

The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



VOL. 23, NO. 9

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

January 2010

Four men ordained to the diaconate for Diocese of Victoria

By Cynthia Brewer

Bishop David E. Fellhauer of the Diocese of Victoria ordained four men into the order of the diaconate at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria Saturday, December 19, 2009. The newly ordained are Milburn William Kram of St. Joseph Parish in Moulton, Patrick Lee Kubala of St. John Nepomucene in New Taiton, Joseph Anton (Joe) Machacek of Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner and José (Joe) Ramos of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Bay City.

The four men have completed the six-year spiritual and academic formation program required of permanent deacons. They have been under the direction of Rev. Gabriel Maison, director of permanent diaconate formation for the Diocese of Victoria and pastor of St. Joseph Church in Moulton. This brings the total number of deacons in the service of the diocese to 34.

To the gathering hymn, *Sing Out, Earth and Skies*, the deacon candidates processed into the cathedral one at a time, followed by 13 of their soon-to-be brother deacons and 11 concelebrating priests and Bishop Fellhauer.

The four candidates sat in the first row of pews with their wives, Marian Kram, Rebecca Kubala, Mary Machacek and Letisia Ramos, close by in the pew behind them.

Following the Liturgy of the Word, in which two of the candidates wives, Letisia Ramos and Mary Machacek, proclaimed the Scriptures, the candidates were called forward by the assisting deacon, Reverend Mr. Leo Sharron of St. Michael Parish in Cuero, and presented to the bishop by Father Maison, who testified to the readiness

and worthiness of each candidate.

Bishop Fellhauer chose the candidates for ordination as deacons and invited the consent of the assembly, which responded with great applause.

In the homily the bishop welcomed the candidates and their wives, congratulating them for their six years' of preparation. He expressed his gratitude and admiration for

in our midst working in his people," the bishop said. "We celebrate the nearness of God in our lives. This is proof that the Word, the voice of God, is heard and obeyed – we see it in the lives of these four men."

Bishop Fellhauer explained that the deacon is a minister of charity who serves at the altar and administers the sacrament

knelt before the bishop who, in silence, laid his hands on each of their heads. The bishop then prayed the prayer of consecration over each of the elect, thus affecting the ordination of the deacons.

The wives of each of the newly ordained deacons then invested their spouse with stole and dalmatic, the outer vestment similar to the chasuble worn by the priest.

Each of the newly ordained deacons, one by one, knelt before the bishop who handed them the Book of Gospels of which they are now heralds.

Lastly they approached the bishop who gave each of the newly ordained the fraternal kiss of peace. All of the diocesan deacons present at the Mass proceeded to the lower sanctuary to offer the kiss of peace to each new deacon as a sign of their being joined in the order of deacons.

The ceremony continued with the liturgy of the Eucharist with Deacon Joe Ramos and Deacon Patrick Kubala assisting the bishop. Marian Kram and Rebecca Kubala presented the gifts to the altar. All four new deacons were the ministers of the Blood of Christ during Holy Communion.

Following Mass, a reception was held for the newly ordained at Holy Family Church activity center in Victoria. The permanent deacons have been assigned to their home parishes.

The newly ordained deacons share some of the thoughts they had during their ordination:

Deacon Patrick Kubala

St. John Nepomucene, New Taiton

"My personal thoughts as I was being ordained was, 'Why me?' God truly knew me before I was born. He knew this time would happen and he shepherded me through my life to reach this point. I did not decide to become a deacon," said Deacon Patrick Kubala. "God chose this path for me and I answered Yes."

"During the Litany of the Saints, as I lay prostrate, I became very emotional and left tears on the cold marble floor. I was awestruck about the sacramental grace that God had given me."

"When we stood up after the litany was complete, I felt that I had died to my old life and had been risen to a new life, that life of service. I truly realized that my life must be to live the Gospel.

The Kiss of Peace, "was overwhelming

See *Four men*, p. 10



At a ceremony at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral December 19, 2009, the Diocese of Victoria received four newly ordained deacons. The newly ordained are pictured with their wives and the bishop of Victoria. From left, Joe and Letisia Ramos of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Bay City, Milburn and Marian Kram of St. Joseph Parish in Moulton, Bishop David Fellhauer, Patrick and Rebecca Kubala of St. John Nepomucene in New Taiton, and Joe and Mary Machacek of Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner

their perseverance, preparation and faithfulness in following God's call.

"What a sign, a proof, that God is indeed

of baptism and proclaims and preaches the Word of God.

He also expressed his gratitude for Father Maison's instructions and guidance of the permanent deacons. "Because of Father Maison, this is just as fine a program as can be," he said.

Following the homily, Bishop Fellhauer examined the candidates asking them a number of questions. Each in turn gave his promise of obedience and respect to the bishop and his successors, kneeling before him and placing their hands, folded flat together, inside the bishop's hands.

The elect then prostrated themselves before the bishop while the litany of supplication to the saints was sung by the choir, made up from choir members from each of the candidates' parishes and led by cantor and music director, Janice Cox, and organist Cynthia Goerig.

Following the litany, each of the elect

Seventh Edition of "Disciples on the Journey" Lent 2010 New: Format, Price, and Content!!

Bishop Fellhauer is proud to announce the seventh publication of "Disciples on the Journey." This year's edition has a new look, a new price, and a new format. The Lent 2010 book is only for adult small faith-sharing groups. The Teen and Family sections will be available through the Diocese of Victoria's Web site at www.victoriadiocese.org. Bishop Fellhauer hopes that the new lower price of \$2.50 per book will make it more affordable. He continues to support and promote this publication and writes one or more commentaries for it each year.

Seven years ago the Diocese of Victoria began producing "Disciples on the Journey" as a means of

continuing the Lenten faith-sharing group process that was begun in 2000 with "Disciples in Mission." Growing numbers of people throughout the United States and

Canada meet each year during Lent, the liturgical season for ongoing conversion and renewal, to study, discuss, and share their faith.

It is the hope of the editorial staff that the Lenten experience of many will be enriched and deepened by their joining or forming a small group to share faith around the Sunday readings using "Disciples on the Journey." Contact the Office of Catechetical Ministry at 361-573-0828 or your parish rec-

tory to order "Disciples on the Journey" for Lent 2010 in English or Spanish.



In This Issue ...

Local hermit becomes Benedictine Brother, p. 2

Diocesan Priest Interviews – Year for Priests, p. 3

Talbot and Genuis concert information, p. 5

Population shortage is real truth; see Faith Point, p. 6

Knowledge bowl and workshop information, p. 7

Seize second chances this New Year, p. 13

Pope begins New Year with call to respect creation, p. 15

Shiner students know their faith, p. 18



Bishop Fellhauer's Schedule

January

10-14 First Week of Diocesan Priests' Retreat

16 6:30 p.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton

17 6:30 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton

9:00 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton

17-21 Second Week of Diocesan Priests' Retreat

20 2:00 p.m., Spelling Bee, Our Lady of Victory School, Victoria

23 6:30 p.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton

24 6:30 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton

9:00 a.m., Mass, St. Joseph Church, Moulton

30 6:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, St. Anthony Church, Columbus, including Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Frelsburg, and St. Roch Church, Mentz

31 9:00 a.m., Mass, opening of Catholic Schools Week, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral, Victoria

5:00 p.m., Mass, Jr. High Fiesta, Knights of Columbus Hall, Hallettsville

February

2 Installation of Bishop Daniel Flores as Bishop of Brownsville

6 4:00 p.m., Mass, Acolytes and new candidates for the Diaconate retreat, Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria

7:30 p.m., Mass, Catholic Committee on Scouting, Adult Awards and banquet, Holy Family Chapel and parish hall, Victoria

Official Appointments By Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer

Effective immediately, the **Rev. Phi Nguyen**, of the clergy of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston, is appointed Chaplain at Incarnate Word Convent, Victoria

Effective at the time of his arrival in the Diocese of Victoria, **Rev. Robert Fisher, SVD**, is assigned as Parochial Vicar at Our Lady of the Gulf Church, Port Lavaca, and its missions.

Local hermit becomes “Brother Bernard”

By Cynthia Brewer

After much soul searching and prayer, Jeff Keele, a young man who many parishioners in Victoria know from his attendance at daily Mass at various parishes, took his monastic vows this past year as a Benedictine Brother at the Olivetan Benedictine Abbey in Pecos, New Mexico, taking the name, Dom, or Brother, Bernard.

Brother Bernard stopped by the chancery office to say “Hi” to me while he was visiting his sick uncle in Victoria this past October 2009. Jeff and I became friends when we both attended daily Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows in the late 1990s.

Jeff was raised in Dallas, but due to life circumstances, he moved to Victoria to live with his uncle, Dr. James R. Hayes, his mother’s brother, in 1982. He attended St. Joseph High School and graduated in 1983.

At the time, Jeff was not Catholic, but through the influence of Sister Ernestine Vollmering, IWBS, his theology and English teacher, he grew to love Christ through the Church.

“She was my saint,” he said of Sister Ernestine. “Every person needs a saint in their life. She was mine. I became Catholic because of her.”

Sister Ernestine died in December 1985. “She gave me three years to know her and love her. With her passing, there was a need to answer with my life – to answer for the love of her life.”

“Sr. Ernestine’s death, that loss, opened an opportunity to see the divinity behind the person; to see God behind his creature,” Brother Bernard said. “I was so blinded by her love; by God taking that away, I was able to see him – his love. I was moved from human love to divine love through the painful loss of a beloved.”

“Tears are a gift. Through the gift of tears we are to better know our dependency on God, to better know our love for him and his love for us.”

From December 1985 to 1987, Jeff spent his time searching, asking, “Who am I?” “Where am I going?” That brought him to the sacraments.

Father Don Ruppert was pastor of Holy Family Church in Victoria at the time and gave Jeff private instructions. On April 18, 1987, he entered the Catholic Church by receiving the sacraments of initiation. “That was the happiest day of my life and it still is.”

“I’ve never had a sad or boring day since,” he continued. “I made my solemn profession on May 31, 2009, with the Benedictines; it was a close second, but

See Local hermit, p. 6



SACRED HEART CELEBRATES 40 YEARS IN PRESENT CHURCH—Sacred Heart Catholic Church in Hallettsville celebrated its 40th anniversary of dedication of the present church building on Sunday, November 22, 2009. Bishop David E. Fellhauer was the principal celebrant of the 10:30 a.m. Mass. He was assisted by Msgr. Stanley Petru, pastor when the church was dedicated, Father Celestino Say, immediate former pastor, Father John Peters, present pastor, and Deacon Joey Targac. In attendance were six sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Community along with the following in full regalia: the Knights of St. Gregory, the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus and the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. The clergy and religious were treated to a wonderful meal at a special table at the Knights of Columbus Falling Leaves Festival at the KC Hall immediately following the Mass. They were entertained by Mark Halata & Texavia, one of the bands at the festival. Pictured from left to right are Msgr. Stanley Petru, Deacon Joey Targac, Bishop David Fellhauer, Fathers Celestino Say and John Peters.

Letter to the Editor

Cindy Brewer, Editor
The Lighthouse

I am writing this letter because of the plethora of e-mails containing prayers accompanied by granting of wishes, chances at fortune, and promises of good luck. Example: “If you send and receive 5 responses, you are loved, while if you do not send on or respond, you are ashamed.”

Often these “prayer e-mails” are followed by or even accompanied by political e-mails which express hate.

We reach and are reached by God so personally, not through e-mails. I would rather receive one personal e-mail with a prayerful note or thought from the sender than 1000 impersonal mass-produced e-mails couched in prayer but including nuances of chain letter fortune.

This is a topic that needs attention on the pulpit or in the Lighthouse as participation in these e-mails is sinful.

Carolyn Hubenak
Wharton

Editor’s response:

Many of these e-mails look so sweet, but then they end telling you to forward to a certain number of people, and if you don’t, you won’t receive a surprise from God or it means you’re ashamed of Jesus. They question your faith. I feel this type of e-mail is quite vindictive.

Don’t feel like you have to respond or forward any e-mail to receive a surprise from God. We receive surprises from Our Lord everyday, and it’s not because we forward an e-mailed chain letter.

I say, if it is really a nice e-mail message and you want to forward it, edit it by cutting the negative, superstitious part and the requests to forward it on to so many people, and then send it on, thus it’s no longer a chain letter. To make it better, add a personal note from yourself.

Cindy Brewer, Editor

Chancery welcomes new employee

The Diocese of Victoria chancery office welcomes new staff member, Mr. René Garcia, to its business office. René began working for the diocese in November 2009 and will replace Sue Ellen Galvan who will be leaving the chancery staff this spring.

René brings sixteen-plus years of accounting and bookkeeping experience to the business office staff. His prior job experiences have been in banking and for a non-profit agency. He will be serving as a staff accountant overseeing the Priest and Lay Employee Pension Plan as well as the DSA and Capital Campaign funds.

“I look forward to working with the staff of the diocese,” said René, “and feel very blessed and thank God to be given the opportunity to work for my faith.”

René and his wife of 12 years, Dena, have a son, Ryan, who is in the second grade at Our Lady of Victory School.



2009 DSA Updates

2009 DSA

Diocesan Goal:	\$1,282,100.00
Parish Pledge Totals:	\$683,239.52
Parish Contribution Totals:	\$670,306.22
Number of Parish Families Participating:	3,942

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DEADLINE IS THE THIRD TUESDAY OF THE PRECEDING MONTH.



Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign Update

To date, the Diocese of Victoria has collected \$6,827,000.00 (50%) of the \$13,684,519.00 pledged. The work of the Capital Campaign has already begun. In the past 18 months the Diocese of Victoria has been able to distribute to the following:

- **Catholic Education** — \$850,659.45 – to provide need-based tuition assistance and funds for teacher salaries
- **Religious Education** — \$191,167.24 – to provide funds to form, train and assist catechetical leaders and provide opportunities for continuing adult faith enrichment
- **Priest Pension** — \$710,337.12 – to provide for those priests who are currently drawing a pension and provide for those priests who are approaching retirement
- **Spiritual Renewal Center** — \$3,462,860.44 – to renovate and expand the existing chapel and construct Hermes Hall, the new multi-purpose building. The chapel's renovation was completed in December 2008 and the Hermes Hall construction project was completed in November 2009.
- **Diocesan Parishes & Missions** — 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. To date, \$1,272,480.31 has been rebated back to the parishes for their needs.

René Garcia, Coordinator
Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign

Year for Priests A Good and Faithful Servant

Special columns from women of renowned faith for the Year for Priests as requested by the USCCB Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations

By Mary Beth Bonacci

His name was Father Marcel Salinas. I knew him only briefly, but he taught me one of life's greatest lessons. He taught me how to die.

Father Marcel was in residence at my parish. He was in his early 60's, while I was in my early 30's and caught between what the Lord wanted of me and what the world wanted of me. I very much wanted to serve the Lord. I also wanted the American dream – the white picket fence, the photogenic family, the late-model car. It was difficult for me to believe that God might have something different in mind for my life, and even more difficult to let go and entrust it all to Him.

Father Marcel reminded me of my Italian grandfather. He called me "Miss Chastity" and always had a warm, grandfatherly hug for me. I loved him, and I sometimes felt sorry for him. He had taken vows of poverty and chastity. He had no family, no "stuff" except a rickety car and a sparsely furnished room. I thought it must be a difficult, lonely life.

And then I heard that Father Marcel had been diagnosed with stomach cancer and wasn't expected to live long. Stunned, I rushed to the rectory to see him.

I had no idea what to expect from a man who had just discovered his death is imminent. Would he be upset? Solemn? Morose?

The one condition I didn't expect to find him in was "absolutely normal." But that's what I found. He was smiling, joking. "I'm going to haunt you, you know." I saw no fear. Only calm confidence.

I figured the poor man was obviously in shock. In a day or two, he would get around to freaking out.

But he never did.

Two short weeks later I received a call telling me that the end was near. Again I rushed to the rectory. I wasn't the only one. His bedroom was adjacent to an indoor courtyard where over 200 people had gathered. He was in and out of consciousness as the last rites were administered. We all sang, and then he opened his eyes and said in a strong voice, "Well, I'm obviously not in Heaven yet."

Over the next several hours, he met with each one of us there at his bedside. As I

walked into the room for my turn, he smiled and exclaimed "Miss Chastity!" I asked how he was doing, and he said, "I had no idea dying could be so pleasant."

As I was leaving the room, I found an unobtrusive corner and lingered a while. I watched person after person come to his bedside. He chided one about his hair. ("So it took my dying for you to finally cut it.") He hugged and kissed and consoled. They thanked him for his impact on their lives, for leading them to Christ.

And Christ was there in that room. His presence was palpable.

Marcel had children. There in that simple, sparsely furnished room, I saw literally hundreds of them. They were his joy, his treasures.

And then I thought of what Marcel would see on the other side when he met his Maker. In that moment, when the Lord of the Universe asked him what he did with the gift of his life, Marcel could point down and say "I led them to You."

Let me tell you, I would have gladly traded places with him in that moment.

Father Marcel didn't die that night. He went on to live two more weeks, most of it in great pain. But I learned a great lesson watching him. I learned that the only way to really plan our lives isn't from this moment forward. It's from the deathbed backwards. In my last moments of life, what do I want to look back and see? What do I want to tell God that I did with the precious years He gave me? Do I want to point out the nice furniture in the room where I died, or the late model car my heirs are fighting over?

No. I simply want to be able to say that I did His will as best I could, and allowed Him to work through me to make a difference. That's a lot easier said than done. And I doubt that I could ever do it with the quiet confidence, grace and humility that I saw in my friend that night.

Rest in peace, Father Marcel.

Mary Beth Bonacci is an internationally known speaker on chastity and faith in the modern world. She has written numerous books and articles, and is the founder of Real Love, Incorporated, a Web-based resource educating the faithful on growth in holiness and wholeness.

To read more columns for the "Year for Priests" by renowned women of faith, please go to: <http://www.usccb.org/year-forpriests/articles.shtml>.

Year for Priests Interviews with priests in the Diocese of Victoria

Father Dan Morales

Father Dan Morales is the pastor of Our Lady of the Gulf Parish and Elementary School in Port Lavaca and its three missions: Point Comfort, Seadrift and Port O'Connor. He is also the director of vocations for the diocese.

Date and place of birth: June 17, 1964, in Palacios, Texas

Parents' names and home: Paz and Andrea Morales, Palacios.

Siblings: Sylvia Cartier, Austin; Rose Mary Mallia, Santa Fe, Texas; Kathy Matheny, Lakehills, Texas; Paz Morales Jr., Austin; Patricia Tenorio, Austin; Margaret Espinosa, Edna, Texas; Jo Ann Reyes, Austin; Ted Morales, Austin

Name and location of your home parish: St. Anthony, Palacios

Schools attended and degrees received: Palacios Elementary, Palacios; Palacios High School; University of St. Thomas, Houston, bachelor of arts; St. Mary's Seminary at University of St. Thomas, M. Div.

