Catholic Relief Services honors Diocese of Victoria

WASHINGTON, DC—The Diocese of Victoria has donated to Catholic Relief Services’ Rice Bowl Collection, on average, more than $100,000 each of the past six years. The diocese was honored for its contributions at the annual Catholic Social Ministry Gathering in Washington, D.C. on Ash Wednesday, February 13, the beginning of CRS Rice Bowl for Lent 2013.

Susan Walters, CRS Communications, stated that Victoria is always in the Top 10 of 180 dioceses in the United States, and the fact that there are just 108,000 Catholics in the diocese raising $100,000 each Lent to fight hunger speaks even more to their commitment and ability to engage all ages in this mission.

As director for the Rice Bowl Collection in our diocese, See Catholic Relief, p. 2

Bishop Fellhauer makes collection appeal for seminarian education fund

Dear people of the Diocese,

March 2013

I would like to call to your attention a well known and much loved Gospel story. It is the story of Peter and several other disciples who had a very poor night of fishing. Jesus was on the seashore, and knowing that their net was empty, called out to them: “Cast the net over the right side of the boat.” We all know what happened when they did this – the net filled with fish. So heavy was the catch that they could not pull the net into the boat. The great catch of fish was both a blessing and a challenge.

We too have a blessing in our diocese that carries a weighty challenge. After many years of consistently praying for an increase of priestly vocations, we are now blessed with more men preparing for the priesthood than ever before. This is remarkable, and we are tremendously grateful to God for answering our prayers and to these men for responding to God’s call and the Church’s need.

The weighty challenge is this: how to pay for the extensive education of our seminarians. Currently we have ten men in seminary formation, preparing to serve us in parishes, in missions, and in all the other priestly ministries within our diocese. In addition to these ten, we have six more men who are applying for acceptance as seminarians. And there is yet another group of men who are discerning possible applications to the seminary. In realistic figures, the average cost to educate each seminarian is $35,000 per year of study.

SEE FULL COVERAGE PP. 9-19.

See Bishop Fellhauer, p. 3
**Bishop Fellhauer’s Schedule**

**March**

8 8:05 a.m., School Mass and visit, St. Michael Church and School, Cuero
1:00 p.m., Golf tournament benefiting St. Michael School, Cuero
9 12:00 p.m., Golf tournament, Rio Colorado Golf Course, ACTS Ministry, Holy Cross Church, Bay City
10 9:00 a.m., Mass, celebrating Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court No. 206 100th Anniversary, St. Joseph Church, Yoakum
17 9:30 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church, Shiner
19 11:00 a.m., Mass, Texas Catholic Correctional Ministers retreat, Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria
6:30 p.m., Catholic Daughters Court #389 and Knights of Columbus Council #1329, Clergy and Religious appreciation dinner, Knights of Columbus Hall, Victoria
20 3:00 p.m., Diocesan Finance Board meeting, Chancery Office
4:00 p.m., Diocesan Building Board meeting, Chancery Office
21 6:00 p.m., Mother Elizabeth Seton Awards Banquet, Shiner
24 9:00 a.m., Mass, Palm Sunday, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
26 10:00 a.m., Chrism Mass, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
28 6:30 p.m., Mass of the Lord’s Supper, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
29 12:15 p.m., Way of the Cross, Capilla de la Santisima Trinidad, Silver City Community, Victoria
30 8:00 p.m., Easter Vigil, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral

**April**

4-7 Catholic Daughters of the Americas State Convention, San Antonio
10 7:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville
11 7:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church, Wharton
12 1:00 p.m., Knights of Columbus Council # 9088 Annual Bishop’s Invitational Golf Tournament, The Club at Colony Creek, Victoria

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**Diocesan editor resigns**

After having been the editor of *The Catholic Lighthouse* newspaper for nearly 13 years, I have decided to resign from the position. I turned in my resignation to Bishop David Fellhauer in mid-February, and the March issue is the last issue I will have produced for the diocese.

With great difficulty I have come to this decision, as it has been a true blessing to work for Bishop Fellhauer, as well as serve the people of the Diocese of Victoria; however after searching my heart and mind for the past year, I’ve realized it is time for me to move on.

I await the Lord’s direction regarding my future and ask the readers of the paper to please keep me in their prayers.

The position of editor will be posted on the diocesan Website at [http://www.victoriadiocese.org/businessoffice/business/Current_Job_Openings.htm](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/businessoffice/business/Current_Job_Openings.htm)

May God continue to bless the Diocese of Victoria, its clergy, its employees, and the people they serve.

Sincerely,

Cynthia (Cindy) Brewer

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**Chancery Office will be closed March 28-April 1 for the Holy Days and Easter Monday.**

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**Catholic Relief Services honors Diocese of Victoria**

*Continued from p. 1*

Father Dan Morales, pastor of St. Mary’s Parish in Victoria, received the award on behalf of the diocese. In a statement Father Dan said, “Making the Rice Bowl part of our Lent is simply a part of who we are and what we do as Catholics.”

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**Kick off of 2013 DSA!**

Over 50 volunteers prepared Diocesan Services Appeal brochures and pledge cards during the week of February 25 to be mailed to each Catholic household in the Diocese of Victoria.

The DSA is the yearly financial appeal to help support the operating expenses of the diocese. Each parish is assessed an amount that must be paid, either through pledges or by the parish, at the end of the year.

The 2012 appeal ended February 28 and this year’s appeal began March 1. Parishioners should receive their pledge card in the mail the first week of March.

This year’s DSA appeal goal is $1,721,342. Total expenditures for the 22 departments within the diocese is $2,959,603, of which $1,238,261 has been met by fees, grants, and donations. The largest expenditure is the education of our seminarians – both a blessing and a challenge (please see the bishop’s appeal for a seminarian education collection on p. 1).

Thank you for your generosity.

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**The Catholic Lighthouse**

Official Publication of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas


E-mail local stories, photos or festival announcements to Lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org

Subscription Price Per Year Is $7/$10 outside the diocese

Periodical postage paid at Victoria, Texas, USPS-001015 (ISSN 0894-7740)

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: The Catholic Lighthouse - P.O. Box 4070 - Victoria, Texas 77903

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DEADLINE IS THE FIFTEENTH (15) OF THE PRECEDING MONTH.
**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 February 22, 2013

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**General Seminary Burse**

Previously reported $101,589.00

In honor of Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily, Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters and Rev. Msgr. Gerry Cernoch on their appointment as a Monsignor by Wilbur and Caroline Grohmann 150.00

Donation in love by Dorothy Kocurek 1,000.00

**St. John the Baptist Church, St. John**

In Memory of Rev. Brian Crookes Burse #2

Previously reported $5,356.00

In memory of Hattie Berger by:
- Elsie Farek 15.00
- Lillian Besetzny 10.00
- Georgia Kalich 10.00
- Elreed and Lillie Dittrich 5.00
- Forrest and Ann Dittrich 20.00

Total $5,416.00

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**William Wearden**

Previously reported $795.00

Donation in loving memory of Will Wearden by the Will Wearden Memorial Fund 1,000.00

Total $1,795.00

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

Previously reported $6,472.12

In memory of Belinda Pustejovsky by Larry and Bernice Buss 15.00

In memory of Jo Ann Socha Ballard by Gordon and Glenda Moore 50.00

Total $6,537.12

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

Previously reported $12,732.50

In memory of Robert “Bob” Miori by KC Victoria Council #1329 100.00

In memory of B. J. Berger by M/M Pete Moya 25.00

Total $12,857.50

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**Sr. Barbara Konvicka**

Previously reported $210.00

In memory of Ronald Shimek by Evelyn Konvicka 20.00

Total $230.00

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**Our Lady of Victory Altar Society**

Previously reported $775.00

In memory of Dorothy Dornak by our Lady of Victory Altar Society 25.00

In memory of Dorothy Dornak by Marilyn Neissner 15.00

Total $815.00

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

Previous Balance carried forward $1,894.00

In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters’ appointment as Monsignor by:
- Harvey and Betty Woytek 10.00
- KJZT Society #9, St. John 30.00
- Terry and Trina Patek & family 25.00
- Bill and Margaret Bludau 25.00
- Frances Menely 20.00

In memory of Marcella Chaloupka by Willie Barborak 10.00

In honor of Ed and Peggy Scherer’s 50th wedding anniversary by Pat Mladenka 20.00

In honor of Robert and Barbara Graham’s 40th wedding anniversary by Pat Mladenka 20.00

In memory of Oswald “Ozzie” Berger by Richard and Wilma Schaefer 15.00

Total $2,069.00

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**Rev. Michael Rother**

Previously reported $4,610.00

In memory of Pamela Ann Allums by:
- Bernard and Madeline Rother 25.00
- John F. Rother Jr. 25.00
- Monica Melnar 100.00

In memory of Carolyn Gassen by:
- John F. Rother Jr. 25.00
- Bernard and Madeline Rother 25.00
- Monica Melnar 100.00

Total $4,710.00

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**Rev. Msgr. Celestino Say**

Previously reported $8,840.00

In memory of Baltus James “BJ” Berger by Ed and Bessie Novak’s five children: Rita, Larry, Andy, David and John 50.00

In honor of Rev. Msgr. Celestino Say’s appointment as Monsignor by Robert and Leona Steffek 25.00

Total $8,915.00

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

Previously reported $834.50

In memory of Johnny Corbett by Richard and Jeanette Allums 10.00

Total $844.50

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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**Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily**

Previously reported $11,224.00

In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Bily’s appointment as a Monsignor by Monica Melnar 100.00

In memory of Alfred “Buddy” Michelke by James and Barbara Janak 25.00

Total $11,349.00

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**Catholic Daughters of America Court St. Ann #369 Burse #2**

Previously reported $9,483.99

In memory of Jo Ann Socha Ballard by CDA Court St. Ann #369 25.00

In memory of Kenneth Warren by CDA Court St. Ann #369 25.00

Total $9,533.99

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Sincerely and gratefully yours,

Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer
Bishop

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**Death Notice**

Msgr. Michael O’Shaughnessy

Just before going to press with the March issue of *The Catholic Lighthouse* we were notified of the death of Msgr. Michael O’Shaughnessy. He served many parishes in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Victoria prior to his retirement in 2007. We will have a full obituary in the April 2013 *Catholic Lighthouse*.

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**Bishop Fellhauer makes collection appeal for seminarian education fund**

Continued from p. 1

In the past we have taken up a special collection on Holy Thursday to help defray the cost. We will continue this tradition and expand it. Since many of the faithful who would welcome the opportunity to support our seminarians are unable to participate in the Holy Thursday liturgy, we are furnishing envelopes that can be put in the parish collection basket on any weekend that precedes or follows Holy Thursday.

It is not often that I ask for money that is over and above the general needs of the diocese; however, we need to meet the challenges that have come forth because of the loving response of God and the response of these men. I ask that you be as generous as you can possibly be in this endeavor to meet the financial needs of educating our seminarians.

We all know that our diocese needs the forthcoming ordinations and priestly services of these men. I pray and trust that together we will adequately answer this wonderful opportunity that is put before us.

