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The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



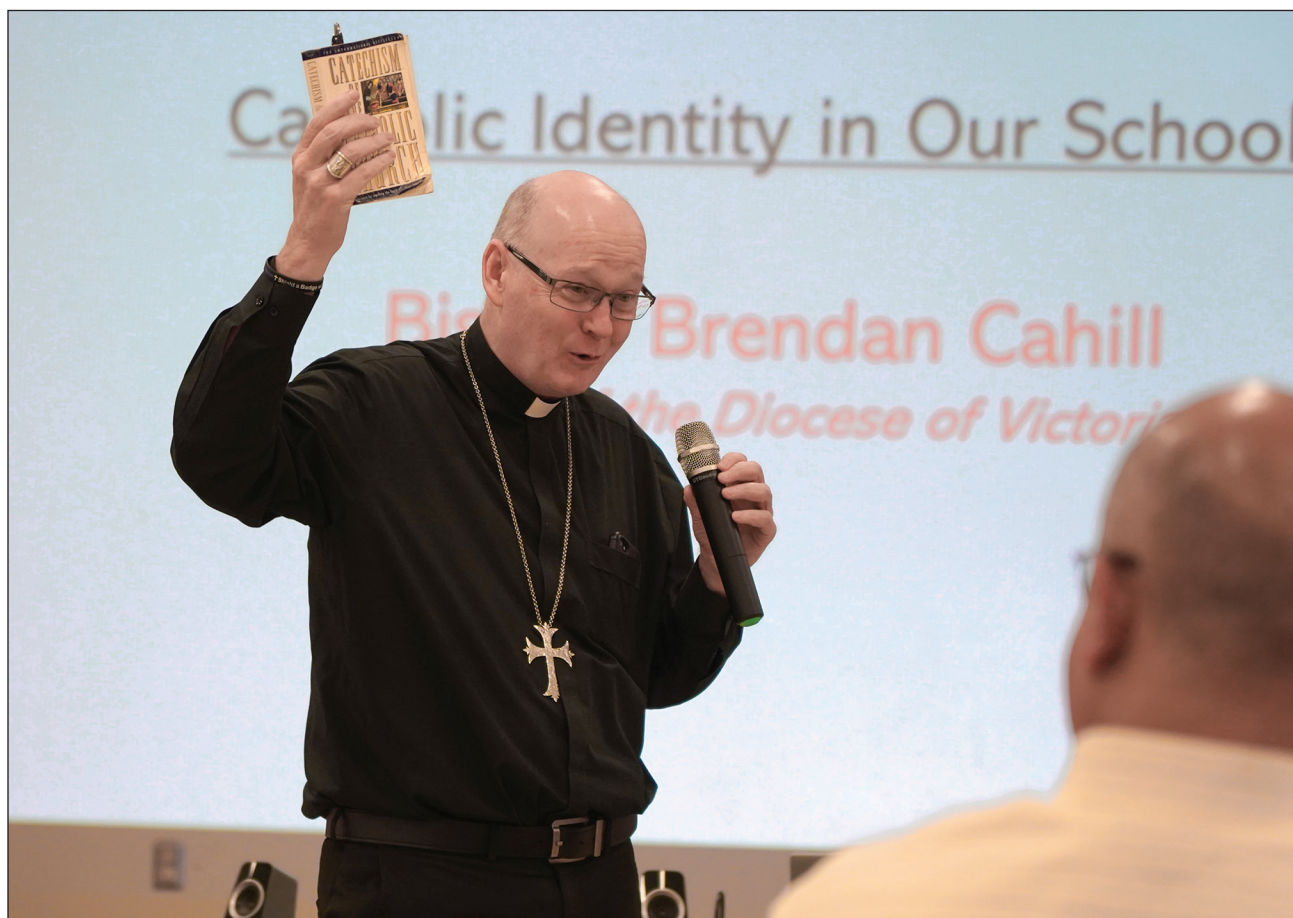
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October 2023



Bishop Brendan J. Cahill holds up the Catechism of the Catholic Church as he makes the point that everything the Catholic Schools need to know to preserve their Catholic identity lies in its pages. He spoke at a recent workshop for local school advisory committees in the Diocese of Victoria, hosted by the Diocesan School Advisory Committee. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Catholic schools 'a heck of a deal'

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

GANADO -- Maintaining a Catholic identity, school safety and transparency in the cost of education were discussed at a recent workshop for local school advisory council (LSAC) in the Diocese of Victoria. The workshop was hosted by the diocesan advisory council at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary parish hall.

Bishop Brendan Cahill revealed to the group a recently adopted mission statement of the diocese that could guide the schools as well in their Catholic identity: "To be Christ-like

people who work together to serve the Church so that every person encounters the love of Jesus."

Attending Catholic schools becomes tradition in families, he said. "It is a sacrifice. It's not easy, but they are committed to it because of their Catholic identity."

The framework for having a strong Catholic identity in the schools, he said, comes straight from the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

"First," Bishop Cahill said, "and it may sound obvious

See Catholic schools, pg. 20

At least 63 million lives aborted since 1973

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

This is Respect Life Month. The USCCB has set aside October to focus on pro-life issues for 50 years -- since Roe v. Wade made abortion legal in the United States.

After the decision to overturn Roe v. Wade, one Victoria man who regularly supports pro-life activities wanted to count the cost of legalized abortion in the U.S.

Robert Easterling, who also paid attention when business owners were saying, "Nobody wants to work," as they struggled to staff their restaurants, retail stores or other businesses, did some research and discovered that

at least 63 million people died from abortion before they were born.

The country not only lost those persons, Easterling said, we lost their progeny. He doesn't see it as a coincidence that there are not enough people willing to fill those open job positions. A retired businessman himself, he said as baby boomers age out of the workforce, the situation will become worse.

The number of reported abortions, according to Easterling, is about one-fifth of the current U.S. population and the loss of those people seems to mirror the

See 63 million, pg. 10

Trip to Yakima eye-opening

See Page 11 to read more about Deacon Eddie Huse's encounter with the migrants.

Huge migrant camps like those in the heart of Washington State during

apple-picking season don't exist in the Diocese of Victoria. But for Deacon Eddie Huse and Aldo Camacho, director of Hispanic Minis-

See Trip to Yakima, pg. 12



We value life by seeing the one in need as ‘another self’

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“Coming to topics which are practical and of some urgency, the council lays stress on respect for the human person: everybody should look upon his or her neighbor (without any exception) as another self, bearing in mind especially their neighbor’s life and the means needed for a dignified way of life, lest they follow the example of the rich man who ignored Lazarus, who was poor.” (Gaudium et spes # 27)

The practical topics addressed at the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council in 1965 remain topics in our discussions about the Church and the world today: “marriage and the family, culture, economic and social life, politics, the solidarity of peoples, and peace.” (Gaudium et spes #46)

The Synod of Bishops, beginning in Rome this month, continues this discussion and offers voices from every part of the world in addressing the different issues. I think respect for the human person could be seen as the centralizing theme.

A Shepherd’s Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



What actions are we are taking to help people live a dignified way of life? It could be bringing communion to the homebound or bringing food to someone in need. I can see many ways you are offering your time to help another person feel the respect and love of Jesus.

In this Respect Life Month, let me highlight three examples from our area:

The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads opened the Bethlehem Maternity Home in 2021. This special place provides a home for women who are experiencing difficult pregnancies. Respecting the value and beauty of every life, the men and women who serve

at the Bethlehem Maternity Home offer love and respect. As I’m writing this, I realize they have a great need for more volunteers and help in the ministry – a result of the good news of their mission is the increased request for assistance from around the Crossroads.

Earlier this year, the Point Comfort Seafarers Center celebrated a new opening and blessing. In the few months that this center has been open inside the port at Point Comfort, many seafarers have come to find welcome and hospitality. Just like the Bethlehem Maternity Home, the ministry is growing and in need of more people to be able to spend some time at the center. The seafarers deeply

appreciate the respect and care they receive from the people of this center.

The Kolbe Prison Ministries have been offering retreats and ministry in prisons across the state of Texas since 2009. In our diocese, they sponsor retreats to bring the love and mercy of Jesus to men incarcerated in the Stevenson Unit outside of Cuero. The ministry in this prison has extended to include weekly Mass, regular opportunities for sacramental confession, bible studies and RCIA. Right now we are looking into ways to reach out more to those incarcerated in county jails and juvenile detention centers. The men and women who have been bringing respect and love to the incarcerated also have grown in awareness and compassion for the pain so many victims of crime have suffered.

May God bless you and your families with peace and joy this month, and may we bring the respect and love of Jesus to every person we meet.

Let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

October					
1	9 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Joseph Church; Inez	9	Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists 2:30 p.m. Communities of Faith meeting	18	5:30 p.m. White Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
3	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center	10	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center	19	6 p.m. Mass and Deacon appreciation dinner at Holy Family Church; Victoria
4	3 p.m. Blessing of Pets at Our Lady of Victory Catholic School Rector’s Dinner, St. Mary’s Seminary; Houston	14	1 p.m. Pension Board meeting; Chancery 11 a.m. Mass for Grief Retreat at Spiritual Renewal Center	20	1:30 p.m. National Catholic Partnership for Disability Meeting; Virtual 6 p.m. Mass and Dinner with Immaculate Heart of Mary Homeschoolers at Holy Family Church; Victoria
5	Holy Trinity Seminary Board meeting; Dallas	15	9 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory	21	United Hearts Concert; Victoria
6	Noon First Friday Mass at the Chancery	16	11 a.m. Mass at Incarnate Word Chapel 6 p.m. F.I.R.S.T. Class Education Awards	22-23	Holy Sepulcher Meeting; Oklahoma City
7	10 a.m. Mass for Papal Honors at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory	17	6:30 a.m. Morning Air Radio interview 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center	24-27	Vacation
8	8:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. Mass at Incarnate Word Convent; Victoria			28	10 a.m. Harvest Mass at Whistling Duck; Weimar
				29	8:30 a.m. Mass at Incarnate Word Convent Noon Mass for God’s Embrace Ministry Retreat at the Spiritual Renewal Center
				30	Presenter at Region X Hispanic Ministry Director’s Meeting at the Spiritual Renewal Center St. Mary’s Seminary Board Meeting; Houston
				31	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
November					
				1	6 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Mary’s Church; Victoria
				3	Noon First Friday Mass at the Chancery



Diocese of Victoria mission:

*To be Christ-like
 people who
 work together
 to serve the Church
 so that every person
 encounters the
 love of Jesus.*



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Photo by Josh Applegate/UnSplash

Diocese of Victoria's 2023 Rosary Congress Oct. 1-8

The Annual Diocesan Rosary Congress
 will begin on Oct. 1. From that time and
 continuing for seven days, the rosary will be
 recited during Eucharistic adoration every
 hour somewhere in the diocese.