Date and place ordained and by whom: September 8, 1990, at St. Anthony, Palacios, by Bishop David E. Fellhauer

Parish assignments: 1990-1993, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral, parochial vicar; 1993-1995, Sts. Peter and Paul, Frelsburg/St. Roch, Mentz, pastor; and 1995-present, Our Lady of the Gulf, pastor

Your hobbies or special interests: scuba



diving

When was the first time you thought of priesthood? In elementary school

Who influenced or inspired you? Father Brian Crookes, my childhood pastor

What would people be surprised to know about you? I knit!

What is your favorite Scripture passage? II Cor. 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is made perfect in weakness."

How did you come to know Jesus? Through my parents' love and example

What was your background before the seminary (things you did, jobs, etc.)? High school – worked in a grocery store and in an auto parts store

Please share a little about your calling to the priesthood - how, when, you knew it was time to join the seminary? I decided my senior year in high school.

What are some of your favorite experiences/ joys/ surprises since becoming a priest? I love to celebrate the Sacraments with the People of God.

What was the last book you read? "Cutting for Stone"

What is your favorite spiritual book? "As Bread that is Broken" by Father Peter Van Breen

What is your favorite movie? "Radio"

Who is a hero to you? My parents

Father Bob Knippenberg

Father Robert Knippenberg is the pastor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish, Elementary School and High School in Shiner. Here is his Year for Priests interview.

Date and place of birth: January 29, 1955; Saint Paul, Minn.

Parents' names and home: Robert E. and Betty Knippenberg Sr. of Fort Worth, Texas

Names of siblings: Todd Knippenberg of Arlington, Texas; Patrick Knippenberg of Houston, Karen Fox of Fort Worth; Amy Knippenberg of Fort Worth

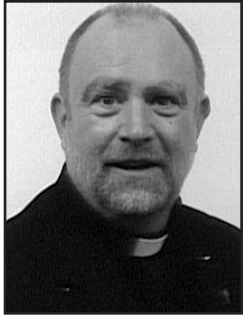
Home parish: Saint Maria Goretti, Arlington, Texas

Schools attended and degrees received: Haynes Elementary, Lubbock; Monterey High School, Lubbock; Don Bosco College, Newton, NJ, bachelor of arts; Seminary: Pontifical College Josephinum, Columbus, Ohio, M. Div.; and University of St. Thomas, Houston, master of arts.

Date ordained and by whom: June 10, 2000, in Victoria, Texas, by Bishop David E. Fellhauer

Assignments: 2000-2002, parochial vicar, Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville; 2002-present, pastor, Sts. Cyril & Methodius Church, Shiner

Your hobbies or special interests: Mak-



ing rosaries

When was the first time you thought of priesthood? When I was around eight years old

Who influenced or inspired you? My boyhood pastor, Father James Brice Clark

What would people be surprised to know about you? I have two cats: Bozena and Mozart

What is your favorite Scripture passage? Romans 8:31b: "If God is for us, who can be against us?"

How did you come to know Jesus? Through the Church

Please share a little about your calling to the priesthood - how, when you knew it was time to join the seminary? I pretty much wanted to be a priest all of my life; it just took me 45 years to work up the courage!

What are some of your favorite experiences/ joys/ surprises since becoming a priest? It's all a sheer joy!

What was the last book you read? "Pillar of Iron" by Taylor Caldwell

What is your favorite spiritual book? "The Wisdom of Accepted Tenderness"

What is your favorite movie? "Gone With the Wind"

Who is a hero to you? Every one of my parishioners trying to live the vocation of marriage and raise a family

Our Lady of Victory School
National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence 2008
Open House for Pre-K3 through 8th
Monday, February 1, at 6:30 p.m.
School Cafeteria - 1311 E. Mesquite Lane
Prospective families will have an opportunity to learn what OLV has to offer.
For more information, call the school office at 575-5391.
Educating Minds, Inspiring Hearts



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 December 17, 2009

	TOTALS
— General Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$ 95,099.00
In memory of Leona Bochat by M/M Robert Bochat	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$95,124.00

— Rev. John C. Bily Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$8,099.00
In memory of 87th birthday of William J. Henneke by Franklin & Rita Addicks	<u>25.00</u>
In honor of 87th birthday of Annie Henneke by Franklin & Rita Addicks	<u>25.00</u>
In memory of Alvirder Helmcamp by Franklin & Rita Addicks	<u>25.00</u>
In memory of Jamie Ryanne by Franklin & Rita Addicks	<u>25.00</u>
In memory of Milam Herchek by M/M Jeff Dickinson	<u>250.00</u>
Total	\$8,449.00

— Catholic Daughters of America Our Lady Queen of Peace Court #1374	
Previously reported	\$4,262.72
In memory of Msgr. Benton Thurmond by CDA Court #1374	<u>50.00</u>
In honor of B.G. & Betty Parma by Justin Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Chris Goerig by Justin Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Kimberly Witcher by Tommy & Carol Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Cody Witcher by Tommy & Carol Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Lindsey Riha by Carol Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Troy Riha by Carol Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Lee Orr by Tommy Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Will Orr by Tommy Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Lee Orr by Tommy Turner	<u>20.00</u>
Scott Kulcak by Tommy Turner	<u>20.00</u>
In memory of Marvin & Mary Frances Turner by Tommy Turner Family	<u>40.00</u>
In memory of Louis & Joyce Riha by Tommy Turner Family	<u>40.00</u>
Total	\$4,612.72

— Rev. Sean Donohue Seminary Burse #2	
Previously reported	\$4,174.36
In celebration of Tony & Kim Nguyen's 25th Wedding Anniversary by Bernard & Madeline Rother	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$4,199.36

— Rev. Jerome J. Stryk Seminary	
Previously reported	\$11,684.50
In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Stryk by Dan Stryk	<u>100.00</u>
Total	\$11,784.50

— Catholic Life Insurance #51 Rev. Msgr. Eustace Hermes & Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi Seminary Burse #2	
Previously reported	\$1,565.47
In memory of Julia Krejci by Ladies Aux Veterans of Foreign Wars #4146	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$1,590.47

— Knights of Columbus Victoria Council #1329 Seminary Burse #3	
Previously reported	\$9,157.50
In memory of George A. Horecka by KC Council 1329	<u>100.00</u>
Total	\$9,257.50

— Rev. Joe Levy Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$1,625.25
In memory of Paul Wayne Dearing by Bernard & Helen Lempa	<u>25.00</u>
In memory of Rev. Charles Carolan by Bernard & Helen Lempa	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$1,675.25

— Rev. John C. Peters Seminary Burse #4	
Previously reported	\$8,444.00
Donations from Advent Party at Mrs. Alvin Grahmann home	<u>600.00</u>
In memory of Milam Hercheck by M/M Jeff Dickinson	<u>250.00</u>
Wishing a Holy & Joyful Christmas to Father John Peters	<u>25.00</u>
Total	\$9,319.00

— Rev. Joseph A. Koebel Seminary Burse	
Previously reported	\$6,468.00
In memory of Fr. Joe Koebel by Ervin & Catherine Buchta	<u>10.00</u>
Total	\$6,478.00

— Catholic Daughters Court of St. Ann #369 Seminary Burse #2	
Previously reported	\$6,963.99
In memory of Julie Krejci by CDA Court of St. Ann #369	<u>20.00</u>
Total	\$6,983.99

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

Happy Birthday!

Philip Brune is in Theology I at St. Mary's Seminary in Houston. His home parish is Sts. Peter & Paul, in Frelsburg, and his birthday is January 24. Please show your support for our seminarian by writing to: Philip Brune, St. Mary's Seminary, 9845 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX 77024



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In Memory of ...

Brother Richard J. Micka, O.S.S.T.

Brother Richard Joseph Micka, O.S.S.T., 58, of Victoria, died to this life and was born to eternal life, after a brief struggle with cancer, on Dec. 13, 2009, at Retama Manor South in Victoria.

Bro. Richard was born on Oct. 27, 1951, in Chester, Pa., to the late Marion and Jean Jakubowska Micka. He was baptized on Nov. 25, 1951, received his First Communion on May 10, 1959, and was confirmed on April 5, 1960, all at St. Hedwig Catholic Church in Chester, Pa.

He entered the Novitiate of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity on Aug. 8, 1975, at the completion of which he made simple vows on Aug. 14, 1976, at Holy Trinity Monastery in Pikesville, Md. Bro. Richard made his solemn profession of vows on Sept. 11, 1982, at St. Bernard Catholic Church in Riverdale, Md. In 1983, he graduated from Towson State University in Maryland with a degree in English.

Because of his deep commitment to the poor and left out, Bro. Richard ministered to men in recovery at Redeemer House in Baltimore, Md. from 1983 until 2003. Bro. Richard lived at Trinity House in Victoria from 2003 to 2008. While there, he assisted with the formation of the novices and cared for elderly priests. He was also a regular volunteer at Christ's Kitchen. From October of 2008 until November

of 2009, when he was forced to resign because of illness, he served as director of the Bakhita Centre in Cairo, Egypt. Bro. Richard's ministry in Cairo brought God's merciful and redemptive love to Sudanese refugees who fled to Egypt because of religious persecution, slavery and war.

Bro. Richard will be remembered for a lifetime of ministry dedicated to the poor and forgotten in our midst. He was a capable writer, using his talents to create interesting newsletters and insightful poetry.

Bro. Richard is survived by the brothers and priests of the Order of the Most Holy Trinity.

He was preceded in death by his parents, and a brother, Edward Micka.

Funeral Mass was held on Wednesday, Dec. 16, 2009, at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Victoria. The Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus did the honors as the Color Guard and also served as pallbearers.

A funeral Mass also was celebrated at Holy Trinity Monastery Chapel in Baltimore, Md., on Friday, Dec. 18, 2009. Interment followed in the monastery cemetery.

Memorials may be sent to the Order of the Most Holy Trinity, P.O. Box 5719, Baltimore, MD 21282.



ACOLYTE INSTITUTED AT ST. PHILIP CHURCH—During the Sunday morning Mass, December 6, 2009, at St. Philip the Apostle Church in El Campo, Larry Hoelscher was instituted an acolyte, the last liturgical step before being ordained to the diaconate as a permanent deacon, for the Diocese of Victoria. Pictured with Bishop David Fellhauer are Larry and his wife, Pat.



THREE MEN INSTITUTED AS ACOLYTES IN MOULTON—Three men from throughout the Diocese of Victoria were instituted acolytes at the Sunday morning Mass, December 12, 2009, at St. Joseph Church in Moulton by Bishop David E. Fellhauer. The men who were instituted are pictured with their wives and Bishop Fellhauer. Pictured from left are Bill and Patricia Briscoe of St. Michael in Weimar, Kenneth and Kathy Fishbeck of St. Joseph in Moulton, and Larry and Lynn Koether of Holy Cross in Bay City. The term acolyte comes from the Greek "akoloutheou" (to follow); it denotes the ministry of one who assists at the altar and performs other liturgical functions. The acolytes will continue with formation and academics until their scheduled ordination in 2011.

Join the Candlelight March for Life

Show your support for life, from conception to natural death; join the annual March for Life in Victoria Thursday, January 28.

The march will begin at 7:00 p.m. at the First Baptist Church on 301 N. Glass and continue to St. Mary's Catholic Church at the corner of Main and Church streets, where special guest Jim Sedlak with American Life League Magazine in Virginia will speak.

Transportation will be provided for those who need a return to the First Baptist Church. Candles provided, or bring your own flashlight.

Please see pg. 18 for more pro-life activities and information.



Attending the Bishop Forest High School Class of 1959 50th reunion are, from left to right, front row: Sister Adrienne Marie Schmitzinsky, Msgr. Eustace Hermes, Sister Josephine Elise; middle row: Diana Wagner Ulbig, Georgie Cernoch Rainosek, Loraine Vacek Stavinocha, Marcella Michalek Sauter, Florine Beyer Bohac, Betty Stavinocha Wagner, Barbara Fietsam Wick, Isabella Kainer Respondek; back row: Kenneth Walla, Bennie Friedel, Ted Hoffmann, Milton Beyer, Ernest Hrachovy, Henry Miksch, Milton Winkler and Melvin Wagner.

Bishop Forest High School Class of 1959 marks 50 years

SCHULENBURG—The Bishop Forest High School Class of 1959 celebrated the 50th anniversary of their high school graduation with a reunion on November 14, 2009, at the Oakridge Smokehouse Restaurant in Schulenburg. Classmates and guests in attendance came from Houston, Lake Jackson, El Campo, San Antonio, New Braunfels, Round Rock, La Grange, Hallettsville, Weimar, Georgetown, Rosenberg and Victoria to attend this important event.

The celebration began with the arrival of classmates and registration. The registration table was decorated with a flower arrangement, a 1959 school annual and school colors of green and white. Ben Friedel greeted arriving classmates and invited all to sign the guest book.

Eager to renew old acquaintances and reminisce about their high school days, classmates visited in small groups, enjoyed snacks, took personal photos and shared experiences since their last class reunion. Sixteen of the 24-member 1959 graduating class attended the reunion. They included Barbara Fietsam Wick and husband, Leo; Allene and Ben Friedel, Jeanette and Ken Walla, Florine Beyer Bohac, Gloria and Henry Miksch, Georgie Cernoch Rainosek and husband, Willie; Loraine Vacek Stavinocha and husband, Joe; Diana Wagner Ulbig, Marcella Michalek Sauter and husband, Leonard; Betty Stavinocha Wagner and husband, Mel; Ted Hoffmann and special guest, Jo Anne Cook; Isabella Kainer Respondek and husband, John; Patsy and Milton Winkler, Mrs. August (Joyce) Klesel, Ellen Jo and Milton Beyer, and Ernest Hrachovy.

Three faculty members from the Bishop Forest Class of 1959 attended the reunion as special guests. They included Msgr. Eustace Hermes of the Catholic Diocese of Victoria, Sister Adrienne Marie Schmitzinsky and Sister Josephine Elise of the Sisters of Divine Providence in San Antonio. Classmates were delighted to be honored by their presence at this graduation class anniversary celebration.

Those classmates present at the reunion, along with the attending faculty members, gathered for a class reunion photo on the restaurant patio. Immediately following, a group photo was taken that included classmates, faculty, spouses and friends.

The entire group gathered in the dining room to share in a special 1959 class program presented by Ken Walla. A special recognition plaque and photo were presented to Joyce Klesel in memory of her husband, August Jimmie Klesel, the

only deceased member of the class of 1959. Walla also recognized the three faculty members in attendance, as well as those classmates who volunteered to make the reunion possible, including Ben Friedel and his wife, Allene; Barbara Fietsam Wick and her husband, Leo; Isabella Kainer Respondek and her husband, John, Ted Hoffmann; and Jeanette Walla, wife of Ken Walla.

Classmates and faculty then spent some time sharing their recollections of Bishop Forest High School in 1959. Vignettes of the past school days were given by several classmates and faculty that highlighted key events that made high school so special.

The entire group was then treated to a special video presentation titled "Bishop Forest Class of 1959, 2009 50 Year Reunion." The video featured a "Walk Down Memory Lane" that highlighted 1959 world and national news events as well as sports, music and movies of the time. A section of the video, titled "The Way We Were in 1959," brought back classic photos and classmate and faculty memories of the school days at Bishop Forest High School. Attendees also enjoyed photo images from the 20-year reunion held in 1979. The video ended with a look at "2009, Our World Today" and "Where Are We Going?" as a class that continues to make its mark on the world. As a keepsake, classmates each received a CD containing the video.

Each member of the group received a rolled paper scroll that contained a special poem, titled "If the BFH Walls Could Speak." Classmate Isabella Kainer Respondek read the poem for the group to enjoy. The poem highlighted student moments from the past and challenged everyone to learn and pave the way to the future.

Msgr. Eustace Hermes offered the prayer before the meal. All in attendance were treated to a delicious buffet dinner. The reunion meal was highlighted by a special Class of 1959, 50-year reunion cake. Ben Friedel did the honor of cutting the reunion anniversary cake for all to enjoy.

All classmates in attendance agreed that the 50-year class reunion marked a very special time in life and that everyone was proud to be part of this milestone event. It was a very special day with many happy and poignant memories of the past shared and many new memories made. The class members agreed to look forward to celebrating their next class reunion in 2014.



Three evenings with John Michael Talbot, January 10-12

John Michael Talbot, award winning Christian recording artist and writer, will be at St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church January 10-12, 2010, to conduct three evenings of reflection, prayer, and music centered upon the prayer of meditation.

As John Michael states: *"In these three evenings, I will take us on a journey through music and teaching into the actual practice of Christian*

meditation in a way that is comfortable for anyone, beginner, intermediate, or advanced..."

There is no charge, but a free- will offering will be requested. Make plans to be present for all three evenings and invite other family members and friends. For additional information, call the parish office at (979) 543-3770.



Eric Genuis to perform in Hallettsville January 20

Eric Genuis will be performing a concert in Hallettsville on Wednesday, January 20, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church beginning at 7 p.m.

Eric is a composer, virtuoso pianist, and captivating performer. Since 1997, he has been performing his works in countries throughout the world, including the United States, Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany and Poland.

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. Eric's concert in Hallettsville will also include a violinist, cellist and a vocalist.

His concerts are a definite must see and have proved riveting for all, from contemporary music lovers to the most sophisticated classical musicians.

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

Eric also performs for the Fullness of Truth conferences that are held in San Antonio, Houston and Corpus Christi every year.

Make plans to attend on Wednesday, January 20, at Sacred Heart Catholic Church at 7:00 p.m.



Local teen named to AAAA West All-Conference football team

SUBIACO, Arkansas—Subiaco Academy in northwest Arkansas proudly announces that Josh Darr, son of Joe and Amanda Darr of Lissie, Texas, was named to the 4 AAAA West All-Conference Football Team.

The Darrs are members of Holy Cross Catholic Parish in East Bernard. Joshua attended school in East Bernard for elementary and junior high and decided to attend high school at Subiaco Academy, where his dad had graduated in 1978 and his brother, Joseph, graduated in 2009.

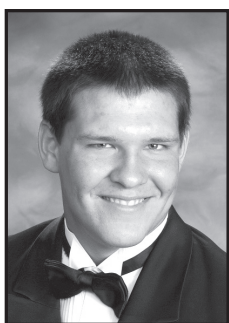
Josh is also an Eagle Scout and worked with Father Don Ruppert to complete his Eagle Project at the Holy Cross Church in East Bernard by installing a fence and gates around the new playground at the church educational building.

Joshua enjoys attending a Catholic high school and has gained much by being in an

environment that on a daily basis reinforces Catholic values. Joshua will graduate with honors in May and has especially enjoyed getting to know the many priests and monks from Subiaco Abbey.

Subiaco Academy is a college preparatory boarding and day high school dedicated to Catholic Benedictine traditions of service to God, respect for self and others, mutual support and the value of work.