Sincerely and gratefully yours,

Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer

Bishop
16th Annual Bishop Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament is on the horizon

The Youth Office, Vocations Office, and Seminarian Education Fund, will for the second year in a row, receive an appreciated boost from the sponsor, Knights of Columbus #9088 of Holy Family in Victoria. These three programs are the benefactors of the annual Bishop Fellhauer Golf Tournament, scheduled for April 12, 2013 at The Club at Colony Creek. Monroe Rieger, chairman of the tournament, and Ron Sitka, golf chairman, along with the committee, have been busy preparing for this jam-packed day!

Funds received from this tournament will be used for the above-mentioned offices, as well as for scholarships. Our diocese is blessed to have a very active youth and vocation ministry that works hand in hand to minister more effectively to the young people of the diocese.

The Youth Office has made it possible for all high school students, who wish to do so, to attend the annual Pro-life Rally in Austin and allowed for expansion of the retreat program for confirmation, junior high, and high school students. However, due to limited resources, some young people are unable to participate in the various activities without subsidization. The funds from this tournament help alleviate that situation, as well as provide opportunities for new and innovative programming.

The Vocations Office has benefited from past tournaments by being able to coordinate with the Youth Office to hold an annual boys vocation camp and to bring in adult formation sessions in human sexual identity and sessions in techniques to strengthen the family. Tournament proceeds have also helped the Vocations Office subsidize costs for the Diocesan formation program the following fall. Our office is excited to offer this opportunity for our young men to begin their vocation journey.

“Faith is knowing that you are in God’s hands, that you are loved, prayed for, surrounded by people who are encouraging and supporting you. Faith is being open to receiving help that you didn’t even know you needed,” said Rob Fuchs

As was done last year, all monies received from the $1,000 Bishop Level sponsors will be earmarked exclusively for the Seminarian Education Fund, as the tremendous increase in seminarians in our diocese necessitates more funds to educate these prospective priests. The average cost to educate one seminarian for a year is $35,000 and next year the diocese expects to have “16” seminarians. Please consider becoming a $1,000 Bishop Level sponsor in the name of one of our seminarians. You may personally choose a seminarian to sponsor or one can be assigned to you. Please contact Monroe Rieger at (361) 571-6535 with your choice (or for a list of names).

Levels are categorized as follows: BISHOP-$1,000; MONSIGNOR - $500; PRIEST - $200; DEACON - $100; and Levels are categorized as follows: BISHOP-$1,000; MONSIGNOR - $500; PRIEST - $200; DEACON - $100; and

See Golf Tournament, p. 5

Miss Sandra Neely, senior development officer and public relations coordinator from Devereaux Victoria in Victoria, speaks to the audience at the Celebration of Life program in Edna. Some of the other participants shown are Mrs. Theresa Martin, vice-regent, Mr. Jace Pfuoh, Inez; and DPS Trooper Thomas Arriaga from Victoria.

Celebration of Life program held

EDNA—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court St. Theresa of the Little Flower #1350, St. Agnes Church, Edna, sponsored their fourth Celebration of Life program on January 16, 2013, in the Jackson County Services Building.

All residents of Jackson and surrounding counties were invited to attend. Mrs. Theresa Martin, vice-regent, gave the welcome address and Father Michael Petering, pastor of St. Agnes Church, delivered the invocation. Father Bob Knippenberg, pastor of Holy Family Church in Victoria, gave the opening address, and Miss Sandra Neely of Devereaux Victoria, and DPS Trooper Thomas Arriaga also from Victoria, addressed the audience.

Music and poetry were provided by community members: Mrs. Vickie Cross of Yorktown provided spiritual music and read poetry she had written, while Mr. Jace Pfuoh of Inez read poetry written by Mrs. Heather Kallus. The benediction was delivered by Rev. Jack Hudson, pastor of Vanderbilt Baptist Church.

The audience was offered pro-life literature and precious baby feet pins. There were nearly 150 people attending.

VICTORIA IWBS SISTERS HOST 2013 FORMATION SYMPOSIUM—Each year the international groups of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters hold a gathering for their members who are in initial formation along with their formation teams. This year the symposium was held at the IWBS Motherhouse in Victoria February 8–10. Sisters come from Houston, Corpus Christi, and Mexico. They pray, learn, and have lots of fun getting to know one another. Last year the groups met in Mexico City; next year they will meet in Houston. Pictured are the women in initial formation from Victoria: Sister Veronica Muñoz, novice (front row, second from left); Sister Patricia Marie Lohre, temporary professed (front row, right); Robin Reinhold, affiliate (back row, second from left); and Rosario Resendez, affiliate (back row, right). For more information on the IWBS Formation Symposium, check us out at www.iwbsvictoria.org.

See Golf Tournament, p. 5

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 4 — March 2013
Richard Chovanec of Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Church in Ganado presents to Bishop Fellhauer the names of the 13 catechumens and five candidates entering the Church through their parish, the largest number entering from one parish. Richard and Rose Chovanec are RCIA directors at Assumption.

Rite of Election held at Cathedral

The Diocese of Victoria hopes to receive 133 new members into the fold at the Easter Vigil, March 31, 2013. The Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion was held February 17, the First Sunday of Lent, where 51 catechumens and 82 candidates presented themselves to Bishop David Fellhauer at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral.

Bishop Fellhauer declared the catechumens to be members of the elect, to be initiated into the sacred mysteries at this Easter Vigil and stated to the candidates that the Church recognizes their desire to be sealed with the gift of the Holy Spirit and to have a place at Christ’s eucharistic table.

Those entering the Church were then invited to a reception and tour of the chancellor building of the Diocese of Victoria, sponsored by the Catechetical Office.

Golf tournament

Continued from p. 4

SEMINARIAN - $50. All sponsorships below Bishops’ Level will be split evenly between the youth and vocations offices. Deacon Level sponsors and higher will be given first priority to play in the tournament. Sponsor signs will be displayed on the tee boxes and on a large display sign at the main scoreboard.

If you have any questions, or would like to be a sponsor, please contact Monroe Rieger at (361) 571-6535.

Craig and Terri Covington will be entering St. Mary Catholic Church in Victoria at this coming Easter Vigil. Craig is a catechumen and will receive all three Sacraments of Initiation: baptism, confirmation, and the Eucharist, while Terri is a candidate and will be confirmed and receive Eucharist. Their four-year-old adopted daughter, Katie, soon to attend NA school, was the motivation for them finding a church in which their family may grow as Christians.

KJZT Society #53 Makes donations

The KJZT Society #53 of Wied made a donation to the Hallettsville EMS and the Shiner Catholic Schools library. The donation came from the proceeds of a bake sale at their People Helping People Community Fundraiser. The total raised was $1,420.30 along with funds from the State KJZT Office.

OCL meeting focuses on reaching youth

The Catechetical and Youth offices joined forces to reach the youth of the Diocese of Victoria by bringing in, from Ohio, Jim Merhaut with the Center for Ministry Development to speak at the Feb. 21 Organization of Catechetical Leadership meeting on the topic “Evangelizing Youth – Engaging a New Generation of Disciples”.

The National Workshop Series was centered around the themes: Vision for Evangelizing Youth; Context and Settings for Evangelization within the Parish, Family, Youth Ministry and Catholic Schools; Sharing the Good News: Witness, Reflection, Conversion; and Dynamic Resources and Starting Points for Evangelization.

Jim Merhaut addresses OCL members in Victoria.

Pictured above are Katherine Kahanek, Richard Garcia with the Hallettsville EMS; Helen Janak; and Margaret Dornak.

Pictured above are Father Kirby Hlavaty, Sts. Cyril and Methodius pastor; Mary Ann Stock; Leah Wagner, Shiner Catholic Schools librarian; Tammy Grabarkiewitz; Neely Yackel, principal; and Molly Peters.

Jim opened with prayer, then began his presentation emphasizing that Catholics’ core identity is to evangelize - to proclaim Good News. He said that we do this by showing Christ’s love rather than criticism when we see youth not living up to our expectations. In fact he used the example of a parishioner gossiping about a youth who is not dressed properly at Mass or at a function within earshot of the youth’s parent. He said, “Hey, Church, that’s not like you.”

“Yes, there are issues to be addressed, but to handle it this way is like driving a knife into the side of the parent,” he said.

He then taught that “there needs to be a balance between preaching and teaching. Catechesis is a moment in the process of evangelization. Evangelization is bigger than teaching, for teaching only happens after the relationship is formed.”

Youth are very emotional – “what drives and excites them is gutsy stuff – very emotional, and they will remain that way into their mid 20s. That’s the way our brains are formed and that’s why they’ll need guidance from adults until then.”

Jim continued with the Church’s vision for the New Evangelization and identified trends and the current opportunities for

See OCL meeting, p. 7

Dollywood and Gatlinburg, Tenn.
May 18-25

• Alaska
July 9-20
Deposit by April 1 because of Air
Pathways ~with Patti
334 Jurek Road
Port Lavaca, TX 77979
361.552.2993 or 361.920.3216
Lent – A Time to Review Our Lives

“E”ach year, on the occasion of Lent, the Church invites us to a sincere review of our life in light of the teachings of the Gospel.” - Benedict XVI, Message for Lent 2010

As we heard in the Gospel reading on the First Sunday of Lent, Jesus was led into the desert by the Holy Spirit; we too, have been led into this season of Lent, where we can review our life in light of the teachings of the Gospel as recommended by our Holy Father.

Jesus was tempted; we are tempted. In the first temptation mentioned, Jesus is tempted to use his own power, rather than relying on the providence of God. Jesus passed that test and quoted Scripture: “One does not live by bread alone”. I have to ask myself if I truly rely on God and cooperate with his grace; or am I so proud to ask myself if I truly rely on God and him alone shall you serve.” Sometimes I may be tempted to take advantage of, or to pass judgment on, people who may be different or less esteemed by the society which surrounds us. Do I always show my love and honor for God by the way I treat the least of our brothers and sisters?

In the third temptation, when the devil tempts Jesus to perform a miracle to save himself, Jesus responds: “You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test.” We pray “lead us not into temptation,” yet do I place myself in situations or associate with people who may lead me to violate God’s law? Are there such situations or persons who could lead me astray? Do I seek personal recognition through risky behavior? Or, can I say with Jesus “You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test,” and avoid situations that might get me into trouble?

So, then, let us take the Gospel to heart each Sunday each time we participate in the Liturgy on this occasion of Lent, and let us make a sincere review of our life in light of the teachings of the Gospel.

Retired Teacher Gives Presentation to Sacred Heart History Classes

HALLETTSVILLE—At the request of Sacred Heart Principal David Smolik, George Koudelka, retired teacher and currently substitute band director at Sacred Heart, gave a special presentation on Wednesday, January 16, to the Junior High and High School history classes.

