A Missionary Catechist Sister looks at the memorial to the 23 immigrant victims of the one-vehicle crash that occurred 10 miles south of Goliad July 22. The memorial shows an image of Saint Toribio Romo, the saint of immigrants who was martyred during the Cristero War in Mexico in the 1920s and 30s; the Honduran, Guatemalan and Mexican flags; and 23 lighted candles, one for each victim. Fifteen passengers have died; eight remain in critical condition.

By Cynthia Brewer

For the second time in nine years, the Diocese of Victoria in Texas has become the site of an immigrant tragedy of large proportions.

Eleven of 23 people in a 2000 Ford 250 extended cab pickup were killed when it crashed about 10 miles southwest of Goliad at approximately 6:30 p.m., July 22, 2012. Since then, another four critically injured have died; eight remain in critical condition.

A Mass for the dead and in-jured migrants was held July 24 at 7:00 p.m. at Santisima Trinidad Church, the mission church of Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria. Father Stan DeBoe, O.SS.T., pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Parish, was the celebrant.

In his homily, Father Stan said that while he was preparing for the Mass and looking at the available readings the Church can use, he realized that the daily Gospel, Matt. 12: 46-50, must have been inspired by the Spirit, as the reading states, someone gathered there – crowds of people – in his new definition of who is a mother and brother.

See Diocese of Victoria, p. 13

New Look to The Catholic Lighthouse

By Cynthia Brewer

In an effort to reduce waste and better use diocesan funds, we’ve made some big changes to The Catholic Lighthouse newspaper this year.

Perhaps the most noticeable change to the newspaper is in this month’s issue – with the new dimensions of the paper. The August issue is now the same size as all the other newspapers our printer, The Port Lavaca Wave, prints. As the printer will no longer have to readjust their equipment just for our paper, it is expected that the quality control will improve - no more blurry color pages. Our new size is 12 3/8” H x 11 3/8” W; because the new pages are smaller than the original paper, we will increase the number of pages to accommodate our content.

This past spring we asked those who wished to continue receiving the monthly paper to contact the chancery office. We received approximately 5,500 responses, about 26 percent of the original address list. This is in keeping with national survey statistics – that of those receiving diocesan newspapers, about 25 percent actually read them. Beginning with the June issue, we began mailing the paper to just those 5,500 respondents; therefore, decreasing monthly postage costs by about 62 percent.

And lastly, as I have been the editor of The Catholic Lighthouse for the past 12 years, I respond, “Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?”

Jesus answered his own question by including all the people gathered there – crowds of people – in his new definition of who is a mother and brother.

See New Look, p. 7

Back to School, or more appropriately, Forward to School

As we prepare our homes for the usual migration of our younger inhabitants to a nearby place of learning, i.e., school, we are also raising our expectations for their learning curves to soar. Whether it’s the usual 180-day school year or the increasingly popular 200-day choice, our students are our most prized possessions and deserve the best that we have to offer them. Here are a few offerings that our Catholic schools are preparing to make available to youngsters throughout the DOVE – Diocese Of Victoria’s excellence in Education.

From the moment that your students enter our halls, they will be met with the reminders that our schools are “incubators of learning in a Catholic Christian atmosphere” (paraphrased from His Eminence, the Most Reverend Cardinal Di’Nardo, Archbishop of Galveston-Houston). Our teachers are some of the most capable educators in the state, and perhaps, the nation, due to their extensive experience and certification. Our classrooms are welcoming places of learning with an average student-teacher ratio of 14:1 (average in Texas is beyond 22:1, Texas Education Agency reports for 2011-2012). Our schools are...
2012 Bishop’s Charities Banquet

Under the auspices of the Victoria Diocese Knights of St. Gregory the Great, the annual Bishop’s Charities Banquet was held July 12, 2012, at the Victoria Country Club.

The evening began with a social and then went into a buffet dinner with a full house. Newly ordained Father Patrick Knippenberg, parochial vicar of St. Mary Church in Victoria, led the invocation. Father Don Ruppert, pastor of Holy Cross in East Bernard, was the master of ceremonies. He introduced the Hon. George Wenzel, president of the KSG, and Hon. Hardy McCullough, secretary/treasurer who presented a $10,000 donation to Bishop David E. Fellhauer for his charities. Bishop Fellhauer gave an update on some of the activities of the diocesan offices for the past 12 months, noting that the construction of the new building at the Spiritual Renewal Center that will sleep 48 people with a central gathering place was finished; and that there will be an increase of two young men to the seminary this fall, which brings the total number of diocesan seminarians to 11. The evening concluded with entertainment by Patrick Veit on accordion and benediction by Father David Berger, pastor of the Catholic Community of Cuero.

Thank You Notes

Dear Bishop Fellhauer,

I am in receipt of your check in the amount of $39,148.22 representing the gifts of the people of the Diocese of Victoria to the Jerusalem Mother Church for the 2012 Good Friday collection. This gift will not only assist in the presentation of the Holy Places but will also help the people to whom the Franciscans of the Holy Land Custody minister.

In the name of the Friars and those to whom they minister, I express our deepest gratitude to you, Bishop Fellhauer, and to our Sisters and Brothers in the Diocese of Victoria, who continue to give most generously to help those who are in need! May God bless and reward all of you.

The Good Friday Collection is a Pontifical Collection and is absolutely vital. This collection helps support the Holy Land Shrines and also the educational, pastoral and charitable programs for the people there. The Custody cares for the poorest social classes, the Living Stones. I am sure you are well aware that it is not easy to be a Christian today in the Holy Land.

With deep appreciation, much gratitude and a promise of prayer for you and the People of God in the Diocese of Victoria, I am yours,

Sincerely and gratefully,

Bro. Joe Rogenski, OFM, Commissary of the Holy Land, St. Louis Region

DSA & Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign Updates

2012 DSA

Diocesan Goal: $ 1,623,907.00
Parish Pledge Totals: $ 622,141.84
Parish Contribution Totals: $ 540,372.51
Number of Parish Families Participating: 3,249

Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign

Diocesan Goal: $ 9,000,000.00
Parish Pledge Totals: $ 12,910,779.45
Parish Contribution Totals: $ 10,621,275.38
Number of Parish Families Participating: 6,769
First class of deacons celebrate 25 years

August 15, 2012, marks the 25th anniversary of the first class of permanent deacons to be ordained for the newly formed Diocese of Victoria. In 1987, Bishop Charles V. Graham ordained nine men to the permanent diaconate.

Those ordained were Fred F. Soto (Bloomington), Paul Patek Sr. (Shiner), Roberto Ricardo Ruiz (currently San Antonio), Michael Carl Vieira (Palacios), Luan Van Tran (Bay City), Joseph (Joey) Targac (Hallettsville), and Edward (Ed) Walter Wendel (El Campo); and Arthur (Dick) Wearden (Victoria) and Manuel Hernandez (Edna), both deceased.

As Father John Peters was the director of the Permanent Diaconate Program at the time of the deacons’ ordination, he will be holding an anniversary picnic celebration for them on August 12 at his family farm near Hallettsville.

In next month’s issue of The Catholic Lighthouse we hope to show “then and now” group photos of the deacons.

Let us show appreciation to the deacons and their wives for their dedication and devotion to the Church and its people.

The past makes room for the future

St. Joseph High School must remove a part of their past in order for their future to grow. To continue the Imagine More Campaign, which will include the building of the new Enrichment Center, named The David Pozzi Center, the beloved O’Connor home, donated to the school 15 years ago, is being demolished.

“The demolition and clean-up will take about one month and is being done now so that it will be complete before the start of school with our students on campus,” said school president Mr. William Mc Ardle. “We will be in a ‘Design and Build’ phase for the next four months with construction starting before the end of the year,” he continued.

“The O’Connor family has been extremely supportive of St. Joseph High School and Catholic education in Victoria for so many years,” Mr. Mc Ardle said.

