Sister Geraldine Pavlik, IWBS celebrates her retirement with her family members, brother Leo and his wife, Kathy, and brother Leroy and his wife, Nancy. They stand before the altar and tabernacle of Holy Cross Church in Bay City where she has served the parish community and school for the past 20 years. (inset/left) Bay City Mayor Richard Knapik proclaimed May 17, 2009, as “Sister Geraldine Day” in honor of her retirement after 20 years of service as teacher and principal of Holy Cross Catholic School. He then presented her with the “Key to the City,” which Sister Geraldine holds.

Bay City mayor proclaims May 17, 2009, as “Sister Geraldine Day”

By Terri Busha

BAY CITY—It was a special day for Sister Geraldine Pavlik, IWBS, but little did she know it would be proclaimed “Sister Geraldine Day” and that she’d be given the “Key to the City.” The day was off to a great start as Sister Geraldine got ready to attend the 10 a.m. Mass at Holy Cross Parish in Bay City on Sunday, May 17. It felt special from the beginning as she attended Mass with her family visiting from Weimar, Leo and Kathy Pavlik and Leroy and Nancy Pavlik. She was also accompanied by 19 Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament order from Victoria. The liturgy was special as the Gospel reading was taken from John 15:9-17, “…This is my commandment: love one another as I love you…” And that was exactly what our celebration was about that day, love, the love that Sister Geraldine has shared with so many throughout the 20 years she has been at Holy Cross School. Sister Geraldine re-dedicated her life to Christ as she renewed her vows before the congregation during Mass. One of Sister Geraldine’s favorite songs is “Bloom Where You Are Planted,” and the choir delighted her by singing it especially for her during Communion.

After Mass everyone was invited to continue the celebration by joining Sister Geraldine at the Knights of Columbus Hall for a covered dish dinner. The KC hall was packed and Sister Geraldine was greeted by so many friends. During the meal, Sister was entertained by the students of Holy Cross dancing to “Ho Down, Throw Down” under the direction of the P.E. teacher, Jade Crouch.

After the meal, seminarian Sean Breeden, a former student of Holy Cross and recent graduate of Franciscan University, welcomed everyone to the celebration and introduced one of the special guests present for the celebration, Bay City Mayor Richard Knapik. He read a proclamation from the Office of the Mayor. “Sister Geraldine has with enthusiasm and effectiveness, made an excellent and constructive contribution to our community by serving in the capacity of teacher and principal for Holy Cross School; and she has strengthened Holy Cross School and enhanced its reputation locally through the priesthood.

See Bay City mayor proclamats, p. 3

BY TIM DRAKE, Register
Senior Writer

April 12-18, 2009 Issue / Reprinted with permission of the National Catholic Register

ROME — Holy Thursday is a day dedicated to the priesthood. How about a whole year? Hoping to reinvigorate the priesthood, Pope Benedict XVI announced a Jubilee Year of the Priest beginning June 19, 2009.

During a March 16 plenary assembly with members of the Congregation for the Clergy, the Pope called for the event to mark the 150th anniversary of the death of St. John Vianney, the Cure of Ars, and for the “spiritual perfection” of the Church’s priests.

St. John Vianney died on Aug. 4, 1859. “The missionary dimension of a priest arises from his sacramental configuration to Christ the head,” said the Pope, highlighting the “indispensable struggle for moral perfection which must dwell in every truly priestly heart.”

“The ecclesial, communional, hierarchical and doctrinal dimension is absolutely indispensable for any authentic mission, and this alone guarantees its spiritual effectiveness,” said Pope Benedict, adding that priests must be “present, identifiable and recognizable — for their judgment of faith, personal virtues and charity in the fields of culture and of charity, which have always been at the heart of the Church’s mission.”

“The announcement was a great surprise,” admitted Father Jim Steffes, executive director of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations. Father Steffes hopes the year will help renew the priesthood.

Father Steffes says that just as the identity of Christ, the High Priest, was in his relationship with God the Father, “that, too, is where we find our identity as priests — in relationship with God.”

But too often priests’ identity is wrapped up in the things that they do. “Pastoral ministry and all that we need to be responsible for … that isn’t what our identity is,” he said. “We need to know who we are so that we can bring that to those entrusted to us. The Year of the Priest gives us a wonderful opportunity.”

Pope Benedict highlighted this dimension of the priesthood, as well. “The centrality of Christ leads to a correct valuation of priestly ministry, without which there would be no Eucharist, no mission, not even the Church,” said the Pope. “It is necessary then, to ensure that ‘new structures’ or pastoral organizations are not planned for a time in which it will be possible to ‘do without’ ordained ministry, on the basis of an erroneous interpretation of the promotion of the laity, because this would lay the foundations for a further dilution in priestly ministry, and any supposed ‘solutions’ would, in fact, dramatically coincide with the real causes of the problems currently affecting the ministry.”

Said Father John Cihak, a former professor of theology at Mount St. Angel Seminary who has recently been assigned to the Vatican’s Congregation for Bishops, “The clergy and the laity are indispensable in the body of Christ. They complement one another as a man and woman do in marriage. There is a differentiation. The body of Christ has those who represent Christ the head. That’s about service and self-giving. When we confuse clergy and laity with a false sense of equality, that’s to the detriment of the whole body.”

To be continued in the July issue of The Catholic Lighthouse. Tim Drake is based in St. Joseph, Minnesota. To view more stories, please go to: NCRegister.com
Columbus and Cuero Catholic schools win diocesan endowment funds

By Cynthia Brewer

St. Anthony Catholic School in Columbus and St. Michael Catholic School in Cuero have each won a competitive grant from the Diocese of Victoria’s Catholic School Endowment Fund to provide funds needed to make improvements to their Catholic elementary school campuses.

The Catholic School Endowment Fund, a category within the Endowment Fund for the Catholic Diocese of Victoria in Texas, has evolved over the past few years into a highly competitive grant since the formation of a grant review committee in 2003.

St. Anthony School was notified April 28, 2009, that they had won the first place grant of $14,000, along with the additional $1,000, which every school receives for turning in their budget proposals on time. The money will be used to complete phase two of a three-phase project to install interactive Smartboards in grades 1, 2, 3 and 4.

Grades 5 – 8, as well as the computer lab, have already had Smartboards installed in their classrooms because the PTC agreed to match the grant with $12,000 regardless of whether or not the school won the grant. An additional $7,000 was donated by two local businesses, Columbus State Bank, donating $5,000, and Mikeska’s Bar-b-que donating $2,000. Therefore, phase 1 has already been completed. Phase 3 will provide Smartboard for early childhood 3-k to 5-k classrooms.

A Smartboard is a large, interactive white board that interacts with a computer; the computer image is displayed on the interactive white board, giving teachers and students complete control over any application run on the computer. Anything on the computer can be shown on the Smartboard: instructional DVD/videos, video streaming from the Internet and educational computer programs. Students and teachers can write on and erase the boards with electronic pens and erasers, solving problems on the board just as they would on a chalkboard.

“The reason for the request was to make better use of technology in the classroom, to enrich the curriculum, and to give teachers more options and ways to bring variety to their class instruction,” said Mr. John O’Leary, principal.

The school is currently seeking bids on the installations of the Smartboards for grades 1, 2, 3 and 4.

St. Michael School in Cuero received a $2,000 grant along with the additional $1,000, thus receiving $3,000 to update the school’s bathrooms with new sinks. Mrs. Judy Roeder, the school’s principal, said the sinks have been ordered and will be installed the first week in June, as soon as school is out for the summer.

The school was also hoping to replace its front doors to be equipped with panic hardware; light fixtures from 1966; floor tiles; and slated hall windows with wooden panels to provide safe “Shelter and Place” areas.

The parish and school will continue to search for grants to complete the major repairs to its 54-year-old-school. Minor repairs will be made as funds become available.

Bishop David Fellhauer, the diocese business office and the endowment fund committee want to get the word out to every Catholic in the diocese that there is an endowment fund to which they may make donations in order to assist our Catholic schools.

Bequests, charitable remainder trusts, and outright gifts of disposable income will be greatly appreciated to continue to improve the Catholic School Endowment Fund. Please contact the diocese’s finance officer, Mike Brown, at (361) 573-0828, ext. 18. See photo of Smartboard, p. 12.

Father Dan Kahlich and Principal John R. O’Leary of SAS in Columbus receive the funds to implement technological advancement at their school. Pictured, from left to right, are John E. Quary, Diocese of Victoria superintendent; Father Dan Kahlich, pastor of St. Anthony Church; Mrs. Laura Wilde, SAS PTC treasurer; John R. O’Leary, SAS principal; Mrs. Diane Matus, SAS PTC president; and Mrs. Laura Walla, SAS PTC secretary.

The following are appointed to the Diocesan Liturgical Commission effective May 27, 2009, for a period of three years:

The Rev. Tommy Chen, Shiner
Mr. Richard Scheibelhut, Victoria
Mrs. Chris Alvarez, Victoria
Mrs. Jackie Papacek, Cuero
FLATONIA—Raphael’s Refuge is most pleased to announce that Rev. Tommy Chen, parochial vicar at Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner, has joined its board of directors. He is replacing the Rev. Dean Wilhelm, vice rector at St. Mary’s Seminary, who is being reassigned to the Diocese of Austin. Father Chen was born in Taiwan and immigrated to the United States when he was five years old. His parents live in Port Lavaca. A graduate of the University of Texas in Austin with a degree in psychology, he earned a Masters of Divinity from St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston in 2008. He was ordained the following month. “He is a very good priest with special gifts with speech and music,” fellow Board member, Dr. Tim Wagner, stated. “He has great insight into human nature and so should be of assistance to grieving families.”

Raphael’s Refuge is located about two miles west of Flatonia, at 2715 Highway 90 West. The Monument to the Innocents, a memorial for babies who have died from miscarriage, abortion, stillbirth, or in infancy, is opened for visitors during the year, seven days a week. For more information, contact Midge Elam at 361-258-1514 (cell), 361-865-3021 (home), or e-mail raphael@awesome.net; or go to www.raphaelsrefuge.org

Bay City mayor proclaims May 17, 2009, as “Sister Geraldine Day”

Continued from p. 1

her leadership, vision, and integrity; and through all these various endeavors, she has won the highest regard of all her associates and the admiration of citizens throughout the community...”. He then proclaimed May 17, 2009, as “Sister Geraldine Day” and presented her with the “Key to the City.”

Now that it was “officially” her day, it was time for members from the parish organizations to express their thanks to Sister. Father Casey shared with the friends and family gathered there that the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament have been serving the school for 68 years and that has been a true blessing for our community. He said, “There is no way we could ever thank the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament for all they have done over the past 68 years for Holy Cross School. For the past 20 years Sister Geraldine has made Holy Cross School her home.” He thanked Sister for her countless hours of serving the school, the students and their families and presented her with a card and a monetary gift. Regent Jeanette Pustka, CDA Court Regency Nursing Center to celebrate Mass for the Catholic faithful. Although he was Father Hughes had continued his services to the Catholic residents there. His excel lenct performances were well received and contributed to the Catholic community in the area.

Rev. Royce William Hughes

SCHULENBURG—Rev. Royce William Hughes, retired Catholic priest of Schulenburg, died Friday, May 1, 2009, at St. Mark’s Medical Center in La Grange. He was 85 years of age.

In memory of Father Hughes, a rosary was recited on Tuesday, May 5, at St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church in Schulenbury.

Funeral Mass was celebrated on Wednesday, May 6, at St. Rose Church. Burial followed next to the graves of his parents at St. Michael’s Catholic Cemetery in Weimar.

Father Hughes was born June 11, 1924, in Hallettsville to William and Sophie Mark Hughes. He was baptized at Sacred Heart Church in Hallettsville.

When the family moved to Schulenbury some years later, he attended St. Rose Catholic School and Schulenburg Public School.

He went to high school at St. John’s Seminary in San Antonio. During 1944-46, he served in the U.S. Navy. After the war, he studied at St. Edward’s University in Austin and graduated in 1950.

Father Hughes continued his education at Rice University in Houston and received his Masters Degree from Notre Dame University. He obtained his Doctoral Degree from the University of St. Thomas and ordained a priest in Rome, Italy, on March 14, 1964, for the (now) Archdiocese of Galveston Houston.

Father Hughes retired in 1999, and went to live in his parents’ home in Schulenbury.

Even nearing the time of his death, Father Hughes had continued his services to the Catholic faithful. Although he was in ill health, he came to the Schulenburg Regency Nursing Center to celebrate Mass for the Catholic residents there. His excellent performances reflected the deep devotion of his many years of teaching and practicing the Catholic faith.