Mr. Koudelka’s presentation was titled “A History of Recorded Sound from 1877 to the present” and showed how the recording industry developed from the original invention by Thomas Edison in 1877 to the current technology and current equipment in use today. Mr. Koudelka showed the students an actual cylinder which came before the flat record disc. He then traced the history of the phonograph record by showing the development of children’s records, foreign records such as those from Germany and Czechoslovakia, and a type of music known as easy listening.

JCUDA Daddy-Daughter Dance

YOAKUM—Forty-nine members of the Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas, along with their escorts, enjoyed the 3rd annual JCUDA Daddy-Daughter Dance held February 8 at Jahn Refrigeration.

This event is set aside to show the importance of dads in their daughters’ lives. Research shows that daughters shape their view of God by how they view their father. Grandpas, uncles, godfathers, and special family friends filled in for those dads who were unable to attend. It was a fun-filled, yet meaningful, night.

The focus for this year’s 2012-2013 JCUDA monthly meetings are the Fruits of the Spirit: Love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-Control. February’s focus was LOVE, so members spent their Feb. 7 meeting creating a letter of love for their dad on a tree leaf. The leaves were placed on the Tree of Life at the dance, and when the evening ended, members presented their dads with their leaves.

The members danced the night away with music and sound equipment donated by Mark Herchek and played by DJ Mercedes Drietner. The traditional Grand March was held as well. Memories were captured with the help of photographer Nicole Bowling, and snacks were graciously provided by the JCUDA mothers. Local eateries donated 16 door prizes, which were given throughout the evening.
Youth Calendar of Events

Sunday, March 24 – Confirmation Retreat – St. Mary’s - Victoria
Saturday, April 13 – Foundations - Retreat Formation
Wednesday, April 14 – 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,
Cassandra 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

NATIONAL JCDA DAY—The Mayor of Shiner signs proclamation for National JCDA Day February 17, 2013 - shown in picture are, front row (l-r): Hope Kapavik, Trinity Garza, Mayor Fred Hilscher, and Seryna Garza; back row: Delynn Pesek, Kristen Schacherl, president; Bailey Machacek, and Bethany Nevlund.

St. Joseph High School Hosts “A Closer Look at STJ”

St. Joseph High School in Victoria, is hosting “A Closer Look at STJ” from 6:30-7:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 11.
Take a campus tour and learn about advanced placement/dual credit courses, tuition assistance, athletics, STJ summer camp registration, and have ice cream sundaes with the Flyer Family.
For more information, please contact Jen Korinek, admissions coordinator, at jkorinek@stjvictoria.com or call (361) 573-2446 ext. 217.

Pancakes for Palm Sunday
OLS youth raise funds for spiritual events

On Sunday, March 24, the high school teens of Our Lady of Sorrows will be helping to serve a Pancake Breakfast after Mass to help raise funds for summer activities. The high school teenagers have been selling tickets for the past few weeks leading up to the breakfast to put money into their individual account. This summer, Our Lady of Sorrows will be hosting and providing many different opportunities for their teenagers to get closer to Christ.

Some of the activities that the teens are specifically raising money for are Steuben-ville, Covecrest, and a local retreat that Our Lady of Sorrows will be hosting at the Renewal Center. Some of the teens have been to Steuben-ville and for others it will be their first time. Covecrest is a week-long retreat held in Tiger, Georgia, and 10 teens will use this as leadership training for next year. Regardless of whether the teens are going to one of these events, or all of them, it takes money to be able to go.
Some of these teenagers do have jobs and use their own hard-earned money to go to these retreats, but a lot of them don’t. Money should never be an issue when it comes to anyone, especially a youth growing in their relationship with God. Hopefully, with the support of their community, the teens who plan on going to these events this summer will be able to raise the funds needed to pay for the fees and continue to grow in an even deeper relationship with God.

The Pancake Breakfast will be held in Trinity Hall (River Street) after the 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Palm Sunday Masses.

If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required to report it to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or to a law enforcement agency within 48 hours of the time you suspect the child had been or may be abused or neglected.

Reporting Child Abuse Hotline
1-800-252-5400
BURNING PALMS AND MARDI GRAS—St. Agnes Church in Edna, held a palm burning and Mardi Gras celebration on February 12, 2013, on the church grounds and in the church parish center. In the left photo, Father Michael Petering, pastor, burned palms to be used as the ashes for Ash Wednesday services. The Mardi Gras celebration followed, and a covered dish meal was served. A parade, with youth and adults participating, was then held, and a king, queen, prince, and princess of the Mardi Gras were chosen. Pictured at the right is Mr. and Mrs. Don Orsak who were chosen as Mardi Gras King and Queen at the Saint Agnes Parish Mardi Gras Celebration. Everyone enjoyed wearing costumes and showing their Mardi Gras attire.

On Super Bowl Sunday the St. Robert’s Youth Group from El Campo participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring. They were at St. Robert Church taking collections from 7 a.m. until noon. After the collection, the members donated the items to St. Vincent de Paul Society that has a food pantry at the church. This was the first year that the youth group participated in the Souper Bowl of Caring. Pictured, from left, is parishioner Julia Ontivaros dropping off her donation to the youth: Estralla Garcia, Martin Fonseca, Kassie Vela, and Eziquel Olivera.

Correction

Thanks To Our Catholic School Employees Who Are Celebrating Anniversary Milestones:

We apologize for not acknowledging the staff of St. Joseph School in Yoakum in the February 2013 issue of The Catholic Lighthouse. The following staff are recognized:

5 Years: Jana Guajardo, Amy Hull, Sheila Klimitchek, Susana Trujillo and Kendra Wenske

10 Years: Susan Kelley, Sherry Pavlick and William Reardon

15 Years: Kandi Sanchez

20 Years: Mary Sue Ferrell

25 Years: Irene Wenske

30 Years: Carlos Sanchez
POPE BENEDICT DEPARTS FROM HIS FINAL GENERAL AUDIENCE—One day before Pope Benedict XVI officially retires, he departs from his final general audience at the Vatican Feb. 27. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano)
said he believes the pope “had no fear of this” happening because he clearly demonstrated his desire to step down and no longer be pope or retain any papal authority.

When asked whether the pope had any medical illnesses or bouts of depression that may have prompted his resignation, Father Lombardi said the pope was “absolutely not” depressed and possessed a remarkable “spiritual serenity” and composure despite the many difficult moments he has had to face as pope. The Vatican spokesman also said he was not aware of any medical illness that would have caused the pope to step down, rather it was due to a “normal” deterioration of physical and mental strength that comes with old age.

The option of a pope to resign is explicitly written into the Code of Canon Law. It says a pope may step down, but stipulates that the decision must be made freely and “duly manifested.” No one needs to formally accept a pope’s resignation for it to be valid.

Pope Benedict had long said it would be appropriate for a pope to resign for the good of the church if the pontiff felt he were unable to physically bear the burden of the papacy.

In his book-length interview, “The Light of the World,” with German journalist Peter Seewald, the pope told the author that it was important, however, that the pope “must not run away” and “must stand fast and endure” any difficult situations that are facing the Church.

Father Lombardi said a “sede vacante” usually lasts less than a month, and that it was more than likely a new pope would be elected in time to lead the full schedule of Holy Week and Easter liturgies.

WASHINGTON—Cardinal Timothy Dolan of New York, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, issued this statement moments after learning of the resignation of Pope Benedict XVI on February 11, 2013:

The Holy Father brought the tender heart of a pastor, the incisive mind of a scholar and the confidence of a soul united with His God in all he did. His resignation is but another sign of his great care for the Church. We are sad that he will be resigning but grateful for his eight years of selfless leadership as successor of St. Peter.

At 78, when he was elected pope in 2005, he set out to meet his people – and they were of all faiths – all over the world. He visited the religiously threatened – Jews, Muslims and Christians in the war-torn Middle East, the desperately poor in Africa, and the world’s youth gathered to meet him in Australia, Germany, Spain and Brazil.

He delighted our beloved United States of America when he visited Washington and New York in 2008. As a favored statesman he greeted notables at the White House. As a spiritual leader he led the Catholic community in prayer at Nationals Park, Yankee Stadium and St. Patrick’s Cathedral. As a pastor feeling pain in a stirring, private meeting at the Vatican nunciature in Washington, he brought a listening heart to victims of sexual abuse by clerics.

Pope Benedict often cited the significance of eternal truths and he warned of a dictatorship of relativism. Some values, such as human life, stand out above all others, he taught again and again. It is a message for eternity.

He unified Catholics and reached out to schismatic groups in hopes of drawing them back to the church. More unites us than divides us, he said by word and deed. That message is for eternity.

He spoke for the world’s poor when he visited them and wrote of equality among nations in his peace messages and encyclicals. He pleaded for a more equitable share of world resources and for a respect for God’s creation in nature.

Those who met him, heard him speak and read his clear, profound writings found themselves moved and changed. In all he said and did he urged people everywhere to know and have a personal encounter with Jesus Christ.

The occasion of his resignation stands as an important moment in our lives as citizens of the world. Our experience impels us to thank God for the gift of Pope Benedict. Our hope impels us to pray that the College of Cardinals under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit choose a worthy successor to meet the challenges present in today’s world.
POPE

Pope Benedict’s resignation and the mystery of the missing encyclical

By Francis X. Rocca
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI’s historic decision to resign at the end of February has astonished and perplexed the world in many ways, not least because of what might be called the mystery of the missing encyclical.

In December, the Vatican spokesman, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, said that Pope Benedict’s fourth encyclical would be released in the first half of 2013. Treating the subject of faith, the encyclical would complete a trilogy on the three “theological virtues,” following “Deus Caritas Est” (2005) on charity, and “Spe Salvi” (2007) on hope.

Then, on the day after the pope’s announcement, Father Lombardi announced that Pope Benedict would not issue another encyclical after all.

The news was surprising because it suggested that Pope Benedict, a former professor who has placed a priority on his teaching role as pope, had abandoned the most prominent teaching project of his pontificate just before its completion. This, even though Father Lombardi said that the pope had pondered resignation for several months, and the Vatican newspaper reported that he first considered the move in March 2012.

It was hardly plausible that so prolific an author might be suffering from writer’s block, even given the deteriorating “strength of mind and body” he cited in announcing his resignation.

Papal encyclicals are not one-man productions. Though the pope ultimately determines their content, they are typically the fruit of much behind-the-scenes collaboration with Vatican officials and often with outside consultants as well. Pope Benedict’s last encyclical, “Caritas in Veritate” (2009), appeared more than a year after its expected date, reportedly because of complications in this process. It is likely that such was the case again this time.

Father Lombardi has suggested that the Roman pontiff emeritus might eventually publish the document under his own name, in which case it would not rank as part of the papal magisterium. But it is at least as likely that his successor will take up and finish the task.

Popes tend to honor their predecessors’ commitments, which is why everyone assumes that the next pope will travel to Rio de Janeiro for World Youth Day in July. Indeed, Pope Benedict’s own first encyclical, “Deus Caritas Est,” was started by his predecessor, Blessed John Paul II.

If the next pope does finish the encyclical on faith, there is reason to think that his predecessor will be happy to have left it incomplete.

