatican said. During the March 19 Mass marking his installation, Pope Francis told the some 150,000 participants that it was a “coincidence rich in significance” that the start of his ministry would fall on the same day as the feast of St. Joseph, husband of Mary and patron of the universal church, and “also the name day of my venerable predecessor.”
Pope Francis begins papacy pledging to protect church, human dignity

By Cindy Wooden

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis formally began his ministry as bishop of Rome and as pope by pledging to protect the Catholic Church, the dignity of each person and the beauty of creation, just like St. Joseph protected Mary and Jesus.

“To protect creation, to protect every man and every woman, to look upon them with tenderness and love is to open up a horizon of hope,” he told between 150,000 and 200,000 people gathered under sunny skies in St. Peter’s Square and the nearby streets.

With representatives of other Christian churches and communities, delegations from 132 countries, Jewish and Muslim leaders as well as Buddhists, Hindus, Sikhs and Jains present, Pope Francis preached the Gospel, but insisted the values it espouses are essentially human, “involving everyone.”

While the rites and rituals of the inauguration of his ministry as pope took place immediately before the Mass, the liturgy itself was a celebration of the feast of St. Joseph, patron of the universal church and “also the name day of my venerable predecessor,” Pope Benedict XVI, the former Joseph Ratzinger.

The retired pope was not present at the liturgy, but the crowds applauded enthusiastically when Pope Francis said, “We are close to him with our prayers, full of affection and gratitude.”

“In the Gospels,” he said, “St. Joseph appears as a strong and courageous man, a working man, yet in his heart we see great tenderness, which is not the virtue of the weak, but rather a sign of strength of spirit and a capacity for concern, for compassion, for genuine openness to others, for love.”

“We must not be afraid of goodness, of tenderness,” Pope Francis said.

The new pope said exercising the role of protector as St. Joseph means doing so “discreetly, humbly and silently, but with an unfailing presence and utter fidelity, even when he finds it hard to understand.”

The Gospels present St. Joseph as a husband to Mary, “at her side in good times and bad,” and as a father who watched over Jesus, worried about him and taught him a trade, the pope said.

St. Joseph responded to his call to be a protector “by being constantly attentive to God, open to the signs of God’s presence and receptive to God’s plans, and not simply his own,” the pope said.

Fidelity to God’s word and God’s plan for individuals and for all of creation makes the difference, he said, calling on everyone to be sensitive and loving toward those in their care, especially toward children, the aged, the poor and the sick.

“In the end, everything has been entrusted to our protection, and all of us are responsible for it,” he said. “Be protectors of God’s gifts.”

When people fail to respect creation, when they ignore “God’s plan inscribed in nature,” or when they treat each other with disrespect, he said, “the way is opened to destruction, and hearts are hardened.”

“Tragically, in every period of history there are ‘Herods’ who plot death, wreak havoc and mar the countenance of men and women,” he said.

Pope Francis asked the government leaders present and all those with responsibility in the field of economics, politics and social life to stand firm when destruction and death threaten human dignity, human life and the environment. He met with the heads of the government delegations after the Mass.

Caring for others, he said in his homily, must begin with watching over one’s own heart, mind and actions, resisting “hatred, envy and pride” and emotions that can tear others down.

Pope Francis told the people he realized his new ministry included “a certain power,” but it is the same power Jesus conferred on St. Peter, which was the “power of service” seen in Jesus’ charge to St. Peter: “Feed my lambs. Feed my sheep.”

“Let us never forget that authentic power is service and that the pope, too, when exercising power, must enter ever more fully into that service which has its radiant culmination on the cross,” he said.

“He must be inspired by the lowly, concrete and faithful service which marked St. Joseph and, like him, he must open his arms to protect all of God’s people and embrace with tender affection the whole of humanity, especially the poorest, the weakest, the least important,” Pope Francis said.

“Only those who serve with love are able to protect,” he said.