WINNERS ANNOUNCED—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Our Lady of the Gulf No. 2267 in Port Lavaca celebrated its 2009 Education Contest winners. Winners were Art Div. 1: 1st, Katherine Dent; 2nd, Sarah Armstrong; 3rd, Cora Mabry; Art Div. 2: 1st, Bianca Munoz; 2nd, Hannah Rose; 3rd, Harley DeSoto; Poetry Div. 2: 1st, Ashley Metz and 2nd Bianca Munoz; Essay Div. 1: 1st, Cory Mabry; 2nd, John-Michael Sadlier; 3rd Katherine Dent; Essay Div. 2: 1st, Mason Elgin; 2nd, Allison Camacho; 3rd, Natalee Lyons; 1st Photograph Div. 1: 1st Hannah Rose and 2nd Kaylyn King. First place winners advanced to state competition. Cory Mabry, sixth from the left, first place winner in Essay Div. 1, won second place in state. His essay was on the love he has for his grandfather, Frank Mabry.
Seminary Burses

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

As of May 28, 2009

— General Seminary Burse
  Previously reported  $95,029.00
  In memory of Wallace Bianchi by
  MM Bob Bochat  50.00
  In memory of Charlie J. Novosad by
  Cedar Grove Lutheran Church  20.00
  Total  $95,099.00

— Rev. John C. Bily Seminary Burse
  Previously reported  $7,619.00
  In memory of Kenneth Hollay by
  Weimar Branch Catholic Life  25.00
  Total  $7,644.00

— Catholic Daughters of America Our Lady Queen of Peace Council #1374
  Previously reported  $4,007.72
  In honor of Catherine Drapela by
  CDA #1374  100.00
  In memory of Lucille Kunisch by
  CDA #1374  100.00
  Total  $4,207.72

— Knights of Columbus Victoria Council #1329 Seminary Burse #3
  Previously reported  $8,607.50
  In memory of William P. John by
  K of C #1329  100.00
  Total  $8,707.50

— Rev. John C. Peters Seminary Burse #4
  Previously reported  $7,274.00
  In honor of Angela Hermes’ 85th birthday by
  Fr. John Peters  25.00
  Total  $7,294.00

— Josephat R. Janak Seminary Burse #2
  Previously reported  $1,498.77
  In honor of Rev. Gary Janak’s 21st anniversary of ordination by:
  Rose Marie Janak & Family  20.00
  Margaret Kacza  20.00
  The Frank Fikac Family  20.00
  Total  $1,558.77

— Rev. Theophil Okrublik & Rev. Vincent Verdarame Seminary Burse
  Previously reported  $2,250.00
  In memory of Georgia Haun by
  Agnes & Clarissa Winans  100.00
  Total  $2,350.00

— Rev. Joseph A. Koebel Seminary Burse
  Previously reported  $6,308.00
  In memory of Margaret Bunge by
  Mrs. Curtis Lundquist  10.00
  Total  $6,318.00

— St. Mary’s Church – Praha Seminary Burse
  Previously reported  $7,370.00
  In honor of Rev. Bartsch’s 60th anniversary of Ordination by Georgia Cerny  25.00
  In honor of Rev. Bartsch’s 60th anniversary of ordination by a friend  100.00
  Total  $7,495.00

— Rev. Celestino Say Seminary Burse (Catholic Life Inc.)
  Previously reported  $1,525.00
  In memory of Wallace Bianchi by:
  Glynda Courtney  25.00
  Steve & Veronica Serrill, Michael Kenrek, Pat & Steve Tillman, Patrick & Jeanne Kenrek
  Catherine Mach and Edloth Kenrek  120.00
  Mary A. Bianchi  150.00
  James, Madeline, Sarah and Wes Dodson  100.00
  Margaret Rosenquest  25.00
  Total  $1,945.00

— Rev. Charles Kram Seminary Burse
  Previously reported  $2,685.00
  In honor of Rev. Edward Bartsch’s 60th anniversary of ordination by
  Gerald & Celine Kalina  25.00
  Total  $2,710.00

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

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

By Sister Mary Ann Walsh, RSM
Director of Media Relations, USCCB

DENVER (CNS) — While the last 40 years have seen an overall drop in the numbers of women entering religious life, a new book released by the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious says orders that are more visibly countercultural seem to be flourishing. The council represents the superiors of more than 10 religious communities of sisters whose members wear an identifiable religious habit.

A canonically approved organization founded in 1992 to promote religious life in the United States, the council notes that the average age of its member communities’ sisters is under 35. The book, titled “The Foundations of Religious Life: Revisiting the Vision” and published by Ave Maria Press, is a project of the council. It explores why the orders represented by the council are gaining numbers and how they are living out the vision of consecrated life described by the Second Vatican Council.

The book, released May 16, consists of essays written by six religious sisters representing five orders. The topics they address are: religious consecration, the spousal bond, the threefold response to vows, communion in community, and mission.

Book says young women attracted to orders whose members wear habits

Come and See

The Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters are hosting a “Come and See” Visit for single Catholic women (high school graduates through 50 years of age) on June 19-20, 2009, at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria, Texas. If you are interested, visit their Web site at www.iwbsvictoria.org or call (361) 575-7111 or e-mail iwbsvoc@yahoo.com for more details.

Broken Vows

By Sister Mary Ann Walsh, RSM
Director of Media Relations, USCCB

Alas, he may not want to be the poster boy, but he seems to have forsaken the first rule in tamping this down: Stay off the air.

The media love a sex or hypocrisy story, and when both converge in the tale of the unfaithful padre, the media know no bounds. Celibacy becomes a joke, rather than something to be respected; an impossibility, despite millions – likely more – who have lived celibate lives for centuries.

Yet whatever you think about celibacy, the real story here is indelibility, not being true to a sacred vow. This fracture of fidelity has an impact on more than the pair involved.

Fractured fidelity undermines not just a couple, but their wider community.

John Edwards did not just hurt his wife, but also his family, friends and people who admired him. He cast a shadow over his work for the poor, even though those efforts are much praised by his wife in her book and media jaunt.

Father Cutiè has hurt people too, including the crowds surrounding the parish he led so well. They’re holding up well, as they mill about with media outside the church. Yet one wonders about the couples he prepared for their lifetime commitment in marriage, the children he taught to never tell a lie, the ailing parishioners he assured of their place in heaven.

The effect of indelibility is profound.

Elizabeth Edwards says it well in her book when she writes, “I am a different person now. I was not wounded, not afraid, not uncertain before and now I always will be.”

One wishes the Edwardses and Father Cutiè well in the wake of their foibles and failings. There’s nothing for political or church enemies to laugh at here. Only something to regret – the acute pain that John, Elizabeth and Father Alberto experienced in their own lives, and the dull, lasting pain evoked in the communities around them.

No one is an island. Fractured fidelity pains us all!
Elect a Young Adult for CCHD Leadership Award

WASHINGTON — The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has announced an initiative to recognize young adults for their efforts to address the root causes of poverty and injustice. CCHD is the domestic anti-poverty social justice program of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). The Cardinal Bernardin New Leadership Award is given to a young adult age 18-30 who has demonstrated leadership against the causes of poverty and injustice in the U.S. The award aims to promote young people as leaders, honor their work in their parishes/organizations and strengthen the Catholic community’s participation in CCHD’s anti-poverty mission. Nominations may be submitted by a pastor, university faculty or staff, a local CCHD diocesan director, a mentor or a colleague. The deadline for nominations is July 31. The award is presented at a reception at the November meeting of the U.S. bishops. For more information about the award, including profiles of past winners, visit http://www.usccb.org/cchd/youth.shtml#cardinal.

Come and See Week

FERDINAND, In. — The Sisters of St. Benedict of Ferdinand, Indiana would like to invite single Catholic women 18-40 who have ever considered being a nun, to live the life with us for a week-long opportunity to get an inside view of monastic life and discernment, as well as an in-depth look at our life. Those who come live the life with us for a period of one week, or longer with the permission of the vocation director. For more information on spending a week or longer as a monastic observer, as well as permission to register online, contact Sis Macbeth’s Direct Line at 812-361-552-6140 or e-mail vocation@thedome.org.

Our Lady of the Gulf 10th Annual Golf Outing

Hole Sponsorships
$200

Call: 361-552-6140

To help us properly plan for this event, please contact Mike Elgin via email at mkeledin123@gmail.com or contact the church office at 552-6140 before July 10th.

Earthly ambition, divine perspective: how to stay on track

I do not understand Kate Gosselin. I cannot comprehend how marital storms and rumored infidelity convinced the reality star and mother of eight (of "Jon & Kate Plus 8") it’s a good time to launch a media campaign, one that results in the yellow, capitalized headline “We might split up.”

How could thinking out loud about divorce (to People magazine, no less) possibly reduce her odds of it?

Kate’s is one of several media blitzes that has left me scratching my head. I don’t understand, for example, how bad-mouthing the Palin camp could help Levi Johnston realize what he insists is his most urgent goal: greater access to his baby boy. (And, he later admitted, he’s also fishing for modeling gigs.)

These ill-advised campaigns reek of ambition — the blind, ravenous kind Shakespeare wrote about.

As a teen I was fascinated by Macbeth’s demise. “I have no spur to prick the sides of my intent,” he professed, “but only /uxtaposition of the Catholic Rite of Marriage, said Father Rick Hilgarter, associate director of the U.S. Bishop’s Secretariat for Divine Worship. “The bride and the groom enter freely and equally into marriage, and the entrance procession should reflect that,” he said. Father Hilgarter also recommended that the couple memorialize their marriage vows rather than repeat them after the priest for a more meaningful and memorable occasion. He offered the suggestions in “Ten Things to Consider for Planning the Celebration of Your Marriage in the Catholic Church,” a resource posted on the Web site of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at http://foryour-marriage.org, then type “Ten Tips” in the search area, or go to the Family Life site of www.victoriadiocese.org.

For a sneak peek, here is tip #7. Procession: Here comes the bride… and the groom! The bride and the groom enter freely and equally into marriage, and the entrance procession should reflect that. The Rite of Marriage suggests that the liturgical ministers (priest, deacon, reader, servers) lead the procession, followed by the bride and bridgroom, each escorted by “at least their parents and the witnesses.” Perhaps the groom first, led by his attendants and escorted by his parents, followed by the bride, led by her attendants and escorted by her parents.

Earthly ambition, divine perspective:

In "Ten Things to Consider for Planning the Celebration of Your Marriage in the Catholic Church," a resource posted on the Web site of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops at http://foryour-marriage.org, Father Rick Hilgarter offers the following suggestions: this week’s Good Shepherd Parish launched a media campaign, one that results in the yellow, capitalized headline “We might split up.”

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With ambition in mind, I offer the following suggestions:

1. Do you know how God…makes the light shine forth from his clouds? I cannot comprehend how marital storms and rumored infidelity convinced the reality star and mother of eight (of “Jon & Kate Plus 8”) it’s a good time to launch a media campaign, one that results in the yellow, capitalized headline “We might split up.”

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Pedophile Protection Act

That is the name given by some commentators to a bill passed by the House of Representatives titled the Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act of 2009. As of this writing it is being considered in the Senate as S. 909. Ostensibly the purpose of this law is to assess extra punishment on persons guilty of crimes against certain privileged classes such as those with any of the 547 forms of sexual deviancy identified by psychologists, chief among them homosexuality.

The rationale for the law is to counter an epidemic of hate crimes committed against homosexuals. That is a blatant lie. According to FBI crime statistics for 2007 there were 1.4 million violent crimes in the US. Of these only 1,512 were identified as “hate crimes” motivated by sexual orientation. Of these there were only 247 cases of aggravated assault resulting in 5 deaths. That comes to 0.0176% of all crimes or less than 2 in every 10,000 cases. Some epidemic! Furthermore, every homicide is a hate crime. There is no need for special legislation concerning the internal processes of criminals in the commission of crimes.

The cause célèbre cited by the proponents of the law is Matthew Shepard who allegedly was beaten and killed because he was a homosexual. It turns out from the testimony of one of the perpetrators’ girl friends that they pretended to be homosexuals so that they could lure him outside and rob him to get money for drugs. Shepard’s attackers are serving life sentences under existing law with no need for “hate crimes” legislation. That does not stop liberals from citing similar cases as need for special “hate crimes” legislation. A promotion based on fraud cannot have a good outcome.

There are many things that are wrong with “hate crimes” legislation. The law should punish deeds and facts, not thoughts or emotions. James Madison who introduced the First Amendment to the Constitution wrote to Thomas Jefferson, “We have in this country extinguished ... traditional morality would become the new racism forever...making laws for the human mind.” He emphasized that no American should be punished for his “thoughts.” Hate crimes legislation punishes people not just for their crimes but also a second time for the way they think about it. Hate crimes are actually thought crimes. It is odd that the ACLU defends neo-Nazis demonstrating and causing real pain in neighborhoods inhabited by Holocaust survivors but does not murmur about this throttling of free speech and thought. The ACLU has no real interest in free speech as in pushing a secular agenda.

The law violates several Constitutional Amendments. The first is the First Amendment giving the right to free speech. An Ohio State University librarian recommended, among others, the book, The Marketing of Evil. He was denounced for unprofessional conduct and of creating a hostile work environment because the book presented a traditional view of homosexuality contrary to the view “reflective” of the university. He was cleared of wrongdoing but had to suffer demotion as a “hatemonger” and “bigot”, not to mention the stress of pursuing legal remedies. Who were the hatemongers and bigots? If people can be prosecuted for insulting words we are all in trouble. The Organization of the Islamic Conferences wants Western countries to label all Islamistic speech “hate speech” as, for example, to quote the Qur’an to point out that Muhammad preached the subjuga
tion of Infidels under Shari’a. S. 909 smacks of thought control.

It criminalizes individuals who harbor ill feelings for a group protected under the law. The OSU librarian under this legislation could be prosecuted for exercising freedom of speech opposed to the homosexual lifestyle, but Christians who are a non-
protected group could not claim sexual harassment if they objected to a showing of “Brokeback Mountain.” Under the law, the legal system’s prejudices would qualify for special consideration and who would decide this? Under the Fourteenth Amendment victims of violent crime are afforded equal protection under the law with no regard to sexual proclivity. S. 909 would change that. It would give unconstitutional special protection to persons who define their identity on aberrant sexual behaviors. There is zero evidence that currently these persons do not receive equal protection under the law. Meanwhile traditional mo-
rality would become the new racism.

