Texas Death sentences, executions drop in 2010

AUSTIN — Death sentences in Texas have dropped more than 70% since 2003, reaching a historic low in 2010 according to the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty’s (TCADP) new report, Texas Death Penalty Developments in 2010: The Year in Review. TCADP, an Austin-based statewide, grassroots advocacy organization, releases this annual report each December in conjunction with the anniversary of the resumption of executions in Texas in 1982.

Juries condemned eight new individuals to death in Texas in 2010, which is the lowest number of new death sentences since the U.S. Supreme Court upheld Texas’ revised death penalty statute in 1976. Those new sentences occurred in six counties: Brazos; Dallas; Harris; Nueces; Rusk; and Travis.

Recent sentencing trends illustrate the arbitrary and biased imposition of the death penalty. An analysis of data from 2007 to 2010 reveals that only 21 counties – 8 percent of the 254 counties in Texas – met out death sentences over the last four years. Out of a total 43 death sentences imposed statewide between 2007 and 2010, Dallas County leads with seven, followed closely by Harris County, with six new sentences. Bexar and Travis Counties each accounted for three new death sentences since 2007. Nearly three-fourths of all death sentences in Texas over the last four years have been imposed on people of color – 40 percent African American, 30 percent Hispanic/Latino, and 2 percent other.

As part of the report, TCADP has produced two interactive maps highlighting the lowest number of new death sentences in Texas in 1982.

Pope Benedict XVI arrives in St. Peter’s Square to visit the Nativity scene after leading a vespers service on New Year’s Eve at the Vatican Dec. 31. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

Pope begins new year with call for religious freedom, end to violence

By Carol Glatz

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — If there’s one clear conclusion that can be drawn from the Vatican-related WikiLeaks disclosures, it’s that the United States takes the Vatican and its diplomatic activity very seriously.

In memo after memo in recent years, officials of the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See have reported back to Washington on the impact of papal trips, statements and documents; on the Vatican’s behind-the-scenes efforts to head off conflicts; on church-state tensions in Latin America; on the evolution of the Catholic teaching on bioethics; and even on the international repercussions of ecumenical affairs.

When a Vatican agency organized a conference on genetically modified foods, the U.S. embassy paid attention. When the Vatican emerged from WikiLeaks with a police escort to the Fellowship Bible Church at 3401 N. Ben Jordon. Those unable to walk, may meet at the Fellowship Bible Church to listen to this year’s speaker, Eve Sanchez Silver, a New Jersey cancer research analyst, who will talk about breast cancer. Life & Family Advocates is sponsoring the March.
Catholic Bishops Reject Arizona-style immigration policies

AUSTIN—At a press conference Jan. 6, Texas’ Roman Catholic Bishops rejected Arizona-style immigration policies as a solution in Texas.

“Immigration is good for Texas. Arizona-style policies, on the other hand, have several pitfalls and risk decreasing the very safety of Texans,” said Andrew Rivas, the Executive Director of the Texas Catholic Conference, the official public policy voice of the Bishops of Texas. “We look forward to working with the legisla-
ture and our immigrant community to enact state-appropriate laws that recognize the historic and present-day contributions of immigrants in Texas.”

“For the Bishops the issue of immi-
gration is not simply a political one, but a moral issue that impacts human rights and the very life and dignity of the human person,” Rivas stated. “The Church’s work in assisting migrants stems from the belief that every person is created in God’s image. Scripture recognizes God’s people as immi-
grants, and Jesus himself is a refugee as an infant, and has no home of his own as an adult. Jesus identifies himself with See Catholic Bishops Reject, p. 8

CORRECTION

In the December issue of The Catholic Lighthouse, I incorrectly named OLV as the girls’ volleyball district champion; rather, they were the south zone champions.

Deacon Eric Genuis in concert

The Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer
Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria

The Executive Director of the Texas Catholic Conference is responsible for advocacy with the Texas Legislature, state and federal agencies that affect the minis-
tries of the Church in Texas, and the Texas State Delegation in Congress.

The successful candidate will have the following:

EDUCATION:
A Masters Degree from an accredited university in theology, political science, law or a related field of study.

EXPERIENCE:
A minimum of 5 years full time, wage earning, progressively responsible leader-
ship experience in a church setting, which includes supervision of staff, administra-
tion of a major department or ministry and working with and/or leading diverse groups toward common goals.

Must be a practicing Catholic in good standing.

Resumes will be accepted until Janu-
ary 31, 2011. A more comprehensive job description is available on the TCC Web site: www.tccatholic.org

Submit resumes to: Victoria Esparza, Director of Human Resources, Archdio-
cese of San Antonio, 2718 West Woodlawn Avenue, San Antonio, Texas 78228.

Sincerely in Christ,
Most Rev. Roger P. Morin
Bishop of Biloxi

Subcommittee on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

Sincerely Christ,
Most Rev. Roger P. Morin
Bishop of Biloxi
Chairman, USCCB

Subcommittee on the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

October 2010
Dear Bishop Fellhauer:

I acknowledge with deep appreciation your contribution of $12,113.43 from your 2009 Collection for the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD). With its 75 percent share of the annual collection, the CCHD funds pro-
grams in communities across the United States where people living in poverty join together to identify problems, make decisions, and find ways to improve their lives and neighborhoods. The generosity of the faithful in your diocese has made a great difference through CCHD’s grant and education programs.

As you know, the CCHD has under-
gone a serious and substantive Review and Renewal. You have already received the full Report and, as many bishops have requested, it (was made) public on Octo-
ber 26 and available on the USCCB and CCHD Web sites.

Sincerely in Christ,

Chairman, USCCB

Catholic Conference is responsible for

a moral issue that impacts human rights
and its impact on culture: that music has

spreading his timely message of music
and virtuoso pianist Eric Genuis will hold
concerts in the diocese Jan. 23 and 24.

The Diocese of Victoria will be a stop for Eric as he travels the world, touring with first-class soloists and orchestras to present concerts that showcase his much celebrated, original compositions while spreading his timely message of music and its impact on culture: that music has the power to bring hope and healing to the

human soul. Eric plays the piano with a skill that few can surpass, but what is perhaps more impacting than the playing itself is the passion with which he plays. Eric puts every ounce of his soul into his playing and as such, is able to move audiences in profound ways. An Eric Genuis concert consists of instrumental solos, trios, and vocal works mixed with inspiring, per-

Eric Genuis in concert

Shiner ~ Jan. 23  ~ Hallettsville ~ Jan. 24

Internationally acclaimed composer and virtuoso pianist Eric Genuis will hold concerts in the diocese Jan. 23 and 24. The Diocese of Victoria will be a stop for Eric as he travels the world, touring with first-class soloists and orchestras to present concerts that showcase his much celebrated, original compositions while spreading his timely message of music and its impact on culture: that music has the power to bring hope and healing to the

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See Eric Genuis, p. 3

Saves Money!
WASHINGTON — Leaders of some of the largest religious communities in the United States have come together to express their commitment toward the protection of marriage as the union of one man and one woman.

In an open letter released Dec. 6, 2010, titled “The Protection of Marriage: A Shared Commitment,” leaders from Anglican, Baptist, Catholic, Evangelical, Jewish, Lutheran, Mormon, Orthodox, Pentecostal and Sikh communities in the United States affirmed the importance of preserving marriage’s unique meaning.

“The broad consensus reflected in this letter—across great religious divides—is clear. The law of marriage is not about imposing the religion of anyone, but about protecting the common good of everyone,” said Archbishop Timothy Dolan of New York, newly elected president of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) and one of the letter’s signers.

“People of any faith or no faith at all can recognize that when the law defines marriage as between one man and one woman, it legally binds a mother and a father to each other and their children, reinforcing the foundational cell of human society.”

The release of this letter comes the same morning that oral arguments on the Proposition 8 case are set to begin. In August, Judge Vaughn Walker had ruled California’s Proposition 8 to be unconstitutional, based in part on the claim that defining marriage as between a man and a woman lacked any rational basis at all, and instead reflected nothing but religion-based hostility to homosexual persons. That ruling has been appealed and its hearing is scheduled for today, December 6.

“Today is the moment to stand for marriage and its unchanged meaning. We hope this letter will encourage just that,” Archbishop Dolan said. “The Protection of Marriage: A Shared Commitment” is being circulated nationwide. A background on the statement can be found at http://www.usccb.org/commission/backgrounders/shared-commitment.shtml.

Shared Commitment” is being circulated nationwide.

By Kate Blain, The Evangelist, Diocese of Albany, NY.

Now that the U.S. bishops and the Vatican have approved new English translations of the Roman missal, the book of prayers used at Mass, experts say the next step is educating church ministers—from laypersons to musicians—to better serve at liturgies.

Father Richard Hilgarten, associate director of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat of Divine Worship, says the new adaptations of the missal will offer laypeople an opportunity to experience the great spiritual richness that can be found in these prayers.

“Just as priests who preside will have to prepare their proclamation of the prayers since the style is different from what is now prayed,” he says, “the laity will experience some immediate changes in the responses they say at Mass.”

For example, when the priest says, “The Lord be with you,” the old response was, “And also with you.” Now the people will respond, “And with your spirit.”

Since church ministers serve at liturgies, says Father Hilgarten, they will be impacted in part by “training the people in the pew to understand and adapt to these changes. To prepare for this, he says, lay ministers should “reflect on the new translation for their own spiritual growth and development.”

He suggests that church ministers refer to new texts during meetings at parishes and even open meetings by reciting some of the prayers from the new translation to become more comfortable with them and “gain access to the richness they contain.” Doing so during special liturgical seasons like Advent and Lent, he adds, may smooth the transition further.

To prepare for the changes, the USCCB provides a new Web page (www.usccb.org/romanmissal) and is sponsoring a series of regional workshops for priests and parish leaders. The Federation of Diocesan Liturgical Commissions is planning workshops that can be given at parishes. Materials also are being published that can aid in adjusting to the liturgical changes.

Not all parish ministers will be affected by the changes. The translation of Scripture readings used at Mass will remain the same, so lectors will be unaffected. So will Eucharistic ministers.

Church musicians, however, are another story. After the changes to the Roman Missal will affect their ministry “pretty profoundly,” says Michael McMahon, president of the National Association of Pastoral Musicians and a church music director. Father Hilgarten explains, “Musicians will be challenged to lead the people in sung text that corresponds to the new translation. Composers have readapted previous musical settings. New compositions are also being prepared that will broaden the treasury of music for the people.”

McMahon says people can expect “new settings of many of the Mass texts that people have come to know and sing pretty confidently—the “Gloria”; the “Sanctus.” A lot of musical settings are being retoled.”

