

Inside ...

10 Meet New Teachers

13 New Pastors Installed

14 Papal Award Recipients

19 Events: Picnics, Ministries



The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

VOL. 37, NO. 5

www.victoriadiocese.org



September 2023

FROM TEXAS TO PORTUGAL



Good start for new school year

JANET JONES

The Catholic Lighthouse

Enrollment numbers are not official until mid-September, but the numbers on the first day of school indicate a positive change for the Catholic schools in the Diocese of Victoria. This is the second year in a row it has grown above the school's pre-pandemic numbers.

"While our enrollment during the past year exhibited growth following the preceding COVID-affected session, the preliminary enrollment figures for the first day of this year show stability," according to Dr. John Quarry, superintendent of the Office of Catholic Schools.

"Incredibly, there are a few schools that have shown a noteworthy increase compared to the previous year's numbers. We are proud to recognize St. Joseph (Yoakum) as it leads the way with a record-setting 23.5 percent increase. Sacred Heart Elementary (Hallettsville) is a close second with an impressive 22.4 percent increase; Holy Cross (Bay City) is rounding out the top three with a superb 18 percent increase," he said. "Moreover, 80 percent of our schools either increased or maintained their enrollment."

The first day of school count shows an overall 3.2 percent increase in the diocese over last year's first-day count. As the first weeks go by, some of the enrollments could change slightly.

Principal Sean Mooney of St. Joseph in Yoakum said his total enrollment on Aug. 24 was 109, one down from the first day of school. But their growth does make for a good year. "We certainly needed it," he said. He said he believes "word of mouth" between parents of school-age children has been

LISBON, PORTUGAL – Deacon Joseph Blackburn sports a backpack with the emblem for World Youth Day and decorated with Texas flags as he and a group of 30 from the Diocese of Victoria make their way to the site where Pope Francis would greet the pilgrims. Bishop Brendan Cahill was one of 12 bishops from Texas to attend World Youth Day. He and other clergy from the Diocese of Victoria were among 700 bishops and 10,000 priests who concelebrated Mass with Pope Francis on the Feast of the Transfiguration. For more photos and stories, See Page 12 (Photo by Taylor Janak/WYD pilgrim)



See Good start for new school year, pg. 6



We need each other; so let's get together soon

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

A few years ago some of the students from St. Joseph Catholic School in Yoakum shared with me about their experiences visiting the Holocaust Museum in Houston. The historical images from that museum call to mind the evil and horrors that humanity can inflict, and the conversation with the students was pretty somber.

That day, their teacher, Mr. Reardon, gave me a book written by Samuel Kassow titled “Who Will Write Our History?” The book details the efforts of certain members of the Jewish community in Warsaw to record memories of their lives during the Nazi occupation from 1939 to 1942. Almost all of the people mentioned in the book suffered the horrible deaths of the concentration camps.

To me, the book stands as a testament to the resiliency of the human spirit and the value of every human life. By writing this historical record, Kassow reminded the reader that every life matters and has a value. Not really

A Shepherd's Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



light summer reading, but I appreciate that the theme of the value of every human person seems to be a theme that unites so much of any discussion of our faith in God.

Right now, I'm preparing for my talk at our Catholic Conference on Sept. 23. I'm trying to develop some themes from a book that I read last summer, written by O. Carter Snead and titled “What It Means to Be Human.” Professor Snead is the director of the de Nicola Center for Ethics and Culture at Notre Dame, and I think he writes in a style that makes complex concepts understandable.

One of the basic themes he develops is

appreciation and gratitude for the gift of our bodies. We enter the world as completely dependent on others, and we never cease to be dependent on others. The beauty of love expresses our need for others and the mutual giving and receiving of being human. That is part of what it means to be human, an embodied person who depends on a network of relationships.

Snead expresses a concern that much of our modern American debate seems to identify a human as an “individual will” that tries to impose its identity on others. The body can come to be experienced as a burden or

something that needs to be changed to fit in to what our will wants. Other people can come to be experienced as “in the way.” The result can be a lot of individuals becoming isolated from one another.

Looking ahead to September, we have many opportunities to come together and discuss our faith in God. For the Hispanic Conference on Sept. 16 and the Annual Catholic Conference on Sept. 23, we have a number of interesting speakers.

Our CCD classes and Catholic schools are starting, and I've heard of many interesting retreats, missions and speakers in our parishes around the diocese.

May you and your families be blessed in this season, with the knowledge that our Lord Jesus knows you by name and loves you in each moment of your life. And may we always respect and cherish the gift of every person, praying that all people can know the power of the love of Jesus.