A major papal document whose production bridged the transition between the two pontificates could serve as a reassuring sign of continuity after Pope Benedict’s practically unprecedented move. At the same time, since the next pope would undoubtedly stamp the encyclical with his distinctive priorities and style, it would exemplify Pope Benedict’s ideal of reform as “innovation in continuity” with Church tradition.

Pope Benedict has been careful throughout his pontificate to distinguish his personal writings from his papal documents, by publishing his bestselling series of “Jesus of Nazareth” books under the name Joseph Ratzinger.

The knowledge that the next encyclical was the work of more than one pope would further underscore its impersonal character and reinforce the idea, which Pope Benedict has conveyed so dramatically through his resignation, that the papacy is an office distinct from any individual who might hold it.

“He does not write alone, an isolated individual, he writes with the help of the church,” Pope Benedict said.

BOOKS BY POPE BENEDICT XVI PICTURED AT CATHOLIC BOOKSTORE NEAR VATICAN—Books by Pope Benedict XVI are pictured in the window of a Catholic bookstore near the Vatican Feb. 26. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Umbert the Unborn

DEAR HOLY FATHER...

I’M SENDING THIS EMAIL BECAUSE I KNOW HOW TECH SAVVY YOU ARE.

ON BEHALF OF UNBORN CHILDREN, I THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU’VE DONE TO DEFEND INNOCENT HUMAN LIFE.

P.S. ENJOY YOUR RETIREMENT. YOU’VE EARNED IT!

by Gary Cangemi
Pope Benedict’s ‘unwavering fidelity’ celebrated at Mass in Washington

By Joseph Austin  
Catholic News Service  
WASHINGTON (CNS)—During the presentation of the gifts at a Feb. 28 Mass celebrating Pope Benedict XVI’s ministry, the choir’s hymn had an ambrosial quality as members sang: “Tu es Petrus et super hanc petram aedificabo ecclesiam meam” – “You are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church.”

The Mass of thanksgiving for the ministry of Pope Benedict and for the election of his successor pope – brought together people from all walks of life to remember one papacy and to pray for the next in the Crypt Church at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception.

Students, elementary age to college age, were also in attendance for the Mass celebrated by Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the U.S. Archdiocese for the Military Services and broadcast live by the Eternal Word Television Network.

“Pope Benedict XVI has demonstrated an unwavering fidelity to seeking and preaching lasting truth. ... We give thanks for the immense gifts of this ‘worker in the vineyard of the Lord,’” said the archbishop.

“Pope Benedict completes his Petrine ministry, exiting not through the traditional door of death,” he continued, “but voluntarily surrendering his office, because he perceived that his strength, energy, and health no longer would allow him to fulfill the challenges of that ministry adequately.”

The Mass took place in the early evening, Eastern time, just hours after the pope left Rome for the papal summer house in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, and to begin his retirement. The sight of his helicopter leaving the Vatican one last time brought many across the world to tears, and thousands to Twitter to send a final #ThanksPontifex tweet.

“Ultimately what lasts? Certainly not money or buildings or even books! In the final analysis only the human soul, created by Almighty God for all eternity will last,” Archbishop Broglio told the congregation in his homily.

“We give thanks that Pope Benedict XVI recognized what is truly important and spent himself completely to enrich the human soul by eloquently teaching the world about what really matters: eternal life,” the archbishop said.

“These are not simple times,” the archbishop said about the climate surrounding the conclave, where the cardinals who are eligible to vote will elect a new pope.

He called it imperative that “we pray for the cardinals who will gather in conclave to elect a worthy successor,” he said.

On March 4, the College of Cardinals began their formal pre-conclave meetings with 142 members present, 103 of whom are under the age of 80 and eligible to enter the conclave to vote for a new pope.

“This is the moment glorious when he who once was dead shall lead his Church victorious, their champion and their head,” sang the choir as they processed out of the church.

Archdioceses and dioceses across the U.S. marked the pope’s retirement prayer for the cardinals who will elect his successor at special Masses and prayer vigils. Parishes and schools also were encouraged to have special liturgies.

Statement from Bishop David E. Fellhauer on Pope Benedict XVI’s announcement of his resignation:

I am personally saddened by Pope Benedict XVI’s announcement that he will retire his coming February 28, although I understand his motives.

While I was completely surprised by his announcement, the pope had already indicated in the past that resignation was an option from which he would not shrink if the circumstances merited.

I admire his decision; it took courage and honesty. The pope, who is a man of prayer and deep spirituality, indicated that he made the decision only after examining his conscience before God.

I am a great admirer of Pope Benedict. He has fulfilled the office of the papacy in a remarkable manner and has brought to the office an extraordinarily keen intellect and a clear insight into the spirit of our time.

May God give him grace and peace.

A letter to Pope Benedict XVI from Bishop Fellhauer on behalf of the faithful of the diocese

Most Holy Father,

Together with the clergy, religious, and faithful of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas, I send You heartfelt greetings. We thank You most sincerely for Your remarkable and faithful service in the Petrine ministry to us and the entire Church.

Be assured, Your Holiness, of our continued prayers, that the Lord will grant You joy and peace in Your remaining years. Your example of selfless dedication will remain a source of strength to us in our own spiritual journey.

Asking Your blessing on us all, and devotedly Yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David E. Fellhauer  
Bishop of Victoria in Texas
Former doctrinal enforcer used pontificate to crack down on sex abuse

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI’s disgust over the abuse scandals marring the Church was made evident even before his election as pope. In his forceful Way of the Cross meditations, which he wrote as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger in the few weeks before his election as pope in 2005, he wrote for the world to hear: “How much filth there is in the Church, and even among those who, in the priesthood, ought to belong entirely to him.” That straightforward attitude, coupled with sympathy for victims and commitment toward prevention, marked much of the pope’s subsequent eight years as pope. “Pope Benedict XVI will certainly be remembered for his extraordinary reply and response to the very sad phenomenon of sexual abuse of minors by the clergy,” Auxiliary Bishop Charles Scicluna of Malta told Vatican Radio. The bishop was promoter of justice at the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, handling accusations of clerical sex abuse from 2002 to 2012. Pope Benedict’s approach to the scandal consistently was to see it as a result of serious sin that has polluted the church; the process of cleansing must be serious and profound, he said, but it also must acknowledge Christ’s power to heal and to strengthen the Church.

Pope Benedict worked to promote understanding of Vatican II

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — On Feb. 14, in one of the last public appearances of his pontificate, Pope Benedict XVI spoke to the clergy of Rome about his experiences at the Second Vatican Council, which he had attended as an expert consultant half a century before. The pope praised some of the council’s achievements, including its teachings on the interpretation of Scripture, religious freedom and relations with non-Christian religions. But he also lamented what he described as widespread distortions of the council’s teachings. The news media, he said, had presented the council to most of the world as a political struggle for “popular sovereignty” in the Church. This “council of the media” was responsible for “many calamities, so many problems, so much misery,” the pope said. “Seminaries closed, convents closed, liturgy trivialized”. With that speech, Pope Benedict returned to one of the major themes of his pontificate. During his first year as pope, he had explained in a landmark speech that Vatican II could be properly understood only in continuity with the church’s millennial traditions, not as a radical break with the past. He went on to devote much of his papacy to promoting this understanding of the council’s teachings. Under Pope Benedict, the Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, which as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger he had headed for almost 24 years, continued to censure or criticize theologians whose writings, often invoking the spirit if not the letter of Vatican II documents, deviated from orthodoxy in areas that included sexual morality, the mystery of the incarnation and the possibility of salvation without Christ.

Australian cardinal says age, nationality will count in conclave

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Sydney Cardinal George Pell, 71, said age, nationality and pastoral experience will be among the factors the cardinals consider when voting for a new pope. “I would be surprised if we elect someone who’s quite as old as the pope was when he was elected (78), but I suspect the cardinal-electors would be a bit reluctant to choose someone who might be pope for 30 years or 40 years,” which would be likely with a cardinal currently in his early 50s, Cardinal Pell said. “That narrows the range down, but it depends on the candidate,” he told Catholic News Service Feb. 27. He said that in looking for Pope Benedict’s successor nationality will matter, “but you don’t start there. But I’ve always said a good – in inverted commas – Italian candidate has an advantage because the pope is the bishop of Rome. I’m not saying that’s a decisive advantage, but it’s a bit of an advantage and I think that is not inappropriate.” At the same time, he said, being from the United States, the world’s remaining superpower, is a definite disadvantage. “I don’t think the universal church is going to choose a pope from the superpower,” Cardinal Pell said. The church had superpower French popes in the 14th century when the papacy was in Avignon, and it was not the best experience, he said.” Superpowers are not universally popular, and a lot of people would see too much of an alignment of power between a pope who was from the States and the United States” government, he said. Cardinal Pell said he also would look for “a man of faith

See Australian cardinal, p. 17

Prayer for the Church

O Lord Jesus Christ, Supreme Pastor of Your Church, we thank you for the ministry of Pope Benedict XVI and the selfless care with which he has led us as Successor of Peter, and Your Vicar on earth.

Good Shepherd, who founded Your Church on the rock of Peter’s faith and have never left Your flock untended, look with love upon us now, and sustain Your Church in faith, hope, and charity.

Grant, Lord Jesus, in your boundless love for us, a new Pope for Your Church who will please You by your holiness and lead us faithfully to You, who are the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Amen.

Knights of Columbus offer “Prayer for the Church” for papal transition

With Pope Benedict XVI announcing his retirement, the Knights of Columbus has asked its members and all Catholics to turn to prayer. The “Prayer for the Church” was composed by their Supreme Chaplain, Archbishop William E. Lori of Baltimore. It is being made available to the order’s 1.8 million members and their families via a special website (kofc.org) in addition to making printed prayer cards (3.5” X 4.5”) available to councils, dioceses, parishes that request them.

As a Church, we are living in historic times that will attract the attention of the world. As a lay organization, the Knights of Columbus hopes to mobilize lay people across the nation in a prayerful campaign that will unite the faithful and serve as a witness to the world.

To order additional copies of this prayer card, please contact the Knights of Columbus Supreme Council Communications Department at (203) 752-4483.
POPE BENEDICT XVI RIDES HIS POPEMOBILE THROUGH ST. PETER’S SQUARE AT THE VATICAN DURING HIS LAST WEEKLY AUDIENCE—Pope Benedict XVI rides in his popemobile through a packed St. Peter’s Square as he concludes his final weekly audience at the Vatican Feb. 27. (CNS photo/Stefano Rellandini, Reuters)

POPE KISSES BABY AS HE ARRIVES TO LEAD HIS FINAL GENERAL AUDIENCE AT VATICAN—Benedict XVI kisses a baby as he arrives to lead his final general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Feb. 27. He is assisted by Archbishop Georg Ganswein, prefect of the papal household and the pope’s personal secretary. (CNS photo/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters)

FINAL MEETING—U.S. Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston kisses the ring of Pope Benedict XVI as the pope meets for the last time with the College of Cardinals at the Vatican Feb. 28. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano)

CARDINAL BERTONE REACTS DURING POPE BENEDICT XVI’S FINAL WEEKLY AUDIENCE AT VATICAN—Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, Vatican secretary of state, fourth from left, reacts as he attends Pope Benedict XVI’s final general audience in St. Peter’s Square at the Vatican Feb. 27. (CNS photo/Alessandro Bianchi, Reuters)

Vatican workers seal the doors leading to the pope’s private apartment in the Apostolic Palace at the Vatican Feb. 28. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano via Reuters)
Pope delivers personal, emotional farewell address at audience

By Francis X. Rocca, Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — On his last full day as pope, Pope Benedict XVI delivered an unusually personal and emotional farewell address, thanking the faithful around the world for their support and assuring them that he would remain in their service even in retirement.

