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The Catholic Lighthouse

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The Rev. Felix Twumasi, parish administrator for Queen of the Holy Rosary in Hostyn, looks over what remains of the church after a fire on June 9. When this was taken, firefighters from four communities were still working to put out hot spots on the building. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Response to tragedy keeping hope alive

By JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

HOSTYN — The Rev. Felix Twumasi and his parishioners of Queen of the Holy Rosary suffered some great losses, first on June 9 when the church was destroyed in an explosion and fire, and on June 20 when parishioner Verlène Kuntschik died from injuries suffered in the tragic fire.

The hardest part has been losing Kuntschik, 75, “a very active member of the church,” Father Twumasi said. At her funeral on June 25, he said that what comes to mind when he thinks about Verlène is her heart for service.

“She was indeed a woman of service,” he said. And she had a special relationship with the Hostyn church, where she received all of her

See Response to tragedy, pg. 11

Synod shows a desire for holiness and relationships

By JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

“What is my desire and our desire? To be holy. To live our lives as individuals and as a body of Christ around our area in the light of God’s love and God’s mercy,” Bishop Brendan Cahill said during the closing Mass for the diocese’s part in Synod 2021-2023.

Though there was some early worries that the synod, nicknamed the “Synod on Synodality,” might become a “gripe session,” results of the surveys and listening sessions produced some good fruit and some common thoughts. And people said they were grateful that their pastors wanted to listen to them.

With the diocesan phase concluded, the report now moves to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops who will compile reports from all U.S. dioceses and submit a report to the Vatican.

Locally, nearly 1,200 people participated in listening sessions or surveys. The open-ended questions sought to find out how people view the Church as “journeying together” in their faith and how the Church can continue in synodality to fulfill

See Synod shows a desire for holiness, pg. 16



God's presence is in the comfort we offer others

The Lord is close to the broken-hearted.
-- Psalm 34:19

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
Reflecting on the first line of the Lord's Prayer, St. Augustine once posed the question: "Where does God live?"

In his classic style, he observed that Scripture never says, "Birds live closer to God," so it doesn't say He lives in the clouds. Scripture also doesn't say He lives in the mountains or anywhere else people might think. After this consideration, he turned to Psalm 34:19, which declares, "The Lord is close to the broken-hearted."

God is close to us in our times of suffering and pain. I've been praying about this experience this past month, praying for families in Uvalde and Hostyn and praying for all our families during times for mourning and sadness. Where does God find us in these times?

One place I've come to experience God's presence is in the words of consolation that others may offer. My brother bishop, Gustavo Garcia-Siller, wrote me the following note:

A Shepherd's Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



"My heart aches for you and the people of Queen of the Rosary Parish. I am so sorry that the parish building burnt down, it is devastating, but the Church is alive so there is hope. Prayers are a powerful instrument of Christ to remind us that we are not alone and to continue to be humble, loving and grateful servants worthy of His grace poured upon us. Know that you, the staff, and families of Queen of the Rosary Parish are in my thoughts and prayers."

Thoughts and prayer of empathetic hearts bring God's love in these times of trial. And the thoughts and prayers are often accompanied by physical presence; sometimes simply

sitting with someone can bring the presence of God.

As I've been thinking about the presence of God to the broken hearts in Uvalde and Hostyn, I realize that one of the themes coming from our listening sessions is a hope that we can be more present to our elderly, disabled and homebound. These are some broken hearts that are waiting for the Lord, and you or I may be the one to bring the presence of God.

God bless you all. May you and your families know the tender compassion of Jesus each day. Let's keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

3 priests from Ghana begin serving DOV this month

As Bishop Brendan Cahill journeys to Ghana for the ordination of new priests there, the Diocese of Victoria is welcoming three new priests from Ghana.

The **Rev. Anthony Augustine Owusu-Peprah**, from the

Archdiocese of Kumasi, was ordained July 16, 2016. He is going to serve in the parish of St. Robert Bellarmine in El Campo. Before coming to the Diocese of Victoria, he served as the archbishop's priest secretary; parochial vicar for St. Theresa Parish in Kumasi; director of Angel Michael Security Agency; and lecturer for Kumasi Archdiocesan Inculturation School.



The **Rev. Michael Odartey-Lampitey**,

ordained into the Catholic priesthood on Dec. 5, 2004, for the Archdiocese of Cape Coast, will serve in the parish of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner. His past work included being associate pastor for five years in two parishes, pastor for two years in one parish and 11 years as vice rector of St. Teresa's Minor Seminary, Amisano- Ghana. While working as vice rector, he also was director for the Pontifical Missionary Societies in the archdiocese.



The **Rev. Samuel Kwabena Owusu**,

who also was ordained in the Archdiocese of Cape Coast on Dec. 5, 2004, worked as an associate pastor for four years in one parish and a pastor in two parishes for 14 years. While a pastor, he also served as sub-dean and chaplain for the catechists in his deanery. He is assigned to St. Philip the Apostle Parish in El Campo.



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Bishop Cahill's Schedule

July		27	4:30 p.m. Meal with IWBS Healthcare Sisters at IWBS Convent; Victoria
June 26- July 14	Trip to Ghana		
16	10 a.m. Jubilee Celebration for Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory; Victoria	28	6 p.m. Knights of St. Gregory Bishop's Charity Dinner; Victoria Country Club
17-22	Vacation	30	10 a.m. Jubilee Mass for Dominican Sisters; Houston
22-23	Nazareth Fishing Tournament		
24	9 a.m. Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory; Victoria		August
25	Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists; Victoria	2	• 9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center; Victoria • 6 p.m. Serra Club Mass and Dinner; Victoria
26	9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center; Victoria	6	10 a.m. Mass for Sister Maria del Rosario's Final Profession at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory; Victoria

Church must redouble efforts to help mothers in need

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. Supreme Court overturning Roe v. Wade is “tremendously important” for the nation and the cause of life, but it’s not “a day simply for celebration,” said the chairman of the U.S. bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities.

“As happy as we may be over this decision,” Baltimore Archbishop William E. Lori said, “I think it is also important for us to recognize our need, our obligation to redouble our efforts to help women in difficult pregnancies.” The archbishop made the comments in an interview via Zoom shortly after the court handed down its ruling June 24.

Bishop Brendan Cahill also said we will need to continue focus on supporting pregnant women through ministries in our diocese such as the Gabriel Project and the Bethlehem Maternity Home.

Joining Lori in the Zoom meeting were

Danielle M. Brown, associate director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism; Dr. Kathleen Raviele, a retired OB-GYN; and Dr. Grazie Pozo Christie, a radiologist, columnist and senior adviser to The Catholic Association. In a 5-4 vote, the high court overturned its landmark Roe v. Wade ruling, which legalized abortion nationwide in 1973. The Catholic Church’s efforts to assist women facing difficult or unplanned pregnancies, include pro-life pregnancy centers, services offered by Catholic Charities across the U.S. and Catholic health care and a new initiative called “Walking with Moms in Need,” which aims to engage every Catholic parish “in providing a safety net to ensure that pregnant and parenting moms have the resources, love and support they need to nurture the lives of their children.”

See Church must redouble, pg. 8

Father Jacob Koether to lead evangelization, catechesis for diocese

By JANET JONES

The Catholic Lighthouse

The Very Rev. Jacob Koether, pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows and Holy Trinity Chapel, is taking on an additional role as the episcopal vicar for the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of Victoria. The office was official on July 1.

The Office of Family Evangelization is transforming into the Office for Evangelization and Catechesis. Koether will oversee Hispanic ministry, the Office of Catechetical Ministry, the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry, and the Office of Catholic Schools. The mission of his office

is to encourage, strengthen and form families as missionary disciples. It will help parishes, families and schools provide formational and educational opportunities.

Koether, who received his master of arts degree in catechesis and evangelization in 2020, said he will act in a supporting role for the existing offices under the umbrella of his new office and help them complement one another. “We are still in conversation about how we all fit together,” he said. He will spend

some time learning more about each office and doing some goal-setting in the near future.