Just some of the uses of the home over the years have included theatre practices, AP testing, faculty meetings, a home for the Marianist Life Community, storage and even Revolutionary Time reenactments by Our Lady of Victory students.

“It has been a tremendous benefit for our students!,” said Mr. Mc Ardle.

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 3 — August 2012

Words Make a Difference
Re: The Catholic Lighthouse - April 2012 - Homosexual Marriage: The Debate (p. 10)

Please do not ever write Homosexual Marriage again. You must write homosexual “marriage”, otherwise you are promoting the concept that the impossible is possible, the immoral, moral.

God bless you,
R. Fabian, Schulenburg

St. Mary’s Parish
Festival & Homecoming
Nada Community Center • Sept. 2

Barbecue Beef & Sausage Dinner • $8 p/p 11-1:30
dine in the air-cooled hall

Plates-To-Go available with a drive-thru line open 11-1

Antique Tractor & Equipment exhibition from 10-4~Parade of Tractors
Ladies’ Bazaar • Waterslide • Karaoke
Train Ride • Bingo • Variety Walk • Kid’s Games
Special Appearance by Rainbow the Clown

Free Dance with music by DJ Chad from 6:00-8:30 p.m.
Come When You Can - Leave When You Want - Plenty of Free Parking
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.

As of July 27, 2012

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Additional Burses for donations:

- Rev. Joe Levy
- Rev. Marcus Valenta
- Rev. Godfrey F. Kuratko

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

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**Sister M. Ronalda Peltier, IWBS**

Sister M. Ronalda Peltier, 80, of Victoria, died Thursday, June 28, 2012. She was born December 30, 1931, in Danbury, Texas, to the late Ronald Samuel Peltier and Blandina Anna (Imhauser) Peltier. She was a member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament.

Sister Ronalda completed grammar school at Danbury Public School and graduated from Nazareth Academy in Victoria May 26, 1950. She entered Nazareth Convent as a candidate May 26, 1948. She became a postulant November 28, 1949, and became a novice September 3, 1950. She made her first profession of vows September 4, 1951, and final profession on September 5, 1954.

In her early years of ministry after profession, Sister Ronalda taught at Sacred Heart School in Crosby, Holy Cross School in East Bernard, Sacred Heart School in Florenceville, St. Michael’s School in Cuero and Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Selma.

After eight years of teaching, in 1960, she entered the nursing program at Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. Sister Ronalda was awarded a Bachelor of Science degree in nursing. She received her certification as a registered nurse shortly after that. She ministered at Huth Memorial Hospital in Yoakum, Mercy Hospital in Jourdanton, and Cuero Community Hospital in Cuero. For three summers beginning in 1967, she attended St. Louis University in St. Louis, Missouri, to obtain certification in hospital administration. She was administrator at Mercy hospital in Jourdanton, Cuero Community Hospital, and Huth Memorial Hospital in Yoakum. She was health care director at IWC for two years before returning to Jourdanton, where she became the director and instructor of the LVN School. She later served as director and instructor of the Victoria College LVN program in Gonzales at Warm Springs Hospital.

From 1988 to 2006, Sister Ronalda served on the General Council of the Congregation and assisted in various duties at Incarnate Word Convent using her gifts in nursing as a consultant. She resided in the congregation’s infirmary since 2003.

Survivors: brothers, Wilfred (Margaret) Peltier of Alvin, Richard (Irene) Peltier of Manvel, Thomas (Lexa) Peltier of Huntsville, and sisters, Catherine Peltier Hechler of Danbury, and Dorothy Peltier Morrow of Angleton; sister-in-law, Esta (Beason) Peltier of Canyon Lake; special child – grandnephew Jerod Woodard, plus 147 beloved nieces, grandnieces, nephews, and grandnephews.

Preceded in death by: parents; brothers, James Peltier, Jerome Peltier, Edmund Peltier, Ronald Peltier, and John Raymond Peltier who died in infancy.

Viewing of the body and scriptural rosary was held on Sunday, July 1, at Incarnate Word Convent. A wake service with Evening Praise and sharing of memories was held at the convent on July 1.

Funeral service was held at the convent Monday, July 2, with Rev. Phi Nguyen presiding. Burial followed at Catholic Cemetery No.3.

Pallbearers were her nephews.

Memorials: Incarnate Word Convent, Hospice of South Texas, or donor’s choice.
HOUSTON — Orrin Halepeska, who grew up in Meyersville, was recently ordained a diocesan priest with three others for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston by Daniel Cardinal DiNardo, who also served as the principal celebrant for the Ordination Mass.

Thirty-year-old Father Orrin Halepeska, the son of Gary and Abradella Halepeska and parishioners of Sts. Peter and Paul Parish in Meyersville, was ordained along with Alvaro Interiano, Richard Lucian Millette and Alfonso Dat-Nhan Tran at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart on June 2, 2012. Father Orrin has a sister, Jennifer Diebel, and brother, Zachary; his grandmother is Nikki Halepeska from St. Mary's Parish in Victoria.

Father Orrin attended elementary, middle, and high school in Goliad, and graduated from the University of Houston in Houston. His home parish in Houston was St. Rose of Lima.

Father Orrin attended St. Mary Seminary in Houston. Before his ordination, he had been serving at St. Hyacinth Parish in Deer Park, Texas, and spent his pastoral year at St. Bernadette Parish in Houston; he will begin his first priestly assignment as parochial vicar at Christ the Redeemer Church in Houston.

In an archdiocesan profile, Father Orrin responded to the following questions:

When did you get 'The Call'? “I would say that the first time I thought about the priesthood was when I was serving Mass in the first grade and thought, as the priest raised the host during consecration, ‘I want to be a part of that.’ Little did I know that was the beginning of my journey to the priesthood. I believe that my calling to the priesthood really grew while at the University of Houston where I became very involved in retreats, music and other ministries within the university and in the archdiocese.”

What do you look forward to most about being a priest? “I look forward to being a diocesan priest because I get to serve and love the people of God from the time they are born until the time they are making their journey to their God,” he said. “I look forward to helping them during this beautiful time – to hear and respond to our God who loves all of us,” Father Orrin continued.

Goliad High graduate is ordained for the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston

WEIMAR KNIGHTS PRESENT FAMILY AND KNIGHT OF THE YEAR AWARDS—Grand Knight, Martin Luchak, on behalf of all Weimar Knights, presented the Family of the Year Award to Henry and Bernice Schoenfeld who continue to be an inspiration to the council, parish, and community by supporting and strengthening Christian family life (top photo). Father John C. Bily received recognition as the Knight of the Year for his dedication to serving others. He truly has the “Passion to Serve” and serves as an inspiration to us all.

HONORARY LIFE MEMBERSHIPS—At the Weimar Knights of Columbus Council #2153 annual Appreciation Awards Banquet held July 7, 2012, Financial Secretary Herbert Ulbrich presented Honorary Life Membership Awards to Richard Vacek, 34 years of service; Melvin Guenther, 43 years of service; and Charles Hajovsky Jr., 48 years of service. Pictured from l. to r. are Grand Knight Martin Luchak, Richard Vacek, Melvin Guenther and Financial Secretary Herbert Ulbrich.
Patrick Janak, Father Kirby Hlavaty, and Gerard Janak watch as Mrs. Rita Janak, Bishop Fellhauer and Catholic School principal Neely Yackel cut the ribbon to officially open Shiner Catholic Schools’ Janak Music Center.

Dedication of Janak Music Center

SHINER—On June 23, 2012, Shiner Catholic Schools held the dedication of its newest addition, the Janak Music Center. This building was made possible through the extreme generosity of the Rita Janak family in memory of Rita’s late husband, Leo Janak, and the Dickson-Allen Foundation.

The building is a state of the art music center that will serve students in grades K-12 beginning in the 2012-13 school year.