Each deanery is coordinating efforts to
 make sure that many parishes are involved in
 the prayerful intercession for our world and
 our families. Anyone who wants to partici-
 pate should check with their church, or can
 visit the Parish Finder on the DOV website,
 www.victoriadiocese.org.

Nationally, many dioceses are participat-
 ing in the Rosary Congress again this year.
 In union with the Eucharistic Revival, this
 year's congress will focus on the spiritual
 power of Eucharistic Adoration and the ro-
 sary.

The movie "Power in My Hands" offers a
 beautiful testimony of our faith and is avail-
 able for public showing. As part of this year's
 Rosary Congress, Bishop Brendan J. Cahill
 will celebrate the Mass for our Diocesan
 Feast at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
 on Saturday, Oct. 7 at 10 a.m.

Bishop Cahill has announced the 2023
 intentions for our diocese:

1. in reparation for the sins of bishops and priests;
2. in reparation for sins against the Holy Eucharist, and for an increase and awareness of the real presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist;
3. for the gift of peace, especially in Ukraine; and
4. for an increase of vocations to the priesthood and consecrated life from our families.

More information on the national move-
 ment for the Rosary Congress can be found
 at www.rosarycongressusa.org.



Happy 25th year

FLATONIA — This year marks the 25th anniversary of Raphael's Refuge in the Diocese of Victoria. The first board meeting took place in 1998, according to a recent newsletter from the organization. Midge Elam, whose vision for the monument to the innocents was the beginning of the ministry, recently retired as a board member but will continue to be a vital part of the ministry. The photo here shows Elam explaining all of the paintings she did behind the altar of the chapel in the center of the monument. (Janet Jones/Lighthouse File Photo)



White Mass Oct. 18

VICTORIA — All the faithful are invited to join in praying for God's blessings upon doctors, nurses, therapists and everyone in the medical profession during the Annual White Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Oct. 18 at 5:30 p.m. Bishop Brendan J. Cahill will be the celebrant. Health care professionals and their families are encouraged to be present as they are given a special blessing and are prayed for by the faithful of the Diocese of Victoria. All are welcome.



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**Diocese of Victoria
 in Texas**



Education of Seminarian Fund

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

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

Lector

Elsie Orsak

In memory of Stuart Kriscke and In Honor of Leroy & Alice Janak 60th wedding anniversary & 80th birthdays

Acolyte

Candidate

Transitional Deacon

Priest

To contribute to the Education of Seminarian Fund, send contributions to:

Diocese Of Victoria
Education of Seminarian Fund
P. O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

Seminary Endowment Fund

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

September 20, 2023

• CDA Court of St. Ann #369 Seminary Burse #2

Acolyte

In memory of Sylvia Kocian, Lydia Pargac, Josephine Schoenherr, Magdalene Potcinski, Marylene Taglibue, Margaret Alvarez, Fred Dorr, Fred Garcia, Richard Scheibelhut and Joseph Talamantes by CDA Ct St Ann, #369

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

Lector

Donation in honor of Rev. Wayne Flagg's 35th ordination to the priesthood by Jim & Michelle Kubicek

• Donald F. McDonald, Sr. Seminary Burse #3

Priest

Donation by Mrs. Donald (Olivia Grace) McDonald

• Anthony and Rose Marie Trippodo Liggio Seminary Burse #2

Acolyte

In memory of Mr. Alfonso Martinez by K of C Council 2902, Schulenburg

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

Candidate

Donation from a friend of religious vocations

• Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse

Lector

In honor of Rev. Michael Rother by Sylvia Peter

• St. John the Baptist Church, St. John In Memory of Rev. Brian Crookes Seminary Burse #2

Lector

In memory of Darlene Duffin by: Milton and Diane Holub Lorena Kubenka Leo and Joyce Janda Ralph and Bonnie Besetzny Eugene and Jo Marie Krupala

To contribute to an existing Seminary Endowment Fund, send contributions with the appropriate fund designation to:

Diocese Of Victoria
Seminary Endowment Fund
P. O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

Silent retreat focuses on All Saints, All Souls feasts

VICTORIA -- Amor Meus Spirituality Center is offering a fall retreat, "The Communion of Saints in Our Relationships," Nov. 4 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. It will incorporate the Catholic holy days All Saints Day and All Souls Day, the two-day celebration of the Communion of Saints.

The retreat will dive into the questions: What exactly does this mean? What does it mean as people living our day-to-day lives? What is the invitation to which we are being beckoned? How do we perceive it, understand it and integrate it into our lives? Join us in exploring the answers.



Christina Guerra

Christina Guerra will be the spiritual director. She worked in state government for 30 years before she chose to become a Spiritual Director, completing her studies at the Center for Spiritual Development and the Contemplative Life in San Antonio and the Shalem Institute in Washington, D.C.

Guerra now serves as a spiritual director, retreat facilitator and hospice chaplain, and works with the homeless, immigrant women and women first responders. She also has served on the ACTS Mission Board and San Antonio ACTS Chapter. She is a widow since 2012, and has one daughter and two grandchildren.

Amor Meus is located at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 NE Water St. Sign in for the retreat begins at 9:30 a.m. Attendees should bring a lunch and are asked to park in front of the convent.

There is no cost, but a free-will offering will be accepted.

Chancery Offices will be Closed Wednesday, Nov. 1 For the Holy Day of Obligation for All Saints

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

Rev. Jonas Kuubeta	10/16/2010	The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
Rev. John Affum	10/26/1996	Sacred Heart, Hallettsville
Rev. Frank B. Lenz	10/29/1994	Retired

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

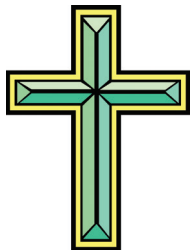
Rev. Charles Carolan	10/09/2009
Rev. Joseph Vrana	10/10/2016
Rev. Msgr. Julius Petru	10/15/2001
Rev. Joseph Pham duc Trinh	10/16/2007

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil for you are with me your rod and your staff, they comfort me. Psalms 23:4



Happy birthday to our seminarian

Shane Goertz is in his third year of Theology at St. Mary's Seminary in Houston. Shane's hometown is Spring Prairie, Texas. His birthday is Oct. 28. Write to Shane at: St. Mary's Seminary, 9845 Memorial Dr., Houston, TX 77024.



Respecting differences doesn't diminish the truth

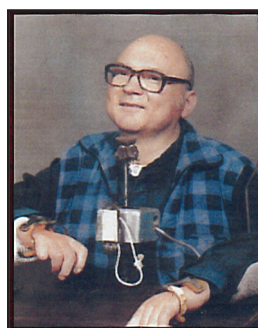
EDITOR'S NOTE: The following was written for the 26th Sunday in ordinary time, Cycle B. Father Kram titled it "Respect and Love for All."

Years ago, German parents and Czech parents strongly opposed the intermarriage of their children, sometimes even to the point of throwing them out of the family. City slickers and country folks ridiculed and looked down on one another. And, of course, an "other side of the tracks" attitude is not hard to find in almost any community.

And what about the rivalry between mankind and womankind – the feminist movement outside and inside the Church? For example, should women drive bulldozers? Should they be combat soldiers? Should

they be ordained priests?

Although we live in a country where we profess freedom and equality and fair play, and where everyone can express his opinion, the fact remains that we still tend to mistreat and belittle and disqualify those who are



1929-2000

Father Charles Kram Corner

different from us.

Fortunately, through such things as women's rights movements and peace movements and religious unity movements, harmony and cooperation have grown.

We have learned that we can each remain faithful to our heritage and to our innermost convictions and, at the same time, recognize whatever is true and good in others and find ways to cooperate and grow with them.

In many things, it would not be correct to say that it doesn't matter what your principles are. This would imply that right is whatever we want or believe it to be.

For example, is drinking too much sinful

or is it not? Does the pope have teaching authority in the Church or does he not? Does absolution by a priest in confession erase sin or does it not?

We are all either for or against the Lord. We must all strive after the truth to the best of our ability and to live honestly according to our conscience and to love and respect every fellow man, no matter how different he may be.

We must not say, "We are all equal but I am more equal than you." But we might say, as one politician did, "I'd rather be right than president."

A good way to decide how to act toward those who are different from us is to watch the Archie Bunker show and carefully note his attitude toward blacks, Jews, women and his son-in-law, and then do the opposite.

Lord Jesus, thank you for accepting into your kingdom people of so many different kinds. Help us to love and respect them all, and to tolerate the things in which we differ. Grant that we may continue to grow in cooperation and unity until we are all one in you. Amen.

4TH ANNUAL
UNITING HEARTS

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and the Joyful Disciples
Clay Crockett and
Nation of Believers
Mt. Nebo Youth Dance Ministry
St. Peter's Adult Choir
Group Ecclesia
Joshua "Fresh" Simmons

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Safe Environment

Reporting Procedures for Suspected or Known Sexual Abuse of a Minor (person under 18 years of age) or Vulnerable Adult by a Member of the Clergy

Contact:

- The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, within **48 hours**, at (800) 252-5400, www.txabusehotline.org, or local police department.

If person is in immediate danger call 911.

and

- Shannon Thomas, LMSW, Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Outreach, Diocese of Victoria, (361) 827-7186, pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.

or

- Bishop or Chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria, (361) 573-0828
Written allegations can be mailed

marked "Personal and Confidential" to
Office of the Bishop
P.O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903



If sexual abuse by a member of clergy has occurred in another diocese, the Diocese of Victoria will help bring your concerns to church officials. For assistance contact Shannon Thomas at (361) 827-7186 or pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.



Spiritual Renewal Center

Looking for a place for your **family reunion or holiday gathering?**

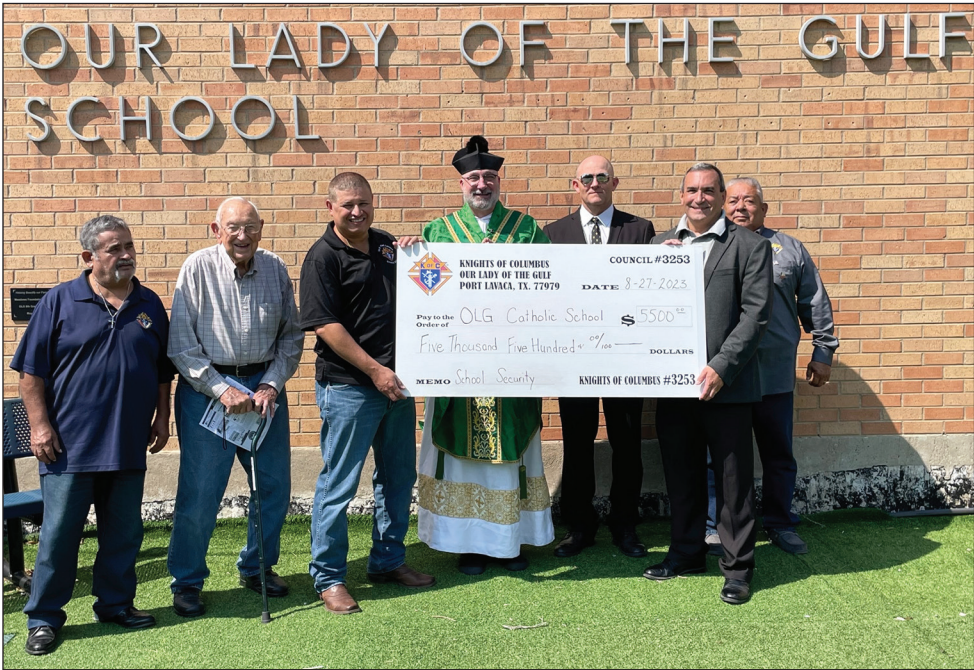
The Spiritual Renewal Center (SRC) is located on approximately 40 acres nestled along the banks of the San Antonio River and about a 25-minute drive from Victoria.