He also will build on the leadership teams and programs established by Justin Reyes, former Director of Family Evangelization, who accepted a position as the Director of Evangelization and Catechesis for the Diocese of Joliet in Illinois. In 2019, Reyes became the first director of Family Evangelization, a new office in the diocese. During his time at the Diocese of Victoria, he created new opportunities to evangelize through conferences and marriage and family ministries.

Koether said Reyes left the diocese in a good place to take this next step. “It feels like walking into a clean house,” he said.

Reyes built up leaders and equipped them to go reach out. “Now it’s about maintaining this great gift he left with us,” Koether said. But he also has ideas for new ways to evangelize. He said he would like to see the diocese get involved in “street evangelization,” perhaps in the form of a door-to-door ministry to build up relationships in the community. It’s a vision to “at least speak to every person in the diocese about the Catholic faith,” he said.



The Very Rev. Jacob Koether

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Education of Seminarian Fund

The Education of Seminarian Fund is a fund in which **all of the monies** donated to this fund, as well as the earnings, are available to cover the cost of educating seminarians. The proceeds of the special collection on Holy Thursday are deposited into the Education of Seminarian Fund. Publication of this fund will appear when new contributions are received.

Donation categories: Lector – \$.01 - \$99.99; Acolyte – \$100 - \$499.99; Candidate – \$500 - \$1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – \$1,500 - \$2,499.99; Priest – \$2,500 >.

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Victor & Gail Dvorak
M/M Dewayne Dvorak
In Memory of Andrea Morales

Bernadette Merta
In Memory of Gordon Moore

M/M Dewayne Dvorak
*In Honor of Father Philip Brune's 8th
Priestly Ordination Anniversary*

M/M Dewayne Dvorak
*In Honor of Father James Dvorak's 2nd
Priestly Ordination Anniversary*

M/M Dewayne Dvorak
*In Honor of Father Michael Lyon's 26th
Priestly Ordination Anniversary*

M/M Dewayne Dvorak
*In Honor of Father Scott Hill's 7th
Priestly Ordination Anniversary*

Acolyte

Mary Margaret & Monroe Rieger
In Memory of Mrs. Minnie Espinosa

Knights of Columbus
Victoria Council #1329
In Memory of John Schoenherr

Candidate

Transitional Deacon

Priest

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

June 24, 2022

• Rev. Dan Morales Seminary Burse in
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In memory of Andrea Morales by
Rene and Wilma Galvan
Acolyte

In memory of Andrea Morales by
Joyce Flores

• Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily Seminary
Burse #3

Acolyte
In honor of Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily's 89th
birthday by Jesse and Nancy Lednický

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

Lector
In memory of Bernita Korenek, Mother of
Rev. Greg Korenek, by
Alphonse and La Dell Janda
In memory of Geraldine Trochta by CDA
Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374

• Rev. Scott Hill Seminary Burse

Lector
In memory of Harvey Schindler by
Henrietta Veselka
Acolyte

In memory of Brother Knight Mr. Harvey
J. Schindler by K of C Schulenburg
Council #2902

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

Lector

In honor of Rev. Philip Brune's 8th anniv.
of ordination by Lambert and Carol Brune

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

Lector
In memory of Dorothy M. Olsovsky by:
Leon and Hattie Kristynik
Henrietta Veselka

Acolyte
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Pastor Appreciation Day by Sacred Heart
School faculty, staff and students
In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters from the
Janacek Family Reunion

• Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse

Candidate
Donation in honor of Rev. Michael Rother
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In Memoriam

Herminia Espinosa, mother of
Father Gabriel Espinosa

GONZALES — Herminia “Minnie” Espinosa, 83, of Gonzales, passed away on Friday, June 3, 2022. She was born in Nixon, Texas, on March 9, 1939, to Luciano and Elvira Posada, the fourth of nine children. She grew up in humble surroundings, but always acknowledged she was a country girl. She married David Espinosa on Jan. 6, 1958. They were married for 47 years before he was called home.



Minnie Espinosa

The four strands that intertwined and encompassed her life were: God, family, people and work. The first strand was her love of God. Her rosary and prayer book were her constant companions and staple. She was a continual presence at the Jamaica celebrations at Sacred Heart where you would find her in the ticket booth. Because of her love for God, she displayed a maternal love and nurtured strong friendships with the many priests and religious sisters that served in Gonzales. She not only fed them, but also provided them with any essentials they needed. Family was her joy and she was their home and refuge. Not many people knew that she made daily trips to San Antonio to stay at the bedside of her ailing mother-in-law María before she passed, and she loved her like a second mother.

“I love the people. Meeting so many people, that’s my great passion,” she said. Her arms were open wide for everyone she encountered wherever she went. “Treat people the way you’d want to be treated. How would I want to be treated? If you were me, how would you want to be treated?”

Early into her marriage to David, she stepped up and took her place alongside him; she complemented him. Long hours at work were common and there was little opportunity for personal time, but she never complained. “I don’t think I’m a businesswoman, but I’m doing my job...I really enjoy my work. If I had to do it over again, I wouldn’t change a thing.” She continued running the business until her retirement, having put in more than 50 years of work. While David was the face of Toni’s, “Miss Minnie” was the heart. “When you give with your heart, you just do it because you want to. You can’t imagine what God does for you.”

Minnie is survived by sons Michael (Rose) and the Rev. Gabriel; daughters Sarah and Orlanda (Mario); granddaughters Vanessa Espinosa and Gabrielle Hernandez; siblings Alice Hernandez, Lily (Lee) Gaytan, Alfredo (Lucy) Posada, Sophia Riojas, and Olga Marquez; daughter-in-law Martha Espinosa; sisters-in-law, Pauline Espinosa and Mary Porras; as well as many nieces and nephews. She was preceded in death by her parents, husband David, baby sister Dolores Posada, sister Rosa Cantú, and brother, Oscar Posada.

The funeral Mass, celebrated by the Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill, took place June 9 at St. James Catholic Church, Gonzales. Burial followed at St. James Catholic Cemetery. Pallbearers: Chris Espinosa, Antonio Espinosa, Patrick Porras, Hector Porras, Jared Markham and Tim Markham.

Friends may leave condolences to the family by visiting www.seydlerhillfuneralhome.com. Memorials may be made to the Catholic Community of Gonzales and Waelder, 417 N. College St., Gonzales, TX 78629, or to the charity of one’s choice.



Story and photos by Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse

2 seminarians become transitional deacons

VICTORIA — As Ryan Kapavik of Shiner and Luke Prihoda of Weimar prepared to offer themselves to the service of God’s people as transitional deacons on June 11, Bishop Brendan Cahill talked about “contemplating the face of Christ with Mary.”

“Preparing for today, I’ve been thinking and praying a lot about St. John Paul II. St. John Paul II had a vision that he received, that you can see through Pope Benedict or Pope Francis and the beauty of our Catholic faith, of how we’re called to live and pray and trust in God every day.” He went on to talk about John Paul II’s vision in the *Novo Millennio Inuente*, that “... he calls all of us baptized in Jesus Christ to contemplate the face of Christ with Mary. And he invited us to do so, saying that, if we do that, it would unleash the energy and power of the Holy Spirit for the healing and salvation of the world.”

Cahill expressed joy and gratitude that Kapavik and Prihoda “... have that heart that is drawn to the Mother Mary and the love for

all God’s children in the World.”

Special guest Bishop Michael Boulette, auxiliary bishop for the Archdiocese of San Antonio, was there to celebrate the ordination with the Kapavik family that he got to know when he was a deacon himself at St. James parish in Gonzales.

Bishop Cahill pointed out that Prihoda is on a path to become the 10th priest from the Weimar parish. He gave recognition to two of the priests present — Rev. Msgr. John Peters, the seventh from Weimar, and the Rev. Dalton Ervin, the ninth from that parish.

At times emotional during his homily, Bishop Cahill said, “My tears

are tears of joy today. Joy in your opening yourself to serve God, joy in the community of faith in this beautiful diocese, confident that God in His beauty has sent us a Savior to lift us up, and God has given us a mother to constantly pray for us and lead us to Jesus.”

The seminarians now prepare for their ordination to the priesthood on Mother’s Day weekend 2023.



