

The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



VOL. 23, NO. 4

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

August 2009



Mr. John Quarry, superintendent of the diocesan Catholic schools, welcomes two, new principals to the diocese, Mr. Tony Winstead (l.) of St. Joseph High School, Victoria, and Mrs. Stephanie Kucera (r.) of Holy Cross, Bay City.

Back to School!

"Whether it's uniforms, getting physicals, or taking the last brief vacation to Grandma's, the signs of "back to school" are definitely in the air," announced Mr. John Quarry, superintendent of Catholic Schools in the Diocese of Victoria. "While parents and children may have a totally different outlook on what that means, we can all agree that our Catholic schools are certainly the place to educate your young ones." The Diocese of Victoria is proud to report that it had more than 3,000 students attend its 13 campuses during the 2008-

2009 school year.

The first day of school for the Catholic schools of the Diocese of Victoria will begin during the week of August 17. In addition to the new year, the Catholic School Office also introduces two new principals to the diocese: Mr. Tony Winstead, principal of St. Joseph High School in Victoria, and Mrs. Stephanie Kucera, principal of Holy Cross Elementary in Bay City.

Mr. Winstead received a bachelor's degree in science from Cameron University,

See Back to School!, p. 19



Over 100 religious and laity meet to discuss the needs of the world and the Church. Sister Patrice Schorp, Sister Mary Margaret Rosberg, Laurie Bautista, Sister Charlene Machala, Tali Villafranca and Sister Amata Hollas are gathered at St. Mary's Activity Center in Victoria June 27-28, 2009, to discuss the refounding of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament (IWBS) Sisters.

Partners in Mission: Proclaiming His Presence Together

By Sister Amata Hollas, IWBS

In 2006 we, the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament in Victoria, made a decision to engage in a process of revitalization and growth. We began a "Journey of Refounding."

Over the years there have been many who have journeyed with us as partners in mission whether they are parents, students or other individuals who have supported us in our mission. On the weekend of June 27 and 28, 2009, we invited some of them to sit and talk with us about how they see us and what our Church needs from us today. Around 50 of them were able to join us.

We, together with our Partners in Mission, embarked on a "Transformative Visioning" process which is a key element in the refounding process. We spent the weekend deepening together our refounding faith journey as we prayed about and

discussed the context, culture and dreams of our lives. In a stance of contemplative listening, both the Sisters and the Partners in Mission reflected on the aching, gaping needs in our world, church and neighborhoods; we reflected on the charism of the Sisters and began to name the values, beliefs and behaviors that surround this charism (a Charism is a particular gift of the Holy Spirit to a group of Consecrated Religious for the good of the Church). As Partners in Mission, we began to unearth possible dreams as we listened to our longings, imaginings, and possibilities for a hope-filled future as we proclaim by our lives that the Word has become Flesh and dwells among us.

The Partners in Mission expressed a desire to continue on the Journey of Re-

See Partners in Mission, p. 7



Rev. Gabriel Bentil visits with his sister, Mrs. Mary Fynn, from Ghana, at his anniversary celebration at St. Joseph parish hall in Inez July 19. He plays his guitar and sings, "God is so Good," at Mass.

Father Gabriel Bentil celebrates 25 years of priesthood

By Cynthia Brewer

Joy! Joy is what exudes from Father Gabriel Bentil, and the Diocese of Victoria has been blessed to experience his joyful presence for the past eight years. He celebrated the 25th anniversary of his priesthood at his parish, St. Joseph's, in Inez on Sunday, July 19, 2009.

Father Gabriel Bentil came from Ghana, West Africa, to Our Lady of Vic-

tory Cathedral in 2001 and has assisted there and at Holy Family Parish in Victoria in between his continued studies in Kent, England, and the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago, Ill. He was incardinated into the Diocese of Victoria on February 27, 2008, and assigned to St. Joseph Parish in Inez in June 2008.

See Father Gabriel Bentil, p. 19

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Bishop Fellhauer's Schedule

August 10	5:00 p.m., Diocesan Liturgical Commission meeting, Chancery Office
13	6:30 p.m., Mass, Serra Club NW seminarian's hamburger cookout, St. Mary's, St. Mary (Hallettsville)
15	10:00 a.m., Mass, St. Mary Church, Praha, Feast of the Assumption of the B.V.M. 6:00 p.m., Gabriel Project Angel Appreciation Dinner, Holy Family Church, Victoria
19	4:30 p.m., Diocesan Building Board meeting, Chancery Office
20	2:00 p.m., Installation of former Austin Bishop Gregory Aymond as Archbishop of New Orleans
22	5:00 p.m., Mass, Catechetical Ministry retreat, Spiritual Renewal Center
23	7:30 a.m., Mass, 120th anniversary of St. Rose of Lima School, and Blessing of Early Childhood Center, St. Rose of Lima Church, Schulenburg
28	8:30 a.m., School Mass St. Philip Church, celebrating 60th anniversary and rededication of school building, El Campo
September 2	10:00 a.m., Presbyteral Council meeting, Chancery Office
4	Catholic Schools Seminar, Holy Family Church, Victoria
6	6:30 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton 9:00 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton
7	1:00 p.m., PTC Golf tournament benefiting St. Joseph School, Yoakum, Municipal Golf Course
11	8:05 a.m., School Mass, blessing of Band Hall addition, etc., Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville
12	6:30 p.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton
13	6:30 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton 9:00 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton 2:00 p.m., Mass, IWBS Associates Consecration, Incarnate Word Convent, Victoria

Letter to the Editor

To Whom It May Concern:

In the June 2009, Vol. 23, No. 2, edition of *The Catholic Lighthouse* publication, there are two articles that should be of concern to Catholics who know and practice their Catholic faith as doctrine teaches.

One article, "Good review: Vatican newspaper sees Obama's start in positive light," presents the illusion that the pope supports President Barack Obama. I am not saying that I know the pope's personal opinion or his stand for the Church regarding President of the United States Barack Obama, but that article leads readers to believe that the pope supports the opinion of the article. I find this insinuation very offensive since President Barack Obama openly supports the murder of viable unborn children and allowing these children to die if they survive a botched abortion. The Catholic Church in no way can support this politician due to his stand on abortion. Nothing he does can offset the effects of his promoting and supporting abortion.

Also, the article, "Engage Obama or fight him? Law professors discuss his abortion stance," written by supposed pro-life law professors alludes to bringing about fewer abortions; fewer abortions? One abortion is wrong and if we do not promote respect for all life then no other issues matter. "Thou shall not commit murder" is one of the Ten Commandments and we, as Catholics, should have no part watering down the issue. Although this article did go on to point out much legislation that the Obama administration has refused to ban such as abortion for gender selection, partial-birth abortion and late-term abortions, the article muddies the water and any article from a Catholic publication can be influential in leading the flock in the wrong direction.

What message did the caption under the picture of Supreme Court nominee Sotomayor send in stating that "she was raised a Catholic and attends church for family celebrations and other important events?" Is that supposed to suggest an acceptable practice for a Catholic? The fact that she could be the first Hispanic Supreme Court Justice is of no great consequence if she

does not uphold the Constitution of the United States.

In the past, I have noticed other articles in *The Catholic Lighthouse* that seemed weak regarding its stance on Catholic doctrine, especially on the subject of abortion.

Thank you for your consideration in better editing of our Victoria Diocese publication.

Nova T. Smith
Bay City, Texas

In response to the Letter to the Editor:

Regarding "Good reviews: Vatican newspaper sees Obama's start in positive light," the article clearly states that the editor's opinions cannot be read as formal Vatican statements, but it also mentions that the editor is "at the service of the thinking of the pope..." The article was a news story that stated that Obama's thinking was very similar to Pope Benedict's and the *L'Osservatore Romano's* on several key issues. Nowhere does the article say that the Church is pleased with President Obama's stand on abortion, and *The Catholic Lighthouse* has never failed to mention the damage the Obama administration's pro-abortion stand has caused to women and unborn children in the United States and throughout the world.

In "Engage Obama or fight him? ...," the article explains that two pro-life professors have differing views on how to engage President Obama on the issue of abortion. The story doesn't say who is right or wrong; however, Robert George's challenge to Douglas Kmiec "that if Obama truly wants to seek common ground, he would support several key policies that would discourage abortion" makes it clear George's argument is stronger.

And finally, regarding the statement under Judge Sonia Sotomayor's picture, that she "was raised a Catholic and attends church for family celebrations and other

important events" was printed in an effort to allow readers to come to their own conclusion as to whether Judge Sotomayor follows Catholic teaching.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states: "Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and to his Church (para. 2182). "... the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) ... (para. 2181).

I appreciate Ms. Smith's comments. Thank you, Cynthia Brewer, Editor.

Thank You

Your Excellency,

The year 2009 National Black and Indian Mission Collection had the theme, "Evangelization - strengthening one's own faith and those around us." I want to thank you for the check in the amount of \$6,823.19 that arrived as your part in helping bring this theme alive.

The Black and Indian Mission Office cooperates and supports diocesan evangelization by disbursing the collection returns in the form of grants to needy archdioceses and dioceses.

With assurance of my prayers for you and your diocesan family, I am,

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Rev. Wayne C. Paysse

Executive Director

Black and Indian Mission Office

Dear Mr. Brown,

We have received your recent check for \$3,411.60. This amount has been posted to the 2009 Collection for the Catholic Communication Campaign and will appear in our annual report.

Sincerely,

Mary Mencarini Campbell

Assistant Director for Promotions

Office of National Collections

2009 DSA & Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign Updates

2009 DSA

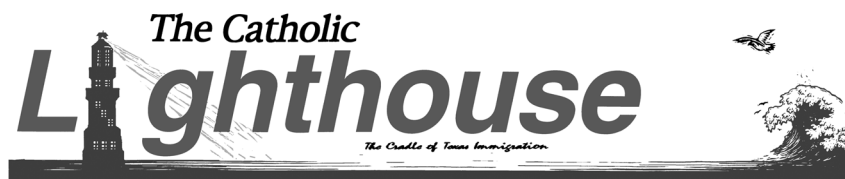
Diocesan Goal:	\$1,282,100.00
Parish Pledge Totals:	\$ 569,683.10
Parish Contribution Totals:	\$ 504,348.90
Number of Parish Families Participating:	3,582

REFLECTION OF FAITH CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

Diocesan Goal:	\$ 9,000,000.00
Parish Pledge Totals:	\$13,469,319.48
Parish Contribution Totals:	\$ 6,042,177.65
Number of Parish Families Participating:	6,947

Built into the Capital Campaign is a financial rebate for each parish. Parishes receive a 20% rebate for contributions up to their parish goal. Once contributions exceed their parish goal, parishes receive a 50% rebate for all contributions received in excess of their parish goal. To date, \$1,272,480.33 has been rebated back to the parishes for their needs. Congratulations to the following seven parishes whose contributions have exceeded their parish goal: St. John Nepomucene (New Taiton), Our Lady of Lourdes (Victoria), Our Lady of Victory Cathedral (Victoria), St. Mary (Victoria), St. Michael (Weimar), Holy Family (Wharton) and St. Joseph (Yoakum).

Sue Ellen Galvan, Coordinator
DSA/Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

Published monthly at 1505 E. Mesquite Lane — Victoria, TX 77901
(361) 573-0828 — FAX (361) 573-5725 — www.victoriadiocese.org

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DEADLINE IS THE THIRD TUESDAY OF THE PRECEDING MONTH.

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

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

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to

The Catholic Lighthouse - P.O. Box 4070 - Victoria, Texas 77903

2009 Bishop's Charities Banquet

Under the auspices of the Victoria Diocese Knights of St. Gregory the Great, the annual Bishop's Charities Banquet was held July 9, 2009, at the Victoria Country Club. The evening began with a social and then a buffet dinner. Rev. Bryan Heyer, parochial vicar of Our Lady of the Gulf Church in Port Lavaca, led the invocation. The Hon. Gaylan Duncan, past president of the KSG, was the master of ceremonies. He introduced the Hon. Jerry A. Hajek, president of the KSG, who presented a \$12,000 donation to Bishop David E. Fellhauer for his charities. Bishop Fellhauer gave a brief update on some of the activities of the diocese of the past 12 months, ranging from religious education, to Catholic schools, the Office of Child and Youth Protection, Youth and Young Adult Ministry and Vocations, and capping off with the announcement of the total pledged on the Diocesan Capital Campaign, which is \$13,484,800 with \$6,381,309 so far collected. The evening concluded with entertainment by Randy Faulk and benediction by Rev. Frank Lenz, pastor of Sts. Peter & Paul Church in Meyersville.



TRAVELING ANGEL AWARDED NEW HOME—Ed and Billie Southern of St. Michael Church in Cuero, pictured with Father Kirby Hlavaty, pastor, were named honored volunteers for 2009 by their parish at the annual parish festival. The Traveling Angel of St. Michael Church was presented to the couple in recognition and appreciation of their generous service and dedicated volunteerism. The angel will be at the Southern's home for a year.



EL CAMPO KNIGHTS ELECT OFFICERS—Knights of Columbus Council 2490 recently elected new officers. They are, back row from left: Leonard Goerig, trustee; AJ Hlavaty, trustee; Wayne Bard, warden; Greg Eggemeyer, chancellor; James Kocurek, outside guard; Steven Deiss, treasurer; Winston Baker, inside guard; front row, from left: Dennis Kana, recorder; Diocesan Deputy Alvin Kulcak; Grand Knight John Tumlinson; Father Augustine Asante, assistant chaplain; Deputy Grand Knight Michael Bolcik and District Deputy Kenneth Trochta. Not pictured: Jason Ryan, advocate; Don Warschak, financial secretary; and John Hrcir, trustee. Upcoming KC events include the council's Bar-B-Que Dinner Sunday, August 30, with a portion of the proceeds going to the St. Philip's School Teacher Supply Fund.

SHUTTIN' THE GATE

Editorial by Cynthia Brewer, editor



Truth Deniers ~ the Holocaust and Pope Pius XII's Sincerity

At the age of 77, Edith Sitwell, an English biographer, critic, novelist and poet, died a prophet. One of her famous quotes is "The public will believe anything, so long as it is not founded on truth." Her saying fulfilled prophecy with the production of the play "The Deputy," which opened in New York City, the same year she died.

Recently I went to a talk at the Holocaust Museum Houston given by Ms. Vivien Spitz, a court reporter on the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials. The topic was fascinating, disturbing and horrific, all at the same time.

While there, I met a very nice woman, perhaps in her 70s; we sat together during the talk and then spoke afterwards. She was Jewish, but had not gone through the Holocaust, although some of her family members had. We made great conversation, until I asked her if she knew of anyone who had been saved by Pope Pius XII's or the Vatican's efforts.

Her response set me back a bit and left me dumbfounded. She retorted something to the effect of, "He didn't do anything for the Jewish people. If anything, he did more harm than good."

The reason for my shock is that I have read many books in defense of Pope Pius XII's heroic, yet quietly, diplomatic efforts, which contributed to the saving of perhaps over 800,000 Jewish lives.

Books I've read which support this theory include: "The Myth of Hitler's Pope" by Rabbi David G. Dalin; "Did Pope Pius XII Help the Jews?" by Sister Margherita Marchione, Ph. D.; and "Hitler, the War and the Pope" by Ron Rychlak, Ph. D. Another great source of first-hand information (primary sources) can be found at Pave the Way Foundation (PTWF): www.pavethewayfoundation.org; go to the bottom of the site and click on the second set of "Obstacles."

How does a pope who is praised by Jews during and after WWII become vilified as doing nothing for them, 20 years later?

All three of the above authors, as well as the PTWF Web site, mention that since the opening of the play "The Deputy" in 1963 (New York City in 1964), which set out to malign Pope Pius XII's papacy, there has been friction between Jews and Catholics.

Where did this play, supposedly written by Rolf Hochhuth, a German, come from?

On National Review Online, I discovered a January 25, 2007, article titled "Moscow's Assault on the Vatican ~ The KGB made corrupting the Church a priority," by Lt. General Ion Mihai Pacepa.

Pacepa was the highest-ranking intelligence officer ever to have defected from the former Soviet bloc, defecting from Romania in July 1978.

The opening line of his article states, "The Soviet Union was never comfortable living in the same world with the Vatican." He explains first how the Kremlin acted to counter the Catholic Church's strong anti-Communism through the Soviet Union's initiative to eliminate Pope John Paul II and then through its collaboration of Poland's Communist-era political police with Polish priests.

He then goes into detail of how the Soviet Union planned to malign Pope Pius XII and the Vatican through the initiation of the play, "The Deputy." Pacepa found himself in the middle of the Kremlin's effort to portray Pope Pius XII as a coldhearted sympathizer of the Nazis via an espionage plot by Romanian agents under the ploy of reestablishing Romania's broken relationship with the Vatican. Pacepa tells the story for the first time in this article (the full story can be read by Googling: Moscow's Assault on the Vatican).

His article states, "In February 1960, Nikita Krushchev approved a super-secret plan for destroying the Vatican's moral authority in Western Europe." Pope Pius XII had died in 1958. Pacepa says that the KGB's latest slogan was, "Dead men cannot defend themselves."

"Its ('The Deputy') central thesis was that Pius II had supported Hitler and encouraged him to go ahead with the Jewish Holocaust." He continues, "It immediately ignited a huge controversy around Pius XII, who was depicted as a cold, heartless man more concerned about Vatican properties than about the fate of Hitler's victims."

Pacepa said the controversies caused by this play did not doom the Church as the Communists had wished; however, it did impart enough falsehood about Pope Pius XII to cause many people who had not even heard of the play to be convinced that Pope Pius was a "cold and evil man who hated the Jews and helped Hitler do away with them."

Gary Krupp, the Jewish founder and president of PTWF, shows an example of how the play has contributed to the friction between Jews and Catholics, "Throughout our research, particularly in the eyewitness accounts that we have captured on video, one glaring observation has come up over and over again. Those who actually lived through the brutality of the Nazis and

See *Truth Deniers*, p. 16

Seminary Burses

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

As of July 29, 2009

	TOTALS
— General Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$95,029.00
In memory of Wallace Bianchi by M/M Bob Bochat	50.00
In memory of Charlie J. Novosad by Cedar Grove Lutheran Church	20.00
Total	\$95,099.00
— Catholic Daughters of America Our Lady Queen of Peace Court #1374	
Previously reported	\$4,007.72
In honor of Catherine Drapela by CDA #1374	100.00
In memory of Lucille Kunschick by CDA #1374	100.00
Total	\$4,207.72
— Catholic Daughters Court of St. Ann #369 Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$6,868.99
In honor of 90th Anniversary of St. Ann by Carolyn Janak DD#12	10.00
In honor of M/M Louis Polasek's 50th anniversary by Henry & Carolyn Janak	20.00
Total	\$6,898.99
— Rev. Sean Donohue Seminary Burse #2	
Previously reported	\$4,124.36
In loving memory of Marshall Lamorie by M/M Bernard Rother	25.00
In honor of Rosie Aparicio's birthday by M/M Bernard Rother	25.00
Total	\$4,174.36
— Louis and Edith Hickl Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$5,020.00
In memory of deceased family members by Edith Hickl	2,000.00
Total	\$7,020.00
— Knights of Columbus Ganado Council #3204 Rev. Joseph Hybner Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$2,126.00
In memory of John P. Pustka by Arnold & Rosemary Riske	25.00
In memory of John P. Pustka by Jennifer & Barbara Riske	25.00
Total	\$2,176.00
— Knights of Militia Immaculata, St. Anthony Village of Bay City Burse	
Previously reported	\$100.00
In memory of Sr. Rosario Estrada by Militia of Immaculata	100.00
Total	\$200.00
— Rev. Msgr. Edward C. Bartsch Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$1,560.00
In memory of Sr. M. Dorothy Susil by Marcus Jasek	20.00
Gift to burse by Marcus Jasek	20.00
In honor of Msgr. Bartsch's 60th anniversary of the priesthood by: John & Nicole Laetsch Jr.	15.00
Leon & Frances Kubenka	25.00
Georgia Cerny	25.00
A Friend	100.00
Total	\$1,765.00
— Josephat R. Janak Seminary Burse #2	
Previously reported	\$1,498.77
In honor of Rev. Gary Janak's 21st anniversary of ordination by: Rose Marie Janak & Family	20.00
Margaret Kutac	20.00
The Frank Fikac Family	20.00
Total	\$1,558.77

— Rev. Celestino Say Seminary Burse (Catholic Life Ins.)	
Previously reported	\$2,360.00
In memory of Wallace Bianchi by M/M Ralph Lau	15.00
Gift to burse by M/M Don R. Jones	100.00
Gift to burse by Our Lady of Sorrows Church	100.00
In memory of A.J. & Agnes Kubena by M/M Daniel Kubena	100.00
Total	\$2,675.00
— Eddie & Olga Juroske and Floran & Laura Frnka Burse	
Previously reported	\$10,040.00
Gift to burse by Edmond and Joyce Juroske	5,000.00
Total	\$15,040.00
— Knights of Columbus Victoria Council #1329 Seminary Burse #3	
Previously reported	\$8,707.50
In memory of Gregory Fossati by K of C #1329	100.00
Total	\$8,807.50
— Knights of Columbus Holy Family Victoria Council #9088 Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$520.00
Donation from KC Holy Family Council #9088	200.00
Total	\$720.00
— Rev. Charles Kram Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$2,685.00
In honor of Msgr. Edward Bartsch's 60th anniversary of ordination	25.00
Total	\$2,710.00
— Rev. John C. Peters Seminary Burse #4	
Previously reported	\$8,114.00
In memory of Eugene and Eva Brent by M/M Daniel Kubena	100.00
Total	\$8,214.00
— Rev. Theophil Okruhlik & Rev. Vincent Verdame Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$9,197.89
In memory of Georgia Haun by Agnes & Clarissa Winans	100.00
Total	\$9,297.89
— St. John the Baptist Church, St. John In Memory of Rev. Brian Crookes Seminary Burse #2	
Previously reported	\$4,431.00
In memory of Julius Schramek by: Albert & Dorothy Olsovsky	10.00
Ervin & Bernice Neskora	10.00
Total	\$4,451.00
— Rev. Msgr. Benton A. Thurmond Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$1,125.00
In honor of Fr. Gabriel Bentil's silver jubilee of ordination by M/M John K. Marek & Family	50.00
Total	\$1,175.00

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

SEMINARY BURSES
DIOCESE OF VICTORIA
P. O. BOX 4070
VICTORIA, TX 77903

Who is a Priest?

