The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration

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The Giving Garden
Yorktown parish project provides nourishment for body and soul

YORKTOWN – An idea took root in Teresa Foegelle’s heart about four years ago. She wanted to create some kind of community garden on a section of property of Holy Cross Catholic Church where she works as secretary and bookkeeper. That idea has come to fruition, but the fruits of this garden go beyond the produce it can yield to feed the homebound and others in need.

Partnerships have grown. And the project sparked a desire in some to get involved.

Foegelle said when she saw that the Yorktown Assistance Ministry (YAM), which provides food to those in need, received a grant from Catholic Relief Services (CRS), she thought that they might have a chance at a grant as well, so she asked the Rev. Roger Hawes, pastor, if it was something the church could pursue. And, with his support, they did.

In March, the church started the Giving Garden with a $3,000 CRS grant to provide fresh produce for the homebound and needy. She reached out to Sharon Metting, president of YAM and asked if they could receive from the garden if there was an abundance of vegetables, and Metting said yes.

See The Giving Garden, pg. 20

Hispanic leaders called to be bridges to a new era

By ALDO CAMACHO
For The Catholic Lighthouse

On April 26, the 6th National Catholic Congress of Hispanic Ministry with the motto “Prophetic voices: Being bridges for a new era,” was held in Washington, D.C. I had the opportunity to go and represent the Diocese of Victoria.

Cathy Garcia and Bonnie Guevara from St. Robert Bellarmine Parish in El Campo attended on behalf of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, USA.

This congress was convened and organized by the National Catholic Council for Hispanic Ministry (NCCHM) to bring together Hispanic ministry leaders, ecclesial associations and movements that work with Hispanics/Latinos. Although it was the sixth such congress, it was the first time I had attended.

It was a pleasant surprise, when I arrived, to find so many Hispanic leaders in the hotel lobby – some from the Texas region and others I knew from virtual conferences, and of course, many new people. I immediately felt at home and went to introduce myself to the heads of various church movements. It was also a pleasant surprise to meet Cathy and Bonnie Garcia there. Cathy introduced me to the team from the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, USA. Bonnie was one of the representatives of that organization.

The conference officially opened that afternoon with Maria del Mar Muñoz-Visoso, executive director of Cultural Diversity in the Church (USCCB), in which she called on all Latino Catholics to be “architects and engineers of those bridges and roads necessary in the church and in today’s society.”

Her speech reminded us that the mission of every Catholic is See Hispanic leaders called, pg. 20

Pope prays for Uvalde shooting victims

By CINDY WOODEN
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- Saying his heart was broken at the news of at least 19 children and two adults being shot and killed at a Texas elementary school, Pope Francis said it was time to say “Enough!” and enact stricter laws on gun sales.

At the end of his weekly general audience May 25, with thousands of people gathered in St. Peter’s Square, the pope prayed publicly for the victims of the shooting the day before at Robb Elementary.

See Pope prays, pg. 2
BISHOP'S NOTE: On June 26 I will be going to Ghana with Dr. John Quary. For this month's Lighthouse want to share with you the letter I wrote from my previous trip to Ghana in 2018.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

One of my favorite childhood memories involves thinking about the trips we used to take for summer vacations. My parents would get us kids ready and we would go for a road trip. I remember we usually would visit and stay with my grandparents in Brooklyn, New York. Sometimes we would go to other places like Florida or California or Galveston or South Padre Island. One of the observations one of my brothers made recently is that wherever it was it always was close to saltwater.

I just thought of that yesterday, as I'm on a summer vacation further away. Yesterday I was sitting in a restaurant on the Atlantic Ocean - in Cape Coast, Ghana, Africa. Last year Archbishop Matthias Nketsiah was visiting Victoria with the five priests from his diocese who now serve in our diocese. He invited me to come visit him in Ghana sometime. Little did he know that I would take him up on the offer so soon. I want to share with you some thoughts from my experience here in Ghana the past couple of days, and I think this is almost like my postcard from summer vacation for my brothers and sisters in Victoria.

Last month I wrote about looking for the similarities instead of the differences in situations. Specifically I thought about the Catholic Rural Life and the V Encuentro Movement, which at first glance may seem like very different realities. After reflecting on them, some of the similarities became apparent to me: Both are very Catholic, desiring to live our faith fully in our society, looking for connections and good ideas on how to celebrate the fullness of our Catholic faith and proclaim it in our society.

Yesterday morning I celebrated morning Mass at the Catholic Chapel of the University of Cape Coast. While the celebration of the Mass reflected African culture with beautiful, vibrant music and dance, at the same time the Mass was the same Mass as celebrated in every culture and language in the world. Let me give you a few of the similarities that I noticed. Before Mass, there was a group leading the rosary in English and Fante. Well-prepared lectors proclaimed the readings clearly and boldly. At the consecration, as I elevated the precious Body and Blood for a moment very Catholic, desiring to live our faith fully in our society, looking for connections and good ideas on how to celebrate the fullness of our Catholic faith and proclaim it in our society.

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Pope prays for Uvalde shooting victims

Continued from pg. 1

School in Uvalde, Texas.

"With a heart shattered over the massacre at the elementary school in Texas, I pray for the children and adults who were killed and for their families," the pope told the crowd. "It is time to say, 'Enough!' to the indiscriminate trafficking of guns," the pope said. "Let's all work to ensure that such tragedies never happen again."

Shortly before the audience, Archbishop Gustavo García-Siller of San Antonio, an archdiocese that includes Uvalde, tweeted: "Holy Father Pope Francis, say some prayers for the souls of our little ones killed today and two teachers. Uvalde is in mourning. The families are having a very dark time. Your prayer will do good to them."

Local authorities said the children and adults were killed by an 18-year-old student from a high school nearby. He also was reported dead and at least three children were reported to have been hospitalized for injuries suffered in the attack.

The Texas Catholic Conference of Bish-
Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

**June**

1  9 a.m. Self-Care Retreat for church personnel at the Cathedral Center; Victoria
2-3  Catholic Rural Life Meeting; St. Paul, Minnesota
4  Mass for Carmelites; Meyersville
   5 p.m. Confirmation Mass for St. Michael Church; Cuero
5  10 a.m. Confirmation Mass for St. John Bosco Church; Vanderbilt
   2 p.m. Confirmation Mass for Our Lady of Sorrows Church; Victoria
6  Noon Subcommittee for African American Affairs Meeting; virtual
7  9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center; Victoria
8  2:30 p.m. Finance Board meeting; Chancery
11 10 a.m. Transitional Diaconate Ordination at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory; Victoria
12  10:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Mary Church; Victoria
   3 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Anthony Church; Palacios
12-17  United States Catholic Conference of Bishops Special Assembly; San Diego
19  10 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Sts. Peter and Paul Church; Meyersville
20  7:30 p.m. Eucharistic Procession at Our Lady of the Gulf; Port Lavaca
21  Noon meal with Sisters at Incarnate Word Convent; Victoria
22  6:30 a.m. Morning Air Relevant Radio interview
23  9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center; Victoria
24  3 p.m. Day of Prayer for Priestly Consecration
25  6 p.m. Opening Mass for Eucharistic Congress at Corpus Christi Cathedral; Corpus Christi
26 - July 14  Trip to Ghana

**Victoria CWV hosts state convention**

VICTORIA — The Catholic War Veterans St. John’s Post 1269 hosted the CWV state convention in Victoria April 22-23. The post celebrated its 75th anniversary as well. Catholic World War II veterans founded it on March 12, 1947. Bishop Brendan Cahill delivered a prayer and remarks at the joint session to formally start the convention. His remarks centered on the role of military chaplains in their ministry to meet the spiritual needs of the men and women serving in our nation’s armed forces, regardless of their religious affiliation. His message resonated with the convention attendees, most of whom were veterans of various armed conflicts from all branches of the military or relatives of former and current service members. At the conclusion of his remarks, Post 1269 and its Unit Auxiliary presented Bishop Cahill a $500 check for the Victoria Diocese Education of Seminarian Fund. Pictured, from left, are Juan Benavidez, Post 1269 Commander; Lupita Martinez, Auxiliary Past National President; Daniel Martinez, Department of Texas Commander; Bishop Cahill; and Melissa Arellano, Department of Texas Auxiliary Third Vice-President. (Contributed Photo)
Andrea Morales, mother of Rev. Dan Morales, passes away

Andrea “Andy” Morales, 93, of Palacios passed away May 6, 2022. She was born November 30, 1928 in Ganado to Isaac and Manuela Aparicio. She worked in the cafeteria for Palacios Elementary School and was a member of St. Anthony of Padua Church. Andy loved spending time cooking, baking and sewing. Most importantly, she was happiest spending time with her beloved husband, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. She was active in the Catholic Daughters for many years.