While he doesn’t expect the entire musical repertoire of many parishes to change, he says, one significant difference is that the new missal translation will “the changes to the Roman Missal we’re not used to.”

For example, he calls it a “priority in the new translation” to sing the Gloria at the beginning of the Eucharistic prayer. He notes that singing more parts of the Mass “puts us at the same time,” adding to the common experience of Holy Communion. Father McMahon sees the changes as a benefit since any part of the Mass given greater attention can result in greater understanding of the Mass by the people.

“People always need to be taken back to the basics of liturgical formation,” he says, and the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s “called for full, active participation in the liturgy.”

Music directors, he cautions that, despite the fact that change is coming, “we don’t want to make too much or too little of it. We’re not changing the Mass; we’re changing the translation.”

St. Basil’s School of Gregorian Chant will be offering a Gregorian Chant Winter Workshop at Sts. Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church in Shiner on Saturdays, Jan 8 – Feb. 26. See page 20 in the December issue of The Catholic Lighthouse for more information; it is located on our Web page.

FEAST OF THE HOLY INNOCENTS CELEBRATED—About 50 persons were in attendance for the fourth annual celebration of the feast of the Holy Innocents, Dec. 26, at the Monuments to the Innocents in Houston. The celebration was beautiful and the singing wonderful — the sound of Christmas cards filled the chapel, resonating off the walls of the glass blocks etched with the names of donors’ babies lost to death. The Mass was celebrated by Father Jose Hilgarten; the altar server was Karl Steinhauser. Refreshments and visiting followed the Mass.

Eric Genuis in concert

Continued from p. 2

Disciples On The Journey

Form or join a faith-sharing group in your parish this Lent. For more information call 361-573-0828 or go to www.victoriadiocese.org

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Eric Genuis in concert

Continued from p. 2

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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 a individual priest or lay persons, living or deceased. Publication of the burses will appear periodically when new contributions are received.

As of December 31, 2010

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burses</th>
<th>Previous Year</th>
<th>Current Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>General Seminary Burse</td>
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<td>Holy Rosary Parish - Hostyn</td>
<td>$4,010.00</td>
<td>$4,310.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis and Edith Hick Burse</td>
<td>$7,020.00</td>
<td>$7,320.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. C. Peters Seminary Burs #4</td>
<td>$14,391.00</td>
<td>$14,691.00</td>
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<td>Rev. C. Petros Seminary Burs #4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Louis and Edith Hick Burse</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rev. C. Bily Seminary Burse</td>
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<td>$150.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total** $187,314.00

- **Holy Rosary Parish – Hostyn Seminary Burs**
  - Previous reported: $4,010.00
  - Current year: $4,310.00

- **Louis and Edith Hick Seminary Burse**
  - Previous reported: $7,020.00
  - Current year: $7,320.00

- **Rev. C. Peters Seminary Burs #4**
  - Previous reported: $14,391.00
  - Current year: $14,691.00

- **Rev. C. Bily Seminary Burse**
  - Previous reported: $50.00
  - Current year: $80.00

- **Rev. C. Bily Seminary Burs #4**
  - Previous reported: $150.00
  - Current year: $250.00

**Total** $187,314.00

**Happy Birthday!**

Philip Brune is in Theology II at St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston. His home parish is Sts. Peter & Paul, in Florence, 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

**Sister Martha Ann Kirk, CCVI, honored for peace work**

Sister Martha Ann Kirk, (l.) a Sister of Charity of the Incarnate Word and native of Cuero, is pictured making one of her many presentations on peace and intercultural and interfaith dialogue. She received the Insigne Verbum Award during the December 2010 Commencement ceremonies at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio.

**Sister Martha Ann Kirk, CCVI, honored for peace work**

SAN ANTONIO—Sister Martha Ann Kirk, CCVI, received the Insigne Verbum Award during the December 2010 Commencement ceremonies at the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio. A native of Cuero, Sister Martha Ann was recognized for her “commitment to intercultural and interfaith dialogue in pursuit of peace.”

This award was approved in 1988 by the UIW board of trustees to honor “individuals who give meritorious service to the San Antonio and South Texas communities and to the university.” Sister Martha Ann is the 25th individual to receive this award.

Insigne Verbum is a Latin phrase which means outstanding word or expression. It has even deeper meaning for the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word—a distinguished expression of the Word—because she stands as a living symbol of the value of interfaith and intercultural dialogue in pursuit of peace.

During her career, Sister Martha Ann has traveled extensively throughout Europe and the Middle East, interacting with colleagues and students in many countries. As she immersed herself in these diverse cultures, she encountered strangers who became her friends. Through these experiences she developed a deep and compelling sensitivity to the plight of those suffering from discrimination, war, and religious intolerance.

Sister Martha Ann has been recognized previously for her contributions to peace in our world. She was awarded the “Art of Peace Award” by the St. Mary’s University President’s Peace Commission and the “Peacemaker Award” by the San Antonio Bar Foundation.

During the first Annual Ramadan Civic Iftar in 2009, Sister Martha Ann received a special award for her work, and was present to present the presentation titled Ramadan: A Month of Sharing: Building Bridges of Mutual Understanding. She worked with Mary Luzardo, a distinguished interfaith leader, with Mayra and Suzanne DeLeon. This year, she assembled a group of about 200 persons from Afghanistan, Belize, Egypt, Greece, India, Iran, Italy, Jordan, Mexico, Morocco, Pakistan, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Turkey, Yemen and the United States to participate in the Iftar on the UIW campus.

As she closed her remarks during the award program, UIW Chancellor Sister Helena Monahan said, “Sister Martha Ann’s contributions are myriad and diverse. She has danced and acted and written in the cause of peace and understanding. Perhaps her message to us all could be summed up in a simple phrase which she uses repeatedly in presentations and articles: ‘We refuse to be Enemies.’ For learning and disseminating an uncompromising attitude of mutual respect and mutual teaching and learning, for unbowed enthusiasm in believing such attitudes can transform the world, the University of the Incarnate Word proudly awards Sister Martha Ann Kirk, Sister of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Incarnate Word College alumna, the “Insigne Verbum” award this 11th day of December, 2010.

**Lay people have duty to nurture vocations, says Archbishop Dolan**

By Ashlee Schuette

Catholic News Service

OMAHA, Neb. (CNS) — New York Archbishop Timothy M. Dolan, keynote speaker at the 67th Serra International Convention in Omaha, said the lay faithful of the church have a duty to nurture vocations to the sacramental priesthood.

“Ordained priests have the duty to call forth the gifts of the lay faithful as they share in the role of Jesus of teaching, serving and sanctifying,” Archbishop Dolan said. “And the lay faithful have the duty to take care of vocations to the sacramental priesthood.”

The archbishop is the episcopal adviser to the Serra Club, an international organization that promotes and fosters vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life. He was one of several speakers at the convention held at Omaha’s Qwest Center and attended by more than 500 people.

The event opened with a Mass at St. Cecilia Cathedral with Omaha Archbishop George J. Lucas as presiding bishop. Archbishop Dolan said one way to start promoting religious vocations was to begin with emphasizing the vocation of marriage and family.

“Only 50 percent of our Catholic youth are approaching the sacrament of matrimony,” he said. “Vocations to the priesthood and religious life come from vocations to lifelong, life-giving and faithful marriages.”

There is a climate of fear, suspicion and discouragement when it comes to vocations to the priesthood and consecrated religious life, he said. “Many boys or young men are afraid to publicly say, ‘I want to be a priest.’”

During the late 1980s, Archbishop Dolan said, only 51 percent of Catholic parents said they would be happy if their son wanted to be a priest. Today, however, he believes that perception is changing because of Serra International and other similar groups.

Mexican Archbishop Emilio Berlie Belaunzaran of Yucatan, another speaker at the convention, said the church mission of salvation in the world is to “realize that the lay faithful participate in the priestly prophetic and kingly mission of Christ.”

Serra International has more than 1,100 clubs in 46 countries. Thirteen of those countries, including the U.S., were represented at the convention.
HOUStON— Are you thinking of pursuing a master’s degree in education? Do you want the flexibility of an online program? The University of St. Thomas School of Education in Houston has the program for you.

You can choose from degrees in Educational Leadership, Special Education, or Dual Language. Complete your M. Ed. online or combine online classes with blended online and face-to-face classes.

Need-based scholarships are available in fall 2011 made possible by a U.S. Department of Education Title V grant to fund the Promoting Post Baccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (PPOHA) Program. The purpose of this grant is to achieve parity among Hispanic graduate students and other underrepresented groups in retention and graduation rates.

The University of St. Thomas has a strong, liberal arts tradition coupled with Catholic faith-based teaching. This M. Ed. is ideal for private and public school teachers alike. Students in the U.S.T School of Education programs enhance their skills and advance their careers, making a difference in the lives of students.

“This grant will help to fill the critical shortages of P-12 master-level educators in these subject areas,” said Dr. Robert LeBlanc, UST School of Education dean.

Dysfunctional Love Songs

Continued from p. 9

“We will concentrate our efforts on achieving Hispanic student enrollment that mirrors the percentage of Hispanics in Houston and the surrounding area. Scholarships are also available for students other than Hispanics who can qualify as need based.

Apply now for spring 2011 classes. Applicants must be accepted to the St. Thomas M. Ed. program and complete the FAFSA Financial Aid Application.

For more information, contact Dr. Rita Richardson at richarrc@stthom.edu or Deborah Fernandez at fernanda@stthom.edu.

Founded in 1947 by the Basilian Fathers, the University of St. Thomas remains Houston’s first and only Catholic university. St. Thomas, dedicated to educating leaders of faith and character, is committed to the religious, ethical, and intellectual traditions of Catholic higher education.

Catholic Life Insurance

Student scholarships

deadline approaches

SAN ANTONIO—Catholic laymen and women pursuing a graduate degree in theology or religious studies in order to serve their church in a professional capacity must submit applications for the Rev. Msgr. Larry J. Drols Scholarship by February 15, 2011. The renewable $2,000 scholarship will be awarded to two candidates in need of tuition assistance for additional education who serve or want to serve his or her parish as an administrator, youth minister, parish coordinator or pastor.

This scholarship is geared towards those who have already obtained their bachelor’s degree and who are either enrolled or wanting to enroll into any Catholic graduate school in Texas, Arizona, Florida, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma or Mississippi. Applicants may also be enrolled in an extension program or in the Catholic University of America School of Canon Law.

Applications may be obtained by contacting the communications department at (210) 826-9921, or 1-800-292-2548 or by writing to Catholic Life Insurance, attn: Communications Department, P.O. Box 659527, San Antonio, TX 78265-9527. Also, applications may be downloaded from the company Web site: www.cbli.com.