Bishop David Fellhauer of the Diocese of Victoria was on hand for a special blessing and ribbon cutting ceremony. The dedication was followed by tours of the music center, live music, and a dinner provided by the Janak family.

Mrs. Rita Janak told of the musical heritage of the Janak family, especially of the accomplishments of her sons Patrick and Gerard. The Janak sons entered the musical stage at an early age, taking music and accordion lessons from Mrs. Thulemeyer and renowned music teacher Hermann Grueneberg of Victoria. Their musical career took them to perform at various area events and eventually to the Lawrence Welk Show.

She noted the importance of music in the Shiner community. “Music brings joy to so many people,” she said. She named several bands and musicians and said most of them were self-taught, but all were responsible for the musical entertainment of the area.

She said she hoped the center would provide a beautiful setting for continuing the musical heritage of the school and community. She told the students to study hard and learn all they can.

Patrick Janak then played a medley of songs on his accordion and the Cardinal Band, under the direction of Charles Coe, followed with the school song and Shiner polka.

Following the ribbon cutting, Bishop Fellhauer blessed the building, and all were invited to tour the center.

The center is furnished with state-of-the-art musician chairs and sheet music stands. It also includes restrooms, and a storage area with cubicles.

(Story shortened and reprinted from The Shiner Gazette)
Funeral worries ... and baptism of the stillborn?

Putting a grandmother’s funeral worries to rest

Q. My grandmother, who is in a nursing home, has used her life’s savings to pay for her care. Now she is on Medicaid and any income that she has (namely, her Social Security monthly check) goes directly to the nursing home. (She is allowed $30 a month to pay for her personal needs.)

For 35 years, she has been a member of our local Catholic parish. She owns a burial plot in our parish cemetery and has her funeral expenses prepaid. For many years, she contributed to the financial support of our parish but because of her current limited income, she is now unable to do so. She is terribly worried that the parish might refuse to host her funeral Mass and provide for her burial because she is not an active donor. If you could tell me the Church’s position on this, perhaps I could put her mind at ease. (New Jersey)

A. I feel sad, and even a bit embarrassed, that such a question would even occur to your grandmother. Please assure her that her parish will certainly be willing to celebrate her funeral rites. First of all, even by right, this would seem the only logical conclusion from Canon No. 1176, which provides that “a faithful must generally be celebrated in his parish financially.” (As a matter of fact, for the past 20 years as a pastor, I have made the point never to look at the figures for an individual’s parish donations so that my judgment will never be colored by those numbers.)

I know of parishes that decline to celebrate the funerals or weddings of someone who is neither registered as a parishioner nor regularly attends services there. These tend to be larger city parishes that serve as a mecca for families desiring a funeral or a wedding because of the church’s particular beauty or convenience — and which often these days are staffed by only one priest. Such a guideline is probably reasonable in those circumstances. My tendency is to accommodate anyone who wants to come — grateful simply because the family wants a religious setting for their service.

Can a stillborn receive the sacrament of baptism?

Q. A friend of mine had a child who was stillborn. The priest on duty declined to baptize the baby because, he said, baptism is only for the living. But I have heard of many stillborn babies who were baptized. Can you explain why this has changed? (Annapolis, Md.)

A. It is true that the sacraments of the church are meant for the living. Their purpose is to put us in touch with the power of the risen Christ in our daily lives. Baptism signifies the entrance of a person into the faith community of Christians, with the intention of putting that faith into action. A priest would never think of trying to give the eucharistic host to someone who had died nor could the baptism of a stillborn indicate the start of a lifelong effort to live out the Gospel.

And yet the grieving parents of a stillborn are dealing with such sadness already that a priest may well find it difficult to deny their requests. Since one is permitted to baptize conditionally if there is any doubt as to whether the moment of death has occurred, pastoral instincts would lead a priest to baptize a newborn on the slightest chance that there might be some life remaining. There are other situations where the child has clearly died, and these call for special tenderness.

What parents really are asking when they request baptism for a stillborn is whether their child is now with God. I find it helpful to reference the Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 1261, which suggests that we can confidently entrust that child to God’s mercy, knowing from the Scriptures that God wants all people to be saved and that Jesus said, “Let the children come to me.”

It can also be helpful, in the case of a stillborn, to use (from the church’s Book of Blessings) the “Blessing of Parents After a Miscarriage.” If the body of the child is present, those prayers could also be combined with the parents naming the child and tracing the sign of the cross on the child’s forehead, as parents would do at a baptism.

XXV Annual Conference for Catechesis & Ministry

Year of Faith and the New Evangelization

Saturday, September 29, 2012 • Holy Family, Victoria

New Look to The Catholic Lighthouse

Continued from p. 1

had decided in June to “retire” at the end of August; this is why readers had seen notices of an opening for the position of editor. However, after much thought and prayer, this decision has been clarified and I feel the Lord is calling me to stay. I thank everyone for their support during these past two months.
By the 1890’s, the community of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word was well established in Victoria. The building spree of the 1870’s had met the space needs of the school and convent for the time being. Numerous vocations, especially among the graduates of the school, increased the community with devoted religious who were dedicated educators. Bishop John Neraz of San Antonio, was a strong devotee of Catholic education, who appreciated the work of the Sisters. Their good friend and mentor, Father Augustine Gardet, the pastor of St. Mary’s Church, who had given his house to the Sisters upon their arrival to Victoria in 1866, remained a strong spiritual and financial supporter. Immigrants who were arriving were sending their children to the school. If female students lived outside of commuting distance of the academy, they were accepted as boarders and lived in the convent. Moreover, the people of Victoria, regardless of their religious affiliation, had great respect for the Sisters and their teaching. God was indeed blessing the flourishing academy as the Sisters continued their day-by-day ministry of making the beloved Incarnate Word known and loved by their students.

Some people have expressed wonder why the Sisters did not get bored living within a cloistered institution with little access to the outside world. In response to this concern, I think that most of us understand that when a person feels called to his or her specific life style (whether it be marriage, single, or ordained or consecrated), their love of God and others sustains them in the ordinary routine of life. I’m sure that all of us can think of persons, from all walks of life, who have served as the stars to which Pope Benedict referred when he wrote, “The true stars of our life are the people who have lived good lives. They are lights of hope. Certainly, Jesus Christ is the true light, the sun that has risen above all the shadows of history. But to reach him we also need lights close by—people who shine with his light and so guide us along our way.” (Spe Salvi, 49)

During this time of progress, the Sisters were happy to have enough members so that they could respond to Bishop Neraz’s request to begin a foundation in Hallettsville; consequently, three Sisters were welcomed by the pastor, Father John Anthony Forest, and began teaching the day after their arrival in 1882. If you want to follow up on this foundation, just ask anyone from Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville!

In spite of the many blessings that the Victoria community was experiencing, the Sisters would soon face some unexpected challenges. First of all, they suffered the loss of their beloved pastor and benefactor, Father Augustine Gardet, who died in 1892. A year later, Bishop Neraz, who had been a strong supporter of their educational endeavors, also died. His replacement, the new Bishop John Anthony Forest was no stranger to the Sisters; he had been a beloved pastor and friend of the Sisters during his prior service in the Hallettsville area.

Another blow, this one financial, was dealt the Sisters when they no longer received the public school salaries which they had been receiving for four months each year. They chose to forfeit the salaries rather than give up the wearing of their religious habits when their garb became an issue.

It was soon afterward that Bishop Forest requested that the Sisters begin a foundation in Shiner; so in 1897 two Sisters from Victoria, one from Houston, and one from Brownsville went to Shiner. Check on some Shiner folks for their memories of the Sisters. (To be continued)

For more stories about the early days of the Sisters in Victoria – please come by the Gift Shop at Incarnate Word Convent and purchase Sister Alberta Novosad’s new book: TEXAS FOOTPRINTS in the Sands of Time.
VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL—From July 9-13, 2012, St. Patrick’s Church in Bloomington hosted a camp titled Sonrock Kids Camp. Through Bible stories, the kids learned that we are accepted, protected, saved and forgiven by Jesus. They learned songs with hand motions, played games, and made crafts. The camp ended with a Mass celebrated by the parish pastor, Father Samuel Appiasi, followed by a meal.