She is survived by her husband of 70 years, Paz Morales; children, Sylvia Cartier, Rose Mary Mallia, Kathy Matheny (Kevin), Paz Morales Jr. (Fina), Patty Morales, Margaret Espinosa (Roland), Jo Ann Reyes and Ted Morales (Nina); sister, Antonia “ Toni” Garcia; 17 grandchildren; numerous great-grandchildren and 2 great-great-grandchildren.

She was preceded in death by her son, Father Dan Morales; parents; sisters, Isabelle Garcia, Mary Silvas, Rose Aparicio, Janie Gonzalez, and Frances Buentello; and brothers, Pete, Homer, and Bernard Aparicio.

A funeral Mass was held May 13, 2022 followed by burial in Palacios Cemetery. Pallbearers will be her grandsons.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations may be made to one of the following:

- Father Dan Morales Endowment Fund (https://frdanendowment.org/)
- St. Anthony of Padua Building Fund (P.O. Box 900, Palacios, TX 77465)

Thank you for your thoughts and prayers. May she rest in peace and may perpetual light shine upon her.
Faith formation is a calling, not a job
Two parish PCLs step down, but still passionate about ministry

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

After almost 35 years of heading the Our Lady of Victory parish religious education program, Betty Mitchell has decided it is time to let someone else take over.

“Things are changing so much,” she said. “The trend is going away from a traditional classroom setting.”

That trend was accelerated by the need for changes during the last two years of COVID concerns. But Mitchell, 68, who said, “I’m lucky if I can turn a DVD player on,” hopes that catechists will work to keep the personal interaction in their work. “It’s relational,” she said. “If you’re a catechist, you’re sharing your faith.”

Christella Alvarez, director of the Diocese of Victoria’s Office of Catechetical Ministry, said, “When I began working in the catechetical office, Betty Mitchell was already in the position of PCL. At that time, the title was director of religious education. Betty’s dedication to educating the children in the faith is proven by her countless hours of inviting, welcoming, and getting to know the families (children and parents/grandparents) and establishing lasting relationships. Her servant-leadership approach fostered dedicated catechists to help year after year.”

Mitchell gained her love of working with children teaching special education in elementary school. She also was helping with RCIA at OLV when Monsignor Michael Harrold was the pastor. During a meeting about RCIA concerns, she said, Monsignor Harrold asked her, “What do you know about CCD?” She was surprised and offered him what experience she did have, but without a lot of confidence in her answer. But he handed her the keys to the religious education building and said, “See what you can do.”

And she did just that, learning along the way. “I learned by making every mistake there is,” she said, but the most important lesson, she said, was realizing, “There are no bad children.”

She said some of the children may be stressed or in pain. “They are coming from a place of need. You have to be able to sit back and let them vent. There are kids in bad situations.”

The Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, OLV rector/pastor, said he sees Mitchell’s biggest strength as her ability to find a way to work with youth and families with physical or mental challenges who might believe they are not able to receive sacraments.

“Don’t ever think the church excludes a child because of an emotional or behavioral problem” or any disability, she said, explaining that she has helped in the formation of people with autism, multiple personality disorder, Down syndrome. She also has accommodated paraplegics, the deaf and people with all sorts of challenges.

“It is our duty to make modifications for them,” Mitchell said.

Her last group of students to be confirmed included a youth with dissociative disorder (also called multiple personality disorder) who discretely carried a pet ferret with him as a means of emotional security. The youth is one who could easily have slipped through the cracks, but she worked to meet his needs because he had the desire to be confirmed. During his confirmation, he did not bring his emotional support animal, but made it through. “When he turned and came back down (after Bishop Cahill anointed him), there was such a peace there.” He told her he was proud of himself.

Mitchell has shared the religious education office for many years with Patti Van-Manen and Janey Hiller and all three ladies have retired together.

Another parish catechetical leader, Stephanie Charbula of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Inez, is stepping down after coordinating the religious education since 2015. She said the church also wanted a youth minister and that job, coupled with the PCL duties, has led to a full-time position instead of part-time work, so Charbula decided to let someone else take the lead.

Alvarez said the gifts Charbula brought to the ministry were immediately seen. She not only took the required training for PCLs, but embraced all the learning opportunities offered through the catechetical office.

Charbula said her years as a PCL have taught her that religious education must continue beyond high school. “I probably gained more knowledge about my faith through the teaching,” she said. And she continues to be hungry to learn more.

Charbula said she’s seen how, after high school, religious education goes by the wayside and many will become distant from the church and return when they plan to marry or when they desire baptism for their children.

“I now understand more why we lose them,” she said. “There is a big need for youth and young adult (religious education).”

Mitchell and Charbula, although they’ve both

See Faith formation, pg. 9
DIOCESE

The Holy Spirit moves us to unity, love and life

EDITOR’S NOTE: The following sermon was written by Father Charles Kram for Pentecost. He titled it “The Holy Spirit, Gift of the Father.”

Today we celebrate the feast of Pentecost, which marks the end of the great 50 days of the Easter season.

After the death of Jesus, first there was the Resurrection, by which Jesus conquered sin and death. Then there was the Ascension, by which he returned to his Father to prepare a place for us and to send the Holy Spirit. And, finally, there was Pentecost, the descent of the Holy Spirit and the birthday of the Church.

The coming of the Holy Spirit is one of our greatest blessings:

First, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of unity. He enlightens us and reminds us of all that the Lord Jesus has taught us. He guides us and helps us to know and to understand.

Secondly, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of love. He enkindles in our hearts love for God and for ourselves and for one another to help us carry out the great commandment of love and the admonition of Jesus, “Love one another as I have loved you.”

Thirdly, because the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life. Like the Spirit of God at the creation, now at the Pentecost the Holy Spirit descends to renew the face of the earth.

And lastly, because the Holy Spirit moves us – like a strong wind that fills the sails of a ship drives it ahead, He impels us to put our faith to work.

We all received the Holy Spirit at baptism and we are His living temples. Although we may never have spoken in tongues or done anything spectacular, the Spirit is in us, too, for our sanctification, and through us, for the sanctification of the world.

But we must always remember that the work of the Holy Spirit will prosper only in proportion to our cooperation. If we resist or place obstacles, little good will follow. If we allow Him to have His way, we can do great things, even in our weakness.

For example, when others argue or gossip in your presence, do you simply join in the fun? You could promote unity and peace by helping soothe flaring tempers and, perhaps, by presenting the other side.

How often or how seldom do you do an act of kindness for someone out of love, without being asked – like running an errand for a shut-in or taking an elderly person to the clinic?

Do you ever visit the sick and give their spirit a little lift? Those who are weak or ill like someone to touch them. Have you ever touched someone and made up a special prayer for them – a consoling experience for you and a bit of new life for them?

Do you say a brief morning prayer, offering your day to God? Do you pray at the end of the day to thank Him for the day’s blessings and to express your regrets over your failures? Do you ever spend a few quiet moments listening for the inspirations of the Spirit to see where He wishes you to put your faith to work?

On this Feast of Pentecost, we rejoice over the breath of the Spirit imparted to us, and over the unity, the love, the life and the driving power He gives us on his birthday of the Church.