More information on Subiaco may be obtained at: www.subi.org or www.subi-acoabbey.blogspot.com.



Josh Darr

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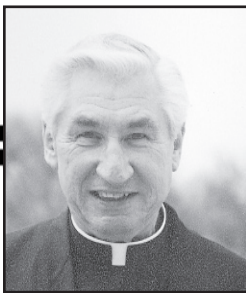
Fred Kubesch



FAITH POINT

By Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner
Vicar General, Diocese of Victoria

For past articles: www.stmaryvic.com/desk.htm



Secularism's Love of Death

Is it just coincidence that wherever secularism is the guiding ideology that there are anti-human campaigns against growth of human population or is the Culture of Death an essential component of secularism? No matter what the topic of discussion is, secularists turn it to decreasing the population. A case in point: there was a climate change conference in Copenhagen and immediately secularists blamed alleged aberrations in the climate on overpopulation. Diane Francis of Canada's National Post declared that all the suggestions in Copenhagen were irrelevant because the only thing that can save us from climatic catastrophe is the imposition on humanity of the China one-child policy. She projects that by 2050 there will be 9 billion people, an "unsustainable number" in her estimation although she does not explain why.

Ms. Francis gushes about the benefits of China's one-child policy:

China has proven that birth restriction is smart policy. Its middle class grows, all its citizens have housing, health care, education and food, and one out of five humans beings who live there are not overpopulating the planet.

A closer examination of the policy reveals it is less than ideal. The policy is a demographic time bomb. Recently Shanghai officials, alarmed by their city's low birthrate and aging population, changed their policy abruptly and started encouraging couples to have more than one child. The policy that has been in place more than 30 years has created two generations of notoriously spoiled only children, affectionately dubbed "little emperors." The average birthrate has fallen to 1.8 children per couple as compared to 6 when the policy went into effect. The elderly residents are predicted to grow from 16.7% of the population to 31.1% by 2050, nearly one out of three. The global average of the elderly is 20%. Demographers predict that China is moving toward the sticky "4-2-1 problem" in which one child will be expected to support two aging parents and four grandparents. China must find a way to prevent overwhelming younger families in supporting so many elders. As a secularist state, China may choose to solve their fiscal problem by reducing the elderly to ashes prematurely. If it can eliminate bothersome humans at the outset of life, why not at the sunset of life?

Another negative outcome of the China policy is the preference for males and the consequent abortion of females. China now has 124 boys up to the age of 4 for every 100 girls. It will soon find itself with a large male population who cannot

find wives.

It happens that Ms. Francis, in spite of her one-child advocacy, has two children, for which we congratulate her. As a proliifer, I will not demand that she drown one of them to save the planet.

All of the dire predictions of doom caused by growing populations have been proven wrong, but, when it comes to ideology, secularists are impervious to reality and reason.

Imaginary food shortages caused by overpopulation have been predicted for more than 200 years since Thomas Malthus recommended wars, famines, and plagues as means of reducing the "surplus population." In 1969 Paul Ehrlich forecast worldwide famine by 1975. He was given a "genius" award for his bad predictions. One might wonder why he is not laughed off the public stage and given the village idiot award on a grand scale, but among secularists, he is still an intellectual. Instead of starving or eating one another, most countries are having trouble with overfed and therefore overweight people.

A decade ago when the population of the world was 5.8 billion, all humans could have fit into the state of Texas with every man, woman, and child having 1,275 square feet of individual living space, the size of a ranch house. Since 1900, human population has quadrupled while the planet's gross domestic product has increased more than 20 times. India used to import food, but with a population double in size, it is an exporter of food. People who starve in our day are mainly victims of government-engineered famine. A 1990 report of the UN Food and Agriculture Organizations stated that the earth could yield enough to feed 30 to 35 billion people.

The anti-human secularists complain that continued population growth damages the ecology of the planet. Current global population density for the land area of the world is about 118 persons per square mile. In Japan it is 874 and on my two trips there I found it a pleasant enough place with room for mountains, lakes, and parks. If the human population grew to 42 billion the world would still not reach the population density of Japan.

Instead of screaming about overpopulation the trend is really underpopulation. Many nations have already fallen below the replacement level of 2.1 children per couple. These include China, of course, but also Tunisia, Brazil, Germany, Japan, New Zealand, Poland, Puerto Rico and Russia. Soon to fall below replacement levels, if present trends continue, are

Mexico, the United States, Vietnam, Turkey and Indonesia. Any nation that falls below 2.1 children per couple can maintain its current population only through immigration, but soon there may not be nations left that can send immigrants. Assuming continuation of present trends by 2050 the world will have 248 million fewer children under five than it does today. Our future problems will not be dealing with growing populations but how to handle declining population. I do not believe that we can maintain a civilization without people.

Population control by immoral means of contraception, sterilization, abortion and euthanasia or rationing of births is not the answer to any problem, not starvation, not poverty, not environmental degradation and not climate control. Whenever we use immoral means to achieve even laudable goals there are always negative consequences that cause more damage than the short-term immoral solution to the perceived problem. Thus the dispensing of condoms and contraceptive pills as a remedy for teenage pregnancy fails spectacularly in eliminating the pregnancies and brings on a host of other problems such as sexually transmitted diseases and abuse. Promoting or condoning homosexual behavior has led to the spread of

AIDS and premature deaths. Invariably the moral thing to do may be the difficult path but, in the end, it will bring about the best results.

Ask yourselves the question: do children and society fare better with couples who are permanently committed to one another and their children in marriage, or are they better off if the children are born of immoral sexual liaisons or unions that are informal and essentially temporary? We know instinctively that the children themselves and society fare better in the permanent union without consulting the research that overwhelmingly confirms that.

Ask yourselves, are you safer in a society that condones killing of the unborn or the unproductive elderly because of their inconvenience and expense, or are you safer in a society that regards all human life as precious and inviolable and guards it from conception to natural death? The answer is obvious. A society that finds some human life inconvenient and therefore subject to a death penalty may for some reason find you inconvenient and apply the penalty to you.

Sound morality is good medicine and good public policy.

Local hermit becomes "Brother Bernard"

Continued from p. 2

it still could not surpass the day I entered the Church."

After working in Victoria as a paramedic for several years, Jeff joined the Monastery of Corpus Christi Abbey in 1992, staying just two years.

Coming back to Victoria he became a hermit. "That was beautiful because I managed to facilitate the benefaction of a married couple, Mr. and Mrs. Bernard Staff, whom I had known from daily Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes."

"I was settled on the hermit life, but God had answered (helped me to fulfill) my goals – all my private goals were fulfilled, so in 2003 I began a discernment process for the monastic life," he said.

"I knew my call was monastic."

He had been living an intense Franciscan Observance – a literal interpretation of the Rule of 1223, while a hermit. He lived the life of a hermit from May 1995 until he left for New Mexico, where his father lives, in August 2003. Archbishop Michael Sheehan of the Archdiocese of Santa Fe wrote a letter of counsel introducing Jeff to the Olivetan Benedictine Abbey in Pecos, New Mexico, in January 2004.

At the monastery, he used to be in

charge of the music, liturgy and computers, but now he is subprior of the monastery, which means deputy administrator, he said. He is in a managerial position over the volunteers and employees of the monastery's retreat house.

Brother Bernard laughs because the new position God has placed him in includes spending a lot of time in the kitchen supervising the staff. While adhering to the Franciscan Rule, he ate very little food, often fasting. He begged God not to put him in the kitchen, and now this is exactly where God put him; now he's in charge of all the food for the entire monastery. He told me he's re-learning to eat somewhat regular

meals now.

I hadn't seen Jeff (Brother Bernard) for a couple of years, and I had to tease him because he had finally put on some weight.

Before leaving, Brother Bernard said, "Everybody has been an angel to me since I came to Victoria in 1982. The people of Victoria taught me how to believe, love and cry."

Please go to www.pecosmonastery.org for more information on the Pecos Benedictines.



Brother Bernard Keele poses with a photo of his spiritual mentor, Sister Ernestine Vollmering, IWBS, at St. Joseph High in Victoria this past fall.

FATHER GIVES PECANS—Annie Bartos (right) is always happy, but she is overjoyed when she receives pecans to crack! Father Joe Hybner (left) presented



a bag of pecans to Annie recently. She uses her hammer, which her husband used to make a living as a carpenter, to crack them. Every pecan shell gets 10 to 12 hits so as not to break the pecan meat, making perfect halves each time. These are Mayhan pecans from the one pecan tree at Sacred Heart Church in Flatonina. Father Joe watered this tree during the months of June and July, and the crop was very plentiful. The tree produced over 100 pounds. *Argus photos by Valentina Thibodaux*

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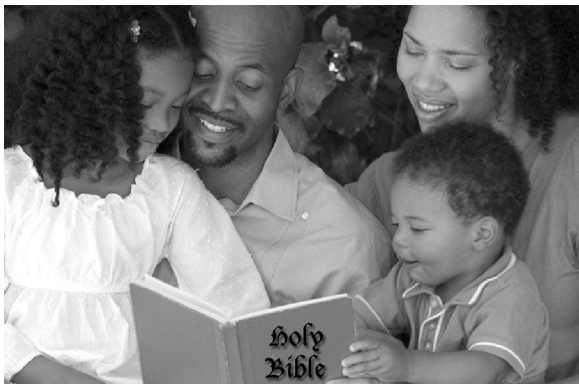


Connecting Catholic Families with the Bible

A Workshop for Parish Leaders February 18—St. Mary's Parish Activity Center, Victoria

The Office of Catechetical Ministry, in conjunction with the Organization of Catechetical Leadership (OCL), is sponsoring a one-day workshop, "Connecting Catholic Families with the Bible," to be held at St. Mary's Parish Activity Center in Victoria on February 18, 2010, from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Picture the "Family Bible" being moved from a dusty corner of a remote bookshelf to the living room coffee table and becoming part of family conversation, from a place of enshrinement to the family dining table where meals are served, homework is completed and family decisions are made. Picture the "Family Bible" being picked up and carried from one room to another as family members wrestle with the challenges of their day and the joys and struggles of living together, while the Word of God comforts and guides them.



This workshop offers practical strategies for making the Bible a vital part of the everyday lives of families. Both the presentation and the hand-out packet will provide resources, which can be used in numerous settings to equip families to share the Word of God at home.

The workshop is designed for clergy, PCLs and assistants, catechists, and others interested in this topic. The cost of the workshop is \$49, which includes lunch and a handout packet rich in practical ideas and resources. The Office of Catechetical Ministry will underwrite one-half of the cost (\$25) for all clergy, parish catechetical leaders and assistants. For more information call the catechetical office (361) 573-0828, go to www.cmdnet.org, or e-mail joanweber@cmdnet.org.

save the Date!



Third Annual Catholic Knowledge Bowl
Holy Family Catholic Church, Victoria
Sunday, February 28, 2010
1:30 – 4:30 p.m.

All persons interested in forming a team are invited to do so. Adult teams may be made up of catechists, members of the Knights of Columbus, Catholic Daughters, or ACTS participants, or anyone who wants to compete.

Teen teams can be made up of any group of high school students such as CCD/Catholic School students or youth group members. Family teams can be made up of parents, children, grandparents, aunts, etc. (Family teams must include one or more children.)

Registration is \$20 per team of four persons. Forms will be available on the Diocesan Web site www.victoriadiocese.org or at the catechetical office. Early registration is encouraged due to limited space.

DIOCESE OF VICTORIA PASTORAL INSTITUTE

Extended Program

Church

February 16 – March 23, 2010
Chancery, Victoria and Holy Rosary, Hostyn
Instructor: Mr. Ron Friedel
Tuesdays 9:15 – 11:30 a.m. and 7:00 – 9:15 p.m.

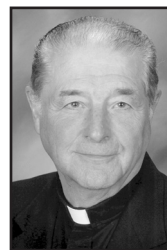
In the wake of the Second Vatican Council almost half a century ago, the Catholic Church made a serious attempt to reach out to the modern mentality and adapt itself to the style and language of contemporary culture. Come and learn more about the Catholic Church, the oldest institution on earth, which traces its beginning back to Jesus Christ and the Apostles.

Using the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, one of the documents of Vatican II, Mr. Ron Friedel will lead students to study and explore the Catholic Church and its relation to the modern world.

Call (361) 573-0828 or e-mail bparkan@victoriadiocese.org to register for the class. There is a \$15 fee for this course. Payment can be made on the first day of class.

Question Corner

By Father John Dietzen
Catholic News Service



The role of extraordinary eucharistic ministers

Q. *The following have been hot topics among us, especially as we look forward to next year's liturgies. May extraordinary eucharistic ministers assist in the blessing of throats on the feast of St. Blaise, and in distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday? We receive different answers. (Indiana)*

A. You really aim at long-range liturgical planning, don't you? Regarding ashes, a response to the American bishops from the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Sacraments (Jan. 30, 1975) stated that extraordinary eucharistic ministers may not bless ashes but may assist the celebrant in distributing them or impose ashes already blessed if no priest is present.

The response would provide also for other lay persons to distribute ashes if there is a pastoral need.

Some pastors are reluctant to ask extraordinary eucharistic ministers to assist with the ashes, partly I suppose out of concern for the sensibilities of some

parishioners who may find it startling. But it is permitted.

Lay persons may assist in blessing throats on the feast of St. Blaise, using the same formula as the priest but without making the sign of the cross. (Official Book of Blessings, No. 1634)

Q. *We read your interesting column about the three kings, explaining that we don't know how many "kings" there were and cannot even be sure the whole story is not legendary, intended to call attention to the prophecies referred to by Matthew. I remember reading somewhere that Joseph sold the gifts given to the Holy Family by the Magi to finance the flight into Egypt. As usual, our loving Father provided a way for them to keep from struggling. Is that true? (Florida)*

A. I must admit I've never heard that one before. You may be right.



KJZT PRESENTS PERPETUAL ENDOWMENT—Della Greive, who is a society member of the KJZT - Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas, No. 4 Praha, was presented a perpetual endowment recently after Mass at Oak Manor Nursing Center. Perpetual endowments are presented to society members who are at or about the age of 100. Mrs. Greive is 104 years young. Society members from three local societies, No. 4 Praha, No. 20 Cistern and No. 83 Flatonia, were present and included, l-r, Grace Vinklerek, state director of Districts IV and V and secretary of Society No. 20 Cistern; Florence Williams, Society No. 20; Loretta Fretay, daughter of Della Greive; Della Greive, holding her endowment card; Leonita Robinson, Society No. 83; Vlasta Pekar, Society No. 4; back row, l-r, Eugene Vinlerek, Society No. 20; Father Joe Hybner, state KJZT chaplain and pastor of Sacred Heart Church in Flatonia; Julie Stryk, Society No. 4 treasurer; Georgia Cerny, Society No. 4 president; Nancy Jasek, Society No. 4 secretary; Della Brosch, Society No. 20; Ann Bratton Society No. 83 treasurer; Anna Wisenbaker, Society No. 4; and Jeanette Zouzalik, Society No. 83 secretary. Not pictured is Mark Kocian, Society No. 4.

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
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Mark your letter "Personal and Confidential"

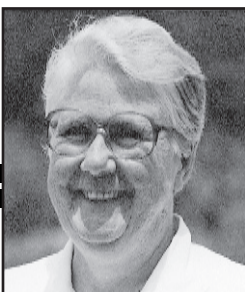
We will also help you bring your concerns to Church officials outside the diocese if the abuse occurred elsewhere and you now reside in the Diocese of Victoria.

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



SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



Overcoming Winter

Awe look about us, we see all of nature lying in wait for signs of movement. The short days are minimizing the length and intensity of the life-promoting rays of the sun. The bare trees are silently building up strength for a future surge of new life. The fields are tilled and prepared and are soaking up moisture for next year's anticipated harvest. The dry grass on the meadows mask any growth that may be occurring. —Yes, we are in the dead of winter which is part of the created cycle of life.

Fortunately, we Christians are gifted with understanding and deep insight into the natural and supernatural realms of existence. For example, as we delve more deeply into the new liturgical year, we see signs and movements of God's life. This year, Cycle C, we have St. Luke as our Sunday Gospel correspondent, portraying his view of Jesus. (We'll talk more about his perspective of Jesus in the future.) Today we'll focus on two of his narratives and the significance they have for us.

The first narrative is that of the Baptism of Jesus. Luke tells us that after Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus and a voice (of God the Father) came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." Now I like to believe that as each of us was baptized

in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, in addition to our receiving the Holy Spirit, God the Father looked down on each of us and said, "You are my beloved Son (or Daughter); with you I am well pleased." Just imagine what a privilege it is to be a Beloved Son or Daughter of God! That thought should sustain us in the winters of our lives.

The second narrative that I would like to refer to is the one for the Third Sunday of Ordinary time. Luke lets us know of the compassionate Jesus as he tells us of Jesus in the synagogue reading a passage from the Prophet Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord."

How can we tap into this insight of Jesus whenever we are faced with the trials and sorrows of life — the times when it is difficult to sustain hope? Let us embrace St. Luke's portrait of Jesus and commit it to memory. Moreover, let us imitate Jesus and make this passage a description of our own Christian mission. Thus we can help bring signs of life to ourselves and those about us. May the hope of new life sustain each of us.

History Was Made with OCL Distance Technology Meeting

For the first time, on November 23, 2009, the Diocese of Victoria held a meeting of the Organization of Catechetical Leadership (OCL) using distance technology. Parish Catechetical Leaders (PCLs), a pastor, and catechists met at three sites: Our Lady of Mt. Carmel in Wharton, Holy Rosary in Hostyn, and the chancery in Victoria. The price of gasoline, the meeting topic, travel time, and an evening meeting were important factors that prompted this innovative and resourceful undertaking.

A participant from Hostyn had this to say about the meeting, "I have really learned what our parish needs to do for our kids and even the parents. I appreciated that I didn't have to travel far. I can go back to class and do more, too, and give them what I learned tonight." An attendee from Wharton made the following comment, "I am glad the meeting was close to home." From the group at the chancery, one person commented, "It was an interesting format. Although it was a little hard to share with other centers, overall it was a good experience and got more people involved because travel was not such an issue. It was certainly worth the time."

Dan Mulhall, from his home in Laurel, Maryland, gave a presentation on the sacraments of initiation. He talked about first communion/reconciliation, working with older first communion students, and the importance of including parents and the family in sacramental preparation. He reminded his distant meeting attendees that they are preparing students for living as Catholic Christians for a lifetime, not just preparing them to receive their first

Holy Communion. They are initiating them into a community; therefore, they have to give them many opportunities to be involved with the parish community and with the Church. Parents and family are essential to insure that students continue to live and practice their Catholic faith. Having a requirement that parents must be part of the sacramental preparation process or program in the parish is very important. If approached well, parents who want the best for their children will usually respond favorably. It will take time to change the culture that seems to say that all parents have to do is drop off their children for religious instruction.