Statements by individuals regarding their beliefs and values are currently protected by the Constitution, but under hate crime legislation, expressions that uphold or protect the right to protect family values could be judged as discriminatory to homosexuals. Meanwhile glorification of homosexuality in the schools could be legally mandated as necessary for the protected group. Hate crime laws are based on the fallacious premise that we may be punished for our thoughts and feelings, not just our actions. Having legislators look into our hearts and minds to adjust their contents would give government far too much power to keep le-
gitimate opposition quiet. Democrat voters who favored the law in the House admitted that a Christian pastor could be prosecuted under the law if he spoke biblically against homosexuality, and someone who heard the comments subsequently committed a crime against a homosexual.

For the first time there would be a law that offers special protection for pedophiles and other sexual offenders. An amendment was offered to the law to eliminate pedophiles from protection and, incredibly, the majority Democrats turned it down. Also turned down were amendments to add churches, veterans, and seniors who have truly been victims of hate crimes and have been targeted by those who were disappointed in the outcome of the referendum in California defining marriage as between one man and one woman. The law is so absurd that even exhibitionists, voyeurs, pedophiles, and necrophiles are protected. A flasher who exposes himself to a female would be guilty of a misdemeanor but if the lady hit him with her purse she would be guilty of a felony because she attacked a sexual deviant belonging to a legally protected class.

The law violates the Fifth Amendment guarantee against double jeopardy. But under this law a de-
defendant found inno-
cent of a hate crime in a state court could be tried once again in a federal court.

Since this law is unconstitutional on several grounds, impractical, and intellectually incoher-
ent, why is it being promoted? It is not so much to protect homosexuals, as to silence opposition to that lifestyle. Ho-
mosexual activists do not want merely to have the freedom to choose their lifestyle, but to be able to demand approval for it and condemnation of those who disagree with them. Christians need to worry about this law because homosexual activists are painting a bulls-eye on them. Hate crimes legislation serve only one purpose: the criminalization of citizens based on thoughts, beliefs, and emotions that are not considered politically correct. As one homosexual activist, who thought he was talking to someone on his side, remarked, “Once we get ‘hate crime’ laws on the books, we’re going to go after the [Boy] Scouts and all the other bigots.”

As this is written, S. 909 is still in the Senate. If it has not passed as yet, be cer-
tain to contact your senators and ask them to oppose it. If it has passed contribute to the legal efforts to overturn it. Its aim is to drive religion and its troublesome morality from the public square and force it to go underground.

Chris
tians need to worry about this law because homosexual activists are painting a bulls-eye on them.

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

• Call the Chancery at (361) 573-0828 and ask to speak with the bishop or the chancellor;

• Call Rev. Gary Janak (979) 543-3770 or Sr. Emilie Eilers (361) 579-7111, Coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach;

• Write to: Most Rev. David E. Ffellhauer Diocese of Victoria P.O. Box 4070 Victoria, TX 77903 Mark your letter “Personal and Confidential”

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

If you are unsure about bringing a complaint or would like further information, please contact: Rev. Gary Janak at (979) 543-3770.
I recently read that garden seed sales are way up. I think that this is a hopeful sign. People will be eating more vegetables and thus adopting a more healthful diet. They’ll spend more time outdoors and get some much-needed exercise and relaxation. They’ll have produce to give away or to barter with their neighbors. And they’ll save money at the grocery store. Moreover, families can spend time together at home as they share garden duties and watch their plants grow. I think that we can all agree that these are worthy reasons to buy garden seeds.

Even more importantly, planting and caring for a garden can provide lessons for life, if we are alert. First of all is the awesome thought that we can see some results of our collaborating with God, the creator of all of nature. While we know that God is the one who makes the seeds sprout and develop, we find satisfaction and joy in helping the process along. I am reminded of the story of a young man who loved the soil. All he could afford was a small abandoned lot in a rocky area that was overrun with weeds. He carefully tilled the soil and removed the rocks until it was ready. He planted, watered, and fertilized his garden. He watched over the little plants and tended them with loving care. In response, they flourished and produced an abundant yield. One day he was showing off his garden to his minister who reminded him that he should give all the credit to God. The young man responded, “You should have seen it before I helped God.”

Yes, when we collaborate with God, we can learn much about God and our relationship with God. Tending a garden is much like tending our spiritual life. We are constantly watching for insects and diseases that may harm our plants in our gardens; likewise, we are careful to avoid anything that may damage our relationship with God and with those whom we share life. Just as we provide water and fertilize to our crops, we nourish ourselves with the Sacraments and other spiritual resources. Lack of consistent care can lead to our plants dying and being overrun with weeds; the same can happen to us spiritually if we get negligent in our care!

Therefore, let us develop a garden mentality in which we and God are working together to promote our spiritual well-being. May our gardens lead us to a growing appreciation of God’s action in our life and in our world. May they provide the space and inspiration for reflection on God’s greatness. May this reflection motivate us to continually energize our relationship with God, with one another and with our planet. So, go on out and buy those garden seeds!
**Youth Calendar of Events**

**June 12-20** — Camp David  
June 12-14 — Staff Formation  
June 14-16 — Session I - Junior High Camp  
June 17 — Elementary Camp  
June 17-19 — Session II - Junior High Camp  
**June 22 - 25** — Discipleship Week at the Spiritual Renewal Center  
**July 4-12** — Rocky Mountain High, Pagosa Springs, Colorado  
**July 19-22** — Quo Vadis, Boys Vocation Camp at the Spiritual Renewal Center  
**July 26-29** — St. Theresa Vocation Camp at Incarnate Word Convent, Virginia  
**August 29** — Altar Server Appreciation at Splashway in Sheraton  
October 23-25 — Archdiocesan Conference for Catholic Youth Ministers in Houston  

**November 1-12** — NET Team in the Diocese – in parish retreats are available, contact the office for more information  
**November 19-22** — National Catholic Youth Conference in Kansas City, Missouri  

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**St. Robert’s Youth Group holds CRS Food Fast**

EL CAMPO—On Saturday, April 4, 2009, St. Robert Parish in El Campo held a Catholic Relief Services (CRS) Food Fast from 9 a.m. to 7 p.m. at St. Robert’s parish hall, under the direction of Elisa Garcia, the parish youth minister. Teens from the 7th to the 11th grade participated.  

“It was our first one and I think it went really well,” said Elisa. Some of the kids were a little scared, but a good size showed up. PLUS, they want to do it again next year. The youth group got the idea at the Youth Spectacular Conference. They met Marcus from CRS at the conference and he gave them the material.  

“You see, the youth group has had a blessed year with fun days, field trips and service projects,” said Elisa. “We wanted to do something impacting for Lent.”

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**Ten Star All Star Basketball Camp**

Final applications are now being evaluated for the Ten Star All Star Summer Basketball Camp. The Ten Star All Star Summer Basketball Camp is by invitation only. Boys and girls ages 10-19 are eligible to apply.  

Past participants include: Michael Jordan, Tim Duncan, Vince Carter, Jerry Stackhouse, Grant Hill and Antawn Jamison. Players from 50 states and 11 foreign countries attended the 2008 camp.  

College basketball scholarships are possible for players selected to the All-American team. Camp locations include: Commerce, Texas and nine other location throughout the United States. There is also a summer camp available for boys and girls ages 9-18 of all skill levels. For a free brochure on these summer camps, call (704) 373-0873 anytime or go to www.tenstarcamp.com.

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**CCHD announces art contest for youth**

WASHINGTON—The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) has announced two major initiatives to involve young Catholics in learning about the Church’s social teaching and to recognize young adults for their efforts to address the root causes of poverty and injustice. CCHD is the domestic anti-poverty social justice program of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB).

The 2010 CCHD Multi-Media Youth Arts Contest is a unique tool for schools and parishes to engage youth in grades 7 through 12 in learning about the causes of poverty, Catholic social teaching and the work and witness of groups funded by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development. The 2010 Contest theme is “Empowering Neighborhoods, Uprooting Poverty.” All art forms, including YouTube videos, music, painting, drama, writing and PowerPoint slideshows, are welcome.

Ralph McCloud, director of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development, said about the 2010 contest: “The contest is a unique educational opportunity. It is an unusual tool for schools and parishes to help young Catholics interact with organizations in their own community that are working to address poverty. It then equips these young people to use their talents and what they have learned to live out their faith by educating others.”

For more information about the contest, including lesson plans and activities for youth and campus ministers and teachers of all disciplines, visit http://www.usccb.org/cchd/contestmaterials.shtml.

The second initiative, the Cardinal Bernardin New Leadership Award, is given to a young adult age 18-30 who has demonstrated leadership against the causes of poverty and injustice in the United States. The award aims to promote young people as leaders, honor their work in their parishes/organizations and strengthen the Catholic community’s participation in CCHD’s anti-poverty mission.

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**NET AVAILABLE FOR RETREATS**—On November 1-12, 2009, the National Evangelization Team (NET) will be arriving in our diocese. NET Ministries is a Catholic Evangelistic Outreach Program based in the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, Minnesota. The team will be comprised of 10-12 young adults who have a vibrant faith life and have given nine months of their lives to travel throughout the United States to share their faith with Catholic youth. Using a retreat format, the team members blend a fun, high-energy experience with a straightforward and personal presentation of the Gospel message and of how Jesus Christ has affected their lives. They use large, group presentations, small, group discussions, music, games, skits, prayer, personal testimonies and the sacraments to reach out to the youth. If any youth ministers or pastors are interested in providing this exciting retreat experience for your young people, please contact the Office of Youth Ministry at 361-573-0825 ext. 32 or 50 or via e-mail at dvaneli@victoriadiocese.org or jortega@victoriadiocese.org.

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**13-day Shrines of Italy and Rome Tour**

Sept. 7 – 19, 2009 with Father Tommy Chen  

Fly into Rome and proceed to Assisi to experience the life of St. Francis and view the incorrupt body of St. Rita; to view the incorrupt body of St. Francis; view the incorrupt body of St. Rita (a saint of the impossible); Loreto, to see the Holy House Jesus grew up in, which was miraculously moved from Nazareth to Loreto, Italy; Lanciano, to see the great eucharistic miracle of the 8th century; San Giovanni Rotondo where our beloved saint, Padre Pio, lies in state; Cave of St. Michael the Archangel; Benedictine Abbey in Monte Cassino (529 a.d.); great St. Philomena (a saint of the impossible); then four days in the Eternal City of Rome, the great seat of our Mother Church, where we will have an audience with Our Holy Father Benedict XVI and visit all the great basilicas.

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**Oberammergau Passion Play – Poland, Czech Republic and Germany – July 11-22, 2010**

For more information, please contact Betty Urbanovsky at burbanovsky@scgglobal.net or 979-543-2333.
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Children's Ferris Wheel • Cakewalk • Raffle

Population Growth • Placement Services

Live Music • Children's Games & Rides • Children's Ferris Wheel • Cakewalk • Raffle

Food Booths (Some open at 9:00 a.m.)

Mexican food and more

Fun For All Ages

Our Lady of Guadalupe - Bay City
Annual Jamaica/Bazaar – June 14

Held on church grounds (Avenue D & 12th Street) 11:00 a.m. to Dark

Our Lady of the Rosary No. 1595
Dr. Gary Cox
Slade Doehrman, Doehrman Show Pigs
Gaylan and Ella Marie Duncan
Dr. Mary Rea Finehout
4th Degree Assembly #1131
James Frazier
Kenneth French, Edward Jones and Co.

Mr. and Mrs. Billy Pope
Hal Redmon, Harrison, Waldrop and Uherek
Jack Ross, Bonnie Brae Ranch
Bill Sanders, Sanders Pipeline Const. Co.

Bishop and Mrs. Garth Myers
Kyle Nethery, The Other Feed Store
Ben and Sue Nutter, Fishing Guide/Putting Lessons

Susan and Bel Bob Oakley
Our Lady of Lourdes Altar Society
Our Lady of Victory Youth Ministry

Rev. Msgr. Michael Harrold, Our Lady of Victory
Robert P. Houston
William and Peggy Howard
Greg Hughes, Colony Creek Country Club
Edward Huse

Rev. Joseph Hybner, Sacred Heart Church
Chris Janak
Russell Janecka, Janeeka Insurance Co.
Judge Pat Kelly

Our Lady of the Rosary No. 1595

Deacon and Mrs. Wearden

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Aaron West, Jeff M., Maintenance, Inc.

St. John's-New Tafton Altar Society
Jim Steedhamen, State Farm Insurance

Mr. and Mrs. M. Stasik
Malcolm Sumbera, DDS, Family Dentistry
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Harold G. Tiemann, Tee's Music House

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Sammy and Nadine Cattan
Jo Chanek

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"Fun for All Ages"
Pastoral Institute steps into the 21st century using technology

If St. Paul were here today, he would be using Facebook, MySpace, On-line classes and Distance Learning to get the message of Jesus out to all nations… This summer the Pastoral Institute office for the Diocese of Victoria is taking steps that will enable more Catholics to get involved and take classes via distance learning.

The Sacraments and Church classes will be offered from the Chancery in Victoria to St. Joseph’s in Yoakum, and St. Anthony’s in Columbus via distance learning. Liturgy will be offered from Holy Rosary in Hostyn to the Chancery in Victoria and Our Lady of the Gulf Parish in Port Lavaca. The Learner course, which is for all Catholic school and parish catechists, will not be offered as a distance learning class. Call 361-573-0828 or e-mail bjparkan@victoriadiocese.org to register or for more information.