Pope Francis celebrates his inaugural Mass in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican March 19. (CNS photo/Paul Hanna, Reuters)

Pope Francis makes his way through the crowd gathered in St. Peter’s Square for new pontiff’s inaugural Mass at the Vatican March 19. (CNS photo/Chris Warde-Jones)

Pope Francis shakes hands with U.S. Vice President Joe Biden in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican March 19 as the new pontiff receives dignitaries following his inaugural Mass. Biden led the U.S. delegation to the ceremonies. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano)

People watch the televised broadcast of the inaugural Mass of Pope Francis on a giant screen outside of the Metropolitan Cathedral in Buenos Aires, Argentina, March 19. (CNS photo/Marcos Brindicci, Reuters)
Last spring, I wanted a statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. My web search yielded many images, including a few of the Infant of Prague. I made my decision on the Sacred Heart statue and placed the order, but I couldn’t stop thinking about the Infant of Prague images.

Every now and then, my former Protestant bias resurfaces. It happened last spring as I studied the images of the Infant of Prague. I did not feel any affection for this devotion. Not a bit. I’ve learned to pause when I feel like this and try to go deeper. What was it about this image that bothered me?

The clothes. Yes, the clothes and the crown — it was all so ostentatious. It didn’t fit with the Christ Child who chose to be born in a stable or the Messiah who deliberately chose His own parents from the poorest of the poor. I tried to tell myself that I was being ridiculous because, of course, Jesus is the king of kings. Perhaps the outward appearance of this little Child reflected the spiritual reality of Jesus Christ, king of heaven and earth.

Further research revealed that St. Teresa of Avila had a great devotion to the Infant of Prague. That didn’t help.

But I paused because something amazing happens every time I agree to let God give me an attitude adjustment.

About that time, my youngest grandson was on my mind. He’s never been baptized, and his mom (my daughter) had never settled in any church or denomination. I pray about this every time I receive the Eucharist.

I began to realize that there was a link in my mind between the Infant of Prague and my infant grandson, Omry. Every time I thought about the Infant of Prague, I felt I could entrust my grandson to the one who held the world in the palm of His divine, albeit infant, hand.

Last June, I went to our parish rummage sale. I was almost ready to pay for my items when I saw a print of the Infant of Prague. The colors were muted, the child’s face — lovely. It was different from all the images I had seen online. I muttered something and walked over to it. “I want this, too,” I told the cashier. Another web image sale. I was almost ready to pay for it. And then I saw the story, interwoven with the stories, the joys, hopes, and tragedies of immigrants who have come to Houston, and an impassioned plea for a change in the political and economic forces that drive people to immigrate.

After living in El Salvador and witnessing the cost of the political violence and economic hardship there, Mark and Louise founded Casa Juan Diego in Houston. A city that has become a destination for waves of refugees from Mexico and Central America. They see only the face of Christ regardless of immigration status.

In the book they analyze some of the causes of the economic imbalances that result in destitution south of the U.S. border, in countries where people toil in factories with little or nothing, only to see the fruits of their labor shipped to the affluent north. Why would these victims of injustice not seek a better life for themselves and their children?


Enter the drawing and you could be the winner of this book.

Puzzle Contest Winners Drawn

The winner of the March puzzle contest and the book “Back Tracking” by I.T. Taylor is Thomas Kuhn of St. Anthony Parish in Columbus. The winners of the children’s contest are Cathy T. Wenske (9) of St. Joseph Parish in Moulton and Brock Rod (8) of St. Philip the Apostle School in El Campo (sent in with class). They each will receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop. The winner of the April contest will win “Mercy With Out Borders - The Catholic Worker and Immigration” by Mark and Louise Zwick. More about the book is at the left.

If you have not won the puzzle contest within the past six months, please mail completed April puzzle form to The Catholic Lighthouse Office, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903, by April 26, 2013, for a chance to win the book.

The Catholic Lighthouse has 9 of the last 18 “Back Tracking” books, at $20 each, with proceeds going to the office of The Catholic Lighthouse, Diocese of Victoria, at the request of the family estate.
Finding our calling also means finding a path toward joy

How do I know what God’s will is for me?
That is a wise question. God wants you to rise from the dead and attain eternal salvation. You are already united to his glorified body by your baptism. But the secret of happiness and holiness rests in your fidelity to the will of God as it is manifested in the duties of the present. That means you should strive to live in the present. Be attentive to the needs of others.

The fulfillment we’ve found during our journey toward Easter is more about being in the present moment. One day you will be united with God in paradise, but for the present we are on our earthly pilgrimage to find joy and strive to be holy.