Lord Jesus, thank you for sending the Holy Spirit upon us. Help us ever more faithfully to live by His inspirations. Grant that, moved by Him, we may all have a share in bringing unity and love and life to all of God’s creation. Amen.

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priest</th>
<th>Ordination Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Ty J. Bazar</td>
<td>06/01/2002</td>
<td>Immaculate Conception, Goliad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Matthew H. Huehlefeld</td>
<td>06/01/1996</td>
<td>St. Joseph, Yoakum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Roger R. Hawes</td>
<td>06/02/2001</td>
<td>Holy Cross, Yorktown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Peter Oscar Kofi-Amo</td>
<td>06/04/2016</td>
<td>St. Patrick’s, Bloomington</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Christopher L. Fuchs</td>
<td>06/06/2015</td>
<td>St. Mary, Victoria</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. Scott J. Hill</td>
<td>06/06/2015</td>
<td>St. Rose of Lima, Schulenburg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Jacob A. Koehler</td>
<td>06/06/2015</td>
<td>Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Francis T. Nguyen III</td>
<td>06/06/2015</td>
<td>Holy Cross, Yorktown</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Michael J. Lyons</td>
<td>06/08/1996</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. George Heminger</td>
<td>06/08/1985</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Michael J. Rother</td>
<td>06/09/2007</td>
<td>St. Philip, El Campo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Gabriel D. Espinosa</td>
<td>06/16/2007</td>
<td>Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bay City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Tommy Chen</td>
<td>06/21/2008</td>
<td>Our Lady of the Gulf, Port Lavaca</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill</td>
<td>06/29/2015</td>
<td>Bishop Diocese of Victoria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priest</th>
<th>Date of Death</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Sean Donohue</td>
<td>06/03/1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner</td>
<td>06/04/2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. William Halata</td>
<td>06/11/2000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace, Amen.

St. Michael boys recognized by KCs

WEIMAR — On May 18, The Knights of Columbus Council 2153 continued its tradition of presenting a personalized Bible to each young gentleman graduating from the eighth grade of St. Michael Catholic School. From left are the Rev. Wayne Flagg, pastor of St. Michael; students Nicolas Vasquez, Hudson Rowland, Connor Elstner and Trey Billeck; and KCs Jack Muggli, grand knight, and Herb Ulbrich, financial secretary. (Contributed Photo)
Congratulations, Sister Rosario

Sister Rosario Resendez, IWBS, executive assistant to Bishop Cahill, graduated in May with her bachelor of arts degree in psychology from the University of Houston-Victoria. She graduated summa cum laude as well. Her next step is to pursue her master’s degree in counseling through Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio. Because she has worked so hard, she is taking a short break and her column, “Finding Beauty in Mystery,” will return in July.

A well-done roast

Sister Colette Koubba places a pair of ears on the Rev. Monsignor John Peters, pastor of Sacred Heart in Hallettsville. Monsignor Peters willingly sat as the target of a little needling, as well as a little praise, for the 2022 Roast and Toast to benefit the Emmaus Counseling Center. The annual event – put on hold in 2020 and 2021 because of COVID – turned out to be the most successful yet, raising almost $115,000 in operating funds for the center. Others who spoke at the Roast and Toast were the Rev. Monsignor Dennis Darilek, Peggy Supak, Sheila Martinka, David Smolik and Doris Hoeinghause, all of whom had some good stories to tell. Top sponsors included Msgr. Peters himself, K&T Construction (Larry and Kathy Tomanek and Scott Strnad), JoAnn and Hardy McCullough and Tim and Lynn Miori. Other major sponsors were Main Street Animal Hospital, Diana and Ben Galvan, Holy Family Catholic Church in Victoria, St. Mary’s Catholic Church in Victoria, and Mary Joan Cahill. Many other businesses and individuals contributed to make the evening a special treat for everyone. On May 24, the Emmaus Center was awarded a $140,000 grant from the Kenedy Memorial Foundation to match funds already set aside for expansion plans. The center plans make use of some shell space at the Cathedral Center building, where its offices are housed, in order to better accommodate clients. Next year, the Rev. Tommy Chen will sit in the Roast and Toast hot seat. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)
Jesus guides us with new sign of discipleship

Y
er ago I received a call from my youngest daughter. Out of the noise of traffic and her own sobs, I was able to piece together that she was stranded along the interstate, miles from home in a car no longer able to move. A mechanic later informed me that the car had been driven “hot” for so long that the engine was beyond repair. When I asked if he could tell whether she had driven it when it was out of water or out of oil, he tried to hold back a chuckle as he said, “Both.”

I reminded my daughter of the many times I had stressed the importance of keeping an eye on the gauges and warning lights, to which she assured me that she had not seen any signs of danger. I discovered later that she had not seen the warning signs, because she had covered the entire instrument panel with pictures of her family and friends. She had fallen to the same temptation that we all need to see with what we prefer to see.

The gospel for the fifth Sunday of Easter (C) addresses a new sign, a new gauge of discipleship from Jesus. The entire body of readings highlights newness, which is particularly appropriate given that, in May, seniors across the country are receiving diplomas; beginning new lives. It is a time of graduation and commencement for, “The One who sits on the throne says: Behold, I make all things new.”

The invitation of Christ Jesus to “follow me” accents the necessity of movement and growth, as does the spirit of the Psalmist who wrote, “Deep calls to deep at the sound of Your waterfalls; All Your breakers and Your waves have rolled over me.” (42:7) These waves of divine love are not meant to be observed, but experienced. While God loves us just the way we are, he loves us too much to let us stay that way; loves us too much to leave us stranded far from home.

At the Last Supper, “after Judas had left them,” Jesus offered his final instructions while alive: “I give you a new commandment: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples … ” This new gauge of discipleship is call to a graduation and commencement. No longer are they to limit themselves to “love your neighbor as yourself.” They are called to graduate beyond a human-generated love and commence to a divine love and matches that of Christ. This will be the new sign of discipleship, not applicable only to those 11 at the table in the Upper Room, but for all of us. This Christ-love is not measured in feelings or flow from emotions. Our natural passions are fragile and fleeting and often offered to the degree that we can expect a return. Christian love, however, is generated by and received from God and flows freely without regard for reciprocity.

St. Thomas Aquinas described this kind of love as “willing the good of the other,” not feeling the good, but choosing the good of the other. While we often don’t choose how we feel, we can deliberately choose to will the good of the other.

To be sure, “willing the good of the other” is not foreign to us. We all have prayed and worked for the good of others; at least for some others, and therein lies the rub. For what Jesus is calling for is not a love offered to some others, but to all others, even the most foul of others.

It is telling that Jesus issued this new commandment and sign of discipleship only after Judas had left on his way to betray them. Was this to be kept a secret from Judas, or exclude him from the receiving list of love? Or was it to allow the apostles to connect the words of Jesus with the treachery of Judas and understand that Judas was the very person they were called to love. As it was for them, so it is for us – to love the Judas, and the Pilate, and the Caiaphas in our own lives. This is our commandment, our sign.

This is not an additional requirement for us to enter heaven, but rather the sign that we have allowed heaven to enter us. It is not Christ placing upon us a new burden, but giving us a new freedom for transformation into true discipleship. We also can point to other signs of our discipleship and allegiance to Christ’s Church – mental pictures of the Masses attended, rosaries prayed, service and monetary contributions. All of these are valuable, all worthy of notation, but not so valuable to cover up or substitute for the sign that Christ has given. To cover up what we need to see with what we prefer to see will leave us spiritually stalled and far from home.

Pax tibi,
Deacon Michael
When Bishop Brendan Cahill accepted eight new deacon candidates on May 14, he recalled a letter by St. Pope Leo the Great, written for the Feast of the Ascension.

“He observes that Jesus is more present to the world today than when He walked the earth. What the great St. Pope Leo understood was that Jesus poured forth his spirit into all the baptized children of God and that we now are the presence of Jesus in the world in which we live.”