Summer 2009 Short-Term Classes are as follow:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Course</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6/15/09</td>
<td>Liturgy</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.</td>
<td>Holy Rosary, Hostyn</td>
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<td>St. Anthony, Columbus</td>
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Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in Victoria will present Jesse Romero at their parish June 12 – 13. Jesse is a bilingual evangelist who is nationally acclaimed for his upbeat, Christ-centered presentations. His presentation will include two talks in Spanish and three in English. His theme will be “The Power and Truth of the Catholic Faith.” Donations of $10 will include lunch on Saturday.

A resident of Calif., Jesse is a retired Los Angeles County Deputy Sheriff, with 20 years of service and two Middleweight U.S. Kick Boxing Championships. Jesse spent some time away from the Catholic faith before his exciting “reversion” and has been lighting fires under Catholics ever since.

In 1986, Jesse picked up a Bible and used faith instead of force as a way to escape the pressures of police life. His messages may be simple but are delivered with energy and conviction that has become his trademark. The audience is left with a clear understanding that our Catholic faith is something to be worn visibly and proudly and not to be kept hidden.

Our Lady of Sorrows is proud to present Jesse Romero and encourages everyone to come listen to him and become more informed about our Catholic faith. For more information, please contact Janie Rubio at (361) 572-4364 or e-mail Janie at Janie.mrubio@yahoo.com or e-mail Hermes Silva at hsmdpt@suddenlink.net.

Jesse Romero, evangelist, to come to Victoria

This year’s conference theme is “Catechesis and the Proclamation of the Word.” It will be held at Holy Family Parish in Victoria on Saturday, September 26, 2009. Preparations for this annual diocesan event are being finalized. The conference will have 39 workshops on various topics offered by 22 presenters from near and far.

The Reverend Dan Morales, pastor of Our Lady of the Gulf Parish in Port Lavaca, will offer two workshops on Theology of the Body at the annual diocesan conference. Father Morales states, “Pope John Paul II devoted the first major teaching project of his pontificate (129 short talks over the course of six years) to provide a profoundly beautiful vision of human embodiment and divine love.”

Father Morales’ workshops will preview the intellectual and spiritual riches of the late pope’s teachings on Theology of the Body.

The Reverend Gary Janak, pastor of St. Philip Parish in El Campo, will also provide a workshop on the Sacrament of Marriage: Implications for Catechetical Ministry. In the workshop, Father Janak will address the Catholic Church’s understanding of the sacrament and its various canonical issues regarding catechetical ministry, including the implications that may apply to some who are in the RCIAs process.

Everyone interested in attending this annual diocesan event is encouraged to call 361-573-0828 for registration information.

DIOCESAN RELIGIOUS ED TEACHERS RECEIVE TRAINING—On Thursday, May 21, 2009, sixty-six persons from 30 parishes attended the 2009 in-service and training for parish catechetical leaders and Catholic school teachers. Jo Rutunno, director of Marketing and Electronic Media for RCL Benziger, introduced the new catechetical training resource “Echoes of Faith Plus.” Jo demonstrated the proper way of facilitating the video-assisted classes and explained the features of Echoes Plus. In the afternoon session, she explored the reasons why self-care is so essential to strengthening those in catechetical ministry. She also encouraged attendees to formulate an action plan for the summer months so that they can return to their ministry in the fall rested and energized.
Catechetical office honors two PCLs in June

By Cynthia Brewer

The Catechetical Office of the Diocese of Victoria has chosen to honor two Parish Catechetical Leaders (PCL) for the month of June 2009. They have chosen Gina Kozelsky of Queen of the Holy Rosary and Sts. Peter and Paul parish in Hostyn and Plum and Patsy Krenek of Holy Cross Parish in East Bernard.

Gina Kozelsky has helped Msgr. Stanley Petru, the pastor of the churches in Hostyn and Plum, in the area of religious education for a few years, then the parishes were blessed to have Sister Louise Miksch, CDP, work in the parishes as director of religious education (DRE). When Sister Louise moved to a new position in Cuero in 2003, Gina was asked to be the DRE.

“I, with the help of Deacon John McCourt and a wonderful group of volunteers, moved back into the parish catechetical leadership,” Gina said.

As to why she became a PCL, Gina says they “kinda phased into the position.” She began working for the parish as secretary, then worked with youth, and when the need arose she officially took on the position of DRE.

“I had learned so much from Sister Louise and had the support of Msgr. Petru and Deacon John,” Gina said, “so after much prayer, I agreed to take on the position.”

The combined parishes of Queen of the Holy Rosary and Sts. Peter and Paul use the “Generations of Faith” whole community catechesis program. When the parish合并s come together for their community catechesis program, there are 80 children and youth and 105 adults who participate. Gina and Deacon John McCourt are assisted by 20 catechists—“And all of them are wonderful,” Gina said.

The most challenging aspect of her ministry is scheduling! She asks, “When can all the activities, sessions, programs … we want to offer be held, so that conflicts with school and community events are avoided when possible?”

Her happiest moments in her ministry are when she sees whole families learning together, “Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles all participating in the learning—what wonderful examples for the young people!” She is also rewarded through the service trips the high school students take through “Young Neighbors in Action.”

Gina stays very busy in her church and community as she is also a lector, is on the Social Ministry and Liturgical Ministry Committee, is an adult participant in Young Neighbors in Action, the La Grange Community Blood Drive Coordinator, in the Band Booster Club, a PTO member and volunteers with the BP Multiple Sclerosis 150 bike-a-thon.

She and her husband, Jerry, have been married for 24 years; they have three children—Jacob—attends Texas State Techni- cal College, Hannah—attends St. Edwards University, and Jodi — starts high school this year. Gina’s hobbies include gardening and making quilts with her mom, aunts, uncles, and sisters and nieces, which they donate to church picnics and give to family members for wedding gifts.

Patsy Krenek of Holy Cross Parish in East Bernard has been the parish’s catechetical leader for the past three years; prior to this, she assisted Sister Carola Hajdik, IWBS, for three years while Sister Carola was the PCL.

Patsy says that she has always enjoyed working in her parish’s religious education program and was the vacation Bible school coordinator for several years. She then moved to the assistant director of religious education and then replaced Sister Carola, once she retired.

Holy Cross Parish in East Bernard is another parish that participates in the whole community catechesis program. “Generations of Faith.” There are over 400 parishioners registered for the program, 205 students from four years to 12th grade and 226 adults. “Generations of Faith” has created a very active parish, as there are 82 catechists and assistants; 60 volunteers for childcare, food, and office help; and 10 catechists who assist with sacramental preparation.

Patsy says that the challenges for the ministry are never ending. “I’m always trying to find ways to improve our program.” Her happiest moments include watching parents and their children interact with each other throughout the program. “Faith is being passed on without them realizing it,” she said.

Besides leading the parish’s catechetical program, Patsy continues to minister as an extraordinary minister of the Eucharist, in Altar Society, Christian Mothers and Catholic Daughters of the Americas.

Patsy and her husband of 28 years, Gary, have three children: Jenny, 25, Matt, 21, and Beth, 19. Patsy also enjoys traveling with her family.

Fasting before Communion, marrying a non-Catholic

Q. I believe we are still required to fast for one hour before receiving Communion. Many friends, however, tell me there is no longer a rule that the pope did away with that regulation years ago. Is there any official directive about fasting before Communion? (Wisconsin)

A. You are correct. We are asked to fast an hour before Communion though, like you, I still encounter many Catholics who seem unaware of this requirement.

By now, only older Catholics will remember that for centuries total fast from all food and liquids was required from midnight until receiving the Eucharist. This worked, even with some difficulty, when no Masses took place after noon.

With the advent of afternoon and evening Masses after the Second Vatican Council, however, fasting from the previous midnight became close to impossible for many people. For this and other reasons, at the end of the third council session in 1964, Pope Paul VI considerably simplified the eucharistic fast. According to his 1964 decree, people should fast from food and liquids for one hour before receiving Communion. Water does not break the fast and may be taken anytime. The same goes for medications.

Note that this hour is before actual Communion, not before the beginning of Mass, which means in practice that it normally will involve only a short time of fast before leaving home for Mass, which is a minimal hardship at most.

The reason this modified regulation is still on the books is that it can aid in preparing oneself spiritually and mentally for participating in the offering of the Eucharist at Mass and for receiving Communion. Basically the rule applies to the whole church, though some variations apply in different parts of the world.

Because of their special needs, the discipline is greatly relaxed for the elderly and the sick, and the people who take care of them. For all of these, the period of eucharistic fast is reduced to “about a quarter of an hour.”

The church law (Canon No. 919) says simply that older and sick persons, and their caregivers, may receive the Eucharist even if they have consumed something during the previous hour. Obviously, the intention is that the sick should be given every possible opportunity to receive holy Communion.

Q. May a Catholic receive Communion more than once a day, for example, at a wedding and then at an evening Mass? (Pennsylvania)

A. For many years Communion was to be received only once a day, but those rules have been considerably relaxed.

Today’s policy is that Communion may be received twice in the same day, but only when participating in a Mass (see Canon No. 917 and the 1984 decree of the Vatican commission for interpretation of canon law). Communion should not be received more than twice a day.

The church knows from experience that some Catholics are tempted to treat sacred things, even the Mass, in a superstitious manner. I once knew a lady who piously claimed she attended 11 Masses, at least the “essential” parts, every Sunday.

To prevent people from collecting Communions in a similar fashion was one reason for the church’s stricter once-a-day rule in the past, as well as for the broader policy today. It trusts that people’s deeper and fuller awareness of the meaning of the Eucharist will discourage any abuse, and at the same time prompt them to receive Communion whenever it is appropriate, even more than once a day.

Q. My grandson, who is Catholic, will be married in a Methodist church to a girl of that denomination. Will this marriage be valid in the Catholic Church? Or does there need to be a priest present? (Iowa)

A. Normally, as you know, a Catholic must be married before a priest or deacon for the marriage to be valid according to church law. However, the bishop of the diocese may grant a dispensation, allowing that marriage to take place before a judge, minister or other licensed official for marriages in that state. This is referred to as a dispensation from the canonical form of marriage.

Even when such a dispensation is obtained, the couple is encouraged to participate in whatever marriage preparation programs are offered by the diocese. The dispensation would be requested through the priest or other parish staff helping the bride and groom prepare for marriage.

If your grandson and his bride have obtained this dispensation, a priest might attend, but his presence is not required for the marriage to be valid.

If the couple has not obtained the dispensation, the marriage before a Methodist minister or other civil official would not be valid, according to Catholic Church marriage legislation. The presence or absence of a priest at the ceremony would not be relevant in that situation.

A free brochure in English or Spanish, answering questions Catholics ask about baptism practices and sponsors is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 3315, Peoria, IL 61612. Questions may be sent to Father John Dietzen at the same address, or e-mail: jldietzen@uol.com.

By Father John Dietzen Catholic News Service
BOY SCOUTS EARN POPE PIUS XII RELIGIOUS AWARD—Recently nine Boy Scouts from the Victoria Diocese received the highest religious award presented by the Catholic Church. The award, the Pope Pius XII Religious Award, was presented to, from left, Daniel Mejia, Troop 364; Zachary Fiew, Troop 363; and Kevin Parma, Nicholas Garza, Andrew Polasek, Roman Vasquez, Robby Gonzales, Tyler Bonorden and Reno Bradicich, all of Troop 364. The purpose of this award is to help Catholic Scouts develop a Christian way within the faith community. Participants explore their baptismal call to bring about an awareness of their current and future calls from God. God’s calls are in three distinct areas: inner self, secular community and church community. These are all intertwined and impact one’s daily life. The scouts explored this intertwining to fully understand their primary vocation of giving witness to the Gospel. The boys achieved this award by attending classes two to three times a month on Sunday afternoons for about six months. This required some homework, interviews, research, a panel discussion and a weekend retreat at which they presented research on an issue, which they felt is facing the Church today. The facilitators were Dr. Frank Parma, Mr. Robert Gonzales, Mr. Brian Fiew and Mr. Dave Kouba. They are very proud of these boys and appreciate the support of their parents.

OLV PSIA STATE WINNERS—Our Lady of Victory School of Victoria recently competed at the 2009 Private Schools Interscholastic Association (PSIA) State Meet held at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth. State medalists were (back row): 8th graders Aaron Kovar-3rd place Number Sense; Andrew Stewart, 1st place Science; Ahmad Sabbagh, 1st place Math and 2nd place Number Sense; front row: 8th grader Hannah Kolle, 4th place On-Site-Drawing; 5th grader Isaac Leal, 3rd place Dictionary Skills; and 8th grader Jillian Strauss, 1st place Prose Interpretation. More than ninety schools competed this year. Our Lady of Victory School placed 6th in the Middle Schools division and 15th overall in the competition.

CDA STATE CONTEST WINNER—At the Catholic Daughters of the Americas 46th Biennial State Convention held recently in McAllen, Clinton Micin was announced as the second place winner in Division I, Computer Art, in the Catholic Daughters State Education Contest. This year’s themes were “God’s Gifts in My Life” and “The Gifts I Give to Others.” Clinton received a certificate from the State Court along with a monetary gift. Pictured are Allison, Jeannie, Randy, and Clinton Micin, Ann Florus, education committee member; Court St. Rose #1597 Regent Cynthia Kosler, and Rev. Tim Kosler, Court St. Rose chaplain.