WEIMAR KNIGHTS PRESENT SCHOLARSHIPS—Weimar KC Council #2153 Scholarship Chairman Willie Tichavsky presented five scholarships to local students. Pictured from left are Grand Knight Martin Luchak, and scholarship winners Dylan Blaha, Ryan Ramirez, Cody Kremling, Jamie Anders, Kaityn Sestak, and Scholarship Chairman Willie Tichavsky. The Weimar Knights of Columbus held their annual Appreciation Awards Banquet Saturday, July 07, 2012. The evening began with members attending Mass at Saint Michael Church with Father John C. Bily as celebrant. The celebration continued at the family center with a banquet meal and Grand Knight Martin Luchak reminding all brother knights about their commitment to serve their church, family and community.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH 2012—This year’s Rocky Mountain High Retreat was held, once again, at Pagosa Springs, Colorado. Forty young people participated in the retreat, which was staffed by 14 adults, including two seminarians, Philip Brune and Jacob Mendoza, and Father Dan Morales, director of vocations and pastor of St. Mary’s Parish in Victoria. The retreat, including travel time, was held from June 30 to July 8.

Inset: Because the local river was running too low, retreatants were unable to go rafting; therefore, they were provided with “messy games” at the camp instead. Father Dan played the part of the King and Wendy Eggert played the Queen. “This photo is proof that neither team defended us very well,” Wendy said.

Pray for all the youth returning back to school!
On Sunday, July 8, 2012, five Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament celebrated the anniversaries of their professions at Incarnate Word Convent. The Most Reverend David Fellhauer, bishop of the Victoria Diocese, officiated at the 2:00 p.m. Mass. Also present and concelebrating were Bishop Michael Duca of Shreveport, Louisiana; Rev. Ronald Gonzales, S.J., Rev. Gary Janak, Rev. Eddie Winkler, and Father David Garcia, homilist. Those honored were Sister M. Michael Kopecky (75 years) and Sister Mary Jurosek, Sister M. Laura Toman, Sister Marian Sturm and Sister M. Digna Vela (50 years). Together they have contributed 275 years of service to the Church in ministries of education, administration and pastoral services.

**Sister M. Michael Kopecky**

Sister M. Michael Kopecky, daughter of the late Joseph and Frances (Strauss) Kopecky, was born in Hallettsville, Texas. Sister Michael received her elementary education at Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville and graduated from Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio. She entered Blessed Sacrament Convent and received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on February 23, 1936. She made first profession of vows on June 10, 1937. Sister received a B.A degree with a major in English and a minor in Spanish from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio and a MA degree with a major in history and a minor in education from the Catholic University of America.

During the 75 years as a professed member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Michael taught on the elementary, junior high, high school and college levels. She also served as local superior at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. She served as teacher and/or principal in the following schools: Sacred Heart School in Floresville, Nazareth Academy in Victoria, Sacred Heart School in La Grange, Holy Cross School in Bay City, Holy Cross School and St. Patrick School in Dallas, Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio, and Holy Trinity School in Duquesne, Pa.

Though Sister Michael retired from full-time teaching in 1988, she remained active at Incarnate Word Convent where she assisted in chauffeuring and community shopping and served in music ministry. During her spare time Sister Michael liked to make flower arrangements and engage in arts and crafts. Due to ill health, Sister Michael has resided in the IWC Infirmary.

**Sister Marian Sturm**

Sister Marian Sturm, daughter of the late Arnold and Mary (Kaptiza) Sturm, was born in Falls City, Texas. She completed grades one through eight in Falls City Elementary School and then did her high school studies at Nazareth Academy in Victoria. Sister then entered Nazareth Convent and received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on July 30, 1961, and made her first profession in Hallettsville. Sister was the religion and CCD coordinator in St. Mary’s Parish in Nada, Holy Cross Parish in East Bernard, and St. Thomas the Apostle Parish in Huntsville.

After the Diocese of Victoria was created, Sister Marian served as the Director of the Reflection Process of the Diocese for a number of years. She has also served as Director of Religious Education in St. Philip of Jesus Parish in San Antonio, Director of Faith Formation in St. Anthony Claret Parish in San Antonio, and Adult Faith Formation Director in St. Mark the Evangelist Parish in San Antonio. Sister enjoys playing Scrabble, dancing and reading mystery novels.

**Sister M. Laura Toman**

Sister M. Laura Toman, daughter of the late Raymond and Anne Rose (Sablatura) Toman, was born in Houston, Texas. After attending Ganado Public School the first four years of elementary school and Assumption School for the upper grades, Sister Laura attended Nazareth Academy. She entered Nazareth convent and received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on July 30, 1961. She made her first Profession of Vows on August 6, 1962. Sister earned her early credits from Annunciation College in Victoria and Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. She attended Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio from which she was awarded a B.A. degree with a major in English and a minor in history. She attended Southwest Texas State College in San Marcos and earned a M. Ed. with a major in Administration and a minor in Psychology/Sociology.

During the 50 years as a professed member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Laura taught at St. Michael School in Cuero. She served as principal for Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Selma, St. Michael School in Cuero, Sacred Heart School in Floresville, St. Patrick School in Dallas, St. Michael School in Weimar and Our Lady of Victory School in Victoria. During Sister Laura’s 23-year leadership as principal of St. Michael School in Weimar, the school received numerous academic awards, culminating in its designation as a nationally recognized “Blue Ribbon School, 2006” by the U.S. Department of Education.

Sister Laura also served as Councilor in the Leadership of the Congregation from 1988 – 2000 along with work in the school. Presently, she has been elected as a Councilor for the Congregational Leadership for a six-year term along with being principal at Our Lady of Victory School in Victoria.

**Sister M Digna Vela**

Sister M Digna Vela, daughter of the late Emilio and Bertha (Cantu) Vela, was born in Port Lavaca, Texas. Sister Digna’s early education was at Jefferson Elementary School in Victoria, her high school diploma. She received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on July 30, 1961. She attended Our Lady of the Lake College in Victoria and then transferred to Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. After attending Ganado Public School the first four years of elementary school and Assumption School for the upper grades, Sister Laura attended Nazareth Academy. She entered Nazareth convent and received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on July 30, 1961. She made her first Profession of Vows on August 6, 1962. Sister earned her early credits from Annunciation College in Victoria and Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. She attended Our Lady of the Lake College in San Antonio from which she was awarded a B.A. degree with a major in English and a minor in history. She attended Southwest Texas State College in San Marcos and earned a M. Ed. with a major in Administration and a minor in Psychology/Sociology.

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**Praised be the Incarnate Word!**
JCDA MEMBERS CREATE CRAFTS FOR PARISH AUCTION—Throughout the year, St. Joseph, Yoakum, JCDA #206 members learned about Christian values and created projects to represent their beliefs. The members created these two individually hand-decorated tile crosses, which show scenes of respecting and celebrating LIFE! The vibrant and gorgeous crosses are on display at the Yoakum Heritage Museum until St. Joseph’s Parish Picnic on August 5, 2012. They will then be up for auction at the church picnic to support the parish.

FIELD TRIP—On Saturday, July 21, 2012, members from the youth group at St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in El Campo traveled to Goliad to visit Presidio La Bahia, the Goliad State Park, and the mission churches at each site.
The bell has not been used since the 1980's. It was recently polished and reset in the small bell tower for display.