The deacons of the church devote themselves to being the hands and feet of Christ to others and serving as ordained ministers under the direction of the bishop and their pastors. Deacons are able to help administer some sacraments, such as baptism, witnessing marriages, and also can proclaim the Gospel at Mass and give homilies.

In a simple ceremony, he accepted David Augustini from St. Joseph in Port O’Connor; Dwain Dungen of Sts. Peter and Paul in Freulsburg; Jimmy Gips of St. Michael in Cuero; Dennis Krenek of Holy Family in Wharton; Francisco Rosas of St. Robert in El Campo; Jose Ugarte III of Holy family in Wharton; and Mike Yeretsky of Holy Cross in Yorktown.

During the Rite of Candidacy, the men resolved to complete their preparation for the ministry in the Church and prepare themselves in mind and spirit “to give faithful service to Christ the Lord and his Body the Church.”

They each presented to Bishop Cahill recommendations from their pastors, letters from their wives (for those who are married) and a handwritten request to be accepted to the formation program.

Faith formation is a calling, not a job

Continued from pg. 5

stepped aside to allow new leaders in their churches’ religious education program, will continue to be catechists and still want to be part of their respective programs as volunteers.

Both women stressed that being a catechist is a ministry and not a job.

“The role of a parish catechetical leader (PCL) is of utmost importance in the life of the parish. As the National Directory for Catechesis (NDC) states, ‘The single most critical factor in an effective catechetical program is the leadership of a professionally trained parish catechetical leader,’” Alvarez stated. “The gifts that each person brings to this ministry of catechesis and evangelization fosters ideas, concepts, and possibly change to enhance the parish faith formation program, for the good of the faith learners and parents as well as for those who volunteer in various capacities.”

Charbula said she expects the changes at St. Joseph to be good ones. “With changes comes growth,” she said. Charlotte Bethke, who is taking the job of youth minister and religious education director, will bring new gifts to the parish with a background in teaching.

Monica Flores, also a teacher, was recently hired to direct the religious education at Our Lady of Victory. She already is involved in the religious education program at OLV.

Over the years, Alvarez has trained, supported and advised the PCLs who serve in the diocese. “As director, I am there to listen and offer assistance and guidance. I always begin by thanking them for saying ‘yes’ to being a part of this vital ministry, and I gently remind them that their ‘yes’ is to God who spoke to them through the pastor who has invited them to help and be a part of the faith formation program in the parish.”

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State academic contest participants
EL CAMPO — St. Philip Catholic School students advancing to state-level contest competed at TCU in Tyler on May 7. Students placing were, from left, front, Ethan Janak, second in third-grade mathematics; Luke Allen, eighth in fifth-grade number sense; Thanh Nguyen, fourth place, fifth-sixth grade music memory; middle, Itzel Gonzalez, sixth place, seventh-grade on-site drawing; Madi Kelly 10th in sixth-grade vocabulary; Cade Konarik, 10th in sixth-grade number sense; Trent Womack, third in fourth-fifth grade listening skills; back, Jaeden Clark, third in eighth-grade on-site drawing and ninth in seventh-eighth grades vocabulary; Abby Wallis, fifth in sixth-eighth grade dictionary skills and eighth in sixth-eighth grade listening skills; Brady Pfeil, 10th in eighth-grade science; Addisyn Merta, ninth in seventh-grade mathematics; and Tara Sladek, seventh-eighth grade impromptu speaking participant. (Contributed Photo)

Fun finishes
Play days, water days, graduation celebrations and many other events have had Catholic school students in the Diocese of Victoria busy in the past few weeks. According to Ashley Novosad, administrative assistant for the Office of Catholic Schools, many principals have said this was a particularly good year. It was refreshing to return to the normal school routines after two years of scaling back events because of COVID precautions. (Contributed Photos)

Education contest winners
WEIMAR — The 2022 Catholic Daughters of America Court #559 Education Contest theme was “With God All Things Are Possible” or “Where is God in my life when I am struggling?” St. Michael Catholic School winners are, from left, front row, Kole Fogleman, third in Art Div. I; Orion Sherwood, first place in Art Div. I; Sarah Jane Berger, third in Poetry Div. I; Chloe Brandt, second in Poetry Div. I; Andie Melnar, first in Essay Div. I; Macie Davis, third in Essay Div. I; Ella Herzik, first in Essay Div. II; back row, the Rev. Wayne Flagg, pastor; Emma Koeth, first in Poetry Div. II; Tucker Janak, third, Computer Art Div. II; Hunter Shupak, second, Photography Div. II; Cullen Marek, third in Essay Div. II; Olivia Elstner, second in Art Div. I; Joseph Rowland, first in Poetry Div. I; and CDA Regent Janet Purdy. Not pictured are Brinson Huette, second in Poetry Div. II; and Kendall Jahn, second in Essay Div. II. (Contributed Photo)
Congratulations to the 2022 top graduates of our Catholic high schools in the Diocese of Victoria.

28 Graduates
St. Paul High School
Shiner

Rebecca Wagner, Salutatorian, daughter of Drs. Tim and Donna Wagner
She plans to attend Texas A&M University, College Station

Sarah Barecky, Historian, daughter of Jon and Ivette Barecky
She plans to attend Texas A&M University, College Station

29 Graduates
Sacred Heart High School
Hallettsville

Victoria Kraatz, Salutatorian, daughter of Trey and Jennifer Kraatz
She plans to attend Texas Christian University, Fort Worth

Quade Henneke, Historian, son of Karl and Brenda Henneke
He plans to attend Victoria College, Victoria

71 Graduates
St. Joseph High School
Victoria

Isabela Garza, Valedictorian, daughter of Dr. Adelaida Resendez and Dr. Dante Garza
She plans to attend The University of Texas, Austin

Sarah Ybarra, Salutatorian, daughter of Charla and Joe Ybarra
She plans to attend Texas A&M University, College Station

Dugan Chandler, Historian, son of Karlissa and Chad Chandler
He plans to attend Duke University, Duram, North Carolina

Julianna Davis, Valedictorian, daughter of Josie and Ryan Davis
She plans to attend The University of Texas, Austin
Recordando el tiempo en Ghana mientras me preparo para regresar

NOTA DEL OBISPO: El 26 de junio iré a Ghana con el Dr. John Quary. Para el Faro de este mes quiero compartir con ustedes la carta que escribí de mi viaje anterior a Ghana en 2018.

Uno de mis recuerdos favoritos de la infancia consiste en pensar en los viajes en que íbamos durante las vacaciones de verano. Mis padres preparaban a nosotros niños e íbamos en viaje por carretera. Recuerdo que generalmente visitaríamos y nos quedábamos con mis abuelos en Brooklyn, New York. A veces íbamos a otros lugares como Florida o California o Galveston o South Padre Island.

¡Una de las observaciones que uno de mis hermanos hizo recientemente es que siempre estuvo cerca del agua salada!

Pensé en eso ayer porque estoy de vacaciones de verano mucho más lejos. Ayer estaba sentado en un restaurante en el Océano Atlántico, en Cape Coast, Ghana, África. El año pasado, el Arzobispo Matthias Nketiah estaba visitando a Victoria y los cinco sacerdotes de su diócesis que ahora sirven en nuestra diócesis. Me invité a visitarlo en Ghana en el futuro; no sabía muy bien que lo aceptaría tan pronto. Quiero compartir con ustedes algunas reflexiones de mi experiencia aquí en Ghana los últimos días, y creo que esto es casi como mi postal de vacaciones de verano para mis hermanos y hermanas en Victoria.