Deacon Luke Prihoda, left, and Deacon Ryan Kapavik with Bishop Brendan Cahill after being ordained transitional deacons on June 11 at the cathedral in Victoria.

KC Council 1329 installs officers

VICTORIA — Knights of Columbus Council #1329 installed new officers for the 2022-23 fiscal year on June 14 after a Mass celebrated by the Rev. Dalton Ervin. District Deputy Manuel Gonzalez presided at the officer installation. From left are, front, Rev. Ervin, chaplain; Grand Knight Donald Shellenbarger; Deputy Grand Knight Allen Rather; Lecturer Gary Rangnow; middle, Jeremy Martin, assistant diocesan deputy; Juan Lara, advocate; Ernest Rosas, chancellor; Chris Krejci, treasurer; Michael Nevlud, recorder; Richard Lerma, outside guard; Daniel Perez, inside guard; and, back, District Deputy Gonzalez; Pete Moya, one-year trustee; Felipe Rosales, warden; and Joseph Janas, three-year trustee. Not pictured: Gary Buckler, financial secretary, and Mike Merritt, two-year trustee. (Contributed Photo)





Worldly goods can be obstacles on path to happiness

EDITOR'S NOTE: The following sermon was written for the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A. Father Kram titled it "Pursuit of Happiness."

In the world today, so many people suffer from high blood pressure, heart disease, anxiety, depression and stress. Much of this comes from being too vigorous in the pursuit of things that will supposedly bring security and happiness. But the more we have, the more we want and the more we must leave behind when we depart from this world.

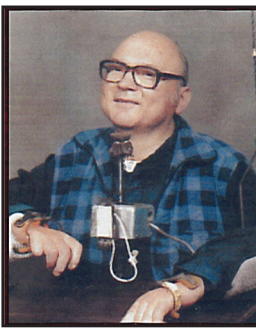
Sometimes the worldly goods we have accumulated by a lifetime of working and saving cause mischief even among those to whom we leave them.

Perhaps you have heard the story of the wealthy old man who left \$100,000 each to his doctor, his pastor and his lawyer, which he instructed them to place into his casket to take with him on his last journey.

So during the funeral service, each of the men was seen slipping an envelope into the man's coffin. But afterwards, the doctor and the pastor confessed that they had not been completely honest, but had each kept half of the money for themselves. Then the lawyer spoke up. He said, "I couldn't see myself keeping what wasn't rightly mine, so just before they closed the lid on him, I put into the dead man's hand my personal check for the full amount ... to be cashed at any time."

Worldly goods can be a real problem but we need them. Grocery bills, house payments and car payments and insurance premiums and medical expenses and taxes must all be paid. So how can we best manage our resources?

The first thing we can all do is to develop



1929-2000

Father Charles Kram Corner

sales resistance. Advertising makes everything look so good that we suddenly NEED goods or services that we may never even have heard of before.

One dad complained about the high cost ... to HIM ... of getting his college student son a credit card. Another parent lamented about the high cost of raising a kid. "You have to buy him a car." One nurse told me that she had maxed out all her credit cards and is barely able to keep up with the interest.

So often we buy an item, only to have it stand there unused. How many magazines have you bought that you have left unread. How many books are gathering dust on your shelf? How many dresses have you worn only once? Children who have received an expensive toy are sometimes seen putting it in the corner and playing with the box it came in.

A good test for safe spending is, "Do I really need this, or do I merely want it, and if I get it, will I use it, and especially, can I afford it?"

Secondly, have you noticed how in this NOW generation so many things are instant and disposable or wear out quickly? The Christian tries to avoid the excessive convenience that leads to waste. The modern

"do-it-yourself" trend seems a healthy return to the ways of the past. The old-fashioned principle, "Waste not, want not," is not dead yet. Even such things as cleaning one's plate at mealtime deserve greater popularity.

A recent TV report told of a housewife with children who decided to add to the family income by going to work. Her husband was earning \$27,000 a year and she earned another \$16,000.

At the end of the year, an audit showed that her efforts had actually led to a LOSS of \$3,900. Uniforms, transportation, childcare, convenience foods and a higher tax bracket

had used up more than the working mother had earned.

The third thing that we must do is to trust our Heavenly Father completely. As Jesus taught us, our Heavenly Father can and does lovingly provide even for the birds and the flowers and the blades of grass, so how can we ever doubt his care for us?

Think about this: Often the things we worry about the most never happen. Each day has troubles of its own. We take one day at a time and we accept each day's trials as God's calling for today.

There are two ways to be happy: One is to have everything we want. The other is to be satisfied with what we have. So let's act wisely. Let's not live in fear of the future. Let's not be weak in faith. God is reliable. God loves us. Let's do our part, and God will provide the rest.

Lord Jesus, thank you for being with us in our search for happiness. Help us always to use our possessions to the best advantage. Grant that everything we will ever own may lead to happiness here and in the life to come. Amen.

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

Rev. Gabriel Maison	07/01/1978	St. Joseph, Moulton
Rev. Charles E. Otsiwah	07/07/1985	Holy Cross, East Bernard
Rev. Peter Yeboah-Amanfo	07/10/1983	Nativity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Nada
Rev. Dominic Antwi-Boasiako	07/11/1981	Queen of Peace, Sweet Home
Rev. Gabriel Bentil	07/14/1984	Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus, Victoria
Rev. Gabriel J. Mensah	07/15/1990	St. Peter, Blessing
Rev. Samuel Appiasi	07/17/1983	Holy Family, Wharton
Rev. Clement Quainoo	07/17/1982	Retired
Rev. Felix Twumasi	07/17/2004	Queen of the Holy Rosary, Hostyn
Rev. Augustine Nsiah Asante	07/18/1998	St. Anthony, Columbus
Rev. Charles Owusu Dwomoh	07/19/1986	St. John the Baptist, Hungerford
Rev. Albert Yankey	07/20/1980	Incarnate Word Convent, Victoria
Rev. Johnson Owusu-Boateng	07/27/1985	St. John Bosco, Vanderbilt
Rev. Barnabas Kyeah	07/29/1995	St. Joseph, Inez

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

Rev. Alfred Hoenig, OSB	07/12/1994
Rev. Msgr. Gerard Cernoch	07/23/2020
Rev. Msgr. Stanley Petru	07/25/2013

Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life; whoever believes in me, even if he dies, will live, and everyone who lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26)



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Church not limited by walls

Back in 1999, I watched this supernatural horror movie where the main actor was possessed by the soul of an excommunicated priest who wanted to share with the world secrets he found in a recently discovered text. Just like several horror movies that have the slightest Catholic theme in it, the Catholic Church was the bad guy. In this case, the Church was trying to keep this message a secret. The message came from a text called the Gospel of Thomas, and the secret was that the Kingdom of God was not confined to a building, or as the movie implied, a church.

Now I didn't say this movie was good. It actually received very low ratings. Yet, even back then, I thought to myself, the Gospel of Thomas is not a secret. One can easily get a copy online, and it's been translated to several different languages. Another thing: The Church has never said that the Kingdom of God is confined to a building. However, the buildings – the churches – do hold a special place in the hearts of the people.

On June 9, I got a message that the church in Hostyn was on fire. It was heartbreaking to see videos of the Queen of the Holy Rosary in flames, and I was not a parishioner of that parish, but had visited it a few times. I quickly called Father Felix to make sure he was OK and to let him know that the Sisters and I were praying for him and the people of Hostyn.

That same day, in the evening, I attended a Mass outside the original Santisima Trinidad Chapel located on Ozark Street in Victoria. It was a farewell Mass held for the people who had received their sacraments at that chapel – a farewell to the building.

When I moved to Victoria, I didn't know there was an old Santisima Trinidad and a new one. I only knew about the one where Mass is being held now. I almost didn't attend this farewell Mass because I didn't know about this older building

Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, IWBS



until recently, but I went anyway since I knew some of the people who would be at the Mass, and I wanted to be there for them. After the Mass was over, some shared their memories of that building. Many tears were shed, many thanks were given, especially to the Missionary Catechists and the founding families of that chapel, and many laughs were shared.