Father Charles Sonnier, pastor of the parishes in Sweet Home and Koerth was in attendance and, said that the Catholic Church is responsible for the situation we find ourselves in today. He said that in the recent past we have given parents the impression that we (catechetical persons, pastors, sisters, etc.) are the ones to teach and prepare the students for first sacraments. "This needs to change," Father Sonnier said. He also said that students need to practice the faith with their families.

Sister Digna Vela, the director of the Diocesan Catechetical Office, said that using modern technology to help evangelize and catechize is essential. Even Pope Benedict XVI uses modern media to communicate. Distance learning is being used by the Pastoral Institute Extended classes and in some of the Short-Term classes, as well.

Sons of Texas present book awards

AUSTIN - The Sons of the Republic of Texas named Galen Greaser, Spanish translator for the Texas General Land Office Archives, the runner-up for this year's Presidio La Bahia Award. Joined by Texas Land Commissioner Jerry Patterson, Greaser accepted the award Saturday in Goliad.

"As a history buff, I'm especially honored to see one of our employees recognized for his dedication to Texas history," Patterson said. "This expertly researched book offers a rich narrative about early land settlement in South Texas, an intriguing subject for landowners, history students, attorneys and genealogists."

The Presidio La Bahia award was established in 1968 and recognizes excellence in preservation of antiquities and research into Texas' heritage, with special emphasis on the Spanish Colonial period. The first place book award went to "Silent Witness to Texas History: Archeology and Artifacts of Goliad's Presidio La Bahia" by Anne A. Fox, Samuel P. Nesmith and Daniel E. Fox.

Greaser's book, "New Guide to Spanish and Mexican Land Grants in South Texas," explores the beginning of the legal establishment of private land ownership in the territory between the Nueces River and the Rio Grande. The Texas assertion of control over the trans-Nueces region produced a unique and sometimes controversial chapter in the history of the public lands of Texas.

The book presents insight into the historical context of the Spanish and Mexican land grants in the trans-Nueces and the process that resulted in their integration into the land system of Texas after the Mexican-American War ended in 1848. The narrative explores how these grants fit in the big picture of colonization, settlement and development of the region. Readers will also learn about Spanish and Mexican property law, the intricacies of the land granting process, and mineral rights as they relate to these grants. Issues such as the border fence, mineral rights and challenges

to prevailing titles continue to call attention to these ancient grants.

As the Spanish translator for the Texas General Land Office Archives, Greaser is part of a team dedicated to preserving the rich heritage of Texas through educational outreach programs and map and document preservation. For more information, please visit www.savetexashistory.org.

Story provided by the Texas General Land Office, Jerry Patterson, Commissioner, Office of Communications.



KJZT NEW CAUSE: FEEDING FAMILIES ACROSS TEXAS—The Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas (KJZT) adopted a statewide fraternal cause called Feeding Families Across Texas. The purpose behind the fraternal cause is to extend KJZT's charitable work throughout Texas and reach those in need. Recently, Society No. 111, St. Agnes Parish in Edna donated \$400 to Helping Hands of Jackson County Food Bank. Pictured, l-r, are local officers Mary Sheblak, vice president; Marcella Ramsbacher, Helping Hands representative; Georgia Orsak, treasurer; Doris Andel, president.



URGENT Adorers and Substitutes Needed

St. Mary's Adoration Chapel in Victoria is in need of adorers of the eucharistic Jesus and always in need of substitutes.

*Openings: Wed. 7-8 p.m.;
Thurs. 8-9 a.m. and 3-4 p.m.;
and Fri. 5-6 p.m.*

If you would like to commit to one of these hours or to fill in when an adorer needs a substitute, please call Cleo Boldt at 573-6161 or St. Mary Rectory at 573-4328.

Pro-life event to be held in Edna, Jan. 20

EDNA—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court 1350, St. Agnes Parish is sponsoring "A Celebration of Life, a Pro-Life Event," on Wednesday, January 20, 2010, from 7:00-8:00 p.m., at the Jackson County Services Building, 411 N. Wells St., in Edna.

The program will focus on the importance of life from conception until natural death. All church ministers, youth, parents, grandparents and adults from Jackson County are invited to attend.

No admission will be charged and refreshments will be served.

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

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Jason Evert Says ‘Teen Sex Rates Are Dropping’

By Chris Pham, CatholicTV, a television network based near Boston, Mass.

WATERTOWN, MASS.—Jason Evert, a renowned chastity speaker and author, was interviewed December 8, 2009, by Father Robert Reed, director, and Kevin Nelson, senior producer, of the CatholicTV Network live on the CatholicTV talk show “This is the Day.”

During his interview, Evert made several “eye-opening” statements about chastity, and the receptiveness of the chastity message by teens. Speaking about young people, Evert said, “They’re eating it up [the chastity message] like ants on a birthday cake because it’s not a bunch of rules so you don’t go to hell, it’s letting you be liberated so you can love for the right reasons.”

Some people “think that the kids are going to throw tomatoes at you, but “after speaking for 10 years to over a million kids, we haven’t had one disruptive audience, and we’ve been to correctional facilities and inner city schools.”

In November, “We gave a chastity talk at the National Catholic Youth Conference (NCYC) and over 20,000 teens gave a standing ovation in response to a chastity talk.” said Evert.

“Teen sexual activity rates have been dropping consistently for the last 10-15 years. The majority of high school kids are virgins. There’s a lot of good news out there, but it’s not often portrayed in the media.”

Evert continued saying, “Chastity is not the elimination of sexual desire, it’s the perfection of it. It’s where you place love above the disordered desire to lust and use. If you really understand the Church’s teachings for what they are, it’s not repressive, it’s liberating.”

“People say the culture glorifies sex. No, culture doesn’t. It’s the Church that glorifies sex. Only in the Church’s teachings of human sexuality can they see

the glory of God’s plan. The problem is not that the world is glorifying sex, the problem is that world is debasing sex so that you don’t see the full beauty of it.” said Evert.

Jason Evert’s interview on the CatholicTV show “This is the Day” is viewable now without charge at <http://www.catholicTV.com/shows/default.aspx?seriesID=72&videoID=129>. The interview begins at 12 minutes and 40 seconds into the video.

Jason Evert and his wife Crystalina have been featured on Fox News, the BBC, WGN-TV news and others as well. More information on Jason and Crystalina Evert is available at www.Chastity.com.

CatholicTV airs several programs which promote chastity including “Body

Matters” (<http://www.catholicTV.com/shows/default.aspx?seriesID=153>), “The Future Depends on Love” (<http://www.catholicTV.com/shows/default.aspx?seriesID=74>), “The Road to Cana” (<http://www.catholicTV.com/shows/default.aspx?seriesID=70>) and others.

CatholicTV is a nationally-broadcasted television network streaming a live feed 24-hours a day at CatholicTV.com. Heeding Pope Benedict XVI’s call to greater utilize the power of television and news media, the CatholicTV Network features its cable TV station, Catholic Web site, mobile apps and widget. Celebrate Mass online; pray The Rosary; enjoy programs on prayer, the saints, the Scriptures and the Catholic Church on America’s Catholic Television Network.

“This is the Day” can also be seen on demand at www.CatholicTV.com or downloaded via iTunes.com and SQPN.com. The hosts, Father Robert Reed and Jay Fadden, discuss various topics of the week and respond to viewer mail (you may e-mail the show at thisistheday@CatholicTV.com

“Chastity is not the elimination of sexual desire, it’s the perfection of it.”
~ Jason Evert



St. Joseph-Yoakum Youth CRU program is becoming active with help from the parish. Above are CRU members McKenzie Heller, Lauren Villa, DeLisa Darilek, Danielle Darilek and Regan Renken at “Centennial Park’s Winter Wonderland of Lights.”

Yoakum CRU youth news

YOAKUM—The St. Joseph-Yoakum youth organization sponsored a tree for the “Centennial Park’s Winter Wonderland of Lights” in Yoakum. Youth members decorated the tree to look like a red and white striped candy cane. The park was lit on November 30 and remained lit throughout the Christmas season. Members present for the lighting were McKenzie Heller, Lauren Villa, DeLisa Darilek, Danielle Darilek and Regan Renken.

KJT Society #13 presented the CRU, St. Joseph youth organization, with a donation of \$500. Society #13 collected and donated \$250 and the KJT home office matched the collection with another \$250 reaching

a total of \$500 to be donated to the youth organization for much needed supplies. Presenting the check was KJT President Theresa Bordovsky; Vice President Henry Zabransky; Secretary Dorothy Zabransky; and Treasurer John Kengle. Receiving the check on behalf of CRU were youth directors, Westley and Therese Ferry and Michael and Jana Guajardo, as well as CRU members, Abby Hull, Emily Harper, and newest member of the KJT, Trent Ferry.

The St. Joseph-Yoakum youth organization also baked pastries with volunteers from the parish, Annette Hull and Juanita Rainosek, to donate to the Meals on Wheels program for Thanksgiving day.

Youth Calendar of Events

January 9 — Foundations - A Certificate Program in Youth Ministry Studies at the Diocese of Victoria, Chancery - This session is “Prayer and Worship” - 9:00 a.m.-12 noon

January 16-17 — Youth Leader Retreat

January 23 — Pro-Life Rally in Austin

January 31 — Junior High Fiesta

February 14 — Confirmation Retreat - St. Michael in Cuero

February 20 — Foundations - A Certificate Program in Youth Ministry Studies at the Diocese of Victoria, Chancery - This session is “Justice and Service” - 9:00 a.m.-12 noon

February 23-26 — Region 10 Diocesan Directors Meeting

March 7 — High School Spectacular

March 13 — Confirmation Retreat - location to be announced

March 27 — Foundations - A Certificate Program in Youth Ministry Studies at the Diocese of Victoria, Chancery - This session is “Ethics and Crisis Management” - 9:00 a.m.-12 noon

April 17 — Foundations - A Certificate Program in Youth Ministry Studies - at the Diocese of Victoria, Chancery - This session is “Retreat Formation” - 9:00 a.m.-12 noon

April 18 — Camp David Planning - Youth Leaders/Staff at the Chancery in Victoria

June 13-15 — 1st Session - Camp David Junior High Camp

June 16 — Camp David Elementary Camp

June 16 - 18 — 2nd Session - Camp David Junior High Camp

June 28 - July 1 — Discipleship Week

July 3-11 — Rocky Mountain High, Colorado

Find us now on Facebook! At Diocese of Victoria – Youth Ministry



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



Gene and Brad display some of their Christian Vaudeville type antics that are sure to entertain, while they share their love for the Lord. Jr. High Fiesta will be held January 31 at the KC Hall in Hallettsville.

Jr. High Fiesta - Jan. 31

Youth in the 6th through 8th grades are invited to this year’s Jr. High Fiesta, which will be held Sunday, January 31, at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Hallettsville.

APeX Ministries (Gene and Brad) is a nationally known comedy duo based out of Baltimore, Md., and near Denver, Co. APeX uses a style they define as Christian Vaudeville. This includes (but is not limited to) death defying juggling, humor, characterizations (skits), storytelling, audience participation and personal testimony. Over the last six years APeX has worked with youth and adults alike in over 40 states at the national, diocesan and parish levels.

Both Gene and Brad were born in Casper, Wyoming, where they grew up in the same parish. Brad now loves to share his antics with the world. He has experience working in youth ministry in different parts of the country. He absolutely loves the Lord and wants to share the joy he’s

found with as many people as he can. Gene graduated from the Catholic University of America in 1996. Gene was a nerd (and some would contest he still is) and loved being on the Math team. When he grows up he would like to be a teacher.

The Jr. High Fiesta will be held at the KC Hall at 321 US Highway 77 S., Hallettsville. Doors open at 11 a.m., program begins at 11:30 a.m. and concludes with Liturgy beginning at 5:00 p.m. Lunch is provided and a snack bar will be available throughout the day.

Deadline for early registration is Thursday, January 28. Early rates are \$15 per person, \$12 pp group rate of eight or more, adults \$7. All fees must be mailed to the office before the event. NO REFUNDS AFTER January 28. Rate at the door is \$20, with no exceptions.

For more information contact your parish coordinator or Debbie Vanelli at the Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry (361) 573-0828, dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org or Jose Ortega, jortega@victoriadiocese.org

Open House
February 4th at 6:30pm

www.STJvictoria.com • 361-573-2446 • 110 E. Red River • Victoria, Texas



Four men ordained to the diaconate for Diocese of Victoria

Continued from p. 1

for me, to be accepted by the bishop, priests and deacons of the diocese. ... I became emotional when Deacon Jarrel Nohavitz, my uncle and God-parent, and I embraced. I cannot forget Deacon Edward Wendel, a relative of mine and with whom I am working at St. John's in New Taiton."

Deacon Milburn Kram St. Joseph, Moulton

"You spend many years of preparation for this very special day, but when the Rite of Ordination takes place, you are caught up in awe of the beauty and deep meaning of the ritual of our Church."

"When called forward and the question of worthiness is asked, I found it difficult to believe that I was worthy of the gift of this order. As I lay prostrate before the majesty of God's altar and listened to the beauty of the cantors' Litany of the Saints, I was overcome by a joy that brought tears to my eyes. When the bishop, in silence laid his hands on my head, I recalled the thought of how Christ's chosen apostles had passed on this responsibility in the same manner at the beginning of our precious Church. At the end of the rite, when the bishop handed the Book of Gospels to me and stated, 'Receive the Book of the Gospels, whose herald you have become. Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you

teach,' I prayed for the Lord's strength and guidance to carry out this way of life to the best of my ability. This rite will be an event that will remain in my heart and mind for the rest of my life."

Deacon Joe Ramos Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bay City

"I had many mixed emotions on this day of my ordination," said Deacon Joe Ramos. "I had a feeling of disbelief that this journey, which started six years ago was coming to an end."

"As I lay prostrate at the altar, I was overwhelmed thinking and knowing that all of our heavenly saints were listening to our prayers."

"Reality set in when I was first addressed as 'Deacon.' Now a new chapter has begun as I continue my spiritual journey as a true servant of our Lord Jesus Christ and with the people of our Church community."

Deacon Joe A. Machacek Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Shiner

"As I lay prostrate during the Prayer of Consecration and the Litany of the Saints was being chanted, a flood of emotions came over me. Our last semester course was a study of Christian eschatology, the end time, Christ's second coming, the heavenly

kingdom and how we can experience it here on earth to some extent. As the saints in the litany were being chanted, I realized how God's kingdom includes all our ancestors, from Abraham till today. I was so aware of the heavenly abode and knowing my family, friends, fellow deacons and priests were all present, I truly felt a part of the heavenly kingdom. Words feel so inadequate in giving a description of the emotions I experienced."

"Gratitude, love, a humble pride, a spiritual responsibility, healing and a special grace that I can call on in my ministry as a deacon in the Roman Catholic Church — these were some of the many emotions running through my mind. Today as I write this it might compare to the experience that Peter, James and John had at the Transfiguration and Peter said to Jesus, 'Let us build a tent for you, Moses and Elijah.' I, just as Peter, longed to be in that heavenly realm, but I realize that my ministry has just begun, and I must come down and be a laborer in God's vineyard."

All the newly ordained deacons expressed thanks to their spouses and family members who had supported them through their years of preparation. Included in their family were their parishioners, pastors, priests, fellow deacons and Bishop Fellhauer. They also mentioned their gratefulness to Father Gabriel

Maison, their director of formation, and Michael Fonseca, their spiritual director, for their guidance. Also mentioned in thanksgiving was the choir who participated in the Mass and the Serrans, who put on a nice and warm reception for the deacons.



(above) Diaconate candidates await ordination.



(left) Joe Ramos promises obedience to Bishop Fellhauer.



(above) Bishop Fellhauer consecrates Joe Machacek.



(left) Pat Kubala is presented with the Gospels.



(above) Milburn Kram distributes the precious blood of Christ.



SHINER JCDA BRINGS JOY TO MANY—On Sunday, December 6, 2009, Shiner JCDA Court St. Paul #1604 met for their regular monthly meeting at 6 p.m. and went for a hayride and Christmas caroling. There were approximately 35 girls in attendance and they sang various Christmas tunes at the nursing home, the assisted living home, the Catholic priests' rectory and the convent. Afterwards, the girls were treated to a social at the parish activity center and brought gifts that were donated to the Deputy Santa program.



FLATONIA HOLDS ACTS RETREAT—"Now I know why the ACTS Retreats are so powerful and wonderful!" said Father Joe Hybner, pastor of Sacred Heart in Flatonia and Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Cistern. "The preparation time for the team is fourteen weeks — praying to the Holy Spirit and preparing every detail of the retreat. There is a wonderful spirit of sacrifice and willing to serve others, wrapped in prayer. The retreatants are overwhelmed with the love of God through the team. It is the Living Church given to us by Jesus Christ through the apostles." The ACTS Retreat was held October 15-18, 2009, at Cathedral Oaks, between Weimar and Hallettsville. Pictured are the ACTS team leaders, front row, l. to r.: Byron Wren, John Mozisek, Mike Steinhauer, Father Joe Hybner, Raymond Harbich, Bubba Pritchard and Deacon Mike Meisner; second row: Roger Olier, Kenneth Harbich, Al Michalec, Ed Hughes, David Fike, Frankie Tupa, David Ortiz, Jason Muras, Bill Bohlmann, Bob Leske, Mike Rains, Rick Perez and Larry Lutringer; back row: Ronnie Vecera, Randy Mican, Mike Janecek, Michael Harbich, Fred Hermis, Jimmie Luksovsky, Walter Hermis, Thomas Petras, Deacon Charlie Novosad, Johnnie Hoffman, Bill Morrow, Steve Blahuta, Bo Janda and R.J. Jauernig. Unavailable for photo: David Machac, Greg Trojacek, Matt Tice, Joe Pilat, Richard Hoelscher, Victor Schaaf and Chris Janca.



CHURCH PICNIC TITHES BENEFIT COMMUNITY—The Queen of the Holy Rosary, Hostyn, was the site of a delicious breakfast celebrating many events including Msgr. Petru's birthday (Nov.22), blessing of the new sidewalks, parish appreciation breakfast, the welcoming of new parishioners and the presentation of the 10% picnic donation checks and youth group donation. The combined Scholarship Breakfast Committees performed their usual cooking feat with numerous hot entrees along with coffee and orange juice. The parishioners were honored to have Bishop David E. Fellhauer join them for this celebration. Deacon John McCourt served as host and welcomed everyone and introduced the new parishioners. Jerry Zezula, president of the parish council, presented checks to Habitat for Humanity representatives Dudley Piland, president, and Gloria Fajkus, financial secretary; and to Bob Fields, chairman of the board for the Tejas Medical Clinic in LaGrange. Each charitable group received a check for \$2,481.89, which was five percent of the profit from the October picnic. Sterling Behren, president of the youth group, also gave a donation from the group's fundraisers at the picnic. Pictured above are Jerry Zezula, Dudley Piland, Gloria Fajkus and Bob Fields.