TYPEPING ON A SMARTBOARD—Kristin Walla, a 5th grader at St. Anthony School (SAS) in Columbus uses the Smartboard pop-up keyboard. The Keyboard can be used to input Web sites to download educational videos. During the 2008 - 2009 school year, SAS implemented a three-phase plan to install interactive Smartboards in all classrooms. Phase one and two have been accomplished through PTC and community donations and a grant from the Catholic School Endowment Fund from the Diocese of Victoria. Phase three will allow for Smartboards to be placed in early childhood pre-k classrooms. See full story on p. 2.

VOLUNTEERS HONORED—The Twelfth Annual Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton Awards were presented recently in Shiner by the Office of Catholic Schools. A dinner was served, followed by the presentation of the awards. Making the presentations were (center) Bishop David E. Fellhauer and (left) John Quary, school superintendent. The recipients of the award for the year 2009: (in no particular order) Mary Ottis, Holy Cross, Bay City; Lesley Smejkal, Nazareth Academy, Victoria; Linda M. Meyer, Our Lady of the Gulf, Port Lavaca; Robert L. Kovar, Our Lady of Victory, Victoria; Mike Johnson, Sacred Heart Elementary, Hallettsville; Frances Kallus, Sacred Heart High, Hallettsville; Dennis and Liz Christen, St. Anthony; Columbus; Cindy DuRose, St. Joseph High School, Victoria; Ken Kvinata, St. Joseph, Yoakum; John Meitzen, St. Michael, Cuero; Peggy Guenther, St. Michael, Weimar; Jan Dornak, St. Philip, El Campo; Edwin and Dolores Vacek, St. Rose, Schulenburg; Leah Wagner, St. Ludmila, Shiner; and Philip Pilat, St. Paul High School, Shiner.
The 1959 class of Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville celebrated its 50th reunion on Saturday, April 18, 2009.

The class began the reunion at 4:30 p.m. with a tour of Sacred Heart School and then attended the 5:30 p.m. parish Mass. After Mass the graduates went to the Garden Center for a social, where they enjoyed a catered meal. Saturday evening, a prayer and candle lighting was held in memory of their only deceased classmate, Marjorie (Haas) Chanek. On Sunday, April 19, a brunch hosted by Sister Mildred (Konarik) Cobden, Lorene (Leopold) Rode and George Knebel was held for those who were able to remain in Hallettsville for the weekend.

Those unable to make the reunion were held in memory of the only deceased classmates.

1959 SHS Class 50th Reunion Held

HALLETTSVILLE—Sacred Heart School class of 1959 of Hallettsville celebrated its 50th reunion on Saturday, April 18, 2009.

The class began the reunion at 4:30 p.m. with a tour of Sacred Heart School and then attended the 5:30 p.m. parish Mass. After Mass the graduates went to the Garden Center for a social, where they visited and caught up with former classmates and enjoyed a catered meal. Saturday evening, a prayer and candle lighting was held in memory of their only deceased classmate, Marjorie (Haas) Chanek. On Sunday, April 19, a brunch hosted by Irene (Bludau) and George Knebel was held for those who were able to remain in Hallettsville for the weekend.

Those unable to make the reunion were held in memory of the only deceased classmates.

Catholic elementary schools’ highest level recognized

St. Michael School
Weimar
8th Graders:
Drew Billeck, Dustin Carroll, Sam Dobecka, Spencer Leppin, Matthew Mason, Courtney Menis, Chase Ritter, Fred Strauss Jr.

St. Joseph School, Yoakum
8th Graders:

St. Rose of Lima (Schulenburg) students win in national competition. The “Philanthropy Phorce” team placed 2nd in this year’s national eCYBERMISSION with its investigation into decreasing heat levels inside motor vehicles. Pictured are team members Caitlyn Bennett (front, holding model car used in their project); back l. to r.: Christopher Kunz, teacher – Phyllis Venghaus, Mary Kossa and Kirsten Hege. Special thanks to Dennis Venghaus and Chris Henk of Schulenburg Sheet Metal who helped make the model car for the students’ project.
The Gift of Fostering
(You Might Be a Foster Parent If…)

By Heidi H. Saxon


One day listening to a Jeff Foxworthy “You Might Be a Redneck If…” routine, it occurred to me that—just as rednecks can blissfully scratch through life without recognizing their “red-neckiness,” so many potentially wonderful foster parents could be missing out on a truly life-changing opportunity, simply because they don’t see within themselves God’s “gift of fostering.” And with more than 500,000 children in the U.S. in need of temporary or permanent homes; getting families to recognize this gift is a genuinely pro-life endeavor.

So…what does a foster family look like? Most aren’t rich in the financial sense. Some excellent foster parents open their hearts to a child long before they find a spouse. (Here in Ann Arbor, the sisters of Servants of God’s Love have fostered children for years.) You don’t have to own your own home, or even be at home full-time. (On the other hand, troubled children greatly benefit from the love and attention a SAHM [stay at home mom] can provide.)

So…what does the “gift of fostering” look like? You might be a great foster parent if…

· You genuinely like being around other people’s children, and they like being around you.

· You instinctively look for ways to help other people—a child, adults and children alike.

· You notice when your child’s classmate doesn’t have a warm jacket… and find one for him.

· You’re good at bringing order out of chaos, but don’t mind a little “happy mess.”

· You have a WYSIWYG [what you see is what you get] philosophy of life: honest, straightforward and generally kind.

· You’re a natural (and patient) teacher, capable of giving a lesson again and again.

· You have a “second sense” about children, and can figure out what they need when they can’t tell you themselves.

· You like cuddling, hugs and dandelion bouquets.

· You make friends for life, even when you don’t see them every day.

· You are a resourceful person and aren’t too proud to ask for help when you need it.

· You would like to add to your family, but aren’t sure you want another pregnancy.

· Most important: You believe in the power of love to change lives.

Some people hesitate to get involved because they aren’t sure they can bear the thought of getting attached, then having a child leave again. In reality, nearly 60% of foster children never go home, and there are more than 25,000 children who need permanent homes. Most of these children are four years of age (the median age is eight)—younger children are often a part of a sibling group, have special needs, or are biracial.

However, many foster parents find that the children who enter their lives even for a brief time touch them so deeply that they are better off for having known them for even a short time. For a touching account of one such family’s experience, pick up a copy of “Paper Sack Kids.”


For more information on Texas foster/adoption, please see: www.dfps.state.tx.us/adoption_and_foster_care; http://txadoption.com/; or www.adoptionnetwork.com/


Prequel “Joshua’s Family” to be Puzzle Prize

Millions of readers around the world have followed the story of the gentle woodcarver and carpenter who was first introduced in 1983 in Joseph Girzone’s beloved parable, Joshua, but never before have readers been taken back to a time before Joshua—until now. In this prequel, Joshua’s Family (Doubleday; $12.95), Girzone travels back to a year in young Joshua’s childhood, beginning with his family’s move to a small town named Shadybrook. In itself a good introduction to the series, fans will be especially moved by the intimate portrayals of the mother and father who nurtured Joshua and of the friends and neighbors who viewed the unusually precocious child with an uneasy balance of wonder and skepticism. Joshua’s gentle nature and mystical gifts come to light even as he participates in the ordinary routines of small-town life: his gentleness and loving spirit bring peace to all those he meets. As he grows older, Joshua gradually awakens to the knowledge that he has been placed on earth for a special reason. Even this idyllic small town cannot keep some of the troubles of the world at bay, and Joshua must decide how he should use the gifts given to him.

As Joshua grows in his relationship with his “Father in heaven,” he will begin to teach others how to heal the divisions in the human family and bring everlasting peace to the world. The ninth novel in this beloved and bestselling series, is the book so many have been waiting for, and its powerful message is a much-needed antidote to the difficulties in today’s world.

Joseph Girzone retired from the active priesthood in 1981 and embarked on a successful career as a motivational and inspirational speaker. He is the author of several best-selling books, including Joshua, My Struggle with Faith, and Never Alone. He lives in Albany, New York.

Stewardship in her blood

Twelve-year-old Claire Kutchka, granddaughter of Joe and Dorothy Jurena Kutchka of Bloomington, Texas, sent out 250 letters to Catholic celebrities, bishops and religious orders all over the world to request silent auction items for a carnival at her parish, Christ the King Church in Fort Smith, Ark., May 15-16. Claire received 105 items; packages arrived almost daily at her sixth-grade classroom. She holds her favorite silent auction item, a Stations of the Cross Scroll donated by Father Joseph Pallo of Immaculate Conception Church in Bluffville, Ark. Read full article at “Extra, Extra, Extra! at www.victoriadiocese.org/lighthouse/lighthouse.htm. Permission to reprint granted by the Arkansas Catholic. Photo by MARYANNE MEYERREICKS of Arkansas Catholic.
**Dad’s day is everyday**

By Mar Muñoz Visoso, USCCB

In the Catholic tradition fathers are honored in the feast of Saint Joseph, spouse of Mary. In Spain, Italy, Portugal, Bolivia and Honduras, Father’s Day is still celebrated on March 19, a custom that brings together the civic and religious traditions.

However, most Latin American countries celebrate it on the third Sunday of June, originally June 19, following the U.S. civic celebration, which was begun by Sonora Smart Dodd in Spokane, Washington, in 1910.

Sonora, as well as the civil authorities that institutionalized this holiday decades later, acknowledged the need for honoring all good fathers, whose sacrifices often go unnoticed, and who are the first to answer the call of duty every day in the same manner in which we honor mothers on Mother’s Day.

We really owe them this celebration of gratitude and remembrance. But I think society and the Church owe them more than that.

Many of them have done their work unprepared or without much guidance, which many men of difference.

Church must give them back the respect they deserve. But I think society and the Church honor mothers on Mother’s Day in the same manner in which we often go unnoticed, with a special holiday decades later, acknowledging the need for honoring all mothers.

Sonora, as well as the civil authorities that institutionalized this holiday decades later, acknowledged the need for honoring all good fathers, whose sacrifices often go unnoticed, and who are the first to answer the call of duty every day.

Fatherhood, however, is a responsibility which many men enter unprepared or without much thought, and many times with the feeling that fatherhood “just happened” to them. As the father of a friend used to say, “I learned all kinds of things in school, but they never taught me how to be a father.”

Most parents know have done the learning on the go, and I hope they have done fine. However, as with every vocation, a process of learning and discernment is needed, along with good advice and some mentoring.

This learning begins at home, with the experience we have of our own father, his presence or his absence, his involvement and the attitudes he shows toward the challenges the family has to confront.

Ideally, reflecting on fatherhood (and motherhood) would be part of every good marriage-prep program. Schools and religious education programs, youth and campus ministry programs must also find ways to include this topic in their curriculum.

Most Latinos still assume that marriage and family—and thus fatherhood/motherhood—go hand-in-hand. If you don’t believe me, ask the Census Bureau. Hispanic marriages also tend to stay together at a higher rate than other groups.

However, there is also a high rate of out-of-wedlock births and many children being raised by a single parent, most often the mother.

We need to help men see the gift and responsibilities that fatherhood brings and its gratifications to encourage them to feel enthused about the prospect of entering such a commitment.

Often men, especially young men, are thirsty for whatever can affirm them in their masculine identity and steer them away from negative forms of fatherhood and “machismo” they may have experienced or been raised with. They want honest advice to help them understand what is, or will be, expected of them as fathers, especially in a world where roles have shifted and the line of traditional responsibilities for fathers and mothers has become blurry.

The most effective initiatives I’ve seen are those that mix theory with a healthy dose of dialogue and experience sharing from men and women, and from men to women and vice versa.

At home, a little affirmation and appreciation on a regular basis also go a long way (Right honey? By the way, here is your honey-do list…).

Congratulations to all those men who every day give the best of themselves to their families; to the fathers who in spite of difficulties and shortcomings stay put and don’t give up; and to those who decide to jump in, even if the party did not start with them.

You are today’s society silent heroes. You are Joseph for today’s holy families.

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**SHUTTIN’ THE GATE**

**Editorial by Cynthia Brewer, editor**

During a business lunch with our printer, Adgraphics, and Corpus Christi’s South Texas Catholic newspaper staff, we began telling funny stories about ourselves. I told them about how my husband always teases me whenever I try to save a situation. It comes from revealing a childhood story about myself to him, which of course, he now uses to tease me as often as he can.

When I was 12 years old, our family went on a summer vacation. We were in the southwest part of the United States and stayed at a campsite that had a little community arena with calf roping/rodeo practice going on, and we kids went to watch. All of a sudden the big cowboys began shouting, “Shut the Gate! Someone shut the gate!” The arena gate somehow got open and the calves were about to get out. I figured I was close, so I ran up and shut the gate. No thank you from the cowboys; they were busy, but my brothers teased me and told Mom and Dad that I had “saved the day” by shutting the gate.

That was 35 years ago, and still my family, and now my husband, tease me whenever I try to fix a situation. When I told this story to my coworkers, the editor of the South Texas Catholic, Paula Beaton, said that “Shuttin’ the Gate” would make a cute title for an editorial column, so I took her up on it. So now, whenever I need to “Shut the Gate,” I’ll be writing an editorial for The Catholic Lighthouse.
Un día muy padre

Por Mar Muñoz-Visoso

En la tradición católica los padres de familia siempre han sido honrados en la fiesta de San José, esposo de María. En España, así como en Italia, Portugal, Bolivia y Honduras todavía se celebra el Día del Padre el 19 de marzo, uniéndolo de esta manera la tradición religiosa a la cívica. Sin embargo, en la mayoría de países Latinoamericanos este día se celebra el tercer domingo de junio, originalmente el 19 de junio, siguiendo la tradición norteamericana iniciada por Sonora Smart Dodd en Spokane, Washington, en 1910.