El mes pasado escribí sobre buscar las similitudes en lugar de las diferencias en situaciones. Específicamente, pensé en la Vida Rural Católica y el Movimiento del V Encuentro, que a primera vista pueden parecer realidades muy diferentes. Después de reflexionar sobre ellos, me aparecieron algunas similitudes: ambos somos muy católicos, deseo vivir nuestra fe plenamente en nuestra sociedad, buscando conexiones y buenas ideas sobre cómo celebrar la plenitud de nuestra fe católica y proclamarla en nuestra sociedad. Ayer por la mañana celebré la misa de la mañana en la Capilla Católica de la Universidad de Cape Coast. Mientras que la celebración de la Misa reflejó la cultura Africana con música y baile hermosos y vibrantes, al mismo tiempo, la Misa fue la misma Misa celebrada en todas las culturas y todos los idiomas del mundo. Dijé sobre algunas de las similitudes que noté. Antes de la misa había un grupo que rezaba el rosario en inglés y Fante. Las lecturas fueron proclamadas con claridad y audacia por lectores bien preparados. En la consagración mientras yo elevaba el precioso Cuerpo y Sangre por un momento, varias personas rezaron en voz alta “Mi Señor y Dios mío”. Cuando la gente vino a recibir la Eucaristía, vinieron con devoción por la presencia real de Cristo en el sacramento. Para todos aquellos que partici

Por ALDO CAMACHO
Para The Catholic Lighthouse

El 26 de abril se llevó a cabo en Washington, D.C., el 6to. Congreso Nacional Católico de Pastoral Hispana con el lema “Voces proféticas: Ser puentes para una nueva época” en el cuál tuve la oportunidad de participar y representar a la diócesis de Victoria. Cathy García y Bonnie Guevara de la parroquia St. Robert Bellarmine en El Campo asistieron en representación de la Sociedad de St. Vincent de Paul, USA.

Este congreso fue convocado y organizado por el Consejo Nacional Católico para el ministerio Hispano (NCCHM) para reunir líderes del Ministerio del Hispano, además de varias asociaciones y movimientos ecle

...presidente del Comité de Migrantes y Obispo Auxiliar de Washington en una vigilía de oración por nuestros hermanos y hermanas migrantes. Fue una gran experiencia haber participado en este día de abogación, ya que desde que inició el día nos agrupamos por regiones. Allí tuve la oportunidad de dialogar y reflexionar con líderes que ya conocía de la región y también dialogar con otros líderes...

Ver Ser puentes, en la página 16
By Justin Reyes

On the Table

By Justin Reyes

Being pro-life matters

With all of the controversy surrounding the leaking of the draft opinion regarding Roe v. Wade, it may be helpful to reflect upon why we are pro-life as Catholics, and how we can share those views with others. Sometimes, it may be hard to find the words when explaining to others why we are pro-life. I didn’t spend much time thinking about this issue until my early 20s. After watching a video of a man convincing people in sidewalk conversations about being pro-life, I was convinced and convicted that sharing this viewpoint with others matters a great deal, not just for mothers and children at risk, but for the sake of the broader culture. A culture that doesn’t celebrate life, in fact celebrates death. This issue is important for all of us.

Here are some reasons we are pro-life, that may help you in sharing this view with others:

First of all, God loves us. Each one of us. Time and time again in Scripture, God reminds us that He loves us, and this is even before we were born. Jeremiah 1:5 says, “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” Notice how God says He forms us in the womb, and we were in His mind even before then.

Did you know that it used to be the widely held belief among medical professionals that life began at conception? It wasn’t until around the time of the birth control pill becoming legalized that the idea of life beginning sometime after conception started to take root. I am proud to be Catholic for many reasons, and one big reason is that the Church has stood as pro-life without wavering. While other belief systems have changed their view on this, our Church has not. No matter what, we believe every person from conception to natural death has the right to life.

Still, some say the Church is pro-life only for infants, and not throughout the continuity of life. But the church has strongly supported and taught on the right to life for all, including the elderly, and even in relation to the care of migrants and refugees. On the local level, we have the example of the Bethlehem Maternity Home to help women choose life and provide proper care and quality of life for them and their children. In addition to this, on the global level we can name countless charities and agencies founded by the Catholic Church to help orphans and widows, including the Knights of Columbus. The list goes on and on.

The church is pro-life for everyone, no strings attached. Why? Because God is the same way. We are merely trying to be His mouthpiece and representatives here on earth. In fact, we believe we literally are the mystical body of Christ on earth. As St. Teresa of Avila said, “Christ has no body now but yours. No hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes through which He looks compassion on this world. Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good. Yours are the hands through which He blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now on earth but yours.”

My friends, it’s our duty and responsibility to stand for life. Please be sure to join in this important cause by prayer, word, and deed. One resource that may be helpful to you can be found at www.usccb.org/resources/dobbs-clergy-resources. It has many great resources to help us live out our shared calling to celebrate, support, and promote life for the sake of our culture, children, and families. God bless!

Justin Reyes is the Director of Family Evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria in Texas. He can be reached at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2265 or jreyes@victoriadiocese.org.

Feeding the hungry
PORT LAVACA -- The Knights of Columbus Council 3253 gave $750 to the Calhoun County Food Pantry recently. From left are Grand Knight Lupe Aviles; Miles Thompson, financial secretary; Luis DeLaGarza, recorder; and Cristal Freudensprung, food pantry director. (Contributed Photo)
Sunday Readings from June 5 - July 10

June 5 ~ Pentecost Sunday
- Mass during the Day
  Acts 2:1-11
  Psalms 104:1, 24, 29-30, 31, 34
  1 Corinthians 12:3b-7, 12-13
  John 20:19-23

June 12 ~ The Solemnity
  of the Most Holy Trinity
- Proverbs 8:22-31
- Psalms 8:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
- Romans 5:1-5
- John 16:12-15

June 19 ~ The Solemnity of the Most Holy
  Body and Blood of Christ
- Genesis 14:18-20
- Psalms 110:1, 2, 3, 4
- 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- Luke 9:11b-17

June 26 ~ Thirteenth Sunday
  in Ordinary Time
- 1 Kings 19:16b, 19-21
- Psalms 16:1-2, 5, 7-8, 9-10, 11
- Galatians 5:1, 13-18

July 3 ~ Fourteenth Sunday
  in Ordinary Time
- Isaiah 66:10-14c
- Psalms 66:1-3, 4-5, 6-7, 16, 20
- Galatians 6:14-18
- Luke 10:1-12, 17-20

July 10 ~ Fifteenth Sunday
  in Ordinary Time
- Deuteronomy 30:10-14
- Psalms 69:14, 17, 30-31, 33-34, 36, 37
- Colossians 1:15-20

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit www.usccb.org/bible/readings.

Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign

Quo Vadis? Vocation Camp to be held

The Annual Vocation Camp “Quo Vadis” plans to be held July 17 through July 20 at Camp Kubena in Ledbetter, Texas, near La Grange. Please encourage and invite the young men of your parish to attend! The registration form and fee are due by June 24 to guarantee a T-shirt. The total fee for the camp is $75. The camp is open to all young men who are going into the eighth grade next school year through 21 years of age. Please call Father Tommy Chen with any questions at 361-552-6140.

Safe Environment

Reporting Procedures for Suspected or Known Sexual Abuse of a Minor (person under 18 years of age) or Vulnerable Adult by a Member of the Clergy

Contact:
- The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, within 48 hours, at (800) 252-5400, www.texasabusedefline.org, or local police department.
  If person is in immediate danger call 911.

  and

- Shannon Thomas, LMSW, Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Outreach, Diocese of Victoria, (361) 827-7186, pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.

  or

- Bishop or Chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria, (361) 573-0828

Written allegations can be mailed marked “Personal and Confidential” to
Office of the Bishop
P.O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

If sexual abuse by a member of clergy has occurred in another diocese, the Diocese of Victoria will help bring your concerns to church officials.
For assistance contact Vicki Pyatt at (361) 827-7186 or pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.
‘Fifth Station moment’

a life-changing encounter and blessing

BY PAUL BARRETT

Special to the Lighthouse

As a young Catholic schoolboy, one of my most memorable spiritual experiences came about one Lenten evening in chapel while praying the Stations of the Cross. At the Fifth Station, where Simon of Cyrene is forced to carry the cross, there arose within me a declaration of deep, heartfelt compassion: “Lord Jesus, if I had only been there, I would have pushed my way through that crowd and gladly carried your cross.” That memorable “Fifth Station spiritual moment” remained with me into my senior years.