Editor's note: The Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations has asked renowned women of faith to write reflections on their appreciation of the priesthood during this Year for Priests. The article also may be found on the USCCB Web site:

www.usccb.org/yearforpriests/articles.shtml

By Victoria M. Thorn

A priest is a man, clothed in tenderness, who speaks of God's mercy, who prophetically pronounces the truth, unpleasant though it might be and who reflects God's love to a hurting world. Sometimes he is shoring up souls and sometimes he is breaking up concrete. He's comforting the grieving and challenging the young. He's soothing the dying and blessing the newborn.

In the 25 years since I founded Project Rachel, the post-abortion healing ministry of the Church, I have witnessed firsthand the gift that priests are to the world. I have seen the heart of the priest repeatedly. It is generous, compassionate, willing to sacrifice for others.

At the inception of Project Rachel, when some thought post-abortion ministry was a hare-brained idea, the priests here in Milwaukee supported it, as did my bishop. As I was planning the training, one priest told me not to be disappointed because he didn't think any priests were going to come, but 60 priests came and generously embraced this new ministry of mercy. And 25 years later, those priests are still involved in the work. If there is anything I need, they are immediately willing to help.

Across the country many priests actively keep me and the ministry in prayer, recognizing that prayer is powerful and protective.

Several times I have received calls on our referral line from elderly women somewhere in the U.S. looking to reconcile an abortion loss from 40 or 50 years ago. They have said to me 'I can't ask my children to take me to confession because they will say 'Ma, you are old. What could you possibly need to confess?' And in every case, I was able to find a priest who would make a house call to ease the fears of an old woman preparing to die.

A priest who was preparing to leave the priesthood received a Project Rachel call the night before submitting his resignation to the bishop. But as he spoke with the woman, he knew he couldn't leave the priesthood until he had seen this process through with her. When he finished it, he tore up the letter because, he said, he had rediscovered the meaning of his priesthood in this sacramental encounter that set the woman free.

A delayed vocation seminarian I met through a God appointment asked me what

the most difficult part of my ministry was and I responded 'raising money.' This former businessman supported my ministry for several years while divesting himself of his earthly riches before ordination. How many lives were touched because of his incredible generosity?

It was the pastoral awareness of the bishops of this country, who, as confessors, recognized the pain of women who had had abortions, and called for a ministry of post-abortion healing in the first Pastoral Plan for Pro-Life Activities, issued shortly after abortion became the law of the land. And it is this pastoral heart that motivated bishops to personally call me

after the founding of the ministry to ask how they could make it happen in their diocese.

A woman who had been convinced by her doctor to abort a child with severe anomalies called me after the hospital had released her dead baby to her, as she

and her husband were grieving profoundly over this loss. The hospital had referred her to a chaplain, but he had been of little use, refusing to help them bury their child. I called an experienced Project Rachel priest and explained the circumstances to him. He was a canon lawyer with years of post-abortion experience. He went to the family, held them as they wept, gave their child a proper burial and soothed the wounds left by the insensitive chaplain, keeping them in the Church. She called to tell me what a gift he had been to them as he came into my office to thank me for the opportunity to minister to them.

A woman will often call after speaking to a priest she has been referred to, to tell me of her profound experience of God's love and mercy brought to her through the priest. She will say "Please tell the priests how grateful we are to them for what they have said and been ... the mercy and love of God made manifest, the wisdom of the Spirit speaking to our souls, indeed Father was Jesus with skin for me! Alter Christus made manifest!"

To the many Project Rachel priests in this country and to the multitudes of confessors who soothe a woman's terror, confront her despair, set her free of her sin and bring her home to the Lord and her lost children: Thank you from the depths of my heart. Without you, this ministry of Project Rachel would not exist! And on behalf of the multitudes of people who have been touched: THANK YOU! You change the world, one heart and soul at a time.

Vicki Thorn is the founder of Project Rachel Post-Abortion Ministry; <http://hopeafterabortion.com/>. She is also the founder and ongoing director of the National Office of Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing based in Milwaukee. Mrs. Thorn is an internationally renowned author and speaker on healing and reconciliation in the aftermath of abortion.



YLT Member, Courtney Janak ~ Valedictorian of El Campo High School

El CAMPO—More and more teens are turning their lives over to God and praying for guidance along their journey to adulthood. Many teens have realized the importance of prayer in their lives. One outstanding teen who lives for God and others is Courtney Janak, a recent graduate of El Campo High School.

Courtney is the daughter of Allan and Jeanie Janak and the sister of two supportive brothers, Brandon and Dustin. She is the granddaughter of proud grandparents Rose Marie Janak and Walter Gold and the niece of our very own, Father Gary Janak, pastor at St. Philip Catholic Church.



Courtney Janak

Courtney not only is dedicated to her Church and family, but she studied diligently and earned the title of Valedictorian in her Senior Class of 227 with a GPA of 5.482. In her farewell address at the graduation ceremony, she said, "I'd like to personally thank God for the blessings he has bestowed upon our senior class. He has been with us every moment, guiding and inspiring, and he joyfully shares this great moment with us today. So don't stop believing, because Jeremiah 29:11 states, 'For I know the plans I have for you, declares the LORD, plans to prosper you and not to

harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.'"

Courtney's strong spiritual attitude was supported greatly by St. Philip Catholic School where she attended from Kindergarten to 8th grade. It was there where she was influenced tremendously by the Catholic atmosphere of prayer and kindness, weekly Mass and by attempting to live St. Philip's motto of knowing, loving and serving God and others.

She was president of the National Honor Society during her senior year and was active in various sports during high school. She was named Fighting Heart for the track team for two years. Not only was Courtney blessed with strong academics and athleticism, but she also used her God-given talent for art and created several winning pictures.

She also participated in many clubs including the FCA (Fellowship of Christian Athletes) and helped with countless community activities. She received the Academic Excellence Award for 2008-09, the Best All-Around Senior Girl at ECHS for 2008-09, and the DAR (Daughters of the American Revolution) Good Citizen-

ship Award for 08-09.

Courtney served her school and Church every chance God gave her throughout her high school years. She belonged to the Youth Leadership Team (YLT) of the Victoria Diocese for four years through which she has helped to facilitate the High School Youth Spectaculars, the Junior High Fiestas and confirmation retreats. For four years, she has been on the staff at Camp David — a summer youth camp sponsored by the diocese — and helped others strengthen their spiritual life by serving on the team of the TEEN ACTS Retreat.

She attended the Rocky Mountain High Retreat in Colorado and participated in Steubenville South — a Catholic conference in Louisiana for high school youth, which is co-sponsored by the Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio.

Courtney plans on attending Texas A&M University in College Station where she will major in psychology. She is excited about becoming involved at St. Mary's Catholic Church and Student Center in College Station. She plans to be very active in one of the largest and most active campus ministries in the country.

On The Cutting Edge

By Sister Margaret Mary Lavonis, CSC



Falling in Love is Not Enough

There is much written about the importance of seriously discerning religious and priestly vocations. People spend a lot of time praying and looking at whether God is calling them to be a priest, brother, or sister. Some people take years trying to decide if religious life is their call and, if so, what congregation they are being called to join.

Yes, discernment about religious vocations is a crucial factor in decision-making, but it is not the only call that needs to be discerned.

Unfortunately, enough is not said about using the discernment process when making a decision about marriage. After all, entering in to the sacrament of marriage is not to be taken lightly. Even so, it has been my experience in my years of working with young adults, and others, that too many people are blinded by infatuation and all too often let their feelings get in the way of making good decisions. Strong emotions sometimes have a way of clouding our ability to reason and we may leap into situations and relationships without enough serious thought.

Although the "perfect" person probably won't come into your life, it is important to think about the values you want in a spouse. If you are an active Catholic and your faith means a lot to you, would it be wise to marry someone who doesn't believe in God or wants no part of church. Are you willing to take the whole responsibility of raising your children in the faith?

And if you want to be a parent and want to raise a family, does it seem logical to marry someone who does not share this same desire? Maybe the person says she does but you notice that she is not good with children, or a career seems more important to her than motherhood.

What about lifestyle preference? Do you observe that material goods seem more important than relationships or work or family?

Do you have some interests in common or does each of you have radically different ways of relaxing or having fun? Are you not willing to bend and do what the other likes now and then? Is television the center of your potential spouse's life? Does he or she spend little time communicating with you?

Do you love to cook but he would rather have a Big Mac? Do you love to eat but she only knows how to use a microwave and has no desire to learn to cook?

And how does each of you deal with money? Are you someone who watches what you spend, while the person who wants to marry you spends every dime or loves to gamble?

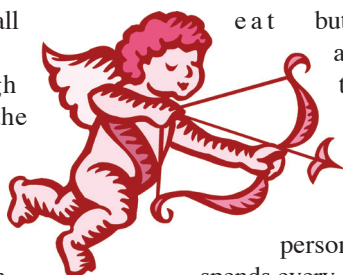
Had the person displayed some drinking or abusive behavior? Do you think these behaviors will change after you marry? (Just know this rarely happens and these behaviors often get worse!)

What are each of your views on forgiveness and faithfulness? Do either of you entertain the thought that if the other one is unfaithful the relationship ends?

If living close to your family is important to you, are you sure you want to marry someone whose career requires moving frequently?

These and many other questions are considered in the marriage preparation sessions with your priest or his designee. However, this preparation is done after the wedding date is set and the invitations have been sent out! These issues should be discussed long before one says yes to a marriage proposal.

Marriage is a sacrament and should not be taken lightly. A red flag should go up if the answers to the above questions do not satisfy you or trouble you. Remember, despite the broken relationships we see all around us, marriage is forever. It is a covenant of everlasting love. Pray for wisdom and the graces needed to make a good decision. And seek a good counselor.



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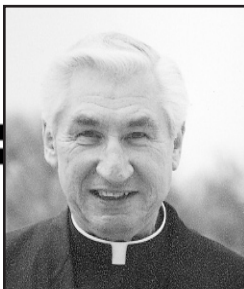
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FAITH POINT

By Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner
Vicar General, Diocese of Victoria
For past articles: www.stmaryvic.com/desk.htm



The Abortion Administration

If President Obama has his way he will go down in history as the Abortion President.

In his first week in office he issued an executive order overturning a policy in place since the Reagan administration, which forbade foreign aid from going to organizations that funded or furnished abortions.

He has repeated a mantra about reducing the number of abortions. His methodology is questionable. His party wants public funds for abortions in the District of Columbia, something that was forbidden for many years by the Dornan Amendment. According to the Guttmacher Institute, fully 41% of pregnancies in the District of Columbia now end in abortion. How subsidizing abortions with tax funds is going to diminish their number is a mystery that only he understands. His words are directly contradicted by his deeds.

At the United Nations, the Obama administration continued to push for increasing access to legal abortion around the world. The US resolution calls for "universal access" to "sexual and reproductive health services including universal access to family planning."

The sticking point is the word "services" in the context of "reproductive health." In 2001 in negotiations on the Child Convention, a Canadian delegate blurted out, "Of course everyone knows 'services' means abortion." In 2005 the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) joined with pro-abortion lobby groups to call for "universal access to health and reproductive health services and programmes." They were defeated in large part by Bush-appointed US delegates who insisted that none of the terms related to health be interpreted to include abortion.

In April, Secretary of State Hillary Clinton told a US House subcommittee, "We [the Obama administration] happen to think that family planning is an important part of health, and reproductive health includes access to abortion that I believe should be safe, and rare." In this statement, Clinton contradicted the agreement reached at the Cairo Conference, which said that abortion can never be used as a part of family planning.

Obama told Pope Benedict XVI in his visit that he was committed to reducing the number of abortions. Yet his administration is helping Democrats craft a health care bill that one House Republican says amounts to the Freedom of Choice Act by stealth. You may recall in a previous article in this space that the Freedom of Choice Act is neither free nor does it give choices. Among other things it requires

public funding of abortion and eliminates conscience protection for health providers who do not wish to participate in abortions. It also nullifies state laws concerning parental notification and late-term abortions. "Unless amended, ...[the current] bill seeks to mandate abortion coverage for nearly every insurance plan in America," said Rep. Jean Schmidt (R-Ohio). "Every American will be forced to pay for these service, whether through premiums or tax rates."

In the current draft in the House, the bill's health care coverage requirements do not specifically mention abortion. It sounds harmless and it is meant to.

But history's "most open and transparent" administration can effectively grant abortion "rights" by not mentioning the word. House Republicans say precedent shows that courts and administrative agencies assume abortion is included unless explicitly prohibited in the legislation. When Congress remains silent, it allows courts and agencies to "mandate abortion" as Rep. Joe Pitts (R-Pa) said in a statement. It happened in the federal Medicaid statute, which required the famous Hyde Amendment to stop federal funding of abortions through Medicaid.

Basically, as Rep. Chris Smith (R-N.J.) put it, if you pay premiums or taxes, you'll be funding abortion. So, Obama plans to reduce the number of abortions by making them cheaper, more accessible, and penalizing insurance companies and employers that choose not to include abortion in their health care coverage. Under the current draft of the bill, if individuals decide they want something other than the minimum benefit standards set by the administration, they have to pay a 2% fee. Employers pay an 8% fee.

The cost of abortions alone often reduces the number performed. According to Planned Parenthood's Web site, an abortion costs anywhere from \$350 to \$900 in the first trimester, and are probably more expensive in the second and third trimesters. Apparently Obama believes that lowering the cost of something means it will become more rare. This is voodoo economics with a vengeance.

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) is drawing condemnation from pro-life advocates who say it ignored the majority of Americans who opposed the proposed guidelines that would implement President Barack Obama's decision to force taxpayers to fund embryonic stem cell research. The president dissolved the President's Council on Bioethics when ten of its eighteen members criticized his new guidelines. NIH released the new guide-

lines, which not only allow the destruction of "leftover" human embryos, but could open the door to their purposeful creation and destruction.

The Obama administration is ignoring the comments it solicited. Acting NIH director Raynard Kington told *The Hill*, a newspaper that covers Congress, that a strong majority of the comments were against embryonic stem cell research funding. The agency received more than 49,000 comments from the public after issuing a draft of its guidelines in April, Kington explained, and he noted 30,000 came from people who opposed the immoral research. Kington admitted that NIH ignored such comments as "unresponsive." "We actually did not ask the public whether we should fund research on human embryonic stem cells. We asked the public how we should fund human embryonic stem cell research," Kington told *The Hill*. Richard M. Doerflinger, associate director of the US bishops' Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities stated that it was "disingenuous (for Kington) to say that comments criticizing the guidelines overall were to be ignored."

Doerflinger said 61% of Americans who oppose embryonic stem cell research did not want to be forced to pay for research that has never helped a single person.

Meanwhile, Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council blasted the guidelines as immoral and unethical. "Embryonic stem cell research requires dissecting and com-

moditizing the youngest, most vulnerable humans." "Instead of funding more life-destroying experiments, federal funding should go toward life-saving treatments and clinical trials using adult stem cells, which are on the cutting edge of treating patients for diabetes, spinal cord injury, heart disease, multiple sclerosis, and other diseases," he concluded.

Deirdre A. McQuade, assistant director for policy and communications in the pro-life secretariat of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, explained, "The new guidelines demanded by the U.S. President promote poor science, reflect bad health care policy, and do nothing to fund treatments with adult stem cells that are providing documented benefits for suffering patients." "The guidelines implement a plan that will force taxpayers to foot the bill for research that involves human destruction, not healing."

So, it appears that on every possible front, Obama and the Democrats are determined to implement the Culture of Death. Elections have consequences. When you elect legislators who favor abortion you get publicly funded abortions. If these laws are still under consideration when this is printed, by all means, write your elected representatives asking them to oppose them. It would have been better, however, had Catholics followed the Bishops' guidance on Responsible Citizenship. Then the pro-abortion candidates would never have been elected.

Cardinal Rigali protests move to fund abortion in DC

WASHINGTON — Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, chair of the Committee on Pro-Life Activities for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, wrote to members of the House Appropriations Committee June 30 urging them not to fund abortions in the District of Columbia. Last week the House subcommittee considering the Financial Services appropriations bill for 2010 voted to permit direct public funding of abortion in the nation's capital. Cardinal Rigali said that the subcommittee's action "effectively nullifies the Dornan amendment," which for a total of 18 years has prevented public funding of elective abortions in the District.

He said this move, "presumably the first step in a broader effort to restore such funding throughout the federal government," is misguided for three reasons.

"First, public funding of abortion is rejected by the American people, as numerous surveys of public opinion have shown," Cardinal Rigali said. He also noted that Catholics recently sent "tens of millions of postcards to their elected representatives in Congress, opposing... any weakening or reversal of current appropriations riders on abortion."

"Second, no lawmaker or Administration can support such a policy change and still claim to support 'reducing abortions.' The evidence is overwhelming, and universally recognized by groups on all sides of the abortion issue, that the availability of public funds for abortion greatly increases abortions," the bishops' Pro-Life

Committee Chair argued. "Third, this action takes place as Congress is working to win broad support for a much-needed major reform of our health care system," Cardinal Rigali noted. "This is the worst of all possible times to be injecting the divisive issue of public abortion funding into the debate on government health policy."

Cardinal Rigali concluded by urging the full House Appropriations Committee to reverse the subcommittee's action and retain the funding ban in current law. The full text of his letter is available at: www.usccb.org/prolife/Rigali-Dornan-Amendment-2009.pdf

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CHURCH TITHES FESTIVAL EARNINGS

—On June 14, 2009, the Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish, Hostyn, presented a check of \$1,100 to Jennifer Boening and Sally Garrett with the Child Passenger Safety Program and \$1,100 to Sharon Muzny, representing the Fayette County EMS. This money will enable the group to purchase car seats for those families that can't afford one or to replace those involved in car accidents. The donations represent 10 percent of the profit from the parish's May '09 Picnic. Pictured is Jerry Zezula, president of the Hostyn Parish Council, awarding the check, along with a small group of parishioners.



BAY CITY ORGANIZATIONS DONATE TO MEDICAL CENTER—Both the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Resurrection No. 2054 and the Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas, Our Lady of Snows, presented the Matagorda Regional Medical Center Foundation with a \$250 check. Each donation will purchase a commemorative brick in the Healing Garden of the new Matagorda Regional Medical Center, scheduled to receive patient transfers from the old facility on July 30. Local CDA officers pictured with Matagorda RMCF representative Tiffany Foltyn (second from right) are from left, Margaret Hicks, Jeanette Pustka and Dorothy Saha (r.).

Partners in Mission: Proclaiming His Presence Together

Continued from p. 1

founding with the Sisters. With gratitude we are looking forward to sharing with our Partners and the larger community our Charism and Incarnational Spirituality. Our 17th century foundress, Jeanne Chezard de Matel, continues to call her Sisters to this kind of sharing.