The SRC participates in the mission of the church of Victoria as well as the universal Catholic Church by providing a place apart from the demands of everyday life where individuals may go seeking God more deeply in their lives.

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

Handicap accessible.

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



KCs help with school safety

PORT LAVACA — The Port Lavaca Knights of Columbus No. 3253 recently donated \$5,500 to Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic School for safety and security upgrades around the school. Pictured, from left, are Chris Heysquierdo, Leonard Dreymala, Ricky Servantes, Father Richard Barfield, parochial vicar at OLG parish, Steve Davis, David Augustini, OLG Principal, and Lupe Aviles. *(Contributed Photo)*



Running to help others

COLUMBUS — Cross-country runners from St. Anthony Catholic School in Columbus, St. Michael Catholic School in Weimar, Sacred Heart Catholic School in Hallettsville, Schulenburg High School and Columbus High School joined forces on Labor Day to raise funds for the Freedom Service Dogs of America, Tunnels to Towers 9/11 Foundation, the Disabled American Veterans Charitable Service Trust, and the National Purple Heart Honor Mission. The St. Anthony Catholic School Principal Shawna Collins and her husband, Paul, joined students and two parents for the evening's fun run. Sarah Moore, St. Anthony's athletic director, coordinated the event. Pictured from left are, front row, Hayes Kloesel (SMCS) and Frank Janecka (SMCS); middle row, Emma Koeth (Sacred Heart HS), Kaylee Foster (Columbus HS), John Foster (SAS), Logan Glueck (SAS), Deacon Barten (SAS), Ella Herzik (SMCS) and Trey Silcox (Schulenburg HS); and, back row, Carrie Foster, Andy Glueck and Shawna and Paul Collins. *(Contributed Photo)*

PARISH OF THE NATIVITY

Roman Catholic Church of Victoria Diocese
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Annual Fall Festival

Sunday, October 15th, 2023
Eucharist
308 N Stevenson St.
Spanish 8:00 am English 10:00 am

MEAL

BBQ Chicken & Sausage,
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\$13.00 per plate
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CURB SERVICE WILL BE AVAILABLE

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RAFFLE DRAWING (AFTER THE AUCTION)
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Different pilgrimage brings new surprises and blessings

On Aug. 21 through Aug. 31, I was blessed to accompany Bishop Brendan Cahill on a pilgrimage to Mexico City. This trip was exactly a year after my pilgrimage to Rome after making my final vows.

For me, one of the highlights of the trip was being able to visit the church of the Sagrada Familia (Holy Family) where the relics of Blessed Miguel Pro are located. I have loved Blessed Miguel Pro for as long as I can remember. I don't remember a time that I didn't love this holy man who lived during the time of the Cristero War, when the Catholic religion was outlawed in Mexico. The churches were closed, people were being killed, priests and religious sisters were being exiled, imprisoned or killed. Yet, during this time, there was a young Jesuit that was determined to still bring the sacraments to people. He was known to dress up in disguises to avoid the police and arrive at people's homes to celebrate the Mass or offer reconciliation.

He was a great man who, when finally captured, stared at the firing squad, outstretched his hands in the form of a cross (in his right hand he held a crucifix, in his left a rosary), and shouted, "Viva Cristo Rey! (Long live Christ the King!)" before being shot to death.

The political powers of the time wanted

Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS



to make an example of Father Pro, so they made sure the execution was fully covered by all news sources and many pictures were taken. Because of that, we have pictures of Father Pro kneeling to pray for his executioners before his death and his stance of bravery when the time came. What happened was the exact opposite of what the political powers were hoping would happen. Their attempt to incite fear and destroy the Catholic Church brought on a new zeal for the faith when people saw how much this man loved his faith and the people.

When it was time for his funeral, knowing that the churches were closed, all the people of the city of Mexico came out for the funeral. There were so many people in attendance that neither the police nor any government official

dared to stop the funeral Mass or burial. They knew that they did not have the numbers to stop the riot that would have been incited had they tried to stop it.

On Aug. 29, our pilgrimage group was able to visit the church and the museum dedicated to Blessed Miguel Pro. Then we were given the honor of holding one of his relics. Bishop Cahill blessed the group with the relic, then the lady in charge of the museum called me forward to hold the relic so that our group members might touch their religious items to it, making them second-class relics.

Exactly one year ago that day I was running around Assisi trying to bring home a relic of Blessed Carlo Acutis for the Diocese of Victoria. It looked hopeless, but through the intercession of Blessed Carlo, who I told as I sat in front of him, "If you want to come back to Victoria, then you're going to have to make it happen because it doesn't look good," I was able to bring him home. (I wrote about this event last year in the *Lighthouse*.)

This year, I was handed a relic of Blessed Miguel Pro who, like I keep repeating, I have loved for as long as I can remember so that our group could touch their medals and/or rosaries to it. It was a bone from a finger of his right hand. The hand he held the crucifix in when

he was killed for being a priest.

Last year I had to jump through hoops and drag my sister and friends around, get told no, get yelled at, but still was blessed. This year the blessing was a surprise, it was gentle and such a gift. Last year and still today, I am learning about Blessed Carlo Acutis as I didn't know much about him. This year, holding the relic was like greeting a friend, I literally felt as if I was holding his hand. I will carry that memory with me for the rest of my life.

The greatest blessing I was able to witness during this pilgrimage was Bishop Cahill celebrating Mass at the main altar of the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe. The petitions we had carried throughout the pilgrimage were placed in a designated area near the tilma, and then we saw our bishop celebrating Mass at the altar with only the deacon we brought with us. Bishop Cahill and all of us thought he was going to concelebrate the Mass, but he was the only celebrant. The people responded well to him, too, applauding when they heard where he was from and shouting that they loved him when Mass was done.

National Hispanic Heritage Month is

See Different pilgrimage, pg. 8

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(361) 594-8160



NADA/GARWOOD
Chris Merta, FIC
(979) 543-1059



Terry
Robinson



Deacon
Leo
Sharron

Amor Meus offers 'Gift You Give Yourself'

VICTORIA -- Anyone who is a caregiver and in need of some spiritual nourishment is invited to join the workshop/retreat "The Gift You Give Yourself" on Oct. 21 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The retreat, hosted by the Amor Meus Spirituality Center at the Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 NE Water St., will be approached from the understanding that caregiving does not start with being busy or taking on tasks; rather, from a place of rest deep within the caregiver.

Before someone can give care that will bring comfort, rest and peace to others, they must know God's rest and peace in their own hearts.

Deacon Leo Sharron, LPC, NCC, and Terry Robinson will be the facilitators. Deacon Sharron has served as director of clinical service at the Emmaus Counseling Center, and is Bereavement Services coordinator/chaplain for Hospice of South Texas.

Robinson, BS, University of Texas, Galveston, provides services to local rehabilitation hospitals, ministered in acute rehabilitation services for 17 years, was CEO of SCCI Hospital for eight years and was executive director of Hospice of South Texas for 15 years.

Sign in is at 9:30 a.m. Lunch will be provided. Attendees are asked to park in front of the convent.

There is no charge, but a free will offering will be accepted.

Different pilgrimage brings new surprises and blessings

Continued from pg. 7

Sept. 15-Oct. 15 every year. I am so blessed to have visited Mexico City, the basilica, and Father Miguel Pro's church before the month began as I have this whole month to meditate on that trip and see how much our God loves us. He loves us so much that He sent His only Son. The Son loves us so much that He sent His mother to bring an entire nation to Him. The Holy Spirit is still with us to give us the strength we need in the midst of adversity. Our Lady of Guadalupe, pray for us. Blessed Miguel Pro, pray for us.

"We ought to speak; shout out against injustices, with confidence and without fear. We proclaim the principles of the Church, the reign of love, without forgetting that it is also a reign of JUSTICE!" -- Blessed Miguel Pro

• Contact Sister Maria del Rosario Resendez by e-mailing her at bishopsecretary.dov@gmail.com.



Sister Rosario Resendez holds a relic of Father Miguel Pro during a recent pilgrimage to Mexico City. She was asked to hold it so that others could touch their medals or rosaries to it, making those items second-class relics. (Contributed Photo)

Advocating for environmental justice is our duty as Christians

EDITOR'S NOTE:
This is the last of a 10-part series about seeing climate change through a faith lens.



Sister Marian
Sturm, IWBS

During the COVID pandemic, we discovered the wisdom that we are all connected.

We see that we catch diseases as individuals who are part of families and families who are part of Churches, cities, states and nations. Our whole globe can be changed because of our interconnectedness.

Yet, other ills have been spreading and causing wider damage. While scientific and technological achievements have improved our human lives in the past 65 years, some have damaged our ecological systems—through our consumption, our use of natural resources and our waste. The impact made on Earth's natural systems has resulted in rapid, harmful environmental changes in the biosphere, which affects human lives. We must address this destruction of the planet and humanity, or it will continue to negatively impact future generations.

It is time to listen, rethink, pray, change and advocate. It is important to not just react, but to develop a way to spiritually look at what is happening in the world. It is important to find a peaceful place within ourselves while living in a fast-paced and changing world. This can help us to respond with more clarity and resilience. Through this more balanced approach of love and compassion within, we can be inspired to respond to the cries of the world in justice.

Love, care of creation and justice coincide. Since God is just, justice is the foundation of all religions. Our Judeo-Christian tradition is one among many other traditions who believe that God made a Covenant with our forbears to love and care for all, including the earth. Through them, we all agreed to love God, and each other. "This, remember, is the message you heard from the beginning: we should love one another." (1 John 3:11)

If our actions in the environment hurt

God's creation, especially people of color and those in powerless neighborhoods, then there is a need to address the inequitable burden on them through environmental justice.

Together, we are called to recognize that our choices have impacted our environment, and we must change those choices. We each can choose to make personal changes by recycling, reducing our consumption and waste and using forms of energy other than petroleum energy.