Founded in 1901, Catholic Life Insurance offers life insurance, IRAs and retirement annuities to individuals and businesses living in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, New Mexico and Mississippi.

POPE GREETES STUDENT DURING VESPER SERVICES FOR UNIVERSITY STUDENTS—Pope Benedict XVI greets a student during a vespers service with Rome university students in St. Peter’s Basilica at the Vatican Dec. 16. The pope said in modern times there is a need for “a new class of intellectuals” who are capable of offering concrete and realistic solutions to social and cultural problems, based on moral principles. (CNS photo/Paul Haring)

To the youth of the Diocese of Victoria:

Peace be with you and greetings from St. Joseph Seminary College in St. Benedict, Louisiana? My name is Adam Beard; I am a seminarian from our diocese, and it is a joy to share with you a bit about my formation to the priesthood and extend to you an invitation to Abbey Youth Fest, a youth rally coordinated by my seminary.

I am currently in my freshman year of undergraduate formation here at St. Joseph’s, and I could not be happier that our Lord has called me to study here. The experience of seminary thus far has been amazing, and I am continuing to grow in love and knowledge of our Catholic faith and our God. Along with 74 other seminarians studying for priesthood, I am currently taking courses in pastoral theology and practicing my theological understanding in the beautiful piney woods of Southeast Louisiana on the 1,200 acre grounds of a Benedictine monastery.

The beautiful charism, traditions and liturgies of the Benedictines have contributed greatly to my experience in seminary, and on behalf of St. Joseph’s, I invite you, the youth of our diocese, to spend a day with us worshipping the Lord, discerning your vocation, and experiencing the richness of the Benedictine life.

On March 26, 2011, St. Joseph Abbey will host its eleventh Abbey Youth Fest: a youth rally topriesthood and extend to you an invitation to Abbey Youth Fest, a youth rally coordinated by my seminary. The theme for Abbey Youth Fest 2011 is, “Ever Ancient, Ever New,” which is taken from Saint Augustine’s Confessions. With youth speaker, Paul George, and Catholic musician, Matt Maher, the event will provide reflections upon, and an experience of, the beauty of God. So ask your youth minister to get a group together and make the trip to South Louisiana! I hope that you will be able to join me, 74 other seminarians, the Benedictine monks of St. Joseph’s Abbey, several priests and religious from all over the country, and thousands of Catholic youths in worshipping our Lord and searching for the vocation to which He calls us.

As I bring my letter to a close, I’d like to share with you some fun facts about the seminary, the Abbey and Abbey Youth Fest:

• The first Benedictine monastery dates to around 530 AD
• Saint Joseph Abbey was founded in 1888
• Saint Joseph Seminary College has 75 seminarians representing 19 different dioceses
• The Benedictine monks at St. Joseph Abbey raise peacocks as a hobby
• In Abbey Youth Fest’s 10 year history, 529 groups have attended
• In 2006, Abbey Youth Fest hosted over 4,000 youths
• Abbey Youth Fest is held outdoors and has never been cancelled due to rain
• Past speakers and performers have included Jason Evert, Jim Caviezel and Matt Smith

For more information and pictures from previous festivals, check out our Web site at www.AbbeyYouthFest.com and find us on Facebook. You are in my prayers; may our hearts, like St. Augustine’s, find eternal rest in the love of God.

In the peace of Christ,
Adam Beard

Holy Cross Church, Bay City, presents:

Jason Evert: “Romance Without Regret”

Sunday, January 23, 6:00 p.m.

All teens and adults are invited!!

For more information, call Terri at 979-479-4788.

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Invitation from a Seminarian

For more information and pictures from previous festivals, check out our Web site at www.AbbeyYouthFest.com and find us on Facebook. You are in my prayers; may our hearts, like St. Augustine’s, find eternal rest in the love of God.

In the peace of Christ,
Adam Beard

Young Adults

YOUNG ADULTS

The Catholic Lighthouse

Page 5 — January 2011

Catholic Schools Week Jan. 30- Feb. 5

The Catholic Lighthouse
Infallibility and Error in the Church

Catholics are called upon to accept the Church’s magisterium or teaching authority. They do because they are aware of the guidance of the Holy Spirit promised to the apostles by Jesus at the Last Supper (Jn. 14:16-17; 15:26-27; 16:13-14) and also that Jesus promised to remain with his apostles to the end of time (Mt. 28:20). Catholics also accept the teaching of the magisterium because they remember that Jesus speaks through his apostles (Luke 10:16). They should be aware that not every utterance of the magisterium is of the same dignity or solemnity nor is every teaching guaranteed to be error-free. The Church has three levels of solemnity in its teaching: (1) extraordinary and infallible; (2) ordinary and infallible; and (3) ordinary and fallible.

The extraordinary magisterium refers to the rare occasions that the Church defines a doctrine as belonging to revela- tion or so intimately connected to it as to require belief in it to protect revelation. An example is the teaching that Jesus is both God and man (Council of Nicaea 325). The basis of the belief is faith in God who can neither deceive nor be deceived. The Church in this instance is not the basis of belief but only the indispensable condition of belief. The divine guarantees for guid- ance of the Church are such in these cases that the statements are absolutely without error. Otherwise they could jeopardize eternal salvation. Once a doctrine is de- fined, it is irrevocable but not necessarily eternal salvation. Once a doctrine is defended, it is irrevocable but not necessarily infallible.

The ordinary magisterium refers to the teaching of the magisterium of bishops worldwide. This teaching can be infallible if the bishops are united to the Holy Father and one another, they teach something about faith and morals to be held definitively, and they agree on a particular teaching. Such teachings must also be believed with divine faith. Teachings of this second category are irrefutable and irrevocable, but like defined doctrine, they can receive a better formulation or better arguments can be found for them. They do not allow an opinion that contradicts them. The person who denies this kind of teaching would also be guilty of heresy.

The ordinary magisterium of the Church that is fallible is that which is proposed as safe and prudent but not necessarily for general belief or without the wish to engage the Church’s author- ity fully. Examples of such teachings are the prohibitions of artificial insemination, surrogate motherhood, “test-tube” babies. Catholics must believe that this teaching is true until there is clear evidence that it is false. The faith required here is religious submission which is distinct from divine faith but a prolongation of it (CCC #992). In divine faith we believe something because God says that it is so; in religious faith we believe it because the Church, the pillar and the ground of truth (1 Tim. 3:15), says it is so. Such teaching is pre- sented as the most trustworthy and best in view of present knowledge. The teaching is reformable because it could be in error and has been in error in the past, e.g., the condemnation of Galileo and certain past replies of the Roman congregations on the interpretation of Scripture. Persons who deny this kind of teaching are either with- holding assent or dissenting privately or publicly. Unless the ordinary Catholic is an expert in the field involved, he or she must accept the teaching. Experts may withhold assent or dissent privately by submitting their reasoning to the magisterium, which has the ultimate authority.

Why are these three categories of teaching important to know? One reason is that when the Church has taught error in the past, it was in the third category. I do not want to give the impression that the Church has been mostly wrong in this area; it has been overwhelmingly correct. It is important to realize that the errors have not been in the area of defined teaching or ordi- nary teaching that is infallible. A second reason for being aware of the distinction is that there are, currently, theologians who seem to hold that anything not formally defined is subject to revision, even long- held teachings of the Church condemning abortion, contraception, etc. A very strong case can be made that these teachings belong to the second category, ordinary and infallible, and therefore do not allow a contradictory opinion.

How is the ordinary Catholic to know to which category a particular teaching of the Church belongs? Why not join an adult religious education program to find out?
Why so few pope saints in recent centuries?

Q. Our study group’s discussion of church history raises some questions about saints. We know the criteria for making saints today, but what were they at the beginning of the church? It seems there were lots of saints in the early days. When did today’s process begin? We know there were bad popes, but why are some popes saints and some are not? (Wisconsin)

A. The church, of course, does not “make saints.” When the church canonizes someone, it simply means that all Catholics may now venerate that person in public liturgies. In fact, the word itself indicates that the person’s name may be included in the “canon,” the eucharistic prayer of the Mass.

As you suggest, the method of naming someone a saint has been a long process. Originally, especially for martyrs, it was accomplished through general acclamation by the whole Christian community. Gradually, local bishops established criteria for sainthood in their own territories. From there, the cult often spread to other areas as well.

By far, the vast majority of Christians we call saints — historians have estimated around 10,000 — were “canonized” in the first 900 years. They are Pope Celestine V, Pope Pius V (1566-1572) and Pope Pius X (1903-1914).

Interestingly, while dozens of popes in earlier centuries are honored as saints, only three popes have been canonized during the past 900 years. They are Pope Pius XII (1939-1958) and Pope John Paul II of the Americas, Court #2275. We strongly believe that the walk is not over until a cure is found. The team has participated in the Relay for Life for since 1999 and raised $2,064 this year. Team members walking in the Relay for Life since 1999 and raised $2,064 this year. Team members walking in the Relay for Life since 1999 and raised $2,064 this year. Team members walking in the Relay for Life since 1999 and raised $2,064 this year. Team members walking in the Relay for Life since 1999 and raised $2,064 this year.

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For many years, we’ve heard Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wis., answer reporters’ questions following Mass Dec. 8, 2010, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wis. At Mass Bishop Ricken announced that he approved Marian apparitions seen by Adele Brise in 1859. They are the first apparitions of Mary in the U.S. to receive approval of a diocesan bishop. (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass)

By Father John Dietzen
Catholic News Service

The fun begins Saturday, February 26, 2011, when Holy Family Parish in Port Lavaca, Texas, host its 908 Annual Catechism Contest for the CCD Program at Holy Family Parish in Victoria. The contest is open to all Catholic school students in the area.

West and South Texas Catholic News Service

By Sam Lucero
Catholic News Service

St. Robert CDA team walks for cancer cure

Bishop David L. Ricken of Green Bay, Wis., answers reporters’ questions following Mass Dec. 8, 2010, at the Shrine of Our Lady of Good Help in Champion, Wis. At Mass Bishop Ricken announced that he approved Marian apparitions seen by Adele Brise in 1859. They are the first apparitions of Mary in the U.S. to receive approval of a diocesan bishop. (CNS photo/Sam Lucero, The Compass)

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First US approved Marian apparitions encourage catechists

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PHANTOM BAKE SALE HELPS BAY CITY CHURCH AND SCHOOL—Officers of Catholic Family Fraternal of Texas, Society 100 Our Lady of Snows, Bay City, present Rev. Casimir Jarzombek, pastor of Holy Cross Church, and Stephanie Kucea, principal of Holy Cross School, each with a check for $618 from funds generated from the 2010 Phantom Bake Sale. Society officers pictured with Father Casey and Principal Kucea are Treasurer Mildred Babik, President Dorothy Saha and Secretary Karen Owens.