This was an historic gathering and we, the Sisters, came together the next day and reflected again on the topics discussed with our Partners in Mission. What might God be calling us to on our "Journey of Refounding?" Among our many reflections were the following:

We are being called to a deeper contemplative life – living the Gospel and Beatitudes and being women of loving service, compassion, and joyful witness. We are being called to invite the laity to participate spiritually and socially with us on our journey. We are being called to develop our Amor Meus Spirituality Center to reach out to the spiritual needs of the Church. (Note: You may wonder what the words "Amor Meus" mean. They are Latin words meaning "My Love". Jesus told our foundress, Jeanne de Matel, that

He wanted to rest on our hearts and on our hearts is an emblem with a heart on which are the words AMOR MEUS.)

We are being called to offer spiritual opportunities to families: family-days, retreats, spiritual experiences, counseling and spiritual direction. We are being called to reach out and invite our Partners in Mission to participate in a Mission Effectiveness process with their families. We are being called to live our lives as a crystal vase, a life of relationship and intimacy with the Incarnate Word. Because of that relationship with God, with the Eucharist, we can have that faithfulness in reflecting the image of Jesus and be that "Crystal Vase" that their foundress calls us to be.

We are being challenged to expand our search for vocations and develop a lay vocation board; we are being challenged to share our Charism and Mission with the larger community.

With all of this valuable input, we are now beginning to consider ways in which all our Partners in Mission might become more involved in our Charism and Mission.

SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



Time and Space for Prayer

"Location, location, location" is a mantra that applies not only to real estate sales prospects, but also to prospects of successful personal prayer. In order to develop patterns that are conducive to deep prayer experiences, it is helpful to establish times and places for personal prayer.

As to the time for personal prayer, it is important to choose prayer times that match one's personality and one's human limitations. I, personally, prefer individual prayer early in the morning, even if it means that I have to rise earlier than I would like to. If I plan to pray later in the day, there is always the danger that things that need attention will "come up" and my time of prayer will be postponed until a more opportune time. However, that opportune time keeps getting put off until the end of the day. By that time, I am so tired that I can no longer focus on prayer, so God is receiving my second-rate efforts at prayer. Therefore, I realize that it is important that I plan my day so that God truly comes first.

I have been edified by persons who tell me how they ensure personal prayer time: before their children get up, while they're driving to work (not a good idea in heavy traffic) and marveling at the wonders of creation about them, during their lunch hour, or after their children are all tucked in for the night. I admire these folks for having succeeded in anchoring their lives in communication with God.

As to prayer space, again it is important to choose prayer spaces that match our personality and our human limitations. I

have several favorite places that promote a prayerful environment. In pre-air conditioning days, one of my favorite prayer sites was inside a church with open windows. I was in the presence of Jesus in the tabernacle and at the same time I was reminded of God's awesome acts of creation by the singing of the birds outside and the cooling breeze that floated in through the open window. I thought that I was in the best of two worlds.

Now, with air conditioning, I no longer have that possibility, so I have had to adapt my prayer space, so I like to spend at least

a little of my prayer time walking outdoors early in the morning so that I can ground myself in the awareness of being a part of the overarching reality of God's role in creation. However, currently the attractiveness of the outdoors is diminished by the warm temperature so my time there is curtailed during the summer months.

The focal point of my indoor prayer space is a small replica of an icon of our foundress, Jeanne de Matel. In the

icon, Jeanne is focused on an illustration of the Trinity so I try to combine my prayer with hers as I ask her to intercede for me. As her eyes are focused on God, she extends her hand holding a small loaf of bread, a symbol that beckons me to share my "bread" with others. I find this prayer space a great aid in personal prayer as I strive to achieve a deeper level of communication with God. I hope this example will help you, the reader, to consider time and space in your efforts to deepen your personal prayer.



SWEET HOME LEGION RECEIVES DONATION—St. Ludmila's KJZT No.12 of Sweet Home recently presented a check to the Sweet Home American Legion No. 571

air-conditioning fund. Post Commander Harvey Matusek is presented the check from St. Ludmila KJZT members Mary Knezek, Lynette Havel, Ruby Orsak (KJZT president), and Mary Ann Matusek.



Youth Calendar of Events

August 29 — Altar Server Appreciation at Splashway in Sheraton

September 3 — Theology at the Well – Chili's in Victoria – Topic tonight: "Wrestling with Suffering and Death" – Father Stan Deboe

September 17 — Theology at the Well – Chili's in Victoria – Topic tonight: "Discovering the Holy Spirit" – Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS

October 1 — Theology at the Well – Chili's in Victoria – Topic tonight: "Do Apologists Apologize" – Father Tommy Chen ; Read more on page 3.

October 23-25 — Archdiocesan Conference for Catholic Youth Ministers in Houston

November 1-12 — NET Team in the Diocese

November 3 — Open – Contact the Youth Office

November 6 — Open – Contact the Youth Office

November 19-22 — National Catholic Youth Conference in Kansas City, Missouri

For more information on any of these events, please contact:
Debbie Vanelli or José Ortega at the Office of Youth Ministry
at (361) 573-0828 ext. 32 / ext. 50 or e-mail at
dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org or jortega@victoriadiocese.org
Web site: www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice

Bloomington CDA provides scholarships

BLOOMINGTON—Carol Sutton, Regent of CDA Court #2494, St. Patrick's of Bloomington, is pleased to announce the following scholarship recipients: Ms. Natasha Ramirez, College Scholarship of \$300.00. Ms. Ramirez is attending St. Mary's University in San Antonio and is the daughter of Leon and Debbie Ramirez of Bloomington. Two high school graduates receiving \$300 each are Mr. Ernest Gil Adame who attended Victoria High School, is the son of Ernest G. Adame Sr. and Rita Adame of Placedo, and Mr. Robert Jesus Sanchez, who attended Bloomington High School, and is the son of John and Natalie Sanchez of Victoria.

CDA Court #2494 has been able to award scholarships since it formed November 2001 under the prior guidance of Father Matthew Huehlefeld. Awarding these scholarships is just a small way we give back to our community, stated Carol Sutton. It's truly rewarding to see our young students excel themselves by continuing their education. This was our first year to include a college scholarship in addition to the two high school graduate

scholarships as we felt a need to assist a college student already enrolled.

Scholarship applications are usually available and passed out to the local high schools in March of each year with a listing of qualifications. They can also be obtained from any CDA Court #2494 officer and are also placed in the back of the church. Applicants are reviewed by the end of April and announced in May of each year.

Members of Court #2494 continue to work together throughout the year on fund-raiser projects. Ms. Sutton said that without their largest project, the Tamale Fund-raiser, we would not be able to provide these scholarships. We look forward to continuing our projects with everyone's support.

If you are interested in joining our CDA Court #2494, please feel free to attend one of our meetings; we meet the second Tuesday of the month, except in July and August. Our next meeting is scheduled for September 8 in the Heritage Room at St. Patrick's Catholic Church.



DISCIPLESHIP WEEK—For the 11th year in a row, the Diocese of Victoria has been selected as one of five sites in the United States to host Discipleship Week (D-week). Alumni from NET ministries facilitate this retreat designed to give high school young people a deeper understanding of the Catholic Faith. This year 100 young people attended this retreat, June 22 – 25.



ROCKY MOUNTAIN HIGH 2009—Fifty high school young people and adults from throughout the diocese attended the 24th annual retreat in Pagosa Springs, Colorado. They "braved" the 60-degree heat in beautiful Pagosa Springs July 4-12, 2009! This year, the retreat was focused on Catholic Social Teaching. Participants had the opportunity to explore in depth the various aspects and implications of the seven principles of that teaching, which included: Life and Dignity of the Human Person; Call to Family, Community, and Participation; Rights and Responsibilities; Option for the Poor and Vulnerable; The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers; Solidarity; and Care for God's Creation.



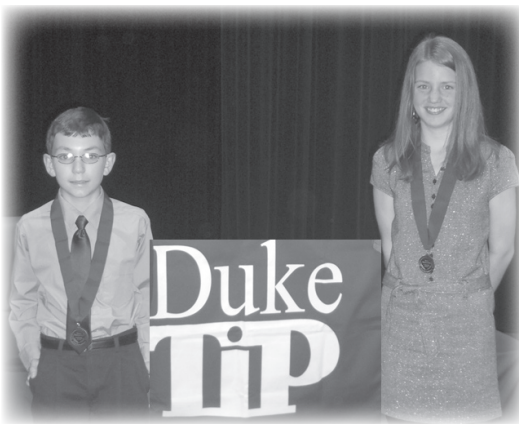
CAMP DAVID JUNIOR HIGH—120 young people from throughout the diocese participated in session I, June 14 – 16, and II, June 17 – 19, at this year's Junior High Camp David. The campers spent their time focusing on community building, learning what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ in today's world, participating in various prayer experiences and generally having lots of fun!



SACRED HEART STUDENTS RECEIVE STATE RECOGNITION—Two Sacred Heart Catholic School 7th grade students, Joshua Blaschke and Megan Harper, attended the 2009 Texas Recognition Ceremony honoring students in the 7th Grade Talent Search with high SAT or ACT scores.

The ceremony was held at Trinity University in San Antonio. The Duke University Talent Identification Program's (Duke TIP) 7th Grade Talent Search identifies students in sixteen states in the Southeast, Midwest, and Southwest who have scored in the 95th percentile on the Stanford Achievement Test.

As part of the program, these academically talented students take above-level college entrance exams (SAT or ACT) to learn more about their abilities. This year, of the 67,438 participants nationally, 24,204 students (36%) have been invited to attend State Recognition Ceremonies. Megan is the daughter of Tommy and Angela Harper and Joshua is the son of Christopher "Scott" and Diane Blaschke.



3RD PLACE STATE CDA PHOTOGRAPHY AWARDED TO VICTORIAN—Rachel Grahmann won 3rd place in photography in the Texas Catholic Daughters of the Americas State Education Contest. She was presented the award at Court St. Ann No. 369's June meeting. Rachel attends St. Joseph High School in Victoria. She is shown with Geraldine Jurica, CDA education contest chairperson, and Court St. Ann Regent Grace Brown, all of Victoria.

North Carolina church spearheads Catholic athlete group for teens

By Katie Moore
Catholic News Service

HUNTERSVILLE, N.C. (CNS) — A North Carolina Catholic parish is providing a place for high school athletes to grow in their faith by adapting a national college program for their age group.

Catholic Athletes for Christ is a national organization that provides a network of sports-oriented clergy and laypeople to serve Catholic athletes, coaches and staff members at all levels of sport in the practice of their faith.

Last summer St. Mark Church in Huntersville launched the first high school version of the program.

Ray McKenna, a Washington attorney who has been involved in sports-related ministry for many years, founded the national group in response to Pope John Paul II's call to evangelize the world of sports and the establishment in August 2004 of the Pontifical Council for the Laity's office for church and sport.

At St. Mark, Father Patrick Hoare, parochial vicar, and parishioner Jean Whelan decided to start the Catholic athletes group as another way for teens to get involved at the parish. Life Teen youth ministry had been successful, but Father Hoare and Whelan said they felt there were youth at the parish who still were not being served.

Through prayer and research, they came across the Catholic Athletes for Christ Web site: www.catholicathletesforchrist.com. After contacting the organization, they received permission to tailor its existing college formula to meet the needs of the high school athletes.

"For many high school students, athletics is an important part of the high school experience," Father Hoare told The Catholic News & Herald, newspaper of the Charlotte Diocese. "We are taking something they love and tying it in with faith."

The group meets every other Wednesday during the summer.

Their meetings begin and end with prayer and always include an athletic activity followed by a faith-sharing talk.

About 12 adult facilitators are on hand to supervise activities. A teen advisory board made up of rising high school juniors and seniors attend the planning meetings and offer suggestions on how to develop the program.

"They tell us what's working," said Whelan, adding that it was teen advisory board members who suggested the group devote one meeting to eucharistic adoration.

Whelan's daughter, Mary Kathryn, a member of the Charlotte Catholic High School women's soccer team, said the benefits of the program vary for each participant.

"Hopefully they get fitness, but also learn lessons about how to deal with stuff in high school and life in general," said the rising senior at Charlotte Catholic High School and advisory board member.

She said the program has helped her approach soccer with a more charitable attitude.

"Sometimes when I'm playing soccer I get aggravated and want to do things that are not very Christian-like," she said. "This just helps me remember that we have got to stay in our faith."

At a recent meeting, after indoor and outdoor basketball, ultimate Frisbee and a cookout, Charlotte Catholic High School athletic director Kevin Christmas addressed the teen athletes, saying he was inspired by the fellowship he saw among them.

He talked to them about the importance of finding time for God each day, something he does by attending daily Mass.

"If we can't give 20 minutes of our day to God, then there is something wrong in our lives," he said.

His advice to the athletes: "Believe in yourself, believe in your faith, and I don't think you have anything to worry about."



ST. PHILIP RECEIVES KJT DONATION—KJT Society #84 of El Campo recently made a donation to St. Philip Catholic School in El Campo. The amount of the donation was \$1,000.00 with the money going towards the school computer program. Society 84 raised the money by having a Thanksgiving Bake Sale at St. Philip's Church after the weekend Masses, along with a matching grant from the State KJT. On hand for the presentation were the officers of El Campo Society 84, (back row, l. to r.) Leonard Leopold, treasurer; Edward Dorotik, secretary; Robert Leopold, president; St. Philip's Principal Gwen Edwards and State KJT Director Elizabeth Mokry; front row: Hannah Sutton, Michelle Sutton, Kayelyn Korenek (students at St. Philip, as well as members of Society 84).



ELEMENTARY SESSION OF CAMP DAVID—Elementary students spent an action-packed day, June 17, looking at God in nature, doing craft activities and making new friends. Seventy-five students participated this year from throughout the diocese.

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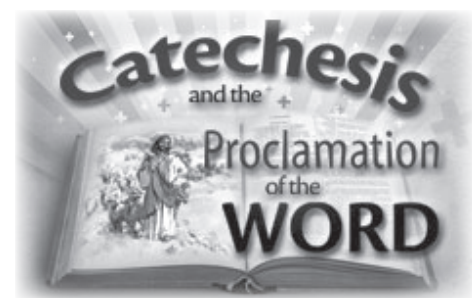


*Annual Percentage Yields as of 08/05/09. Rates subject to change without notice. Minimum balance to open an account and obtain the stated APY is \$500. Rates apply to deposits less than \$100,000. A penalty may be imposed for a withdrawal prior to maturity. Certificates automatically renew at the then-current rate for the same term.

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CATECHESIS



Diocese of Victoria Twenty-second Annual Conference for Catechesis and Ministry



Workshops At A Glance

- The Spirituality of the Catechist: Speak Lord, Your Servant is Listening
- Preparing Parents for Their Children's First Reconciliation and First Communion
- Theology of the Body
- So You are a New Catechist...or Maybe Not so new...
- Understanding the Mass: There's More to it than Plopping in the Pew!
- The Catholic Church and the Death Penalty
- RCIA 101
- The Justice for Immigrants Campaign: An Effort of the United States Bishops
- The Gospel of Luke: Message of Hope and Compassion
- Strengthening Marriage and Family Education across the Lifecycle
- Proclaiming the Word
- Protecting Children Online
- The Missionary Life of St. Paul
- The Holy Land Cries out for Peace and Justice
- Selecting Music for the Liturgy
- The Sacrament of Marriage: Implications for Catechetical Ministry
- Answering the Call to Service
- La Campaña de Justicia para los Inmigrantes:
Un Esfuerzo de los Obispos de los Estados Unidos
- And many more...

Saturday, September 26, 2009

Holy Family, Victoria

Schedule of the Day

7:30 - 9:00 a.m.	Registration
9:00 - 9:30 a.m.	Welcome & Opening Prayer
9:30 - 10:30 a.m.	Keynote: Rev. Stanley DeBoe
10:30 - 11:00 a.m.	Visit Exhibits
11:00 - 12:15 p.m.	Round A
12:15 - 1:30 p.m.	Lunch and Visit Exhibits
1:30 - 2:45 p.m.	Round B
2:45 - 3:00 p.m.	Break: Last time to visit Exhibits
3:00 - 4:00 p.m.	Round C
4:15 p.m.	Liturgy Bishop Fellhauer, presiding

The XXII Annual Conference will begin with a keynote presentation by Rev. Stanley DeBoe, O.S.S.T. Conference participants can choose from over 40 workshops throughout the day. Catholic publishers and vendors will also be available at the one-day conference. Contact the catechetical office at 361-573-0828 or email calvarez@victoriadiocese.org for more information.

DIOCESE CONTINUES TO GO HIGH TECH—Deacon John McCourt recently held the first long-distance-learning class hosted by the Hostyn Parish via the Internet. Deacon McCourt was able to converse with participants in Port Lavaca



and Victoria. The Liturgy Plus class was broadcast on June 9-10 from 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. and again on Monday, June 15, from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Attendees were from several local parishes at each site. Hostyn had participated in the Distance Learning Class in the fall of '08 and spring '09 classes, but this was the first time the class originated in Hostyn.

The Organization of Catechetical Leadership is co-sponsoring a retreat

*Our Lives Proclaim the Word
Retreat for Parish Catechetical
Leaders and Catechists
August 21-22, 2009
Spiritual Renewal Center*

Retreat director Anna Huth, M.Div, Education and Formation Program Coordinator for the Southwest Region of Catholic Relief Services will lead this overnight retreat that will give par-



Anna Huth

ticipants time to be immersed in God's Word and to reflect on how they proclaim the Word in their lives. Throughout the retreat, particular emphasis will be placed on our solidarity as human beings created and loved by God.

Sessions will include prayer services, presentations and guided reflections. The retreat will conclude with Mass with Bishop David E. Fellhauer. The OCL Retreat flyer is available at www.victoriadiocese.org. Call (361) 573-0828 for more information.

New Testament II The Gospel of John and the Book of Revelation



The Pastoral Institute will continue to offer the adult extended classes at the chancery in Victoria, and at Holy Rosary in Hostyn via distance learning. Beginning Tuesday, August 25, Sister Digna Vela will teach

The Gospel of John & The Book of Revelation at 9:15 a.m. and again at 7:00 p.m. During the six-week course, participants will discover why the Gospel of John is so different from the other Gospels and whether or not the Book of Revelation truly predicts the end of the world. The fee for this six-week course is \$15. Call (361) 573-0828 or e-mail bparkan@victoriadiocese.org to register for the class. You can also register on the first day of class.



Class Schedule
Session One: Aug. 25
Session Two: Sept. 1
Session Three: Sept. 8
No class Sept. 15, 2009
Session Four: Sept. 22 (p.m.)
Session Four: Sept. 23 (a.m.)
Session Five: Sept. 29
Session Six: Oct. 6

Reporting Abuse

If you or someone you know has been sexually abused by a member of the clergy or other church personnel, you can register a complaint.

- Call the Chancery at (361) 573-0828 and ask to speak with the bishop or the chancellor;
- or
- Call Rev. Gary Janak (979) 543-3770 or Sr. Emilie Eilers (361) 575-7111, Coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach;
- or
- Write to: Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer
Diocese of Victoria
P.O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903
Mark your letter "Personal and Confidential"

We will also help you bring your concerns to Church officials outside the diocese if the abuse occurred elsewhere and you now reside in the Diocese of Victoria.

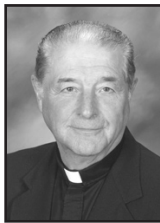
If you are unsure about bringing a complaint or would like further information, please contact: Rev. Gary Janak at (979) 543-3770.

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

Reporting Child Abuse • Hotline
1-800-252-5400

Question Corner

By Father John Dietzen
Catholic News Service



Becoming a more 'authentic' Catholic

Q. Can the Catholic Church ordain homosexual men to the priesthood?

Some fellow parishioners say, What's the difference? If they do their job and remain celibate it's not a matter of contention. Others say it is an issue because the person is not whole, is not reconciled in this important part of his personality, has set God aside in his life and would be a negative example blocking God's grace for others. What is your answer? (New York)

A. First, I need to say that this second description and judgment of homosexuality in men (or women) is questionable, to put it mildly. Surely it does not reflect the attitude of the church, which teaches that homosexuals do not choose their condition and must be accepted with respect, compassion and sensitivity, and without discrimination (Catechism of the Catholic Church, No. 2358).

To declare that homosexual persons have set aside God, are not reconciled in their physical makeup and block God's grace to others is at best a rash judgment and, furthermore, does not fit experience.

In my 55 years as a priest I've known and worked with a number of homosexual priests. To my knowledge they were not sexually active, and nearly all have been good, prayerful, effective and dedicated in their ministry.

To answer your question, a Vatican instruction on admission of men with homosexual tendencies to seminaries and holy orders, dated Nov. 29, 2005, prohibits men with "deep-seated homosexual tendencies" from entering the seminary. The precise meaning of this phrase was not spelled out, apparently leaving it to bishops and seminary authorities to interpret it more specifically. And many have done so.