Sonora, así como las autoridades civiles que institucionalizaron esta celebración décadas después, reconocieron necesidad de honrar a todos los buenos padres de familia, cuyos sacrificios pasan a menudo desperdiciados, con un día especial en la misma manera en que honramos a nuestras mamás en el Día de la Madre.

Realmente les debemos esta celebración de agradecimiento y recuerdo. Pero creo que la sociedad y la Iglesia les debe algo más. La figura del padre es fundamental en la familia, y los padres felices y comprometidos hacen una gran diferencia.

La paternidad, sin embargo, es un tema que muchas veces se la dejan a los hombres. En la historia del padre Cutié, sin embargo, la paternidad tiene un papel fundamental en la familia, y los padres y madres ya no están tan marcados.

La mayoría de los padres que conozco han hecho el aprendizaje sobre la marcha, y debo decir que lo hacen bien. Sin embargo, muchos hombres no tienen miedo, no sintieron incertidumbre y no se alejan de experiencias negativas de paternidad y de machismo que puedan haber experimentado o con las que creyeran. Buscan consejo honesto que les ayude a entender qué se espera de ellos como padres, o futuros padres, especialmente en un mundo donde los roles han cambiado y las responsabilidades tradicionales de padres y madres ya no están tan marcadas. Las iniciativas más eficaces de las que he sido testigo son aquellas que mezclan la teoría con una buena dosis de diálogo, de hombre a hombre y de mujeres a hombres y viceversa.

En casa, pequeñas muestras de afirmación y gratitud siempre llegan lejos (¡verdad carito! Por cierto, aquí tienes la lista del mandado…)

Felicidades a todos los hombres que dan cada día lo mejor de sí mismos a sus familias; a los padres que a pesar de dificultades y defectos no se rían y continúan ahí el pie del cañón; y a todos aquellos que deciden entrar al asunto, aun cuando la fiesta la comenzaron otros.

Ustedes son los héroes silenciosos de la sociedad actual, el San José de las sagradas familias de hoy.

Mar Muñoz-Visoso es subdirectora de prensa y medios de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos.

Colecta Peter's Pence Del 2009

28 de junio

¡Feliz Día del Padre!

21 de junio

La Peregrinación a Tierra Santa

Conoce aquellos lugares santos que tanto representan nuestra Fe. Basílica de la Natividad en Belén, la casa de la Sagrada Familia en Nazaret, Mar de Galilea, la ciudad de Jerusalén, Mar Muerto y mucho más. Completa guía de Israel en Español Salgamos el día Martes, 8 de septiembre hasta el día 17. ¡No falten! Precios es $2,350 puedes reservar tu lugar con sólo $200 de anticipo. Para mas informes llama al P. José Ángel Ortiz de la Diócesis de Corpus Christi (361) 643-4505 o icggregory.org en el Internet.

De la pareja, principalmente por madres están siendo criados por un solo miembro. Los matrimonios se están adaptando en mayor ratio que los matrimonios hispanos tienden también a permanecer juntos en mayor ratio que los de otros grupos. Sin embargo, también existen porcentajes elevados de nacimientos fuera del matrimonio. Y si niños que están siendo criados por un solo miembro de la pareja, principalmente por madres solteras.

Necesitamos ayudar a los hombres a ver el don que es y sus responsabilidades que trae la paternidad, pero también sus satisfacciones. Animarlos a que entren en ese compromiso de forma entusiasta.

A menudo los hombres, especialmente los jóvenes, están sedientos de todo aquello que les aírne en su masculinidad y que los aleje de experiencias negativas de paternidad y de machismo que puedan haber experimentado o con las que creyeran. Buscan consejo honesto que les ayude a entender qué se espera de ellos como padres, o futuros padres, especialmente en un mundo donde los roles han cambiado y las responsabilidades tradicionales de padres y madres ya no están tan marcadas. Las iniciativas más eficaces de las que he sido testigo son aquellas que mezclan la teoría con una buena dosis de diálogo, de hombre a hombre y de mujeres a hombres y viceversa.

En casa, pequeñas muestras de afirmación y gratitud siempre llegan lejos (¡verdad carito! Por cierto, aquí tienes la lista del mandado…) Felicidades a todos los hombres que dan cada día lo mejor de sí mismos a sus familias; a los padres que a pesar de dificultades y defectos no se rían y continúan ahí el pie del cañón; y a todos aquellos que deciden entrar al asunto, aun cuando la fiesta la comenzaron otros.

Ustedes son los héroes silenciosos de la sociedad actual, el San José de las sagradas familias de hoy.

Mar Muñoz-Visoso es subdirectora de prensa y medios de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos.

Colecta Peter's Pence Del 2009

28 de junio

¡Feliz Día del Padre!

21 de junio

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Texas CDA held 46th Biennial convention

Photos and feature story by Terrie Vacek

“One Faith, One Body, One Lord of All” was the theme of the 46th Biennial Texas State Convention of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) held April 23-26, 2009, at the Convention Center in McAllen, Texas.

The State Board Luncheon served as the kick-off activity for the State Convention Thursday, April 23, providing an opportunity to “thank you” to those who have worked so hard over the past two years enabling CDA in Texas to excel.

The 2009 Convention opened with Mass that evening at the Basilica of the National Shrine of Our Lady of San Juan Del Valle with approximately 900 people in attendance. The main celebrant was the Most Rev. Raymundo J. Pena, bishop of Brownsville; concelebrants included Texas State Chaplain and National Clergy Consultant Rev. Donald Ruppert, East Bernard; Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas (JCDCA) State Chaplain Rev. John Peters, Hallettsville; and several priests.

State Regent Bachmann called the convention to order Friday morning. Rev. Ruppert led the opening prayer. Rev. Eduardo Montemayor, director of Evangelization, Diocese of Corpus Christi, gave the keynote address. His address, “Together We Are Strong,” emphasized the two-year theme of State Regent Bachmann, with four specific principles derived from the order’s motto of Unity and Charity. In closing, Rev. Montemayor reminded each CDA member that she is “strong, holy, a princess, and a gift of God for one another.”

Rev. Ruppert was the celebrant for the Memorial Mass in memory of 2007-2009 deceased CDA members. Presiding over the Past Regents Club (PRC) of Texas “Women of the Bible” Friday luncheon and meeting was Lillian Hansen, El Campo, 2007-2009 PRC President. The 2009-2011 PRC officers election results are: Cathy Bitter, Rosenburg, president; Christine Moore, Columbus, first vice president; Beatriz Gonzalez, Victoria, second vice president; Darcie Miskch, Columbus, secretary; Patricia Carr, Richardond, treasurer. Rev. Ruppert served as speaker and master of ceremonies for the Clergy Men’s Luncheon on Friday. State Regent Bachmann made the remarks and Rev. Peters offered the benediction.

Friday evening’s “Fiesta Mexicana” Fun Night began with the 40-year tradition Border Buttermilk reception hosted by the McAllen Chamber. Delegates, clergy and guests dressed for the occasion with a variety of clothing from south of the border.

An opportunity to ‘Meet the Candidates’ was held in the Palm Lobby for those running for the 2011 nominating committee and state office for the 2009-2011 term. Elected as the 2009-2011 state officers are Sheila Martinka, state regent, Houston; Carolyn Malik, first vice state regent, Shiner; Peggy Rosales, second vice state regent, Austin; Eve Trevino, state secretary, Corpus Christi; Minnie Rodgers, state treasurer, Mission. The Passing of the Robe Ceremony followed the announcement. Rev. Ruppert was appointed for a second term as the Texas state chaplain for 2009-2011.

Celebrate and homilist for the Junior Catholic Daughters of the Americas (JCDCA) Celebration of the Eucharist was Rev. Peters, state JCDCA chaplain for 25 years. Rev. Peters also celebrated the 35th anniversary of his ordination in McAllen with 1,000 CDA sisters!

State Regent Bachmann presented many of the highlights of her term in the Regent’s Report including the addition of two new districts that were created with district deputies assigned geographically facilitating multi-district meetings and the addition of ten new CDA courts and six new JCDCA courts. Texas is growing! By the donations of Texas CDA local courts and participation in the Memorial Scholarship Fund, Texas CDA has given over $207,000 to charities and scholarships.

A presentation on the following state projects was given on Missions of Mercy, Texas Habitat for Humanity, Mexico Habitat Build, as Missions of Mercy (MOM) Projects.

The final registration indicate 1,032 paid registrations with 55 registered guests/priests/spouses totaling 1,087 in attendance.

The 2011 State Convention will be in Houston, and San Antonio presented a bid for the 2013 Convention. There are currently 15,800 members in 230 Texas CDA Courts, 56 Junior CDA Courts (age 6 to 18) with 801 members and six College Campus Courts in Texas. To learn more about the Catholic Daughters of the American CDA Districts 14 and 28 Represent State JCDCA Officers—State JCDCA Officers are represented by East Bernard and El Campo youth. Pictured left to right are the officers who attended the 46th Biannual State CDA State Convention in McAllen, Texas: President Beth Krenek of East Bernard, CDA State Regent Sheila Martinka, of Houston, 2nd Vice President Ashley Stiley of Sealy, 1st Vice President Sarah Ornelas of Baytown, Laura Aguilar of El Campo, reporter, State Youth/JCDCA Chairman Terri Beltran of El Campo and Rev. John Peters, State Chaplain of Hallettsville.

“Texas CDA is thriving because of your faithfulness and enthusiasm—and Texas CDA works because of your hard work” said Regent Bachmann.

State Chaplain Reverend Ruppert gave the invocation at the Saturday formal banquet “Together We Celebrate.” Sheila Martinka served as mistress of ceremonies and National Regent Libby Ramirez shared remarks and greetings from the national board.

Sunday morning, 50 participated in the first Walk/Run Event, which raised over $3,500 for Texas CDA.

Catholic Daughters Delegates Attend Texas Convention

Members of Saint Bernadette Court #1108, District 28, that attended the Texas CDA Convention include (front row): Helen Pesek; #1108 Regent Henriette Jalouy; Terrie Vacek, state scrapbook and public relations chairman; second row: Carolyn Minks, Patricia Michulka, #1108 treasurer; Debbie Gathman, #1108 financial secretary; and Joey Pitman.

“Thank you to each and every one of you for your hard work and your dedication to your church and to our Order of Catholic Daughters of the Americas,” Sheila Martinka, National Regent, stated during the State Convention Closing.

Texas CDA News, May 2009

For the full story please go to Extra, Extra. Extra at www.victoriadiocese.org/lighthouse/lighthouse.htm.
CATHOLIC CHURCH BOMBING IN NEPAL—Relatives and friends of bomb blast victims grieve during a funeral service inside the Catholic Church of the Assumption in Katmandu, Nepal, May 26. The blast, occurring May 23, killed two and is suspected of being placed by members of a Hindu extremist group. (CNS photo/Gopal Chitrakar, Reuters)

Five Tamil priests remain detained in Sri Lankan refugee camps
JAFFNA, Sri Lanka (CNS) — Five Tamil Catholic priests who had been trapped in Sri Lanka’s northern war zone remain detained in refugee camps in Vavuniya, said Bishop Thomas Savundaranayagam of Jaffna. “They were rescued by the military from the war zone,” Bishop Savundaranayagam told the Asian church news agency UCA News June 1. “They worked for the people. They should be sent to Jaffna.” The Jaffna Diocese bore the brunt of the heaviest fighting and the church there has suffered “heavy loss,” said the bishop, whose diocese was subject to laws governing church activities. Diocesan lawyers filed a lawsuit in U.S. District Court in Hartford May 29 asking that a decision by the Connecticut Office of State Ethics determining the Bridgeport Diocese was subject to laws governing lobbying organizations be overturned. The decision stems from the diocese’s involve- ment in organizing a March 11 rally at the Connecticut Capitol in Hartford to oppose a bill that would have given lay people fi- nancial control of their parishes. The church maintained that such a law would have been contrary to canon law. “The lobbying law of Connecticut is being used to limit free speech, to limit assembly, to limit freedom of religion,” Bishop William E. Lori said in announcing the lawsuit in a video posted on the diocesan Web site.

Good reviews: Vatican newspaper sees Obama’s start in positive light

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) -- In a season of tension for the U.S. Catholic hierarchy and President Barack Obama, the Vatican newspaper has offered some unexpectedly upbeat reviews of the president’s first four months in office. With Pope Benedict XVI expected to meet Obama in early July, it’s worth a closer look at what L’Osservatore Romano has had to say, and what it finds so promising about the new U.S. administration.

The newspaper enjoys a degree of editorial independence, especially under its new editor, Giovanni Maria Vian, so its opinions cannot be read as formal Vatican policy statements. But it describes itself as “at the service of the thinking of the pope” and in practice works closely with the Vatican Secretariat of State. If its myriad front-page articles on Obama were going in the wrong direction, one can be sure that the editors would feel a swift tug on the reins.

“It should be understood that L’Osservatore shares the same position as the American bishops who consider abor- tion a disaster. It is always a necessary and decisive task, in fact, to promote a culture of life at every level,” Vian said.

In fact, the day it reported on the Notre Dame speech, L’Osservatore also carried a news story on the U.S. bishops’ campaign against the Obama administration’s policy on federal funding of embryonic stem-cell research. And on May 22, the newspaper ran a short article quoting two U.S. bishops who had criticized Notre Dame’s decision to honor Obama.