However, large corporations and businesses that greatly impact the climate must make changes. Throughout the Bible, God calls us to be advocates for justice, to be the voice of those who do not have a voice. "Listen to what the Lord says: 'Stand up, plead my case before the mountains; let the hills hear what you have to say. He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly

and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.'" (Micah 6:1, 8)

This calls us to advocate for a clean atmosphere rid of harmful gases to reduce the temperature of the earth before 2050. Through the power and choice of

advocacy, we can change the harm done for the benefit of all. We can help our neighbors half way around the world, ensuring that their needs and rights are taken seriously through policies, reversing the damage done to our atmosphere.

Often we shy away from advocacy. However, as members of civil society as well as of family and Church, our political leaders represent us. Through advocacy we inform them of our concerns, share our views, propose solutions, influence their thinking and encourage them in their commitments to represent all of us justly by formulating equitable policies to correct the devastation. We can do this through letters or in person.

We cannot be passive onlookers if we believe in a God of justice. We must be at the forefront, acting on what nature is telling us. If we believe in a God who created the universe and wants us to take care of it, we do not have another choice..

• Contact Sister Marian at maristurm@yahoo.com.

"This, remember, is the message you heard from the beginning: we should love one another."

(1 John 3:11)

2023 Annual Catholic Conference

Father Juan Molina and Bishop Brendan Cahill, keynote speakers for the 35th Annual Catholic Conference in the Diocese of Victoria, offered conference talks focusing on God's love for all people. More than 20 workshop presenters also provided a multitude of presentations on topics such as Eucharistic adoration, the Kerygma, family catechesis, sacramental preparation, scripture, Theology of the Body and more. Christella Alvarez, director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry, said she believes the day-long conference at St. Joseph High School in Victoria, demonstrated that the three key words of the Synod on Synodality – communion, participation and mission – bring us to the reality that we are one in the Lord.



Hermes Silva mans a booth for Kolbe Prison Ministry. He also presented one of the workshops.



Bishop Brendan Cahill and Father Juan Molina celebrate Mass at the conclusion of the 35th Annual Catholic Conference. Deacon Luan Tran, left, and Deacon Andy Nunmaker were two of the conference committee members.



Round-table discussions followed the workshops at the Annual Catholic Conference.

Bill Smith, right, of Loyola Press talks to people at his booth. He also was a workshop presenter at the conference.



Rhonda Cummins, Maritime Associate for Stella Maris promotes the Point Comfort Seafarers Center ministry.

St. Theresa, La Salle Annual Turkey Dinner/Festival

Sunday, October 15
at La Salle Hall

Turkey and Dressing Dinner ~ \$12 p/p
Catered by Mike Pozzi Catering of Victoria
11:00 a.m. ~ Until Sold Out
Dine-in or Drive-thru Plates-To-Go Available
Raffle

Tickets : 1 For \$2 ~ 6 For \$10 • Value Of Prizes \$7,300

Live Auction @ 12:30 p.m.
Kids Games • Cakewalk • Country Store



Jesus draw me near

Students at St. Joseph High School in Victoria were blessed to attend Adoration. Deacon Matthew Schaefer and Clay Crockett led the service.



At least 63 million lives aborted since 1973

Continued from pg. 1

decline in population of the 100 largest cities in the U.S. Of those 100 cities (New York being the largest and San Bernadino, Calif., in the 100th slot) there are 64,355,923 fewer people.

Of course no one but God could know the profundity of the loss, but Easterling hopes that sharing the data might be an eye-opener for the nation affected by the people who aren't here.

"I thought the information was important," Easterling said.

In a more personal way, being a father and grandfather, Easterling said he can't imagine how people can see babies as anything less than whole persons who are wonderful to experience and watch as they grow.

Bishop Michael Burbidge, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Pro-Life Activities, called for "radical solidarity" with mothers in crisis through initiatives like "Walking with Moms in Need," promoted by the USCCB. The program offers resources and how-tos for parishes so they can embrace the cause of helping women who might be considering abortion because they are impoverished or have other struggles.

"While we thank God that the terrible reign of Roe has ended, we also recognize that abortion still continues in most states and is aggressively promoted at the federal level. A great many prayers, sacrifices, and good works are still desperately needed to transform a culture of death into a culture of life. Our public witness, our marching, and our advocacy must continue, yet laws alone will not end the tragedy of abortion," Bishop Burbidge stated.

The USCCB website www.respectlife.org/celebrate is promoting a nationwide novena Oct. 13-21 featuring daily pro-life intentions, reflections and suggestions for actions to help build a culture of life.

Another resource, one that helps explain many things about the pro-life position, is Healing the Culture. Camille Pauley, president of Healing the Culture, has created a video series called "Truth in 90 Seconds" that offers sound information for healthy pro-life debates. The series covers a variety of "what ifs" and "what abouts" that inevitably come up during pro-life discussions. A each segment is only 90 seconds.

People who want to get involved locally can participate in the Life Chain, scheduled for Oct. 1 this year in Victoria and many other locations around the diocese, and set for Oct. 29 in Port Lavaca. For more information on that, visit www.lifechain.net. And each year in January there is a Candlelight March for Life close to the anniversary of Roe v. Wade.

Hands-on help for mothers is accomplished through The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads. The organization trains volunteers to accompany mothers in crisis pregnancies and operates the Bethlehem Home for women who need a place to stay during a crisis pregnancy.

Those suffering the effects of abortion or who want to pray for the innocents who have died have a resource in Raphael's Refuge in the Flaton area. On Dec. 28, a special Mass to celebrate the Feast of the Innocents will take place. Visit www.raphaelrefuge.org for more information on this healing mission.

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Migrant worker encounter affirms need for outreach

DEACON EDDIE HUSE

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Pink Lady, Honeycrisp, Red Delicious, Granny Smith, Gala, and many more varieties of apple; pears, peaches, nectarines, cherries, asparagus: These various forms of fresh produce are readily available every day in grocery stores across the country. As customers and consumers, we seldom stop long enough to consider how that takes place or who all may be involved. Let's pause for a moment to ponder and give thanks for the bounty that surrounds us.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Subcommittee on Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees, and Travelers (PCMRT) recently organized and sponsored an episcopal encounter with migrant farmworkers in late August in the Diocese of Yakima, Wash., called "Christ in the Heart of the Migrant Farmworker Today."

The goal for those of us who attended was to better understand how to support and promote ministry to migrant farmworkers in a way that is collaborative and conducive to integral development. The Diocese of Yakima, led by Bishop Joseph Tyson, offers a strong migrant ministry model, one that is centered on the gifts of communion and grace; of bringing the Gospel to life. It is all about the principle of subsidiarity in action; of social justice lived.

The attendees were of varied backgrounds, all involved in ministries and offices that seek to support migrants and their families. Bishops, priests, deacons and laity traveled from all over the country to Yakima -- from Ohio, Oregon, California and Texas; from Seattle and Chicago and San Antonio and Washington, D.C., and Spokane and from Mexico. They represented the USCCB, the Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network, Justice for Immigrants (a Catholic national political group), and the Diocese of Yakima as well as other dioceses and groups.

The reality that is migrant farmworkers are nothing new and follow the pattern of all immigrants who simply want to work for a better life. These good people are vital and integral to the life and economy of this country. Their characteristics and desires are the same as they are for any of us -- strong families and communities, friendship and mutual support, inclusion and self-worth and a belief that the God of Life is accompanying them in their journey. The work to be done on their behalf is not about subject to object but subject to subject since we are all the same.

St. Pope John XXIII said, "The laborer deserves a just wage: this is what our Lord means in Matthew 10:10. A man's work is sa-



A migrant worker loads a bin with apples he picked during his days work. Accompanying him to learn about the life of migrant workers are Catholic ministers from different areas invited by the USCCB's Subcommittee on the Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers to share an encounter with migrant workers. The trip also included a panel discussion with members of the migrant community who explained what their lives are like and why they come to the United States migrant camps. (Photo contributed by Aldo Camacho)

cred, because it is the work of a rational being, raised to the dignity of a son of God ... What dignity and strength come to man from this divine purpose ... Jesus, who came into this world to save mankind, spent most of his life as a workman ... in ordinary manual labor."

Certainly, the migrant farmworker is created in the image and likeness of God, deserving of all the inherent graces and blessings.

During this episcopal encounter, we were

exposed to the details lived daily by those who would risk so much and work so hard. We heard presentations from those already involved in ministries that impact the migrant worker experience. We made site visits to migrant camps and farms, sharing moments of fellowship and the Eucharist. We had face-to-face conversations with migrant workers and their families, connecting and creating memories. We also shared within our group of

participants how best to create a more holistic migrant farmworker ministry.

While unpleasant to accept, it was also so very necessary to be reminded about why this ministry outreach is so important. The needs being addressed include providing sacraments and faith formation wherever they are needed, leadership development and growing their cultural traditions. Sadly, however, this usually takes place without necessary resources, support or legal help and against prevailing social, political and economic prejudices. These good people suffer through unfair recruitment processes, wage and hour abuses, health and safety risks, isolated or substandard living conditions and limited access to justice, not to mention the ever-present threat of deportation.

And yet they return, time after time, year after year, enduring annual six- to eight-month absences from their families in Mexico.

So why do they come? A better question, perhaps, is: How can they not?

Let me allow Fabian to explain.

Fabian was part of a panel discussion that we shared at the Fairbridge Inn and Convention Center. It is located in the heart of Yakima, a converted hotel complex that is now home to Fabian and so many of his friends and co-workers. This young man is in his late 20s or early 30s, well dressed and neatly kept. He seemed anxious to talk about the details of being away from home and family. He was welcoming and very appreciative of being noticed and encountered. The fact that he spoke almost no English and that my Spanish is very limited didn't really matter.

These workers follow the growing and harvesting seasons, starting in California, then to Oregon, here in Washington at this time, then on to Idaho for potato season and back to California before leaving for Mexico. His day begins early, usually 4 a.m., and is very structured with considerable time constraints. Their work is quite physical, picking apples by hand while working off a ladder, and the days run long.

Their wages vary but are always tied to how many bins they fill in a day. Each bin holds about 300 pounds of apples, and the current compensation for him is around \$25 per bin. He explained that if he can do this for at least five years, he can earn what it would take him 25 years to earn if he stayed in Mexico doing the same type of farm work. Indeed, how can they not come?

They return to the Fairbridge each evening, where they generally stay for the rest of the day. They cannot easily or very readily

See Migrant worker encounter, pg. 12



Trip to Yakima eye-opening

Continued from pg. 1

try for the Diocese of Victoria, a trip to see those camps and the Catholic outreach for them was worth the time.

They went at the invitation of the US-CCB's Subcommittee on Pastoral Care of Migrants, Refugees and Travelers and joined many others in similar ministries for the encounter with the migrants.

"It was an eye-opening experience for sure," Deacon Huse said, explaining that it gave him a good sense of what migrant life is all about.

The migrant workers, he said, have always been a presence, but the U.S. began to depend more on them during World War II when American farmers were sent to fight. As a deacon given to service, it was a chance to experience how other areas serve the vulnerable populations.