“I will continue to accompany the path of the church with prayer and reflection, with that dedication to the Lord and to his bride that I have tried to live every day till now and that I want to live always,” the pope told a crowd in St. Peter’s Square Feb. 27, the eve of his resignation.

The audience was the last opportunity for large numbers of the public to see the pope in person in St. Peter’s Square in the Vatican before his resignation was to take effect at 8 p.m.

Under a clear blue sky with temperatures in the low 40s, the pope arrived for his last public audience shortly after 10:30 a.m., standing and waving for almost 15 minutes as his white popemobile made a circuit through the square. Cheering pilgrims waved national flags and banners with slogans such as “always with the pope” and “you will never be alone.”

The pope thanked the cardinals, some 70 of whom sat near him in front of St. Peter’s Basilica, and who are expected to begin meeting March 4 to plan the election of the next pope. Pope Benedict also voiced his gratitude to other members of the hierarchy, the Vatican diplomatic corps and “all those who work for good communication,” a category presumably including the press.

Pope Benedict acknowledged messages he had received over the preceding two weeks from heads of state, religious leaders and other dignitaries. But he made special mention of letters from “simple people,” who he said had written to him not as to a “prince or a great man whom they do not know,” but as “brothers and sisters or sons and daughters.” The pope called their expressions of affection and solidarity “reason for joy at a time when so many speak of the (Church’s) decline, but we see how the Church is alive today.”

The conclusion of the pope’s talk set off a two-minute standing ovation, which he acknowledged by smiling broadly and standing with outstretched arms.

That evening in the small town square of Castel Gandolfo, 15 miles southeast of Rome, he greeted several thousand people in front of the papal summer residence where he will live until the end of renovations at his permanent home in Vatican City.

Bertone, who has drawn blame for the mismanagement sensationalized in the 2012 “Vatileaks” of confidential correspondence, “has accompanied me faithfully in these years,” the pope said.

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SWISS GUARDS CLOSE MAIN DOOR AT CASTEL GANDOLFO, SIGNALING END OF BENEDICT XVI’S PAPACY—Members of the Swiss Guard close the main door of the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo, Italy, at 8 p.m. Feb. 28 – the exact moment Pope Benedict ceased being pope. The Swiss Guard concluded its protective service to Pope Benedict XVI and the Vatican gendarmes took over, signaling the end of his papacy. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano)

‘SEDE VACANTE’ INSIGNIA USED BY VATICAN DURING PERIOD BETWEEN POPES—This is the Vatican insignia representing the “sede vacante” (vacant see). The emblem is used between the death of a pope and the election of a new one – a period known as the interregnum. (CNS illustration/Tim Meko)

POPE BENEDICT XVI WAVES AS HE APPEARS FOR LAST TIME AT BALCONY OF SUMMER RESIDENCE IN CASTEL GANDOLFO—Pope Benedict XVI waves as he appears for the last time at the balcony of his summer residence in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, Feb. 28. It was his final public appearance before his papacy drew to a close. (CNS photo/L’Osservatore Romano via Reuters)

POPE BENEDICT XVI WALKS AWAY AFTER MAKING FINAL PUBLIC APPEARANCE AS POPE IN CASTEL GANDOLFO—Pope Benedict XVI turns away after making his final public appearance as pope in Castel Gandolfo, Italy, Feb. 28. The pope blessed the people gathered in the town square after he arrived via helicopter from the Vatican. “I am a simple pilgrim who begins the last stage of his pilgrimage on this earth,” he told the crowd. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)
Pope Benedict begins emeritus life; cardinals begin ‘sede vacante’ jobs

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Since resigning, Pope Benedict XVI has moved to the papal villa in Castel Gandolfo outside of Rome. He will stay there until the renovation is completed of a cloister, the Mater Ecclesia monastery set up by Blessed John Paul II, which is located inside the Vatican Gardens. There he will dedicate his time to prayer and reflection, Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman said.

After Pope Benedict XVI officially became pope emeritus, he ate dinner, watched the television news and strolled through the lake-view rooms of the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo.

Father Federico Lombardi said he spoke March 1 with Archbishop Georg Gänswein, the retired pope’s secretary, who said the mood in the villa after the pontificate ended was “relaxed” and his boss slept well.

After watching two news programs, Pope Benedict expressed his gratitude to the media, because he said the coverage of his last day as pope helped people participate in the event, Father Lombardi said.

The papal secretary said Pope Benedict celebrated Mass at 7 a.m. March 1 as normal, read his breviary, had breakfast and then began reading more of the messages he had received in the last days of his pontificate. He expected to stroll through the villa gardens, praying his rosary, in the afternoon.

Meanwhile, back at the Vatican, officials from the College of Cardinals had a series of tasks to perform at the beginning of the “sede vacante,” the period when there is no pope.

The most symbolic tasks were carried out by Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone, the camerlengo or chamberlain of the Holy Roman Church, and his assistants. During the sede vacante, the chamberlain is charged with administering and safeguarding the temporal goods of the Church.

Gathered with others in the offices of the “apostolic chamber,” Cardinal Bertone asked the time. At 8 p.m. exactly he was handed a “ferula,” a red velvet-covered scepter, as a sign of his authority. The cardinal led the staff in a brief prayer to God: “Give your Church a pope acceptable to you.”

Carrying the ferula, he and his aides went into the private papal apartments. They made sure the door to the small private elevator was locked, then stretched tape across the elevator door and stamped it with seals.

Withdrawing from the apartment, they dead-bolted the main door with a large key, then strung a red ribbon through the handles. An aide, using a glue gun, sealed the ribbon’s knot.

The next day, Archbishop Pier Luigi Celata, vice chamberlain, went to the seldom-used papal apartments at the Basilica of St. John Lateran, the pope’s cathedral, and sealed those as well, Father Lombardi said.

Cardinal Angelo Sodano, dean of the College of Cardinals, wrote almost immediately after 8 p.m. to Vatican nuncios and other diplomatic representatives around the world, officially informing them of the sede vacante.

In one of his first acts as dean March 1, Cardinal Sodano wrote to each of the world’s 207 cardinals – including those over age 80 and ineligible to vote in a conclave – notifying them of “the vacancy of the Apostolic See because of the renunciation presented on the part of Pope Benedict XVI.”

He also asked them to come to the Vatican to begin the pre-conclave meetings, known as general congregations, March 4 at 9:30 a.m.

The general congregations will continue until all the cardinal-electors are present in Rome, “and then the College of Cardinals will decide the date to enter into conclave” to elect a pope, he said.

Asked whether Cardinal Sodano was saying that a conclave date would not be set until all the cardinal-electors were present or accounted for, Father Lombardi said the letter “does not have the weight of law,” but he expected the cardinals would not vote on a conclave date until most of them were present and had time to talk and meet formally.

Australian cardinal says age, nationality will count in conclave

Continued from p. 13

Pope Benedict to be ‘pope emeritus’ or ‘Roman pontiff emeritus’

VATICAN CITY (CNS) – Pope Benedict XVI will continue to be known as Pope Benedict and addressed as “His Holiness,” but after his resignation, he will add the title “emeritus” in one of two acceptable forms, either “pope emeritus” or “Roman pontiff emeritus.” After Feb. 28, Pope Benedict will continue to wear a white cassock, but it will be a simplified version of the papal vestment, mainly without the little white cape piece on the shoulders, Father Federico Lombardi, Vatican spokesman, told reporters Feb. 26. Pope Benedict will leave behind his emblematic red shoes, Father Lombardi said. Instead, he will wear brown shoes, beginning with loafers he was given as a gift last March during a visit to Leon, Mexico. The pope has found the zapatos to be very comfortable, he said. The safety of the pope emeritus will be ensured by the Vatican police, Father Lombardi said. Pope Benedict also gave the College of Cardinals his “fisherman’s ring” and seal to be broken, as is usually done upon the death of a pope, the spokesman said. The pope will go back to wearing an episcopal ring he wore as a cardinal.

RED SHOES ENDING—Pope Benedict will leave behind his emblematic red shoes after ending his papacy Feb. 28. A Vatican official said he will wear brown shoes, beginning with loafers he was given as a gift last March during a visit to Leon, Mexico. (CNS photo/Derek Blair, Reuters)
Factoids about the time between pope’s resignation and papal election

By Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — Here is an explanation of some of the terms and practices related to the time between Pope Benedict XVI’s resignation at 8 p.m. Feb. 28 and the election of a new pope.

“The empty slot”

Dioceses are also called sees. The Latin for “when the see is vacant” is “sede vacante.” When the vacant see is the Diocese of Rome, all major Church decisions, such as new legislation or the appointment of bishops, stop until a new pope is elected. Only ordinary business and matters that cannot be postponed can be conducted by the College of Cardinals. (CNS)

Interregnum

The period between popes is called an interregnum — between reigns — even though Pope Paul VI set aside many of the regal trappings of the papacy and references to a papal “reign” gradually fell into disuse. Pope Paul inaugurated his ministry in 1963 with a coronation, then set aside the papal tiara. It was the last time a pope wore the beehive-shaped tiara, a triple crown. (CNS)

Conclave

A meeting of cardinals to elect a new pope is a conclave. The word — from the Latin “cum clave” (with key) — means under lock and key. In 1268, cardinals couldn’t decide on a new pope. After nearly three years the people finally locked them up and cut their rations. The man elected, Pope Gregory X, ordered that in the future cardinals be sequestered from the start, and eventually the practice became normative. (CNS)

Cardinal-electors

Only cardinals under the age of 80 on the day the “sede vacante” begins can enter a conclave and vote for a pope. Even if he is retired from other Church posts, if a cardinal is under 80 he is considered an active cardinal for the purposes of the conclave. As of Feb. 28, there will be 117 cardinal-electors. (CNS)

Secrecy

Cardinals take two oaths of secrecy: not to reveal to anyone anything directly or indirectly related to the election of the pope. The first is taken the day a cardinal joins the general congregation; the second, at the start of the conclave. The few noncardinals authorized to assist the cardinals while they are in conclave also take an oath of secrecy. (CNS)

White smoke, black smoke

The traditional signal, from a chimney on the roof of the Sistine Chapel, whether a pope has been elected: Black smoke, no; white smoke, yes. The smoke is generated by burning conclave ballots and notes with chemicals to make the smoke the right color. To avoid any possible confusion, the cardinals decided to have white smoke accompanied by ringing bells. (CNS)

What the Church needs now:

Synod gives clues to cardinals’ priorities

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — A job description for the Catholic Church’s chief evangelizer already is written. He must be humble, but firmly grounded in Church teaching; joyful and enthusiastic; willing to listen to and dialogue with others; and courageous in defending human rights, including the right to freedom of religion. Before the cardinals enter the Sistine Chapel to begin voting for a successor to Pope Benedict XVI, they will hold meetings in the Vatican synod hall to discuss the current needs of the Church. Many of them sat in the same room for three weeks in October discussing the same thing, so they won’t be starting from scratch. Cardinal Angelo Sodano, dean of the College of Cardinals, and 52 of the 117 cardinals who are under the age of 80 and eligible to vote for a new pope participated in the Synod of Bishops on the new evangelization. While emphases may change when the cardinals meet after Feb. 28, it is unlikely they will try to reinvent the wheel and almost impossible that they will come up with a new topic for discussion. The synod discussions covered the most crucial issues facing the Church around the world: proclaiming the Gospel; catechisis; the meaning and role of the family; parish life; the role of new movements; liturgy and the sacraments; the clerical sexual abuse crisis; relations with other Christians; dialogue with other religions; challenges to religious freedom; the message of the Second Vatican Council; the challenges and opportunities raised by science and technology; and dialogue with nonbelievers.