In January of 2017, I participated in a 10-day Holy Land pilgrimage led by Bishop Brendan Cahill. Shortly before our pilgrimage concluded in Jerusalem, we gathered on the Via Dolorosa in the predawn shadows of a cold morning to walk and pray the Way of the Cross. There were two large crosses with four pilgrims carrying each one and a rotation of sharing in the blessing every second or third station.

During a rotational change, I felt hands upon my shoulders positioning me to carry a cross and a man’s voice explained, “We are placing you at the head of the cross.” The cherished memory of my decades old “Fifth Station spiritual moment” immediately came to mind. I looked above the doorway beside me and there was the “V” for the Fifth Station of the Cross.

As God in His will and kindness had blessed Simon of Cyrene, so to, in my old age, He had blessed me beyond all expectations, to carry the cross of His beloved Son. My heart wept with joy and thanksgiving at God’s generosity.

Simon of Cyrene’s interaction with Jesus on his way to be crucified is recorded in all three Synoptic Gospels. These scriptural references are short, simple, statements recognizing Simon of Cyrene as the man who carried the cross for Jesus. The simplicity of these verses has led most scriptural scholars to believe that Simon’s participation was well known within the early Christian community.

From these three short passages, we know that Simon of Cyrene, a religious Jew, accompanied by his sons Rufus and Alexander came into Jerusalem to attend the Passover festival at the Temple. He was randomly pulled out of a crowd of Passover pilgrims by Roman soldiers and forced to carry the bloody cross beam of a man condemned to crucifixion.

Under Jewish religious law, the moment the blood of the condemned man touched his person, Simon was “defiled” and would have been prevented from entering the Temple for Passover. In time, Simon, his sons and the early Christian community would understand this humiliating, random act of forced servitude was a unique and special blessing. Simon was blessed by God, to participate in the atoning Passover sacrifice of the Lamb of God, Jesus Messiah.

For a deeper, personal perspective on this event within the crucifixion narrative, let us consider it in the manner of scriptural contemplation set forth by St. Ignatius and practiced by the Jesuits. Let us mentally place ourselves within these scriptures as witnesses to the event. Let us imagine …

We are part of a large group of Passover pilgrims slowly making our way through the crowded streets of Jerusalem. Near Herod’s palace and the Antonia Fortress, our forward movement through the crowded street is abruptly halted by a contingent of Roman soldiers escorting three condemned prisoners for crucifixion. Each of the condemned prisoners carries across their backs, a large cross bar to be used in their crucifixion.

The soldiers are coarse and brutal in their herding of the condemned men. A Roman officer on horseback is directing activities when one of the prisoners suddenly collapses in the street. The extensive bloodstains on his outer cloak and prayer shawl, which are taken by the Roman officer stops the attack. A soldier seizes him roughly by the clothing near his neck, curses him and throws him face down onto the filthy street with orders to pick up the cross bar. Both men are lying near each other in the street and appear to momentarily make eye contact.

The pilgrim pushes himself up into a standing position; quickly removing his cloak and prayer shawl, which are taken by his two sons. He lifts the large, heavy cross bar from the back of the condemned man and positions himself under it. Blood from the cross bar is immediately visible on the Pilate’s linen garment.

With curses and scornful contempt, two soldiers, grab the condemned man by his bloody arms and roughly yank him up from the street into a standing position. The crowd is ordered to keep moving.

As the procession of the condemned resumes, the Passover pilgrim, stooped over from the weight of the cross bar upon his back, slowly follows in the bloody footsteps of the condemned man. The two sons follow close behind with their father’s outer cloak and prayer shawl. Jewish pilgrims from the port city of Cyrene identify the man as Simon and his sons as Rufus and Alexander.

In time, we learn that at the crucifixion site Simon and his sons met a group of grieving women including the condemned man’s mother. The women identify the condemned man as Jesus of Nazareth and told of his teaching ministry and arrest in the garden. Through tears of grief, the condemned man’s mother thanked Simon for helping her son. Simon will always be remembered as the man who carried the cross for Jesus.

This spiritually contemplative perspective of Simon of Cyrene’s encounter with Jesus reveals for our consideration the following:

• Simon of Cyrene represents every soul’s personal experience in a life-changing encounter with Jesus Christ.

• As Simon of Cyrene carried the cross for Jesus, so Jesus carried the cross for fulfillment of God’s plan of salvation for all.

• Like Simon, many of the crosses we encounter and carry in our life’s journey will belong to someone else.

As a “communion of saints,” let us consider, for our own spiritual journey, bearing not only the cross of selfish service to God but also for each other. Philippians 2:3-5: “Do nothing out of selfishness or out of vainglory; rather, humbly regard others as more important than yourselves, each looking not out for his own interests, but [also] everyone for those of others. Have among yourselves the same attitude that is also yours in Christ Jesus.”

Paul Barrett is the RCIA director for St. Philip the Apostle Church in El Campo and a member of the Catholic Writers Guild.
que no conocía. Algunos de ellos compartieron sus historias personales de migración, así como historias de personas con las que trabajan. Fue una verdadera experiencia sinodal de escucha y acompañamiento.

Este día de abogación culminó con la Celebración Eucarística en la Basílica del Santuario Nacional de la Inmaculada Concepción, en donde el nuncio Apostólico Christophe Pierre, junto a otros 13 arzobispos y obispos de los EE.UU., presidieron una misa completamente en español, una novedad en la historia de esta basílica. Lo primero que me llamó la atención al llegar a la basílica fue el domo que sobresalía entre los edificios de alrededor. Un domo imponente, de color predominante azul con detalles dorados, colores que trasmitían belleza y paz. Una vez que llegamos a la basílica, la arquitectura se apreciaba majestuosa, era simplemente espectacular de observar. Uno se puede llenar de esperanza al observar una gran presencia de jóvenes líderes en esta conferencia. Muchos de ellos son parte de la Pastoral Juvenil Hispana y otros están trabajando en oficinas diocesanas creando impacto en sus comunidades locales. Fue sin lugar a dudas una experiencia eclesial llenada de esperanza fue escuchar que, los jóvenes no son solo el futuro de la Iglesia, sino que son el presente. Esto se pudo constatar al observar una gran presencia de jóvenes líderes en esta conferencia. Muchos de ellos son parte de la Pastoral Juvenil Hispana y otros están trabajando en oficinas diocesanas creando impacto en sus comunidades locales.

Por lo cual, se mencionó que es vital acompañar a esos mismos padres para ayudarlos a comprender su papel como primeros educadores de la fe de sus hijos. Ellos, son instrumentos a través de los cuales sus hijos conocerán el amor de Dios, amor que aumentará con la ayuda de la Iglesia y la comunidad a través de los sacramentos y las experiencias eclesiales de fe.

Esta Conferencia fue una gran experiencia de diálogo y discernimiento, experimento lleno del Espíritu Santo. Algo que me llenó de esperanza fue escuchar que, los jóvenes no son solo el futuro de la Iglesia, sino que son el presente. Esto se pudo constatar al observar una gran presencia de jóvenes líderes en esta conferencia. Muchos de ellos son parte de la Pastoral Juvenil Hispana y otros están trabajando en oficinas diocesanas creando impacto en sus comunidades locales. Fue sin lugar a dudas una experiencia eclesial llenada del Espíritu Santo.
Courage ministries reach out to homosexuals and their families

By JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

A common theme in the listening sessions of the diocesan phase of the Synod on Synodality – what Bishop Brendan Cahill refers to as “a Church that listens” – is the need to find ways to embrace those who think the Church doesn’t want them.

One outreach that already exists, Courage, exists to specifically give people with same-sex attraction some answers about their role as Catholics and how to follow the teachings of the Church.

Bishop Brendan Cahill recently asked the Rev. Jacob Koether, pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria, to become the chaplain of this outreach in the Diocese of Victoria.

“As the Church, we are open to all people, and I have to acknowledge that sometimes people feel we hate them,” Bishop Cahill said. “We love everybody.”