THE BUSTY HOLIDAY SEASON IS BECOMING HISTORY, the Christmas decorations are being put away for next year, and we’re trying to catch our breath. Moreover, even nature also has seemed to shut down. Days are short; weather is gloomy, and we see little growth in vegetation about us. Wild animals are hibernating or spending more time in sheltered surroundings; even we humans are spending more time indoors. Yet we all know that nature is quietly regenerating itself and getting ready for a burst of activity as soon as the temperature rises, the days lengthen and spring arrives.

We, too, should be using this time of decreased external activity to regenerate spiritually. Fortunately, we are blessed, at this time, with the celebration of the feast of the Baptism of the Lord. We all remember the Gospel story of how Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by his cousin John. We remember how the Holy Spirit came down in the form of a dove, and we remember how the voice of the Father announced, “This is my Beloved Son.”

I think much of that Gospel story applies to each of us as we were baptized “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” We all know that we received the Holy Spirit at our Baptism; however, we might not be aware that God the Father looks down upon each of us as a beloved son or daughter. How awesome that thought is; like Jesus, we are the Father’s beloved sons and daughters! That thought needs some getting used to! If we truly let it permeate our whole being, it will regenerate us! Like Jesus, we will be inspired and strengthened to go out and seek the Father’s will.

Now God won’t be making any public announcement about his will for us but he will speak to us through our Church services and our prayers, through our reading and reflection, through those around us, and through the inspirations derived from reflection on the wonders of creation about us.

So, as beloved sons and daughters of God, let us use this “in between” time to grow interiorly and to discern how we can respond to God’s call to prayer, sacrifice and service in the Church. Let us pray for those who are discerning lifestyle choices in their response to God and the Church.

Therefore, as we hear or read the Gospel account of the Baptism of the Lord, let us be mindful of our own baptism in which we became beloved sons and daughters of God. With this in mind, let us use the next two months spiritually regenerating ourselves so that we can burst into the season of Lent and Easter with renewed fervor.

TIME OF SPIRITUAL REGENERATION

WHY SO FEW POPE SAINTS IN RECENT CENTURIES?

Perhaps we experienced something of this after the death of Pope John Paul II in 2005. Many wanted a quick canonization to put the church’s seal of approval on all his teachings, especially some that other leaders in the church tended to approach more questioningly. They were days of deep emotion, witnessed by all the signs of his death demanding “saints subito” — make him a saint right now.

Whether for this or other reasons, Pope Benedict XVI seems inclined to slow the rush and take time to let history give a better and more balanced picture before taking such a step.

Finally, “saint” is simply an anglicized version of the Latin word “sanctus” (“holy”). Scripture applies the name to the living as well as to the dead. St. Paul addressed his letters to the Corinthians and Ephesians, for example, to the “sancti,” the saints, the “holy ones,” in those Christian communities.

Much more fascinating information may be found in a modern classic on the subject, “Making Saints,” by Kenneth Woodward (Simon and Schuster).

CATHOLIC BISHOPS REJECT ARIZONA-STYLE IMMIGRATION POLICIES

Two-page policy papers on these issues, as well as the other legislative priorities of the Texas Bishops, can be found on the TCC legislative agenda page. The Texas Catholic Conference is the association of the 15 Roman Catholic dioceses of the State of Texas and is the official public policy voice of the Bishops of Texas. For more information on the Texas Catholic Conference, visit www.TXCatholic.org. For information regarding the position of the U.S. Bishops on comprehensive immigration reform, visit the Justice for Immigrants Web site, www.JusticeForImmigrants.org.

If you or someone you know has been sexually or physically abused by a member of the clergy or other church personnel:

• Contact the bishop or the chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria at (361) 573-0828 or
• Call Father Gary Janak (979) 543-3770 or Sister Emilie Eilers (361) 575-7111, Coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach;
• Write to: Bishop David E. Fellhauer, Diocese of Victoria, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 Mark your letter “Personal and Confidential”

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

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

If the abuse involves a minor, civil authorities should be contacted prior to reporting to the bishop, chancellor or coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach. If the child is in immediate danger, call 911.

MAN POWER IN THE KETTLE ROOM—Man Power is most welcome in the kettle room early in the morning in preparation for the chicken noodle soup and sandwich supper, which will be held Wednesday, January 26, 2011, at 5 p.m. by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #1108 at the American Legion Hall in East Bernard. The Catholic Daughters appreciate these gentlemen’s help each year: John Kramz, Charlie Janeczek, Delbert Silva, Syl Kramz, and Mark Pileik. They are with Helen Mica, long-time chairman. Students from Keller Academy of Performing Arts will provide entertainment before the drawing. See When and Where, p. 19, for more information.

FIRE PREVENTION WEEK—Recently, St. Rose School celebrated Fire Prevention Week with a visit from the Schulenburg Fire Department. Firefighters came to the school and talked about their duties. All of the classes got the opportunity to spray the water hose and try on the fire department uniforms. At the end of the presentation by the firefighters, the 8th grade class was able to ride on the top of the fire truck.

Continued from p. 7
Dysfunctional Love Songs

By Christopher Stefanick

The lessons packed in the love songs that are getting the most radio play today all seem to have a similar theme: if it isn’t dysfunctional, it isn’t love.

Take the song Grenade for instance, wherein Bruno Mars sings a litany of praises he’s thinking, “You’re the one I should do the same.”

In one of the most popular songs this year, Take a Bite by Neon Trees, the lyrics go: “I’m still alive but I barely breathe.”

Everyone who has had their heart broken can relate with those words. But he goes on to sing, “What am I supposed to do when the best part of me was always the animal inside of you… Take a bite of my heart tonight.”

Tyler, you and anyone who looks like you, won’t be dating my daughter. The lesson of this song is echoed in countless others: if it’s not promiscuous, it’s not passion.

And Miranda Cosgrove, a Nickelodeon i.e. children’s TV channel actress, in her song Kissing You sings to her boyfriend after an audience of millions of pre-teen girls, “When I’m kissing you it all starts making sense!”

And answers to questions like, “Are you the one I should trust?” become “crystal clear… when I’m kissed you.”

The lesson of this song is that physical intimacy is the way to discern if a given relationship is the right one. I hate to break the news to Miranda, but letting your feeling’s you’re getting while kissing him is oxytocin. It’s a neuro-peptide released during physical intimacy that decreases your ability to reason and increases your ability to bond. It produces the polar opposite of clear thinking. Furthermore, it lets the heavy-kissing with your boyfriend, Miranda, I can almost guarantee that he’s not thinking. “You’re the one I should trust.” It’s more like the he’s thinking, “You’re the one I should do more with than kiss.”

I’m not even going to attempt to tackle what most rap songs say about relationships because their content, packed with sexual deviance and hedonism that border on violence is more fitting for a hard core porn magazine or a Law and Order SVU episode than the radio.

I don’t mean to sound like an emotion-less Spock of a man. The songs I mentioned, with the exception of Animal, do have some redeeming themes, and they all have great melodies. But they dismantle the prerequisite for love in the minds of the desperate pre-teens who are listening: self possession, It’s almost as if the person is stable enough to stand on his own two feet without falling into enmeshment and codependence, then, and only then, can he give himself in love to another.

And if love is contained by modesty, chivalry and purity during dating and engagement, then, and only then, can it become an internal fire that nothing can

See Dysfunctional Love Songs, p. 5

Almost 38 years ago, the Supreme Court decided that abortion should be legal in this country in the infamous Roe vs. Wade case. That decision, in essence, gave way to what is being called the new Holocaust. More than fifty million babies have been killed since that decision, roughly one-third of all pregnancies since 1973 have ended in abortion.

This year will mark the 38th anniversary of the tragic Supreme Court decision by marching at a pro-life march at the state’s Capitol Saturday, January 22. The rally begins at 1:00 p.m. where all will meet and march up Congress Avenue to the South Steps of the Capitol. Then from 2:00-3:00 p.m. a rally will take place at the south steps with pro-life speakers and leaders from across the state.

The Office of Youth Ministry is sponsoring a trip to this important event for junior high and high school youth from the Diocese of Victoria. Thanks to a generous grant, there is no charge for groups. For all the information at the diocesan Web site www.victoriadiocese.org, and click on youth ministry; the flyer is titled Texas Rally for Life.

Last year more than 160 young people and adults from our diocese joined thousands of people at the Capitol in Austin for the annual pro-life march. The group gathered at Republic Square and marched up the south steps of the State Capitol. They prayed and heard from keynote speakers Gos. Rick Perry, Sen. Dan Patrick, Rep. Frank Cortéz, Jodi Everett, Cathy Kerr, Elizabeth McCaughey and Msgr. Michael Mulvey. You can find more information at http://www.texasrallyforlife.org.

Youth Pro-life March 2011

Senior Crush

The Catholic Lighthouse Page 9 — January 2011

Youth Calendar of Events

January 19—Strong Catholic Families, Strong Catholic Teens - St. Mary, Victoria
January 22—Pro-life Rally in Austin
January 26—Strong Catholic Families, Strong Catholic Teens - St. Mary, Victoria
January 30—Parish Confirmation Retreat at St. Anthony in Palacios
February 6—Soupster Bowl of Caring
February 20—Youth Spectacular
February 24—NET at Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria
February 25—NET at St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg
February 26—NET at Our Lady of Mount Carmel in Wharton
February 26—Foundations Youth Ministry Class
February 27—NET at Our Lady of Victory in Victoria
March 1—NET at Sacred Heart in Hallettsville
March 2—NET at Sacred Heart in Hallettsville
March 3—NET at Sacred Heart in Hallettsville
March 4—NET in our diocese and available for in-parish retreats
March 5—NET at St. Joseph in Boling
March 6—NET at St. Joseph in Moulton
March 6—Catholic Knowledge Bowl
March 12—Foundations Youth Ministry Class
March 14—Our Lady of Guadalupe Confirmation Retreat at SRC
March 27—Diocesan Confirmation Retreat at St. Michael’s in Cuero

For more information on any of these events, please contact: Debbie Vanelli or José Ortega at the Office of Youth Ministry at (512) 576-0828 ext. 32 / ext. 50 or e-mail at dvaneill@victoriadiocese.org or jortega@victoriadiocese.org

Web site: www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice

Grenade

by Neon Trees,

by Bruno Mars

by Bruno Mars

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YOUNG CATHOLIC DAUGHTERS BRING JOY TO OTHERS—Yoakum JCDA #206 members decorated a residents’ door at Yoakum Nursing and Rehabilitation Center recently. The girls titled their door “Christmas Blessings.” The festive door brought a smile to the faces of the residents living there.