St. Anthony students display artwork at Live Oak Art Center
Continued from p. 11

Attending the exhibit reception were three generations of the Cantu family. Ray Cantu, father of SAS student, Daniel, commented on how truly blessed the school is to have a teacher of Mullen’s talent passing down her knowledge of art and her talents to the students in art class. “She has brought out the creativity inside all of the students, which has helped broaden their minds, opening them to all kinds of possibilities,” Mr. Cantu said. “Nobody could pay her what she’s worth because she is worth her weight in gold.”

SAS Principal John O’Leary added that the wide variety of artwork on display is truly impressive and thanked Mrs. Mullen for all of her hard work in guiding the students in helping to find an interest and even love for art.

“This exhibit gives all students an opportunity to display their creativity,” Principal O’Leary said.

The cost of the exhibit was underwritten by Shawna Collins, Andrea Schobel, Nicole Schobel and June Schobel, chairperson.

Donors stand before the restored church bell and its new tower at St. Peter Church in Blessing. The bell was originally donated by the parishioners of St. Peter’s in 1928. This inscription is written in Czech on one side and in English on the other. The bell has not been used since the 1980’s. It was recently polished and reset in the small bell tower for display.

### IWBS Jubilee 2012
Continued from p. 10

During her 30 years of service as a professor member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Digna taught in the elementary and junior high schools at Our Lady of Victory School in Victoria, Immaculate Conception School in Sealy, St. Mary School in Nada, Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Selma, and Holy Cross School in Bay City. Sister also ministered in the following high schools: Nazareth Academy in Victoria, Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio and St. Joseph High School in Victoria. In 1990 Sister began ministry for the Diocese of Victoria as Director of Catechetical Ministry, serving in that capacity for 22 years. She is also presently involved in the IWBS Amor Meus Spirituality Center’s activities.

**Sister Mary Juroske**

Sister Mary Juroske, daughter of the late Eddie and Olga (Pratka) Juroske, was born in Angleton, Texas. Sister Mary attended Industrial Elementary School and Lolita Junior High School before entering Nazareth Academy for her high school education. She entered Incarnate Word Convent and received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on July 30, 1961, and made her first profession of vows on August 6, 1962. Sister Mary attended Annunciation College where she took Sacred Scripture classes as well as Dogmatic and Moral Theology courses. When her aptitude for art was perceived, she attended classes in oil painting, charcoal, water color, ceramics and other classes connected with the arts.

Sister Mary’s culinary abilities and dietary knowledge were put to use at Incarnate Word Convent for a number of years. She was assigned to Nazareth Academy where she developed a clientele for private art lessons and assisted in the N.A. Pre-School Day Care with religion classes. At this time, Sister Mary assists as a volunteer aide at Nazareth Academy and teaches private art lessons. Sister Mary is involved in the IWBS Spirituality Center’s activities. She also enjoys arts and crafts which she shares as gifts and contributes to the IWC Gift Shop.
Diocese of Victoria experiences second major immigrant tragedy in nine years

Continued from p. 1

Father Stan asked, “How many of us would really extend our arms and indicate that everyone in our presence, especially in a crowd, is our mother and our brothers?”

“We might want to do that, but we know that as our eye might scan the crowd,” he said, “something inside of us might be saying — except for him, except for her.” But that is our goal, he said.

We don’t know why the immigrants were passing through our community, Father Stan said. “Some may have been traveling to be united with family already here; some were seeking economic opportunities that may be denied them in their own countries.”

“Whatever their reasons, when the truck came to the violent stop just miles from here, they became a part of our community,” he said. “At that moment, lives ended and lives changed. OUR lives changed. In an instant the women in that truck became our sisters and our mothers, the men became our brothers and fathers, the two young girls became our sisters and daughters.”

Father Stan went into further depth saying, “What we do here tonight has nothing to do with immigration policies, economic policies, or any of the political discussions that are whirling around us. If someone is here because they want to hear that, I am afraid that you will be disappointed.”

“What we gather for tonight is about human dignity and justice,” he continued. “It is about hearing the command of God repeated over and over again in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures to treat the foreigner, the stranger, the marginalized as if they are one of us. Not hesitatingly, not begrudgingly, but with joy.”

Following his homily, Sister Marie Garcia directed 23 members of the church community to light a candle, one for each of them.

Father Tolton's sainthood cause has received more than 1,000 calls regarding the victims’ possible identities, but that none of them had yet been identified. The dead range between the ages of eight and 25 years old.

Since this initial interview, Jennifer Preys of The Victoria Advocate has reported that 14 have been identified, six of those are alive and eight are dead. Nine remain unidentified.

Rev. John Peters, Vicar General of the Diocese of Victoria, sent, via the diocesan website, a message of condolence for all those involved in the accident.

Nine years ago, on May 14, 2003, Victoria was the site of the deadliest human trafficking case in U.S. history. Over 70 immigrants were found abandoned in a tractor-trailer a few miles outside of Victoria, alongside U.S. Hwy. 77. S. Nineteen immigrants had died from dehydration, hypothermia and suffocation, while 55 survived the suffocating conditions in the trailer.

In the June 25, 2012, Supreme Court decision to strike down provisions of an Arizona immigration law, Archbishop José H. Gomez of Los Angeles, chairman of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Committee on Migration, urged state governments not to rush to pass laws similar to SB 1070 and called upon Congress to assume its responsibility and enact comprehensive immigration reform. He vowed that the Catholic Church in the United States would continue to fight for humane and just reform of the nation’s immigration system.

“The Church will continue to stand by immigrants and their families and seek justice on their behalf,” stated Archbishop Gomez.
Couples need to set aside time to talk each day, papal message says

By Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Going to Mass together and setting aside time each day to talk to each other are two simple practices that can help Catholic couples strengthen their marriage and be examples to others, said a papal message.

Pope Benedict XVI “invites Christian couples to be ‘the gentle and smiling face of the church,’ the best and most convincing heralds of love sustained and nourished by faith,” said a message to the participants in the international meeting of the Teams of Our Lady.

The group, a movement for Catholic couples started in France in 1938, was meeting in Brasilia, Brazil, July 21-26. The papal message to the couples was signed by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state.

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While pressures on married couples have increased since the movement’s founding, the message said, members continue to be committed to proclaiming, “not only in words, but also through their lives, the fundamental truths about human love” and how it is a reflection of God’s love for humanity.

The movement helps couples recognize the grace of the sacrament of marriage and encourages them to attend Mass together, Cardinal Bertone said. It also gives them “simple and practical ideas to daily live an embodied spirituality for Christian spouses.”

One of the key ideas, he said, is “the ‘sit down,’ that is to say, a commitment to setting a regular time for personal dialogue between the spouses, in which each presents to the other, with all sincerity and in a climate of mutual listening, the issues and topics most important to life as a couple.”

“In our world, so marked by individualism, activism, eagerness and distraction,” Cardinal Bertone wrote, “sincere and constant dialogue between the spouses is essential for avoiding the emergence of misunderstandings that grow and harden,” and which can cause irreparable damage.

By pairing a thoughtful story line with amusing full-color photographs of children, bestselling author Anthony DeStefano succeeds in delivering a lighthearted look at the age-old question, “why me?”

Through photos, especially chosen to bring out a smile, and carefully crafted sentiment, Anthony shares his delightful sense of humor, lifts the reader’s spirit, and plants a firm message of hope and encouragement.

Fun for all, this is one book that can be given—or received—on any occasion!

Anthony DeStefano is the bestselling author of Ten Prayers God Always Says Yes To, A Travel Guide to Heaven, This Little Prayer of Mine, and Little Star. He has received prestigious awards from religious organizations worldwide for his efforts to advance Christian beliefs in modern culture.

For a chance to win this book, please send in completed August puzzle form to The Catholic Lighthouse, P. O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 by August 27.