Real holiness is more about being in love than it is about doing good deeds. The two go together, however. Blessed Teresa of Calcutta explained the connection, “It’s not about how much you do, but how much love you put into what you do that counts.”

For some, this means finding their calling in life. “But how do I find my calling?” some may be asking.

Do not confuse the idea of finding a calling with that of being called to a religious vocation. Few people are called to the priesthood or to the religious life, but everyone is called to holiness, including priests and sisters.

The essential calling of every Christian is to love and honor almighty God first. We do that best by living joyfully. In this joy we find the knowledge of God’s love for us. Pray for the grace to appreciate God’s love by responding to it joyfully. In that way you will be better able to love God in return.

The supreme law is love. It is first mentioned in Deuteronomy 6 and also in the Last Supper. Jesus repeated this command, “Love one another.” He then explained why he taught this. “I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and your joy may be complete” (John 15:11).

Doesn’t the pursuit of personal joy sound a little self-serving? Not if you are striving to love God with your whole heart. He said he wanted us to be joyful. Joy is a byproduct of love. After I began studying the writings of Pope John Paul II, I came across this quote from him:

“Christ came to bring joy; joy to children, joy to parents, joy to families and friends, joy to workers and scholars, joy to the sick and elderly, joy to all humanity. In a true sense, you are the keynote message of Christianity and the recurring motif of the Gospels. Go therefore and become messengers of joy.”

For over 25 years I have been writing books on joy and spread the message via the messengerofojy.com website.

Why? Because we are called to be messengers of joy and that means all of us.

Movie Capsule
“G.I. Joe: Retaliation” (Paramount)

In this explosion-laden, ear-splitting 3-D sequel to 2009’s “G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra,” directed by Jon M. Chu, the president (Jonathan Pryce) has been kidnapped, and the imposter (Arnold Vosloo) who has assumed his identity is bent on world domination. But first, the villain must spring his nefarious commander (Luke Bracey) from prison and eliminate his main opposition: the elite fighting force of G.I. Joes led by Dwayne Johnson. Pervasive action violence, brief gore, a handful of crude and crass terms. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III – adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 – parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

SCENE FROM MOVIE ‘G.I. JOE: RETALIATION’—Dwayne Johnson and Bruce Willis, center, star in a scene from the movie “G.I. Joe: Retaliation.” (CNS photo/Paramount)

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Pope says women’s love makes them privileged witnesses of Christ

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Women have a privileged role in the church because of their ability to pass on the faith through love, Pope Francis said.

“Women have had and still have a special role in opening doors to the Lord, in following him and communicating his face, because the eyes of faith always need the simple and profound look of love,” the pope told an estimated 50,000 people in St. Peter’s Square April 3.

“This is the mission of women, of mothers and women, to give witness to their children and grandchildren that Christ is risen,” he said. “Faith is professed with the mouth and heart, with the word and love.”

In the second weekly public audience of his pontificate, Pope Francis resumed a series of catechetical talks on the creed begun by Pope Benedict XVI in January.

Commenting on the words, “rose again on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures,” the pope said, “The first witnesses of the birth of Jesus are the shepherds, simple and humble people, and the first witnesses of the resurrection are women.”

Jesus’ male apostles and disciples “find it harder to believe in the risen Christ,” the pope said. “Peter runs to the tomb, but stops before the empty tomb. Thomas has to touch the wounds of the body of Jesus with his own hands.”

By contrast, the “women are driven by love and they know to accept this proclamation (of the resurrection) with faith,” the pope said. “They believe and immediately transmit it; they do not keep it for themselves.”

“Let us also have the courage to go out to bring this joy and light to all the places of our lives,” the pope said, eliciting cheers from the crowd, as at several other moments in his talk. “The resurrection of Christ is our greatest certainty, it is our most precious treasure. How can we not share this treasure, this beautiful certainty with others?”

“Unfortunately, there have often been attempts to obscure faith in the resurrection of Jesus, and doubts have crept in even among believers themselves,” Pope Francis said, lamenting what he called a “rosewater”-like faith, diluted by superficiality, indifference, other priorities or a “purely horizontal vision of life.”

Hope in the resurrection, he said, enables Christians to “live everyday realities with more confidence, to face them with courage and commitment.”

Por Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — Pope Francis began his weekly audience April 3 by appealing to the presence of women in church life.