LOCAL AUTHOR SHARES BOOK IN EL CAMPO—Local author, Marilyn Sebesta, visited Diocese of Victoria chancery staff member Jose Ortega, his wife, Kim, and daughter, Emma. Each and every gift under the tree was wrapped with paper from old issues of The Catholic Light House newspaper. Thanks to the Ortega family for their support.

El Campo 4th Degree Celebrates 60 Years

EL CAMPO—The Archbishop Drossaerts Assembly 1131 Knights of Columbus 4th Degree of El Campo celebrated their 60th Anniversary, as well as had their most successful fundraiser, Friday, December 10, 2010.

Over 250 guests were treated to a roast beef dinner catered by Mikeska BBQ, a bucket raffle, a big raffle and dancing to the band of “Legacy.” The KC Hall was decorated with a Christmas theme with a focal point of a group of lighted Christmas Trees and lighted deer. Tables featured tall vases filled with Christmas decorations, greenery and candles. A special table honored the 4th Degree Knights of Columbus with the original Proclamation dated 60 years ago, a KC Cape, KC Sword and a Cross.

Some of the money raised from this event was dedicated to Bishop David Fellhauer. A donation was presented to the Bishop that night in the amount of $5,000. The Bishop will put the money towards needed non-profit charities of his choice. An additional $2,600 was donated to Bishop David Fellhauer from the Assembly 1131 4th Degree.

This event was organized and put on by KC members and their wives, who are all volunteers of the organization and the community. Area businesses helped by sponsoring the band and making cash donations and donating items for the raffles.

“Without the hard work and commitment of all of these individuals and businesses, this event would not have been possible, for that I say ‘Thank you,’” closed Gerry Mikeska, Faithful Navigator Assembly 1131 4th Degree.

ST. ROSE ELEMENTARY SHARE CHRIST—Each year St. Rose of Lima classes put on short performances for the “Christmas Around the World” annual fundraiser. Third graders told the Christmas story of Jesus’ Birth. Kneeling from left: Lian Bennett, Justin Stang, Jaxon Fietsam, Taylor Demel, Brynlee Hollas and Mindy Girard; standing back, from left: Elizabeth Seyl, Andrea Mazoch, Grant Mechura, Julia Oeding and Ashley Pesl.

CHRISTMAS GATHERING—Seminarians and religious sisters were honored at the 2010 Serra Club Christmas Party. Back, l-r, Scott Hill, St. Roch, Mentz; Kristopher Fuchs, St. Michael the Archangel, Needville; Matthew Soto, Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Shiner; Philip Brune, Sts. Peter & Paul, Freerburg; John Dougherty, Holy Cross, Bay City; Jasper Liggio, Shrine of the True Cross, Dickinson; Stephen Vacek, Holy Cross, East Bernard; Patrick Knippenberg, Sts. Cyril & Methodius, Shiner; front, l-r, Jacob Koether, Holy Cross, Bay City; Bishop David Fellhauer; Sister Louise Marie Jones, IWBS; Veronica Munoz, IWBS; Sister Patricia Marie Lohre, IWBS; and Father Dan Morales, Vocation Director.

JESUS IS BORN—Above, eighth graders from Our Lady of Victory depict the nativity scene of our Lord. All students, from kinder to eighth grade, participate in the Christmas program.
STJ Flyer Marching Band – SUPERIOR!

The St. Joseph High School Flyer Band from Victoria finished in first place in Classification I at the Texas Private School Music Educators Association (TPSMEA) State Marching Contest this fall at Nolan Catholic High School in Fort Worth. This is the fifth consecutive year the band received a State First Division-Superior Marching Band Trophy. St. Joseph High School Marching Band was the most awarded marching band in their classification in the state of Texas winning four of the six Caption Awards presented in Classification I.

Pictured with awards are band officers, standing, l. to r.: Quartermaster-Myles Martinez, Chaplain-Michael Petrash II, Brass Vice President-Nathaniel Hawes, Woodwind Vice President-Spencer Driver, and Percussion Vice President-Martin Kallus; kneeling: Leslie Zepeda-President/Drum Major; not pictured: Librarian-Mark Chavez and Crew Chief-Steven Sudheimer.

STJ Flyer Marching Band wins state marching contest

The following State Plaques were awarded to the St. Joseph High School Flyer Marching Band.

STJ Senior Drum Major Leslie Zepeda was named “Best Drum Major” in Classification I.

The STJ Band was named, “Best Horn Line”, “Best Overall Musical Effect”, and “Best Overall General Effect” in Classification I.

Judges comments included, “Great Show…Wonderful, energetic sound!…I enjoyed your performance.”

The St. Joseph High School Band is under the direction of Mr. Michael Petrisky.

HALF OF NA 7TH GRADERS SCORE IN 95TH PERCENTILE OF ITBS—Twenty Nazareth Academy 7th graders (50% of the class) scored in the 95th percentile or above in one or more categories of the Iowa Test of Basic Skills (ITBS). The ITBS is a national standardized test. Scoring in the 95th percentile means scoring better than 95% of all 7th graders across the nation. These students have thus earned recognition through the Duke University Academic Talent Search program and are eligible to take the college entrance SAT in January along with high school juniors and seniors. The Duke University Talent Identification Program (TIP) also includes 4th & 5th graders, and Nazareth Academy had 17 students in 4th & 5th grade qualify (95th percentile in one or more categories of the ITBS).

Running Catholic Schools

The majority of U.S. Catholic college and university presidents are men, while mainly women take the top position at U.S. Catholic primary schools.

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<th>College and University Presidents</th>
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<td>Priest or Religious Brother</td>
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<th>Primary School Principals</th>
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Archbishop Hannan experienced a “Forrest Gump” kind of life.


Reviewed by Elizabeth Rackover

Archbishop Hannan experienced a “Forrest Gump” kind of life.

“The Archbishop Wore Combat Boots,” a well-told living history of a remarkable man of the cloth. But this is a book of any age curious to experience the internal structure of the American Catholic Church as it stood against the unsettled and unsettling backdrop of seven decades of American Catholic (and Vatican) history.

Collaborating with the assistance of Nancy Collins and Peter Finney Jr., Archbishops Philip M. Hannan, the now 97-year-old retired archbishop of New Orleans has constructed a memoir that spans an impressive array of secular and ecclesiastical history. This is his personal tale, as well, gives his anecdotes weight and meaning beyond simple storytelling. He maintains an easy conversational style, starting with the once-typical Catholic family portrait that is now rather sadly removed from our 21st-century lifestyle.

Following tales from his family life and seminary days, Archbishop Hannan marches us into his arena, throwing us straight into World War II where he served as a chaplain in the 82nd Airborne, helping free Jews in Germany and even manning a machine gun (he writes, “in protest”) during the Battle of the Bulge. For those of us who sought out the Church’s tenets on “just war” in the months following the 9/11 attacks against America, the archbishop goes deep into the trenches in a section called “Combat Morality.” Catholicism at war, he writes, creates new moral dilemmas on a daily basis.

He doesn’t flinch from the hard stuff, and he gives compassionate counsel to soldiers who have killed.

And ah, yes, the Kennedy years. Archbishop Hannan betried a young congressman, Jack Kennedy, and created a safe and supportive environment for Catholic politicians in Washington. “In those days,” he writes, “there was the word, Catholicism was shrouded in the same misunderstanding and mythical fear as, perhaps, Islam today.”

Archbishop Hannan continued to be the unpublicized Catholic conscience of President Kennedy, and the friendship between them was so close that he flew from Rome to Washington to eulogize the slain president at the funeral. The two chapters he devotes to Kennedy are fascinating in their behind-the-scenes revelations that have, up until now, never been openly discussed.

For game-changing racial politics, Archbishop Hannan is hard to beat. He was assigned to serve as archbishop of New Orleans in 1965, and readers will get a fascinating look into the racial politics of that time and place. His efforts to desegregate the church in New Orleans reveal the worst of human nature. In one photograph from that time, handmade signs reading “The Catholic Church includes: ‘Hannan, don’t tell us, show us church doctrine to integrate’ and ‘God does not recognize a Negro priest, bishop.’” Archbishop Hannan navigates and narrates this difficult era skillfully.

As an individual, Archbishop Hannan is probably not that rare a breed. He is simply a product of the 20th-century Catholic Church, encompassing and embodying some of the best qualities a church leader can and his back — into making his words faithful. What is rare is his proximity to and his tendency to find himself in political, racial and cultural hotspots (the Second Vatican Council; with Negro priests, bishops.) Archbishop Hannan experiences a “Forrest Gump” kind of life.

His anecdotes and stories are peppered with the sort of “good faith” that makes a person strive to be better himself. Archbishop Hannan has put his life — and his back — into making his Catholic Church one that Jesus himself would recognize: a place where the hungry are fed, the lost are counseled and consoled, where justice is not just talked about but sought after, worked for, and even — wonder of wonders — sometimes achieved.

The archbishop recounts with astonishing detail events that unfolded decades ago. It must help that he has stacks of photographs and letters documenting just about everything that ever happened to or around him. One can’t help but think, looking at dozens upon dozens of personal letters from public figures across the decades, that somewhere out there a collector is skipping over covering and going straight on to lasting after that obviously valuable collection of memorabilia.

In a sense, Archbishop Hannan is the Catholic Church’s very own “Forrest Gump,” finding himself in all the hot happening places at all the right, hot happenings. No other man who, with husband Don, is responsible for spearheading over the past 30 years to be a Christian presence by living a life of service, simplicity and poverty. Monica Tesei describes it as a fulfilling way of life. “When you experience missionary work, you become closer to the Lord,” she said. “It’s a way to meet him strongly.” In 1988, Pope John Paul II started a tradition of blessing such families and their mission to evangelize when he celebrated Mass with 100 families of the Neocatechumenal Way in Porto San Giorgio, Italy, and sent them across the globe. Precedents for this evangelical mission can be found in the early church. The New Testament tells of the family of Aquila and Priscilla, who collaborated with St. Paul in his evangelization efforts. During the ministry of the Benedictines in the Middle Ages, monks were accompanied by groups of Christian families; and in North America, Franciscan Father Junipero Serra’s California missionaries included Christian families who helped the priests. Rose Mary McAleod, who, with husband Don, is responsible for the Neocatechumenal Way in Colorado, said about 300 missionary families were sent worldwide last year, another 250-300 are expected this year. “Mission families are going like crazy,” she said. “There are a lot of requests (from bishops).”