July Puzzle Contest Winners Chosen

The winner of the July puzzle contest and the book “Lifted by Angels—The Presence and Power of our Heavenly Guides and Guardians” by Joel J. Miller and published by Thomas Nelson is Mildred Targac of Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish in Shiner. The winners of the children’s contest are Lacie Grace Olivarez (4) of Sacred Heart in Hallettsville and Katelyn Borsch (7) of Sts. Peter & Paul in Plum. They each will receive a gift from Incarnate Word Gift Shop.

The winner of the August Puzzle Contest will win “I Just Can’t Take It Anymore! ~ Encouragement When Life Gets You Down” by Anthony DeStefano and published by Harvest House. See review on this page. Please mail all completed August puzzle forms to arrive in The Catholic Lighthouse Office, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903, by August 27.
If mental illness a factor, shooting suspect might be ‘troubled soul’

WASHINGTON (CNS) — In the days following the shootings at an Aurora, Colo., movie theater that left 12 people dead and 58 others wounded, speculation arose about the mental state of the suspected shooter, James Holmes. Days after the July 20 tragedy, word was leaked to news outlets that Holmes reportedly had been seeing a psychiatrist at the University of Colorado and had sent his therapist a package that included a description of a planned shooting spree. That possibility of such a package reveals a “cry for help” and perhaps indicates the suspect “was a troubled soul” according to Connie Rakitan, chair of the Chicago Archdiocesan Commission on Mental Illness, told Catholic News Service July 26. Sending it to a psychiatrist, and not to police, “points to the bigger issue of mental pain and mental illness,” she added. Holmes was formally charged July 30. He faces 142 counts, which include a first-degree count for each of the 12 who died and attempted murder charges for those injured. It was not yet clear if his lawyers will mount an insanity defense.

Sunday Readings from Aug. 5 to Sept. 9

Aug. 5 — Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Exodus 16:2-4, 12-15
Psalms 78:3-4, 23-24, 25, 54
Ephesians 4:17, 20-24
John 6:24-35

Aug. 12 — Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time
1 Kings 19:4-8
Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9
Ephesians 4:30 - 5:2
John 6:41-51

Aug. 15 — Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary
Revelations 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
Psalms 45:10, 11, 12, 16
1 Corinthians 15:20-27
Luke 1:39-56

Aug. 19 — Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Proverbs 9:1-6
Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7
Ephesians 5:15-20
John 6:51-58

Aug. 26 — Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time
Joshua 1:1-2a, 15-17, 18b
Psalms 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21
Ephesians 5:21-32
John 6:60-69

Sept. 2 — Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
Psalms 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5
James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Sept. 9 — Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 35:4-7a
Psalms 146:7, 8-9, 9-10
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-37

All daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, are available in text or video at: www.usccb.org/bible/readings
Brought to you by the Catholic Communications Campaign — please be generous.

Like Olympic athletes, everyone can glorify God, archbishop says
M ansch ester, England (CNS) — Athletes competing in the 2012 Summer Olympics serve as a reminder to all people to use their bodies to glorify God, the president of the Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales said during a Mass of thanksgiving for the games. Archbishop Vincent Nichols of Westminster said during the July 28 Mass at Westminster Cathedral that the games can help people to understand the link between spirituality and sport. The archbishop’s homily echoed the theme of the July 29 annual Day of Life of the Catholic Church in England and Wales on the importance of using one’s body to praise God. He told the 900 Massgoers, some wearing national costumes, that the human body is beautiful in the eyes of God, even as it grew old, and always should be used to honor God, the creator of all. “We will see many fine sports (where) men and women use their bodies, their minds and their spirits in the quest for glory,” Archbishop Nichols said. “But the message of the Gospel goes deeper. It reminds us, vividly, that our bodies are for the glory of God. Indeed our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit. This does not detract from that physical achievement of sport, with its beauty, symmetry, harnessing of speed, finesse and power,” he said. “Rather it enhances those achievements and gives them their deepest purpose -- that of giving glory to their Maker.”

Marriage saving weekend coming to the Greater Victoria region – Aug. 17-19

Do you feel alone? Are you frustrated or angry with each other? Do you argue … or have you just stopped talking to each other? Does talking about it only make it worse?

Retrouvaille (pronounced retro-vi and meaning “rediscovery”) has helped thousands of couples at all stages of disillusionment or deep misery in their marriage. Most say that Retrouvaille was the lifeline that helped their marriage and their family.

This is a program for married couples that feel bored, disillusioned, frustrated, or angry in their marriage. Some experience coldness. Others experience conflict in their relationship. Most don’t know how to change the situation or even communicate with their spouse about it.

Retrouvaille has helped thousands of couples experiencing difficulties in their marriage. It offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. Thousands headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending.

Retrouvaille is a not spiritual retreat, not a sensitivity group, not a seminar, and not a social gathering. It is designed to provide the tools to help get your marriage back on track. It will give you the opportunity to rediscover each other and examine your lives together in a new and positive way.

The Retrouvaille weekend to be held at the Spiritual Renewal Center in the Diocese of Victoria is scheduled for Aug. 17 – 19.

For confidential information about, or to register for, the upcoming program beginning with a weekend on Aug. 17-19, call John or Jennifer Vincent (361) 580-2770 or e-mail: jbjov@sbglobal.net or visit the web site at http://www.retrouvaille.org.

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Pope Benedict XVI’s Intentions ~ August 2012

General Intention: That prisoners may be treated with justice and respect for their human dignity.

Missionary Intention: Youth Witness to Christ. That young people, called to follow Christ, may be willing to proclaim and bear witness to the Gospel to the ends of the earth.
Taking stock of pope’s work year

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — We might call the period between the time the pope returns to the Vatican each fall and when he leaves for the papal summer residence at Castel Gandolfo (where he relocated this year July 3), the papal year. Almost all of the Vatican’s important business gets done in this span, making it the most relevant unit of time to use when analyzing the papacy’s activity and its implications for the church as a whole.

So what can the 2011-12 papal “term” tell us about where Pope Benedict XVI is leading the Church?

If there was one message that the Vatican’s agenda and statements this year seemed designed to convey, it was that the world needs the Catholic Church’s help to solve its most urgent social and economic problems.

In five speeches over the course of six months to U.S. bishops on their “ad limina” visits to Rome, Pope Benedict said that the health and prosperity of American society as a whole require the engagement of its Catholic citizens, in fidelity to the church’s teaching on contentious matters, including marriage, abortion, euthanasia, immigration and education.

On a November visit to the West African country of Benin, the pope said that a “church reconciled within itself can become a prophetic sign of reconciliation in society,” on a continent divided by often violent ethnic and religious conflicts.

Conceding no realm of human activity as beyond the Church’s scope, the Vatican delved into the highly technical field of international finance with a controversial October document blaming the world’s economic crisis on a “liberalism that spurns international money supply.

Pope Benedict made it clear that the Church’s appeals to secular society should be made not in terms of faith but in terms of the “natural moral law” accessible to all through the use of reason. He notably included prominent agnostic “seekers of the truth” alongside religious leaders at an October meeting to promote peace and justice in Assisi, Italy.

Yet the pope also insisted that the Church’s commitment to social justice must never be separated from a faith that transcends this world. During a trip to Mexico and Cuba in March, the pope said that the “Church is not a political power, it is not a party,” and told a crowd of more than 600,000 at an outdoor Mass that “human strategies will not suffice to save us” from war and injustice.

The following month, the Vatican published a “doctrinal assessment” of the U.S. Leadership Conference of Women Religious. The document, which had been expressly approved by Pope Benedict, recognized the LCWR’s adherence to Catholic teaching in its promotion of social justice, but concluded that the group’s neglect of the Church’s doctrine on a number of important moral issues, including abortion and euthanasia, reflected a crisis “characterized by a diminution of the fundamental Christological center and focus of religious consecration.”

Pope Benedict also emphasized a link between the Church’s contributions to society and its right to freedom of religion, which he championed against varying degrees of restriction in communist Cuba, Mexico with its legacy of anti-clericalism, and the U.S., where the Obama administration seeks to make private Catholic institutions provide insurance covering sterilizations and contraception, in violation of the Church’s moral teaching.