What’s striking about L’Osservatore’s coverage of Obama has been its attention to the wider range of issues, especially in foreign policy. The newspaper has found much to its liking:

– The Israeli-Palestinian situation. Three days after Pope Benedict left Israel with a strong call for a two-state solution based on mutual security, Obama met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netan- yahu with virtually the same message. The Vatican newspaper said the president’s position was in “full harmony” with that of the pope, reflecting the Vatican’s strong hope that Obama will get serious about pressing Israel on a settlement.

– Middle East outreach. The Vatican newspaper has said Obama’s upcoming speech in Egypt in June represents a “new step by the U.S. administration toward an open dialogue with the Arab world.” It has reported favorably on the Obama admin- istration’s opening of direct talks with Iran and Syria, and its efforts to encourage greater Syrian involvement in a regional peace settlement.

– Disarmament. A recent L’Osservatore story headlined “Concrete hopes for dis- armament” took Obama at his word when he spoke of the need to rid the planet of nuclear arsenals. This is a sleeper issue, one that makes few headlines in the United States but which is frequently on the minds of Vatican officials, including the pope. Obama’s steps toward direct talks with Russia on strategic weapons and his call for strengthening the nonproliferation treaty have convinced the Vatican that he is serious.

– The Americas. The newspaper has commented favorably on Obama’s over- tures to several leftist Latin American states, most specifically his lifting of restrictions on Cuba.

– Multilateralism and human rights. L’Osservatore has applauded Obama’s “turn toward multilateralism” in the interna- tional arena, especially when it comes to international organizations banned by previous U.S. administrations. When the administration announced, for example, that the United States would seek a place on the United Nations Human Rights Council, it sent a positive signal of change, the newspaper said. A proposal to close the U.S. detention center in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, was described as another human rights step in the right direction.

– Diplomacy. The newspaper has said Obama is pursuing a foreign policy based on “fewer bullets and more diplomacy,” thus reducing the risk of war and bringing the United States into closer alignment with European thinking. It has also credited him with political savvy in identifying Iran and Pakistan as key states vital for the future of world peace.

– The economy. L’Osservatore has reported in depth on Obama’s economic moves, including his “war on superbo- mbs” and actions to eliminate “fiscal paradises” for multinational companies. Without endorsing his approach, it has de-

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In Holy Land, pilgrim pope delivers religious, political challenges

By John Thavis
Catholic News Service

JERUSALEM (CNS) -- Pope Benedict XVI's eight-day visit to the Holy Land was a biblical pilgrimage, an interfaith mission and a political balancing act rolled into one. It was more than remarkable. In a region hardened by decades of conflict and simmering social and religious tensions, there was no guarantee of success.

The long-range verdict is yet to come on this “pilgrimage of peace,” but the pope certainly earned the right to a challenging message to his diverse audiences in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories May 8-15. That alone was an achievement.

The common theme that tied his events together was that God acts in human events, and that believers have a duty to make religion an effective force for good in a region suffering from war, mistrust and misunderstanding.

To Christians, the pope focused on the hope brought by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. On his final day in Jerusalem, he summed up his message, saying that the empty tomb “assures us that God can make all things new,” that peace is really possible and that long-standing hostilities can be overcome.

That was the point of the pope’s pilgrimage to places like the Jordan River, the Grotto of the Annunciation and Golgotha. He was not just engaging in religious tourism, but trying to strengthen the confidence of the struggling Church. The humanity in the Holy Land and the faith of other Christians who watched and listened from afar.

On an interreligious level, the pope’s pilgrimage seemed to have two distinct phases. In Jordan, a predominantly Muslim country that has protected the rights of Christians, the pope lauded efforts to build an “alliance of civilizations” and curb extremism. His stop at a mosque in Amman was historic ... he’s now the first pope to have visited two Muslim places of worship.

His approach was to build bridges by affirming the moderate voices in Islam. When he spoke, for example, of the “fundamental contradiction of resorting to violence or terrorism,” he spoke, for example, of the “fundamental contradiction of resorting to violence or terrorism.”

Pope Benedict XVI wears a shmagh, a Jordanian head scarf, which was given to him at the Regina Pacis center in Amman, Jordan, May 8. Looking on is Mgr. Guido Martinelli, the pope’s master of liturgical ceremonies. The center was the first stop on the pope’s weeklong pastoral visit to the Holy Land. (CNS photo/OL’Osservatore Romano, CPP)

The pope’s interreligious dialogue encounter the same evening was unfortunately derailed by a Muslim sheik’s denunciation of Israeli policies, which prompted Jewish representatives to walk out. And with that, the pope was knee-deep in the politics of the region within the first 24 hours.

The Israeli-Palestinian conflict touches every aspect of life in the Holy Land, so it should have been no surprise that the pope got an earful wherever he went. Especially in the West Bank city of Bethlehem, on his one full day in Palestinian territory, speaker after speaker — including church leaders — denounced the Israeli occupation, the travel and economic restrictions, the destruction of homes and the political difficulties.

The pope walked a finer line. On one hand he sympathized with Palestinians and strongly defended their right to an independent state; on the other hand, he spoke of “turnoil” rather than “occupation” and appealed to Palestinian youths to overcome bitterness and reject terrorism — words that Israeli officials were no doubt happy to hear.

He denounced the 26-foot-high Israeli security wall that cuts through the West Bank like a concrete scar, calling it one of the “saddest sights” of his visit and a tragic symbol of Israeli-Palestinian relations.

But even there, he was careful to avoid blame, referring to “the hostilities that have caused this wall to be built” rather than the “oppression” that his Palestinian hosts loudly condemned. The pope’s method was the moral prodding of a pilgrim. When he met with Israeli President Shimon Peres, for example, he explored the Hebrew scriptural meaning of “security” as not just the lack of threat but the building of trust.

The pope did more than preach in the Holy Land. He also did a lot of listening, his aides said. For every papal speech, there were three or four speeches from his hosts.

Of the visit’s many remarkable moments, one stood out: At an interfaith encounter in Nazareth, the pope and other Christian, Muslim, Jewish and Druze leaders held hands in prayer as a psalm of peace was sung — a small but significant achievement on his pilgrim’s path.

Engage Obama or fight him? Law professors discuss his abortion stance

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- While agreeing that abortion is unacceptable, two pro-life professors disagreed on whether it is appropriate to engage President Barack Obama in the issue of abortion or to insist that it be outlawed in order to protect the dignity of the unborn.

In a discussion May 28 at the National Press Club, Douglas Kmiec, professor of law at Pepperdine University and an Obama supporter, said the new administration’s promise to fund abortion alternatives and its proposals for new social and economic policies would sooner reach the goal of fewer abortions.

Joining with the Obama White House to address the common good would be the more prudent step for Catholics, Kmiec said. However, Robert George, professor of jurisprudence at Princeton University, even while acknowledging that he and Kmiec hold the same views on life issues, challenged the Peperdine professor saying that if Obama truly wants to seek common ground, he would support several key policies that would discourage abortion.

George said proposals to ban parental-birth and sex-selection abortion, end abortions during the second and third trimester and extend waiting periods, informed consent laws and parental consent laws all have been rejected by Obama administration officials.

Priest’s decision to be an Episcopalian said to harm church relations

MIAMI (CNS) -- Archbishop John C. Favalora of Miami expressed disappointment May 28 at both Father Alberto Cutie’s decision to join the Episcopal Church and the public way he was received into his new church. “This truly is a serious setback for ecumenical relations and cooperation” between the Catholic Archdiocese of Miami and the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida, the archbishop said in a statement that also warned Catholics not to request sacraments from Father Cutie nor attend Masses celebrated by him. Father Cutie, who was suspended from his parish and Catholic radio posts after photos of him with a woman were released by a tabloid magazine, joined the Episcopal Church May 28 at a ceremony at Miami’s Trinity Cathedral.

The woman, identified as Ruhama Bunni Canellis, 35, also became an Episcopalian in the same ceremony. A statement from the Episcopal Diocese of Southeast Florida said he would pursue becoming a priest in that church but it was not clear how long the process would take.

Archbishop Favalora said neither Father Cutie nor Episcopal Bishop Leo Fragoe of Southeast Florida had told him that the priest was considering joining the Episcopal Church.

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A Primer in Peace

By Cynthia Brewer

SAN ANTONIO—“You can’t have anger and peace,” was the essential point of the Holy Land Conference held at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio May 1-2, 2009.

The conference, sponsored by the Pilgrim Center of Hope, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) and the Oblate School of Theology, hosted the Archbishop of the Melkite Greek Catholic Church in Galilee, Abuna (Father) Elias Chacour. He is the author of “Blood Brothers,” the story of how his family became refugees at the creation of the state of Israel in 1948.

The conference began with a talk by Archbishop Chacour Friday evening at the Assumption Chapel on the Oblate School of Theology (OST) grounds, where he implored those working for peace in the Holy Land to not bring anger to the situation. If you’re not going to be part of the solution, don’t come (to the Holy Land), he said. They have enough angry and unhappy people there.

At the Saturday morning opening, Rev. Ron Rolheiser, president of OST, welcomed the attendees to the conference. The day was arranged into four sessions beginning with Joe Donnelly, the permanent delegate to the United Nations for Caritas Internationalis, who spoke about the “Complexity of the Issues” of the Holy Land. “Don’t be a ‘Wisenheimer’—a know it all– there’s more to learn about the issues,” he cautioned. He also said that there is a very strong need for a vocabulary of peace.

Following his presentation and questions and answers, a panel consisting of Father Juan Molina of CRS, Patty Parma of the Holy Land Christian Ecumenical Foundation, and Deacon Tom and Mary Jane Fox of the Pilgrim Center of Hope presented their stories and reflected on how their personal Holy Land experiences transformed them and the work that they do.

“The whole body of Christ is the total of all the churches in the world,” Mary Jane stated and then asked, “(What) is the heart of the church? It’s Jerusalem, and it’s bleeding.” She told participants that on her 35 pilgrimages of peace to the Holy Land, the Christian Arabs beg her to “Tell people we are here!”

Session III included an extraordinary panel of three women native to the Holy Land who come from three different faiths: Ms. Rachel Walsh, an Israeli-American Jew, born and raised in Israel and now teaching English, Judaism and Hebrew in several universities in Texas; Rolla Al-laydi, a Muslim, originally from Al Mughazai, and now living in New Mexico; and Grace Ghattas, a Palestinian Christian originally from Bethlehem, now living in Torreon, Mexico.

Ms. Al-laydi’s main request was for hope, “to keep hope in our hearts.” and Mrs. Ghattas stated: “Without peace and justice in the Holy Land, there will be no peace in the world.” At a Palestinian/Jewish dialogue in San Antonio, Ms. Walsh said she experienced a transformation, “I connected to the pain of the other side—and it does not diminish my own pain—it added a whole new dimension (except for her immediate family, she lost most of her relatives to the Holocaust). She strongly suggested that to legitimize the others’ pain, we must start working with joint organizations—we must come as equals to the table. We’re “not to take the Palestinian side or Israeli side. If you choose a side against another, you are no longer an honest peace broker,” said Ms. Walsh. “Choose the side of humanity, reconciliation and peace.”

Because there were many levels of anger and demands voiced from attendees of the conference that “justice must be attained if peace is to be attained,” a Victorian conference participant, Kelly Clements, made the comment that “Peace comes from forgiveness, not just from justice.”

The fourth session involved action planning, where participants joined either Advocacy, Pilgrimages or Parish solidarity breakout sessions.

Originally 88 high school students from the Laredo area were scheduled to attend the conference but had to change.

By Maria Huemmer, Public Relations and Outreach Coordinator, Texas Catholic Conference

Mother’s day and father’s day provide us with an opportunity to think about the importance of our family, both for us as individuals and also on society. The Catechism teaches that “in our own time, in a world often alien and even hostile to faith, believing families are of primary importance as centers of living, radiant faith.” Indeed our Church teaches that the family is “the original cell of social life….Family life is an initiation into life in society.”

If we work to strengthen the family, we strengthen society. This legislative session the Texas Catholic Conference is supporting several family-friendly bills that do many things such as outreach campaigns to increase a fathers’ involvement with their children before birth, help pregnant moms in college, promote adoption over abortion, fund school breakfast programs and children’s health insurance, and strengthen Pre-K programs.

However, there are several bills that hurt the confidence and trust of the family. They would allow minors access to contraception, advocate for domestic partnerships and contracts with surrogates to bear children, and divide immigration families.

Family life should not have to be considered a luxury. Together, we can act as faithful citizens to promote the family by supporting health care, educational opportunity, family unity, and the basic right to life. Let us pray for strength for all families that they may receive God’s blessings as the domestic Church and mimic the love that we find between the Holy Family.
JOPLIN, MO—The following is the joint statement by Robert L. Fastiggi, Ph.D., a Catholic theologian and ethicist, and Bernard N. Nathanson, M.A., M.D., bioethicist and former abortivist, on behalf of the Pope John Paul II Bioethics Commission: "The John Paul II Bioethics Commission unequivocally condemns the killing of the late-term abortionist Dr. George Tiller as an egregious, lawless and evil action.

"Whoever is responsible for this act, no matter the reason, should be brought to justice. Although it is yet to be seen why the perpetrator took these actions, there has been much speculation that it was to end Tiller’s enterprise as a late-term abortionist.