Camacho said, "For me it was reaffirming what we are doing here. There are a lot of migrants here in the diocese." Some may

work in agriculture, but others have visas to work in the plants or in other industries. Seafarers are also the kind of travelers for whom the ministry is designed to provide spiritual care.

Camacho said the migrants have faith, evident in the numbers who attended Mass at the event in Washington. "It was packed," he said. "It's about bringing the church to them and making them feel like they belong."

"Ever since I've been involved with the different ministries with people on the move, I've appreciated how each ministry contributes to the Church," said Bishop Brendan Cahill, who is the episcopal promoter for Stella Maris, the ministry for seafarers. "There is a widely diverse group of people. As bishop, I want you to know the church is providing the Eucharist and social services to circus workers, people who are seafarers, refugees and migrants."



Migrant workers and ministers mingle during a picnic at the migrant work camps in the Diocese of Yakima in Washington. (Photo contributed by Ado Camacho)

Migrant worker encounter reveals need for outreach

Continued from pg. 11

leave the premises to go into Yakima itself. It was obvious that Fabian accepted this reality and was committed to making the best of the situation.

That situation is made so much more palatable by Bishop Tyson, Father Jesus and other priests, and so many laity of the Diocese of Yakima. A combination of entities and individuals operate the Fairbridge, and the diocese only has access to it as a result of a relationship that has been developed over many years. A clarity of purpose and commitment to subsidiarity sustain their work today.

What the diocese offers Fabian and others is of great value, not just to the workers themselves but to all those who benefit from their presence here in Central Washington. We had the blessed opportunity to celebrate the Mass, offered on a regular basis, in a converted conference room at the Fairbridge. We shared Eucharist with about 75 workers, and their reverent reception of the Gift was humbling to witness.

Fabian also spoke highly of the classes that the diocese makes available, classes that range from music to choir to catechesis to various life skills. These offerings allow those who voluntarily participate the chance to work toward the best versions of themselves despite the daunting realities of their lives. He spoke in a more somber way as he lamented the documentation process. This necessary process by which they enter and remain in this country is complex and expensive. Trying to grasp and sort out things like DACA, H2As and H2Bs, R1s, blue cards and green cards only causes this listener to want to stand and applaud what the Diocese of Yakima is doing.

All of what we see and hear in the national

level dialog is not an accurate representation of what happens at the local level. Most reasonable people can distinguish between drug trafficking and smuggling at the South Texas border and hardworking laborers in the Northwest who have hopes and dreams very similar to our own. So how do we play the hand we are dealt, the reality that is migrant farm labor that is critical to our way of life?

The answers are many and so complex, still being developed, but we must acknowledge and pray for the Diocese of Yakima. They are following a comprehensive plan that is designed to see to the rights and spiritual needs of migrant farmworkers in Central Washington. They indeed smell like their sheep.

We pray for committees, such as those with the USCCB and the Catholic Migrant Farmworker Network, as they pursue various improvements at the national and local level. We pray for and support Aldo Camacho in his efforts as the Director of Hispanic Ministry in our own Diocese. Individually, we can do our part by buying produce that originates in the Yakima Valley and never again complain about the price.

We pray that we can follow the direction that is given us in the Eucharistic Prayer for Various Needs III – "Keep us attentive to the needs of all that, sharing their grief and pain, their joy and hope, we may faithfully bring them the good news of salvation and go forward with them along the way of your Kingdom."

• Deacon Eddie Huse of Holy Family parish in Victoria, is the director of diaconate ministry and life.

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Parish celebrates Father Flagg's installation

LOUISE — Father Wayne Flagg addresses church leaders at St. Procopius Catholic Church during his installation Mass. Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated the Mass that includes a simple ritual when a new pastor is installed. Father Flagg officially became pastor of St. Andrew in Hillje as well as St. Procopius on June 1. The parishes have been looking forward to having a permanent pastor since the retirement of Father Clement Quainoo in 2021. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)



The coolest place to sit
HILLJE — Father Wayne Flagg, pastor of St. Andrew Church gets set to make a splash in the dunking booth during the church's summer festival. Participants could pay \$5 for three balls to throw at the lever. Those who wanted a sure thing could pay \$25 and hit the lever. Given the extreme temperatures this summer, it was probably an enviable place to be. (Contributed Photo)

St. Andrew, Hillje Altar Society Turkey Dinner

Turkey & Dressing, Sweet Potatoes, Green Beans,
Cranberries, & Dessert

Sunday, October 29, 2023

St. Andrew Parish Hall, Hillje, Texas

Serving Begins at 11AM until...

Plates TO GO Only \$15 per plate
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Pope Francis' next environmental document to be called Laudate Deum

BY HANNAH BROCKHAUS
Catholic News Agency

The pope shared the name of his latest apostolic exhortation during a meeting with Latin American university rectors on Sept. 21, though the speech was only made public by Vatican News in Spanish on Monday afternoon.

According to Vatican News, while speaking about the environment and the "culture of abandonment," Pope Francis revealed that his new document on the topic will be titled Laudate Deum, which means "Praise God" in Latin. It will be, he said, "a look at what has happened and say what needs to be done," Vatican News reported.

In the same speech to 200 university personnel, Francis reflected on what he has termed a throwaway culture, saying it reveals "a lack of education to use the things that remain, to remake them, to replace them in the order of the common use of things." He encouraged a "good use of nature," including practical actions that can help the environment, such as the installation of solar panels. The pope also noted how environmental degradation could lead to another kind of "degradation," namely, in how we treat others, especially those who are already living

with fewer resources.

Pope Francis announced last month he would be releasing a follow-up document to the 2015 encyclical Laudato Si'. He later said it would be published on Oct. 4, the feast of St. Francis of Assisi. Oct. 4 is also the first day of a month-long assembly for the Synod on Synodality and the conclusion of the Season of Creation, a Vatican-supported ecumenical initiative about caring for the environment. Laudato Si' is the second of three encyclicals published in Pope Francis' pontificate thus far. It was released in June 2015. The theme of the encyclical, which means "Praise be to you," is human ecology, a phrase first used by Pope Benedict XVI. The document addresses issues such as climate change, care for the environment, and the defense of human life and dignity. Pope Francis said Aug. 30 that the second part to Laudato Si' would be the kind of papal document known as an "exhortation." Francis has so far published five apostolic exhortations during his pontificate, including Evangelii Gaudium in 2013 and Amoris Laetitia in 2016. The feast of St. Francis of Assisi was also the date in 2020 that Pope Francis chose to release his most recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti, about fraternity and social friendship.



When the storms come, we are called into them

At Your Service

By Deacon Michael Tankersley



“On that day, when evening came, He said to them, “Let us cross over to the other side. Leaving the crowd, they took Him along with them in the boat, just as He was; and other boats were with Him. And there arose a fierce gale of wind, and the waves were breaking over the boat so much that the boat was already filling up.” (Mark 4:35-37)

The prospect of landing on “the other side” – in the unfamiliar land of the Gentiles -- was likely unsettling news for the apostles. Reports of demons and evil spirits have that effect. But their first trouble came not upon their arrival, but in the very act of crossing over.

Jonah had been thrust into a storm when he disobeyed God, but the apostles stepped into the boat in obedience and still there came a storm. Disciples, past and present, accept the reality that following Christ does not guarantee that storms will be absent, but in the promise that He is present.

Indeed, Jesus does not provide life hacks to avoid storms in our lives; rather, he calls us into storms --storms of our own and those of others.

In my first year as a deacon, I was asked to baptize a newborn. Standing in the sanctu-

ary, I watched as the mother carried the infant down the aisle with her husband beside her. There was lightness in their steps and laughter in the hearts as they walked the aisle to bring themselves and their child to Christ.

Several weeks later, I stood in the same sanctuary awaiting another family and another newborn. I watched as the mother carried the infant down the aisle with her husband beside her ... but there was no joy in the air. The mother did not carry her infant in her arms, she carried an urn. There was heaviness in their steps and sorrow in their hearts. Yet, in the midst of this “fierce gale of wind” they brought themselves and their child to Christ. The wounded family had stepped into the boat with the Wounded Healer to ride out the storm. Though the two families had walked the very same aisle, they walked differently -- one walked in sunshine, the other in a storm.

I have come to appreciate the “aisle” as something more than an access to and from our pews. I imagine it as the bridge by which people are trying to cross over to Christ and encounter the divine. It is a bridge that connects where we are to where we can be, and from who we are to who we can be. Jesus said “Come to me,” and we do. Each Mass we walk that bridge to Him and with Him, to consume Him and to be consumed by Him. But that walk, that bridge, is different for each of us. Some walk in sunshine, others in darkness seeking the light.

A college psychology professor of mine would often recite a snippet from a poem by Wallace Stevens:



Photo by
Nicolay
Vorobyev/
UnSplash

*“Twenty men crossing a bridge,
Into a village,
Are twenty men crossing twenty bridges,
Into twenty villages...”*

I am mindful that each of us have our own bridges to cross, our own unique crosses to carry, our own storms to weather. Some who come forward to receive Christ in communion bear wounds that are fresh and raw and others come forward with the scars of hurts healed over. There is a woman who aches for a child she cannot have, and another who pains because she has a child but no husband ... or job ... or home. There is an elderly man concerned that he will soon be in need of full-time care and a caretaker who is drained of energy but filled with stress. Someone in line is in remission, another is in stage 4. This is where the newly wedded walk beside the newly widowed, and those with broken hearts stand by those with newfound loves. This is the aisle on which we walk with joy to weddings and with sorrow to funerals. And all are trying to cross over.

I have come to appreciate that I do not distribute communion to a crowd -- to just another body in a long line of bodies. Although we are “one body in Christ,” each body in that line is a unique person with his or her own rich life story, with their own frailties and strengths and their own victories and defeats.

Some are living the dream and others

are living with disaster, and it is into those disasters, into those troubled lives, that I am called (as are you).

I could remind those in need of the Good News that Jesus isn’t asleep, and that He will calm the storm, and that He is present with them. But am I present to them? Am I being the good news for them or am I, like Cain, asking “Am I my brother’s keeper?”

Jesus said “Let us cross over to the other side.” This is not a calling for individual solo missions to salvation. This is us crossing over together to come to Our Father.

I once commented to a professor-priest as to the difficulty of preparing someone for the priesthood. Quite quickly he said that preparing a priest was easy, but developing a pastor was the real challenge. “It’s just like preparing you,” he said, “I can give you knowledge for your mind, and I can give you training for your hands. But I can’t give you an empathetic heart.”

My friends, we are our brother’s keeper. Whether it is an unacquainted body in the pew or a body on the street, he is our brother. When someone is struggling on their bridge, we can give them someone to hold onto. We can be a Simeon and help carry the cross of the fallen or a Veronica and wipe the blood-stained face of the hurt. We can be the hands and feet, the eyes and empathetic heart of Jesus. We can help to calm the storms in the lives of others.