In October, the pope removed Archbishop Carlo Maria Viganò, author of several leaked letters accusing specific Vatican officials of corruption and incompetence, from his job as secretary-general of the governor’s office of Vatican City. In an apparent sign of esteem for the archbishop’s ability and integrity, however, the pope appointed him to the key post of nuncio to the U.S.

After months of furor over the leaks, in July, Pope Benedict defended Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the Vatican secretary of state, against “unjust criticism” in the Italian media, thus showing his appreciation for his longtime lieutenant.

The papal “term” marked another chapter in the ongoing narrative of the Vatican’s relationship with the breakaway traditionalists of the Society of St. Pius X (SSPX), who reject some teachings of the 1962-65 Second Vatican Council and subsequent modernizing changes to the Church.

In September, the Vatican presented the traditionalists with a “doctrinal preamble” outlining certain teachings, presumably including those of Vatican II, which the breakaway group would have to accept as a condition for reconciliation. In June, the Vatican presented them with a draft document proposing that a reintegrated society would hold the canonical status of a personal prelature, in effect an international diocese under the direct authority of the pope. As the Vatican awaited the traditionalists’ final response to these overtures, in late June, Pope Benedict named U.S. Archbishop Augustine Di Noia to focus personally on the SSPX negotiations.

It is time to register for God’s Embrace local three year program

God’s Embrace Three Year Formation Program for 2012-2013 will begin in August. The First Year Program Classes “Understanding God in Our Lives” will be held in Blessing, Frelsburg, Schulenberg, and Victoria. The program classes will meet once a month on a designated evening for two and one-half hours at each location through May 2013. God’s Embrace also offers four Weekend Retreats throughout the year for all participants and non-participants.

The God’s Embrace Program and Retreats are facilitated by Michael Fonseca and are designed to give you a deep appreciation of Scripture, the Catholic Catechism, and Catholic Spirituality as offered to us by our saints and mystics. It is our hope that you will be renewed in your discipleship, and will want to help in the further renewal of our Church.

There is still room for more participants so please encourage all of your friends and family members to join us!

Registration has begun for the Saturday, August 11, Retreat Day “Our Call to Holiness”, which will be held in Victoria at St. Mary’s Activity Center from 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. for all new entrants in the First Year Program. Suggested registration fee donation is $30.00. Lunch will be provided. Contact Sandy Reese to register.

Second Year Program Class will be held in El Campo.

Third Year Program Class will be held in Hallettsville.

Registration has begun for our September 14, 15, and 16 Weekend Retreat in Palacios at The Texas Baptist Encampment. Please register before Monday, September 10, so we can accommodate everyone’s needs.

Church Etiquette

When we enter a church, we must always remember that our Lord is present in the tabernacle. A church is a sanctuary, a sacred place. It is of the utmost importance that everyone who enters a church enters with the respect and dignity that our God deserves. We should refrain from loud talking and socializing, even when Mass is not being celebrated. This includes funeral wake services, wedding rehearsals, wedding days and baptisms.

A church is not a place to bring in food and drinks, except for water for those who need it.

During the “Sign of Peace,” we should limit that sign to a gentle hug or handshake with the persons close to us. The Lord is truly always present on the altar.

Remember this each and every time you come into his house.

Reprinted from a local church bulletin.

Next month: Proper Dress for Mass
DESTROYED BUILDINGS SEEN AFTER FIGHTING IN HOMS, SYRIA—Destroyed buildings are seen after fighting in Homs, Syria, July 27. Manaf Tlass, a Syrian brigadier general and Syria’s most prominent defector, offered himself up July 26 as a figure to unite the fractious opposition, saying he failed to persuade his former friend, President Bashar Assad, to end a bloody crackdown that has left thousands of Syrians dead. In Castel Gandolfo, Italy, Pope Benedict XVI renewed his appeal for peace in Syria and humanitarian assistance for civilians threatened by the ongoing fighting or seeking refuge far from home. “I continue to follow with apprehension the tragic and increasing episodes of violence in Syria with their sad sequence of deaths and injuries, including among civilians, and a huge number of people internally displaced or seeking refuge in neighboring countries,” the pope said July 29. (CNS photo/Shaam News Network handout via Reuters)

Bishops urge Congress to fix health law flaws after high court decision

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court’s June 28 decision upholding the health reform law makes it even more urgent for Congress to act to fix the law’s “fundamental flaws” on abortion funding, conscience protection and immigrants’ access to health care, the U.S. bishops said. The court found that although the individual mandate in the 2010 health reform law does not pass constitutional muster under the Commerce Clause of the Constitution, it can be upheld as an acceptable exercise of Congress’ taxing powers. In a 65-page opinion announced by Chief Justice John Roberts, five members of the court upheld the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act in full but limited the federal government’s right to withhold its share of Medicaid funding from states that do not expand the health program for the low-income and disabled as mandated by the law. “The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops has not joined in efforts to repeal the law in its entirety, and we do not do so today,” said a USCCB news release issued shortly after the decision. “The decision of the Supreme Court neither diminishes the moral imperative to ensure decent health care for all, nor eliminates the need to correct (the law’s) fundamental flaws.”

No ‘middle ground’ possible with LCWR on key issues, Bishop Blair says

WASHINGTON (CNS) — There can be no “middle ground” on matters of faith and morals, the bishop who conducted the Vatican-ordered doctrinal assessment of the Leadership Conference of Women Religious said in an interview that aired July 25 on National Public Radio’s “Fresh Air” program. Bishop Leonard P. Blair of Toledo, Ohio, one of two U.S. bishops assisting Archbishop J. Peter Sartain of Seattle in providing “review, guidance and approval, where necessary, of the work” of LCWR, was responding to a call for dialogue by Franciscan Sister Pat Farrell, LCWR president, on the same program July 17. “If by dialogue they mean that the doctrines of the church are negotiable and the bishops represent one position and the LCWR presents another position, and somehow we find a middle ground about basic church teaching on faith and morals, then no,” he said. “I don’t think that is the kind of dialogue that the Holy See would envision. “But if it’s a dialogue about how to have the LCWR really educate and help the sisters to appreciate and accept church teaching and to implement it in their discussions and try to hear some of the questions or concerns they have about these issues, then that would be the dialogue,” he added. Named in April 2008 to carry out a doctrinal assessment of LCWR, Bishop Blair submitted an eight-page report to the Vatican in July 2010. In April 2012, the Vatican announced a major reform of LCWR, citing “serious doctrinal problems which affect many in consecrated life.” The Maryland-based LCWR has about 1,500 leaders of U.S. women’s religious communities as members and represents about 80 percent of the country’s 57,000 women religious. Its canonical status is granted by the Vatican. The assessment said reform was needed to ensure LCWR’s fidelity to Catholic teaching in areas that include abortion, euthanasia, women’s ordination and homosexuality.

Our Sunday Visitor to distribute L’Osservatore Romano’s English edition

HUNTINGTON, Ind. (CNS) — The Vatican has chosen Our Sunday Visitor to be the exclusive distributor of the North American English edition of L’Osservatore Romano, the official Vatican newspaper. Our Sunday Visitor will begin distributing L’Osservatore Romano in August and also will provide order fulfillment, customer service, and marketing support for the newspaper. The focus will be promotion to individual Catholics, parishes, dioceses and other Catholic organizations.