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Family Puzzle Contest Winners!


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 30 for a chance to win “The Archbishop Wore Combat Boots.”

Program sends missionary families to nontraditional places

DENVER (CNS) — Marco and Monica Tesei consider themselves a normal couple: married for 18 years; three children, ages 16, 14 and 11; living in a peaceful family neighborhood in Denver. The unusual thing about them is that the family left their home in Rome five years ago to serve as missionaries in the Archdiocese of Denver.

They’re part of the Neocatechumenal Way, a parish-based faith formation program that has sent hundreds of missionary families around the world over the past 30 years to be a Christian presence by living a life of service, simplicity and poverty. Monica Tesei describes it as a fulfilling way of life.

SHINER — Nine-year-old Owen Morkovsky and his family are parishioners of Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish in Shiner. Owen was born to Robert and Dawn Morkovsky with an advanced case of cerebral palsy. This is a broad term used for a variety of disorders that affect one’s ability to move and maintain posture and balance. Cerebral palsy is caused by a brain injury that occurs before, during, or within the first few years of life and maintains itself throughout life. The extent of these motor disabilities that affect Owen’s whole body is called “Spastic Quadriplegia.” This particular condition affects Owen’s whole body: face, trunk, arms, legs, and vision. Because of the extent of these motor disabilities, the Morkovsky family has chosen to keep him at home with them, rather than place him in an institution, which is where most children with this disability reside. They work hard and make many sacrifices to give him the love and nurturing environment that support families of a special needs child. Other agencies have encouraged the family to get an image on paperwork, but the Morkovsky family refuses to behave in this un-Godly manner and believes there is a better way.

As alluded to above, Dawn and Robert are also proud parents of three other children, Zachary, 20; Laurie, 17; and Matthew, 13. This family is a true example of the love, endurance and commitment to have Owen at home is what keeps this family intact. Although their financial burdens make it difficult on their family, they feel blessed to have the family that they do and would not trade one moment for anything else in the world.

A campaign is being established for Owen and the Morkovsky family by a group of friends in Shiner with the help of Saints Cyril & Methodius Church Assistance Program. The organization is calling on those who can help with meeting some of Owen’s needs, as shown below. Help with social services advocacy, foundations that support families of a special needs child, or even monetary donations, would greatly be appreciated. Any contribution to this family’s fight for Owen will be 100 percent deductible and 100 percent awarded to Owen and his family.

In the spirit of the holidays, “Friends of Owen” would like to present the Morkovsky family with a generous Christmas donation to help with their expenses and investment in Owen’s care. Instead of giving a “traditional” gift this year, the organization is asking those concerned to consider donating, in the name of a loved one, a friend or family, to this important cause for a very special child. Donors may contribute toward a particular need by specifying the item at the time of donation and the organization will make sure to invest too much time in his care, he’s still reluctant to do so. "In the time being, he’s still reluctant to invest too much time in his care, he’s still reluctant to do so. "In the time being, he’s still reluctant to invest too much time in his care, he’s still reluctant to do so. "In the time being, he’s still reluctant to invest too much time in his care, he’s still reluctant to do so. 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Going to Church on Sunday

Sometimes it seems that there are a million other things you could do on a Sunday morning rather than attend church. Why get up when you can sleep an extra hour, or why dress up when jeans are more comfortable?

That’s when I read the news.

On Sunday, Oct. 31, armed gunmen entered Our Lady of Salvation, Baghdad’s Syrian Catholic church, during Sunday Mass. They opened fire on more than 100 Catholics at worship, killing the celebrants immediately, and shooting Massgoers indiscriminately.

Since a multinational force began military action in Iraq in 2003, the country’s capital, Baghdad, has been a city under siege. For seven years, terrorists have made death and death as common there as mosquitoes and grass are in my backyard. If you live in Baghdad or one of the hundreds of other areas around the world where terrorist activity is common (in Alexandria, Egypt, on Jan. 1, 2011, a bomb exploded in an Orthodox Christian church, killing 25 and injuring dozens), leaving your house to get groceries, go to church, school, visit a friend is extremely dangerous.

Imagine peering at that unknown car across the street, wondering if it is going to explode.

Imagine locking your door at night and trying to sleep. Sometime, someone will be the one that is attacked next.

Imagine getting that phone call at work or school, saying that someone you love was killed by a bomb blast.

Imagine doing something as ordinary as going to church on a Sunday — and losing everything.

All of our little complaints about work, school and having to go to church on Sunday pale in comparison to the pain and suffering currently being dealt with in Iraq’s Christian community.

In an interview with The New York Times just more than a month before his death, church priest Father Taha Abdel said that after a car bomb scare a few years ago, the pastor’s stuff arranged for a cement, concrete and razor-wire blockade to be erected around the church to protect parishioners from violence.

Imagine how it must have felt for the parishioners of Our Lady of Salvation to keep attending Mass every Sunday! The simple act of leaving the house to go to church — something we take for granted — became an act of incredible faith, beauty and courage.

It’s a reminder that our ordinary ability to go to church on Sunday is not, in fact, ordinary. Being able to do this is a privilege, and also a statement of the fact that Catholics are people of hope and life.

Seeing what happened in Baghdad, I think there is something intrinsically wrong with avoiding the Mass because we don’t want to be troubled or have to work or want to sleep.

By going to Mass, we tell God and the world that we want to stand up for love, not fear.

Those of us who say we believe in Jesus Christ need to see that the world needs us. We are a part of a world that includes Christians, Muslims, Sikhs, Jews and atheists alike, and we need to see that they all deserve our love and respect.

That means no bullying or attacking because someone is different, whether it’s in an American high school or on the streets of a faraway city.

Every single act of kindness goes a long way in a world that seems to so often rely on violence and fear.

So get up. Dress up. Go to church and be light in the world.

Every year Appalachia-Science in the Public Interest (ASPI) produces its “Simple Lifestyle Calendar” with daily reminders about walking more gently on the earth.

“Take time to get away and be alone,” “Feel good, live simply, laugh more,” and “Put more art in your life” all suggest ways to become more human, more gentle, more spiritual.

How appealing: “Sing in the morning.” “Indulge your need to read.” “Listen to silence!”

Unfortunately, many of us need to ponder more deeply the reality presented in the calendar’s May 12th date: “Stress can make you vulnerable to disease.”

While we recognize the salutary effects of living slower-paced lives, we find ourselves swept along in the rush of popular culture.

Maybe we need the ASPI calendar more than we realize: “Learn to email, text.” “Disable the envy switch.” “Turn away from consumerism.”

The admonitions of the calendar come from a care of creation theology with a respectful appreciation of earth science. In Genesis, God looked over creation and found it “very good” (Gen. 1:31), signifying its inherent worth. God so loved the world that God joined it (Jn. 3:16) — that’s the Incarnation. Christ needed creation after the Resurrection, i.e. his body (Lk. 24:39-43), to demonstrate God’s power over death and destruction.

Why is Christ called the “firstborn of all creation” (Col. 1:15), if at the end of time creation gets wadded up and thrown away like a useless piece of paper? The answer appears to lie with the totality of salvation. All creation awaits its own freedom from corruption and a share in the redemption of Christ (Rom. 8:21; Col. 1:20).

This approach to theology invites us to appreciate God’s gift of creation and to see ourselves as interdependent with it in the web of life.

Curiously, a simple lifestyle sounds so Gospel, but respecting earth science appears so Spiritist. We revel in the inimitability and dependence on God when we recall “the fables of the field” (Lk. 12:22-34) and “allow the children to come unto me” (Matt. 19:13-15) and “let not your hearts be troubled” (Jn. 14:1). Yet St. Augustine reminds us that God speaks in two ways: through the revelation in Scripture and through the revelations of creation.

The simplicity entails proclaiming the Good News, then as part of that Good News our patterns of consumption must reverberate creation. Currently the findings of earth science are begging us to change our lifestyles based on over consumption of scarce resources and the excessive use of fossil fuels. Human activity is changing the earth’s climate and inducing global warming.

While carbon dioxide levels fluctuate by season, they are currently increasing by two parts per million (ppm) each year which is intensifying the greenhouse effect and raising earth’s average temperature.

In the mid 1950s the carbon dioxide level measured 315 ppm. Today it stands at 390 ppm. The science is irrefutable.

Perhaps the simple lifestyle calendar can help us in two ways. First, it can reduce the fear that lifestyle changes will lead to boredom. People are finding they have turned themselves addicted to the Internet, texting, and shopping, which many times leaves them unfulfilled.

The calendar suggests creative activities that can satisfy the human spirit: “Explore the beauty of Autumn.” “Dig into your hands dirty.” “Celebrate the use of herbs and all things herbal.”

Second, the calendar can teach us a connection between spirituality and creation care: “Smart energy choices save money and improve life.” “More with less is best.”

Finally, faithfully following the simple lifestyle calendar gets you to December 31st and something new: “New Year, New You.” Find it at http://www.a-spi.org/ cal.html.

Is There a Fiscal Note?

In the upcoming legislative session, lawmakers will be facing the largest budget shortfall that Texas has seen in a generation, if not ever. As we advocate for support of legislation at the Capitol, the first response to every bill has been, “Is there a fiscal note?” In other words, “What will it mean for Texans today, and jeopardizes future economic growth in our state. Relying on funds without raising revenue. This practice favors generating revenue, cutting unnecessary spending, and raising massgousers indiscriminately.

Every shortfall, which must be addressed during this legislative session, can be resolved with a balanced approach that includes using the entire Rainy Day Fund, generating revenue, cutting unnecessary corporate loopholes, and ensuring that the state appropriates funding at a level that meets the needs of Texas.

Today, vital public services in Texas are not funded to meet basic needs. Many legislators have pledged to cut program funds without raising revenue. This practice of implementing an unbalanced, cuts-only approach is harmful to the most vulnerable Texans today, and jeopardizes future economic growth in our state. Relying on cuts only approach only threatens the recovery of the state as it endeavors to meet the needs of those most affected by the recession, but also hampers our nation’s recovery, as state and local spending is a large component of our nation’s economy.

In light of the global economic recession, the Holy See has reminded governments of the importance of public services.

“Even more than mere preservation of solidarity, it is a matter of justice to overcome the temptation to reduce public services for a short-term benefit against the long-term human cost (Intervention of the Holy See at the 2009 High Level Segment of the United Nations Economic and Social Council, July 2009).” Ournal National DInAGhas also spoken out on the government’s responsibility to service, stating that “a task of good government is to use its funding power to direct resources where they will best serve and respect human life, not to find new sources of revenue, but to help those in need.”