Since he began coordinating the Courage ministry in the diocese, Father Koether has discovered that it is also a ministry needed to heal families. “What I’ve experienced most is parents concerned for their children,” he said. “A lot of parents think, ‘It’s all my fault,’ and end up making it about themselves. And that makes it worse.”

Father Koether said those parents need to be reassured that they did not “break” their children and suggests they look into Encourage, a related ministry for the loved ones of people with same-sex attraction having a hard time accepting the reality of it. “It’s a great resource for parents,” he said. “It can be very comforting to learn that you’re not alone.”

According to Father Koether, the best mind-set to have when approaching the issue of same-sex attraction is to have people understand that everyone is a sinner and everyone is called to holiness, and freedom and virtue experienced when we follow the teachings of Christ. It is also noteworthy that having a same-sex attraction is not a sin, nor is any temptation for that matter, Koether said.

It is important to emphasize, Koether said, that Courage is not “conversion therapy,” nor is it any type of group therapy. It is simply people with similar experiences who want to live their Catholic faith and understand the truth of the Church’s teaching. It is similar to the recently established ministry for divorced Catholics – another group of people who often are misinformed and therefore separate themselves from the Catholic Church.

“When the Bishop first asked me to do this, he presented it in terms of evangelization,” Koether said. “It’s really mission territory.”

Anyone who wants to learn more about the Courage ministry can email courage@victoriadiocese.org. There is also a section on the Diocese of Victoria’s website under “Resources” for the Courage ministry.

Job opportunities throughout diocese

Chancery Office, Victoria
• Accounting Clerk
• Safe Environment Executive Program Assistant

St. Mary’s Catholic Church, Victoria
• Business Manager

The Cathedral of OLV, Victoria
• Religious Education Program Assistant

Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria
• Cook/Kitchen Assistant

The Emmaus Center, Victoria
• Director of Clinical Services
• Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
• Licensed Professional Counselor Associate

Presidio La Bahia, Goliad
• Presidio La Bahia Historical Interpreter
  - Part-Time

For job descriptions, application and requirements, go to the Diocese of Victoria web site at www.victoriadiocese.org/current-job-postings.

A Prayer for the Wheat

DEAR Lord, in many broad fields of this vast country of ours, the wheat is growing now. Some is still young and green, some is headed out, and all, before very long, will be golden ripe.

Most of it, dear Lord Jesus, will go to feed the hungry. In countless loaves of bread and in cereals, it will find its way to tables in city and country almost all over the world.

Some of it will be used at another table. It will be ground into fine flour and used to make the hosts, the altar-breads for Holy Mass. Priests will take it into their anointed hands and pronounce over it the words of consecration, and it will cease to be ordinary bread, and will become the Bread of angels. It will look as it did before, but we know and believe that it will be the Body and Blood, the Soul and Divinity of You, Lord Jesus Christ, there really present, under the appearances of bread.

O Jesus, bless the broad, rich fields of wheat in our whole land. Protect them from hail and beating rains, from blight and rust, from windstorms and drought. Let them be full and rich, so that the hungry may be fed, and may praise You and thank You as You deserve. And may all the Holy Masses that will be said with hosts made of this wheat hasten the day when at last there will be enough reapers working in Your harvest, which is ripe and ready now, waiting only to be gathered home. Amen.

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Yorktown CDA celebrates 70 years

YORKTOWN – Rita Renault, who received her 70-year pin from Catholic Daughters of the Americas, is shown with CDA member Helen Mikus. The CDA Court Holy Cross Court 1598 celebrated its 70th anniversary recently, honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary with a Mass celebrated by the Rev. Roger Hawes, court chaplain, followed by a social hour and luncheon.

Service awards were given and new members were installed. Deceased members, within the last five years, were remembered. The celebration was attended by 31 of our 61 members, including three new members, all court officers and District Deputy Dorothy Zabransky. The Court 1598 charity projects include: support of The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads of De Witt County, by having an annual baby shower and making a monetary donation; promoting right to life events; honoring military and first responders; visiting the local nursing home and providing Valentine goodie bags for the residents; and taking care of the older section of our parish cemetery. They also support the youth of the community by donating to the public library, Project Graduation and Shattered Dreams. The group helps with Vacation Bible School, holds an annual education contest for students and gives high school scholarships as well as gifts for sacraments and graduation. (Contributed Photo)
**Ministries • Ongoing Activities**

**Emmanuel Center** – Offers individual, couple, family, adolescent and children’s counseling, as well as specialized support groups. Spiritual direction is also available if requested. To make an appointment, call 361-212-0830.

**Engaged Encounter** – 2022 Dates: Sept. 16-18; Nov. 11-13. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For information, call 361-573-0828 or visit http://www.victoriadiocese.org.

**Gabriel Project of the Crossroads** – Our mission is to protect the unborn by providing spiritual and emotional support as well as supplies for the pregnant mother and her baby. We provide housing through the Bethlehem Maternity Home, and have an outreach ministry that visits pregnant women in our community. Our services cover Victoria, Calhoun, Colorado, DeWitt, Fayette, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda and Wharton. For more information, please contact our helpline at 361-576-1156.

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

**Incarnate Word Prayer Group** – Praise and worship 7:30-9 p.m. Mondays in the auditorium at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water St. For information, contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at 361-575-7111 or e-mail amormeus@yahoo.com.

**Mothers of Grace** – A mothers’ group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For information, contact Leslie Book at book.leslie@gmail.com or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/MothersofGrace1/.

**Natural Family Planning** – NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. For the CREIGHTON MODEL Fertility Care System (CrMS) featuring NaPro TECHNOLOGY™ contact Susanne Koch in Wharton at 505-710-0903 or mailto:susannekoch614@gmail.com. Also in the Cuero area contact, Ashley Rodriguez at 361-293-0700 or e-mail ashleyay09@gmail.com.

**Raphael’s Refuge** – To build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Flotation. Peer counseling and spiritual direction are available for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death or abortion. For information, contact Midge Elam at 361-505-7100 or e-mail ashleyay09@gmail.com.

**Retrouvaille** – Retrouvaille, meaning “rediscovery,” is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jhbjv@scbglobal.net or 361-580-2770; or call 800-470-2230; or visit http://www.helpourmarriage.org.

**Strength for the Journey** – A grief ministry for parents who have lost their child meets monthly at Assumption Church parish hall, 108 6th St., in Ganado from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The upcoming meetings will be June 14, July 12, Aug. 9, Sept. 13, Nov. 8, and Dec. 13. For more information, please call Patricia Hoelscher 979-257-9984 or email phoelscher@victoriadiocese.org.

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**Events**

**Meals • Picnics and More**

**Port Lavaca** – Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Daughters, Court 2267 Annual Games Party, June 5, 1-4:30 p.m., St. Jude’s Hall, 300 W. Austin St. Admission is $8 per person. Raffle, silent auction, door prizes and refreshments. For information or to reserve a table, call Cynthia Escalera, 361-920-2430; Nancy Thompson, 361-212-5838; or Doris Winter, 361-920-2583.

**East Bernard** – Annual Czech Kolache Klobase Festival, June 11, 10:30 a.m.-8 p.m. at Riverside Hall. Sponsored by KJT Society No. 40. Admission is $8 per person (covers parking and all events); children 12 and under are free. Entertainment indoors and under pavilion with water fan-cooled comfort. Sausage/barbecued chicken plate lunches available for purchase beginning 11 a.m. Hamburgers/sausage sandwiches available after noon. Arts/crafts, cakewalk, kolache eating contest and silent auction. For information, go to www.kkfest.com or call 979-335-7907.

**St. Mary** – St. Mary’s Picnic June 12 at the parish hall (1648 FM 340 just outside of Hallettsville). Mass will be celebrated at 9:15 a.m. A stew and sausage dinner begins at 10:30 a.m. Auction, bingo, cake and plant walk, country store, children’s games and more. Live music from 10:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. See ad on pg. 13.