Changing rules, pope allows cardinals to move up conclave date

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In his last week as pontiff, Pope Benedict XVI issued new rules for conclaves, including a clause that allows the College of Cardinals to move up the date for the beginning of the conclave to elect his successor. However, the cardinals couldn’t set the date until after the pope left office. Pope Benedict also defined the exact penalty — automatic excommunication — that would be incurred by any noncardinal assisting the College of Cardinals who failed to maintain absolute secrecy about the conclave proceedings. The pope laid out the new rules in an apostolic letter issued “motu proprio” (on his own initiative) Feb. 22, the feast of the Chair of St. Peter. The Vatican released the document Feb. 25. The changes affect the rules established in Blessed John Paul II’s apostolic constitution governing the election of popes, “Universi Dominici Gregis.” Under the current rules, which remain in effect, upon the vacancy of the papacy, cardinals in Rome “must wait 15 full days for those who are absent” before they can enter into a conclave and begin the process of electing a new pope.

Between popes: Vatican business continues as usual — almost

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — When Pope Benedict XVI officially left office at 8 p.m. Feb. 28, most of the top-level Vatican officials lost their jobs, but that does not mean the majority of Vatican employees get a vacation. Although Catholics inside and outside the Vatican love to complain about its unwieldy bureaucracy, coordinating the universal ministry of the Church involves a steady flow of paperwork, correspondence and meeting planning. All of that continues even when there is no pope. However, the publication of documents, the nomination of new bishops and the approval of statutes for Catholic universities and religious orders are suspended. Anything that must be issued in the name of the Vatican or in the name of the pope must be approved by Pope Benedict’s successor. “The general rule is that all ordinary business continues,” the secretary of one Vatican congregation told Catholic News Service during the “interregnum” — the period between popes — in 2005. “Like in most bureaucracies, most of our business is ordinary business.”

Commission and subcommittees continue to meet, reports continue to be prepared, letters are answered, and Vatican officials try to tidy their desks enough to be able to inform the new pope about exactly where their various projects stand.
The world watches with interest as cardinals gather in conclave — literally under lock and key — to elect the next pope. The rarity of the event, the ceremony and secrecy add to the intrigue.

Sistine Chapel
The centuries-old chapel adorned with Michelangelo’s frescoes has been the site of every papal election since 1878. Its marble floor is covered with wood. The windows and doors are shut as the Master of Papal Liturgical Ceremonies exclaims, “Extra omnes!” (“Everybody else, out!”) A sweep is performed for electronic devices.

Cardinal Electors
Placing a hand on the Gospels, each one swears to uphold the rules and secrecy of the conclave. Any communication with people outside is forbidden. They may not receive messages or news. Cardinals under the age of 80 may vote in the conclave. There are 117 eligible cardinals this time.

Ballots and Voting
Votes are handwritten and cast individually into special urns. The top of the ballot reads, “Eligo in Sumnum Pontificem” (“I elect as the most high pontiff”). Ballots are counted by three “scrutineers.” The work is checked by three “revisers.” The ballot counters and verifiers are chosen by lot at the start of the conclave.

One round of voting is expected the first day. Each day after, two votes are taken in the morning and two votes in the afternoon until a successful vote. A two-thirds majority is required to elect the new pope.

Timeline of recent papal transitions

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The last few popes have been elected and installed within a fairly short period of time after the deaths of their predecessors.

– Pope Paul VI died Aug. 6, 1978, and his funeral was held Aug. 12. The conclave to choose his successor began Aug. 25. A day later, Aug. 26, the cardinals elected Cardinal Albino Luciani, who chose the name John Paul I. He was installed Sept. 3.

– Pope John Paul I died less than a month later, on Sept. 28, 1978, and his funeral was held Oct. 4. The conclave to choose his successor began Oct. 15 and Cardinal Karol Wojtyla was elected on the second day of voting, Oct. 16. Pope John Paul II was installed Oct. 22.

– Pope John Paul II died April 2, 2005, and his funeral was celebrated April 8. Under the leadership of its dean, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, the College of Cardinals entered into the conclave April 18 and elected the dean as pope the next day. He took the name Pope Benedict XVI and inaugurated his pontificate April 24.

– Pope Benedict XVI announced Feb. 11 that he was resigning effective Feb. 28.
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LENT – Penance involves recognizing there’s more to life than anyone can know

By Father David K. O’Rourke, Catholic News Service

Many years ago I was trained and then licensed in California as a family counselor. Still, over the years, I have always made clear that I am a priest. The medical school training in counseling was an exposure to a wonderful and honored profession, as well as another useful lens through which to look at pastoral situations.

But when local officials in a small town need help with troubled folks and you happen to be one of the available professionals in their community, they don’t always worry about which hat they see you wearing. This happens rarely, but for me it has included dealing with family court and social welfare officers.

These experiences have made me more aware of the fundamental differences between counseling and the sacrament of reconciliation (or confession or penance) as some know it.

As an example, I think of a very unusual situation from the past. A man had been referred to me by the court. He was ordered to meet with a licensed counselor. The exact details are not that important, but he had rolled destructively through the lives of people close to him and even some of his co-workers. The history of human pain he left in his path, if I recall, was the reason why the official ordered the meeting.

Our meeting was brief. He made clear from the start that the only reason he was there was that it was me or a spell in the county jail. “Well,” I told him in short order, “you’ve seen me. Legally, you’re off the hook. So why waste each other’s time? I’m too busy to play games.”

He seemed surprised.

As I started tidying up my desk to leave for the day, I told him, “If you want to make some changes in your life, well, you’ve got my number.”

To my surprise, he called me a few days later, and I ended up meeting with him several times over the course of a few months. It was clear that he was coming to me in my role as a priest, not as a counselor.

Counseling is mostly about the past, about cutting loose from the destructive baggage and memories we can drag with us. The baggage that this man carried was heavy, but as bad as it was, it also was familiar territory. He knew his way around it, its rules and its routines. Until his recent brush with the law, he could handle it.

I told him at the start that I didn’t see much purpose in rehashing the past. What I wanted to know was whether or not he wanted a future. Did he want a life?

That is where the sacrament of reconciliation comes in. Penance is not about the past. It is about the future. In his case, if he wanted it, it would be a future in very unfamiliar territory, and that scared him.

Penance is not just a new or kinder set of rules, or a different and better road map for living. Many good and moral nonbelievers can and do live that way.

Penance involves recognizing that there is much more to me and my life than what I or any human can see and know. It means being prepared to recognize a presence or value that goes beyond what I or anyone can imagine using ordinary human measures of worth.

Reconciliation, the sacrament, like all the sacraments, involves recognizing the limitations, even inadequacy, that we can see in ourselves if we are honest. And that means facing the future with hope rather than certainty. All of that was completely new to him.

He made clear that he finally wanted to stop the battling and to be rid of the past. The sacramental ritual seemed to support that hope, for it shifted the focus from where he had been and was to where he could be. Then he left. I don’t know what he did, but he seemed hopeful.

Dominican Father O’Rourke is a senior fellow at the Santa Fe Institute in Berkeley, Calif.
‘Storming the heavens’ with prayers for grandbaby

On Jan. 14, I prayed for my newborn granddaughter in the chapel at Cardinal Glennon Children’s Medical Center. I paused at the door to sign the guest register and write the name Eliana Noel in the prayer request space next to my name.

A couple of days earlier, my son called to tell me that their baby had been born. The call was not the call I expected. “Mom,” he said, “we have a baby girl, but it has been a terrible night. She’s 9 pounds, 9 ounces.” I gasped. My daughter-in-law had just delivered a baby that was about 1/12 of her pre-pregnancy weight.

“The baby was stuck in the birth canal for a very long time. The umbilical cord was wrapped around her neck twice. The doctors finally just pulled her out by her arm. She didn’t have a heartbeat, Mom.” Tears streamed down my face as I listened to my son describe the birth of his first child. “She wasn’t breathing. They worked on her for about 12 minutes, and she didn’t breathe on her own until 13 minutes after delivery.

See “Storming the heavens”, p. 23

“Back Tracking” by I. T. Taylor of the Edna area will be puzzle contest prize

From the Publisher: “Originally written as correspondence to his granddaughters abroad, I. T. (Ira) Taylor’s heartwarming collection of stories of his daily life on the hunt illustrate in moving prose the special relationship that exists between hunters, between a master and his dog, and between the hunter and his environment. These are Taylor’s memories of hunting since he was eleven years old, of his faithful dog’s first “strike” (which sent goosebumps down his neck), and of his recollection of pre-W. W. II America, a time that forged his formidable spirit. Taylor says that he was born and bred to hunt; that his parents were hunters; and that his father and mother hunted to provide meat for the table during the Depression. These Endearing stories will touch you as well as tickle your funny bone, all the while evoking memories of times past never to return again. This is a not-to-be-missed tribute to hunting, and to the dogs that make being out in the wild an experience that calls the hunter back again and again—whether it be for coons, rabbits, deer, antelope, or elk.”

Mr. Taylor’s love for hunting developed when he was a child in the Edna area, where he was raised. His adulthood was spent in San Marcos while an inspector of Feed and Fertilizer with A&M for the State of Texas. Upon his retirement he moved back to live on his father’s ranch. On Jan. 5, 2012, Mr. Taylor passed away. His wife, Billye, now lives in San Antonio near their ranch. On Jan. 14, 2012, Mr. Taylor passed away. His wife, Billye, now lives in San Antonio near their daughter, Karen.