Obviously these people know that God is not confined inside that building, but that building is special to them. That is where many of them had their encounter with the divine; where many received their sacraments.

People talked about how, before the building was built, the Missionary Catechists would come and teach catechesis to children under a tree. The families worked to build the chapel, and it became, as one gentleman said, the place that he as an immigrant could come and know he was welcomed. My friend Cesar mentioned to all that the history of that particular chapel began outside and it is ending outside as well, with the original altar that a family had built. It was a very emotional service to say the least.

I believe it was the next day that I saw online that the

people of Hostyn were going to continue to have Mass at their normal Mass times, in their parish hall. I know the day of the fire priests from the surrounding area and Bishop Cahill went to visit with Father Felix and the people. Catholic churches from our diocese and those nearby extended hands of support, offering vestments, prayers, or anything they had to offer. Our chaplain at the convent went to visit Father Felix, and when he found out that Father Felix was going to visit with the person who was hurt during the fire, he went with him.

I guess I'm writing all of this to say that, yes, the buildings are important. Not only do they hold beautiful pieces of art, they hold beautiful memories. They are special to us because they are like our homes. My home parish is Our Lady of Guadalupe in Bay City. I no longer live in Bay City; I live in the Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria, but I always call Our Lady of Guadalupe my parish.

These two events that took place on the same day, showed us the Kingdom of God – the way the people rallied around each other in support and love; how they took care of their priest and how he took care of them; how they immediately found a way to make sure they will still have a place to worship our God.

Jesus asks us to love one another as He loves us. If we want to see the Kingdom of God, then we just need to live as Jesus lived, and love as He loved.

"Once Jesus was asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God was coming, and he answered, 'The kingdom of God is not coming with things that can be observed; nor will they say, "Look, here it is!" or "There it is!" For, in fact, the kingdom of God is among you.'" (Luke 17:20-21)

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0622



Entrance procession meant to move everyone to Christ

“In the liturgy of the New Covenant every liturgical action, especially the celebration of the Eucharist and the sacraments, is an encounter between Christ and the Church” (CCC 1097).

Offer a sheet of musical notations to people, and most would see gibberish; to others so trained, the markings can come alive in song. Similarly, I find house blueprints indecipherable, while others see competed homes in those same prints.

Whether by training or natural gift, we all have some niche in which we can see beyond the external signs and can flesh out the skeletal. It is also true that we can find it frustrating when others cannot see, or refuse to recognize what is so obvious for us. I am disturbed when I hear, “I don’t get anything out Mass,” or, “Mass is always the same thing over and over,” as if there was something lacking in the Mass itself rather than in the commenter. But as in music and blueprints, we all need to have some training, some guidance if we are to fully engage with Christ through the liturgy.

I had the good fortune of receiving my formative training under the Rev. Gabriel Maison, whose love for and knowledge of sacred liturgy was both infectious and enlightening. He provided us a liturgical catechesis that allowed us to encounter and engage in the mystery of Christ in every liturgical action and word.

I hold fast to the belief that the more informed we are of the life, spirit and meaning

At Your Service

By Deacon Michael Tankersley



of sacred liturgy, the more sacred liturgy will inform the spirit and meaning of our lives. To that end, for the next several months, I will offer reflections on the Mass. The focus will not be on how we “do” or “say” Mass, but rather what Mass does to me and how it speaks to me. For the sake of an orderly presentation, installments will follow the general order of Mass, and so we begin with ...

The entrance procession

The order of Mass begins not with words but in movement. To a casual observer, the entrance procession may appear to have only the utilitarian purpose of getting the priest, deacon and servers from the back of the church to the front. You might even assume it a remnant of an ancient time, empty of any real meaning today. Such is not the case. Assuming that actions speak louder than words, what does this procession say to us? Or say about us?

Church must redouble efforts to help mothers in need

Continued from pg. 3

A truly pro-life celebration of the U.S. Supreme Court decision overturning *Roe v. Wade* would lead to cooperative efforts to pass legislation protecting life, women’s rights and motherhood, said an editorial in *Vatican News* and *L’Osservatore Romano*, the Vatican newspaper.

Those efforts should include finding ways to protect maternal health and lower the maternal death rate, assist poor women, provide or expand paid family leave and control access to guns in the country, said the piece written by Andrea Tornielli, editorial director at the Vatican Dicastery for Communication.

The Vatican published the editorial June 25, the day after the Supreme Court ruled that there is no constitutional right to abortion in the United States, giving individual states the power to legislate abortion.



Bishop Brendan Cahill prepares to process toward the altar at Raphael’s Refuge during the Feast of the Innocents Mass. (Regina Janak/The Catholic Lighthouse)

The entrance procession is a visual reminder that the entire people of God are pilgrims on the road from here (earth) to our eternal home (heaven). In this procession, like our salvation history, there is a starting point and a final destination, an alpha and an omega. Our spiritual life is not meant for idle movement or wandering in desperate search for purpose and direction. The call of Jesus, “Follow me,” is the language of movement, and so we begin our liturgy with movement. That is what liturgy does – it moves us.

The entrance processional reminds us that our salvation is a process. This is not just a physical act of proceeding to, but models a spiritual movement, of being processed by and molded through the very act of accepting Christ’s invitation to come to him. We are not a once saved, always saved faith that recognizes spiritual certification as a single act completed upon a human declaration of faith. Rather, we are called to work out our own salvation, as St. Paul said (Philippians 2:12), and so we move toward Him. Embedded in the meaning of the procession at the beginning of Mass is the process of our active movement to our own holiness.

The entrance procession embodies the Paschal mystery to which we are moving towards. Before the revision of the Roman Missal in the early 2000s, one of the choice memorial acclamations was: “Christ has died. Christ has risen. Christ will come again.” For reasons beyond the scope of this article, this acclamation is no longer one of the three choices we may use in response to the “mystery of faith.” However, it does remain a concise and valid statement of the Paschal Mystery into which we called to enter. Notice the order in the alignment of those in the procession and you will see the Paschal Mystery personified. Assuming a typical Sunday Mass, the cross bearer enters first, symbolically pronouncing that, although Christ has died, through His death we are led

heavenward. The candle bearers follow, lighting the way as the deacon carries the Book of the Gospels – the good news that “Christ has risen.” Completing the procession is the priest who is configured to Christ and is the sacramental sign of the presence of Jesus. In other words, Jesus Christ is walking our aisle, for “Christ will come again.” In the processional, as in our lives, we go to Christ, with Christ. We move from the world outside the doors at the back of the church, to our heavenly destination, towards the sun that rises in the Risen Son.

The processional is an act of gathering. Our tradition holds that liturgy includes the work of the People of God in the work of God. It is shortsighted to view the entrance procession as if it were restricted to a handful of workers going to their stations. The entrance is not an act of moving through the people to get to Him, but rather it is an act of bringing the people to Him. We may have entered the church building as individuals from different places and circumstances but now we are now called to gather as one liturgical community, to come forward in mind and heart to receive and respond to the work of God.

From childhood I have had a special fondness for the song “Adeste Fideles” and the lyrics, “O come all ye faithful ... to Bethlehem.” When open our hearts to accept and cultivate in ourselves the awareness that our whole life is designed as a journey from earth to heaven, then the entrance procession will no longer be just a ceremonial act by a few. Instead it will serve as our march to hope and promise – our response to Christ’s invitation to “Come, all ye faithful.” It becomes a movement of pilgrims to our own Bethlehem, our own birthplace into a new life with Christ.

And so, at the next entrance procession, stand in readiness – ready to move and to be moved.

Pax tibi,
Deacon Michael



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ABOVE: Pictured, from left are, front, Elizabeth Proctor, Miles Weempe, Blaire Weempe and Jackson Fayed; back, the Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, Matina Weempe, and the Rev. Dalton Ervin.

RIGHT: Blair Weempe receives the sacrament of First Holy Communion.



Educating & evangelizing

OLV school year ends with joyful celebration of baptisms, First Communion, confirmation

By THE REV. DALTON ERVIN
Special to the Lighthouse

VICTORIA — Each of four Our Lady of Victory students' journeys toward the joyful day of their baptism on May 23 was entirely unique.