Why Complicate a Simple Life?

Why is it so difficult to live in a way that’s consistent with our beliefs? For some, it’s because of the distraction of our consumer culture. For others, it’s hard to find time. But for many, it’s that we can never seem to stop, taking only a moment to breathe and consider the impact our actions are having on the world.

Perhaps the simple lifestyle calendar can help us in two ways. First, it can reduce the fear that lifestyle changes will lead to boredom. People are finding that they have turned themselves addicted to the Internet, texting, and shopping, which many times leaves them unfulfilled. The calendar suggests creative activities that can satisfy the human spirit: “Explore the beauty of Autumn.” “Dig your hands dirty.” “Celebrate the use of herbs and all things herbal.”

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BEATIFICATION OF POPE JOHN PAUL II — An Italian journalist reported Jan. 4 that the process of approving a miracle in the sainthood cause of Pope John Paul II is so far along that the late pontiff could be beatified this year. See p. 17. He is pictured during a pastoral visit to Abuja, Nigeria, on March 1998. (CNS file photo from L’Osservatore Romano)

Ancient practice seen as way for modern Catholics to get close to Jesus

By Beth Griffin

Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) — “Lectio divina,” an ancient scriptural meditative practice, is an ideal way for contemporary Catho-

lics to unplug from worldly distractions and establish holy intimacy, permanent friendship and fruitful companionship with Jesus Christ, according to Trappist Brother Simonis of the Abbey of Our Lady of the Annunciation in Maryland.

Brother Leiva, a Scripture scholar and monk at St. Joseph’s Abbey in Spencer, Mass., and a member of the Trappists, said that Scripture and prayer are “the key to entering into oneself.”

He called “lectio divina” a tool to “make our lives themselves a living exegesis of the Word.”

Brother Leiva told Catholic News Service that “lectio divina” is “a Catholic way to decompensate and pray at the same time. For whatever reason you practice it, it requires you to slow down and unplug yourself. It’s healthy and it’s very adaptable.”

Paraphrasing St. Bernard, the Trappist said, “Stay at home, you may receive an important visitor.” “Lectio divina” is coming home to oneself.”

Marie Paredes, presidential liaison to the American Bible Society’s Catholic ministries, said the “lectio divina” initia-

tive in the Bible means “You have to read the Bible, you have to study the Bible, and you have to understand the Bible. You have to study the Bible for yourself. You have to make a commitment to study the Bible for yourself. You have to make a commitment to read the Bible for yourself. You have to make a commitment to pray the Bible for yourself.”

And Brother Leiva added that “lectio divina” is a “tool to make our lives themselves a living exegesis of the Word.”

The contribution of Christians to society in general is so significant that civil authorities should realize that social and other prayers for life. The novena will conclude on Saturday, January 22, at 7:00 p.m. with a special Private Procession of the Blessed Sacrament from Sacred Heart Church to the Lavaca County Courthouse and back to the Church for Benediction. January 22 marks the 38th anniversary of the infamous Supreme Court decision Roe v. Wade, which legalized the sin of abortion in the United States. Let us unite to pray for an end to abortion! Please call Father Tommy Chen, Director of Pro Life Concerns for the diocese, if you have any questions.

Pope Benedict XVI's Intentions

January 2011

General Intention: That the riches of creation be preserved, valued and made available to all, as a precious gift from God to mankind.

Missionary Intention: That Christians may achieve full unity, bear witness of the universal fatherhood of God to the entire human race.

Pope Benedict XVI calls for defense of religion in public life, praises Italy

By Sarah Delaney

Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Bene-

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dom and its expression in contemporary societies where religion is sometimes shut out completely from public life.

He also praised Italy for defending the right to hang crucifixes in public schools before a European Court of Human Rights ruling.

Speaking Dec. 17 to Francesco Maria Greco, Italy’s new ambassador to the Vati-

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ity that governments have in safeguarding religious expression.

“The state is called to protect not only the rights of believers in their freedom of conscience and religion, but also the legitimate role of religion and religious communities in the public sphere,” he said.

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Pope Benedict XVI calls on people to pray for peace in the Middle East. (Catholic News Service)
new death sentences by county from 2007 to 2010 and from 1976 to 2010. Clicking on the graph displays the total number of sentences, the number executed, the number awaiting execution, and the number reentered. See below for links to each map.

The number of executions also dropped in 2010. The State of Texas executed 17 people in 2010 compared to 22 in 2009. The state remains the nation’s leading executioner, accounting for approximately 37% of executions in 2010. The number of executions in Texas this year represents a smaller percentage of the national total than it has in recent years, however.

“Texas – along with the rest of the nation – is moving away from the death penalty,” said Kristin Houlé, executive director of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. “The system is broken beyond repair, and the continued decline in executions shows that juries and prosecutors in Texas are seeking other ways to address violent crime.”

Concerns about wrongful convictions and efforts to correct miscarriages of justice dominated headlines this year. On October 27, 2010, Anthony Graves walked out of the Burleson County Jail after spending 18 years in prison – including 12 years on death row – for a crime he did not commit. Prosecutors dropped all charges against Graves and declared him innocent after conducting their own investigation into the case. His conviction was overturned after the testimony of Robert Carter, who was convicted and executed for the same crime 10 years before and who retracted several times, including from the gurney. Anthony Graves is the 12th person in Texas to be wrongfully convicted and removed from death row and the 8th person released this year.

The ongoing inquiry into the case of Cameron Todd Willingham also underlines the fallibility of convictions. Testimony witnesses testifying in Fort Worth were executed in 2004 for setting a fire to his Corsicana home in 1991 that killed his three young daughters. The Texas Forensic Science Commission issued an日正式ized “flaw” in the science used to convict him. In January it will hold a special meeting with some of the fire experts who have examined the case since the time of conviction and concluded that there is no evidence to support the finding of arson.

In another case of "flawed" science, recent DNA testing of evidence that was used to convict and execute Claude Jones 10 years ago this month revealed that the strand of hair belonged to the victim, not Joseph Edwards, a forensic expert testifying during his 1990 trial. While the DNA results do exonerate Jones, they raise serious questions about the reliability of the system.

In yet another case, concerns about wrongful convictions were raised when Texas officials released key pieces of evidence gathered at the time of conviction and concluded that there is no evidence to support the finding of arson.

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The execution of Stacy Johnson on October 21st, 2010, showed that the community did not support Planned Parenthood’s agenda. By getting the organization out of the Corpus Christi Independent School District, it cut off its access to children. South Texas STOPP repeatedly warned the community that Planned Parenthood is in the abortion business.

"After almost three years of prayer and activism by South Texas STOPP, the national Planned Parenthood organization insisted that the local affiliate must commit surgery to obtaining contraceptives. Rather than continue its relationship with Planned Parenthood and fulfill the warnings of South Texas STOPP, they cut off its access to children. South Texas STOPP in its heroic efforts. Though we pray to God for this victory and commend South Texas STOPP in its heroic efforts, we must be aware that this is a statement from Jim Sedlak, vice president of the Texas Coalition to Abolish the Death Penalty. "The system is broken beyond repair, and the continued decline in executions shows that juries and prosecutors in Texas are seeking other ways to address violent crime."

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VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI, the 2011 calendar already holds a full slate of events, according to an official of the Vatican Secretariat of State.

Pope Benedict XVI still would have to sign a penal nuncio, or ambassador, to a military diocese, it permits former Anglicans to retain much of the patrimony

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — For Pope Benedict XVI, the 2011 calendar already holds a full slate of events, meetings and foreign trips. What’s not on the calendar — at least so far — is a special “year of” or “a year for.” In 2008-2009, the pope declared a Year of St. Paul. He designated a Year of St. John Paul II. And, finally, Pope Benedict.

Holy See is interested and well-informed about our traditions, the WikiLeaks cables have described the Holy See as a big superpower.

The WikiLeaks cables often reveal U.S. diplomats as trying very hard to figure out the Vatican, as they deal with an institution that is both a sovereign state and the center of a global religion. One “confidential” cable said: “Occasionally, there are frank assessments of differences, as in a U.S. Embassy memo from July 2001, which forecast continued problems with the Vatican over Israeli, the death penalty and Iraq.

The ‘routine’ year: Pope’s 2011 calendar holds full slate of events

A ‘routine’ year: Pope’s 2011 calendar holds full slate of events

The WikiLeaks cables have described Vatican diplomats as generally well-informed and as influential lobbyists behind the scenes. What’s amazing is that the Vatican accomplishes all this with a relatively tiny diplomatic corps — few hundred bishops and priests who were hand-picked and trained at a little-known diplomatic academy in downtown Rome.

At the same time, a nuncio acts not only as the pope’s representative to heads of state to schoolchildren.

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A Moving Experience

Pope signs new measures to guarantee financial transparency in Vatican

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Vatican emerges from WikiLeaks as a key player on global scene

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New Release: Mercy Without Borders

Mercy Without Borders – The Catholic Worker and Immigration Mark and Louise Zwick 978-0-8091-4689-5 288 pages 6X9 Paperback $19.95 / November 2010

The lives of Mark and Louise Zwick were turned around by their experience in El Salvador, where they had traveled with their young children. As the war and repression began, the witness of Archbishop Oscar Romero in responding to violence suffered by the people and the presence of the people themselves saved them from despair.

Arriving back in the United States, the Zwicks were faced with a central American refugee pouring into the busy streets of Houston. Inspired by Dorothy Day and the mysterious presence of the Lord in the poor, they opened a Catholic Worker House of Hospitality for homeless refugees. They named the house for Juan Diego, to whom Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared. They were not seeking arrest (although this was a real possibility), but understood their work as doing the Works of Mercy, even if this meant resistance to unjust structures caring eventually for thousands of undocumented immigrants, including the sick and wounded.

In the Catholic Worker tradition, the Zwicks publish a newspaper, the Houston Catholic Worker, where they share the stories of immigrants, the inspiration of Dorothy Day and Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the political and economic forces, which drive people to immigrate. See Texas Bishops Statement on Immigration, p. 2.

Pope deplores deadly attacks on Christian churches

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI deplored a series of deadly attacks against Christian churches and other targets around the world at Christmas time. The pope appealed for peace Dec. 26 after bombs went off in churches in the Philippines and Nigeria, killing or wounding several worshipers. In Pakistan, a suicide bombing against a World Food Program depot left at least 40 dead. "At this time of holy Christmas, the desire and the plea for peace have become even more intense. But our world continues to be marked by violence, especially against the disciples of Christ," the pope said at his noon blessing at the Vatican. The pope appealed for peace during Christmas Eve worship left at six people dead, including a Baptist pastor. Authorities said they suspected an Islamist sect in the violence. "The earth has also been stained with blood in other parts of the world, like Pakistan," the pope said. "I wish to express my heartfelt condolences for the victims of this absurd violence. Once again I make an appeal to abandon the path of hatred in order to find peaceful solutions to conflicts and bring security and tranquility to these dear populations," he said. Since then, 25 Orthodox Christians were killed following Liturgy Jan. 1 in Alexandria, Egypt.