According to the German bishops' conference, for example, such "deep-seated" tendencies are those which can lead to situations that gravely hamper a correct relationship with men and women. The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the bishops' conference of Switzerland, the president of the Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and others, understood it rather along the same lines.

Some individual bishops seem to have taken a narrower view. It will require time and experience to learn how the prohibition should work out in practice.

Q. Our son just finished his first year of college at what we were told is one of the "real" Catholic colleges in the country.

He has been surprised, however, by some of the groups he is urged to participate in to be a more authentic Catholic. Frankly, we share his confusion. Some make us hesitant, especially one, which is allegedly tied to appearances of the Blessed Virgin.

Another experience that gives him,

and us, some concern is the claim that no one can be a "good and loyal Catholic" except their way. Sometimes they sound very narrow. Have you any suggestions on how to deal with this? (Michigan)

A. Your concern is a healthy one, and, as my mail reveals, is shared by a number of faithful and well-informed Catholics.

Good common sense is always the first judge in such dilemmas. After that, Catholic tradition suggests some solid basic guidelines.

It is always good to remember that ours is a big church. In all its 2,000 years it has been at its best and most alive when there has been room for a whole rainbow of ways for people to pray, to think, to live out their faith and grow in holiness.

Just because something does not appeal to us, doesn't necessarily mean there is something bad about it. Without respect for, and willingness to explore, honest varieties within the appropriate framework of faith, the church stagnates, intellectually and spiritually.

One danger sign to look for is any position that rejects out-of-hand what the church is teaching today. We've experienced sad examples in the past few decades of individuals and larger Catholic factions who refuse to accept any developments in the church since the Second Vatican Council.

In their opinion, present teachings and practices conflict with what they view as the "golden age" of Pope Pius V and the Council of Trent in the 16th century, and therefore deserve no respect or recognition by authentic Catholics.

We believe, on the contrary, that the same Holy Spirit who was with the church in the past is with it now.

Another warning flag is the claim that this or that faction constitutes the "elite" in

the church. They are the genuine orthodox Catholics. Anyone not with them, or who sees things differently, is at best a second-level Catholic.

These types of movements (one might even call them cults) have been around since the beginning of Christianity. We read about them already in the New Testament.

Exaggerated claims like this seem to be a common temptation for enthusiastic religious associations. In my 55 years as a priest I have led or participated in dozens of spiritual and apostolic movements. All have accomplished much good.

Nearly every one, however, went through a stage when it was tempted to consider itself something like an eighth sacrament, to assume that no one is a genuine, full Catholic until he or she has done their "thing" or seen things their way.

Naturally, groups and societies who pursue this course always have the highest motives, to "purify" the church and so on. But unchecked, such attitudes often lead to gross arrogance and intolerance. When sufficiently large, they can cause enormous personal pain, persecution and hurt to the body of Christ. But still they surface every generation or so.

The eucharistic liturgy, the sacraments, the Gospels, intelligent efforts to grow in knowledge of the faith, and the basic prayer and spiritual exercises contained in continuous Christian tradition still suffice to make good, loyal and faithful Catholic Christians.

Finally, the best criterion of all in evaluating any phenomena in the church is the old standby: What are their fruits, their results? Do they bring to the Catholic community (parish, diocese, universal church) greater hope, unity, charity, kindness, peace and other fruits of the Spirit listed by St. Paul in Galatians 5:22-23?

Or do they foment mistrust, secretiveness, elitism, hostility and bickering, division and oppression?

You can guess which ones St. Paul and Christian tradition recommend.

(Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612, or e-mail: jjdietzen@aol.com.)

In Memory of ...

Mary R. Luhrs
January 18, 1938 – July 15, 2009



Mary R. Luhrs was a wonderful example of being a disciple of Jesus. At her funeral, one of her nephews said that she always wanted others to know about Jesus. Her years of service to the religious education program at St. Michael's was just one example of how she tried to bring the "good news" of Jesus to the catechists, parents, and students alike.

For several years, Mary served as coordinator of the religious education program and as a catechist at St. Michael Parish in Weimar. She prepared well for these ministries by attending catechetical and theological classes, retreats, and catechetical leader training sessions. In 2002 Mary received the Pastoral Institute Extended program certificate for completing 144 clock hours of theological study. During this time, she also took catechetical classes, and in 2006, after completing the hours necessary for the P.I. Extended program again, she also received the Advanced Catechist certificate. She seemed never to tire and was always willing and eager to learn more about the Catholic faith and traditions. In 2007, Mary was among those honored at the annual catechetical conference for serving as a catechist for more than twenty years.

At the onset of Disciples in Mission, Mary received training and participated in the small group faith-sharing process. She believed so strongly in sharing her faith that she continued with her small group each Lent with Disciples on the Journey.

Mary and her husband, Richard, also served on numerous committees and participated in various meetings offered by the catechetical office. Each time Mary was invited to be a part of a committee, she responded with a "yes." She was a member of the Organization of Catechetical Leadership and served as vice-president from 2002 – 2004. It was a blessing to have Mary R. Luhrs a part of committees, conferences, and retreats, as well as workshops and meetings. She will be missed. Mary was a fine example of a catechetical leader.

A Prayer for a Lately Deceased Person

Absolve, we beseech Thee, O Lord,
the soul of Thy servant N...,
from every bond of sin,
that being raised in the glory of the resurrection,
he may be refreshed among the
Saints and Elect.
Through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



1ST Indian Open Golf Classic Saturday, September 5

Hallettsville Municipal Golf Course
BENEFITS SACRED HEART CATHOLIC SCHOOL

GOLF TOURNAMENT DETAILS

- 3-Person Scramble • Limited To First 48 Paid Teams
- \$60 Per Person • \$180 Per Team
- Tee Times: Morning (8:30 a.m.) and Afternoon (1:30 p.m.)
- Lunch included with entry

PRIZES AWARDED TO TOP THREE TEAMS IN THREE FLIGHTS
(Payout pending on full field)



Silent Auction: 8:30 a.m. until 1 hour after results

Donations or Hole Sponsorships available at:
\$100(Indian) • \$200(Tribe) • \$500(Big Chief)

To Register, Donate or Sponsor, please contact
Hallettsville Golf Association: 361-798-9908; or

Sacred Heart Catholic School: (361) 798-4251; www.shschool.org; or
David Smolik: dsmolik@shschool.org

IWBS Jubilee 2009

On Saturday, July 11, and Sunday, July 12, 2009, nine Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament celebrated the anniversaries of their religious professions at Incarnate Word Convent. Those who were honored on their 50th Anniversary on Saturday, July 11, 2009 were: Sister M. Stephana Marbach, Sister M. Serena Etzler, Sister Mary Theresa Fritz and Sister M. Odilia Korenek. The honorees on Sunday, July 12, 2009 were: 75 years - Sister M. George Vasek; 70 years - Sister Pauline Marie Ermis and Sister M. Scholastica Friesenhahn; and 60 years - Sister Mary Virginia Sheblak and Sister M. Sylvia Grahmann. Together these Sisters have contributed a total of 535 years of service to the Church in ministries of education, administration and pastoral services.

Celebration on Saturday, July 11, 2009

On Saturday, the Most Reverend David Fellhauer, Bishop of the Victoria Diocese, officiated at the 2:00 p.m. Mass. Co-Celebrants were Rev. Connor McGrath of San Antonio, who gave the homily, Rev. Greg Korenek of Victoria, and other clergy guests. Rev. Donald Hayden, O.S.S.T., Convent Chaplain, was Master of Ceremonies.

- Sister Stephana Marbach, daughter of the late Udo S. and Erna Schumann Marbach, was born in Converse, Texas. She was the eldest of nine sons and four daughters.

Sister Stephana received her grammar schooling at Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Selma and then attended Nazareth Academy from which she graduated. She became a postulant in 1957, entered the novitiate in 1958 and pronounced her first vows on August 6, 1959.

Sister received a BA degree with a major in history and a minor in philosophy from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio and received certification in educational administration from Southwest Texas University in San Marcos. Sister also studied at the Theological Union in Chicago and at Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio from which she received a MA degree in pastoral ministry.

During the 50 years as a member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Stephana ministered as a teacher and/or principal at Holy Cross School in Bay City, Holy Cross School in East Bernard, Our Lady of Victory School, Nazareth Academy and St. Joseph High School in Victoria, and Blessed Sacrament Parish School and Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio. She also served in the initial formation and vocation ministry for the congregation. In 1988, after serving on the Congregational Administrative Council for six years, Sister Stephana was elected Superior General of the Congregation, a position she held for 12 years. She has served as Pastoral Associate in Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in Selma for the past 7 years.

- Sister Serena Etzler, daughter of Theodore and Agnes Christ Etzler, was born in Hallettsville, Texas. She was the youngest of three boys and three girls in the family. Sister Serena attended grade school and

high school at Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville. She entered Nazareth Convent in Victoria where she became a postulant in 1957, was received into the novitiate as a Sister of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament in 1958 and pronounced her first vows on August 6, 1959.

Sister Serena received a BA degree with a major in education and a minor in history from Incarnate Word College. She also took courses in physical education to be a certified PE teacher in the schools where she taught.



Eight Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament celebrated the anniversaries of their religious professions recently. Front, l-r, Sister George Vasek, 75 years; Sister Pauline Marie Ermis 70 years; Sister Scholastica Friesenhahn 70 years; Sister Sylvia Grahmann 60 years; back, l-r, Sister Mary Theresa Fritz, 50 years; Sister Stephana Marbach 50 years; Sister Mary Virginia Sheblak 60 years; Sister Serena Etzler 50 years and Sister Odilia Korenek 50 years.

During her 50 years of religious profession Sister Serena ministered in the following schools: St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner (16 years), St. John School in San Antonio (2 years), and Nazareth Academy (27 years). Sister Serena also spent many hours assisting at the schools' athletic events as score keeper.

Sister Serena retired from the active teaching ministry in December, 2007, and now assists in staffing the IWC Gift Shop and making rosaries.

- Sister Mary Theresa Fritz, daughter of the late Richard and Mary Rainosek Fritz, was born in Victoria, the youngest of four children - three boys and one girl. Sister completed grammar school and high school at Nazareth Academy. She entered Nazareth Convent and became a postulant in 1957, was received into the novitiate in 1958 and pronounced her first vows as a Sister of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on August 6, 1959.

Sister Mary Theresa received a BA degree with a major in English and a minor in history from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. Sister continued her education and became certified in business administration through courses at Victoria College and the University of Houston-Victoria. She also holds a certificate verifying competency to teach computer literacy.

During her 50 years of profession, Sister Mary Theresa ministered as teacher and/or principal at the following schools: Sacred Heart School in La Grange, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Selma, Sacred Heart School in Crosby, St. Mary School in Nada, Immaculate Conception School in Sealy, Sealy Public School, Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, St. Leo School in San An-

tonio, St. Joseph High School and Nazareth Academy in Victoria, Mary Immaculate School in Dallas, St. Paul High School in Shiner. Sister also assisted in the Business Office at Incarnate Word Convent for

Sister also served as Director of Religious Education at St. Anthony Parish in Danbury, and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Houston. She received her CPE training and became a resident chaplain at Memorial Hospital in Houston. For the past 15 years Sister Mary Theresa has

ministered as chaplain and bereavement counselor with Nurses in Touch Hospice Care in San Antonio and Floresville.

- Sister Odilia Korenek, daughter of the late Adolph and Justina Janish Korenek, was born in Nada, Texas. Sister came from a family of four boys and eight girls. She attended St. Mary School for grade school studies and did three years of high school at Garwood High School. She received her high school diploma from Nazareth Academy.

Sister Odilia entered Nazareth Convent and became a postulant in 1957, received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament in 1958 and pronounced her first vows on August 6, 1959.

Sister Odilia received a BA degree with a major in history and a minor in Spanish from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio, Texas. Sister earned a MA degree from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, and spiritual direction certification from St. Edward's University in Austin, Texas.

During her 50 years of profession, Sister Odilia ministered as teacher and/or principal at the following schools: Sacred Heart School in Floresville, Sacred Heart School in Crosby, Sacred Heart School in La Grange, Our Lady of Victory School and St. Joseph High School in Victoria, and St. Agnes School, St. John School, St. Leo School and Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio

Sister Odilia also ministered in the Diocese of Victoria as Director of the Farm Aid Outreach and the Gulf Coast Organizational Effort. In 1990, Sister was missioned to develop new programs needed

by San Antonio's south side which developed into the Multilevel Learning Center at Blessed Sacrament Academy. At present Sister is development director, executive director and supervisor of the Child Care Development Center, Parents' Academy, and Charter Schools in San Antonio and Corpus Christi.

Sister Odilia has also served as a councilor on the Congregational Leadership Team for the last nine years.

Celebration on Sunday, July 12, 2009

The Most Reverend David Fellhauer, Bishop of the Victoria Diocese, officiated at the 2:00 p.m. Mass and gave the homily. Co-Celebrants were Bishop Charles Grahmann, Rev. Celestino Say of Victoria, Rev. Charles Sonnier of Sweet Home, Rev. Joseph Kariuki of Plum, Rev. Michael Lyons of Ganado, and other clergy guests. Rev. Donald Hayden, O.S.S.T., Convent Chaplain, was Master of Ceremonies.

- Sister M. George Vasek, celebrating 75 years of profession, is the daughter of the late August and Mary Srubar Vasek. Sister was born in East Bernard, Texas. The family moved to Wharton where Sister received her grammar education at Lawson Public School. She completed her high school education at St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner.

Sister George entered St. Ludmila as a postulant on October 5, 1923 and received the habit of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament on July 24, 1933. She made her first profession of vows on September 5, 1934. Sister was awarded a BA degree with a major in English and a minor in Spanish from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio. She did post graduate work in the area of library science and held a professional elementary teacher certification, provisional high school certification and librarian certification.

During the 75 years of her religious profession, Sister George ministered as a teacher, librarian and/or administrator in the following schools: St. Ludmila Academy and St. Paul High School in Shiner, Marak Public School, Hostyn Public School and Radhost Public School, both near La Grange, St. Jerome School in Plum, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Selma, Sacred Heart School in Crosby, and St. Mary School in Nada. Sister George also served as Treasurer at Burns Hospital in Cuero from 1942-1946.

Sister George retired from the active education ministry in the Fall of 1993 and resides at Incarnate Word Convent. She has assisted in various household duties when able and is very much involved in the Apostolate of Prayer. Her sense of humor and kindness has reaped her a host of lasting friends.

- Sister Pauline Marie Ermis, one of nine children, is the daughter of the late Ignac and Annie Vaclavik Ermis of Plum, Texas. Sister Pauline Marie completed grammar school at St. Jerome School in Plum and attended high school at St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner.

She entered St. Ludmila Convent on September 15, 1937 and pronounced



East Bernard KJT Society No. 40's president, Edwin Marik, presented Sandy Logan with a check on July 14 in honor of her nephew, Samuel Britton, and the NTAF Southwest Stem Cell Transplant Fund. Proceeds were donated at the Kolache Klobase Festival. Sam will be receiving an adult stem cell transplant in Costa Rica this August for the hopeful cure of autism. Also pictured are Samuel's grandparents, Daniel and Carolyn Pilcik, and Samuel's uncle, Mark Dujka (society secretary). Included in the total was a \$250 matching grant from the KJT home office.

East Bernard family hopes for Adult Stem Cell cure

By Cynthia Brewer

EAST BERNARD—Sam, eight years of age, and Madison, 11 years old, are the grandchildren of Daniel and Carolyn Pilcik, parishioners of Holy Cross in East Bernard. Sam and Madison live in Fallbrook, California, with their parents, Paulette and Brad Britton. This August, however, they will be spending some time visiting grandma and grandpa, their aunt, Sandy Logan, and uncle, Mark Dujka, in Texas. The visit is part vacation and part hopeful medical treatment for Sam.

Sam was born a healthy, active baby to Paulette and Brad on April 23, 2001. In four months time, from 15 to 19 months of age, Sam went from a happy, active toddler to a reclusive little boy. Sam was diagnosed with autism at the age of two years and nine months.

According to Sam's aunt, Sandy, autism is not a mental or behavioral disorder, rather it is a medical condition that manifests itself in the digestive tract and the immune system. "When these systems are wrecked, kids look like they have a mental disorder," Sandy said in an e-mail interview.

"Sam was very sick and either threw up or had diarrhea for a year," Sandy said. For the past five years, Sam has undergone many tests and treatments for his condition. His tests showed he had a very low functioning immune system, was mercury toxic, and the viral activity in his body (from his vaccines) was almost four times higher than the acceptable levels.

Since the testing, Sam has also had years of in-home therapy: speech, occupational and physical therapy. He is now eight years old and can now walk and has begun speaking in short sentences.

When Sam was born, his parents had his umbilical cord blood saved, just in case someone in the family could use it. "They never imagined one of their own children would need it," Sandy said.

According to Sam's family, umbilical-cord blood is being successfully used to

treat Cerebral Palsy and brain injury in the United States; however, there are no doctors using adult stem cells to treat autism in the United States. But Medistem, an American company located in the San Diego area, is using adult stem cells to treat autism in their treatment clinics under the name ICM in Costa Rica and Panama.

The Brittons said they are not concerned with the safety of the procedures or the competency of the doctors, as many Americans go to Costa Rica to the CIMA clinic for excellent, modern, medical care. Many hospitals and clinics there are associated or built by American hospital associations or pharmaceutical companies.



Samuel Britton

The Brittons will begin their hopeful journey August 5, stopping by the Pilcik's, where Madison will stay, while Sam and his parents go on to Costa Rica August 9.

Sam will have blood tests on Monday, August 10, and a catheter inserted. Unfortunately, the family will not be able to bring Sam's own umbilical cord blood to Costa Rica and will have to use donor cells.

He will have transplant injections Tuesday through Friday. Then he and his parents will fly back to Texas to join Madison and have a short, family vacation before school starts August 31 in California.

Upon returning from Costa Rica, Sam will continue therapies to assist in his recovery and retraining. Less than 10 percent of all of his treatment is covered by insurance, the school district or state programs, Sandy said.

The family says they are blessed beyond belief that they have roots in a town like East Bernard. "So many have been so generous and we could not be more grateful," Sam's parents said. "It is our deepest hope and prayer that one day Sam will be able to write his own thank-you note to the whole town."

Please go to www.samshope.com to learn more about Sam, his treatment, and funding for his transplant. Go to the bottom of his Web page to watch videos about the success of his type of adult stem cell transplant.

Theology at the Well returns

Theology at the Well, the highly successful Catholic program geared toward young adults, married or single, returns to Victoria. The exciting and informative meetings will take place every other Thursday evening at 6:45 p.m. at Chili's Restaurant from September 3 to November 12. Those attending will hear interesting discussions on current issues in the Church and have the opportunity to meet other Catholics while enjoying good food and drinks.

Topics for the upcoming meetings will be:

Sept. 3 – "Wrestling with Suffering and Death" – For many people, suffering and death are severe challenges to their faith. If God loves us so much, why does he allow such pain to exist? How do we maintain our faith through the trials? Does our faith allow us to approach suffering differently? Father Stan DeBoe explores these questions and helps us learn to use suffering and death for good.

Sept. 17 – "Discovering the Holy Spirit" – Jesus reassured his followers that he would send an Advocate to guide them after his Ascension. As we strive to live in this world, we are comforted by the knowledge that we were sealed in the same Spirit at our confirmations. However,

it can be hard to know if he is guiding us. Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS helps us learn how to find and follow the Spirit. Oct. 1 – "Do Apologists Apologize?" – with Father Tommy Chen



Oct. 15 – "Jesus of Nazareth," part 1 – with Father David Berger

Oct. 29 – "Jesus of Nazareth," part 2 – with Father David Berger

Nov. 12 – "Going to the Movies ... or not?" – with Father Bryan Heyer

For more information, please contact: Debbie Vanelli at the Office of Youth Ministry at (361) 573-0828 ext. 32 or at dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org / José Ortega at ext. 50 or at jortega@victoriadiocese.org / or Jim Wearden at (361) 649-9157.

Eric Genuis to perform in Shiner Aug. 23

Eric Genuis, a composer, virtuoso pianist, and captivating performer, will be in concert at Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church in Shiner Sunday, August 23, at 6:30 p.m.

Since 1997, he has been performing his works throughout the world. In addition to performing for millions of people, Genuis has composed and recorded four CDs and written music for films, documentaries, television and Internet media.

Having recently recorded with the famed Maestro Allan Wilson of London and the Slovak National Symphony Orchestra, Eric is currently touring the United States with an ensemble of world-class musicians. His concert in Shiner will feature the vocals of Caroline Brooks and violinist Liesl Shonberger.