Elizabeth Proctor was a part of the campus ministry program as a seventh-grader. Through her interactions with her fellow students and the campus minister, Vern Crockett, she discovered a desire to be a part of this faith in Jesus Christ that creates a community, a family of believers. Eventually, this stirring in her heart caused her to ask her group what she must do to be baptized into a faith she would share with her mother and grandmother. She has been a student at OLV since 2020.

Jackson Fayed was new to OLV this year and quickly settled into the fourth-grade class. One weekend he was at Mass with his mother and stayed afterwards for the baptism of an infant family member. Witnessing this baptism set in motion the preparations for him to desire, request and receive this sacrament as well.

Blair, a fourth-grader, and Miles Weempe, in second grade, are sister and brother. They joined OLV in 2020. In addition to their time at the school and in religion classes, it was particularly Miles' classmates' preparation for First Holy Communion that began not only this sibling duo, but also their mother's seeking incorporation into the Catholic Church. It was Miles' desire to have his sins forgiven in reconciliation and to receive the Body and Blood of Christ in Communion that led the family to seek these sacraments of the Church that they had learned about, and in which they believed.

"Children, you have spent a long time in preparation and you have now asked to be baptized. Your parents have agreed to your request; your teachers, companions, and friends have helped you; and all who have come here today promise you the example of their faith and their loving support ... (Rite of Christian Initiation of Children)."

As the Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, pastor, spoke these words to Elizabeth, Jackson, Blaire and Miles, the students stood before him in the sanctuary of The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory at a special all-school Mass during the last week of classes. The smiles and tears of their parents, teachers, companions and friends who surrounded them attested to a completion of the long journey leading to the font of baptism and the joyful expectation of the new beautiful adventure they were embarking on, life with Christ.

After the four students were baptized, Blair and Miles' mother, Matina Weempe, a second-grade teacher at OLV, made a profession of faith and received the sacrament of confirmation. Her initiation into the Catholic Church was the fruit of countless conversations with colleagues, friends, priests, and God in prayer, as well as the effects of those preparations for the sacraments of her students in the second grade.

In his homily, Father Hlavaty spoke on the Responsorial Psalm, "The Lord takes delight in his people," as he opened the Scriptures to reveal to all gathered how God truly rejoices as we become members of His Church, His chosen people. The summit of this Mass was when all four students and Mrs. Weempe received the Eucharist for the first time in Holy Communion. At the conclusion of Mass there was an eruption of applause from students, teachers, family, and parishioners and priests, spurred on by the great joy that filled the cathedral that Monday morning.

This is the purpose of Catholic education, to evangelize. How fitting that this momentous day for the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory and her school be celebrated during the last week of school, only days before the Solemnity of the Ascension of the Lord.

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20).



The Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty presides as Jackson Fayed receives the sacrament of baptism during an all-school Mass at the end of the school year.

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La presencia de Dios en el consuelo

El Señor está cerca de los quebrantados de corazón. -- Salmo 34:19

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,
Reflexionando sobre la primera línea del Padrenuestro, San Agustín planteó una vez la pregunta: “¿Dónde vive Dios?”

En su estilo clásico, observó que las Escrituras nunca dicen: “Las aves viven más cerca de Dios”, por lo que no dice que Él vive en las nubes. Las Escrituras tampoco dicen que Él vive en las montañas o en cualquier otro lugar que la gente pueda pensar. Después de esta consideración, recurrió al Salmo 34:19, que declara: “El Señor está cerca de los quebrantados de corazón”.

Dios está cerca de nosotros en nuestros momentos de sufrimiento y dolor. He estado orando por esta experiencia el mes pasado, orando por las familias en Uvalde y Hostyn y orando por todas nuestras familias durante los momentos de duelo y tristeza. ¿Dónde nos

Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill



encuentra Dios en estos tiempos?

Un lugar donde he llegado a experimentar la presencia de Dios es en las palabras de consuelo que otros pueden ofrecer. Mi hermano obispo, Gustavo García-Siller, me escribió la siguiente nota:

“Me duele el corazón por ti y por la gente de la Parroquia Reina del Rosario. Lamento mucho que el edificio de la parroquia se haya quemado, es devastador, pero la Iglesia está viva, así que hay esperanza. Las oraciones son un poderoso instrumento de Cristo para recor-

darnos que no estamos solos y seguir siendo siervos humildes, amorosos y agradecidos dignos de su gracia derramada sobre nosotros. Sepa que usted, el personal y las familias de la Parroquia Reina del Rosario están en mis pensamientos y oraciones”.

Los pensamientos y la oración de corazones empáticos traen el amor de Dios en estos tiempos de prueba. Y los pensamientos

y pagadores suelen ir acompañados de presencia física; a veces simplemente sentarse con alguien puede traer la presencia de Dios.

Mientras pensaba en la presencia de Dios en los corazones quebrantados en Uvalde y Hostyn, me doy cuenta de que uno de los temas que surgen de nuestras sesiones de escucha es la esperanza de que podamos estar más presentes para nuestros ancianos, discapacitados y confinados en casa. Estos son algunos corazones quebrantados que están esperando al Señor, y tú o yo podemos ser los que seamos la presencia de Dios.

Dios los bendiga a todos. Que ustedes y sus familias conozcan cada día la tierna compasión de Jesús. Mantengámonos unos a otros en oración.

+Brendan

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Response to tragedy keeps hope alive

Continued from pg. 1

sacraments.

“I consider her one of the greatest gifts of God to the church,” Twumasi said.

She was involved in many church and community organizations and had a special love for her Czech heritage. Her obituary, published online at www.lagrangefunerals.com, includes a lengthy list of ways she has served people.

Fayette Savings Bank, where she worked for almost three decades, has taken up the cause for the church and opened recovery funds for the church and for Kuntschik. Matching donations are being made as well.

Not much is left of the church building, which has stood there since 1966.

But the parish family wants to make something beautiful from something tragic.

“We are not losing hope,” Twumasi said.

He has plenty of reason to remain hopeful. Services are continuing at the church fellowship hall and attendance has been very strong since the fire, he said. When the cemetery was opened recently for a cleanup, lots of people came to help.

Whatever they find in the area – such as pieces of glass or other remnants – he hopes can be used to incorporate in the next building somehow as a memorial to what was lost. When the church is released by officials, who are still doing their due diligence reporting on the cause of the fire, they will continue their search for pieces that can be repurposed.

Minutes after the fire began, the help and support started pouring in. Four fire departments responded. To sustain them food, water and soft drinks began arriving from different sources and were set up in the garage by the rectory. Soon priests from the diocese as well as a few neighboring parishes outside of the diocese began arriving. The Very Rev. Charles Otsiwah, recently named vicar for clergy for the diocese, arrived and brought many of the priests who, like Father Twumasi, are from Ghana. They stayed for many hours to offer emotional support that day and have every since.

Father Twumasi said the outpouring of support and help has come from everywhere – phone calls, visits, cards, emails and more.

Bishop Brendan Cahill, during a recent homily, recalled being there the day of the fire. He said we find Christ in every person we encounter and “in a special way in those who are suffering.” He spoke of the importance of being present even if we do not have all the answers to bring Christ to others. “I saw that in those people. ... The people cared for each other.”



Debris from the Queen of the Holy Rosary church building is seen hanging from trees. Fortunately, the grotto and other structures around the church seem to be unharmed. (Photos: Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Firefighters brought out the tabernacle in the church as well as the ciboria and pyx that were inside of it. Those will eventually be buried in an appropriate place.



A photo from 2020 shows the stained glass behind the baptism font at the church. The marble font survived, but most of the glass ended up in pea-sized pieces across the parking lot.



Blessing of Visitors and Guests

From the Catholic Rural Life Calendar of Blessings

Summer is a time of vacations and visitors, when people travel to see relatives and friends. Hospitality is a cornerstone of rural life, a trademark of these summer days. This hospitality can become a cornerstone of rural spirituality as well. This blessing prompts us to greet God in the people who come to see us, to proclaim their visits a blessing to us, and to recognize that our homes and farms are indeed holy places where God can be encountered. This blessing works well when visitors are preparing to depart. Everyone gathers in the yard or a large room. The visitors are asked to stand together, and the family host members encircle them for the blessing rite.