LOCAL SOLDIER VISITS ST. JOE STUDENTS—St. Joseph Elementary students in Yoakum were honored with a visit from Private First Class, Aaron Grichar. PFC Grichar, son of James and Dimple Grichar, is a Yoakum SJS alumnus from the St. Joseph School 2003 eighth-grade class. He completed his training in the U.S. Army at Ft. Stewart, Ga., and joined the 1st Brigade, Unit 1/41 in Baghdad, Iraq, December 17. During his visit to the school, PFC Grichar educated students about his basic training experiences and how his training will help serve the United States in Iraq. The St. Joseph School would like to extend their prayers for a successful mission and a safe return of PJC Grichar to his family.



The Confraternity of Christian Mothers, St. Elizabeth's Society, of Nada, recently received 10 new members during their 110th anniversary. They are pictured with St. Elizabeth's vice president and the pastor, from l. to r., front row: Shelly Thompson, Amy Fucik, Sandra Wishert and Lana Weid; middle row: Vice President Betty Leopold, Annie Gold, Vicki Nelson, Tammy Till and Janice Waddle; and back row: Jessica Baker, Betty Janish and Father Joe Vrana, pastor.

Christian Mothers of Nada receive 10 new members

NADA, Texas—The Confraternity of Christian Mothers, St. Elizabeth's Society, of Nada celebrated 110 years of service to the parish community with the reception of 10 new members at Mass November 1, 2009. Each new member was given a Mother Love prayer book and Christian Mother medal.

The St. Elizabeth Society was organized by Tharasia Schneider with 35 charter members on November 1, 1899. The main concern of the society is the spiritual welfare of the family, and it also serves as the Altar society. They furnish the needs of St Mary's Church sanctuary, such as vestments, linens, hosts, wine, candles, etc.

The society meets the fourth Thursday of each month after the 8:00 a.m. Mass

in St. Mary's Parish Hall. A Mass is celebrated on the First Friday of each month for the intentions of the members and their families. The daily prayer for children is to be said every day and it is said aloud after the rosary before the Masses in Nada.

The current officers are: President Rose Staff, Vice President Betty Leopold, Secretary Virginia Korenek, Treasurer Ernestine Schneider and Financial Secretary Edith Drlik.

The Christian Mothers accept married women as members and unmarried women as associate members. If you are a Catholic, you must be practicing your faith and receiving the sacraments. Also non-Catholic mothers rearing children in the Catholic faith may be associate members.

History of Christian Mothers' Society

In 1850 in the little village of Lille, France, a group of Catholic mothers agreed to meet in one another's homes to discuss ways in which they could combat the moral decline that was taking place in their community. They wanted to go over ways that they could improve family life and protect their children. First they prayed and then they discussed.

Soon these little groups organized into a parish group and the idea spread. But it took the Holy Father, Pope Leo the 13th, to make the Confraternity an indulgenced canonical society and to signify that the Immaculate Mother of God under the

title of Sorrowful Mother was to be its Patroness. Another Holy Father, Pope Pius IX, heard of the confraternities and their common purpose (the early Christian education of children by mothers in the home) and exclaimed: "Give me truly Christian mothers and I will renew the face of the earth!"

On January 16, 1881, the Archconfraternity of Christian Mothers was established in the United States at St. Augustine's Church, Pittsburgh, Pa., under the direction of the Capuchin Franciscan Friars.



DIOCESAN TASK FORCE COMMITTEE FOR NATIONAL RCIA FORUM—

Much planning is needed to host and prepare for the RCIA National "Beginnings Plus" Institute slated for August 19-22, 2010. Committee members are meeting regularly to plan for the many and varied aspects of this event. The Institute will engage participants in the rituals of the RCIA process and will explain the skills and techniques necessary to implement these rites in a parish setting. The four-day institute is recommended for all clergy, RCIA team members, liturgists, music ministers and anyone who is on the planning team for RCIA. Pictured from left are committee members Christella Alvarez, Mary Lupita Reyes (Diocesan NAFC Coordinator), Dick Scheibelhut, Cynthia Goerig (Liturgical Commission Director), and Laurie Bautista.



Pictured are the St. Rose of Lima Cardinals DVAL district volleyball champions of Schulenburg front row, from left: Hannah Fogle, Kelsie Fietz, Samantha Carter, Lexi Fowlkes and Rachel Saulnier; back row, from left: Coach Sandy Zaruba, Sarah Walker, Rylie Heller, Jade Bujnoch, Assistant Coach Doris Bujnoch and Assistant Coach Sadee Cooper.

St. Rose Cardinals win Volleyball Championship

SCHULENBURG—The St. Rose Cardinals captured their first Diocese of Victoria Athletic League (DVAL) district volleyball championship with an exciting win over St. Ludmila of Shiner. The Cardinals made up for last year's championship game loss to Shiner with a 25-22 and 25-19 victory to bring the championship trophy to St. Rose School.

The Cardinals got off to a slow start falling behind by the score of 4-12 and then 10-19. After the nervousness wore off, the girls played an excellent game by scoring 15 of the last 18 points, including a run of nine consecutive points that put St. Rose

in the lead for good. In the second set the Cardinals again started slow, trailing by a score of 8-13 before slowly climbing in to the lead at 16-15, after a run of 6 points. The girls never looked back, believing in their teammates and their abilities to take the second set and bring the championship to honor St. Rose.

The Cardinal A-team finished the year with an 18-1 overall record and a perfect 8-0 record in the north zone of the DVAL. They also captured first place titles in the Trinity tournament and the Nazareth tournament.



NEW TAITON CCD HELPS THE NEEDY—In November 2009, students of St. John Nepomucene of New Taiton CCD classes, along with Father Gabriel Oduro Tawiah, pastor, participated in a food drive to benefit the Blessing Cup. The students brought cans of food to CCD class. The Blessing Cup is an organization that helps those in need by offering free food and clothing. The CCD classes held a birthday party for Jesus in December.



The life you change may be your own

By Father Peter Ciuciulla, MCCJ

Christmas is a time when we reflect on the great reality of Jesus "Who, being in the very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness" (Phi 2,6-7).



Isn't this good news for everybody on earth? At Christmas, everybody wants to be a better person as a way of connecting with our God who is no more far away, high in the sky. This God walks our own paths, sharing life with us. Emmanuel – a "free of charge" act of love from God. "Free of charge," a word that we do not use very often in our world today.

If this is good news for us here in the United States, imagine what good news it is for the poorest and most abandoned people on earth. Imagine what good news it is for those who are neglected, for those who have nothing but the most extreme poverty, hunger, illness and loss.

Imagine what good news the birth of Christ is for my friend Mathieu, a young adult of Moissala in Chad, Africa. He has a wife and children to brighten his life and strength to work a field or go fishing to procure food for his family. If you go to visit him, you will find the smile of Veronique, his wife, and the laughter of his children. Anna the last one of his daughters, just four years old, will come to sit by you and ask all kinds of questions. You will hear a ruckus in the yard, and before long one of the children has caught a chicken so you, the guest, will have a special meal. At this moment, it is the only chicken they have, but they will

cook it for you with no regret.

Where does this peace, this acceptance of life's circumstances come from? Where does this generosity come from? There is no bitterness, no depression, no complaints. Ask Mathieu and Veronique why they want to share with you the only chicken they have. They answer, "Jesus did not keep anything for himself but shared everything, so we do the same."

Once I went to preach in a church somewhere in the United States, and of course I talked about my missionary life in Chad. Many months later I received a letter from a family that had decided not to exchange gifts at Christmas. They sent me the money they saved by not buying gifts for family and friends and asked me to give it to somebody poor. They wanted to make a difference, they told me in the accompanying note.

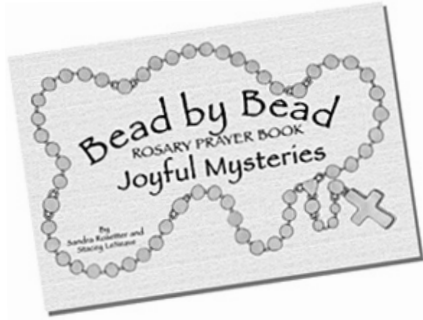
My note to this family told them they had made a difference in someone's life – their own – the moment they made their decision to share what they had. Just like Veronique and Mathieu with their chicken, this family did exactly as Jesus did. They gave of themselves.

Isn't this the spirit of Christmas? Give a gift, change a life, not only the life of those who receive but also of those who give. And Christmas, hopefully, is the time when we "rev up" for the whole of the coming year, a year filled with giving of ourselves in Jesus' name. Amen!

Father Peter Ciuciulla, MCCJ, is Mission Director of the North American Province of the Comboni Missionaries, a worldwide religious institute founded by St. Daniel Comboni to carry the Gospel to "the world's poorest and most abandoned people." www.combonimissionaries.org

The "Bead by Bead Rosary Prayer Book, Joyful Mysteries" puzzle prize

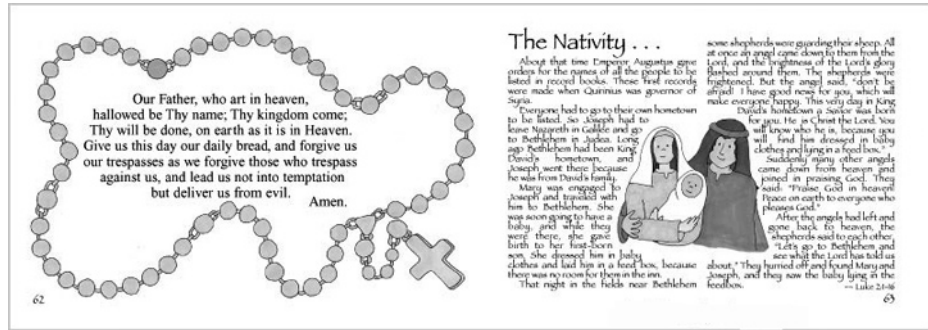
The "Bead by Bead Rosary Prayer Book, Joyful Mysteries," by Sandra Rosetter and Stacey LeNeave, is designed to help children stay focused while praying the rosary. In this book you will find a special illustration for each bead. After each prayer (bead), simply turn the page for a new image to contemplate. Using this prayer book, children will become familiar with the Mysteries of the Rosary and the related Scripture.



books!" —Margarete S. (grandmother and Catholic school principal)

The Bead by Bead Rosary Prayer Book is the first in a series; the Joyful Mysteries will be followed by the Sorrowful, Glorious, and Luminous Mysteries. The book sells for \$9.99 plus \$3.00 shipping & handling (add \$1.00 for each additional book).

Special Offer for Schools and Religious Education Programs!



Complete instructions on how to pray the rosary are also included.

"Bead by Bead is an endearing crawl-into-the-lap rosary meditation! The quality, visual impact is perfect for children learning this prayer. I will be using this book in my classroom!" —Diane E. (mother and kindergarten teacher)

"A must-have book for all Catholic children! Simply sweet and meaningful pictures, a wonderful bedside prayer book."—Lynn G. (mother and 5th grade teacher)

"I want to share this book with my grandchildren and school children—I anxiously await the upcoming Bead by Bead

For orders of 25 or more from your families, we will donate 10% of the proceeds back to your church or school!

To view more of the book, please go to: <http://www.beadbybeadrosarybooks.com/>. To purchase or for more information about educational programs, please call (612) 802-6355; e-mail: inquiries@beadbybeadrosarybooks.com; or write: Bead by Bead Rosary Books, P.O. Box 754, Long Lake, MN 55356. Orders will be shipped when the on-line payment or check has processed. All purchases are final. Make checks payable to: Bead by Bead Rosary Books.

GLORIA IN EXCELSIS DEO

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GLORY
TO GOD
IN THE HIGHEST
AND PEACE
TO HIS PEOPLE

ON EARTH
LORD GOD
HEAVENLY KING
ALMIGHTY GOD
AND FATHER WE

WORSHIP YOU
WE GIVE
YOU THANKS WE
PRAISE YOU
FOR YOUR GLORY

Name: _____
Address: _____
Phone number: _____
Parish: _____
Age if 18 or under: _____



Family Puzzle Contest

The Family Puzzle Contest Winner will win "Bead by Bead Rosary Prayer Book, Joyful Mysteries" by Sandra Rosetter and Stacey LeNeave in next month's contest. See book review on this page.

The winner of the December Family Puzzle Contest and "The Tap" by Frank McKinney, NY Times best-selling author, is Mary Silvas of Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria. We had many contestants for this prize; thank you to all those who participated. The book may be purchased online. Proceeds from the purchase of either of these books goes to the author's non-profit Caring House Project Foundation (CHPF) that provides a self-sustaining existence for desperately poor and homeless families around the world. Please go to his Web site for more information: <http://www.frank-mckinney.com/>

Mr. McKinney donated 12 copies of his children's book, "Dead Fred, Flying Lunchboxes, and the Good Luck Circle," to *The Catholic Lighthouse* to be given away as gifts for the "12 Days of Christmas." As we had only three youth eligible (10-17 years of age) for the gift, we will give three of those books away this month to each of the winners: Charlie Quarry of OLS, Justin Wittig of St. Joseph Mission, Boling; and Karlie Stehle of St. Joseph in Yoakum.

The winner of the under-10 age group is Kenedy Couvillion (8), of St. Philip in El Campo. Kenedy 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, P. O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903, by January 25 for a chance to win "Bead by Bead Rosary Prayer Book, Joyful Mysteries." Beginning this month, youth 18 years and under will have the opportunity to receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop or another gift from *The Catholic Lighthouse* (youth, please state age).

Prayer for Vocations

Loving Father, through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Queen of Vocations, may our youth joyfully respond to your call to follow Jesus in the priestly and religious life. Amen.

From Serra International

Oberammergau – Passion Play July 11 - 22, 2010

Poland (Warsaw; Czestochowa: Black Madonna "Queen of Poland," Auschwitz: St. Maximilian Kolbe; Wadowice: birthplace of Pope John Paul II; Krakow: St. Faustina, Shrine of Divine Mercy) – Czech Republic (Prague) – Germany (Munich, Ettal, Oberammergau, Heidelberg).

Spiritual director will be Father Bob Knippenberg, pastor of Sts. Cyril & Methodius, in Shiner.

Few seats remaining

Holy Land – November 7, 2010

For more information or to register, please contact Betty Urbanovsky, 911 Fahrenthold, El Campo, TX 77437; (979) 543-2333; e-mail: burbanovsky@sbcglobal.net.



Twenty Something

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



Seize your second chance in this second decade

It is nearly impossible to recognize Danny Cahill, the Oklahoma land surveyor, in NBC's Biggest Loser. But if you look closely, you can see him in the corners of his smile and the familiar glimmer in his blue eyes — hints of the former man, eight months and 239 pounds ago.

Today the 40-year-old dad is a reality TV star, peddling an eponymous Web site and a hit single. "This is your second chance at life. Don't you wait there for it," he sings. "Don't let this chance pass you by 'cause you are ready for it."

It's an apt soundtrack to the footage he has given us: sweating on the treadmill, crying to the camera, stepping onto the scale, pumping his fists in the air and hugging his family as confetti cascades.

"I feel like a million bucks," Danny told Meredith Vieira the morning after his victory. By losing 55 percent of his body weight, he has gained so much: cash, celebrity, confidence and, best of all, longevity.

Danny's extreme weight loss makes him the Biggest Loser ever, a triumph we all can get be-

hind right now. As the century's first decade gives way to the second, we're feeling a heightened desire for turnaround, an itching to up the ante on our typical New Year's resolve.

"Time" magazine has added to our urgency, bidding farewell, on a recent cover, to "The Decade From Hell."

"Bookended by 9/11 at the start and a financial wipeout at the end, the first 10 years of this century will very likely go down as the most dispiriting and disillusioning decade Americans have lived through in the post-World War II era," Andy Serwer writes. "Call it the Decade from Hell, or the Reckoning, or the Decade of Broken Dreams, or the Lost Decade. Call it whatever you want — just give thanks that it is nearly over."

The magazine's dramatic claim is laced with the promise, a subtitle, that the next decade will be better.

As Catholics, we have cause for great hope — and a myriad of turnaround tales. The lives of the saints are full of second acts and second chances: heretics and hedonists, embezzlers and

extortionists, gossips and gamblers and gang leaders who turn around and do great things for the glory of God. St. Augustine stopped denouncing the Church. St. Olga stopped killing. And Mary Magdalene was freed of seven demons, becoming the first witness of Jesus' resurrection.

Our merciful God has given us the grace of the sacraments and the power of reconciliation. "As far as the East is from the West," David the Psalmist reassures us, "so far have our sins been removed from us."

Just as 430-pound Danny Cahill has vanished, absolution leaves no trace of our former selves.

My favorite expression of that hope for transformation comes from the German poet Rainer Maria Rilke: "And now let us welcome the new year, full of things that have never been."

What a sweet and simple phrase: things that have never been. Mountains that have never been climbed. Prayers that have never been uttered. Cures that have never been found. Babies that have never been born. Books that have never been written. Dreams that have never been imagined.

For as long as our history here, there is so much yet undone, waiting to be breathed and willed into life. This new decade. This new year. This new day.

Maybe it's your turn for a turnaround.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

Simple ideas that use our excesses to benefit others

Walt Hays burst into the parish office where I work just as the excess of the holidays was ending. A few leftover cookies called to me from the staff lounge and an unopened box of candy tempted.

But fortunately, when I met the lean, loquacious retired Methodist pastor, I was well into my post-holiday resolve to be a good, sacrificial citizen of January.

This was the appropriate frame of mind, because just listening to Walt and his wonderful projects made me aware of how much — how over-much — I have, and what a world of need lies beyond the parish office.

Walt is the Alaska coordinator for something called PET International, a charity that sends "personal energy transportation" devices to people in Third World countries who have been crippled by land mines, polio, birth defects — hazards that take away the use of one's legs.

It is worth logging on to www.petinternational.org just to see these contraptions. They're practical and sturdy, with a seat, three wheels and hand-controlled pedals. They have a small carriage space for transporting small goods to market or hauling produce. They're also cheap: with many donated parts and all donated labor, they can be put together for \$250.

What I love about ideas like

PET, and what I love about Walt, is the pure, practical "just do it" approach they present to a problem. Think tanks might ponder the problem for a few years. People like Walt simply take action.

Walt was once a pastor in Nome, Alaska. He calls the



volunteers who assemble the PETs "geezers and geezerettes." Clearly, he places himself in that category despite the fact that he has the energy of a 15-year-old boy on a sugar high.

He told me about how PET got its start. In 1995, a guy named Mel West from Missouri, who was a former Marine and a late-comer to ministry, got a call from a missionary friend in Africa who asked, "Is there anyway you can help me get some wheelchairs?"

Mel immediately saw the impracticality of that request. Wheelchairs, which can easily cost between \$1,000 and \$2,000, on the rugged ruts, mud and grasslands of Africa? Mel consulted an

inventor friend named Earl Miner, and together the two produced the go-anywhere PET.