“I say to you”, he said, “women have a privileged role in the church because of their ability to pass on the faith through love.”

The pope also said that Jesus chose his first female apostle, Mary Magdalene, in order to give women a role in the church.

“Women have a privileged role in the church because of their ability to pass on the faith through love,” Pope Francis said.

El papa Francisco comienza papado prometiendo proteger iglesia, dignidad humana

Por Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — El papa Francisco comenzó formalmente su ministerio como obispo de Roma y como papa comprometiéndose a proteger la Iglesia Católica, la dignidad de cada persona y la belleza de la creación, igual que San José protegió a María y Jesús.

“Proteger la creación, proteger a todo hombre y toda mujer, mirarlos con ternura y amor es abrirse a un horizonte de esperanza”, el papa dijo ante las entre 150,000 y 200,000 personas reunidas bajo cielos soleados en la plaza de San Pedro y en calles cercanas.

Con representantes de otras iglesias y comunidades cristianas, con delegaciones de 132 países, con líderes judíos y musulmanes así como con budistas, hindúes, sijs y jainistas presentes, el papa Francisco predicó el Evangelio pero insistió en que los valores que esta abarca son esencialmente humanos, “que involucran a todos”.

“Aunque los ritos y rituales de la inauguración de su ministerio como papa se llevaron a cabo inmediatamente antes de la Misa, la liturgia en sí fue una celebración de la fiesta de San José, patrón de la iglesia universal”, el papa Benedicto XVI, el antiguo Papa Francisco.

Papa Francisco dijo ante la gente que él se dio cuenta que su nuevo ministerio incluya “cierto poder”, pero que es el mismo poder que Jesús confirió a san Pedro, que fue el “él poder del servicio” visto en el encargo de Jesús a Pedro: “Alimenta mis corderos. Alimenta mis ovejas”.

“Que no olvidemos nunca que el poder auténtico es el servicio” dijo el papa Francisco.

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“Trágicamente, en todo periodo de la historia ha habido ‘Herodes’ que confabulan muertes, causan estragos y estropean el semblante de hombres y mujeres”, el papa Francisco.

El papa Francisco pidió a los líderes gubernamentales presente y a todos aquellos que tienen responsabilidades en los campos de la economía, la política y la vida social manténerse firmes cuando la destrucción y la muerte amenacen la dignidad humana, la vida humana y el medioambiente. Él se reunió con los líderes de las delegaciones gubernamentales después de la Misa.

Cuidar a otros, él dijo en su homilía, debe comenzar velando el corazón, la mente y las acciones de uno mismo, resistiendo “el odio, la envidia y el orgullo” y las emociones que pueden perjudicar a otros.

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Priest murdered, nun commits suicide in southern India

THRISSUR, India (CNS) — Catholics in southern India faced double tragedies at Easter time: the murder of the rector of a regional major seminary and the suicide of a young nun. Father K. J. Thomas, rector of St. Peter’s Seminary in Bangalore, was found murdered April 1.

In Coimbatore Holy Saturday, March 30, Sister Angeline Nirmala Reena drank poison and told fellow nuns about it during breakfast before she collapsed and died in a hospital in southern Tamil Nadu state.

Police said the family of the 26-year-old nun had complained that she had been harassed in the convent.

Father Thomas, who had been on the faculty of the regional seminary for three decades and its rector for the last five years, apparently died when his head was smashed by intruders.

Condemning the murder as a “most heinous crime,” Archbishop Bernard Moras of Bangalore described Father Thomas as “a very pious, soft-spoken and harmless priest.”

Police investigators have been quoted by the media as saying that three people had trespassed onto the seminary premises March 26 to rob some antique furniture, and the watchman managed to thwart the robbery. However, the culprits beat him up before escaping.

Police suspect the slain rector might have fallen victim to thieves when they entered the compound under the cover of heavy rain Easter night.

Archbishop: Love is important part of therapy for those with autism

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — While the medical world makes technological advancements, it must not forget the power of love and affection in helping those with autism and their families, said Archbishop Zygmunt Zimowski.

“Faced with the problems and difficulties that these children and their parents encounter, the church proposes, with humility, an approach of service to one’s suffering brethren, accompanying them with compassion and tenderness,” he said. Parishes, Catholic associations, lay movements and people of good will can all work together in providing such forms of service, he said.