OPENING PRAYER

O God, you have made us your guests in this world, the earth you created for all. We remember how you sent your angels to Abraham and Sarah to be received as guests. By their hospitality, Abraham and Sarah received a message of hope and life.

Bless us and out hospitality. May our guests be a blessing to us and reveal your presence to us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Song of Praise: Psalm 87:1-7

Response: Blessed be these angels, the messengers of God's love.

The Lord loves the city founded on holy mountains,

Glorious things are said of you, O city of God!

Response: Blessed be these angels, the messengers of God's love.

From Babylon and Egypt I count among those who know me.

And of Zion it will be said: "They all were born here."

The Most High confirms this.

Response: Blessed be these angels, the messengers of God's love.

The Lord notes in the register of the peoples:

"This one was born here."

So singers and dancers: "All my springs are in you.

Within you is my true home."

Response: Blessed be these angels, the messengers of God's love.

Reading: Genesis 18:1-10

Abraham's Visitors

The LORD appeared to Abraham by the oak of Mamre, as he sat in the entrance of his tent, while the day was growing hot. Looking up, he saw three men standing near him.

When he saw them, he ran from the entrance of the tent to greet them; and bowing to the ground, he said: "Sir, if it please you, do not go on past your servant. Let some water be brought, that you may bathe your feet, and then rest under the tree.

"Now that you have come to your servant, let me bring you a little food, that you may refresh yourselves; and afterward you may go on your way."

"Very well," they replied, "do as you have said."

Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah and said, "Quick, three measures of bran flour! Knead it and make bread." He ran to the herd, picked out a tender, choice calf, and gave it to a servant, who quickly prepared it.

Then he got some curds and milk, as well as the calf that had been prepared, and set these before them, waiting on them under the tree while they ate.

"Where is your wife Sarah?" they asked him. "There in the tent," he replied. One of them said, "I will return to you about this time next year, and Sarah will then have a son."

Selective Readings from Scripture:

Hebrews 13:2; Hebrews 13:16; Leviticus 19:34; Isaiah 58:7; Matthew 10:40,42; Luke 14:12-14; Romans 15:4-7

(Quiet Reflection, or people may share their thoughts.)

CLOSING BLESSING

(Family members extend their hands in blessing over the guests.)

O wondrous God, you are never far away. Again and again, you reveal your presence among us. Look with favor on our guests, who during their stay with us have opened our eyes to the mystery of your love and grace. Like our ancestors in the bible, we have received these guests through the fellowship of table: food, drink stories and sharing.

Through them we have participated in the companionship which mirrors the relationship between you and your people. As Abraham and Sarah were visited by your angels, we too have felt your presence through our guests.

Bless these holy pilgrims with safety in their travels, wonderful adventures in your good world, warm welcome from all they meet and a happy return home when that time comes. May all they touch witness the wonder of your presence.

Bless us, O Lord of Hosts, for you became a guest to reveal the truth of your faithful love. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



Sunday Readings from July 10 - August 14

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
Luke 10:25-37

July 17 ~ Sixteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Genesis 18:1-10a
Psalms 15:2-3, 3-4, 5
Colossians 1:24-28
Luke 10:38-42

July 24 ~ Seventeenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Genesis 18:20-32
Psalms 138:1-2, 2-3, 6-7, 7-8
Colossians 2:12-14
Luke 11:1-13

July 31 ~ Eighteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Ecclesiastes 1:2; 2:21-23
Psalms 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 and 17
Colossians 3:1-5, 9-11
Luke 12:13-21

August 7 ~ Nineteenth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Wisdom 18:6-9
Psalms 33:1, 12, 18-19, 20-22
Hebrews 11:1-2, 8-19
Luke 12:32-48

August 14 ~ Twentieth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Jeremiah 38:4-6, 8-10
Psalms 40:2, 3, 4, 18
Hebrews 12:1-4
Luke 12:49-53

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" has been set for July 17 - 20 at Camp Kubena in Ledbetter, Texas, near La Grange. Please encourage and invite the young men of your parish to attend. 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 the Rev. Kristopher Fuchs, vocation director, with any questions at 361-573-4328. For registration form go to www.victoriadiocese.org/quo-vadis-vocation-camp.

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.txabusehotline.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.



Sacred Heart Catholic School All Alumni Reunion July 23

HALLETTSVILLE — The All Alumni Reunion for Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville will be held on Saturday, July 23 at the Knights of Columbus Hall from 3 to 10 p.m. A Memorial Mass will be held at 4 p.m. followed by a social (open bar), dinner and dance. Tickets are \$30 per adult. Mail checks to Sacred Heart Catholic School at 313 S. Texana, Hallettsville, TX 77964, by Friday, July 15. For more information contact David Smolik at 361-772-5463.

God's Embrace retreat set for Aug. 12-14

The God's Embrace Weekend Retreat will be held on Aug. 12-14, at the Spiritual Renewal Center in Victoria. The retreat cost is based on room occupancy and includes all meals. The event is open to all.

To register contact the God's Embrace office at 979-561-8883 or register online at www.godsembrace.org/gem-weekend-retreat

God's Embrace weekend retreats offer participants an opportunity to leave the busyness of the world and enter deep into the heart of our Triune God. Led by Dr. Michael Fonseca, the content of each retreat is carefully planned to create a sacred space to encounter God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Bishop Brendan Cahill will be joining the retreat to celebrate the closing Mass on Sunday.

The retreat topic is: "Developing a Eu-

charistic Lifestyle in and through Jesus." Participants will explore the importance of developing and living a Eucharistic lifestyle, a life patterned after Christ. To be a Eucharistic people means that we are committed to living a Eucharistic life, a life in which we are willing to break open our lives and shed our blood for others just as Jesus did for us. The retreat will include adoration, meditation on sacred scripture, daily Mass, confession as well as group spiritual direction and fellowship.

The mission of God's Embrace Ministries is teaching and empowering Catholics to experience daily the loving embrace of our Triune God through teaching, mentorship and

experiences. God's Embrace (GEM) provides a variety of opportunities to help form Faith-FULL disciples.

What does it mean to be Faith-FULL? Faith-FULL disciples not only learn about the deep rich traditions and teachings of our faith but apply it to their lives, in turn transforming the lives of others. Now, more than ever, our world needs the rich tradition, beauty and truth of the Catholic faith. God's Embrace is committed to meeting God's people where they are and bring the beauty, tradition and truth of the Catholic faith to the whole world.

For more information about GEM please visit www.GodsEmbrace.org.

Job opportunities throughout diocese

Chancery Office, Victoria

- Accounting Clerk
- Safe Environment Executive Program Assistant

St. Mary's Catholic Church, Victoria

- Business Manager

Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria

- Cook/ Kitchen Assistant

The Emmaus Center, Victoria

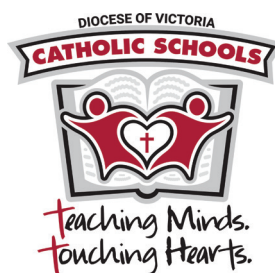
- Director of Clinical Services
- Licensed Professional Counselor (LPC)
- Licensed Professional Counselor Associate

Presidio La Bahia, Goliad

- Presidio La Bahia Historical Interpreter - Part-Time

Catholic School Employment Opportunities

- Our Lady of Victory (Victoria)
- Shiner Catholic School (Shiner)
- Nazareth Academy (Victoria)
- Holy Cross (Bay City)

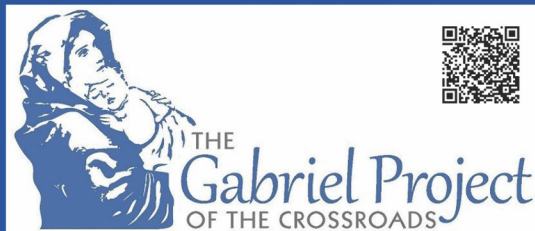


- Our Lady of the Gulf (Port Lavaca)
- St. Joseph Catholic School (Yoakum)
- Sacred Heart (Hallettsville)

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

Crisis Pregnancy Ministry

Providing help, hope & healing to pregnant women in a crisis pregnancy



- Offering:
- + Mother/Baby Services
 - + Bethlehem Maternity Home

20th Anniversary
& now serving
10 counties!