**Schulenburg** – St. Rose of Lima Annual Parish Picnic, June 12 at the KC Hall. A fried chicken and sausage dinner will be served starting at 11 a.m. Games, music and more throughout the day.

**Ammansville** – St. John the Baptist (FM 1383) Fathers Day Picnic, June 19. A fried chicken and sausage dinner will be served. Entertainment throughout the day. See ad on pg. 18.

**Plum** – Sts. Peter and Paul Plum Feast (126 Plum Church Road), June 26. Serving sausage and fried chicken from 11 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for $12 each plate. Auction starts at 1:30 p.m.; music from 11 a.m.-5 p.m. with Ken Brothers and Mark Halata and Texavia. Games, cakewalk, country store, bingo (2 p.m.) and hamburgers served in the evening.

**July**

**Dubina** – Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church Feast July 3, Mass at 9:00 a.m. A fried-chicken and sausage dinner begins at 11:00 a.m. for $12 p/p dine-in or take-out available. See ad on pg. 9.

**St. John** – St. John Parish Picnic, Monday, July 4, with Mass at 9:00 a.m. followed by a flag raising ceremony. A stew and fried-chicken dinner at 10:30 a.m. for $12 p/p dine-in or take-out available. See ad on pg. 5.

**Moravia** – Ascension Parish Picnic July 18

**Ganado** – Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Parish is hosting a Women’s ACTS Retreat July 21-24. Send off will take place at the Parish Hall and the retreat will be held at the Spiritual Renewal Center in McFadden and then returning to ABVM Ganado on Sunday morning. Anyone interested should reach out to the director, Sharon Carroll at 361-648-8940.

**Port O’Connor** – Knights of Columbus #9038 and Nazareth Academy Annual Fishing Tournament July 22-23. See ad on pg. 3.

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**Do you have any calendar of events for the Lighthouse?**

Submit to
lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org
The Giving Garden

Continued from pg. 1

Foegelle also reached out to the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and found herself another partner in the project.

The grant money was spent to run water lines to garden beds and an in-ground planting area, purchase water troughs to use as raised beds, and for fencing, hoses and soil.

In conjunction with the Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Services of DeWitt County, the parish has offered a program on Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities to the community at no cost with anywhere from 15 to 23 in attendance, according to Foegelle.

Then the AgriLife Extension Service brought in Victoria County Master Gardeners to share information about composting, raised bed gardening and beneficial companion gardening (putting plants that attract beneficial bugs near vegetables). The Master Gardeners have made themselves available to discuss questions and concerns about the garden beds the parish planted and ones started at home.

The extension service provided the materials for building of wooden beds, soil, plants and fertilizer. Volunteers of all ages came together to build the raised beds, trenched the ground for in-ground water lines, till the ground for in-ground planting, install water lines out to the garden, plant vegetable plants and seeds and continue watering to produce a harvest to be shared.

Debbie Vanelli, Catholic Relief Services coordinator for the Diocese of Victoria, said the project was unique and met all of the criteria for what CRS wants to fund.

A couple of things Foegelle mentioned in the grant just jumped off the page, Vanelli said. First of all it was a project the entire parish family could help with, and volunteers were doing all the work.

The project puts the church at the center of activity while addressing hunger. “It speaks to everything that Catholic Relief Services is about,” Vanelli said.

“We pray it doesn’t only provide a bountiful harvest, but also graces us with the opportunity to meet new people, strengthen bonds with new friendships developed, creates a vibrant community of participants and touches the soil of our heart on which God’s Word is planted and that we allow it to grow in our heart,” Foegelle said.

The parish invites anyone interested to come and see the garden. “Helpful hands are always welcome,” Foegelle said.

Bishop Brendan Cahill said he got a tour of the garden from Father Hawes after presiding at the Confirmation Mass at Holy Cross on May 15. “What a wonderful way to witness our gratitude to God for the gift of creation,” he said. What makes it so special to him is that it brings to life so many of the lessons Jesus taught — about feeding others, the love of family, and more.

Foegelle said the parish is now looking forward to putting a playground in the same area so little ones can play while the grownups or older youth work in the garden.

Some of the children already have been engaged in the garden and have recently planted pumpkin seeds in the raised beds. A planting day is scheduled for June 16 to start in-ground planting of pumpkins. The parish will have a Fall Harvest Festival to Oct. 29 to celebrate a successful start to the Giving Garden.

Father Hawes said next year’s garden will be bigger and better and he hopes it continues to increase each year. “It’s been a good thing for the community. We not only have this garden and this food, but something that the community can take part in. It can only bring about positive things.”

Relationships may be the best fruit of this garden. “For me it’s all about family gathering together for a purpose,” Father Hawes said. “It’s so important. People need relationships.”

Holy Cross in Yorktown, as part of its Giving Garden project, has partnered with Texas A&M AgriLife Extension Service and the Victoria County Master Gardeners to make it educational as well as a source to feed the homebound and needy. Pictured here is a group gathered during one of the Growing and Nourishing Healthy Communities garden classes put on by out DeWitt County Texas A&M AgriLife Extension agents at Holy Cross church. “The course is very hands on, which allowed all to partake in putting the soil in the beds, planting the plants and seeds and then watering them,” according to Teresa Foegelle, church secretary/bookkeeper who had the idea for a community garden. “We gathered outside in the garden area to see how everything was growing and had the opportunity to ask questions of the Victoria County Master Gardeners that came to present. It was very beneficial.” (Contributed Photo)

Hispanic leaders called to be bridges to a new era

Continued from pg. 1

to be an instrument of healing and reconciliation within and, above all, outside the structures of the Church. It was encouraging to hear, and impressive to see the room filled with more than 400 Catholic leaders, not only Hispanic, but from different cultures, languages and nationalities. It was an expression of the cultural and universal diversity of the Catholic Church.

Part of the Conference was to participate in a day of advocacy. We joined Monsignor Mario E. Dorsonville, president of the Committee on Migrants and Auxiliary Bishop of Washington in a prayer vigil for our migrant brothers and sisters. It was a great experience. Since the beginning of the day we had been grouped by region, but there I had the opportunity to dialogue and reflect with leaders that I already knew from the region and well as others I did not know. Some of them shared their personal stories of migration or stories of people they work with. It was a true synodal experience of listening and accompaniment.

This day of advocacy culminated with the Eucharistic Celebration at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, where the Apostolic Nuncio Christophe Pierre, along with 13 other archbishops and bishops from the U.S., presided over a Mass entirely in Spanish, a novelty in the history of this basilica. The first thing that caught my attention when we were heading to the basilica was the dome that stood out between the surrounding buildings. An imposing dome, predominantly blue in color with gold details, Marian colors that conveyed beauty and peace. The basilica’s architecture was majestic. It was spectacular to observe. One can get lost in the nobility of the architecture and art inside the basilica, especially with the mosaics that represented the different apparitions and invocations of the Virgin Mary, a space for everyone. It was simply unforgettable.

The next four days of the conference were dedicated to dialogue and discernment on some of the pastoral priorities. Although formation is part of the vital process of catechesis-evangelization in our communities, family accompaniment and Hispanic youth ministry were given top priority.

It was recalled that the family is the domestic Church by the grace of the Holy Spirit through Baptism, as Lumen Gentium says: “In this kind of domestic Church, parents must be for their children the first preachers of the faith, with the word and example, and must promote the vocation of each one, but with special care the sacred vocation.”

Therefore, it was mentioned that it is vital to accompany these same parents to help them understand their role as the first educators of their children’s faith. They are instruments through which their children will know the love of God, a love that will increase with the help of the Church and the community through the sacraments and ecclesial experiences of faith.

This conference was a great experience of dialogue and discernment, an experience filled with the Holy Spirit. Something that filled me with hope was hearing that young people are not only the future of the Church, but they are the present. This was confirmed by observing a large presence of young leaders at this conference. Many of them are part of the Hispanic Youth Ministry and others are working in diocesan offices creating an impact in their local communities.

It was without a doubt an ecclesial experience full of the synodal dynamism to which Pope Francis has called us.