The archbishop, president of the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry, made his comments in a written message marking World Autism Awareness Day April 2.

The stereotypes associated with those diagnosed with autism require “profound revision,” he said. Sometimes just the word – autism – “still generates fear today” even in cultures that have begun to accept many kinds of disabilities, the archbishop said in his message.

Social stigmas already isolate people who are ill or disabled, making them feel irrelevant or alien to the rest of the community, he said.

After cautious start, Haiti church rebuilding program gains momentum

By Dennis Sadowski
Catholic News Service
WASHINGTON (CNS) — Church reconstruction in Haiti is moving forward at a faster pace after months of discussions as Haitian and American church leaders gain confidence in the process they established to oversee the massive rebuilding effort.

Planning for two new projects in the earthquake-damaged capital of Port-au-Prince was approved in mid-March by the PROCHE Joint Steering Committee overseeing the reconstruction, and the first church to be rebuilt with some of the $33 million donated by American parishioners was consecrated in February.

But church leaders cautioned that the challenge of rebuilding churches, schools, convents and seminaries is so immense that it will take millions of dollars more in donations and years of planning before the dozens of structures destroyed in the powerful January 2010 earthquake will be replaced.

“The problem is bigger than we can solve,” said Archbishop Thomas G. Wenski of Miami, a member of the steering committee.

While 36 projects are under way and one has been completed, dozens more across the expansive earthquake zone remain to be tackled.

Funds for planning the rebuilding of St. Louis King of France Church and Christ the King Church were the most recent to be approved under PROCHE, the Partnership for Church Reconstruction in Haiti.

PROCHE is a joint effort among the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Haitian Episcopal Conference, Adveniat, which is the German bishops’ agency for solidarity in Latin America, and the French bishops’ conference to coordinate the reconstruction effort.
**DISCIPLES ON THE JOURNEY**—During Lent on Monday mornings Disciples on the Journey group of Our Lady of Lourdes meet. Pictured above, left front to back: Lawrence Yanta, leader; James Novak, Lillian Berger, Martha Valenta, Bernice Drost, Father John Kollannur; right front to back: Barbara Yanta, co-leader; Connie Novak, Mary Bianchi, Roxan Salziger and Pat Goslin. Not pictured is the original leader Catherine Palmer and Jewel Correll. They ended their journey on the Monday after Easter sharing breakfast and their faith experiences during Lent.

**LENT REFLECTION**—
The 7th grade CCD class of St. Joseph Parish in Yoakum led the reflection of the Stations of the Cross for the CCD program, March 6, with the help of their teachers, Sara Basham, Amy Basham and Jenna Macha. Also, two 9th graders, Reed Gearson and Lauren Villa, helped with the music, creating an involved, adoration-like atmosphere.

**ST. JOSEPH ALTAR**—At Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville, an Italian prayer service was held to honor St. Joseph. The St. Joseph altar is an old tradition from Sicily, Italy. During the Middle Ages, a terrible famine swept through Sicily. The people of Sicily fervently prayed to St. Joseph, their patron saint, for an end to the starvation and death. They promised that they would prepare a feast in his honor if he would save them. With their petition of prayer for water and food, he answered them and the famine ended. As they had promised, they prepared a table laden with food they had harvested. After paying homage to St. Joseph, they then distributed the food to the less fortunate – the poor. Pictured above in front of the St. Joseph altar is, l-r, Msgr. John C. Peters, pastor of Sacred Heart Church; Sacred Heart students and Sister Colette Kouba, IWBS.

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**April Saints**

— Peter of Verona (April 6 feast)
— Julie Billiart (April 8 feast)
— Bernadette Soubirous (April 16 feast)
— George (April 23 feast)
— Catherine of Siena (April 29 feast)

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Events

Ongoing Events
That Man Is You—This men’s group transforms men, families, and society as it presents the vision of man fully alive; see www.thatmanisyou.org. It is held at Holy Cross, Bay City, Fri., 5:45-7:15 a.m.; Holy Family, Victoria, Wed., 5:45-7:00 a.m., St. Peter Parish Hall; and Assumption, Ganado, Wed., 5:30-7:15 a.m., JPII Family Center.

Grief Group—Meetings held the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in conference/brides’ room at Holy Family Church in Victoria. Before attending, please call Sharon at (361) 578-7572.