"Eric is beyond a masterful composer and performer," ~ says Raymond Arroyo – EWTN News Anchor and author.

There is no admission charge.



KJZT DIAMOND STATUS ACHIEVEMENTS ASSIST COMMUNITY—KJZT Society No. 101 earns Diamond Status through various activities: bake sale, "Join Hands with KJT," Flag Day, Lenten Soup parish activity and community service. Twenty-four members of KJZT No. 101 and KJT No. 115 "Join Hands" in June cleaning and beautifying flower beds of an elderly parishioner of Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria. They followed the workday with a pizza party in the backyard. KJZT Society No. 101 also raised \$1,500 from a recent bake sale and donated the funds to the Community Action Committee of Victoria for meals it delivers to senior citizens, and this year County Commissioner Wayne Dierlam (Precinct 4) signed the Flag Day Proclamation for KJZT. With the \$100 they received from state funds for achieving Diamond Status they will donate a TV Mass at Our Lady of Victory for Living and Deceased Members of KJZT August 9. Congratulations to Society 101!

August 15 ~ The Assumption

Jesus arose from the tomb and ascended into heaven; this is the doctrine of the Ascension of Christ. Catholics believe that Mary's body was taken up to heaven by the power of her Son, so a different word is used: the Assumption of Mary.

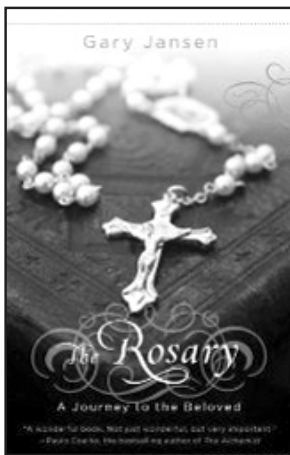
While there is no historical proof of the Assumption, there are impressive negative proofs: At no time in history has Christendom venerated a grave or tomb of the Blessed Virgin; until the 5th century there was not even a legend concerning her place of burial. While the remains of thousands of saints have been preserved and venerated from the earliest ages of the Church, no such shrines or relics of Mary have been found; there is absolutely no relic of Our Lady's body in existence, nor has any person or city ever claimed to possess such a relic.

While there is no explicit mention in the Bible of the glorification of Mary's body, there are several implicit revelations of the Assumption: Gen. 3:15; Luke 1:28; and Rev. 12:1-2. St. Epiphanius, a 4th century bishop, was the first to ask what happened to Mary's body. From the middle of the 5th century, a feast was celebrated on August 15 in a shrine near Jerusalem. Near the end of the 6th century, the feast was called the "Dormition of Our Lady." In the 8th century the feast spread from Rome throughout Europe and the pope gave it the name of the "Assumption of Mary."

In the first 16 centuries of Christianity, no reputable theologian ever questioned the dogma of the Assumption, which was formally defined Nov. 1, 1950.

Puzzle Contest Prize is "The Rosary" book

"The Rosary ~ A Journey to the Beloved," written by Gary Jansen and published by Faith Words, will guide readers to connect with God through prayer in an approachable way.



The book explains the history and significance of the rosary, as well as instructions on how to get the most of the meditative and spiritual exercise of repeating prayers.

"The Rosary" walks readers through each of the twenty mysteries combining biblical excerpts and reproductions of famous biblical artwork by Tissot, Raphael, Gauguin and many others to illustrate the power of this beloved act of devotion.

"The Rosary" (Faith Words, ISBN: 978-0-446-53584-7) can be purchased for \$11.99 on many Web sites.

For a chance to win "The Rosary ~ A Journey to the Beloved" in a drawing, please send completed puzzle and form to *The Catholic Lighthouse*.

Our Turn

By **Therese J. Borchard**
Catholic News Service



Six ways to make your marriage last

You often hear that half of all marriages end in divorce. But marriage is actually doing much better than that these days, say Benedict Carey and Tara Parker-Pope. They collaborated on a piece for the New York Times called "Marriage Stands Up for Itself." They write:

"A comparison of 10-year divorce rates among college-educated men married in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s shows that divorce is becoming less common," said Dr. Stevenson, the Wharton researcher. Among men who married in the 1970s, for example, about 23 percent had divorced by the 10th year of marriage. Among similar men married in the 1980s, about 20 percent had divorced by the 10th year. Men married in the 1990s are doing even better -- with a 10-year divorce rate of 16 percent."

Christian writer Steven Wickstrom and others say the divorce rate for a Christian couple who actively pray together is less than 1 percent.

I kid you not: less than 1 percent.

What else can you do to improve your odds?

In his blog post called "5 Secrets to a Successful Long-Term Relationship or Marriage," John Grohol, CEO and founder of PsychCentral.com, lists five core ingredients to a good marriage or long-term relationship: Compromise. Communicate. Choose your battles carefully. Don't hide your needs. Don't underestimate the importance of trust and honesty.

No relationships are perfectly 50-50 arrangements. Usually one person does an extra load of laundry. But for a marriage to thrive, there must be compromise, some give and take. Not just take.

Says Grohol in stressing the importance of communication: "Relationships live and die not by the sword, but by the amount of discussion. If two people can't find a way to openly and honestly communicate their needs and feelings to one another, the relationship doesn't stand much of a chance long-term. Couples must find a way to communicate regularly, openly and directly."

Choosing your battles carefully eliminates half the fights right there, and it adds value to the disagreements that can't be

"D" Is For DEACON

www.wordgamesforcatholics.com

E	I	N	G	B	H	M	R	L	I	L	N	H	E	Y
Z	E	N	I	R	T	C	O	D	W	A	Q	T	N	M
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N	O	I	T	A	S	N	E	P	S	I	D	F	I	O
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V	K	H	S	C	A	O	L	D	E	T	K	T	A	T
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T	Z	Y	C	I	Y	A	P	O	U	N	O	S	L	E
I	X	L	O	N	X	I	C	Y	X	N	F	O	U	D
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N	L	X	D	S	A	U	J	K	I	E	D	E	K	O
C	I	E	I	R	D	L	I	V	E	D	Q	D	W	F
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DEAN

DEPOSIT OF FAITH

DEUTERONOMY

DEVIL

DEVOTION

DIOCESE

DISCALCED

DISCIPLE

DISPENSATION

DIVINE

DOCTRINE

DOGMA

DOXOLOGY

DULIA

DUTY

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Parish: _____

Age if under 18: _____



Family Puzzle Contest Winner to win "The Rosary"

Edna Bludau of Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville has won the July Family Puzzle Contest drawing and will receive the book "A Civilization of Love ~ What Every Catholic Can Do to Transform the World" by Supreme Knight Carl Anderson and published by Harper One.

Our apologies to the children who entered the July contest; we lost the children's entries. Children, please enter again to win the August children's contest. We'll choose two winners to make up for this mistake. The winner will receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop.

If you have not won the puzzle contest within the past six months, please send completed puzzle and contest form to The Catholic Lighthouse by August 25 for a chance to win the August Family Puzzle Contest prize of "The Rosary ~ A Journey to the Beloved," written by Gary Jansen and published by Faith Words.

A PRAYER FOR PRIESTS AND BISHOPS

O God, who hast appointed Thine only-begotten Son to be the eternal High Priest for the glory of Thy Majesty and the salvation of mankind; grant that they whom He hath chosen to be His ministers and the stewards of His mysteries, may be found faithful in the fulfillment of the ministry which they have received. Through the same Christ Our Lord.
Amen.

avoided.

Many of the psychologists I've interviewed for my Beliefnet.com blog "Beyond Blue" say that hiding needs, for example, is precisely why so many marriages fall apart. One or both partners weren't getting needs met and were afraid or unable to communicate that with the other.

Don't underestimate the importance of trust and honesty. Writes Grohol, "Different people have different areas of concern, but almost everyone values trust and honesty from their partner above all."

For more marriage information go to:
www.foryourmarriage.org.

Twenty Something

By Christina Capecci
E-mail: Christina@ReadChristina.com



Traveling light: storing up treasures in heaven

“Wife have too many shoes?”

The billboard on Interstate 94 caught my eye. The solution it advertised, off the next exit, was not a Goodwill or a therapist, but a storage unit. Why get rid of the stilettos when you can pay \$50 a month to stash them somewhere else?

Millions of Americans have purchased storage, locking up the Hummel dolls, tax returns and soccer trophies they don't need but can't quite part with. At the end of 2008, self-storage facilities occupied 2.35 billion square feet, making it physically possible for every American to stand under the total canopy of self-storage roofing.

My canopy of choice has been the ping-pong table in my parents'

basement, beneath which you'll find Mead spiral-bound notebooks detailing my introduction to the Pythagorean theorem and the periodic table. Those royal blue and Kelly green pads signal such youthful diligence that they have not yet made their way to the recycling bin they warrant.

Last night I examined the bins below the staircase. I was struck by how many years were mixed together, how time was compressed in a single cardboard box. Baseball cards, birthday cards, report cards. A rhyming dictionary and a cookbook. Crinkled newspapers stacked on a busted Gateway laptop.

These days, it's not just physical stuff we store. It's also digital: documents, pictures, spreadsheets, Power Points, mp3s, pdfs. “Cur-

rent statistics show that one in every 10 hard drives fail every year,” warns the online storage site Mozy, which claims more than 1 million users. “Unfortunately, computers are vulnerable to hard drive crashes, virus attacks, theft and natural disasters, which can erase everything in an instant.”

That appeal to fear drives us to buy 100 gigabytes or 1,000 or – what the heck – unlimited space.

It seems we cannot discard or delete, and we do not want to sift through our stuff and make those tough judgment calls about what to keep and what to give. So we shove it in attics, garages and hard drives, protected with padlocks and passwords. We don't have to deal with it, except for the monthly bill to remind us it's there.

This hunter-gatherer-hoarder impulse is a cultural and spiritual malady: overconsumption with no accountability. Our baggage is heavy and dusty and jumbled, and we cannot manage it. We do not even try.

As disciples of Christ, we must travel light so our hands and hearts are free to build his

See Traveling light, p. 18

Sunday Readings from Aug. 9 to Sept.

August 9 — Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1 Kings 19:44-8
Psalms 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9
Ephesians 4:30 — 5:2
John 6:41-51

August 15 — Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary - Mass during the Day

Revelation 11:19a; 12:1-6a, 10ab
Psalm 45:10, 11, 12, 16
1 Corinthians 15:20-27
Luke 1:39-56

August 16 — Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Proverbs 9:1-6
Psalm 34:2-3, 4-5, 6-7
Ephesians 5:15-20
John 6:51-58

August 23 — Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time

Joshua 24:1-2a, 15-17, 18b
Psalm 34:2-3, 16-17, 18-19, 20-21
Ephesians 5:21-32
John 6:60-69

August 30 — Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-8
Psalm 15:2-3, 3-4, 4-5
James 1:17-18, 21b-22, 27
Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

September 6 — Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isaiah 35:4-7a
Psalm 146:7, 8-9, 9-10
James 2:1-5
Mark 7:31-37

All readings (Daily and Sunday's) and a reflection video are available in text or audio at:

www.usccb.org/nab/

IWBS Jubilee 2009

first vows on June 5, 1939. She received her BA degree from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio with a major in history and a minor in social science, and held a teacher's permanent elementary certificate.

During the 70 years of her religious profession, Sister Pauline Marie taught in the primary, elementary and junior high grades at the following schools: Immaculate Conception School in Sealy, Holy Trinity School in Duquesne, Pennsylvania, Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Selma, St. Mary School in Nada, Holy Cross School in East Bernard, St. John School in San Marcos, Nazareth Academy in Victoria, St. Michael School in Weimar, Holy Cross School in Bay City, Holy Trinity School in Corn Hill, St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner and Blessed Sacrament Parish School in San Antonio.

Sister Pauline Marie retired from full-time active classroom duties in 1995 to reside at Incarnate Word Convent where she assisted in various household duties. She now resides in the infirmary where her cheerful presence is an inspiration to all as she engages in the apostolate of prayer and suffering.

• Sister Scholastica Friesenhahn, is the daughter of the late

Gregor and Marie Fey Friesenhahn of New Braunfels, and is the youngest of seven children. Sister grew up on a farm and attended St. Joseph's School in Comal; she completed her high school at Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio.

Sister Scholastica entered Blessed Sacrament Convent as a postulant on January 6, 1938, became a novice on July 20, 1938 and made first profession of vows on July 26, 1939. Sister received a BA degree with a major in English and a minor in history from Our Lady of the Lake University in San Antonio and a MA degree with a major in education and a minor in math from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio.

During her 70 years as a member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Scholastica taught on the elementary, junior high and high school levels at the following schools: Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, St. Agnes School and St. Leo School in San Antonio, St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner, Sts. Peter and Paul School in Frelsburg, St. Boniface School in Hobson, Immaculate Conception School in Sealy, Blessed Sacrament Academy and St. Gerard High School in San Antonio. Sister Scholastica retired from teaching in 2001 after 63 years in the classroom.

During her years at Blessed Sacrament Academy, Sister Scholastica, a math teacher, was very involved in the math club, Mu Alpha Theta, on the state and national levels with her high school students. Both she and her students were elected to offices and received awards at the state and national conventions.

Sister Scholastica has resided at Incarnate Word since 2006. Her ready smile invites all for a sharing of stories.

• Sister Mary Virginia Sheblak is the daughter of the late Elmer and Annie Hollas Sheblak of Edna. She was the eldest of five children—one girl and four boys. Sister completed grammar school at Haynes School near Edna and is a graduate of Nazareth Academy in Victoria. She became a postulant in 1947, was received into the novitiate in 1948, and pronounced her first vows on June 7, 1949.

Sister Mary Virginia received a BM degree with a major in music and a minor in education from Incarnate Word College in San Antonio and a master of education in music from Southwest Texas State University. She also received certification in liturgy from the University of Notre Dame.

For the past 60 years Sister Mary Virginia has taught on the

elementary, junior high and high school levels in the following schools: St. Michael School in Weimar, Sacred Heart School in Floresville, Immaculate Conception School in Sealy, St. Agnes School in San Antonio, St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner, Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio, Blessed Sacrament Parish School in San Antonio, and Our Lady of Mt. Carmel School in Houston. She also ministered at St. Joseph High School in Victoria as a teacher in the 1970's and served as registrar during the 1990's.

Sister Mary Virginia presently serves as Secretary General of the Congregation.

• Sister Sylvia Grahmann is the daughter of the late Nicholas and Annie Grafe Grahmann of Hallettsville. Sister Sylvia is one of 11 children - six boys and five girls.

Sister Sylvia received her elementary education at Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville; she is a graduate of Nazareth Academy in Victoria. Sister became a postulant in 1947, entered the novitiate in 1948 and pronounced her first vows on June 7, 1949.

Sister Sylvia received her BA degree with a major in English and a minor in philosophy and Latin from Incarnate Word

Continued from p. 12

College in San Antonio. She also earned a MA degree with a major in English and a minor in education from Incarnate Word College. Sister then attended St. Mary's University from which she received a MA degree in theology.

During the 60 years of being a member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, Sister Sylvia taught on the elementary, junior high and high school levels. She taught in the following schools: St. Leo School in San Antonio, Holy Trinity School in Corn Hill, Holy Cross School in Bay City, Our Lady of Perpetual Help School in Selma, St. Ludmila Academy in Shiner, Immaculate Conception School in Sealy, Sacred Heart School in Crosby, Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, St. Paul High School in Shiner, and Blessed Sacrament Academy in San Antonio.

Sister Sylvia retired from the active ministry of teaching in 2004 and came to reside at Incarnate Word Convent where she assists in various household duties. She loves visiting with the other Sisters and playing dominos and card games.

Sister Sylvia's sister, Sister Anastasia Grahmann (also a Sister of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament) went to her eternal reward on June 17, 1997.

CARITAS IN VERITATE - Comentario

El nombre lo dice todo

Por Mar Muñoz-Visoso, subdirectora de relaciones públicas de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos



Caritas in veritate, la caridad en la verdad, son las palabras que dan comienzo y nombre a la nueva encíclica social de Benedicto XVI. El título en sí recoge ya el mensaje central de la carta, dejando que el resto del texto lo desarrolle como los hilos de una madeja que se va desenrollando o piezas de un rompecabezas del cual ya tenemos una foto completa en la cubierta de la caja.

El nombre lo dice todo. Sin la verdad, la caridad, también traducida como amor, no tiene significado ni propósito, se convierte en mero sentimentalismo, “un envoltorio vacío que se rellena arbitrariamente” (3), dice el papa. “La caridad es el don más grande que Dios ha dado a los hombres, es su promesa y nuestra esperanza” (2). A menos que entendamos que el hombre, creado a imagen y semejanza de Dios, ha sido hecho para dar y recibir amor no podremos entender que la solidaridad es más que una opción personal y que cuidar de la creación es más que un estilo de vida.

Pero ¿por qué “en la verdad”? Y ¿qué verdad? En el modo relativista de pensar

actual parece no haber cabida para verdades absolutas, ni parámetros de pensamiento y acción válidos para todos. Mi verdad no es tu verdad. Y así, la afirmación “la caridad en la verdad” no parece tener mucho sentido en un mundo desprovisto de significado último y verdades trascendentes.

Como voz que clama en el desierto, el papa Benedicto continúa predicando el evangelio de la verdad y sostiene que sí existe una Verdad última de la cual se derivan todas las demás verdades. Sí, existen cosas que dañan y destruyen a la humanidad y existen otras que la elevan y la llevan a alcanzar su pleno potencial. Sí, existen principios y valores universales que pueden ser percibidos por la razón y la fe y que deben guiar todos nuestros actos.

Sólo si aceptamos la verdad de la dignidad del hombre y la mujer, que éstos están hechos para el amor y la comunión, y que esta verdad se antepone a cualquier otra, tendrán sentido la búsqueda de la justicia y del bien común. Sólo entonces seremos capaces de ver que cualquier cosa que viole la dignidad de una vida humana, que le impida alcanzar todo su potencial o la transforme en capital dispensable, es una “injusticia” que reclama la restauración de la justicia, y que todos tenemos una responsabilidad en ello.

Nueva Encíclica papal a la venta a partir de 20 de julio

WASHINGTON— “La caridad en la verdad” (Caritas in veritate), la tercera encíclica del Papa Benedicto XVI, se pondrá a la venta como libro, en inglés y español, el próximo 20 de julio, según anunció la oficina de publicaciones de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos (USCCB).

John Carr, director ejecutivo del Departamento de Justicia, Paz y Desarrollo Humano de la conferencia de obispos declaró que la encíclica papal “ofrece un

análisis ético muy necesario de la crisis económica global y un marco esencial de referencia moral sobre cómo seguir hacia delante como una familia humana”.

“El Santo Padre insiste en que la ética y la atención prioritaria a los pobres necesitan estar en el centro de la vida económica”, dijo Carr. “El papa nos reta a cada uno de nosotros a poner la caridad y la verdad, la justicia y el bien común en el corazón de nuestras opciones económicas y de nuestra vida diaria”.

Caritas in veritate abarca varios de los temas esenciales de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia. El papa ubica la caridad en el centro de la enseñanza social de la Iglesia. También hace un llamado a encontrar una nueva forma de llevar los negocios para asegurar la estabilidad y el bienestar de todas las partes interesadas, incluyendo los trabajadores y la sociedad en general. La economía global, los problemas con las fuentes de energía no renovables y la necesidad de una nueva autoridad política mundial son otros de los asuntos que el papa trata en la encíclica.

La publicación “La verdad en la caridad” (Caritas in veritate), tiene un costo de \$6.95 por copia. Pueden hacerse los pedidos vía Internet en <http://www.usccb-publishing.org>. El número de publicación es 7-049, en inglés, y 7-806, en español.



MISA DE SANACION

Miercoles – Septiembre 2, 2009

Nuestra Señora De Los Dolores
208 W. River St., Victoria, Texas

Rosario – 7:00 p.m.
Mass – 7:30 p.m.

Vengan Todos!

Papa reza por Honduras, insta al diálogo

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) - Pope Benedict XVI ofrece sus oraciones para el pueblo de Honduras y animó a la nación del derrocado presidente y actual líderes políticos a participar en el diálogo por el bien del país. “En estos días estoy siguiendo con profunda preocupación los acontecimientos en Honduras”, dijo el Papa después de recitar el Ángelus 12 de julio con los visitantes en la Plaza de San Pedro. Presidente hondureño Manuel Zelaya fue derrocado en las primeras horas del 28 de junio, cuando los soldados de Honduras - actuando bajo las órdenes del Congreso Nacional - se disparó a su casa y se lo llevó, chapados en pijama, hacia el aeropuerto. Acusado de traición y de tratar de burlar la constitución de la nación, fue volado en un avión militar a Costa Rica. El cardenal hondureño Oscar Rodríguez Maradiaga de Tegucigalpa, que había dicho que la iglesia no volver el golpe de estado, aunque Zelaya se ha de sembrar la división en el país, dijo a Radio Vaticano el 14 de julio la atención del Papa levantó los ánimos de muchos hondureños y les dio fuerza. “Entre los seguidores del antiguo régimen hay muchos católicos que están actuando de buena conciencia”, dijo, pero “la iglesia no puede tomar partido. La iglesia busca la reconciliación, la paz y, sobre todo, la comprensión a través del diálogo”.