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From 'the four corners' to 'ends of the Earth'

First Eucharistic congress in 80 years coming soon

In Communion

By Very Rev. Jacob Koether



Have you heard about the National Eucharistic Congress? Hopefully, you have at least heard about the National Eucharistic Revival. This is an initiative that was called for by the bishops of the U.S. to encourage a rediscovery of the incredible gift of the Eucharist.

This multi-year effort of renewal is scheduled to culminate in a five-day event in Indianapolis, Ind., called the Eucharistic Congress.

But what even is a Eucharistic Congress? The purpose of a Eucharistic Congress is understanding and worship; to increase one's devotion and appreciation of the Eucharist.

The first Eucharistic Congress was inspired and organized by a French laywoman in Lille, France, in 1881. The theme was "The Eucharist Saves the World!" Since then there have been many hosted throughout the years — internationally, nationally and regionally. What is common to all Eucharistic congresses is the unity prayed for and expressed in the large communal celebrations of Mass and Eucharistic adoration. Much like a special diocesan Mass -- with the bishop, his priests and representatives of the whole diocese -- uniquely manifests the life of the local Church; a Eucharistic congress manifests the life of the broader Church in a common spirit of unity and charity.

In the United States there have been nine Eucharistic congresses. Between 1895 and 1911, Bishop Camillus Maes organized the first five. These were mostly gatherings of clergy that involved not only prayer, but also more academic presentations of scholarly papers on Eucharistic theology and practice, ending with a published resolution to summarize the reflections.

The next four Eucharistic congresses were organized by Bishop Joseph Schrembs between 1930 and 1941 and were opened to laity. These grew to huge proportions, including tens of thousands of people. Eucharistic congresses were paused during World War II, but they never started again.

The 10th Eucharistic Congress, at the end of our Eucharistic Revival, will be the first one in more than 80 years.

What will happen at the Eucharistic Congress? Who can come? Taking place July 17-21, 2024, in Lucas Oil Stadium in Indianapolis, this historic event is open to anyone. In fact, the organizers are hoping to completely fill up the stadium with 80,000 people. Each day will have a different theme and general keynote presentation with multiple breakout sessions and tracks for different groups. There is a track for those who are seeking a deeper encounter with Jesus and a track for those who are looking for strength and inspiration in their current volunteer efforts, as well as tracks for youth, families and those who are wondering about next steps after the revival.

The first day's theme, "From the Four Corners," will celebrate the arrival of pilgrims who will have been walking for months to the Congress from four parts of the United States.

One group will actually be passing

through our diocese in May.

The second day, "The Greatest Love Story," will focus on the proclamation of the Gospel and invite participants to be intentional disciples of Jesus. The third day, "Into Gethsemane," will be devoted to asking the Lord to pour out mercy and healing. The fourth day, "This is My Body," will consider what it means to be a part of the Church and what we can do to live as committed disciples

in relation to each other. The last day, "To the Ends of the Earth," will send out the 80,000 Eucharistically renewed Christians as missionary disciples to share the Good News with everyone they meet.

Are you planning to attend the Eucharistic Congress? What kind of group do you want to take? Do you want to take a youth group? Do you want to go with just your immediate family? Are you a pastor who wants to take your staff for formation? Are you a leader in your parish who wants to start a young adult group? Do you want to go by yourself or with a small group of friends? In whatever ways you might attend, make sure not to miss this incredible opportunity.

• Contact Father Jacob Koether at jkoether@victoriadiocese.org.

Celebrating 10 Years of Pilgrimages!

For details on any of the listed trips, and for online registration, go to www.selectinternationaltours.com!

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Fr. Oscar Amo,
November 10-20, 2023
Walk with Jesus in His footsteps.



Holy Land with Bishop Cahill,
February 23-March 4, 2024
Join our Bishop as we relive Jesus' life
from Annunciation to Resurrection!

A Lenten Holy Land Pilgrimage

March 9-18, 2024

Fr. Tommy Chen
Fr. Kristopher Fuchs
Praying the Rosary through
Jesus life and resurrection.

This Spring Break trip is filling up fast.



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Valoramos la vida viendo al necesitado como 'otro yo'

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,
“Al abordar temas prácticos y de cierta urgencia, el Consejo hace hincapié en el respeto a la persona humana: todos deben considerar a su prójimo (sin excepción) como otro yo, teniendo especialmente en cuenta la vida del prójimo y los medios necesario para una vida digna, no sea que sigan el ejemplo del hombre rico que ignoró a Lázaro, que era pobre”. (Gaudium et spes n° 27)

Los temas prácticos abordados al concluir el Concilio Vaticano II en 1965 siguen siendo temas de nuestras discusiones sobre la Iglesia y el mundo de hoy: “el matrimonio y la familia, la cultura, la vida económica y social, la política, la solidaridad de los pueblos y la paz.” (Gaudium et spes #46)

El Sínodo de los Obispos, que comienza en Roma este mes, continúa esta discusión y ofrece voces de todas partes del mundo para abordar los diferentes temas. Creo que el respeto a la persona humana podría verse como el tema central.

¿Qué acciones estamos tomando para ayudar a las personas a vivir una forma de

Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill



vida digna? Podría ser llevar la comunión a quienes están confinados en sus hogares o llevar comida a alguien que lo necesita. Puedo ver muchas maneras en las que ofreces tu tiempo para ayudar a otra persona a sentir el respeto y el amor de Jesús.

En este Mes del Respeto a la Vida, permítanme resaltar tres ejemplos de nuestra área:

El Proyecto Gabriel de la Encrucijada inauguró la Casa de Maternidad Belén en 2021. Este lugar especial ofrece un hogar para mujeres que atraviesan embarazos difíciles. Respetando el valor y la belleza de cada vida, los hombres y mujeres que sirven en el Hogar de Maternidad Bethlehem ofrecen

amor y respeto. Mientras escribo esto, me doy cuenta de que tienen una gran necesidad de más voluntarios y ayuda en el ministerio; un resultado de la buena noticia de su misión es el aumento de la solicitud de asistencia en todo Crossroads.

A principios de este año, el Point Comfort Seafarers Center celebró una nueva inauguración y bendición. En los pocos meses que este centro ha estado abierto dentro del puerto de Point Comfort, muchos marinos han venido en busca de bienvenida y hospitalidad. Al igual que la Casa de Maternidad Belén, el ministerio está creciendo y necesita más personas para poder pasar algún tiempo en el centro. Los marinos aprecian profundamente

el respeto y la atención que reciben de la gente de este centro.

Los Ministerios Penitenciarios Kolbe han estado ofreciendo retiros y ministerio en prisiones de todo el estado de Texas desde 2009. En nuestra diócesis, patrocinan retiros para llevar el amor y la misericordia de Jesús a los hombres encarcelados en la Unidad Stevenson en las afueras de Cuero. El ministerio en esta prisión se ha ampliado para incluir misa semanal, oportunidades regulares para la confesión sacramental, estudios bíblicos y RICA. En este momento estamos buscando formas de llegar más a los encarcelados en cárceles del condado y centros de detención juvenil. Los hombres y mujeres que han estado brindando respeto y amor a los encarcelados también han crecido en conciencia y compasión por el dolor que han sufrido tantas víctimas del crimen.

Que Dios los bendiga a ustedes y a sus familias con paz y alegría este mes, y que podamos llevar el respeto y el amor de Jesús a cada persona que conozcamos.

Mantengámonos unos a otros en oración.
+Brendan

2da Conferencia Hispana un gran éxito

ALDO CAMACHO

Especial para el Lighthouse

VICTORIA -- El pasado 16 de septiembre se llevó a cabo la Segunda Conferencia Católica Hispana en the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Victory y el Centro Catedralicio de la parroquia. La temática de la conferencia fue Eucarística con enfoque en la cita bíblica de Juan 6,35: “Yo soy el pan de vida. El que viene a mí nunca tendrá hambre y el que cree en mí nunca tendrá sed”.

Contamos con la participación especial del Arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller, M.Sp.S, quien es arzobispo de la Arquidiócesis de San Antonio, como orador principal de la conferencia. Él nos habló sobre ¿Qué es y porque es importante una cultura Eucarística? Su plática se basó en el contexto del Avivamiento Eucarístico nacional y en la comunidad Hispana haciendo un realce en que todas las culturas formamos una misma Iglesia y como debemos “dejar de defender nuestra fe, sino más bien promover nuestra fe” llamando a la misión y a la unión entre diferentes culturas.

Además, tuvimos la bendición de contar con el padre Agustino Torres, CFR, quien sirve con los Franciscanos de la Renovación con sede en el Bronx, Nueva York, y quien será uno de los oradores bilingües principales en el próximo Congreso Eucarístico Nacional que se llevará a cabo en julio del 2024 en Indianápolis, Indiana, y que espera recibir a más de 80 mil católicos de toda la nación.



El Arzobispo Gustavo García-Siller de la Arquidiócesis de San Antonio y el Padre Agustino Torres del Bronx, Nueva York, concelebraron la Misa con el Obispo Brendan Cahill antes de la Segunda Conferencia Hispana en la Diócesis de Victoria. Ambos hombres fueron los principales oradores de la conferencia. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

El Padre Agustino Torres nos habló de la importancia de prender fuego a todos los corazones con un enfoque eucarístico misionero, además dirigió la adoración eucarística con la que terminó la conferencia en donde más de 300 personas pudimos adorarle y darle gracias

por el don de la lluvia que recibimos ese día.

Nuestra tercera oradora fue la Hermana Miriam Perez quien sirvió por muchos años en nuestras comunidades. Ella nos habló sobre María como Madre de la Eucaristía. Fue una gran bendición poder darle la bienvenida

nuevamente a nuestra diócesis la cual fue bendecida abundantemente con su ministerio.

Quiero darle las gracias a los más de 300 hispanos que asistieron a la conferencia y a todos aquellos que hicieron este evento posible, al equipo Diocesano del Ministerio Hispano, a todos y todas las voluntarias, a las hermanas del Verbo Encarnado y Santísimo Sacramento por haber estado en adoración frente al santísimo durante todo el evento, y al Reverendísimo Padre Kirby Hlavaty, Rector de The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory quien sirvió como maestro de ceremonias durante la misa, la procesión eucarística y la adoración eucarística.

Esperamos que los frutos de esta conferencia sean muchos, que la gente se inspire a vivir una Cultura Eucarística en sus comunidades la cual llame a la misión a compartir el amor y la misericordia de Dios con los más necesitados.

Los invito también a seguir atentos de nuestra pagina web www.victoriadiocese.org/hispanic-ministry en donde estaremos dando a conocer eventos diocesanos como el próximo retiro espiritual de meditación y silencio a cargo del Padre Robert Moreno Jr. de la Diócesis de Brownsville del 17 al 19 de Noviembre de 2023 en el Centro de Renovación Espiritual. ¡No se pierdan esta gran oportunidad. Más información aquí: www.victoriadiocese.org/retiro-espiritual-2023.