The Beginning Experience—This is an international ministry that helps divorced, separated, and widowed individuals resolve their grief surrounding the loss of a marriage partner. San Antonio contact is (210) 734-2146 or sanantonio@bfhemail.com; or see: www.beginningexperience.org.

Catholic Family Services—To find listings of e-mail/Websites of Catholic organizations that focus on the family, please go to the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at www.nacflm.org.

St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans—For information, please go to www.lostcompaneros-sfo.org. For Victoria meeting dates, contact Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858.

Natural Family Planning—NFP is the only Church-approved form of family planning. To learn about the Sympto-Thermal Method in the Victoria area and the NFP class schedule, contact David and Annie Coffey, victorianfpteachers@yahoo.com. Classes—Spring Session: April 21, May 19 and June 23; Summer Session: July 21, Aug. 18 and Sept. 15; Fall Session: Oct. 20; Nov. 17 and Dec. 15.

Gabriel Project—A ministry providing help to women experiencing a crisis pregnancy – an alternative to abortion – holds monthly meetings for all interested. Victoria meetings, 2nd Tuesday, 101 W. Convent at 6:30 p.m., includes light supper; for Angel Workshop/Training dates, contact Barbara at (361) 649-1612 or e-mail: barbaramecainisk@yahoo.com. Holy Family, Wharton, meets 4th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.; contact (979) 552-3593, M-F, 9:00 a.m.-4:30 p.m. See: www.victoriadiocese.org/lighthouse/gp.htm

Raphael’s Refuge—The mission of Raphael’s Refuge is to build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Flatonia that also provides peer counseling and spiritual direction for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death, or abortion. Learn more at www.raphaelsrefuge.org.

Engaged Encounter—For a registration form, contact your pastor, visit the website at www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The 2013 dates are: Sept. 27-29 with ONLY 25 spaces available. For more info., call (361) 573-0828 ext. 2230. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

Retrouvaille—Retrouvaille, meaning rediscovery, is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Go to www.retrouvaille.org; contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jvbyvj@bgsglobal.net or (361) 580-2770; 800-700-2230; or www.helpourmarriage.org.

Marriage Encounter—This program is no longer offered in the Diocese of Victoria; Retrouvaille (see above) has replaced it. To find a Marriage Encounter weekend outside of the diocese, go to www.wwwe.org.

Courage—This is a ministry for those experiencing same-sex attraction and looking for answers. It is a Roman Catholic Apostolate endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family. Encourage ministers to family and friends of persons with same-sex attraction. Learn more at couragerc.net.

Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center—The Presidio, located in Goliad, is the only Spanish fort in the possession of the Catholic Church in North America and is a National Historic Landmark. It and its museum are open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and closed on major holidays. The Quarters, a two-bedroom guest quarter, is available for overnight stays. For rates and more information, contact (361) 645-3752 or see www.presidiolabahia.org.

Picnics, Activities, etc.
April

Blessing—Catholic Daughters Court #2646 of St. Peter’s Church is sponsoring a chicken spaghetti dinner on April 14 at the parish hall starting at 10:30 a.m. at $8 p/p (to-go only). Proceeds benefit CDA scholarships and charities.

Victoria—Catholic Daughters Court St. Ann Games Party April 14 from 1:00-4:00 p.m. at the KC Hall. Admission is $7 p/p includes lunch. There will be a silent auction, door prizes and a raffle. Reservations required by calling: Joan Schramek at (361) 485-2387 or Dolores Schroller at (361) 575-6111.

Beasley—St. Wenceslaus annual fundraiser April 21 at the CCD building on the church grounds. A barbecue-beef, chicken and sausage dinner will begin at 10:30 a.m. at $9 p/p. The live auction starts at 11:30 a.m. and there will be games music and entertainment for all ages.

Victoria—St. Mary’s Altar Society Annual Games Party, Tuesday, April 23, from 11:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at the activity center (401 S. Liberty St.). Admission of $7 p/p includes lunch of crunchy chicken rice casserole, refreshments, country store featuring baked goods, sewing and craft items and door prizes. Call for reservations to Ann Carver at (361) 575-2050 or Martha Hamel at (361) 575-1932.