Since then, over 18,000 PETs have gone to 80 nations. PET has only two paid employees, but operates 16 workshops full of volunteers around the United States. It also has smaller operations like the seat-makers who work out of an Anchorage garage.

My parish got involved — how else? — through an invitation to our pastor from Walt: Would we care to raise funds for one PET to be presented to some Catholic religious sisters in Cameroon?

The child-size PET we paid for will be ridden down the church aisle during our Masses in late-January. We raised money beyond that, and perhaps best of all, one parishioner, Pat, has volunteered for a mission to Honduras with the Methodist group.

Walt warned Pat that she'll be "in country" for several days, resting in a sleeping bag at night on concrete school floors. She'll help reassemble PETs, and, being a former librarian, she's boning up on her Spanish in order to read to kids.

Walt's congregation in Anchorage has funded over 40 PETs and sent people off on mission trips to construct clinics, deliver eyeglasses and conduct health screenings. Some PETs have been paid for simply by collecting used printer ink cartridges for reimbursement.

Simple ideas, but strong focus — a great example of changing our excess to action.

Sunday Readings from Jan. 10 to Feb. 7

January 10 — The Baptism of the Lord	Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7 Psalms 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10 Acts 10:34-38 Luke 3:15-16, 21-22
January 17 — Second Sunday in Ordinary Time	Isaiah 62:1-5 Psalms 96:1-2, 2-3, 7-8, 9-10 1 Corinthians 12:4-11 John 2:1-11
January 24 — Third Sunday in Ordinary Time	Nehemiah 8:2-4a, 5-6, 8-10 Psalms 19:8, 9, 10, 15 1 Corinthians 12:12-30 Luke 1:1-4; 4:14-21
January 31 — Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Jeremiah 1:4-5, 17-19 Psalms 71:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 15-17 1 Corinthians 12:31 – 13:13 Luke 4:21-30
February 7 — Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8 Psalms 138:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 7-8 1 Corinthians 5:1-11 Luke 5:1-11

All daily and Sunday readings, as well as a reflection video, are available in text or audio at:
www.usccb.org/nab/

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Séptima Edición de “Discípulos en la Jornada” Cuaresma 2010

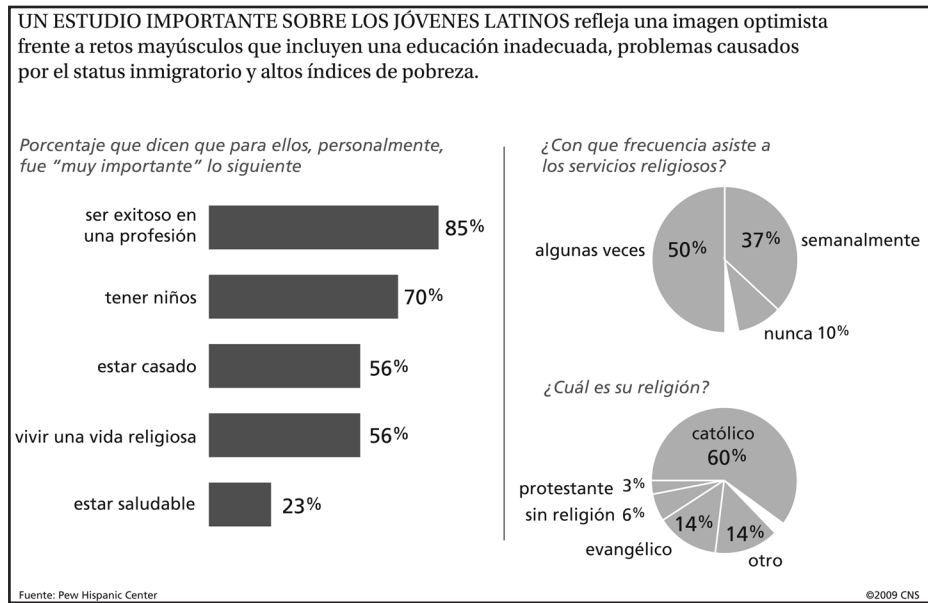
— Nuevo: ¡Formato, precio, y contenido! —

El Obispo Fellhauer esta orgulloso al anunciar la séptima publicación de **Discípulos en la Jornada**. La edición de este año tiene una nueva imagen, un nuevo precio, y un nuevo formato. El libro de Cuaresma 2010 es solamente para los grupos de adultos para compartir la fe. Las secciones de Jóvenes y Familias están disponibles a través de la página del Web de la Diócesis de Victoria en **www.victoriadiocese.org**. El Obispo Fellhauer espera que el precio más económico de \$2.50 por libro lo hará más accesible. El sigue apoyando y promoviendo esta publicación y escribe uno o más de los comentarios para cada año.

Hace siete años la Diócesis de Victoria comenzó a publicar *Discípulos en la Jornada* como un medio para continuar

el proceso de compartir la fe durante la Cuaresma, la cual se inició en el 2000 con *Discípulos en Misión*. Un número creciente de personas a través de los Estados Unidos y Canadá se reúnen cada año durante la Cuaresma, el tiempo litúrgico para una conversión y renovación continuada, para estudiar, discutir, y compartir su fe.

Es la esperanza del equipo editorial que la experiencia cuaresmal de muchos sea enriquecida y profundizada al unirse a un pequeño grupo o formando uno para compartir su fe sobre las lecturas dominicales usando *Discípulos en la Jornada*. Contacte a la Oficina del Ministerio Catequético al (361) 573-0828 o a la rectoría de tu parroquia para ordenar *Discípulos en la Jornada* para la Cuaresma 2010 en Ingles o Español.



La Peregrinación a Roma y Turín

Papa Benedicto XVI ha impulsado una ostensión de la Sábana Santa de Turín para la primavera de 2010. Esto es solamente la sexta ostensión entre 100 años. La siguiente ostensión pública de la reliquia será el próximo Año Santo, en 2025. Padre José Ángel Ortiz de Corpus Christi ha organizado una peregrinación a Roma, Turín, Milán, Venecia, Padua, Asís y Florencia. Partirá del lote de ruta 59 el próximo 4 de mayo de 2010 se prolongará hasta el día 13. ¡No faltes! Precio es \$2,600 puedes reservar tu lugar con sólo \$200 de anticipo. Para mas informes llama a (361) 643-4505 o **www.iccgregory.org** en el internet.

Intenciones del Santo Padre Benedicto XVI para el 2010 Enero

Los jóvenes y los medios de comunicación social. Para que los jóvenes sepan utilizar los medios de comunicación social para su crecimiento personal y para prepararse mejor para servir la sociedad.

La unidad de los cristianos. Para que todos los creyentes en Cristo entienden de que la unidad entre todos los cristianos es necesario para la proclamación eficaz del evangelio.

Cámara de Representantes, “Affordable Health Care for America Act”.

“Le rogamos encarecidamente que apoye una enmienda esencial que será ofrecida por los Senadores Ben Nelson (D-NE), Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Robert Casey (D-PA) para mantener vigentes las actuales disposiciones legales, en vigor por largo tiempo y que gozan de amplio apoyo que prohíben el uso de fondos gubernamentales para pagar por cobertura médica que incluya abortos electivos”, dicen los obispos en su carta. Los obispos también enviaron a los senadores dos resúmenes de datos esenciales que dan soporte a su postura. Los resúmenes, en inglés, pueden encontrarse en : Abortion and Conscience Problems in the Senate Health Care Reform: <http://www.usccb.org/healthcare/hatch-nelson120409.pdf> y What the Nelson-Hatch-Casey Amendment Does: <http://www.usccb.org/healthcare/nelsondo.pdf>. La carta fue firmada por el Obispo William Murphy de Rockville Centre, New York, presidente del Comité de Obispos sobre Justicia y Desarrollo Humano; el Cardenal Daniel DiNardo de Galveston-

Buscando Vida

Por Moises Sandoval
Servicio Noticiero Católico



Hay compasión y dureza de corazón en nuestros tiempos

Recientemente, vi otra vez la película “Les Misérables”, inspirada por la novela de Víctor Hugo sobre misericordia y redención.

La compasión de un obispo redime a un ladrón, pero un oficial de la policía no puede perdonar, ni a sí mismo. Me sorprendió la relevancia de Hugo para nuestra vida actual.

Abundan ejemplares de compasión y redención. Cuando Clare Effiong, afroamericana de New Rochelle, Nueva York, fue a Ruanda hace diez años para ver las consecuencias del genocidio en 1994, la desoló ver cientos de niños huérfanos residiendo en el basurero.

Rehusaban salir, diciendo que nadie los quería, pero Wayesu Justus, de siete años, sí se acercó, y dijo: ¡Yo quiero ir a la escuela!.

Effiong lo llevó a su habitación, lo bañó, lo inscribió en una escuela y le halló hospedaje. Justus había vivido en el basurero tres años.

Así empezó la Estherís Aid, una empresa caritativa con base en la fe nombrada por la Esther bíblica. Esta organización, cuyo equipo en Nueva York consiste totalmente de voluntarios, ha rescatado a 3,000 huérfanos y niños de la calle en Ruanda.

Estableció una escuela primaria libre y centros de entrenamiento en mecánica automovilista, servicio de banquetes, soldadura, y costura, y alimenta a cientos de víctimas de SIDA.

Justus, el primer niño que Effiong rescató, asistió a la celebración del décimo aniversario de Estherís Aid el pasado otoño en New Rochelle.

Ahora de 17 años, un elocuente y listo alumno en escuela superior que aspira a ser médico, él le dijo a un reportero del periódico local de Gannett: ¡Si estos niños reciben la oportunidad de asistir a la escuela o de salir de la calle, pueden ser buena gente, importante gente!.

En otra historia inspiradora, la respuesta personal de un médico a la crisis de cuidado médico, el Doctor Lloyd Hamilton, de 81 años, empezó una clínica libre en Nyack, Nueva York.

Su generosidad inspiró al Padre Rees Doughty, pastor de la Parroquia de Santa Ana en Nyack, a proporcionar oficina en un ex-convento. Amigos de Hamilton, incluso un comerciante anónimo y una fundación de la universidad Harvard, contribuyeron \$31,000. Otros donaron el seguro de mala práctica, servicios de enfermería y hasta de limpieza.

Lamentablemente, también vemos dureza de corazón. En una columna en el New York Times, ¿Vamos a permitir que John muera? Nicholas D. Kristof escribe sobre John Brodniak, de 23 años, que padece de un derrame de sangre en el cerebro causado por crecimiento anormal de los vasos sanguíneos.

Incapacitado, Brodniak perdió su seguro médico y su puesto de capataz en un aserradero. Por eso, no recibe la cirugía necesaria.

Tales situaciones son comunes, Kristof escribió. Un estudio de Harvard muestra que casi 45,000 ciudadanos mueren en los Estados Unidos prematuramente cada año porque carecen de seguro. Sin embargo, la ley que les ayudaría ha demorado décadas en lograr la posibilidad de ser legislada. Y el resultado probable todavía excluye mucha gente del sistema.

En otro caso, un estudio por representantes de ambos partidos y de una organización de derechos humanos concluyó que crecientes números de no-ciudadanos, incluso inmigrantes legales, son detenidos innecesariamente y trasladados descuidadamente en un caro sistema de detención que niega a muchos la justicia básica.

El sistema esta tan desordenado que algunos de los detenidos no reciben noticia propia del porque han sido detenidos.

En “Los Misérables”, el obispo de dice al ladrón de sus platos de plata, “Jean Valjean, mi hermano, ya no perteneces a lo malo sino a lo bueno”.

Si no reconocemos nuestra hermandad común con las víctimas del genocidio, las víctimas de un sistema injusto que le niega cuidado médico a millones y las victimas de pobreza y opresión obligadas a venir a los EE.UU. buscando sobrevivir, enfrentamos un triste futuro.

Obispos piden a senadores que apoyen la Enmienda Nelson-Hatch-Casey a la reforma de salud

WASHINGTON—Los obispos estadounidenses han expresado su apoyo a la Enmienda Nelson-Hatch-Casey a la propuesta de ley de reforma de salud en el Senado y han pedido a los votantes que la respalden.

Los obispos adoptaron esta postura en una carta a todos los senadores con fecha 7 de diciembre, después de que los Senadores Ben Nelson (D-NE), Orrin Hatch (R-UT) and Robert Casey (D-PA) propusieron una enmienda para evitar que la ley de reforma de salud permita el uso de fondos federales para comprar planes de seguro médico que incluyan abortos electivos. Las restricciones serían similares a las de la Enmienda Hyde, aprobada en 1976, que prohíbe en la ley de apropiaciones de Salud y Servicios Humanos el uso de fondos públicos para pagar por la cobertura de la mayoría de los abortos.

Prohibiciones similares son parte de otros programas federales como el Programa de Seguro Médico Infantil (Children’s Health Insurance Program) y el Programa de Beneficios de Salud para Empleados Federales, y se incluyeron ahora en la ley de reforma de salud recién aprobada en la

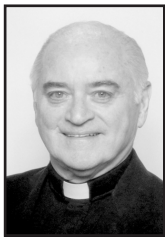
Houston, presidente del Comité de Actividades Pro Vida, y el Obispo John Wester de Salt Lake City, presidente del Comité de Obispos sobre Inmigración. “Esta enmienda tendrá un efecto similar a la Enmienda Stupak-Smith-Ellsworth-Kaptur-Dahlkemper-Pitts ya aceptada en la casa por amplia mayoría y de forma bipartidista,” afirma la carta. “Como aquella enmienda, ésta no cambia la situación actual en nuestro país: el aborto sigue siendo legal y estando disponible, pero no se puede usar fondos públicos para pagar por abortos electivos o planes que incluyen tales abortos. Esta enmienda no restringe el aborto o evita que la gente pueda comprar de su propio bolsillo seguros médicos que incluyen cobertura de abortos. Simplemente se asegura que en lo que respecta a fondos federales, el público no está obligado a pagar por abortos de otras personas”. La carta afirma que la propuesta en curso en el Senado “permite al Secratario/a de Salud y Servicios Humanos autorizar y hacer obligatoria la cobertura de abortos mediante la llamada “opción de seguro médico comunitario” que estaría gestionada por el gobierno. También otorga fondos

para otros planes que incluyen abortos ilimitados y crea un “recargo de aborto” obligatorio sin precedente que requerirá a los compradores de seguros médicos que son pro vida pagar directa y explícitamente por los abortos de otras personas. La propuesta de ley no mantiene protecciones esenciales de no discriminación para proveedores que rechacen participar en abortos. La enmienda Nelson-Hatch-Casey simplemente corrige graves desviaciones que se alejan de la actual política federal”. “Urgimos al Senado a que apoye la enmienda Nelson-Hatch-Casey. Conforme otras enmiendas a la propuesta legislativa se vayan ofreciendo, que aborden nuestras prioridades como la accesibilidad de precios y trato justo para los inmigrantes, nosotros continuaremos comunicando al Senado nuestra posición al respecto”, dijeron los obispos. Los obispos alentaron a los católicos a trabajar por la aprobación de la enmienda contactando a sus senadores. Un modo de hacerlo es a través del sitio Web **www.usccb.org/action**.



Spirituality for Today

By Father John Catoir
Catholic News Service



New Year's resolution

Dare we make any new resolutions this year?

Some of us have only a little confidence in our own ability to keep our promises. We don't understand ourselves very well.

In the movie "Anna and the King of Siam," we hear the king repeat the phrase "'Tis a puzzlement."

And so it is.

Before you give up on yourself in making a New Year's resolution, consider the apostles James and John. In the Gospel of Mark (10:35-45), we are reminded of how they failed to live up to the high ideals of an apostle. They quarreled over their seniority in the kingdom to come.

These brothers who had been allowed to hear the actual Sermon on the Mount, and who were with Jesus constantly for the three years of his public ministry, and who were even eyewitnesses of the triumph of the transfiguration, gave in to their ambitions rather shamelessly.

In today's parlance, it would be like seeing them argue over who would be a cardinal and who would be a priest in the next kingdom.

Jesus gently reproached James and John. Jesus was kind. He always had a way of hoping for the best while being ready for the worst.

The Lord knew that even the great heroes of the Bible were just human beings. These heroes have been "so sanitized by

homilists, that we forget how often they yielded to temptations far more monstrous than most of us would even dare to consider," wrote Jesuit Father William O'Malley.

He elaborates: "The great Abraham, our father in faith, pimped his wife Sarah into rich men's harems to save his own skin (Gn 12:10-20). And Moses, the greatest figure in Hebrew Scripture, tried to stammer his way out of his mission. Even King David, the reputed writer of the psalms, became an adulterer and a murderer."

In light of such hypocrisies, who are you to get down on yourself for your imperfections and weak resolve?

As Blessed Mother Teresa once said, "God doesn't expect us to be perfect, he just wants us to be faithful."

The impact of original sin on all of us is mind-blowing. That's why making New Year's resolutions can be so worrisome.

Why not forget all of that and just begin again? Don't spend any time on the past and what went wrong. Just step up to the plate and hit the ball. Expect a couple of misses. Turn to the Lord for help and swing again; you may hit a home run.

The purpose of making a resolution is not so much to test your strength as it is to keep you in the good fight. St. Peter remained in the battle after he denied Christ three times.

The tradition is that he went to Mary in tears, asking her help. She consoled him and convinced him to carry on with courage. She probably told him to persevere in his good intentions. In this way, his desire to make amends would be taken care of automatically.

If you want to make a worthwhile resolution for the coming new year, one that you can easily keep, why not decide to enter into silence and solitude once a day for two minutes, just before you go to sleep at night. Be still and know that God is within you. Find your inner spirit, the place where the Holy Spirit resides.

Two minutes, that's all, because the kingdom of God is within you.

Happy New Year!

THE POPE SPEAKS

Pope
Benedict XVI



CNS photo from Reuters

Pope begins new year with call for respect for creation, trust in God

By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Having respect for every human being and for all of creation as God's handiwork and having trust in God's overwhelming love are the keys to peace and to a better future, Pope Benedict XVI said.

Marking the new year with the celebration Jan. 1 of the feast of Mary Mother of God and of World Peace Day and with Angelus recitations Jan. 1 and 3, Pope Benedict reminded Christians that God's promises require a response.

"The divine plan is not accomplished automatically, because it is a plan of love and love generates freedom and asks for freedom," he said during his Angelus address Jan. 3.

While God's kingdom of peace and justice already is being realized on earth, he said, "every man and woman is responsible for welcoming it into his or her own life day by day. So 2010 will be better or worse to the extent that people, accepting their own responsibility, learn to collaborate with the grace of God."

"There are problems in the church and in the world, as well as in the daily lives of families, but thanks to God our hope does not depend on improbable prognostications and even less on economic forecasts. Our hope is in God," he said.

The pope also spoke about personal responsibility Jan. 1 when he was commenting on the theme he chose for World Peace Day 2010: "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation."

The resources of the earth must be used with justice and wisdom, he said during his Angelus address Jan. 1.