“Back Tracking” was self-published by Mr. Taylor and Arenosa Publishing Co., Edna, in 1997. It was then picked up by Safari Press. There is only one book available on Amazon’s site, selling for $30. The Catholic Lighthouse has access to 10 of the last 18 books, which they will sell for $20, with proceeds going to the office of The Catholic Lighthouse, the Diocese of Victoria, at the request of the family estate.

For a chance to win a copy of “Back Tracking”, please enter this month’s puzzle contest.

GOOD FRIDAY: PASSION OF THE LORD ~
excerpt (John 19: 26-30) from John 18:1 – 19:42

When Jesus saw his mother and the disciple there whom he loved he said to his mother, “Woman, behold, your son.” Then he said to the disciple, “Behold, your mother.” And from that hour the disciple took her into his home. After this, aware that everything was now finished, in order that the Scripture might be fulfilled, Jesus said, “I thirst.” There was a vessel filled with common wine. So they put a sponge soaked in wine on a sprig of hyssop and put it up to his mouth. When Jesus had taken the wine, he said, “It is finished.” And bowing his head, he handed over the spirit.

Puzzle Contest Winners Chosen

The winner of the February puzzle contest and the book “Four Signs of a Dynamic Catholic” by Matthew Kelly is Louis E. Pustka of Queen of Peace, Sweet Home. Myles Svatek (9) of St. Philip Parish in El Campo is the winner of the youth puzzle contest and will receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop. The winner of the March contest will win “Back Tracking” by I.T. Taylor; please see review. Please mail all completed March puzzle forms to arrive in The Catholic Lighthouse office, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903, by March 27, 2013, for a chance to win the book.

“... he will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.” James 1:12
**Sunday Readings from March 10 - April 7**

<table>
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<th>Date</th>
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| March 10 — Fourth Sunday of Lent | Joshua 5:9a, 10-12  
Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7  
2 Corinthians 5:17-21  
| March 17 — Fifth Sunday of Lent | Isaiah 43:16-21  
Psalms 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6  
Philippians 3:6-14  
John 8:1-11 |
Isaiah 50:4-7 (1st Reading at Mass)  
Psalms 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24  
Philippians 2:6-11  
| March 28 — Holy Thursday: Evening Mass of the Lord’s Supper | Exodus 12:1-8, 11-14  
Psalms 116:12-13, 15-16bc, 17-18  
1 Corinthians 11:23-26  
John 13:1-15 |
| March 29 — Friday of the Passion of the Lord (Good Friday) | Isaiah 52:13 — 53:12  
Psalms 31:2, 6, 12-13, 15-16, 17, 25  
Hebrews 4:14-16; 5:7-9  
John 18:1—19:42 |
| March 30 — Holy Saturday — Vigil in the Holy Night of Easter | Genesis 1:1 — 2:2 (Reading 1)  
Psalms 104:1-2, 5-6, 10, 12, 13-14, 24, 35  
Genesis 22:18 (Reading 2)  
Psalms 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11  
Exodus 14:5 — 15:1 (Reading 3)  
Exodus 15:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 17-18  
Isaiah 54:5-14 (Reading 4)  
Psalms 30:2, 4, 5-6, 11-12, 13  
Isaiah 55:1-11 (Reading 5)  
Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6  
Baruch 3:9-15, 32-4:4 (Reading 6)  
Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 11  
Ezekiel 36:16-17a, 18-28 (Reading 7)  
Psalms 42:3, 5; 43:3, 4  
Romans 6:3-11 (Epistle)  
Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23  
Luke 24:12-16 (Gospel) |
Psalms 118:1-2, 16-17, 22-23  
Colossians 3:1-4  
John 20:1-9 |
| April 7 — Second Sunday of Easter (or Sunday of Divine Mercy) | Acts 5:12-16  
Psalms 118:2-4, 13-15, 22-24  
Revelation 1:9-11a, 12-13, 17-19  
John 20:19-31 |

All daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, are available in text or video at:  

www.usccb.org/bible/readings

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**Catholic Faith in Action 2013 Advocacy Conference**

The Diocese of Victoria will be participating in the Catholic Faith in Action Advocacy Day, on April 9, at the Texas Capitol in Austin. Participants from the Diocese of Victoria will join with thousands of Catholics, from the 15 dioceses in Texas, in attending a rally promoting Catholic teachings and seeking to influence our legislators, and other state leaders, to better understand what we believe as Catholics. A select group of volunteers will also be instructed and prepared to visit with the elected state legislators, representing the ten counties of our diocese. If you are interested in participating, call Father Gary Janak at (361)573-0828 or e-mail him at chancellor@victoriadiocese.org for further information.

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**‘Storming the heavens’ with prayers for grandbaby**

_Continued from p. 22_

She’s being transferred to Cardinal Glennon Hospital, and they aren’t sure if she’s going to make it.”

He listed the possible scenarios. Paralysis. Cerebral palsy. Brain damage. The next day, Eliana had two seizures. For three days, the neurological team said the MRI would show some brain damage.

As I prayed in the chapel, I asked for the intercession of Blessed John Paul II. I asked everyone I met to pray and had become a beggar of prayers. Clergy, the curia, seminarians, countless orders of men and women religious, faithful Catholics, and perfect strangers agreed to pray for Eliana. I asked for prayers through Facebook and LinkedIn list. I asked them to lay this petition before Blessed John Paul II.

Thousands were storming the heavens. Eliana means “God answers prayer.”

Eliana’s nurses have said, “This child is miraculous. We have never seen this happen. Babies just don’t go through without suffering some brain damage.”

I have seen the power of intercessory prayer. I don’t know that this will be a Church-declared miracle for the canonization of Blessed John Paul II, but I am confident he prayed for Eliana at the throne in heaven, and God heard his prayer.

_Bossert is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in New Melle._

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Arkansas is eighth state with fetal pain law; court challenge expected
LITTLE ROCK, Ark. (CNS)—Both houses of the Arkansas Legislature voted to override Gov. Mike Beebe’s veto of a fetal pain bill, outlawing most abortions after 20 weeks of pregnancy. Medical evidence suggests that the unborn can feel pain beginning around 20 weeks of life. In a 19-14 vote Feb. 28, the state Senate reaffirmed the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act. The House of Representatives voted 53-28 a day earlier to overturn the veto. Both votes fell largely along party lines with Republicans mostly supporting the override. Pro-life activists praised passage of the measure, a legislative priority for the Diocese of Little Rock and Arkansas Right to Life. It provides exceptions in cases of rape, incest or to save the mother’s life but does not include any exemption for fetal disorders. The new law builds upon the state’s Unborn Child Pain Awareness and Prevention Act of 2005 that requires doctors to review printed material discussing fetal pain at least 24 hours before an abortion is performed on women whose pregnancy is 20 weeks or longer. Few later-term abortions are performed. The Arkansas Department of Health reported that 4,033 abortions occurred in the state in 2011, and 46 of them occurred at 20 weeks and two occurred at 21 weeks or later.

Catholic advocates monitoring issues raised by extractive industries
WASHINGTON (CNS)—In his State of the Union address last year, President Barack Obama called for an “all of the above” strategy on domestic energy production. In this year’s State of the Union remarks, Obama said, “No area is more ripe for such innovation than energy.” Not so fast, say some clean-energy advocates, a growing number of Catholics among them. The latest craze in domestic energy is hydraulic fracturing -- fracking for short. Energy companies hope to tap into natural gas deposits trapped in shale deep under the ground. To free them, they drill deep, then pump in a compressed mixture of water, silica sand and a collection of chemicals -- the composition of which is a trade secret of the energy firms. According to Richard Barnes, executive director of the New York State Catholic Conference, which issued a statement on the issue, polls show mixed support for fracking. It’s evenly divided in areas of the state where fracking occurs or could occur, he said, but tilts against fracking outside those regions. Barnes had spoken during a Feb. 12 forum on “extractive” industries during the Catholic Social Ministry Gathering in Washington. Those who support fracking look to the economic benefits of leasing their land or selling mineral rights to fracking interests. Those who oppose it worry about environmental degradation. New York currently permits only vertical fracking, although technology has advanced to the point where horizontal fracking -- once vertical pipes are underground -- can take place, holding the promise of extracting even more natural gas.

US House passes bill to help storm-ravaged houses of worship rebuild
WASHINGTON (CNS)—Many churches “were the only shelter available to people who lost their homes” during Hurricane Sandy, said Rep. Eliot Engel, D-N.Y., in arguing for federal assistance to help houses of worship still trying to recover from the storm. On Feb. 13, the House of Representatives passed a bill in a 354-72 vote that will allow Federal Emergency Management Agency disaster funding to go to churches, synagogues, temples, mosques and other houses of worship.

PRIEST WHO DIED SERVING AS CHAPLAIN IN KOREAN WAR TO BE AWARDED MEDAL OF HONOR—U.S. Army chaplain Father Emil Kapaun, who died May 23, 1951, in a North Korean prisoner of war camp, will be awarded the Medal of Honor, the nation’s highest military award for bravery. He is pictured in an undated portrait. (CNS photo/St. Louis Review)

Vatican official: German bishops’ rule on ‘Plan B’ for rape acceptable
VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Catholic Church has long accepted the possibility of preventing ovulation in a woman who has been raped, but withdraws that option if there is a possibility that ovulation may have already occurred, said the president of Vatican’s Pontifical Academy for Life.

A recent statement by bishops in Germany saying it was acceptable to use medication that hinders conception after rape reflects an “unassailable rule” that has been proposed by the Catholic Church the past 50 years, said Bishop Ignacio Carrasco de Paula. “To consider the possibility of using a drug whose active ingredient is a contraceptive in the case of a woman who has been raped seems acceptable to me,” he told “Vatican Insider,” the online news supplement to the Italian newspaper La Stampa. The Church, however, refuses the administration of an abortive drug in all cases, he said on the sidelines of a workshop, Faith and Human Life, sponsored by the academy Feb. 22. “In the case of rape, one can do what is necessary to avoid a pregnancy, but you cannot terminate it,” the bishop said. Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the U.S. bishops’ Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities and a member of the pontifical academy, told Catholic News Service that “you are not violating the teaching on contraception by seeking to stop ovulation or fertilization.” Rape “is not an act of unitive love, it is an act of violence (and) the woman has a right to defend herself against this attack,” he said.

Venezuelan president changed nation, had rocky relations with bishops
SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (CNS) — Hugo Chavez, a socialist president who transformed Venezuela while acting as chief protagonist in what was one of the worst Catholic Church-government relationships in Latin America, died March 5. He was 58. Chavez died of complications from a respiratory infection nearly two years and four surgeries after his cancer diagnosis was made public. Last April 5, Holy Thursday, shortly before his third surgery for cancer, Chavez attended a Catholic Mass in Barinas, the state in western Venezuela where he was born and where his brother, Adan Chavez Frias, is now governor. Wearing a rosary.