Victoria—Our Lady of Victory Boy Scout Annual Barbecue-Chicken Dinner April 28 at OLV Cafeteria. Serving from 10:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m. with dine-in or plates-to-go at $8 p/p. Baked sale items available.

Bloomington—St. Patrick’s Annual Spring Festival April 28. A carne guisada dinner will be served starting at 11:00 a.m. See ad on page 7 for more information.

Weimar—St. Michael Spring Festival April 28 at Veterans Memorial Park. A fried-chicken and sausage dinner will be served starting at 11:00 a.m. See ad on page 6.

Upcoming Events
Hostyn—Holy Rosary Mayfest May 5
Victoria—Holy Family Parish Festival May 5
Inez—Catholic Daughters Court St. Joseph, Protector of Mary is hosting a games party at $7 p/p on May 19 at the St Joseph Parish Hall from 2:00-5:00 p.m. with dinner served (king ranch chicken, salad and drink). Reservations required by calling Kathy Prukop at (361) 575-3559 or Brenda Miller at (361) 218-9389.

Hallettsville—Sacred Heart Parish Spring Festival May 26
Shiner—Sts. Cyril and Methodius Spring Picnic May 26

San Antonio—Catholic Women’s Luncheon—“Treasure Chest of Catholic Womanhood: Revealing the Riches of Catholic Femininity”. You’re invited to enjoy an elegant, three-course lunch, door prizes, and receive spiritual tools for your life as a Catholic woman on Saturday, April 20, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Cost is $35 p/p. Luncheon will be held at the Omni Hotel at the Colonnade, 9821 Colonnade Blvd., San Antonio, 78230. For more information: www.pilgrimcenterofhope.org/womensluncheon.php

Victoria—Spirit Wind Ministry presents a weekend retreat led by Father Ronald Rolheiser April 26-28 at the Spiritual Renewal Center. “Solitude and Prayer: In Search of the Deepest and Ultimate Sustenance” will be the theme. For information on Father Rolheiser, visit his website at www.rolheiser.com. The cost is $170 p/p for double occupancy ($190 single occupancy). Space is limited and will be reserved in the order deposits are received ($50/non-refundable). Partial grants are available should finances be a problem. Make checks payable to Spirit Wind Ministry and mail to: Susan Oakley, 103 Woodmere, Victoria, TX 77904. Please include your name, address, telephone number and e-mail address with your deposit. For additional information contact Susan Oakley at (361) 576-1515 or (361) 649-6391 or e-mail: smok53@msn.com.

Victoria—Taizé Prayer Service at the Amor Meus Spirituality Center at Incarnate Word Convent on May 2, 7:00-8:00 p.m. consisting of music, song, chant, scriptural readings, meditation, and prayers of praise and intercession. For more information call (361) 575-7111.

Dallas—The 16th annual multi-denominational Dallas Benedictine Experience will take place at The Catholic Conference and Formation Center from Wednesday, June 19, to Saturday, June 22. This monastic experience is presented by The Friends of St. Benedict, Washington, D.C. and is open to men and women, laity and clergy of all denominations. For information, please e-mail heepspence@aol.com or call (214) 339-8483.

Victoria—Incarnate Word Prayer Group invites you to Praise and Worship on Mondays at 7:30-9:00 p.m. in the auditorium. Events are held at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water Street. FMI on any event, contact Sr. Louise Marie Jones at (361) 575-7111, or amormeexus@yahoo.com.

Victoria—Healing Mass and Prayer at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 105 N. William St., on the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m. with Father Phil Nguyen, chaplain of IWBS Convent. Mark your calendars now for next month. For more information, please contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at iwbvbsvoc2@yahoo.com.

Shiner—Latin Masses will be celebrated by Father Bob Knippenberg at Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church every 1st & 3rd Sunday of the month at 11:00 a.m.

Tivoli—First Friday Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament at 6 p.m. at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 501B William Street, Mass follows at 7:00 p.m., with Rev. Paulson Panakal. Mark your calendars now for next month. Call for more information: (361) 237-3634.

ACTS Retreats—For information on ACTS retreats, please go to ACTS Web site at www.actsmissions.org.

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The El Campo Knights of Columbus Council 2490 outdid some of the larger companies in the Houston area that hosted blood drives throughout the year. Pictured for the presentation are (l-r) Wayne Bard, council warden; Richard Raun, church director; Rebecca Pfardrescher, donor recruitment coordinator; Greg Witcher, grand knight; Yuridia Royas, mobile supervisor; and Blair Couey, program director. Contributed Photo by Keith Trochta.