Oración por la Lluvia

Por Marty Egan, Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish, Shiner

Nuestra tierra es árida, Señor
Envíenos lluvia

Nuestra tierra, lecho de río
a la llanura

Nuestra amplia pastos, nuestros
campos

nuestro grano

Todos ellos hacen la sed, el Señor

Envíenos lluvia

Nuestra tierra es quema

Envíenos lluvia

El viento sopla caliente,
que no decaiga

Dar agua de la vida

a beber de nuevo

Eliminar esta sequía

esta prueba, esta cepa



Nuestra tierra es árida, Señor
Envíenos lluvia

No permitamos que nuestras peti-
ciones

se gritó en vano

A través del Espíritu,

en nombre de Jesús

Por favor, envíanos la lluvia

Por favor, envíanos la lluvia

San Isidro, patrón de los agricultores,
ruega por nosotros

Flora santo, protector contra los incen-
dios, ruega por nosotros

Santa Bárbara, patrona de los bomb-
eros, ruega por nosotros

Saints Cyril and Methodius, ruega por
nosotros

Nuestra Señora de la Victoria, pat-
rona de nuestra diócesis, ruega por
nosotros

Nuestra Señora de la Anunciación, pat-
rona de Texas, ruega por nosotros

México prelado defiende decisión de permitir que el ex presidente privado de boda

LEON, Mexico (CNS) - José Martín Rabago Arzobispo de León ha defendido la decisión de permitir que el ex Presidente Vicente Fox el derecho a contraer matrimonio a corto plazo en una ceremonia religiosa, a pesar de que otros matrimonios celebrados de forma similar han sido declaradas ilegales. “Un auténtico matrimonio eclesiástico fue celebrado con todos los requisitos de validez jurídica”, el arzobispo dijo a los periodistas Martín del 12 de julio. El arzobispo de la Comisión son un intento de sofocar la confusión sobre el 9 de julio el matrimonio religioso de Fox y su vocera de campaña, Marta Sahagún, quienes se casaron en una ceremonia civil 2001. Ambos tenían sus anteriores matrimonios anulados por la Iglesia Católica. Un vocero de la Arquidiócesis de León, el padre Raúl Villegas Chávez, había dicho a varios medios de comunicación que la boda de julio es ilegal, ya que tuvo lugar en privado y no seguir el procedimiento adecuado iglesia. También se plantearon preguntas, porque la pareja comunicó a la archidiócesis a sólo dos horas antes de la ceremonia, que fue presenciado por Fox primo, el padre Alejandro Latapí Dominicana. Arzobispo Martín dijo el vicario general, dio permiso para la boda que tendrá lugar en muy corto plazo y que el ex presidente de la privada boda no sería un precedente para situaciones similares.

Truth Deniers ~ the Holocaust and Pope Pius XII's Sincerity

Continued from p. 3

who were saved by the church's actions had one opinion of the actions of the Catholic Church and the Pope. Subsequent generations born into the safety of the defeat of the Nazi regime seem to hold a different opinion,” – “A Reality of the Generations,” Pave the Way Foundation, Examining the Papacy of Pope Pius II – September 15 – 17, 2008.

Rabbi David Dalin, author of “The Myth of Hitler's Pope” goes a step further; he “believes that to ‘deny and delegitimize their (Jews who testified on the pope's behalf) collective memory and experience of the Holocaust,’ as some have done, ‘is to engage in a subtle yet profound form of Holocaust denial’” Seattle Catholic (13 August 2005).

I am thankful that the evil efforts of the Soviet Union have not affected the standing of the One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church; however, I am saddened that its efforts have managed to be a stumbling block of distrust between the Jewish and Catholic people. Although Pope Pius XII has taken the fall and we pray for the clearing of his name, God still makes good come from evil, for he sent another messenger of hope and peace for Jewish-Christian relations in Pope John Paul II. See “Pope John Paul II Exhibit at Holocaust Museum Houston,” pg. 17.



Terrie Beltran, JCDA/Youth State Chair from El Campo, and 2007 – 2009 President Beth Krenek of East Bernard, presented the following awards at the 23rd Biennial JCDA State Convention:

- Outstanding 2007-2009 JCDA Member was awarded to Kyla Schaecherl, Court St. Paul #1604, Shiner.
- Saint Elizabeth Ann Adult Advisor Medal had a tie and was awarded to Carolyn Malik, Court St. Paul #1604, Shiner, and Marsha Kreymeyer, Court St. Theresa of Lisieux #2211, Sugar Land.
- Membership and Retention Contest awards were presented to Court St. Paul #1604, Shiner, receiving Platinum Level, and Court Sacred Heart #797, Hallettsville, receiving Gold Level.
- JCDA Court Newsletter Contest winners were: 1st Place – Court St. Paul #1604, Shiner; 2nd Place – Court Annunciation #1962, La Grange; and 3rd Place – Court Saint Bernadette #1108, East Bernard.
- Banner Contest winners were: 1st Place – Court Sacred Heart #829, West; 2nd Place – Court Mary St. John #219, Baytown; and 3rd Place – Court Sacred Heart #797, Hallettsville.
- Scrapbook Contest winners were: 1st place - Court St. Paul #1604, Shiner; 2nd Place - St. Theresa of Lisieux #2211, Sugar Land; and 3rd Place – Court Annunciation #1962, La Grange.

23rd Biennial JCDA State Convention Held

By Terrie Vacek, CDA State Public Relations Chairman

Over 300 members of the Texas Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas (JCDA) traveled to Houston for the 23rd Biennial JCDA State Convention June 27-29, 2009. To emphasize the convention theme, “Princesses of Christ,” the JCDA 2007-2009 state officers welcomed the delegates and members by pampering them with new hairstyles, painted nails and make-up! The girls and CDA Court sponsors created a huge ‘thank you’ card during their opening Fun Night at the Roof Top of the Westin Oaks Hotel in the Galleria. It was presented to Houston Mayor Bill White following his welcome to Houston and their convention.

Convention business included a report on the events of each JCDA court; approval of 2007 convention business; credentials; and nominations and the election of 2009-2011 state officers. Additional craft activities were offered to Juniorette members. There are currently 56 JCDA courts throughout Texas with 801 members. The three-fold program of ‘Message, Service and Community’ was reflected in the talks given by guest speakers throughout the weekend. Reverend John Peters, State JCDA Chaplain, shared the highlights of the past two years including the first JCDA



Eleven members of Shiner's Court #1604 Junior Catholic Daughters, along with six senior CDA members attended the Biennial State JCDA Convention held in Houston, June 27-29, 2009.

retreat held at his ranch in Hallettsville.

Libby Ramirez, National CDA Regent from Victoria, spoke about the history of JCDA beginning in 1926. Terrie Beltran, JCDA/Youth State Chair from El Campo, reported on JCDA's growth, noting that six, new courts were installed in this term and two more were expected over the summer.

Carolyn Bachmann, 2007-2009 CDA State Regent, Scotland, spoke on ‘Unity’ and the value of teamwork. Sheila Martinka, newly elected State Regent, Deer Park, reminded the girls that there are three opportunities to grow and serve within the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Speaking directly to those members graduating from high school, she invited them to join or develop a Campus Court where their gifts and talents can bridge them in unity and service throughout college and into a senior court. Others attending were State Parliamentarian Cecina Kojemans, Dallas; First Vice State Regent Carolyn Malik, Shiner; Second Vice State Regent



Newly Elected 2009-2011 JCDA Board pictured above are, CDA State Regent Sheila Martinka, JCDA State Chair Terri Beltran, State JCDA 1st Vice President Kimberly Kallies, State JCDA 2nd Vice President Sarah Proske, State JCDA President Maya Cuellar, State JCDA Secretary Danielle Duplechain, State JCDA Reporter Felicia Garcia and State JCDA Chaplain Rev. John Peters.

Peggy Rosales, Austin; State Secretary Eve Trevino, Corpus Christi; and State Public Relations Chairman Terrie Vacek, Willis.

Almost 600 attended the banquet including JCDA members, JCDA advisors, parents, CDA state officers, CDA state parliamentarian and state chairmen. One would think they were at Cinderella's Castle in Disney Land among the twinkling tiaras; even Reverend John Peters joined the festivities wearing a lighted rhinestone tiara!

The keynote speaker, Jade (Vacek) Marcantel, Houston (former JCDA Charter member of Saint Bernadette Court #1108, East Bernard) dazzled the girls with her humor and grace. She engaged the participation of banquet guests by having each guest tell others at their table that they are “Daughters of the King.” Quoting Blessed Mother Theresa (referring to her as BMT), Marcantel challenged the girls “to spread love everywhere you go and to let no one ever come to you without leaving happier.” She challenged the girls saying that princesses do a good job consistently and always give thanks to those who serve with care and kindness. In an incredible way, Jade connected with the girls through encouragement by emphasizing their personal value to God and community.

Terrie Beltran recognized each of the newly installed courts from 2007-2009: Our

Lady of the Body of Christ Court #2548, Corpus Christi; Court Our Lady #2337, Farmers Branch; Court Daughters of the Immaculate Conception #2581, Denton; Court Marie #344, Texarkana; Court Cathedral #246, Corpus Christi; Court Our Lady of St. John, Houston. She then thanked and presented personal awards to the outgoing 2007-2009 JCDA officers and the JCDA State Chaplain. JCDA 2007-2009 state officers were President Beth Krenek, East Bernard; First Vice President Sarah Ornelas, Baytown; Second Vice President Ashley Stilley, Sealy; Christina Muench, secretary, Houston; and Laura Aguilar, reporter, El Campo. In turn, the 2007-2009 officers presented a thanksgiving bouquet of flowers to Mrs. Beltran.

JCDA delegates met for a caucus Saturday night. The election of new officers Sunday morning was followed by an installation Mass with celebrant Rev. John Peters. Delegates elected to serve the 2009-2011 term are President Maya Cuellar, Garland; 1st Vice President Kim Kallies, Deer Park; 2nd Vice President Sarah Proske, La Grange; Danielle Kupplechain, secretary, Houston; and Felicia Garcia, reporter, El Campo.

A bid for the 2011 JCDA Convention was made by La Grange Court #1962.

To learn more about the JCDA and the Catholic Daughters of the Americas please visit the National Web site at www.catholicdaughters.org or Texas at www.texasda.org. The convention feature story with photos may be viewed on the State Web site.

The Shiner members were excited when the winners in the various contests were announced. The Shiner court received 1st place awards in both the scrapbook and newsletter contests, as well as Platinum Level in membership and retention contest. In addition, one of their adult counselors, Carolyn Malik, was the co-recipient of the Elizabeth Ann Seton Award. This special recognition is awarded to those adults who have given outstanding service to youth, especially in the area of spiritual development. During the past several years, more than 30 members of the Shiner JCDA Court have earned religious recognition pins under the guidance and leadership of Carolyn Malik. She is also a CCD teacher, cantor and an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist at Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish.



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Holocaust Museum, Houston

Landmark exhibit focuses on Pope John Paul II's relationship with the Jewish People

HOUSTON — In the course of his papacy, John Paul II shattered the chain of 2,000 years of painful history between Catholics and Jews. He was the first pope since the first century to enter a synagogue, officially visit and recognize the State of Israel and formally express regret for the Catholic Church's past treatment of Jewish people.

Now, a new exhibit opening Aug. 28, 2009, at Holocaust Museum Houston takes an in-depth look at his extraordinary legacy of improved dialogue between Catholics and Jews.

More than an historical exhibit, "A Blessing to One Another: Pope John Paul II and the Jewish People" is an interactive experience that allows visitors to follow in John Paul II's footsteps from his childhood to his role as head of the world's largest church.

The exhibit formally opens for viewing at 9 a.m., Friday, Aug. 28, 2009, but the public is invited to a free preview reception from 6 to 8 p.m., Thursday, Aug. 27, 2009, at the Museum's Minberg Gallery in the Morgan Family Center, 5401 Caroline St., in Houston's Museum District. Visit www.hmh.org/register.asp to RSVP online. Admission is free. The exhibit runs through Jan. 3, 2010.

This exhibit draws its name from the pope's 1993 appeal marking the 50th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto uprising in which he said, "As Christians and Jews, following the example of the faith of Abraham, we are called to be a blessing to the world. This is the common task awaiting us. It is therefore necessary for us, Christians and Jews, to first be a blessing to one another."

Photographs, video footage, documents and artifacts are included in this exhibit to record the extraordinary contributions of the pope to relations between the Catholic and Jewish faiths. It includes about 70 artifacts on loan from 10 museums and private collections that help illustrate the pope's association with the Jewish community from the time of his childhood and how these life-long associations shaped his papacy, the church and Jewish-Catholic relations.

"A Blessing to One Another: Pope John

Paul II and the Jewish People" was created and produced by Xavier University of Cincinnati, Hillel Jewish Student Center of Cincinnati, and The Shtetl Foundation of New York. The Jewish Foundation of Cincinnati served as lead financial sponsor with major underwriting by Xavier University.

Also displayed at the HMH, in the Central Gallery from July 17 – Feb. 7, 2010, is "Besa: Muslims Who Saved Jews During the Holocaust."

U.S. Bishops Urge Congress to Observe Respect for Life, Access for All in Health Care Legislation

WASHINGTON — "Genuine health care reform that protects the life and dignity of all is a moral imperative and a vital national obligation," said Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., as he outlined the policy priorities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) on the issue of health care in a July 17 letter to Congress. The letter supported efforts to pass health care reform, but warned against inclusion of abortion.

Writing on behalf of the bishops as chairman of their Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, Bishop Murphy said the bishops have advocated comprehensive health care reform for decades and recommended four criteria for fair and just health care reform: respect for human life and dignity, access for all, pluralism and equitable costs.

"Two of these criteria need special attention as Congress moves forward with health care reform," Bishop Murphy said.

On respecting life and dignity, he said, "No health care reform plan should compel us or others to pay for the destruction of human life, whether through government funding or mandatory coverage of abortion. Any such action would be morally wrong."

After citing protections from public funding of abortion in U.S. law, Bishop Murphy added, "Health care reform cannot be a vehicle for abandoning this consensus which respects freedom of conscience and honors our best American traditions. Any legislation should reflect longstanding and widely supported current policies on abortion funding, mandates and conscience protections because they represent sound morality, wise policy and political reality."

On the issue of access for all, Bishop Murphy said, "All people need and should have access to comprehensive, quality health care that they can afford, and it should not depend on their stage of life, where or whether they or their parents work, how much they earn, where they live, or where they were born. The Bishops' Conference believes health care reform should be truly universal and it should be genuinely affordable."

He went on to cite that, even after the implementation of health care reform,

\$100 million contract aids Catholic Charities' natural disaster work

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The expertise honed by years of resolute follow-up work with natural disaster victims has landed Catholic Charities USA a five-year federal contract potentially worth more than \$100 million. The contract with the Department of Health and Human Services is the first the Alexandria, Va.-based agency has received from the federal government. Father Larry Snyder, president of Catholic Charities USA, said the contract will allow the agency to step in immediately in the days after a natural disaster strikes anywhere across the U.S. or its territories to ensure that victims' basic needs are met and to follow up on in-

dividual cases for up to 18 months. "When you look at case management, that's where Catholic Charities excels," Father Snyder told Catholic News Service July 31.

Archbishop O'Brien calls for world to eliminate nuclear stockpiles

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A member of the U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace called upon attendees at a nuclear deterrence symposium to work to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Archbishop Edwin F. O'Brien of Baltimore told an audience of 500 people gathered for the military-sponsored symposium in Omaha, Neb., July 29 that the abolishment of nuclear weapons was an issue of "fundamental moral values that should unite people across national and ideological boundaries." "Our world and its leaders must stay focused on the destination of a nuclear weapons-free world and on the concrete steps that lead there," he said. The full text of Archbishop O'Brien's talk, "Nuclear Weapons and Moral Questions: The Path to Zero," can be found online at www.usccb.org/sdwp/international/nuclearzero.shtml.

Mexican bishops criticize federal police for drug raid during Mass

MEXICO CITY (CNS) — The Mexican Catholic bishops' conference has criticized federal police for bursting into a Mass in Mexico's western Michoacan state to apprehend an alleged drug-cartel lieutenant. "Nothing explains this kind of action inside a religious place and much less in these moments where Mexico is noted internationally as an insecure and violent country," the bishops said. The Aug. 1 raid marked the first time that police officers have burst into a parish to arrest suspects linked to organized crime, said Father Mateo Calvillo Paz, spokesman for the Archdiocese of Morelia, which is in Michoacan. Father Calvillo said police "took advantage of the Mass to assault a large number of 'narcos'" and avoid bloodshed, but showed ignorance of the importance of the Mass.

Pope Benedict XVI's Intentions August 2009

General: That public opinion may be more aware of the problem of millions of displaced persons and refugees and that concrete solutions may be found for their often tragic situation.

Mission: That those Christians who are discriminated against and persecuted in many countries because of the name of Christ may have their human rights, equality and religious freedom recognized, in order to be able to live and profess their own faith freely.

Traveling light: storing up treasures in heaven

Continued from p. 15

kingdom. When we are attached to our stuff and our homes and our petty evidence of success, we cannot respond to our Christian mission and its many demands: to help our neighbors, to serve the poor and to catch each spiritual lesson in our path. We are distracted, occupied.

St. Matthew would've abhorred the sight of our stuffed storage units. "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal," he admonished. "But store up treasures in heaven... For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be."

He was calling for a bigger picture, an attachment and investment in the divine, unmarred by cobwebs and sin. "If you wish to be perfect," Jesus told the young man who heeded the 10 commandments,

"go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me."

That billboard motivated me. I'm downsizing my shoe collection. The stilettos were slowing me down.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights.

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Pope expresses sadness at death of Aquino, praises her leadership

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI expressed his sadness at the death of former Philippine President Corazon Aquino and praised her commitment to freedom and justice for Filipinos. Aquino, 76, died Aug. 1 after a battle with colon cancer. Tens of thousands of Filipinos lined the streets Aug. 3 as her coffin made its way from San Juan City to Manila's cathedral for a wake and an Aug. 5 funeral. Aquino was installed as president in 1986 after a church-led people's uprising in Manila deposed President Ferdinand Marcos and paved the way for restoring the country's democratic institutions. She served as the country's first female president until stepping down in 1992.

Turkish government denies Christian request for church in Tarsus

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Despite a personal request from Pope Benedict XVI and repeated requests by Christian leaders in Turkey, the Turkish government has decided that the only church in Tarsus, the city of St. Paul's birth, will remain a government museum. The Church of St. Paul, built as a Catholic church in the 1800s and confiscated by the government in 1943,

was used throughout the 2008-2009 year of St. Paul for prayer services by Christian pilgrims. After the end of the yearlong celebration, the Turkish government decided the building could not be used exclusively for worship. The government decided to return to the practice of allowing Christians to pray in the church as long as they made reservations three days in advance and bought an admission ticket.

Catholic official asks Nigerian state to pay for 11 burned churches

LAGOS, Nigeria (CNS) — A Catholic official in northeastern Nigeria has asked the Borno state government to pay for 11 Christian churches burned by Islamic extremists. Father Heladuwa John William, administrator of the Diocese of Maiduguri, also said it was wrong to conclude that the five days of violence in late July were not related to religion because "no single mosque was reportedly damaged." Father William made the appeal Aug. 1 and chronicled the violence in Borno, Bauchi, Yobe and Kano states. Red Cross and military officials said that in Maiduguri alone, more than 700 people were killed in an uprising by Boko Haram, an extremist Islamic group that opposes Western education and insists on the imposition of Shariah, or Islamic law.

Back to School!

Continued from p. 1

a master's degree in secondary education from Southern Arkansas University and his Catholic school administration certification from the University of Dallas.

He had been the assistant principal and dean of students at STJ from August 2004 to June 2005 before becoming the principal at the Highlands School in Irving, Texas. Before returning to STJ in January 2009, he worked for two years as a program manager for the Army ROTC college scholarship program.

Prior to becoming an educator, Mr. Winstead served in the U.S. Army for over 26 years as a Logistics officer and retired as a colonel in July 2001. He and his wife, Lillian, have four children, three of whom have graduated from the University of Dallas, and the youngest, Michael, who will begin STJ as a freshman this year.