• Aldo Camacho es el director del Ministerio Hispano de la Diócesis de Victoria.



Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, Oct. 4 blessing of animals

Many people bring their pets to the church to be blessed on St. Francis' feast day because of his love for animals as expressed in his Canticle of Creatures. You can pray for and bless your pets and animals at home too. A verbal blessing and a sprinkling holy water can be offered in your backyard, garden or anywhere inside your home.

The following Pet Blessing can be used:
Blessed are you, Lord God, maker of all living creatures.

You called forth fish in the sea, birds in the air, and animals on the land.

You inspired St. Francis to call all of them his brothers and sisters.

We ask you to bless this pet.

By the power of your love, enable it to live according to your plan.

May we always praise you for all your beauty in creation.

Blessed are you, Lord our God, in all your creatures!

Amen.

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Sunday Readings from Oct. 1 to Nov. 5

October 1 ~ Twenty-sixth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Ezekiel 18:25-28
Psalms 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9
Philippians 2:1-11
Matthew 21:28-32

October 8 ~ Twenty-seventh Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 5:1-7
Psalms 80:9, 12, 13-14, 15-16, 19-20
Philippians 4:6-9
Matthew 21:33-43

October 15 ~ Twenty-eighth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 25:6-10a
Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6
Phil 4:12-14, 19-20
Matthew 22:1-14

October 22 ~ Twenty-ninth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 45:1, 4-6
Psalms 96:1, 3, 4-5, 7-8, 9-10
1 Thessalonians 1:1-5b
Matthew 22:15-21

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit
www.usccb.org/bible/readings.

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October 29 ~ Thirtieth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Exodus 22:20-26
Psalms 18:2-3, 3-4, 47, 51
1 Thessalonians 1:5c-10
Matthew 22:34-40

Holy Day of Obligation
November 1 ~ Solemnity of All Saints
Revelations 7:2-4, 9-14
Psalms 24:1bc-2, 3-4ab, 5-6
1 John 3:1-3
Matthew 5:1-12a

November 2 ~ All Souls
Wisdom 3:1-9
Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6
Romans 6:3-9
John 6:37-40

November 5 ~ Thirty-first Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Malachi 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10
Psalms 131:1, 2, 3
1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13
Matthew 23:1-12



Join us for lunch at our Monthly
Travel Meeting on
Thursday, October 26, 2023
Sky Restaurant in Victoria (77904)
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Dutch Lunch
Visit our website and sign-up for our
newsletter to stay current on all trips.



12 Days ~ 26 Meals
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and more
Aug. 28 - Sept. 8, 2024

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Director of Vocations
361-573-4328
vocations@victoriadiocese.org

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Elie Mejia’s passion is to continue to spread God’s Word and is delighted to include a monthly puzzle from the Mass Readings. Please mail all completed October puzzle forms to arrive in The Catholic Lighthouse office, P. O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 by Oct. 31 to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of the following books:

For 2023, the monthly winner of the puzzle contest will receive a sampler copy of *Elie’s Spiritual Treasures, Volume 2 – The New Testament: Matthew and Mark* and the monthly winner of the youth contest will receive a sampler copy of *Elie’s Spiritual Treasures, Volume 2 – The New Testament: Matthew and Mark, Children’s Series*.

To date, Elie has published 20 books. Most of her books can be purchased at www.searching-for-jesus.com, Amazon or by calling 361-648-5832. The prices range from \$4.99 and \$19.99.

Congratulations to Dorothy Rother from Hallettsville on being our August 2023 adult winner, she’ll receive the Adult version of the Matthew and Mark Sampler Book!

OCTOBER 29, 2023
30TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
GOSPEL – MATTHEW 22:34–40

A **reading** from the **holy Gospel** according to **Matthew**: **When** the **Pharisees heard** that **Jesus** had **silenced** the **Sadducees**, / they **gathered together**, and one of **them**, / a **scholar** of the law **tested** him by **asking**, / “**Teacher**, which **commandment** in the **law** is the **greatest**?” / He **said** to him, / “You shall **love** the **Lord**, your **God**, / with **all** your **heart**, / with all your **soul**, / and **with** all your **mind**. / This is the greatest and the **first** commandment. / The **second** is **like** it: / You **shall** love your **neighbor** as **yourself**. / The **whole** law and the **prophets depend** on these **two** commandments.”

D	L	P	N	I	D	D	E	R	E	H	T	A	G	Y	J	U
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Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Parish: _____

Age, if 12 or younger _____ Age, if 13 or older _____



Harvest Mass Oct. 28

WEIMAR — The Diocese of Victoria Chapter of Catholic Rural Life is hosting a Harvest Mass at 10 a.m. Oct. 28 at Whistling Duck Vineyards and Winery. Bishop Brendan Cahill will be the celebrant and all are invited and asked to bring a lawn chair. A reception will follow the Mass. The winery is at 1211 County Road 173 in Weimar.



A Prayer in Autumn for Country Living

GOOD and generous Lord, You have once more brought the year full circle, through planting and growing and ripening to harvest time, and autumn.

We thank You for the sun and the wind, the rain and the dew, the minerals of the earth and all the plants that grow and all the beasts and birds of farm and field. We marvel at Your wonderful ways of bringing food from the earth for man’s good.

Dear God, help us to use Your rich gifts as You want us to. Teach us to share them with our neighbor when he is in need. Make us see, in the marvelous succession of sea sons, and in the growth and ripening of our crops, the merciful, generous hand of Your divine providence.

Help us to realize, too, that if we keep Your commandments and live according to the inspirations of Your grace, we shall also reap a plentiful harvest in the autumn of our lifetime: a harvest that we will be able to enjoy for ever and ever, where no rust can destroy, nor blight spoil any least part of it.

Amen.



Crisis Pregnancy Ministry

24 Hour Hotline: 361-576-1156

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Meals • Picnics and More

October

Hostyn – Queen of the Holy Rosary Festival Oct. 1 on the parish grounds. A fried chicken and sausage dinner from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. for \$14 per plate. Auction begins at 1 p.m. More information at www.facebook.com/HostynPlumCatholicChurches.

Hungerford – St. John Bazaar Oct. 1 at the Hungerford Hall. Serving BBQ beef, chicken and sausage dinner starting at 10:30 a.m. Live auction at 12 p.m., games and more.

Mentz – St. Roch Parish Picnic Oct. 1 on the parish grounds. A BBQ beef, pork and sausage dinner beginning at 11 a.m. for \$15 per plate. Live auction at 1 p.m. with music, games, cornhole tournament, county store and more. Hamburgers available at 2 p.m.

Victoria – Nazareth Academy Fall Festival Oct. 1 at the Victoria Community Center. A Turkey and dressing meal will be served starting at 10:30 a.m. Dine-in or to go available.

Palacios – Shrimporee Oct. 8 at the Recreation Center. A shrimp or BBQ (beef or chicken) dinner for \$15 per plate starting at 10:30 a.m. Live auction starts at 1 p.m.

Columbus – St. Anthony Parish Fall Picnic Oct. 8 at the Columbus Hall. A fried chicken and sausage meal with dine-in or drive-thru available from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. for \$12 per plate. Auction begins at 1 p.m. Mexican food and hamburgers will be available.

East Bernard – Holy Cross Bazaar, Oct. 8 at Riverside Hall. A BBQ beef, chicken and sausage with homemade dressing dinner starting at 11 a.m. Hamburgers will be sold after 3 p.m. The auction starts at 12 p.m. Games from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Music by the Dujka Brothers and Red Ravens from noon to 6 p.m.

El Campo – St. Robert Festival, Oct. 8 at the Civic Center. A BBQ brisket and sausage dinner served from 11 a.m. until sold out with dine-in or plates-to-go for \$15 each. Live auction at 12 p.m. Fun and games throughout the day.

Victoria – The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory Festival Oct. 8, at the Victoria Community Center.

Victoria – Grief Weekend Retreat for Parents Whose Children Have Died. The journey through grief after the loss of a child is a path of unimaginable challenges. In recognition of this profound struggle, Strength for the Journey, extends an invitation to parents who have experienced the heartbreaking loss of their children, regardless of age or circumstance and no matter how long ago, to join us for a weekend of comfort, support and healing at our upcoming Grief Retreat, Oct. 13-15, at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more information: Pat Hoelscher 979-257-9984 or visit the website: victoriadiocese.org/grief-support.

Hallettsville – The Sacred Heart Home and School Association of Hallettsville is hosting their 71st annual Apple Strudel Bake on Oct. 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sacred Heart Family Center. Unbaked strudels sell for \$18 each or baked and ready-to-eat at \$22 each, and will be available for pickup on the day of the event. To order, call Annette Henke 361-772-0929 or Barbara Grahmann 361-798-0659 or email shsstrudelbake@gmail.com (Advance orders are required to guarantee order fulfillment.)

Moulton – Christian Mothers Annual Public Square Rosary, Saturday, Oct. 14, at 9:30 a.m. at the downtown Gazebo. (Inclement weather site is St. Joseph's Church Family Room). Special Guest Speaker, Deacon Kenneth Fishbeck. Come early for coffee. For more information, please call 361-550-5903.

Eagle Lake – Parish of the Nativity Fall Festival on Oct. 15. See ad on pg. 7.

Goliad – Immaculate Conception Fall Festival (238 N. Commercial St.) on Oct. 15. A BBQ beef buffet style dinner with dine-in or plates-to-go beginning at 10:30. There will be a Big Ticket Raffle with only 350 tickets to be sold with 26 prizes of a \$500 VISA gift card each week. Also there will be a country store, bake shop, plant booth, cakewalk, kid's games, and a live auction at 1 p.m.

LaSalle – St. Theresa Annual Turkey Dinner, Oct. 15. See ad on pg. 8.

Wharton – Holy Family Fall Festival, Oct. 15. A turkey and dressing dinner (10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.) for \$12 per plate. Live auction (12:30 p.m.), games, petting zoo and much more.

Shiner – Annual Shiner Strudel Bake. Homemade apple strudels of the unbaked variety are \$18 each. Baking instructions included. Advance orders required. Call the church office at 361-594-3836 or email aduke@sscmshiner.org. Orders must be placed by Wed. Oct. 25 and picked up on Sat., Oct. 28 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Shiner KC Hall.

Hallettsville – The "Women God Sees" retreat, hosted by Catholic Daughter's of America 797 and presented by Sister Joseph Andrew Bogdanowicz, OP, Dominican Sisters of Mary, Saturday, Oct. 28 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. starting with Mass at Sacred Heart Church. Cost is \$16 prior to Oct. 10 and \$20 thereafter. Checks should be made out to Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court 797 and mailed to Schottsie Hill, 101 Bowie St., Hallettsville, TX 77964. Please include an email address. If you have questions, call Schottsie Hill at 713-301-5795.