"I want to underline the importance that the choices of individuals, families and local administrations have in protecting the environment," he said.

In educating people to respect creation, the pope said, they must be helped to recognize that the human beings God created in his own image and likeness require special respect and protection.

"If we must take care of the creatures around us, how much more care must we have for people -- our brothers and sisters," he said. "On the first day of the year, I want to appeal to the consciences of those who are part of any kind of armed group. To each and every one I say: Stop, reflect and abandon the path of violence."

In his homily during the morning Mass in St. Peter's Basilica Jan. 1, Pope Benedict said people will respect the environment only to the extent that they respect themselves and others, because true respect for creation means seeing all creation as a reflection of God, the creator.

Teaching people to respect others must begin early in childhood, he said.

"From the time they are small, it is important to educate children to respect others, even when they are different from us," he said.

Children who are part of multiethnic classes have an advantage, he said, because the faces of the children "are a prophecy of the humanity we are called to form: a family of families and peoples."

"The smaller these children are, the more they elicit from us tenderness and joy for an innocence and brotherhood that is evident: despite their differences they cry and laugh in the same way, they have the same needs, they communicate spontaneously and play together," he said.

However, the pope said, the smiles of too many children are extinguished by suffering and their hearts are poisoned by violence.

In them, one can see "faces lined by hunger and disease, faces disfigured by pain and desperation. The faces of these innocent little ones are a silent appeal to our responsibility," the pope said.

Recognizing their helplessness, "all the false justifications for war and violence fall away. We simply must convert to projects of peace, lay down weapons of every kind and, all of us together, make a commitment to building a world more worthy of humanity."

Pope Benedict XVI's 2010 Monthly Prayer Intentions — January

A suggested "Morning Offering/Daily Offering" for the Apostleship of Prayer reads:

O Jesus, through the Immaculate Heart of Mary,
I offer you my prayers, works, joys and sufferings of this day
in union with the holy Sacrifice of the Mass
throughout the world.

I offer them for all the intentions of your Sacred Heart:
the salvation of souls, reparation for sin,
the reunion of all Christians.

I offer them for the intentions of our bishops
and of all apostles of prayer -- in particular, for those recommended by our Holy Father this month:

General: Young People and Media. That young people may learn to use social communication media for their personal growth and in preparation to serve society.

Mission: Christian Unity. That every believer in Christ may understand that unity among all Christians is necessary for effective proclamation of the Gospel.

The mission of the Apostleship of Prayer is to encourage you to pray daily for the Church and the world, as well as for Pope Benedict's two prayer intentions each month. Since 1844, millions of members of the Apostleship of Prayer throughout the world have offered themselves to God for the good of others. In offering ourselves we imitate Jesus Christ, who offered himself for the salvation of all. To learn more about the Apostleship of Prayer and the pope's monthly intention, please go to: <http://apostleshipofprayer.org/reflectionsMonthly.html>

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Pope names Detroit Auxiliary Bishop Daniel Flores to succeed Bishop Raymundo Peña In Brownsville

WASHINGTON—Pope Benedict XVI has named Bishop Daniel Flores, auxiliary bishop of Detroit, 48, as bishop of Brownsville, Texas, and accepted the resignation of Bishop Raymundo Peña, 75, from the pastoral governance of that diocese.

The appointment and resignation were publicized in Washington, December 9, by Archbishop Pietro Sambi, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

Daniel Ernest Flores was born in Palacios, Texas, August 28, 1961. He studied for the seminary at Holy Trinity Seminary at the University of Dallas, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in philosophy and a master of divinity degree with a specialty in theology. He was ordained for the Diocese of Corpus Christi, Texas, in 1988.

Assignments after ordination included vice chancellor of the diocese, 1988-1992, episcopal vicar for priestly formation, 1992-1997, chancellor of the diocese, 2000-2001, vice-rector of St. Mary's Seminary, Houston 2002-2006, and adjunct professor of theology at the University of St. Thomas School of Theology in

Houston (2001-2006).

Bishop Flores was named an auxiliary bishop of Detroit in 2006.



In addition to degrees earned before ordination, Bishop Flores also holds licentiate and doctoral degrees in theology from the University of St. Thomas in Urbe (Angelicum) in Rome.

At the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), Bishop Flores has served on the Task Force for Faith Formation and Sacramental Practice.

Bishop Peña was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Corpus Christi in 1957, and named an auxiliary bishop of San Antonio in 1976; bishop of El Paso, Texas, in 1980; and bishop of Brownsville in 1995. As a member of the USCCB, he has served as chair of the Committee on Hispanic Affairs, chair of the Committee on the Church in Latin America and a member of the pre-synod council and a synod father for the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for America.

The Diocese of Brownsville has 4,226 square miles. It has a population of 1,170,776 people, with 995,160, or 85 per cent, of them Catholic.

'Not a shred of disagreement' between CHA, bishops on health reform

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Despite a New York Times report to the contrary, the Catholic Health Association and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops are working together to achieve health reform legislation that does not expand federal funding of abortion, according to the CHA president and CEO. Sister Carol Keehan, a Daughter of Charity, told Catholic News Service in a telephone interview Dec. 28 that her organization has never wavered in its commitment to health care that protects "from conception to natural death," as outlined in the CHA document, "Our Vision for U.S. Health Care." She disputed a report in The New York Times Dec. 26 that a recent CHA statement on Senate negotiations over abortion funding in health reform legislation represented a split with the bishops. "There is not a shred of disagreement between CHA and the bishops," Sister Carol said. "We believe there is a great possibility and probability that in conference committee we can work toward a solution that will prevent federal funding of abortion." She said the CHA, which represents more than 600 Catholic hospitals in the U.S., "brings a lot of expertise with funding structures in the marketplace" to the debate and hopes to "bring that to bear" during the conference committee's work. Shortly before the Senate approved its version of health reform legislation early Dec. 24, the chairmen of three USCCB committees said the bill should not be approved "without incorporating essential changes to ensure" that it "truly protects the life, dignity, consciences and health of all."

Committee backs Obama goal of 'responsible transition' in Afghanistan

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Barack Obama's goal of a "responsible transition" in Afghanistan must serve as the "overall ethical framework for U.S. actions" there, the chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on International Justice and Peace told the national security adviser. In a Dec. 18 letter to retired Marine Gen. James L. Jones, Bishop Howard J. Hubbard of Albany, N.Y., called for the development of "specific criteria" for troop withdrawal, as well as efforts to help the Afghans "secure an adequate basis for future political and economic stability." He urged that "each course of action taken by the U.S." in Afghanistan be "weighed in light of the traditional moral principle of 'probability of success.'" "In other words, will this action contribute to a 'responsible transition' and withdrawal as soon as appropriate and possible?" the bishop said. "Will it improve Afghan security and minimize loss of life? Will it provide an adequate foundation for long-term development?" "In the face of terrorist threats, our nation must respond to indiscriminate attacks against innocent civilians in ways that combine a resolve to do what is necessary, the restraint to ensure that we act justly, and the vision to focus on broader issues of poverty and injustice that are unscrupulously exploited by terrorists in gaining recruits," Bishop Hubbard wrote in both letters.

Saint Paul wrote: "God's Reign is justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

— Romans 14:17

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US Postal Service to honor Mother Teresa with stamp in 2010

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta will be among the subjects depicted on U.S. stamps debuting in 2010, the U.S. Postal Service announced Dec. 30. The 44-cent stamp, bearing a portrait of Mother Teresa painted by artist Thomas Blackshear II of Colorado Springs, Colo., will go on sale on what would have been her 100th birthday, Aug. 26. "Her humility and compassion, as well as her respect for the innate worth and dignity of humankind, inspired people of all ages and backgrounds to work on behalf of the world's poorest populations," said the Postal Service news release on its 2010 commemorative stamp program. The release also noted that Mother Teresa received honorary U.S. citizenship in 1996 from the U.S. Congress and President Bill Clinton.

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Vatican agency says at least 37 church workers killed in 2009

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — An uptick of violence against Catholic Church workers in the Americas contributed to almost doubling the number of missionaries who were murdered in 2009 compared to the previous year, the Vatican's Fides agency said. The agency said 37 people working for the church were killed in 2009, up from 20 people in 2008. It is also the highest number of deaths in the last 10 years, it added. The 2009 list released Dec. 30 includes two priests and one nun from the United States: Oblate Father Lawrence Rosebaugh, a 74-year-old U.S. priest, killed in a highway robbery in Guatemala in May; Father Edward Hinds stabbed 32 times in a brutal murder in the rectory of St. Patrick Church, in Chatham, N.J., in October. Prosecutors said the parish janitor confessed to the crime; and Blessed Sacrament Sister Marguerite Bartz, found dead in her Navajo, N.M., home in November. An 18-year-old man found driving the car the nun used was charged in connection with her death. Fides also highlighted the case of a Mexican priest and two seminarians who were killed in the southern state of Guerrero as they were traveling to a religious retreat. Father Habacuc Hernandez, Eduardo Oregon Benitez and Silvestre Gonzalez were shot dead by gunmen while they traveled through a violence-plagued area where drug-cartel activities have been on the increase.

Terror, war, politics dominate headlines over decade

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Terrorist actions that left physical scars on many world cities and psychological scars on those affected dominated much of the headlines over the first decade of the third millennium, as did the wars fought in the name of quashing terrorism. Fractious U.S. politics also had a hand to play in shaping headlines over much of the decade. In the Catholic Church, the clergy sexual abuse scandals that had simmered in decades past exploded into public consciousness in 2002, with its repercussions still felt as the decade neared its end. The death of Pope John Paul II and the election of Pope Benedict XVI in 2005 resonated in the world's consciousness throughout that April as a dying pope breathed his last and a conclave, the first in more than 26 years, fascinated Catholics and others

across the globe. Popes have reliably been top newsmakers year in and year out, and regularly make most lists of most admired men in the world. The 2000s were no different, as a world watched in fascination as Pope John Paul gave a lesson in how to die a happy death and Pope Benedict ascended to the chair of Peter, seeking during his pontificate to mend fences with those who have not been in full communion with the Catholic Church. Both popes preached peace to world leaders, but all too often in vain. After the Sept. 11, 2001, terror attacks, the United States first led a multinational effort in Afghanistan to capture al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the terror plot.

Synod, saints, shroud all on papal calendar for 2010

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — As Pope Benedict XVI says goodbye to 2009, his 2010 calendar is already being filled. On the horizon for the next 12 months are four papal trips; a Middle East Synod of Bishops; the expected publication of a document on the Bible and the second volume of "Jesus of Nazareth;" a major gathering of the world's priests; a pilgrimage to the Shroud of Turin; a probable consistory and several likely canonizations and beatifications — including that of Pope John Paul II. In April Pope Benedict marks five years in office, and the event will no doubt be marked by modest festivities and lots of analysis on the accomplishments and priorities of the German pontiff, who turns 83 the same month. Several of his endeavors are works in progress, like the ongoing negotiations with the traditionalist Society of St. Pius X and the effort to bring its leaders back into full communion. No breakthrough is guaranteed in 2010, but Vatican officials say that, at the very least, the picture should be much clearer as twice-a-month meetings proceed. January brings traditional papal liturgies and meetings, including an encounter Jan. 11 with the diplomatic corps accredited to the Vatican. Six days later, Pope Benedict will visit Rome's synagogue for the first time, an event that has added drama since the pope's recent decision to advance Pope Pius XII's sainthood cause.

High court rules Malaysian Catholic weekly can use the word 'Allah'

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (CNS) — The High Court in Kuala Lumpur ruled that a national Catholic weekly can use the word "Allah" to refer to God and that the Home Ministry's order banning

certain uses of the word was illegal. The court also declared Dec. 31 that the word "Allah" is not exclusive to Islam, reported the Asian church news agency UCA News. "We welcome the court's decision very much as, in the long term, it will be not only good for (the) Herald but for others as well," said S. Selvarajah, one of a team of four lawyers involved in the church's challenge of the ban. In 2007 Malaysia's Home Ministry issued a blanket ban on the use of the word "Allah" in all non-Muslim publications. Archbishop Murphy Pakiam of Kuala Lumpur, publisher of the Herald, challenged it in a case that began in February. The government had argued that the use of the word "Allah" in Christian publications was likely to confuse Muslims and draw them to Christianity.

For Christmas, Jerusalem's Latin patriarch speaks of 'signs of hope'

JERUSALEM (CNS) — Although politicians have failed to reach a solution to the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and Palestinians still face occupation, house demolitions and separated families, hope is still alive in the Holy Land, said Latin Patriarch Fouad Twal of Jerusalem. "In the Holy Land, everything is not desperate. There are a few signs of hope," he told journalists at a Dec. 22 press conference to present his Christmas message. As signs of hope, he mentioned the partial freeze on the construction of Israeli settlements in Palestinian territory and the removal of more than 50 checkpoints within the West Bank, which has "markedly improved the freedom of movement" for Palestinians and improved the economic situation. However, he said, although "it is a step

forward, it is not enough," and all illegal settlements are an "obstacle to peace. Patriarch Twal said a "courageous gesture" was needed to establish a peaceful resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. He said Palestinians are beginning to express their resistance in more nonviolent ways. He also said the financial support of the international community is a sign of hope and greatly appreciated.

Report says Chaldean churches in Kirkuk cancel Christmas Masses

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Chaldean Catholic Archdiocese of Kirkuk, Iraq, has canceled Christmas Masses because of insecurity and attacks against Christians, the Washington Post reported Dec. 23. "This is the first time we have had to cancel our celebrations," the Post quoted Kirkuk Archbishop Louis Sako as saying. The Post also reported that a sign on the Kirkuk cathedral read, in part: "We apologize to all the brothers for not conducting celebrations or accepting greetings or guests, but we pray for peace and security in Iraq. We cannot celebrate because of our grief over the victims of the bombings in Mosul and Baghdad." In Mosul, less than 100 miles from Kirkuk, Christian churches were targeted in late November and early December. On Dec. 23, two people were killed in a bomb attack on the Syrian Orthodox Church of St. Thomas. A hospital official in Mosul told Agence France-Presse that the two people who were killed were Muslims. In late November, a Chaldean Catholic church, rectory and convent in Mosul were bombed in two separate incidents, but no one was injured.

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Rev. Tommy Chen's students know what it means to be Catholic

SHINER—Father Tommy Chen, parochial vicar at Sts. Cyril & Methodius, teaches 11th and 12th grade Religion at St. Paul High School. His recent assignment requested his students to write about the response by Bishop Thomas J. Tobin of the Diocese of Rhode Island to Rep. Patrick Kennedy's Oct. 29 (D-R.I.) comment: "The fact that I disagree with the hierarchy of the church on some issues does not make me any less of a Catholic."

This sample provides a hint of the quality education provided by Catholic schools.

Brandon Pesek

"Bishop Tobin publicly calls Rep. Kennedy to 'conversion and repentance'"

November 10, 2009

REFLECTION: In this public address to Representative Kennedy we find one of the most prevalent problems the Catholic Church faces in the public eye; a person who declares themselves to be Catholic but does not publicly live out the life of a Catholic.

The dilemma in Kennedy's situation should be evident to any person who observes it. Kennedy proclaims himself a Catholic, yet he has agreed with those who support abortion that the government should fund abortion. If Kennedy does not agree with the Catholic Church's teaching of abortion should he truly consider himself Catholic? Although the answer is clear, Kennedy declares that, "the fact that I disagree with the hierarchy on some issues does not make me any less of a Catholic." The most evident problem with this statement is that it is untrue and his actions lead to scandal. If American Catholics believe Kennedy and see him as a true Catholic and observe his vote for abortion bills, and Kennedy receives no comment from the Church, his actions lead others to believe that abortion is morally acceptable.

In order to clarify exactly how Kennedy is disobeying Church teachings, Bishop Tobin poses the question, "What does it mean to be Catholic?" The bishop

then continues to distinguish five basic qualifications of a Catholic. Kennedy complies with the qualifications of belonging to a parish, and possibly fulfils the requirement of attending Mass on Sundays and receiving the sacraments, but the other three qualifications are not on Kennedy's list of priorities, Kennedy cannot validly argue that he belongs to a faith community with a clearly defined authority, doctrine, obligation, and expectation. He also cannot argue that he agrees and accepts the teachings of the Church on matters on faith and morals, and finally, Kennedy does not support the Church publicly. Bishop Tobin continues his letter to Representative Kennedy by asking what he believes makes him a Catholic. If Kennedy acknowledges the qualifications Tobin has provided for being a Catholic, there truly is no answer to the bishop's question.

Kennedy also attempts to blame his vote against the bill on an "imperfect humanity." Kennedy's exact comment was, "I embrace my faith which acknowledges the existence of an imperfect humanity." If Representative Kennedy were to say that he voted against the bill because of his imperfect humanity, and that his faith will embrace him no matter what his actions are, he is no different from a Catholic saying, "Hey, I know sinning is wrong, but I'll just do whatever I want now and go to confession later." Tobin points out that Kennedy deliberately voted against the bill and completely fulfilled the requirements for and action to be a sin; the sin is grave, Kennedy knows the Church's teaching on abortion, and Kennedy used his free will to choose how to vote.

Simply and concisely, the problem displayed by Kennedy is that he does not believe what the Church believes, but still wishes to be Catholic. A person cannot be Catholic if they do not agree with the Catholic Church's teachings. Kennedy's choices consist of finding a different Christian denomination that coincides with his beliefs, or more preferably, to repent and choose the true, Catholic Church.

Derek Chunda

November 20, 2009

"Bishop Tobin Publicly Calls Rep. Kennedy to 'Conversion and Repentance'"

In his article Bishop Tobin challenges Rep. Kennedy on what he thinks it means to be a Catholic. It seems that to Kennedy being Catholic is something you're born into but are allowed to believe what you want. This idea is seen in his statement, "the fact that I disagree with the hierarchy on some issues does not make me any less of a Catholic." Now this statement carries some truth. Catholics do not have to agree with the hierarchy on everything. But when it comes to issues concerning faith and morals, to remain Catholic and in communion with the Church we must trust in the fact that the Holy Spirit guides the hierarchy of the Church and agree on these issues. Bishop Tobin spells out to Rep. Kennedy in his article some basic requirements of being a Catholic. The first one Tobin states is that he must belong to a faith community that has a distinguished authority along with doctrine, obligations, and expectations. The second requirement he states is that he must accept and believe the Church's teachings on faith and morals. This is where Tobin calls Kennedy to 'conversion and repentance.' It is no secret that the Catholic Church is pro-life and consequently, teaches that abortion is an intrinsically evil act. So for Rep. Kennedy to fulfill the second requirement stated by Tobin, he must accept and believe this teaching. But by voting against the Stupak amendment, he displayed otherwise. The third requirement is that he belong to a local Catholic parish. The fourth requirement he stated was that he attend Mass and receive the Sacraments on a regular basis. One of the sacraments that must be

received regularly would be the Eucharist. Looking at the requirements stated by the Church for receiving the Eucharist, also known as communion, is that the person receiving is in communion with the Church. One can not be in communion with the Church unless he believes and accepts everything the Church teaches in terms of faith and morals, including the Church's teaching on abortion. The fifth and final requirement stated by Tobin is that he support the Church publicly, spiritually, personally, and financially. Supporting the Church spiritually through prayer, publicly through politics and other public events, financially through monetary means, and personally through giving time to the Church are crucial components of being Catholic. Rep. Kennedy does not fulfill his requirement of publicly supporting the Church because of his vote concerning the Stupak amendment. These five requirements are not only put out there for Rep. Kennedy, but for all baptized Catholics, so that they can examine what it truly means to be a Catholic and work on becoming better Catholics.