Before becoming principal at Holy Cross, Mrs. Kucera taught 3rd grade at Tenie Holmes Elementary in Bay City. She received her bachelor's in business administration and her master's in educational administration, both at UHV in Victoria. She and her husband, Shane, have two children, Tyler, nine years old,

and Julianne, six years of age.

If you are wondering what day your local Catholic school will be returning, please find your school listed below. If you have any questions on how you might enroll your youngster, please contact a Catholic school near you for more information or visit the Web site at www.victoriadiocese.org.

Remember, "Catholic Schools: F.I.R.S.T. Class Education...for life!"

August 17
Sacred Heart Elementary and

High, Hallettsville; St. Michael Elementary, Cuero; Shiner Elementary and High, Shiner; Our Lady of Victory Elementary, Victoria; Nazareth Academy, Victoria; St. Philip Elementary, El Campo; St. Joseph High School, Victoria; St. Joseph Elementary, Yoakum; and Holy Cross Elementary, Bay City

August 18

St. Anthony Elementary, Columbus

August 19

St. Rose of Lima Elementary, Schulenburg, and Our Lady of the Gulf Elementary, Port Lavaca

August 20

St. Michael Elementary, Weimar



88th ANNUAL SHINER CATHOLIC CHURCH FALL 2009 PICNIC, SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 6 LEGION PARK, SHINER



Masses:
Saturday — 5:00 p.m. (Polka Mass)
Sunday — 7:30 & 9:30 a.m. Also
Traditional Latin Mass at 11:00 am

MUSIC & DANCING Inside AIR CONDITIONED Hall Free Admission

11 a.m. — 2 p.m.

Accordion Music

2 - 4 p.m.

Shiner Hobo Band

4 — 8 p.m.
OUTSIDE BEER GARDEN MUSIC
By Jack Motley
Bring your lawn chairs for your listening pleasure

DANCE
9 p.m. to 1 a.m.
EMOTIONS
\$8.00 Admission charged
inside hall beginning at 8 p.m.

FREE Dance for the Children
8-10 p.m. - Ages: 3-10
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Drive thru "Plates to Go" from
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12 Noon

Cattle Auction: 2:30 p.m.
Bring Your Lawn Chairs

COUNTRY STORE

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Served from 8 a.m. until ...

Father Gabriel Bentil celebrates 25 years of priesthood

Continued from p. 1

During Mass, Father Gabriel said he had such joy because of all who came from throughout the diocese to celebrate with him. "Surely you are a part of my life story," he said. He thanked Bishop David E. Fellhauer, who presided at the Thanksgiving Mass, for appointing him to St. Joseph Parish in Inez.

In his homily, Father Gabriel said, "As I celebrate my 25th anniversary, Pope Benedict set aside this year as the Year of the Priest. In the readings, Jeremiah had prophesied, 'Woe to you who mislead my flock.' Due to their human weaknesses and shortcomings, there are times when our human weaknesses can come to play. So I want to request that you pray for me and all priests, and Bishop Fellhauer, so that we can keep up with all the responsibilities."

Father Gabriel came from a large family, with 10 sisters and four brothers. He said his father would pray, 'God, make one of my children a priest or a nun.' His father wept for joy when he told him he was entering the seminary.

Of Father Gabriel's ordination class of five, only he and another are still ministering, he said. Two died at early ages, and another left the priesthood. "I tell you these stories to tell you we need your prayers," he said.

Nearing the end of Mass, Bishop Fellhauer spoke saying, "We are so blessed, so glad Father Gabriel is here." He thanked

God for the gift of the priesthood and said, "God has given Father Gabriel so many gifts, and we're so blessed that he's sharing them with us."

Father Gabriel was born June 27, 1956, in Takoradi, Ghana, and ordained to the priesthood on July 14, 1984. He was associate pastor of Good Shepherd Parish in Tema, Ghana, from 1984-1989, and was then the spiritual director of St. Paul Major Seminary in Accra, Ghana, from 1990-2001. He received a diploma in Human Growth and Development in 1990 and an advanced certificate in Integrative Spiritual Counseling in 2003, both from the Institute of St. Anselm, Kent, England. He spent another two years as a Cardinal Bernardin Scholar and received an Ecumenical Doctor of Ministry at Catholic Theological Union in 2006.

Rev. Augustine Nsiah Asante, once a student of Father Gabriel's in Ghana, and now parochial vicar at St. Philip Parish in El Campo, also concelebrated the Mass with Father Gabriel and Bishop Fellhauer. The Mass had to be televised in the parish hall because of the overflow crowd of wellwishers. Following the early morning Mass, the St. Joseph parishioners held an anniversary brunch in the parish hall. Father Gabriel's sister, Mrs. Mary Fynn, had flown in from Ghana the evening before for the celebration, and his cousins, who currently live in Dallas, were also in attendance.

By Cynthia Brewer

Don Jank, a parishioner of Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria, recently returned from 76 days of volunteer work at "El Calvario" Church in San Salvador, El Salvador.

His work consisted of helping to paint the outside of the church and assisting Father José Del Carmen Escobar with the construction of a shelter that will house 20 homeless people at night.

Don, a retired cash register repairman and a graduate of St. Joseph Catholic School in Yoakum, is 72 years old. Don't let his age fool you; this work isn't for the fainthearted. At the church, Don worked from the top of a 24-foot ladder and at times with a safety harness on a ledge with a 30-foot drop below.

The El Salvador trip in winter/spring of 2009 actually happened because of his openness to helping as a tourist in Lima, Peru, in 2007, which then led to "Mission Honduras" work in October 2008, and now he's already got volunteer work set up for January 2010 in the Dominican Republic. Regarding the volunteer work, he says, "It opened up for me, so health permitting, I'm going."

"What started this whole thing was an October trip to Bolivia, Peru, Panama and Costa Rica in 2007," Don said.

While he was visiting as a tourist for two days in Lima, Peru, he decided to visit one of the poorest sections of the city. He came across a halted building project of a three-level soup kitchen (comedor) for squatters on a Peruvian mountainside.

"The Peruvian government provides all the food for soup kitchens, free of charge," Don said, "but the people in the communities have to build the building and serve the food." Each day, the volunteer cooks receive a free meal for themselves and can take five meals home with them.

While visiting with a worker in charge of the building project, he asked what it would take to finish it.

"I was told it would take 53 sacks of cement to complete it and they could finish it in 60 days," he said. Less than a couple hundred U.S. dollars and the squatters would have access to one meal a day.

A missionary's work is never finished ...

"I was impressed," Don said. "Talk about the Holy Spirit working." With Don's assistance, cement was purchased for the project and the project was completed in a couple of months.

The following year he decided to work with the Catholic charity "Mission Honduras." He spent three weeks in Honduras shoveling cement and rock to build a foundation for a six-foot, chain-linked fence within the Mission Honduras compound and painting

homes for orphans and abandoned mothers with children. While there, he met a group of 12 medical volunteers who treated 700 people in one week.

While journeying to Honduras in 2008, he stopped for a three-day visit in San Salvador. This is where a friar introduced him to Father José Escobar, who told him about his project for the homeless. Of course, this

chance meeting led to his 76-day trip this year to San Salvador.

It was Father José's original plan to get 100 homeless persons off the streets at night, but the money from his order, Padres Somascos, of Italy was diverted to the African missions. The shelter he was able to build will provide beds, meals and showers for 20 men each night.

The project has been completed! Don just received a call on July 27 from Father Escobar telling him that eight homeless people planned to stay at the shelter that night. Two people will stay with them and attend to their needs.

Since Don left in March 2009, political turmoil has brought about chaos in the country. Father José had written to Don telling him that four vendors were killed outside of the church for not making "rental payments" to pandilla (gangs) and a grenade was thrown at the church gate, killing three and injuring 10.

"They just elected a new president there and perhaps this is all related to political unrest," Don reflected. "Or it could be just the 'poverty stricken' people speaking out in an extremely violent manner." The poverty that exists in El Salvador can lead to criminal activity, as the government mandated daily wage is only \$8 for ten hours labor; however, they use the US dollar monetary system.

"El Salvador is a country of only 8,000 square miles — about the size of Louisiana," Don said, "but when I left in March of this year, the papers reported 18 murders each day."

"Please pray for these good people, not to mention Father José," said Don, "that the crimes being committed there will subside or cease sometime soon."

Don goes on his next spiritual adventure in January 2010. He will be working with "Mission Honduras" in the Dominican Republic, one of several of its international sites, teaching English to Spanish-speaking high school students. He will be leaving

Jan. 23 for eight weeks.

Currently he is having trouble with his vocal chords. "If my vocal chord problems don't straighten out and I'm unable to teach," Don said, "I'll work on a building project in the same location. My plane fare has been paid, so I'm going regardless of the 'voice problems' I might have," he said.

Don emphasized that one does not need to be highly educated to do volunteer work, "God asks for availability, not ability, to do his work," he said.

Please contact the stateside volunteer coordinator, Joanie (Joan Fabiano), for information about "Mission Honduras International" at P. O. Box 56007, Chicago, Ill. 60650-0007; Phone: (773) 631-2916; Fax: (773) 751-2201; e-mail: donations@

missionhonduras.com; or go to their Web site at <http://www.missionhonduras.com/>.



Mr. Don Jank on mission.



A homeless man from San Salvador, who, hopefully, will find a bed at Father Escobar's evening shelter now that it's open.



"Of all the statues in El Calvario Church, to me the most beautiful one was in the priest's dining area," Don said. The statue, El Niño Jesus, has a gentle glow of fiber optic lighting behind it.

PRAYER FOR RAIN

By Marty Egan of Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish, Shiner

Our earth is parched, Lord
Send us rain
Our land, from river bed
to plain
Our pastures wide, our fields
our grain
They all do thirst, Lord
Send us rain

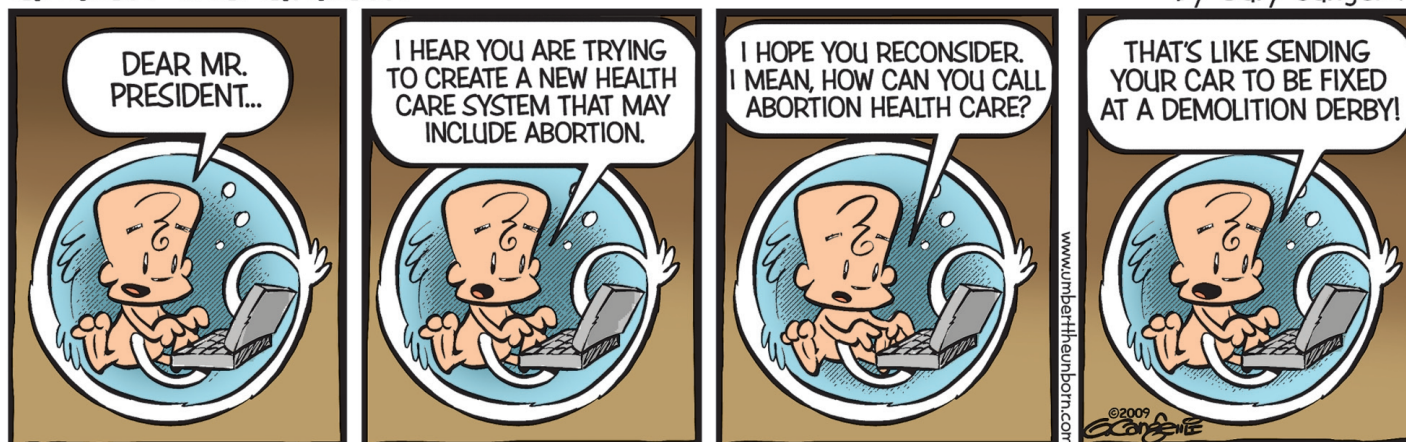
Our earth is scorched, Lord
Send us rain
The hot wind blows,
it will not wane
Give water of life
to drink again
Remove this drought
this test, this strain



Our earth is parched, Lord
Send us rain
Let not our pleas
be cried in vain
Through the Spirit,
in Jesus' name
Please send us rain
Please send us rain

Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi



Saint Isidore, patron of farmers, pray for us
Saint Floria, protector against fire, pray for us
Saint Barbara, patroness of firefighters, pray for us
Saints Cyril and Methodius, pray for us
Our Lady of Victory, patroness of our diocese, pray for us
Our Lady of the Annunciation, patroness of Texas, pray for us

Making A Difference

By Tony Magliano
Catholic News Service



Strong words from a gentle pope

It's powerful, it's wise, it's challenging, it's ancient and yet modern: It's Pope Benedict XVI's new encyclical letter "Charity in Truth" ("Caritas in Veritate").

Building on over 100 years of Catholic social teaching with a special concentration on Pope Paul VI's encyclical "The Development of Peoples" ("Populorum Progressio"), Pope Benedict takes his predecessor's groundbreaking teaching on international development -- with its emphasis on economic justice for all as the basis for peace -- and applies it to the economic crisis currently facing the whole world.

Among the contemporary issues the pope focuses on are globalization, microfinancing, intellectual property rights, embryonic research, technology and the environment. And among the old critical issues he concentrates on are poverty, hunger, abortion and violence.

To both new and old areas of concern, the Holy Father applies the always relevant, ancient teaching of the church: that "love is God's greatest gift to humanity, it is his promise and our hope."

Love (or charity) guided by truth teaches us to care for the needs of our human family, especially the vulnerable and poor.

In the truth of God's loving plan, human beings must always come before everything else, including profit. Profit is useful if it is a means toward a good end. However, "once profit becomes the exclusive goal, if it is produced by improper means and without the common good as its ultimate end, it risks destroying wealth and creating poverty," wrote the pope.

And that is primarily what caused our current economic crisis. Wealth was destroyed, and most of all, poverty was created as a result of a lust for profit that put the accumulation of money and other assets above the good of all.

As a result of this greed, well over 100 million additional people are now hungry.

According to a recent U.N. report, for the first time in history more than 1 billion fellow human beings are now starving or undernourished!

This unjust distribution of wealth is totally unacceptable to the Holy Father -- and should be totally unacceptable to us as well.

Like Pope Paul, Pope Benedict calls for the need to create "a model of market economy capable of including within its

range all peoples and not just the better off." He also continues Pope John Paul II's teaching of promoting a culture of life that recognizes and respects the interconnectedness of all human life from conception to natural death, including all of creation.

The Holy Father urges us to look at our planet as a living being. And he warns that

if we continue destroying our environment, we will end up destroying our own life source.

The pope is calling us to better understand and act on the whole of Catholic social teaching.

It is not enough to only

work for the protection of the unborn, or to promote nonviolence and peace, or to strive to end poverty and hunger, or to respect the integrity of creation.

Faithful Catholics are called to do all of the above to the best of our ability!

This encyclical letter is packed with information on spirituality, theology, economics, politics, ecology and more. It is impossible to cover it adequately in one sitting or one column.

Hopefully it will be the ongoing subject of college courses, clergy in-service days, numerous homilies, social justice committee gatherings, corporate board meetings, congressional debates and family conversations.

To do justice to this outstanding encyclical we need to study, pray with and consider how best to act on the teachings of "Charity in Truth."

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Pope's Encyclical Available for Purchase

WASHINGTON—Charity in Truth (Caritas In Veritate), Pope Benedict XVI's third encyclical, will be available for purchase as a book July 20, in English and Spanish, according to the USCCB Publishing Office.

John Carr, executive director of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development (JPHD), said the pope's encyclical "offers a much needed ethical analysis of the global economic crisis and an essential moral framework on how to move forward as one human family."

"The Holy Father insists that ethics and a priority for the poor need to be at the heart of economic life," Carr said. "The pope challenges each of us to put charity and truth, justice and the common good at the heart of our economic choices and everyday lives."

Charity in Truth (Caritas In Veritate) covers several issues integral to Catholic Social Teaching. The pope places charity at the heart of the Church's social doctrine. He also calls for a new way of

doing business to ensure the stability and welfare of all stakeholders, including workers and society at large. The global economy, problems with non-renewable energy resources, and a need for a new world political authority are other issues the pope discusses in the encyclical.

The USCCB's Department of Justice, Peace and Human Development is developing study and reflection guides to accompany Charity in Truth (Caritas In Veritate). The guides include session templates with excerpts from the encyclical, short prayers, and discussion questions. Paul Henderson, USCCB Publishing director, highlighted the value of the study guides as "aids for people to reflect on the Holy Father's encyclical and put it into action in their own communities."

Charity in Truth (Caritas In Veritate), Publication numbers 7-049 (English) and 7-806 (Spanish), is \$6.95 per copy and can be ordered online at <http://www.usccbpublishing.org>. The study guides will be available as free downloads at <http://www.usccb.org/jphd/caritasin-veritate/>.



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Pope prays priests will be in love with Christ

By Catholic News Service

CASTEL GANDOLFO, Italy (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI prayed that the world's priests would be totally in love with Christ and would serve God and their brothers and sisters like many saintly priests did.

Reciting the Angelus prayer Aug. 2 with visitors gathered in the courtyard of the papal villa at Castel Gandolfo, Pope Benedict spoke about the 2009-2010 Year for Priests.

In deepening an understanding of the role of priests, he said, the church's calendar of saints offers "true models of spirituality and priestly dedication."

Remembering St. Alphonsus Liguori Aug. 1, the church honored a "great master of moral theology and model of Christian and pastoral virtue," he said.

The celebration Aug. 2 of the "Pardon of Assisi," a plenary indulgence St. Francis of Assisi convinced the pope to grant in 1216 -- and one which still is granted annually at Franciscan churches and shrines -- demonstrates the concern of St. Francis for the forgiveness and salvation of all people, he said.

The feast of St. John Vianney, patron of parish priests, is Aug. 4. The Year for Priests coincides with the 150th anniversary of the French priest's death and Pope Benedict said he would talk about the saint during his weekly general audience Aug. 5 at Castel Gandolfo.

Pope Benedict said he also wanted to remember Pope Paul VI, who died Aug. 6, 1978, in Castel Gandolfo.

"His life, so profoundly priestly and rich in humanity, remains a gift to the church, for which we must thank God," the pope said.

He prayed that Mary would "help priests to be totally in love with Christ, following the example of these models of priestly holiness."



Parish Diary

By Father Peter J. Daly
Catholic News Service



It's Only Money

It's only money.

In tough economic times, it is important to remember that.

A few weeks ago we had a terrible spate of murders and suicides in our area, all of them thought to be related to the recent economic meltdown.

In one terrible case a man killed his wife and three children and then took his own life. He was apparently \$460,000 in debt, half of it on credit cards. He had been a good Catholic, worker and father. He just gave up.

Across the Potomac River from me, the acting chief financial officer of Freddie Mac, the huge government-backed mortgage company, took his own life at age 41. He had worked for Freddie Mac for 16 years, his entire professional career.

He had watched the company melt down. He had become the acting CFO only a few months before. Under huge stress,

he tried to resign. His boss was concerned and told him to take a few days off and think it over.

He went home and reportedly hung himself in the basement.

Just to the north of me in Baltimore, a lawyer from Long Island, who was visiting his daughter, a sophomore at Loyola College, killed his wife and two daughters and then himself at a suburban hotel. The house-keeping staff made the terrible discovery.

Evidently the lawyer had run some kind of investment fund. It had gone bankrupt. One friend of his had invested \$500,000. The friend needed the money immediately. In despair and shame the lawyer annihilated himself and his family.

These men despaired. Why?

In God's great mercy, I'm sure they are forgiven. God knew their clouded thinking. God knew the dark curtain of despair that had come over them.

But these poor men were wrong.

We have to remember that money is only money. It is not the measure of our worth. It is not our true security. It is not our ultimate salvation.

For men especially, so much of our identity is tied up in our ability to provide for our families. Our self-worth comes from our work. Failure as a provider and a worker seems like failure as a father, husband and person.

But it isn't. We need the resignation of Job: "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

We need the acceptance of the father of the prodigal son in Luke's Gospel. So, the money was gone, but the boy is alive. Kill the fatted calf and let's rejoice.

Money is important in consumer culture. It gives us security. It gives us dignity. And work gives us joy because we feel productive.

But when it all collapses, it is not the end.

If these men had confided in their wives and children, I'm sure each would have said, "It's OK, Dad, we can start over. So long as we have each other, we will survive and thrive."

If only they had called their pastors.

In the last few months, I have dealt with three different families facing financial ruin and foreclosure. What did I try to get across to them?

Do not despair.

You are more than your bank account.

You are more than your house.

You are more than your credit rating.

As Christians, our hope is not in the things of this world. Our hope is in Christ. That is more than a theological proposition. It is the bedrock on which we build our lives.

See the lilies of the field. See the birds of the air. Are you not worth more than these?!