L’Osservatore Romano (Italian for “The Roman Observer”), founded in 1861, publishes papal discourses, texts and documents, reports on the events of the church and the pope, and provides news of cultural debates and international life from the perspective of the Catholic Church. Celebrating its 100th anniversary this year, Our Sunday Visitor publishes several periodicals, including the largest national Catholic newspaper, OSV Newsweekly, plus The Catholic Answer, The Priest, My Daily Visitor, Grace in Action and Take Out: Family Faith on the Go. Our Sunday Visitor also has more than 1,700 Catholic book, pamphlet and textbook titles in print. In partnership with the Vatican publishing house Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Our Sunday Visitor has published more than 18 books by Pope Benedict XVI.
John Paul II said of this ministry, “COURAGE is doing the work of God!” There is also an outreach called EnCourage which ministers to relatives, spouses, and friends of persons with same-sex attraction. From their website you will learn about same sex attraction and chastity. By developing an interior life of chastity, which is the universal call to all Christians, one can move beyond the confines of the homosexual identity to a more complete one in Christ. Also, find Chapter Meetings, Conferences, Days of Recollection, and Retreats. Go to http://courage.net/.

The Beginning Experience — The Beginning Experience is an international ministry that helps divorced, separated and widowed individuals resolve their grief surrounding the loss of a marriage partner. It is a ministry of the San Antonio Archdiocese Family Life Office. For more information, go to their website: www.beginningexperience.org; e-mail: santanoniobe@yahoo.com; phone: (210) 734-2146.

Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center — A National Historic Landmark in Goliad — is the only Spanish fort in the possession of the Catholic Church in North America. A tour program is available to groups. The Presidio is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on major holidays. Admission is $4 (ages 12-59); $3.50 for 60 and older and military personnel and $1 (ages 6-11), with children live and younger admitted free. Group rates are available with advance reservations. A re-enactment will be available for school groups with advanced reservations. The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information call (361) 645-3752 or see the website at www.presidiolabahia.org.

St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans — For more information, please go to their website at www.lostcompaneros-so.org. For meeting dates, please call Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858.

Engaged Encounter — Register as soon as you have contacted your pastor due to limited space. It is strongly recommended that you attend an encounter weekend four to six months prior to your wedding date. For a registration form, contact your pastor, visit the website at www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm, or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The 2012 dates are: Sept. 7-9 and Nov. 16-18. For more info., call (361) 573-0828 ext. 2230. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

Natural Family Planning — It is the only Church-approved form of family planning. For information about the Sympto-Thermal Method in the Victoria area and the NFP class schedules, please contact David and Annie Coffey at victorianfpeachers@yahoo.com. Classes going on now.

Retrouvaille — A marriage-healing ministry in the Diocese of Victoria; the word Retrouvaille means ‘rediscovery.’ Retrouvaille is a program that offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and the loving relationship in your marriage. Tens of thousands headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending. Next weekend is Aug. 17-19. Go to www.retrouvaille.org for more information or contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jbhovjv@sbcglobal.net or (361) 580-2770. Other contacts are at (800) 470-2230 and www.helpfoumpairriage.org. See story on page 15.

Marriage Encounter — The Marriage Encounter Weekend is no longer offered in the Diocese of Victoria. Retrouvaille, meaning rediscovery, is the only program offered in the diocese at this time to married couples who would like marriage help. For more information, please see the Retrouvaille notice (above), contact www.helpfoumpairriage.org, or go to www.wwme.org for Marriage Encounter Weekends offered outside the Diocese of Victoria.

Courage — Are you or a loved one experiencing homosexual attraction and looking for answers? Courage, an apostolate of the Catholic Church, ministers to persons with same-sex attraction and their loved ones. It has been endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family, and our beloved Blessed
EVENTS

Familia Cathedral – Barcelona, Spain

Father Gabriel Bentil needs pilgrims

Father Gabriel Bentil is still looking for pilgrims to go on a pilgrimage with him to the great shrines of the Blessed Mother in Europe. He will be the spiritual director of a 15-day Shrines of Spain – Portugal – France Pilgrimage from October 1 – 15, 2012. The tour coordinator is Betty Urbanovsky of El Campo, and the group leader will be Paul Mazoch.

Highlights will include Barcelona; Montserrat, Spain’s most sacred mountain, to see the shrine of the Virgin of Montserrat (Black Madonna); the Basilica of Our Lady of the Pillar, the oldest church consecrated to the Blessed Virgin in Christendom; the Basilica of the Immaculate Conception in Mexico City; the Basilica of Guadalupe in Mexico City; the Basilica of Our Lady of Lourdes in France; and the Basilica of Fatima in Portugal.

For further information, please contact Betty Urbanovsky (979) 332-3044 or Ceci Triska (979) 543-8575.
BLESSING—On July 15, 2012, parishioners of St. Peter’s Catholic Parish proudly celebrated the 100-year anniversary of the first Catholic Mass celebrated in Blessing. Bishop David E. Fellhauer was the main celebrant at the Centennial Mass, while Father Peter Yeboah-Amanfo, pastor, concelebrated, along with many visiting priests and his good friend Deacon Michael J. Rauen from Corpus Christi assisted.

The festivities began at 10 a.m. with Bishop Fellhauer rededicating the “Old Bell” and then striking it, calling all to worship. During the procession, which was led by Mariachi De Rogelio Cortines from Victoria, four new statues were blessed by the bishop: an Our Lady of Guadalupe outdoor fountain, two adoring angels at the tabernacle, and St. Michael the Archangel at the back of the church.

Lector Leticia Aparicio read the readings from the 15th Sunday in Ordinary Time, and Bishop Fellhauer read the Gospel, Mark 6:7-13, and delivered the homily. The altar gifts were presented by parishioners Vincent and Cynthia Nemec. Following Bishop Fellhauer’s final blessing, all present were invited to St. Peter’s Hall for the centennial meal and celebration.

Entertainment was provided by the Mariachis; Father Greg Korenek, pastor of Holy Cross Church in Bay City (accordion music); and John and Barbara Hickl and their “first-time” Polka Band.

St. Peter Parish History

Prepared by Cynthia Nemec

Centennial Chairman

The first Catholic Mass was said in Blessing on July 12, 1912, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Roach, Father Francis Palanche, assistant pastor of St. Mary in Victoria. There were five families present. Arrangements were made to have Mass held once a month. Mass was said in the homes of John Roach, Frank Cobb, and J. D. Murphy.

In January 1914, local Catholics began plans to erect a church. The Blessing Town Site Company, owned by Jonathan E. Pierce, donated Lots 10, 11, and 12 of Block 15 of the Blessing Original Town Site (BOTS) for use as a church or school. As a memorial to loved ones, Alfred Fred Foisy agreed to bear the greater part of the expense.

The church was a wooden frame, Mission style structure that measured 30 by 50 feet with two towers on the west side. A Mission-style altar was donated by Ples and Elizabeth Dawdy and the wooden pews were donated by John R. and Margaret J. Rowles, the parents of Elizabeth Dawdy.

The new church was dedicated on April 20, 1915, by the Most Reverend John William Shaw, bishop of the San Antonio Diocese and later archbishop of New Orleans, along with Rev. J. X. Heck, pastor of St. Mary Church, Victoria; Msgr. Jacobus B. Schnetzer, pastor of Church of the Blessed Sacrament, Houston; and Rev. Francis Palanche, pastor of Port Lavaca and administrator of Blessing.

The church was placed under the patronage of St. Peter, “Prince of the Apostles”. The music of the Mass was Gounod’s “Convent Mass in C”, sung by the new church choir, with Anita Hill as organist.

St. Peter Catholic Church was a mission parish attended by priests from Victoria, Port Lavaca, Edna, El Campo and Hillje. In 1927, John and Mary Murphy donated an acre of land for a Catholic cemetery as memorial to their son, Joseph F. Murphy (1920 – 1927), the first person to be buried there.

In 1929, the church was enlarged, adding a bell tower and choir loft. This remodeling changed the appearance of the church from its original Mission-style appearance.

The first resident priest was Father A. J. Weber, who served from 1930 to 1936. During the years of 1930-31, a rectory was built on a portion of Lots 7, 8, and 9 of Block 15. In 1933, a wing was added to the church due to the increase in

See Blessing celebrates, p. 12