Choose Life! Be There!

The Diocese of Victoria is coordinating a trip to the 2010 Texas Rally for Life in Austin for all interested junior high and high school young people and their chaperones. They will travel by bus Saturday, January 23, 2010.

The bus will leave the Diocese of Victoria chancery building (1505 E. Mesquite) in Victoria at 9:00 a.m. – stop at St.

See Choose Life!, p. 19

"Sarah's Choice" - heartwarming pro-life film

NASHVILLE—*Sarah's Choice* (Pure Flix Entertainment) is more than a showcase film for Grammy winning Christian singer Rebecca St. James to make her debut as a lead actress in a movie with a strong pro-life message. It's proved to be a heartwarming addition to the film fare this past Christmas season.

Film critic, Greg Wright, in his November 24 review at the popular online review site, "Past The Popcorn," stated, "*Sarah's Choice* does not play like a generic flick — in fact when the film concluded, I told my wife, 'This is a movie I think I could look forward to seeing every holiday season.' A Christmas classic about abortion? Well, yes!"

CBN.org movie critic, Beth Patch in her online review for the CBN site: "*Sarah's Choice* carries a clear pro-life message. The film also includes the message of redemption and forgiveness... the value of including this element cannot be understated."

But most heartwarming to Rebecca is the news that recently reached her in which one young woman who viewed *Sarah's Choice* opted for the decision of 'life' for her unborn baby.

"We've prayed that the film will touch hearts and be used as a real tool for ministry to encourage the choice of 'life' for those facing the very realities that the film portrays," noted St. James in a recent

interview. "That was my intent and the intent of everyone involved in the making of this movie."

By special arrangement with Care Net, and their broad alliance of 1,180 North American Care Net pregnancy centers, special local market viewing events of *Sarah's Choice* are being encouraged to reach those most in need of the film's message. A study guide has also been prepared by Pure Flix to correspond with the movie as a ministry assist tool. Kristin Hansen, vice-president of communications

for Care Net noted, "We are encouraging screenings of *Sarah's Choice* in conjunction with the January 22nd Roe v. Wade anniversary and the corresponding 'Sanctity of Human Life Sunday,' which falls on January 24th."

Rebecca is adding her personal voice and presence to many of the screenings with a special series of coordinated concert/film events being set throughout 2010.

Her recent guest appearance on "Fox & Friends Weekend," hit mainstream audiences with news on the film. Watch Rebecca on "Fox & Friends Weekend" at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jVPjVGDCh1M>.

Learn more about *Sarah's Choice* online at: www.pureflix.com/sarah, and for further information on the work of Care Net, please go to: www.care-net.org.



Umbert the Unborn by Gary Cangemi





EVENTS

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 19 — January 2010

Special Collections

Church in Latin America - Jan. 24

Aid to Church in Europe (Ash Wednesday) - Feb. 17
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.

Mini-Life-Chain—In Victoria every Wednesday before the 2nd Thursday of each month. Call (361) 578-2506 or (361) 578-2002 for time and intersection location.

St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans — For meeting dates call Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858.

Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity Emerging/Secular Franciscans — meets every other Wednesday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For dates and location call Jay Howard at (361) 574-8487.

Marriage Encounter—Marriage Encounter weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more information or to register, write or call Milton and Diane Rejcek, 2512 Hillcrest, Bay City, Texas 77414; (979) 245-0323; register@mevictoria.org www.mevictoria.org

Retrouvaille — The word Retrouvaille means ‘rediscovery.’ It is a program that offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse and a loving relationship in your marriage. Tens of thousands headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending. Contact Gerd and Linda Conner (979) 543-3493 or (800) 470-2230 for more information. For dates in Texas, please go to www.retrouvaille.org or www.helpourmarriage.org.

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

Singles — Catholic Singles, 40 and over, meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month at Holy Family Education Building at 7:00 p.m. Call Georgia (361) 573-9435, or Jean at (361) 578-8760, or Sue at (361) 578-3106.

Young Adults—Between the ages of 21 and 45 meet for an evening of fellowship and good company every 1st and 3rd Thursday at Holy Family at 7:00 p.m. Call Jim Wearden at (361) 579-9737 or (361) 649-9157.

ACTS Retreats—For information on ACTS retreats, please go to ACTS Web site at www.actsmissions.org. For more information about the ACTS community movement in the El Campo Deanery, to download an upcoming ACTS retreat application, or to submit/view the prayer requests across the El Campo Deanery, please visit their site at <http://ecdeaneryacts.org/>.

Natural Family Planning—For English or bilingual sessions of the **Sympto-Thermal Method** (S-TM) in Palacios, call Rene and Wilma Galvan at (361) 972-5030. Available for counseling and classes. For information about the Sympto-Thermal Method in the Victoria area, contact Rudy and Estella De Los Santos (361) 894-6950. Introductory presentations on the **Creighton Model Ovulation Method** are offered in Wharton at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and in East Bernard at Holy Cross Catholic Church. Please contact Melissa Morse at (979) 335-7306 for more information or to register for classes. To learn more about Natural Family Planning, please go to Natural Family Planning Outreach at: www.nfpoutreach.org. *Natural Family Planning is the only church approved form of family planning.*

Goliad—Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center — a National Historic Landmark — is the only Spanish fort in

the possession of the Catholic Church in North America. A tour program is available to groups. The Presidio is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on major holidays. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$1 for children under 12. The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information call (361) 645-3752 or see the Web site at www.presidiolabahia.org.

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 2010 are: 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.

Picnics, Activities, etc. January

El Campo—John Michael Talbot will be at St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church on January 10-12, 2010, to conduct three evenings of reflection, prayer and music, centered upon the prayer of meditation. For additional information, see page 5 and/or call the parish office at 979-543-3770.

Shiner—Taste of Texas Gala benefiting Sts. Cyril and Methodius Religious Education Endowment Fund Jan. 16, 2010. This year’s theme is a Chinese New Year’s Party with a Taste of Texas meal. Looking for sponsors who will be listed on the Web site immediately. Check out the Web site for more information at www.shinertasteoftexas.com.

Beasley—Annual Chicken-fried Steak Dinner Jan. 17 beginning at 10:30 a.m. at St. Wenceslaus Church CCD Building. Dine in or drive-thru for plates-to-go and/or pastries will be available. There will be a raffle, followed by a silent auction.

Victoria—Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser Jan. 17 at the KC Hall. 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.

Hallettsville—Eric Genuis, composer, virtuoso pianist and captivating performer, will be at Sacred Heart Church in Hallettsville Wednesday, January 20, at 7:00 p.m. See more on page 5.

East Bernard—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Saint Bernadette #1108, will hold their annual Chicken Noodle Soup and Sandwich Supper and Raffle on Wednesday, January 27, American Legion Hall, Hwy. 60. Serving begins at 5:00 p.m. till sold out. Soup is \$2.50 a bowl, chicken-salad sandwiches are \$2.50 each. Eat in or bring your own containers and enjoy at home. A large variety of pastries will be available whole or by the slice. Raffle drawing for 64 prizes will begin at 7:00 p.m.

Upcoming Events

Victoria—St. Mary Parish Festival Feb. 14 at the community center from 10:30 a.m.-6:00 p.m. See pg. 15 for more information.

Victoria—Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser Feb. 21 at the KC Hall. 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.

Victoria—Our Lady of Lourdes Holy Name Society annual chicken and sausage dinner Feb. 28 at the church (105 N. William St.). More information to come.

Victoria—Benefit for Linda Longoria, to help defray medical expenses, Feb. 28 at Power Avenue Warehouse (402 E. Power) from 11:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m. The plates will be carne guisada with rice, beans and trimmings at \$7 p/p. There will be an auction, bake sale, mariachi and DJ entertainment.

Hungerford—KJT Society #79 and KJZT Society #57 will be hosting their Annual Barbecue-Chicken and Sausage Dinner, March 7 at the community center. Serving begins at 10:30 a.m., dine-in or plates-to-go will be available. There will be an auction, free dance until 5:00 p.m. with music by The Texas Legacy Czech Band.

Masses • Retreats • Conferences

Victoria—You are invited to join Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters for Taizé Prayer Service on Thursday evenings, Jan. 14 and 21, from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. Taizé Prayer consists of music, song, chant, scriptural readings, meditation and prayers of praise and intercession. The service will be held at Incarnate Word Convent Chapel, 1101 N.E. Water Street, Victoria. For more information, please call (361) 575-7111.

Edna—A Celebration of Life, a Pro-Life Event on Wed., Jan. 20 at Jackson County Services Building, 411 N. Wells St., 7:00-8:00 p.m., sponsored by Catholic Daughters of the Americas #1350 and St. Agnes Parish. All church ministers, youth, parents, grandparents and adults from Jackson County are invited to attend. No admission will be charged and refreshments will be served.

Victoria—The Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament are hosting “Come and See” Weekends for single Catholic women up to 50 years of age on Jan. 23-24, 2010, and on Feb. 27-28, 2010, at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria, Texas. If you are interested in learning more about the life of a Sister or in discovering if God might be calling you to consecrated life, please call (361) 575-7111 or e-mail iwbsvoc@yahoo.com or check www.iwbsvictoria.org for more information about the Sisters.

Victoria — The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Amor Meus Spirituality Center will offer Lenten Vespers, Retreat Days with quiet reflection, prayer and Liturgy. Come and enjoy God’s nature and experience peace and quiet. UPCOMING EVENTS: Retreat Days: Feb. 20, April 24, and Oct. 9. Register by calling (361) 575-7111. Events located at the Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water Street, Victoria. Park in front of convent and follow the signs to the event.

Tivoli—Our Lady of Guadalupe Church invites you to a Healing Mass and Prayer Service every First Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Mass is followed by praise and worship/adoration, healing prayers, praying over, etc. Counseling available. For more information, please contact Rev. Gabriel P. Coelho at (361) 286-3349.

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

Pilgrimage to Rome and Turin

Pope Benedict XVI approved a 40-Day Exhibition of the Shroud of Turin beginning April 10, 2010. This is only the sixth exhibition in over 100 years. The Shroud won’t be exhibited again until 2025. Fr. José Ángel Ortiz of Corpus Christi, Texas will lead an exciting pilgrimage to Rome, Turin, Milan, Venice, Padua, Florence, and Assisi. Departure is May 4, 2010 from U.S. Highway 59 parking lot across from Skillet’s to return May 13. Cost is \$2,600 with only \$200 to reserve your seat. For more information call (361) 643-4505.

Have an event???
Contact us at
(361) 573-5725 (FAX)

or e-mail: janakr@victoriadiocese.org

Choose Life! Be There!

Continued from p. 18

Michael Church (104 McLeod) in Cuero at approximately 9:30 a.m. to pick up groups – then continue on to Austin. After the rally, they will leave Austin at approximately 5:00 p.m. – arriving back in Cuero at approx. 7:00 p.m. and at the chancery in Victoria at 7:45 p.m.

Groups from around Texas will meet at Republic Square (4th and Guadalupe in Austin) to march to the Texas State Capitol for the rally on the south steps.

Your public witness commemorating the 37th anniversary of the tragic Roe v. Wade decision will show legislators and the media that Texans want laws that help men and women choose life, not death, for their unborn children.

Register by January 14 by going to the youth office webpage at <http://www.victoriadiocese.org/youth/youth.htm>, or call Debbie Vanelli at (361) 573-0828, ext. 32 for more information.



DISCOVER GOD’S LOVE WITH US

Taizé Prayer

A Taizé Prayer Service consists of music, song, chant, scriptural readings, meditation, and prayers of praise and intercession. Join us Thursday evenings

**January 14, 2010
January 21, 2010**

7:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

Lenten Vespers

Evening Prayer (or Vespers) is an ancient prayer form that predates the Church. It is a gift from our Jewish brothers and sisters. Join us Sunday evenings

**February 21, 2010
February 28, 2010
March 7, 2010
March 14, 2010
March 21, 2010
March 28, 2010**

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Advent Vespers

Evening Prayer finds its base in the prayers of the Psalms. This Prayer calls us to give praise and thanksgiving to our loving God. Join us Sunday evenings

**November 28, 2010
December 5, 2010
December 12, 2010
December 19, 2010**

5:00 p.m. - 6:00 p.m.

Amor Meus Retreats

Quiet Days of
Reflection and Prayer
**Saturday, February 20, 2010
Saturday, April 24, 2010
Saturday, October 9, 2010**

9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

A quiet day of prayer
listening to the *voice of God*
speaking in the stillness of your heart.
Women and men are welcomed.

For more information call: (361) 575-7111
or email: amormeus@yahoo.com
**Incarnate Word Convent
1101 N.E. Water Street
Victoria, Texas 77901**



Mission Statement

AMOR MEUS SPIRITUALITY CENTER
*is a ministry of the
Sisters of the Incarnate Word and
Blessed Sacrament of Victoria, Texas.*

*The Center seeks to extend the Sisters’
charism of Incarnational Spirituality
to individuals and groups who desire
to deepen their spiritual growth and
love of God.*

*Amor Meus Spirituality Center offers a
place for silent retreats, experiences of
prayer, personal reflection and
solitude in an atmosphere of quiet
contemplation, nature’s beauty and the
peace of a sacred space.*

*Amor Meus Spirituality Center also
seeks to expand its community
outreach ministry through educational
experiences and opportunities.*

***Opportunities to Come Away and Rest
Awhile in 2010***



Bishop David E. Fellhauer and the Chancery Office Staff Wish You a Blessed New Year!

Happy New Year from (seated l-r) Msgr. Eustace Hermes, Sue Ellen Galvan, Regina Janak, Minnie Bochat; Sharon Jones, John Quarry, Cindy Brewer, Ray Beth Sills; Janie Carrales, Sister Digna Vela, IWBS, Jeri Joseph, Barbara Parkan, Melissa Perales; Chris Alvarez, Martha Pearson-Vela, René Garcia, Debbie Vanelli, Mike Brown; Gary Rangnow, Mariah Raz, Bishop David E. Fellhauer and Jose Ortega.



THE MYSTERY OF SIMON SHEPHERD—St. Philip School in El Campo had their annual Christmas pageant, “The Mystery of Simon Shepherd,” on December 16. The 8th-grade class performed in the pageant while the student body sang the theme songs. The play was about a shepherd named Simon (Koy Kresta) who took the wrong path while searching for the Baby Jesus and was thought by friends and family to be lost. In the search for Simon, several, including Caesar Augustus (Nick Jasek) and the innkeeper (Hunter Tupa), were questioned in the courtroom of Judge Trudy Justice (Katelyn Baros). After finding Baby Jesus, Simon Shepherd returned home to his sheep. All welcomed him home with open arms and learned that we all are traveling on a path like Simon searching for Jesus in our lives. Like Simon we may take a wrong turn, but our friends and family are there to help guide us along the way. After the pageant, the eighth graders presented the directors, Courtney Kulcak, Lauren Hlavinka, and music director Janice Cox, with a gift to show appreciation for their hard work and dedication. Actors were, from l. to r., front row: Brandon Naiser, Kari Wilkins, Taylor Fuechec, Kacey Knesek, Hunter Winklemann and Austin Kelly; middle row: Shelby Stary, Michaela Thornton with baby Weid, Nick Jasek, Alexis Crowell, Brooke Wallace, Jordan Limmer and Hunter Tupa; and back row: Katelyn Baros, Koy Kresta and Matthew Graff.



THE NOT-SO SILENT NIGHT!—Our Lady of Victory School annual Christmas program was held December 17, 2009, with two shows. Each class took part in the program. The eighth-grade class played out the main parts. Those who did not participate on stage participated in the choir.



MERRY CHRISTMAS TO SEMINARIANS AND SISTERS—The Serra Club of the Diocese of Victoria held a Christmas dinner in honor of the seminarians and temporary professed sisters of the diocese December 29, 2009, at Holy Family Church in Victoria. Pictured with Bishop David E. Fellhauer are seminarians (back row, l. to r.): Matthew Soto of Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner, Kris Fuchs of St. Michael in Needville, Patrick Knippenberg of Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Shiner, Philip Brune of Sts. Peter & Paul in Frelsburg, Sean Breeden of Holy Cross, Bay City, and Scott Hill of St. Roch in Mentz; seminarians and religious sister, front row: E.J. Gutierrez of Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Wharton, Junior Sister Louise Marie Jones, IWBS and Jacob Koether of Holy Cross in Bay City. Words of encouragement as they continue their religious journey may be sent to seminarians and Sister Louise Marie at the following addresses: Sister Louise Marie Jones: Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Convent, 1101 N. E. Water Street, Victoria, TX 77901; E. J. Gutierrez: St. Joseph Seminary, 75376 River Rd., Saint Benedict, LA 70457; Philip Brune: St. Mary's Seminary, 9845 Memorial Drive, Houston, TX 77024; Kristopher Fuchs and Matthew Soto: Holy Trinity Seminary, P. O. Box 140309, Irving, TX 75014-0309; Patrick Knippenberg: Holy Family Parish, 704 Mallette Drive, Victoria, TX 77904; Sean Breeden, Scott Hill and Jacob Koether: Franciscan University, 1235 University Blvd., Steubenville, OH 43952



1st place winner



Sacred Heart Church in Hallettsville is the first place winner in the “religious” category of the festival of Lights Christmas Commercial Outdoor Decorating Contest. The rectory received Honorable Mention in the Most Elaborate Lighting category of the Festival of Lights Christmas Residential Outdoor Decorating Contest. Pictured above is the church and in the inset is Father John Peters, pastor of Sacred Heart, with the first place award.



ST. JOSEPH, YOAKUM CELEBRATES CHRIST'S BIRTH—St. Joseph CCD students came as shepherds, angels, drummer boy and three wise men to celebrate the birth of Jesus in the presentation of “Children Run Joyfully, Jesus is Born.” The entire student group gave gifts of food, clothes and miscellaneous items. Front row actors hold the name “Christ,” wishing all a blessed Christmas.

Donate coats and blankets during January

A drive for new or used warm blankets, coats, gloves, hats, etc. will run through January in Victoria. To donate to those in need of such items, please contact Janet Charbula at Coldwell Banker The Ron Brown at 361-575-1446 for drop-off locations. Adults and children in need of items listed above, contact Kid's Connection at 361-788-9909. God bless you.