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Special Collections**Retired and needy priests of the Diocese - Sept. 5-6
Ongoing Events**

To see the full listing of all on-going ministries within the Diocese of Victoria see the diocesan calendar at: www.jiavic.com/misc/calendar.htm or call the office for information at (361) 573-0828.

Engaged Encounter—Register as soon as you have contacted your pastor due to limited space. *It is strongly recommended that you attend an encounter weekend four to six months prior to your wedding date.* For a registration form, contact your pastor, visit the **Web site at** www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm, or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The dates for 2009 are: Sept. 11-13 and Nov. 20-22. The dates for 2010 are: Feb. 26-28, April 16-18, June 25-27, Sept. 24-26 and Nov. 19-21. For more info., call (361) 573-0828 ext. 30. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

Marriage Encounter—A Marriage Encounter weekend will be held at the Spiritual Renewal Center Aug. 28-30 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Friday evening. The Marriage Encounter Weekend is open to married couples, Catholic and non-Catholic. World-wide Marriage Encounter is designed to make good marriages even better. To register, please contact Milton and Diane Rejcek at (979) 245-0323 or at: register@mevictoria.org

Picnics, Activities, etc.**August**

Weimar—St. Michael Harvest Feast Aug. 9 at the Veteran's Memorial Park. A fried-chicken and stew dinner begins at 11:00 a.m. at \$7 p/p for adults and plates-to-go and \$4 p/p for children 12 and under. There will be entertainment for all: train ride, country store, cakewalk, ring toss and more. Auction starts at 1:00 p.m. Refreshments and food throughout the day. Music by Shiner Hobo Band 12:00-2:00 p.m.; Czechaholics 2:00-6:00 p.m.; and The Red Ravens 6:00-10:00 p.m. There will be a Men's Softball tournament Saturday and Sunday, contact Carl Prihoda at (979) 263-5806.

Praha—St. Mary Parish Picnic Aug. 15 with Mass at 10:00 a.m. (weekend Mass Sat. at 6:00 p.m./Sunday at 8:30 a.m.). A dinner will be served from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. featuring Praha stew and fried-chicken at \$7 p/p for adults and plates-to-go and \$4 each for children. There will be a cakewalk, country store and much more. The auction begins at 1:00 p.m. Music throughout the day and evening with Praha Brothers from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. and 3:00-5:00 p.m.; Dujka Brothers from 1:00-3:00 p.m. and 5:00-7:00 p.m.; and Red Ravens from 7:00-11:00 p.m. Food available throughout the afternoon and evening with hamburgers available after 4:00 p.m. For more information go to www.stmaryspraha.com.

Victoria—Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser Aug. 16 at the KC Hall (3610 N. Ben Wilson at Airline). The price is \$6 per chicken. Beans and Spanish rice available for \$1.50 per pint. Sale starts at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit council's projects. For information, call the hall that morning at 575-9214.

Victoria—Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court St. Ann Games Party Monday, Aug. 17, from 6:00-9:00 p.m. at the KC Hall (3610 N. Ben Wilson) with admission at \$7 p/p. For reservations (required) call Dianne Beatty at 575-7042; Patty Schaar at 578-2603; Joyce Morris at 575-5817; or Linn Boehm at 576-1491.

Shiner—Eric Genuis Concert at Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church Sunday, August 23, 6:30 p.m. There is no admission charge. See pg. 13 for more information.

Victoria—Our Lady of Victory Boy Scout Troop #364 Annual Chicken-Barbecue Dinner Aug. 23 at OLV Cafeteria from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Dine-in or plates-to-go available at \$7 p/p. Bake sale items available.

El Campo—KC Council 2490 will hold their Barbecue Dinner Aug. 30, with a portion of the proceeds going to the St. Philip's School Teacher Supply Fund.

September

Cuero—Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish Jamaica Sept. 6 at the parish hall grounds (207 Graham). A Mexican dinner (tamales, w/chili con carne, rice, beans, salad and dessert) served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at \$6.50 with dine-in at the a/c hall. Many activities, food and refreshments throughout the day with the auction beginning at 1:00 p.m. in the parish hall. Free music and street dancing from 12:00 p.m. -11:30 p.m. with DJ Tony, DJ Magic Man, Conjunto music and Los Mismos. A volleyball tournament starts at 8:00 a.m. and a horseshoe tournament starts at 4:00 p.m.

High Hill—St. Mary 149th Parish Picnic Sept. 6 on the parish grounds (2833 FM 2672) starting with a flag-raising ceremony at 9:30 a.m., followed by a Polka Mass at 10:00 a.m. A fried-chicken and stew lunch served at 11:00 a.m. at \$7 p/p for adults and \$4 p/p for children; drive-thru starts at 10:30 a.m. with plates at \$7 p/p. The auction begins at 1:00

p.m. Music during the day by Texas Sound Czech and Mark Halata/Texavia, and a free dance at night by Texas Dream. Booths include a cakewalk, country store, duck pond, ring toss, train ride, the famous souvenir booth and much more. There will be a horseshoe tournament at 1:00 p.m. Bingo starts at 2:00 p.m. in the a/c parish hall. Hamburgers, nachos and more available all day and a spectacular fireworks show at 10:00 p.m.

Shiner—Sts. Cyril and Methodius Picnic Sept. 6 at the American Legion Park. A sausage, stew and fried-chicken dinner will be served in the a/c dining room from 10:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. with drive-thru plates-to-go available from the KC Hall (Hwy. 90A East) from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. There will be a country store, arts & crafts, games, cake and plant wheels and much more. The big auction begins at noon. Music throughout the day and night.

Hallettsville—Sacred Heart Festival Sept. 6 at the KC Hall. A country-fried chicken, stew and cornbread dressing dinner served from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. with dine-in or drive-thru plates-to-go available. The auction begins at 1:00 p.m. There will be games, horseshoe pitching and washer pitching contest, free dance under the outdoor pavilion-biergarten from 1:00 to 10:00 p.m. There will be hamburgers and much more in the afternoon.

Nada—St. Mary Parish Festival and Homecoming Sept. 6 at the community center. A barbecue-beef and sausage dinner served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for dine-in or drive-thru plates-to-go available. The auction begins at 1:00 p.m. There will be music, games and entertainment throughout the day.

Vanderbilt—St. John Bosco Annual Parish Picnic Sept. 6, to be held at Trinity Family Center with barbecue brisket and sausage plates at \$7.50 p/p; plates-to-go also available. The auction begins at 1:00 p.m.; games, refreshments, cakewalk, religious and craft store and much more for young and young at heart.

Inez—St. Joseph Annual Parish Picnic, Sept. 13 at the community center. A fried-chicken, brisket and sausage dinner at \$7 p/p. Plates-to-go begin at 10:30 a.m. and serving inside begins at 11:00 a.m. The auction starts at 1:00 p.m. There will be kids games, country store, cakewalk, silent auction and more.

Wharton—Knights of Columbus Council 3262 Bazaar and Celebration Sept 13, at the K of C Home, 2820 North Fulton. Serving barbecue-beef and sausage dinner at 11:00 a.m. —dine-in or drive-thru available at \$7.50 p/p (advance) or \$8 p/p at door. There will be an auction, games, raffle and much more. For more information, please contact: Leroy Dettling (979) 532-2218 or Richard Zahn (979) 282-2451.

Yorktown—Holy Cross Festival Sept. 13 at the community hall across from the church, beginning after the 9:30 a.m. Mass at the church, located at 1214 Zorn Rd. Homemade sausage, barbecue plates, games, cakewalk, country store, live auction and many more things to see and do.

San Antonio—3rd Annual Pilgrim Center of Hope Golf Tournament, Friday, Sept. 25, at Olympia Hills Golf & Conference Center (Universal City); Time: Registration at 11:00 a.m.; Tee Time at noon; Shotgun Start - 4 Person Scramble. Cost is \$80 per golfer. For more information, contact Rudy Sotelo at (210) 699-9795 or Rene Farias at (210) 493-1913.

Bloomington—St. Patrick Turkey Dinner Sept. 27

El Campo—St. Philip annual picnic Sept. 27 at the KC Hall (Armory Road, just off South Hwy. 71). A prime-cut beef barbecue and sausage dinner will be served beginning at 11:00 a.m. at \$7 p/p, dine-in a/c hall or plates-to-go available. Music by Dujka Brothers will perform from 10:00 a.m.-Noon and 2:00-4:00 p.m. The Twilites will also be performing Noon-2:00 p.m. and 4:00-6:00 p.m. inside the KC Hall. Other activities include a huge country auction beginning at 1:00 p.m., bingo, 'Second Time Around' booth, country store, cake wheel, fish pond and a variety of other activities including rides for the children.

Meyersville—Sts. Peter and Paul Annual Festival Sept. 27 with a barbecue-beef dinner serving from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at \$7 p/p (adult) and \$4 p/p for (children under 12), with dine-in or plates-to-go available. Live auction begins at 1:00 p.m. There will be a country store, cakewalk, kid's games and much more for everyone to enjoy. Mass: Saturday 7:00 p.m. and Sunday: 10:15 a.m. located at 11220 FM 237.

Upcoming Events

Hungerford—St. John's Annual Bazaar Oct. 4 at the community center. A barbecue- chicken, beef and sausage dinner served along with sauerkraut begins at 10:30 a.m. The auction starts at 12:30 p.m. There will be games, country store, cakewalk, and much more for your entertainment.

Columbus—St. Anthony Fall Festival Oct. 11 at the KC Hall (I-10 West/Glidden Exit). A barbecue beef and sausage dinner begins at 11:00 a.m. Also serving pit barbecue, Mexican food and hamburgers. There will be lots of booths, auction and something for everyone to enjoy.

East Bernard—Holy Cross Bazaar Oct. 11

Victoria—Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Parish Festival Oct. 11 at the community center; doors open at 11:00 a.m. A buffet style barbecue beef and sausage dinner will be served. There will be booths and games for the entire family to enjoy. The auction begins at 12:30 p.m. in the annex.

Eagle Lake—Parish of the Nativity Picnic Oct. 18 at the pavilion located at 545 South Austin. The meal will be served from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The auction begins at 1:00 p.m. Food will be served throughout the day along with a variety of booths, games, activities and a dance.

La Salle— St. Theresa Annual Parish Picnic Oct. 18

Seadrift—St. Patrick Annual Turkey Dinner will be held Oct. 25, at the parish hall. Serving begins at 11:00 a.m. Plates are \$7 p/p.

Praha—Veterans Memorial Service, Nov. 8 at 9:30 a.m.

Masses • Retreats • Conferences

Victoria — Charismatic Healing Mass, Wednesday, Sept. 2 with Father Stan De Boe O.S.S.T. as celebrant at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, 108 W. River St., Victoria. Rosary begins at 7:00 p.m.; Mass at 7:30 p.m. Everyone is welcome to attend: Adoration, Praising, Singing.

Victoria — Our Lady of Sorrows Prayer Group invites you to come and meet Sonia Sanchez, singer and evangelizer from Pharr, Texas, Sept. 16 at 7:00 p.m. at Our Lady of Sorrows Church.

Irving—2009 Seminarian Welcome Dinner at Holy Trinity Seminary of the Diocese of Dallas, Oct. 6, at 5:00 p.m. at the Fairmont Hotels & Resorts. www.holytrinityseminary.com/wd2009/

San Antonio—Catholic Women's Conference, Sept. 11 – 12, at St. Matthew Catholic Church, 10703 Wurzbach Rd., 78230. The mission of the CWC is to renew families and society by enriching women's relationship with God, fostering appreciation for the personal dignity of women and inspiring women to use their feminine gifts for the good of all. Early-registration \$45/Regular reg. (after Aug. 12) \$55. Fee includes box lunch and conf. packet worth \$25. For more information contact Sarah Stravitsch at cwc@catholic.org or (210) 521-3377.

Victoria—St. Mary's Altar Society Retreat, Sept. 30; Retreat Master: Father Charles Sonnier; Time: 9:30 a.m. – noon; Ends with Mass and lunch; More information to follow.

Houston—Coming Events at Holocaust Museum Houston – Education Center and Memorial: www.hmh.org/pc_home.asp.

Houston — 2009 Scripture Seminar: The Psalms in the Life and Worship of the Church, featuring Father Lawrence Boadt, CSP, and Dr. Renata Furst, October 5 – 8, St. Mary's Seminary. For more information, please visit www.TXcatholic.org or contact the Texas Catholic Conference at (512) 339-9882.

Pilgrimages

Pilgrimage to the Holy Land—Father José Ángel Ortiz of the Diocese of Corpus Christi invites you to follow the footsteps of our Lord Jesus Christ, Pray on the Mount of Beatitudes, renew your marriage vows in Cana, celebrate Mass in the Upper Room, the Church of Nativity, and take a swim in the Dead Sea and much more! Departure and return from Bush Intercontinental from Sept. 8-17. Cost is \$2,350 with only \$200 to reserve your place. For more information call Father Ortiz at (361) 643-4505 or e-mail: icgregory.org.

**Parish holds
“Movie Night”**

SHINER—On Wednesday evening, June 24, parish-ioners of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church in Shiner gathered together for the first ever parish movie night sponsored by the parish altar server program. The idea came about as a result of a desire by parishioners to get together to enjoy fellowship with one another without having to work to raise funds for some parish cause. And what better way to do that than to gather together in the air-conditioned parish hall on a hot summer's evening and enjoy free hot dogs, popcorn, nachos, cookies and drinks, while watching the 1966 comedy classic “The Trouble with Angels,” starring Hayley Mills, June Harding and Rosalind Russell. “The event was a total success! The altar server adult sponsors and I who organized this event really did not know how many people to plan for. We were hoping for 30 people, but instead we had close to 100 adults and children! Everyone enjoyed the evening, even those of us in the kitchen who never stopped serving the movie treats!,” Father Tommy Chen, parochial vicar of Sts. Cyril and Methodius said. “We are definitely planning another parish movie night and we hope even more parishioners will come out!”

Concealed Handguns ... A Ministry?

By Cynthia Brewer

Deacon David Valdez not only preaches to parishioners at Sunday Mass at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Wharton, Texas, but also to those wishing to obtain a concealed handgun permit.

Deacon David has been a Texas Department of Public Safety Certified Concealed Handgun Instructor for eight years and a permanent deacon for the Diocese of Victoria since his ordination on July 29, 2006.



Deacon David Valdez, a Texas Department of Public Safety Certified Concealed Handgun Instructor, teaches CHL classes at his family business, Chamberlin Ace Hardware in southwest Houston, almost every Saturday of the month. The only weekend he does not teach is when he is assigned to preach at the Masses at Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Wharton. His students will hear a mixture of state and divine law in his classes.

Why would a Catholic clergyman be a trainer for concealed handgun license (CHL)?

Deacon David says it's simple, "To spread the Gospel message of the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ."

"In the beginning it was just a gun class," he said. "As I went through the diaconate program, the class began to change, and when I was ordained, it really changed."

"I realized that people who attend the class are searching for knowledge," Deacon David said, "they just don't realize what that knowledge is yet."

In class, a student's first thought may be that they'll learn all about guns and how and where to shoot the "bad guy," but when they get there, they find out that God is present, even in the "bad guy."

"I'm paid to teach state law, but I'm obligated by my ordination to teach divine law," he said. "So I teach both, with divine law always superceding state law."

Deacon David is one of three instructors in Wharton County, one of 1,500 in the state of Texas.

— Non-violent Dispute Resolution - Say it with tact! —

The state of Texas uses the "Child, Parent and Adult Ego States" to teach non-violent dispute resolution in CHL classes because the state doesn't want the one permitted to carry a gun to start a fight;

they want him to de-escalate it. Deacon David uses the same methods, but with a Christian twist.

The best way to avoid a confrontation is to remain in the adult ego state — which is non-biased, not prejudiced. David likes to call it the Christian-ego-state.

"One of the biggest teaching moments is when we're discussing how we talk to one another," David says. When we get angry we tend to talk in an authoritative, parent state, but the only response we can expect is an uncooperative one; then it's like two children arguing.

Deacon David uses the example of avoiding an argument/fight over a parking space: If you pull into a parking space and someone confronts you saying, 'You could see that I was waiting to park there,' you can argue about it or de-escalate to convert the angry driver to an adult state.

To do this, he suggests apologizing and saying, 'Oh, I didn't realize that, but I can see that now. I'll move.' Just take his word for it and go back to your car and offer to move.

"When you do this, you shock the other guy," the deacon said. "He's embarrassed to look you in the face. Most likely he'll turn away and say, 'That's OK, I already found another spot.' You're 'killing him with kindness.'"

"The Christian ego state always puts the other person first. We have an opportunity to be Christ to someone who is angry and hurt and bring peace to him. If we remember this," he said, "to treat the person like Christ in the beginning, a lot of bad situations can be avoided."

— Don't shoot people over garage sale items —

The state says we have the right to shoot someone if they're taking our stuff. However, Deacon David likes to paraphrase Jesus in John 8:7 and say, 'He who has never stolen, take the first shot.'

David teaches that we're not supposed to protect items with a gun; only lives are worth protecting with a gun. The purpose of using deadly force is to stop someone from hurting us.

"Notice it is to 'stop' someone, not to kill someone," he said. "If your intent is to kill someone, then you're a murderer. There is not one penal code that gives one the right to murder."

He's taught his children that if they're out in the field and something looks suspicious, go to the house and call 911.

"If you're still being threatened, barricade yourself in your room, and if they still come after you, then shoot," he said, "and when you shoot them, pray for them, for they weren't shown the way, the truth and the life."

The gun is intended to stop the aggres-

sor. People will ask David, 'What about hitting the kneecap?' He responds, 'If you hit my kneecap, you make me mad, and when you're nervous, you're not going to be able to aim at such a small target.'

Aim at the mass — not to kill, but to stop. "They might die, he said, "but that wasn't your intention."

This again is a teaching of the Church. The Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes St. Thomas Aquinas in para. 2263: "The act of self-defense can have a double effect: the preservation of one's own life; and the killing of the aggressor ... The one is intended, the other is not."

— Love Your Enemies —

"I like to confuse the people who come in wanting a license to 'shoot to kill,' or who have an attitude of 'it's us against them,'" Deacon David said.

"We want to point the finger at the gang member," he said. "We're so good at saying he sinned, but we don't know his situation, only God knows. We should be asking, 'Who is showing them the goodness of Christ?'"

He tries to get the students to have compassion, to realize the criminal is someone's father, son, or daughter who's been led down the wrong path.

Recently, a Muslim gentleman in class commented that if someone kills a person, he deserves to die. Deacon David sees these instances as teaching moments. By the next day at the shooting range he could see that his teachings were beginning to unfold for him. The gentleman stayed an extra two hours just to discuss these new thoughts.



Deacon David Valdez on the day of his ordination at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria July 29, 2006.

"These are not my ideas, but the teachings of the Catholic Church," Deacon David said. "But, where's a Muslim, or for that matter, a Protestant, or anyone who doesn't go to church, going to hear Catholic teaching? I teach these classes as if they're a bunch of short homilies."

"I don't know how many times I've been thanked for the class, and then the person adds, 'and by the way the information on the guns was good too.'"

"I've also been told, 'You've changed my life. I was going to blow the scum away.

I never recognized them as a person.'"

Deacon David teaches these classes three to four weekends a month at his and his brothers' Ace Hardware store in South Houston. If you're interested in Christian CHL training, contact VALFLOR ACADEMY at Chamberlin Ace Hardware in southwest Houston at (281) 495-8844, and ask for the deacon.

Firearms Safety and Handling

If you own or carry a firearm you are responsible for whatever happens with that firearm. Firearms have no mind of their own. They are simply tools, which must be used properly by people trained in their safe handling and operation. Firearms should never be allowed to fall into unauthorized or untrained hands. Children should never have access to loaded firearms. In fact, it is not legal to allow unsupervised access to firearms to anyone under 18 years of age. Children should be trained to never touch a real firearm without responsible adult supervision. Never make a firearm the focus of taboo or curiosity. Videotapes and books are available to help teach children about firearms.

Basic Gun Handling & Shooting Safety Rules

Always keep the gun pointed in a safe direction.

Always keep your finger off the trigger until ready to shoot.

Be sure of your target and what's behind it.

Always keep the gun unloaded until ready to use.

Check twice to be sure the gun is unloaded.

Treat every gun as if it was loaded.

Be sure the gun is safe to operate.

Know how to use the gun.

Use only correct ammunition.

Use eye and ear protection.

From p. 22 of Texas Concealed Handgun License Training handbook

Safe storage of guns:

Store guns so they are not accessible to unauthorized persons.

Make sure storage places are safe from children.

Make sure storage device works safely.

Check the chamber twice to make sure it's empty.

Store ammunition separate from firearms.

From p. 23 of TCHLP handbook.