See Venezuelan president, p. 25
and dressed in a blue and white track suit, Chavez pleaded for his life. “I ask God to give me life, however painful. I can carry 100 crosses, your crown of thorns, but don’t take me yet. I still have things to do,” he said, according to press reports. Catholic leaders spoke of Chavez’s relationship with the Church and his legacy for Venezuelans. “The people of Venezuela held him up, considered him a public leader that they felt a connection to; someone they were close with,” said Auxiliary Bishop Jesus Gonzalez de Zarate of Caracas, secretary-general of the Venezuelan bishops’ conference. During his 13 years in office, he placed price caps on products sold by multinational companies and food basics. Chavez’s critics, including many church leaders, said his programs were inefficient and indoctrinated poor Venezuelans in socialist philosophy. Father Tornero said the government has slashed funding to Catholic schools in the barrio, leaving them in a “financial crisis.” Church leaders said the Church’s relationship with the president was complicated, if not at times downright nasty. “There were years that were difficult, tense,” said Bishop Gonzalez de Zarate. “There were attacks and strong responses. ... But I feel that there was a calming in the past year.” In July, Chavez called the conference and suggested he was open to a face-to-face meeting, which would have been the first in at least six years, Bishop Gonzalez de Zarate said. Initially, the relationship between Chavez and church leaders seemed warm. But it did not take long for things to sour. 

Barrier’s extension would separate West Bank monastery, convent, school

BEIT JALLA, West Bank (CNS) — Just over the ridge, not far from where Father Ibrahim Shomali celebrated Mass on a recent Friday afternoon, is the Israeli settlement of Har Gilo. Nearby, across the Cremisan Valley, is Gilo, another Israeli settlement. It was built decades ago on land that was part of Beit Jalla, a largely Christian Palestinian town six miles south of Jerusalem and three miles west of Bethlehem. Israelis consider Har Gilo and Gilo neighborhoods of Jerusalem. Between the two settlements, hidden behind trees, is a 150-year-old Salesian monastery. The monks there run the West Bank’s only winery, the Cremisan Cellars.

Not far away is the convent of the Salesian Sisters of Cremisan, who operate an elementary school and after-school programs for 400 children. As near as they are, the monastery and the convent may end up on opposite sides of an extension of the Israeli-Palestinian separation barrier. On Feb. 12, the Israeli Supreme Court heard Israel’s appeal to extend the barrier, a series of cement slabs, barbed wire fences and security roads snaking across part of the valley. It would effectively separate Beit Jalla from the two Israeli settlements, creating a contiguous strip of land that could be used for expansion and their eventual joining. If built according to one option proposed by the Israeli army, the wall would isolate the monastery on the Israeli side of the wall, separating it from the convent and Beit Jalla. It would surround the village of Wallajah, where many of the students live.

WOMAN TOUCHES ROSARY TO RELIC OF ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA DURING MASS AT NEW YORK CHURCH—A woman touches a rosary to the relic of St. Anthony of Padua during a Mass at St. Francis of Assisi Church in New York Feb. 19. Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York celebrated one of several Masses honoring St. Anthony of Padua, a Franciscan friar known for his gifted preaching who died in Italy in 1231. The relics will be on display in New York and New Jersey before returning to Padua, Italy. (CNS photo/Octavio Duran)
STJ STUDENT CREATES ARTWORK FOR SANDY HOOK—Victoria St. Joseph High School, junior, Johanna Hoang, offered her interpretation of HOPE for those at Sandy Hook Elementary in her recent art creation. Johanna said, “In the painting, I wanted to capture symbols of hope, faith, and the idea of being able to reach someone even if that person or group is tens to hundreds to thousands of miles away.” All of STJ students, faculty, and staff signed the green frame around the painting in memoriam. The artwork has been sent to Sandy Hook Elementary in Newtown, Connecticut.

BALLOON ROSARY—Pictured, on left, is a rosary made out of balloons that were launched from the football field at Shiner Catholic School during Catholic Schools Week. Event organizer Philip Pilat worked extra hard to surprise the kids with the rosary.

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DIOCESE

MARDI GRAS PARADE—St. Philip School in El Campo held a Mardi Gras parade on February 12. The entire student body joined in the festivities complete with masks, beads, and the band playing “When the Saints Go Marching In”. The parade ended with an “Alleluia” banner being placed in a chest symbolizing the term of great joy we use during mass, as we enter the season of repentance, being “put away” so that it will be returned to us at Easter full of enthusiasm and joy!

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GOOD FRIDAY

WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS

Good Friday Collection

Each year the Holy Father invites Catholics to support fellow Christians and sacred shrines in the Holy Land. God bless you for your generosity.

Good Friday Graphic – What Wondrous Love Is This

An annual collection uniting Christians around the World.

“Come, follow me, ...”

Mark 1:17

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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.; JPJ 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@hotmail.com; or see: www.beginningexperience.org.

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

St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans—For information, please go to www.lighthousegp.htm.

St. Francis of Assisi Parish—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 quarters, is available for overnight stays. For rates and more information, contact (361) 645-3752 or see www.presidiolahabia.org. Upcoming Event: March 23 and 24 — 28th Annual Goliad Massacre - Fort Defiance Living History Program. A recreation of the occupation of the fort by Col. Fannin and the Goliad Massacre, the only event of its kind in the State of Texas, Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Candlelight Tours 7 to 9 p.m.; and Sunday, following the Massacre Reenactment at 10:00 a.m., there will be a memorial service and a pilgrimage to the Fannin Memorial.

Picnics, Activities, etc.

East Bernard—Annual Lent Fish Fry sponsored by the KC Council #2500 every Friday night through March 22 at the Riverside Hall. Serving from 5:30-7:30 p.m. All you can eat for $10 p/p. Plates-to-go available at $9 p/p.

Blessing—K of C Council #3407 will sponsor their annual Lenten fish fry, auction, and raffle on March 10 at the parish hall. A fried-cattail dinner will be served from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at $8 p/p. The auction will be held during the event.

Schulenburger—St. Rose Spring Festival March 10 at the KC Hall. A turkey dinner served from 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at $8 p/p. There will be a live auction at 11:30 a.m., cakewalk, music and more.

New Tunart—St. John’s Altar Society Annual Chicken Dinner and Spring Festival March 10 at the community center. Starting at 11:00 a.m. a fried-chicken dinner with homemade dressing, with dine-in or plates-to-go at $8 p/p. There will be an auction, cakewalk, games, country store, and more.

Victoria—KJZT Society #101 will have a bake sale at Holy Family Church March 16 and 17 after all Masses. Proceeds to benefit Christ’s Kitchen.

Victoria—Our Lady of Victory Lenten Fish/Shrimp dinner on Friday, March 22, at the cafeteria from 5:00-7:00 p.m. With dine-in or take-home plates at $7 p/p.

Victoria—A Pancake Breakfast will be held in Our Lady of Sorrows Trinity Hall (River Street) after the 8:30 and 10:30 a.m. Palm Sunday (March 24) Masses. Proceeds to help parish youth summer activities.

Upcoming Events

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 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.

Hostyn—Holy Rosary Mayfest May 5

Victoria—Holy Family Parish Festival May 5

Hallettsville—Sacred Heart Parish Spring Festival May 26

Shiner—Sts. Cyril and Methodius Spring Picnic May 26

Charity Golf Tournaments

Victoria—Knights of Columbus Council 9088 Annual Bishop’s Invitational Golf Tournament, at The Club at Colony Creek. For more information contact the Youth Office at (361) 573-0828.

Masses • Retreats • Conferences

Victoria—The Annual Men’s Inmate and Blessed Sacrament invite you to attend Lenten Vespers on the Sundays of Lent, March 10, 17, and 24, from 5:00-5:45 p.m. Evening Prayer (or Vespers) is patterned on an ancient Jewish prayer form that predates the Church.

San Antonio—The Sisters of the Holy Spirit and Mary Immaculate are providing an inside view of life in a convent setting during a “Come and See” weekend on March 22-24 at their motherhouse, 300 Yuca St. The weekend will give women, between the ages of 18-45 an opportunity to prayerfully reflect on religious life and vocation discernment. The Sisters minister in the United States, Mexico and Africa. Register online at www.shsp.org or contact Sister Gabriell Hessel SHSp, at (210) 535-5149; cell (817) 360-9316; or ghsessel@hotmail.com.

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. - 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 to present 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.ronrolheiser.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/ (361) 649-6391 or e-mail: smoak53@msn.com.

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 heppensence@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 amormeaus@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 Phu Nguyen, chaplain of IWBS Convent. Mark your calendars now for next month. For more information, please contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at iwbsvo2@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. For more information, please contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at iwbsvo2@yahoo.com.

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

HEAHENLY HELPERS

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Jeanie Janak, owner
Ascension of Our Lord Church in Moravia celebrated its 100th anniversary

MORAVIA—Ascension of Our Lord Catholic Church in Moravia celebrated its 100th anniversary as a parish on Sunday, February 10 with Bishop David Fellhauer celebrating the Mass and Msgr. John Peters concelebrating. The liturgy included Czech and English Hymns. After Mass, Bishop Fellhauer blessed the newly built pavilion, which will be used for the annual parish picnic and other parish and family events. The blessing was followed by a delicious catered meal.

In the 1870’s, the first families that settled in the Moravia Community were from Czechoslovakia. The first pioneers of Moravia attended Mass either in Hallettsville or Praha. Later when St. John the Baptist Catholic Church was built, the people of Moravia became a part of St. John’s Parish.

In 1913, Ascension of Our Lord Catholic Church was established with Father Emil Schindler as its first pastor. In 1923, the inside of the church was painted by Donecker & Sons of San Antonio. In honor of its 100th year anniversary, the Schulenburg Chamber has added the church to their Painted Churches Tour.

Today the buildings consist of the church, the parish dining hall and a large dance hall, which is used mainly for the parish picnics. A new pavilion has just been added.

Ascension of Our Lord Catholic Church, located at 11134 FM 957, twelve miles north of Hallettsville and ten miles southwest of Schulenburg, was previously taken care of by the pastor who lived at St. John’s. Today it is under the pastorship of Msgr. John Peters of Hallettsville, since 2001.

Mass is celebrated each weekend at 6:00 p.m. on the 1st, 3rd, and 5th Saturdays and at 9:30 a.m. on the 2nd and 4th Sundays.

The parish consists of approximately 90 families. The church seats about 190 people.

The Annual Parish Picnic is held on the parish grounds on the third Sunday of July.

Centennial Cookbooks are available for purchase at Hallettsville General Store.

KJT SOCIETIES DONATE $7,500 TO DIOCESE—The Catholic Union of Texas (KJT) donated $7,505 for two Diocese of Victoria funds this past February. The Priest and Religious Retirement Fund, a KJT adopted charity on a statewide basis, received $7,305 and the Priest Education Fund received $200. The donations were made on behalf of all KJT societies located in the Diocese of Victoria. The societies stated that it is their pleasure to donate these funds as a token of their appreciation for the service that our priests and other religious have given us throughout the years.

Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center, located in Goliad, will hold the Goliad Massacre - Fort Defiance Living History Program on March 23 and 24. It is a recreation of the occupation of the fort by Col. Fannin and the Goliad Massacre, the only event of its kind in the State of Texas.

For more information go to page 27 of this issue.