Church’s peace-building to continue after Southern Sudan referendum

JUBA, Southern Sudan (CNS) — As Southern Sudan approaches a historic vote on independence in January, church leaders are recommending themselves to continuing their work of building peace. Yet dealing with internal conflicts in what may become Africa’s newest country could prove just as challenging as its work during decades of civil war with the country’s North. “Whatever happens after the referendum on Jan. 9, it’s not going to be easy, even if we’re going to separate tomorrow, we’ve got to work for our land to be free of the violence that has become our trademark,” said Father John Oryem, coordinator of the justice and peace commission of the Diocese of El Obeid. As the referendum approaches, Sudan’s churches are ramping up efforts at peace-building & the work of resolving conflicts without violence while laying the foundations for sustainable peace.

Canadian Catholics boost sponsorship of Iraqi Christian refugees

TORONTO (CNS) — Spurred by the exodus of Iraqi Christians, the Toronto Archdiocese doubled the number of Iraqi refugee families it sponsored in 2010 to 190. The boom in the resettlement of Iraqis was fueled by 40 new refugee sponsorship committees or initiatives aimed at rescuing Christians fleeing the violence-torn coun- try. The archdiocese’s Office for Refugees is handling the cases of about 250 refugees from around the world. The Canadian response to the plight of Iraqi Christian refugees has been the most significant development in Canada’s refugee resettlement system since faith groups pushed the government to create a private sponsor- ship system 30 years ago in response to the thousands of Vietnamese fleeing by boat from their homeland, according to Martin Mark, executive director of the refugee office. To make the sponsorship system more responsive, the archdiocese has launched a special fund that will help parish offices organize fundraising efforts and manage expenses for refugee resettlement. Sponsoring a refugee family can cost as much as $40,000.

Refugee sponsorship will not solve the problems of Middle Eastern Christians terrorized by militias and struggling under oppressive regimes, Toronto Archbishop Thomas Collins said after reading a five- minute statement during the Synod of Bishops for the Middle East at the Vatican in October. While it is important to provide a solution to Christians who can’t return home to Iraq, it is just as important that Canadian Catholics support Christian communities in the Middle East, the archbishop said.
**Victoria—** Shiner–

**Natural Family Planning—** The Beginning Experience—

11th Annual Chili Cook-Off Fundraiser will be held Saturday, Jan. 15, at the community center from 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. A variety of chili, rice and beans will be served for $1.50 per pint. A silent auction and games for all ages and more. For more information, please contact Rev. Gabriel P. Cohen at (979) 286-3349.

**ACTMissions** – In an ongoing projects on ACTS retreats, please go to ACTMS Web site at www.actmissions.org. For more information about the ACTS community movement in the El Campo Diocese, please contact ACTMS at (361) 578-3335.

**Pilgrimages, Times, etc.**

In Victoria—Where Texas History Region will be open to the public through January 29. During the hours: Tuesday – Sunday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. At the Museum of the Coastal Bend, located on the campus of The Victoria College, at the corner of College Ave. and Calvert St. Please visit www.museumofthecoastalbend.org for more information. Admission is $5.00 for adults, $2.50 for senior citizens, and $2 for students ages four through 11th grade. Admission is free for museum members, faculty, staff and students of The Victoria College and the City of Houston—Victoria, for children under 4 years of age.

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**January is National Blood Donor Month**

SAN ANTONIO—January is National Blood Donor Month and The Catholic Lighthouse encourages others to follow in their footsteps. When asked to write an essay for his company newsletter about why he chooses to donate blood, Moreno’s answer was simple: “I want to help people.”

“That answer seemed too simple,” Moreno wrote. “However, the more I thought about it, I realized, what other reason is there to donate blood, but to help people?”

Since his first donation in 1984 with the South Texas Blood & Tissue Center (STBTC), he has donated more than 200 units of blood. His message to others is, “Blood donation can save up to three lives and it only takes one hour to donate. All presenting donors in January will earn points towards Wellness and Fitness Program. Be part of a quarterly drawing for a $3,000 shopping spree at BJ’s.”

**In Victoria:**

- **Bloomington:**
  - **Friday, Jan. 21:** From 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
  - **Monday, Jan. 31:** From 12:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
  - **Tuesday, Feb. 1:** From 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

- **Victoria:**
  - **Saturday, Jan. 22:** From 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

- **East Victoria:**
  - **Sunday, Jan. 16:** From 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

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**Donate at a blood drive near you.**

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**Ongoing Events**

**Church in Latin America - Jan. 23**

**Add to Church in Europe (FR) - March 9**

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**Thirst!—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. Mark your calendars now for next month. Mass is followed by prayer and songs. Free meditation, healing prayers, prayer offerings, etc. Available. Please come; bring your family and friends for a special healing touch of the Lord!**

For more information, please contact Rev. Gabriel P. Cohen at (979) 286-3349.

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**PINEGROVE VICTORIA**

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**Jesuit Center**

M-F: 9:30 a.m. – 5:30 p.m.  •  Sat: 9:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.
A Moving Experience of People Struggling in the Midst of Ruin and Poverty: Haiti — One Year Later

By Rev. Msgr. Jim Henke, a recently retired priest of the Archdiocese of San Antonio

Have you heard the expression, “God writes straight with crooked lines”? I suppose one way of interpreting that is to say that we never know for sure what God’s plans are for us. Haiti was no where in my mind as a place I would be visiting. However, shortly before I retired from parish ministry in June, I decided to become involved with Catholic Relief Services as a Global Fellow. That is the title CRS gives to those who go to parishes around the country preaching about the work of CRS. Early concern and questions of how many are forced by their situation to struggle just survive while we are blessed with abundance. They do not get a salary for what they do. Tips are welcome help or not and their pleading for a trip if they even touched your luggage was, I must admit, annoying. However, when I realized that this was their source of income I am ashamed of my greed. They are only income.

The ride to CRS headquarters was an experience in maneuvering through traffic with cars and trucks and buses and people all trying to make their way. This experience was multiplied many times during our stay. Sometimes the courtesy of drivers to one another was evident. At other times it was evident that the bravest and most assertive driver to make your way in and out and around the mass of vehicles and people. One of our drivers said, “To drive to more than 215,000 people have been registered as separated or unaccompanied minors in the time since the earthquake. CRS has provided emergency shelter materials to more than 22,000 families have received transitional shelters. The transitional shelters are basically plywood walls with a roof and a floor. Timbers and are being built on the hillside that is reached by a trail hardly wide enough for two people to walk. These areas are moving into the tent cities because of the fact that some people from outlying areas are moving into the tent cities because of the services provided there. Some temporary homes have been built. These are basically plywood walls with a tin roof. They see 2,500 or more patients in a week and deliver 15 to 20 babies each week. The effort to provide clean water to these areas is an ongoing effort. The extent of the poverty and need for services is made more evident by the fact that some people from outlying areas are moving into the tent cities because of the services provided there.

One of the places that really touched me was Hope Village, or in Creole, Vilaj Espwa, which is in the city of Les Cayes. There, an Oblate priest has founded an orphanage and school, which also provides vocational training. About 600 kids live there. The school goes from kindergarten through high school and has over 2,200 children enrolled. Three thousand five hundred meals are prepared every day over coal fires. A large canteena is under construction. Soon the meals will be prepared there and the children and workers will be able to eat at tables under a roof instead of sitting on the ground. Several hundred of the children there have been brought up by their families because they cannot provide the care and education for them. Father James, with whom we shared a meal, talked about situations in which such children are given to individu- als or couples who are able to provide for them and then they often become slaves to the ones who have taken them. That is why Hope Village takes them in to provide a real, caring home for them.

There are other experiences that I could share from this trip. I trust that the information above will bring us that there are more than one thing we can appreciate at least two things. One is how abundantly blessed we are even though we have done very little, if anything, to deserve such blessings. How did it happen that I was born here rather than in Haiti of one of those poor, struggling families? The second

Haiti, One Year after the Quake

Thanks to contributions, over the past year CRS and church partner Caritas Haiti have

- Provided food to nearly 900,000 people and continue to provide monthly food rations to more than 100,000 children in more than 370 schools, orphanages and child-care centers
- Provided emergency shelter materials to more than 215,000 people
- Performed over 974 emergency operations and conducted 640 outpatient consultations through on-going support to St. Francis de Sales Hospital
- Installed over 600 latrines, wash stations, portable water tanks and inflatables waterchildren in Port-au-Prince and surrounding area
- Registered 339 separated or unaccompanied children for family tracing and reunification services, and currently providing them with interim care and support
- Provided 6,000 families with livelihood support through vouchers that allow them to choose the most appropriate type of seeds and fertilizers – an approach that also benefits local seed suppliers and the local economy
- Created short-term employment through its Cash-For-Work program that has benefitted more than 10,000 people through work projects that provide income to vulnerable people and aid communities through improved infrastructure
- Provided Haitians with soap, water purification tablets and hygiene guidance to counter the cholera outbreak. So far, more than 22,000 families have received soap from CRS
- Provided some 2,100 transitional shelters and is building another 120 to 150 every week. The transitional shelters are constructed of tarps and are built in Port-au-Prince. All of us at CRS are proud of our achievements so far, but we are well aware that to build back a better Haiti, a Haiti that is much stronger and better able to face future disaster, our work has just started. We continue to work together with the Haitian people and the local Catholic Church. Thank you for your support and prayers.

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. The agency provides assistance to people in more than 100 countries and territories based on need, regardless of race, national- ity or creed. For more information, please make room for the new home the rubble had to be cut out in buckets. Then the people were able to build these homes up the little trails piece by piece. They were rightly very proud of their accomplishments.

Eight Sisters of Charity, one is a Haitian doctor, have a convent and staff a hospital. Their hospital has 250 beds. About twenty-five patients on very simple cots are in each ward. And here, if we have to be in a hospital, we get concerned about having to share a hospital room with another patient. It was almost unbelievable to be able to eat at tables under a roof instead of sitting on the ground. Several hundred of the children there have been brought up by their families because they cannot provide the care and education for them. Father James, with whom we shared a meal, talked about situations in which such children are given to individuals or couples who are able to provide for them and then they often become slaves to the ones who have taken them. That is why Hope Village takes them in to provide a real, caring home for them.

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