To learn more visit:
victoriagabrielproject.org
(361) 576-1156

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Class offers better understanding of Bible

Scripture is foundational to the Catholic faith. If you think about it, Bible stories are all around us. There are Good Samaritan laws. Parents often welcome home the Prodigal Son. And we hear Scripture readings in church.

Today, more than ever, we have the opportunity to discover the jewel that the Scriptures provide by learning the Catholic approach to reading the Bible. Beginning

Aug. 30, adult Catholics in the Diocese of Victoria will have the opportunity to delve into the “Good Book” by participating in the six-week course: “Introduction to the Bible and Pentateuch.” This course is for everyone who is curious about the message that God is providing through the stories in the Bible.

The Bible, for some, can be confusing. However, the proper approach to understanding the basic principles of how the passages

of the Bible were gathered over time – who wrote the stories, in what literary form and in what language, for example – provides the reader a broader view of the Scriptures, which helps in discovering the deeper message. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops website states, “Today’s Catholic is called to take an intelligent, spiritual approach to the bible.”



Father Stephen Vacek will teach “Introduction to the Bible and Pentateuch” as the Pastoral Institute’s first course of many for the next three years.

Father Stephen Vacek, pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church in Bay City will be the instructor for the six-week course, which will be offered every Tuesday morning from 9:15 to 11:30 a.m. Participants can gather at the Chancery in Victoria or at Holy Cross Catholic Church in Yorktown to listen and learn as a community. There is also an option to join the classes synchronously (online from your home), or even watch and listen to the recorded sessions asynchronously (through a password-protected site).

Christella Alvarez, director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry said, “There are many suggestions that offer a means for us to take better care of ourselves. Self-care is defined as the process of taking care of oneself by making healthy food choices, exercising, and getting proper sleep and dental care.” Alvarez continued, “Let us not forget that we are more than just bodies; God made us spiritual beings. It is important to take good care of our mind, body and soul. Therefore, I invite you to join us for a journey like no other in the exploration of God’s love letter, the Bible. It will nourish your mind, body and soul. I guarantee it.”

Contact Alvarez for more information at 361-827-7171 or calvarez@victoriadiocese.org or register online at www.victoriadiocese.org.

Presidio La Bahia



Wayback Every Wednesday in July

10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

The history of Presidio La Bahia is brought to life.

Are you looking for something special to do during summer vacation? If so, plan a trip to Presidio La Bahia and get in on Wayback Wednesdays!

Visit with living historians as they bring the past to life and explore little known stories from the Presidio’s early days. Learn about the daily life of a presidial trooper stationed on the frontier of Spanish Texas. Explore the stone walls and battlements of the old presidio and when you’re done there, duck inside for a look at our museum and the wonderful collection of artifacts from the 1700 and 1800s. It’s fun for the whole family so come on out and spend the day at Texas’s only fully restored Spanish Presidio!

Dress for the weather as this event takes place out of doors.

All events subject to change. Please monitor their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/PresidioLaBahia> for more up to date information or call 361-645-3752.

Open daily 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4.50 for seniors, \$3.50 for military personnel, \$2 for children 6-11, and under 6 are free.

Group rates available when reservations are made in advance.

Guided tours available to large groups and schools. Please confirm in advance.

The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information, call 361-645-3752.

Spiritual Renewal Center

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

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

For more information or to reserve the SRC contact Matthew Boyle, director, by email src@victoriadiocese.org or at 361-572-0836.

Journeys of Faith with Ceci

**LAST CALL for Rome and the Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii
with Bishop Cahill • August 21-30
Few Openings Available!**

A Marian Pilgrimage to Paris, Lourdes & Fatima

October 3 - 14, 2022



A Marian Pilgrimage to Paris, Lourdes & Fatima with Father Michael Rother...\$3,995

We are going to France and Portugal visiting the Marian Shrines in Paris, Lourdes and Fatima! This program will have us based in Paris for 4 nights! We will visit Nevers where St. Bernadette’s incorrupt body is encased in glass, St. Vincent de Paul, Miraculous Medal Shrine where Blessed Mother appeared to St.

Catherine Laboure, Mass in Sacre Coeur Cathedral, and more before we board the train to Lourdes where we will spend three nights. We will visit the Shrine of Our Lady of Lourdes, bathe in the miraculous waters, and participate in the nightly Candlelight Rosary Procession. We then head to Fatima with an evening stop at Avila and visit the convent of St. Theresa of Avila. Then on to Fatima for three nights where the highlight of our pilgrimage is attending the Mass of the Miracle of the Sun, which was our Lady of Fatima’s last appearance to the three children.

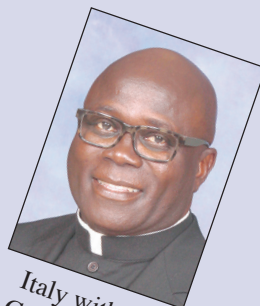
2023 Pilgrimages



Holy Land and Jordan with
Fr. Philip Brune



Traditional Holy Land with
Fr. Oscar Amo



Italy with
Fr. Gabriel Bentil

Ireland with Fr. Jim Weldon
from Wichita, KS

Details are being finalized! Stay tuned!

Information and online fliers are found at www.selectinternationaltours.com
or contact me at ceci.triska@gmail.com and I will email it to you

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facebook

Diocese of Victoria
in Texas



Meals • Picnics and More

July

- Dubina** – Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church Feast July 3, Mass at 9 a.m. A fried-chicken and sausage dinner begins at 11. Cost is \$12 per plate. Dine-in or take-out available.
- St. John** – St. John Parish Picnic, Monday, July 4, with Mass at 9 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.
- Hungerford** – Our Lady Queen of the Clergy Catholic Daughters Court #1990, Wharton, Annual Fundraiser Dance, Silent Auction, Live Auction and Raffle on Saturday, July 16. Doors open at 7 p.m. and dance 8 p.m. to midnight at the Hungerford Community Center, 235 Cypress St. Music by Legacy Band (classic country, polkas and waltzes). Public is invited. For information call 979-532-1466. See ad on pg. 11.
- Moravia** – Ascension Parish Picnic July 18, on the parish grounds beginning with a Mass at 9:30 a.m. A fried-chicken and stew dinner begins at 11 a.m. for \$12 each plate. For more information see ad on pg. 10.
- 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 #9088 and Nazareth Academy Annual Fishing Tournament July 22-23. See ad on pg. 3.

August

- Victoria** – Our Lady of Victory - Boy Scout Troop 364 Annual BBQ Chicken Dinner will be on Aug. 7 serving 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. at Our Lady of Victory School Cafeteria with TO GO plates only. The plates will be a 1/2 chicken, German potatoes, beans, bread and trimmings for \$12 each.
- Yoakum** – St. Joseph Picnic, Aug. 7, at the Community Center. A stew and sausage dinner will be served. For more information see at on pg. 4.
- Victoria** – The God's Embrace Weekend Retreat will be held on August 12-14, at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The retreat topic is: Developing a Eucharistic Lifestyle in and through Jesus. To register contact the God's Embrace office at 979-561-8883 or register online at www.godsembrace.org/gem-weekend-retreat. See pg. 13 for more information.
- Ganado** – Assumption of the BVM Feast Day Picnic, Aug. 14 on the parish and hall grounds. See ad on pg. 11.
- Weimar** – St. Michael Harvest Feast, Aug. 14, at Veterans Hall. Watch their Facebook page for more information.
- Praha** – 167th Prazska Pout/Praha Picnic Monday, Aug. 15. Mass will be at 10 a.m. Starting at 11 a.m., a stew and fried chicken dinner will be served. Music starting at 11 a.m. There will be a cakewalk, games, country store, bingo (1-5 p.m. and 6-10 p.m.), and more throughout the day. Auction at 1 p.m. Food available throughout the afternoon and evening.
- Cistern** – Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church Picnic, Aug. 28, on the parish grounds. A fried chicken and V & V sausage dinner will be served.