Ministries • Ongoing Activities

ACTS Retreats – Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS retreats in the diocese should e-mail dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org.

Catholic Family Services – To find Catholic organizations that focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at <http://www.nacflm.org>.

Courage – Ministers to persons with same-sex attractions and their loved ones. The ministry also has an outreach, EnCourage, which ministers to relatives, spouses, and friends of persons with same-sex attractions. It is a Roman Catholic Apostolate endorsed by the Pontifical Council for the Family. For information, visit <http://www.couragerc.net>.

Crisis Pregnancy Center of Victoria – A sister organization to the Gabriel Project staffed by volunteers that offers help to girls and women who find themselves in a difficult situation due to an unplanned pregnancy. Office located at 1501 E. Red River, is open 1-4 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Free pregnancy tests offered and medical referrals are made for prenatal care. New volunteers are welcome. For information call 361-575-6171.

Emmaus Center – Offers individual, couple, family, adolescent and children's counseling, as well as specialized support groups. Spiritual direction is also available if requested. To make an appointment, call 361-212-0830.

Engaged Encounter – 2023 Dates: Nov. 10-12. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For information, call 361-573-0828 or visit <http://www.victoriadiocese.org>.

Gabriel Project of the Crossroads – Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy as an alternative to abortion. Our mission is to protect the unborn by providing spiritual and emotional support as well as supplies. We provide housing through the Bethlehem Maternity Home and have an outreach ministry that visits pregnant women in our community. Our services cover Victoria, Calhoun, Colorado, DeWitt, Fayette, Goliad, Jackson, Lavaca, Matagorda and Wharton Counties. For more information, please contact our helpline at 361-576-1156.

Grief Ministry – Are you an adult, 18 years or older experiencing the death of a loved one? Grief Group meets on the 1st and 3rd Thursday evenings from 6:45 to 8 p.m. at Holy Family Catholic Church. Please call Sharon at 361-578-7572 before attending.

Grief Ministry – Please join Strength for the Journey team for their monthly meeting, 6:30-8 p.m. Oct. 10 in the parish hall at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary Catholic Church, 108 6th St. in Ganado. The meeting is open to anyone who has experienced the death of a child at any age. For more information, contact Pat Hoelscher 979-257-9984 or phoelscher@victoriadiocese.org.

Healing Through Grace grief support group – Please join us at the Emmaus Center in Victoria on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 9 a.m. at the Cathedral Center (St. Raphael meeting room). Please call 361-212-0830 for more information and to register.

Incarnate Word Prayer Group – Praise and worship 7:30-9 p.m. Mondays in the auditorium at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water St. For information, contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at 361-575-7111 or e-mail amormeus@yahoo.com.

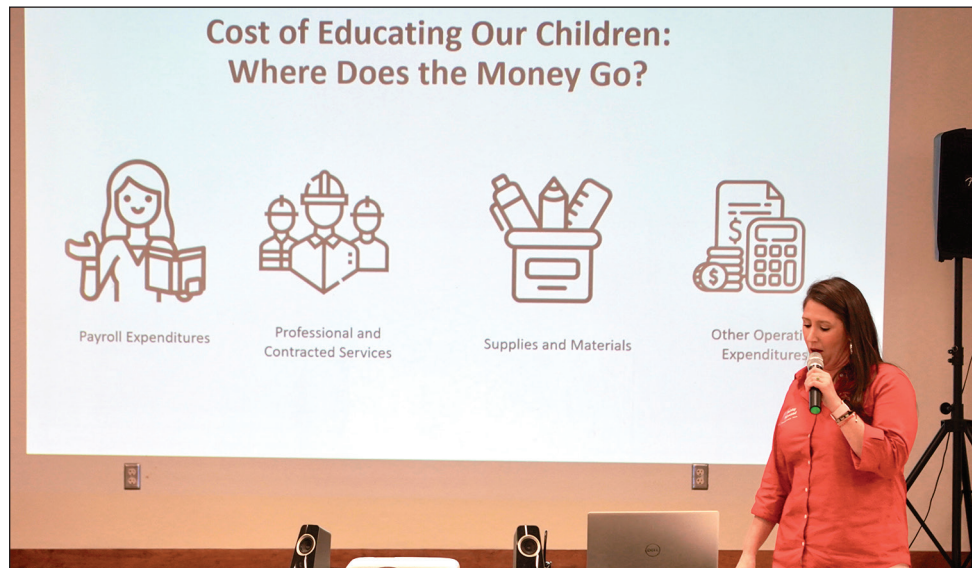
Ministry of Love Caregiver Support Group – Come to the Emmaus Center on the first Tuesday of each month at 9 a.m. in the Cathedral Center (St. Gabriel Hall.) Please call 361-212-0830 for more information and to register.

Mothers of Grace – A mothers' group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For information, contact Leslie Book at book.leslie@gmail.com or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Mothersofgraceolv/.

Natural Family Planning – NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. For the CREIGHTON MODEL Fertility Care System (CrMS) featuring NaPro TECHNOLOGY™ contact Susanne Koch in Wharton at 505-710-0903 or mailto:susannekoch614@gmail.com. Also in the Cuero area contact, Ashley Rodriguez at 361-293-0700 or e-mail ashleyfay09@gmail.com.

Raphael's Refuge – Raphael's Refuge is the home of the Monument to the Innocents which honors babies who have died (from conception to one year). We are a non-profit organization located outside of Flatonia, Texas. Peer counseling is available for those suffering the loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death or abortion. For information, call Therese at 361-258-1514, e-mail raphaelsrefuge@att.net, or visit <http://www.raphaelsrefuge.org>.

Retrouvaille – Retrouvaille, meaning "rediscovery," is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jbvjov@sbcglobal.net or 361-580-2770; or call 800-470-2230; or visit <http://www.helpourmarriage.org>



Ashley Novosad gives a presentation on the actual cost of educating students at Catholic schools in the Diocese of Victoria during a workshop for all local school advisory committees in the diocese. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Catholic schools ‘a heck of a deal’

Continued from pg. 1

to us: God is the Creator and the creation is good.” Though evil can sometimes make us believe otherwise, he said, it is the first thing the Bible teaches and the first thing children learn.

“Students are gifts to be treasured, not problems to be solved,” he said. “Our schools should see the beauty of children.”

The Catechism also talks about the sacraments. Bishop Cahill told the group that, through a sacramental life – going to Communion and reconciliation – people experience mercy and, therefore, will become more merciful and compassionate.

Life in the Holy Spirit is also learned through the Catechism. That means living a moral code, which is provided in the 10 Commandments, and teaching that moral code in school.

“The final section is about prayer: What does it look like at a Catholic School? And this is what I get to see,” Bishop Cahill said. “I get to celebrate Mass. ... And those kids pray.”

Dr. John Quarry, superintendent of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Victoria, addressed school safety, calling it “one of our most critical aspects of our educational journey. He said children should “learn, grow and thrive without fear.”

He said security is not only for students’ physical well being but also their mental and emotional security. He stressed keeping doors locked, using the Raptor system religiously and “being aware of what is going on around us.” The Raptor system is used to check in visitors using their drivers’ licenses. It is connected to a sex offender database and will alert school personnel if there are any matches.

Ashley Novosad, an LSAC member for Nazareth Academy, offered a presentation

showing the actual cost of education (ACE). She and NA teacher Amy Alegira gathered the data as a graduate student project. They are in a partnership program between the diocese and the University of Houston-Victoria to receive master’s degree in educational leadership.

They found that each year, the average cost of educating children of Catholic schools in the diocese is \$8,600. For public schools in the area, that average cost is \$12,000. All told, she said the DOV’s Catholic schools save taxpayers about \$39 million every year.

“Obviously it is much less costly to have a child in a Catholic school than a public school.” The money largely goes to teachers’ salaries and other regular operating costs.

What parents actually pay is less than the actual cost. Sometimes almost half. Novosad said there are gaps as great as \$5,200 per child per year in some schools, which is why fund-raising is so important in Catholic schools.

“We have an incredible product and a heck of a deal,” Novosad said. Sharing that information with parents, hopefully, will inspire them to volunteer more and understand the importance of fund-raisers.

“I think parents want to know, and I think they’d be surprised to know,” Novosad, a Catholic school parent, said. She said she thought what she was paying was expensive until she realized the cost versus the value of Catholic education.

Marketing and promoting the schools is also important, she said. Many schools could decrease their cost per student simply by having more students in the classroom. In some instances the cost per student could be cut almost in half if the school enrollment was at capacity.

Pope warns against ‘playing with life’

DANIEL IBANEZ
Catholic News Agency

Pope Francis condemned euthanasia and abortion as actions that “play with life” and said there is such a thing as “bad compassion” during a press conference aboard the papal plane from Marseille to Rome on Saturday.

“You don’t play with life, neither at the beginning nor at the end. It is not played with!” he told journalists Sept. 23, as he returned from a two-day trip to Marseille, in southern France, to speak at a meeting of young people and bishops called Mediterranean Encounter.

“Whether it is the law not to let the child grow in the mother’s womb or the law of euthanasia in disease and old age,” he said, “I am not saying it is a faith thing, but it is a human thing: There is bad compassion.”

Aboard the plane, a French journalist asked Pope Francis whether he had spoken about euthanasia in his private conversation with France’s President Emmanuel Macron earlier in the day. The French government is currently preparing to pass a controversial bill on end-of-life issues that could legalize assisted suicide and euthanasia in the country. Francis said he did not address the topic of euthanasia with Macron on Saturday but that he had expressed himself “clearly” on the issue when the French president visited him at the Vatican last year.

Macron, who made changing the end-of-life framework one of his campaign promises, declared his “pendant” for the Belgian model in April 2022. Pope Francis said it is not just an opinion that life should be safeguarded and warned that it is easy to fall into an idea that pain should always be prevented, even through what some might consider a “humanistic euthanasia.” Instead, science has made great strides in helping

people to control pain with medication, he noted, repeating, “You don’t play with life.”

In his comments, Francis also recommended, as he has on other occasions, that people read the 1907 dystopian science fiction novel “Lord of the World” by Robert Hugh Benson. The author, he said, “shows how things are going to be in the end, \[when\] you take away all the differences, and also



Pope Francis greets the crowd gathered in St. Peter’s Square for his Angelus address on Sept. 24, 2023. Pope Francis said Sunday that regardless of one’s stage of life, it is never too late to receive God’s love. (Vatican Media)

you take away all the pain, and euthanasia is one of these things ... gentle death, selection before birth ...” Pope Francis has condemned euthanasia throughout his papacy, including referring to it as “a sin against God.”

On the feast of our Lady of Fátima on May 13, the pope expressed his sorrow over the legalization of euthanasia in Portugal, which he called “a law to kill.” He has also been firm about the need to provide the very ill and dying with palliative care, which seeks to improve the quality of life of people suffering from severe illnesses. “We must accompany people towards death but not provoke death or facilitate assisted suicide,” he said in 2022.