“To that end, we wish to address this way of thinking: The concept that murder- ing an abortionist is acceptable because it can save the lives of innocent unborn children is the philosophy of utilitarianism and it is radically incompatible with a true understanding of Christianity. Pope John Paul II condemned such moral reasoning in 1993’s Veritatis Splendor. Such actions are intrinsically evil because they refuse to acknowledge the classical precept that one may never directly perform an evil action regardless of the good which may come from it.”

Dr. Fastiggi went on to say: “Our commission recognizes that God wills the conversion in this life of the worst of sinners - including late-term abortionists like George Tiller-not their destruction. We witness the fruits of God’s merciful will on a regular basis through our work with Dr. Nathanson. He is living testimony that such conversions do occur. Prior to his conversion first to the pro-life movement and then eventually to the Catholic Church, Dr. Nathanson was the co-founder of NARAL and director of what was then the largest abortion facility in the world. He is personally responsible for over 60,000 abortions; however he has been a vital ally in the fight to protect the innocent unborn over the past 25 years because he was allowed the chance to change. If we are truly to do God’s work here on Earth, we must never lose sight that it is His will we are to follow, not our own.”

The John Paul II Bioethics Commission exists to educate the public and seek to protect innocent human lives in accord with Catholic teaching and to work within our system of government to facilitate such conversions.

Supreme Court Nominee Sonia Sotomayor (CNS photo/Jason Reed, Reuters)

Obama nominates New York Latina to Supreme Court

WASHINGTON (CNS) — President Barack Obama has nominated federal appeal court Judge Sonia Sotomayor to the Supreme Court; if she is confirmed, the New York native of Puerto Rican descent would become the first Hispanic to serve on the high court and would replace retiring Justice David Souter when the next term opens in October. Obama announced his choice of Sotomayor, 54, at a brief event at the White House May 26. At the White House announcement, Sotomayor described herself as “an ordinary person who has been blessed with extraordinary opportunities and experiences.”

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Catholic Life Insurance
Celebrating 108 Years of Service

*Interest rates are subject to change & vary by plan. Minimum guaranteed interest rate is 2.50% SS 5-09
By Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI said his visit to the Holy Land was a pilgrimage of faith and of peace, and an occasion to bear witness to the fact that even in desperate situations of tension believers trust in the power of God.

“In that land blessed by God, it sometimes seems impossible to break the spiral of violence, but nothing is impossible for God and for those who trust in him,” the pope said May 20 at his weekly general audience.

“For this reason, faith in the one God — just and merciful — is the most precious resource” of the Christians, Muslims and Jews living in Jordan, Israel and the Palestinian territories, he said.

Reviewing his May 8-15 trip for the 20,000 people gathered in St. Peter’s Square, the pope said that in his meetings with government leaders he tried to be a messenger of peace and to remind everyone that faith should help the region’s people unleash the power of respect, reconciliation and cooperation.

Pope Benedict praised the government of Jordan, a country with a Muslim majority, for the respect it shows its Christian minority and for the way it upholds religious liberty for all.

Pope tells Vatican diplomats to first be good priests

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI told priests studying to be Vatican diplomats that their primary concern must be to be good priests rather than to have a brilliant career and see the world. “The Lord wants us to be saints,” the pope said May 23 during a meeting with students and staff of the Pontifical Ecclesial Academy, which prepares priests to work in Vatican embassies around the world as well as in the Vatican Secretariat of State.

God can bring peace to Middle East, pope says at audience

“God’s plan for human beings is that they should be able both to exhort with sound doctrine and to refute opponents.”

Pope Benedict XVI

CNS photo by Reuters

The Pope Speaks

SPRITUALITY

A Day of Prayer and Reflection — IWBS Convent, June 20

“Listen, the Voice of Your God is Calling”

Do you seek the still, small voice of God? You are invited to a quiet retreat of prayer and reflection, to listen to the God who dwells in your heart. Learn about prayer as relationship, hear with the ear of your heart and find the God within through Lectio Divina (Praying the Scriptures).

A Day of Prayer and Reflection will be held at IWBS Convent (Amor Meus Spirituality Center), Saturday, June 20, from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. The retreat is open to men and women. Come and enjoy God’s nature and experience peace and quiet.

Mass will be celebrated and Liturgical Prayer will begin and end our day. You may buy a box lunch for $5.00 or bring your own. Drinks will be provided. Register by Monday, June 15 by calling Sister Alberta or Cris Uresti at 361-575-7111. Park in front of Incarnate Word Convent (1101 NE Water Street, Victoria, 77901) and follow the signs to Annunciation Library.

“Be still and know that I am God”

A Farewell from St. Paul Year of St. Paul ~ 2008-2009 Jubilee

End of the Year of St. Paul Jubilee, June 29, 2009

Titus 1:5-9; 2:1-3/11 (NAB)

For this reason I left you in Crete so that you might set right what remains to be done and appoint presbyters in every town, as I directed you, on condition that a man be blameless, married only once, with believing children who are not accused of licentiousness or rebellious.

For a bishop as God’s steward must be blameless, not arrogant, not irritable, not a drunkard, not aggressive, not greedy for sordid gain, but hospitable, a lover of goodness, temperate, just, holy, and self-controlled, holding fast to the true message as taught so that he will be able both to exhort with sound doctrine and to refute opponents.

Chapter 2

1) As for yourself, you must say what is consistent with sound doctrine, namely, 2) that older men should be temperate, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, love, and endurance. 3) Similarly, older women should be reverent in their behavior, not slanderers, not addicted to drink, teaching what is good, 4) so that they may train younger women to love their husbands and children, 5) to be self-controlled, chaste, good homemakers, under the control of their husbands, so that the word of God may not be discredited. 6) Urge the younger men, similarly, to control themselves, 7) showing yourself as a model of good deeds in every respect, with integrity in your teaching, dignity, 8) and sound speech that cannot be criticized, so that the opponent will be put to shame without anything bad to say about us. 9) Slaves are to be under the control of their masters, in all respects, giving them satisfaction, not talking back to them(10) or stealing from them, but exhibiting complete good faith, so as to adorn the doctrine of God our savior in every way.

For the grace of God has appeared, saving all (12) and training us to reject godless ways and worldly desires and to live temperately, justly, and devoutly in this age, 13) as we await the blessed hope, the appearance of the glory of the great God and of our savior Jesus Christ, 14) who gave himself for us to deliver us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people for his own, for what is good. 15) Say these things. Exhort and correct with all authority. Let no one look down on you.

Chapter 3: 1) Remind them to be under the control of magistrates and authorities, to be obedient, to be open to every good enterprise. 2) They are to slander no one, to be peaceable, considerate, exercising all graciousness toward everyone. 3) For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, deluded, slaves to various desires and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hateful to ourselves and hating one another. 4) But when the kindness and generous love of God our savior appeared, 5) not because of any righteous deeds we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy Spirit, 6) whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus Christ our savior, 7) so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life. 8) This saying is trustworthy. I want you to insist on these points, that those who have believed in God be careful to devote themselves to good works; these are excellent and beneficial to others. 9) Avoid foolish arguments, genealogies, rivalries, and quarrels about the law, for they are useless and futile. 10) After a first and second warning, break off contact with a heretic.

Pope Benedict XVI’s June 2009 Intentions

General: That international attention towards the poorer countries may give rise to more concrete help, in particular to relieve them of the crushing burden of foreign debt.

Mission: That the particular Churches operating in regions marked by violence may be sustained by the love and concrete closeness of all the Catholics in the world.
**Grief Group** — Have you experienced the death of a loved one? Join us in this on-going grief group on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room at Holy Family Church, 274 Mallette Drive, Victoria. For information, please call (361) 578-7572.

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

**St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans** — For meeting dates call Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 574-1858.

Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity Emerging/Secular Franciscans — meets every other Wednesday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. for dates and location call Joy Howard at (361) 574-8847.

St. Padre Pio Prayer Group meets the 2nd Saturday of each month at St. Mary Church Annex in Victoria for a 7:30 a.m. Mass, followed by prayer and light refreshments.

**Natural Family Planning Outreach** at: Holy Family Catholic Church. Please contact Melissa Morse at (361) 573-0877 or call (361) 573-0870 for more information or to register for classes. Available for counsel at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more information or to register, visit the Web site at www.victoriadiocese.org/famil-ium/ee.htm, or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. To request information in Spanish or bilingual, please call (361) 257-2002 ext. 30. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

**Engaged Encounter** — Register as soon as you have contacted your pastor due to limited space. It is strongly recommended that you attend an encounter weekend every four to six months prior to your marriage. To register for the next registration form, contact your pastor, visit the Web site at www.victoriadiocese.org/famil-ium/ee.htm, or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. To request information in Spanish or bilingual, please call (361) 257-2002 ext. 30. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

**Renewal Center** — Engaged Encounter weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more information or to register, write or call Michael and Diane Keerck, 2512 Hillcrest, Bay City, Texas 77404; (979) 245-0323; register@mevictoria.org www.mevictoria.org

**Retreats** — the word Retrairee means ‘rediscovey.’ It is a program that offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse and your relationship. The program is offered at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The dates for 2009 are: Sept. 11-13 and Nov. 20-22. For more info., call (361) 573-0828 ext. 30. All registration forms must be returned by the deadline.

**St. Mary—St. Mary Parish Picnic June 14 at the parish hall. Mass will be celebrated at the church beginning at 9:15 a.m. A stew and sausage dinner begins at 10:30 a.m. at $7/p with dine-in or drive-thru available. There will be games, plants, cake, cakewalk, train ride and country store. Hamburgers will be sold in the afternoon. Dancing begins at 1:00 p.m. Dance to live music from 10:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. with Texas Sound Source, Tony Janak and Red Ravens. See page 7 for more information.

**Schaften—St. Rose of Lima will hold its annual parish picnic on June 14 at KC Hall. Mass will be held Sunday at 7:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. A meal featuring fried chicken, sausage and all the trimmings will be served from 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. at the KC Hall. Adult plates $7.50 p/p; children under 12, $3.50 p/p. Drive-through adult plates will be available. Hamburgers, iced tea and other food and refreshments will be served all afternoon and evening. The biergarten will open at noon.

**Victoria—Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser June 21 at the KC Hall. The price is $6 per dinner. The food begins at 1:00 p.m. and from 1:30-3:30 p.m.; Mark Halata and Texavia will play from 4-8 p.m. One of the highlights of the evening will be the drawing of a car for $300 donated by the Knights. There will be a bouquet raffle at 1:00 p.m., featuring cattle, quilts, antiques and much more. Other activities at this year’s picnic will include bingo in the hall, as well as amusements and games, including a country store, cake walk, children’s rides, for children, and the sweepstakes drawing will be at 8:00 p.m.

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The Catholic Lighthouse
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DIOCESE

Catholic elementary schools’ highest level recognized

Holy Cross School
Bay City
6th Graders:
Mitchell Dougherty, Richard James, Connor Jenewein, Miguel Mirelez, Andrew Richards, Ryan Rubio and Joseph Tobias

Saint Anthony School
Columbus
8th Graders:

St. Michael School
Cuero
6th Graders:
Keve Franklin-Williams, Ricky Garcia and Charles Jackson

St. Philip School
El Campo
8th Graders:
Blaise Anderson, Amy Bremer, Mark Alan Cochrum, Rebecca Dornak, Matthew Edwards, Allison Fucik, Stephen Gaines, Cody Gyuenes, Chance Hollingsworth, Stephanie Janak, Kayelyn Korenek, Rebecca Korenek, Sarah Krenek, Sean Mahoney, Cameron Pratka, Elliott Rittershau, Spencer Singleton, Zachary Stites, Reid Strnad and Brittain Zalman

Sacred Heart School
Hallettsville
8th Graders:
Sandra Adams, Lucas Allen, Cade Brewer, Jenna Brown, Alex DeLaRosa, Marianne Herndon, Lauren Huser, MacKenzie Kennedy, Adrienne Klimitchek, Ariane Kubena, Amber Labay, Robyn Pavlick, Leighlin Pilat, Brier Shimek, Brady Sitka, Hailey Smith, Katelyn Snider, Tyler Wagner and Ashley Zimmerman

Our Lady of the Gulf School, Port Lavaca
8th Graders:
Aron Collins, James Mai-koeter, Joe Martinez, Jake Meyer, Bianca Munoz, Kaitlin Smith, Ashley Mutchler and Leilani Pina

St. Rose of Lima School, Schulenburg
8th Graders:
Caitlyn Bennett, Colton Bubela, Dax Dittrich, Baylie Fietsam, Kirsten Heger, Mary Kossa, Christopher Kunz, Molly McCourt, Victor Mondragon and Caitlin Surman

St. Ludmila Academy
Shiner
8th Graders:

Nazareth Academy
Victoria
8th Graders:

Our Lady of Victory School, Victoria
8th Graders:

Our Lady of Victory High School’s 2009 Top Graduates

St. Joseph High
Victoria
Valedictorian
Emalee Hall
Parents: Scott & Shanna Hall

Salutatorian
Abbey Janssen
Parents: Dr. David Janssen & Ms. Rebecca McCarty

St. Paul High
Shiner
Valedictorian
Hannah Alyse Kocian
Parents: James & Laurie Kocian

Salutatorian
Jessica Diane Schwab
Parents: Cynthia Martinez & Douglas Schwab

Sacred Heart High
Hallettsville
Valedictorian
Kadee Bludau
Parents: Ervin & Terry Bludau

Salutatorian
Kaylie Steffek
Parents: Alvin & Ruth Steffek

For Weimar and Yoakum
See Catholic elementary, p. 13