**El Campo KC’s outdid Houston in blood drive**

The El Campo Knights of Columbus Council 2490 outdid some of the larger companies in the Houston area that hosted blood drives throughout the year. Pictured for the presentation are (l-r) Wayne Bard, council warden; Richard Raun, church director; Rebecca Pfardrescher, donor recruitment coordinator; Greg Witcher, grand knight; Yuridia Royas, mobile supervisor; and Blair Couey, program director. Contributed Photo by Keith Trochta.

Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center honored its gold level donor groups recently at the annual Celebration of Life luncheon and awards presentation.

Approximately 900 businesses, churches, schools and other organizations achieved this distinction in 2012 by hosting blood drives at least once every quarter.

A Celebration of Life commemorates the achievements of gold-level donor groups from the previous year and Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center recognizes their life-saving contributions to patients in the Texas Gulf Coast Region.

Held at the Royal Sonesta Hotel in Houston, the event featured a recipient story from Ann-Marie Servos who received over 40 units of blood units as well as a bone marrow transplant. Because of the gold level groups and their commitment to help saving lives, Ann-Marie is currently in remission and living a healthy life.

Special category awards were presented to groups that went above and beyond in their life-saving efforts in 2012.

Large Group of the Year was awarded to El Campo Knights of Columbus No. 2490. They have been hosting seven blood drives per year since 2009 and have collected 1,795 total blood units in four years.

Since just one unit of blood can save up to three lives, they have saved more than 5,300 patients’ lives in the Gulf Coast area.

Just last year, they collected 592 units, making them a clear winner for Large Group of the Year. They surpassed 10 other finalists beating companies such as Shell Oil and National Oilwell Varco.

Grand Knight Greg Witcher has been the chairperson for all blood drives since 2009. Along with getting a T-shirt for donating, Greg and the rest of the KC members provide a meal for everyone attending the blood drive.

Reprinted from: *El Campo Leader News*
EASTER

RISEN CHRIST—The risen Christ is portrayed in a window at St. Mary Cathedral in Killarney, Ireland. Easter, the feast of the Resurrection, was March 31 in the Latin rite this year. (CNS photo/Crosiers)

THE LAST SUPPER—In preparation for Holy Week, St. Michael School in Weimar, second grade students participated in re-enacting The Last Supper. Colin Schuetze, portraying Jesus Christ led the re-enactment by “breaking” the bread and wine to be Jesus’ Body and Blood. He later washed the Apostles feet. By doing so, Jesus hopes that we may “wash each others feet” in everything we do in our lives. On the same day St. Michael 7th and 8th grade students participated in the re-enactment of the Stations of the Cross in the St. Michael gym. The Stations end at the scene of Jesus laying in the tomb while the audience joins in the song “Jesus Remember Me”. This leaves us to appreciate Jesus’ sacrifice to save mankind from our sins.

A FIRST FOR NADA—The St. Mary’s High School LLC Youth Group from Nada portrayed their reflection of the Way of the Cross retracing the steps that Christ took and seeing the agony that Christ endured on his journey to Calvary by performing live Stations of the Cross on March 6, 2013, for their church and community for the first time. The Stations were performed outside on the grounds of St. Mary’s around the church. Quite a large crowd gathered for this faith inspiring event. Pictured above is, front l-r, Kelsey Janow, Yamiled Rodriguez, Mikenna Gabler, Kylie Wishert, Mary Beth Huvar, Yesnelly Flores, Kayleigh Pausewang, Caitlin Kunz; middle, Tucker Korenek, Bailey Schneider, Lauren Labay, Jose Aguero; back, Austin Dota, Everett Shimek, Aubrey Pavlu, John Kyle Huvar, Zachary Labay, Jacob Drlik, Ashton Pavlu, Kevin Krpec and Colton Leopold. Not pictured, who also took part, was Molly Smidovec.

EASTER HUNT—Our Lady of Victory Early Childhood held an Easter Egg Hunt for the 3k’s, left, and for the 4k’s, bottom. Each one enjoyed the fruits of their labor after searching the chancery grounds for the eggs.

Easter Ends on Pentecost Sunday, May 19