Ministries • Ongoing Activities

- ACTS Retreats** – Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS retreats in the diocese should e-mail dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org.
- Catholic Family Services** – To find Catholic organizations that focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at <http://www.nacflm.org>.
- Courage** – Ministers to persons with same-sex attractions and their loved ones. The ministry also has an outreach, EnCourage, which ministers to relatives, spouses, and friends of persons with same-sex attractions. It is a Roman Catholic Apostolate endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family. For information, visit <http://www.couragerc.net>.
- Crisis Pregnancy Center of Victoria** – A sister organization to the Gabriel Project staffed by volunteers that offers help to girls and women who find themselves in a difficult situation due to an unplanned pregnancy. Office located at 1501 E. Red River, is open 1-4 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Free pregnancy tests offered and medical referrals are made for prenatal care. New volunteers are welcome. For information call 361-575-6171.

Mission Trip Planned

The Coram Deo Missions trip to Las Obras in Antigua, Guatemala, will take place July 10-17. The late Father Dan Morales led many mission trips to the orphanage and an endowment in his name was created to help support Las Obras. More information will be coming about how to register for future mission trips. For more information about the mission, visit <https://frdanendowment.org>.



Father Dan
Morales

Pilgrimages

God's Embrace Ministries (GEM) is hosting its first Marian Pilgrimage this fall from Sept. 26-Oct. 5. GEM has partnered with 206 tours for this 9 day pilgrimage to Fatima, Lourdes and Spain. Mary plays a significant role in the life of every disciple and is always pointing the faithful toward her son, Jesus. In January 2023 GEM will be making its 2nd pilgrimage to the Holy Land. Register for either of these trips by visiting www.godsembrace.org and clicking on the Experiences tab or calling the God's Embrace Ministries office at 979-561-883 to have a staff member help complete registration.

Journeys of Faith with Ceci has an upcoming pilgrimages to Rome and the Shrine of Our Lady of Pompeii Aug. 21-30 and a Marian pilgrimage to Paris, Lourdes and Fatima in October. For more information see ad on pg. 14.

Do you have any calendar of events
for the Lighthouse?

Submit to
lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org

- Emmaus Center** – Offers individual, couple, family, adolescent and children's counseling, as well as specialized support groups. Spiritual direction is also available if requested. To make an appointment, call 361-212-0830.
- 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** – Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy as an alternative to abortion. Our mission is to protect the unborn by providing spiritual and emotional support as well as supplies. 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.
- id.9:16 Ministry** – For adults in their 20s and 30s, single or married. Held at Holy Family in Victoria every first Thursday of the month. Starts with 6 p.m. Mass followed by dinner and a talk live streamed from the headquarters in Michigan and fellowship. 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/Mothersofgraceolv/.
- 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 ashleyfay09@gmail.com.
- Raphael's Refuge** – To build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Flatonia. Peer counseling and spiritual direction are available for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death or abortion. For information, contact Midge Elam at 361-865-3021, 361-258-1514, or visit their web site <http://www.raphaelsrefuge.org>.
- Retrouvaille** – Retrouvaille, meaning "rediscovery," is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jbvjov@sbcglobal.net 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 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.



Sister Stephana Marbach, IWBA, speaks during a listening session that included women religious from the three communities serving in the Diocese of Victoria. She said the synod process was well-received by the participants and gave her a sense of hope for the future. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Synod shows a desire for holiness and relationships

Continued from pg. 1

Jesus' mission.

In the Diocese of Victoria, the top emerging themes were listed as following:

1. Be more inviting and welcoming parishes
2. Address the absence of people from Mass due to pandemic
3. Renew reverence for the Real Presence in the Eucharist
4. Adult/family faith formation – on the Mass and about the faith
5. More opportunities to come together to build relationships and community
6. Improving communication within parishes and the diocese
7. Providing support for young adults/newly married; engaging the youth
8. Addressing the needs of the elderly/homebound/ disabled
9. More support of Hispanic and Vietnamese faithful
10. Consistently expressed appreciation for church, leadership, and community

During a final meeting of the diocese synod team and Bishop Brendan Cahill, another topic discussed was the style of liturgy. Several people expressed a desire for more traditional Latin Masses, while others stated Latin could be an impediment to understanding the liturgy. There were also many who wanted more traditional hymns during the Mass and some stated that more contemporary music could help attract younger people.

The Rev. Bob Knippenberg, who has been at Sts. Peter and Paul in Frelsburg and St. Roch in Mentz for about a year, called the listening sessions a good way to identify the parish's personality. "And every parish has a different personality," he said.

Knippenberg said in his 22 years as a priest, he has heard the same comments or

concerns at every parish: For example, more ways to engage youth is needed, more contact with shut-ins is needed, and better communication is needed.

One of the fruits of his experience in listening was the decision to employ Flocknote, a database for church communications, to better engage parishioners who prefer to receive information through text and/or email.

Though most of the surveys or sessions came from individual parishes and mission churches, a few were conducted with particular groups. Bishop Brendan Cahill, along with the synod team headed by Jenny Vincent, pastoral associate for the Our Lady of Victory Parish in Victoria, conducted a listening session with women religious in the diocese and another with the Communities of Faith, a group of church leaders from different faith backgrounds who meet regularly to share the joys and challenges of their vocations.

Sister Stephana Marbach, IWBS, attended both of the sessions with Bishop Cahill.

"It filled me with a sense of hope," Marbach said. "People were excited. People were open. People were free to discuss. And having the bishop present, where he heard everything first hand, was just a profound opportunity. It was an awesome experience for me."

Marbach also said being part of a synodal church that emphasizes the theme "communion, participation, mission" makes her look optimistically about the future of the Church, because it showed her that people feel co-

responsible for that future.

The Communities of Faith listening session showed that even those who aren't Catholic were happy to be included in the "journeying together" discussion. Marbach, who is a member of the group, said they had a larger-than-average gathering.

"It kind of went right along with what we're all about," Marbach said. "We collaborate and work together and support each other. I'm honored to be part of this whole synodal process. It was just a good experience all the way around."

The Rev. Jacob Mendoza, pastor of St. Michael's parish in Cuero, said even though there was not much enthusiasm for the process in the beginning, he figured if he had to do it, he would try to get as much information as possible. He chose surveys and sent out personal letters to vari-

ous parishioners and collected data on ages, gender, social status and so on. His was more of a scientific approach and his final report included graphics and charts as well as feedback from various questions about the Church and parish.

"The responses I got were fantastic," Mendoza said. "People were very open about their flaws and their misgivings and their struggles."

The whole process already has helped shape his ministry. He said he has new ideas for homilies. He also said it opened some people up who don't really know how to share their prayer life. And he has issued a chal-

lenge to his parishioners to invite other parish families to their dinner tables to continue the dialogue about their faith.

"I will do a modified version of this every few years," Mendoza said. "I think every priest should."

Vincent, with the help committee members Dr. Glenn Hunter, director of music for Our Lady of Victory, and Aldo Camacho, coordinator of Hispanic Ministry for the diocese, spent a lot of time over the past few months preparing information for priests to begin the process, conducting listening sessions and, finally, compiling all of the submitted reports. She said it was an honor to be chosen for the task and she spent time in prayer before each step. And the listening sessions began with prayer as Pope Francis asked everyone to be open to the Holy Spirit during the journey.

In the final synthesis, Vincent wrote regarding the parishioners who responded, "If their desires of the heart were to be condensed to the lowest common denominators, it would be that the faithful of the diocese of Victoria long for meaning (What do we believe and why?), purpose (How can we share these truths authentically?), and love (We desire genuine relationships, with God and with others)."

The complete synthesis and report will be available for viewing on the Synod page of the diocese website, www.victoriadiocese.org.

At the closing Mass Bishop Cahill said, "It really doesn't end today." He recalled the beginning of his seven-year journey in the diocese and how the faithful are continually being formed. He expressed his gratitude for all who were open to the listening process.

"Trust Jesus and he'll lead us each and every day," he said.