+Brendan

Bishop Cahill's Schedule

September					
1	Mass and celebration for Bishop Guillory's 50th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood and 80th birthday; Beaumont	12	• 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center • 12:15 p.m. Mass at Victoria College	20	• 2:30 p.m. Finance Board meeting; Chancery • 4 p.m. Building Board meeting; Chancery
2	4 p.m. Confirmation Mass for Sts. Peter and Paul and St. Roch at St. Roch; Mentz	13	Presbyteral Council; Chancery	22	5 p.m. World Youth Day Fundraiser
3	9 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory	14	Catholic Relief Services board meeting; Virtual	23	2023 Catholic Conference at St. Joseph High School; Victoria
4	Chancery offices closed	15	Presidio La Bahia Welcoming Event; Goliad	24	• 8 a.m. Installation Mass for Father Wayne Flagg as Pastor of St. Andrew, Hillje and St. Procopius, Louise at St. Procopius; Louise • 11 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Sacred Heart Catholic Church; Flatonia
5	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center	16	8 a.m. Mass for 2nd Annual Hispanic Catholic Conference; Our Lady of Victory Cathedral	25	Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists
7	Fort Bend Catholic Charities Gala; Richmond	17	11:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass for Holy Cross Church; Bay City		
10	Mass with Archbishop Gabriel Anokye of the Diocese of Kumasi at St. John the Baptist; Hungerford	18	4:30 p.m. meal with OVISS Healthcare Sisters		
11	• 2:30 p.m. Communities of Faith meeting	19	• 6:30 a.m. Morning Air Radio interview		
				26	• 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center • 6 p.m. Adult Confirmation Mass for Our Lady of Victory; Victoria
				27	Mass for Stella Maris at St. Mary's Cathedral; Galveston
				29	5:30 p.m. Blue Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
				October	
				1	9 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Joseph Church; Inez
				1-2	Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops meeting; San Antonio
				3	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
				4	Rector's Dinner, St. Mary's Seminary; Houston
				5	Holy Trinity Seminary board meeting; Dallas



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.*



Established 1987
Published Monthly
1505 E. Mesquite Lane, Victoria, TX 77901
(361) 573-0828
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.

Publisher:
The Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill

Managing Editor:
Janet Jones

jjones@victoriadiocese.org

Communications Assistant/Graphic Specialist:
Regina Matus-Janak
janakr@victoriadiocese.org

Deadline for advertising and news items is the 15th of the preceding month.

E-mail local stories, photos or festival announcements to:

lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org
(361) 573-0828 / (361) 573-5725 FAX
www.victoriadiocese.org

The Catholic Lighthouse cannot be held liable, or in any way responsible, for the content of any advertisement appearing within these pages. All claims, offer guarantees, statements, etc., made by The Catholic Lighthouse advertisers are solely the responsibility of the advertiser. Deceptive or misleading advertising is never knowingly accepted. Complaints regarding advertising should be made directly to the advertiser or to the Better Business Bureau.

Periodical postage paid at Victoria, TX and additional Entry Offices

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to
The Catholic Lighthouse
P.O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

Subscription rates are: \$7 per year within the diocese / \$10 outside the diocese.

3 Ghanaian priests begin ministry in the DOV

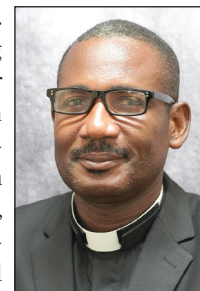
Three priests from the Archdiocese of Cape Coast in Ghana begin serving in the Diocese of Victoria in Texas this month. The diocese has been awaiting their arrival since Bishop Brendan Cahill first announced their assignments during the Chrism Mass in April.

Father Alexander Aboagye is a new parochial vicar in the parish of St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg, where he joins Father Jasper Ligio, pastor, and Father Luke Prihoda, parochial vicar. He was ordained in 2004.



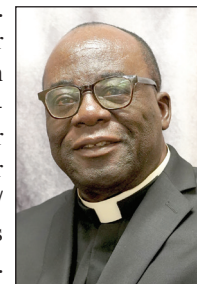
Father Alexander Aboagye

Father Derek F.K. Acquah is ministering in the parish of Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca as parochial vicar, serving with Father Tommy Chen, pastor, and Father Richard Barfield, parochial vicar. Father Derek also was ordained in 2004.



Father Derek F.K. Acquah

Father Samuel B.A. Asantey joins the Our Lady of Victory Parish family in Victoria, serving as parochial vicar and working with Father Kirby Hlavaty, pastor/rector, and Father Jonas Kuubeta, parochial vicar. He also will be on staff at the Emmaus Counseling Center. He was ordained in 1988.



Father Samuel B.A. Asantey



Attention High School Youth:

Youth Leadership
Training Applications
Available NOW!

For More Information email:
Wendy Eggert at weggert@victoriadiocese.org
or go to:
www.victoriadiocese.org/youth-leadership-training



Heavenly Helpers

Christian Store

(979) 543-2850

1603 N Mechanic

El Campo, TX 77437

M-F 9:30 - 5:30 Sat. 9:30 - 3:00

www.facebook.com/heavenlyhelpersonline

First Communion, Confirmation,
Bibles, Books, Rosaries, Medals,
Statues, Baptism & Wedding Items
Inspirational Gifts

St. John CATHOLIC CHURCH OF HUNGERFORD
Annual Bazaar

SUNDAY, OCT. 1ST
HUNGERFORD HALL

SUNDAY MASS AT 9:30

Barbecue Dinner

Beef - Chicken - Sausage

with all the trimmings

DRIVE THRU OR DINE IN
SERVING BEGINS AT 10:30 AM

Country Store
Kids' Games
Cake Walk

LIVE AUCTION
IN A/C HALL
AT 12:00



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

Paz Morales

In memory of Father Dan Morales

Anne Mahy
Treptow Family
Susie Behlen
Linda Oltmann
Joe Cernosek
Richard Cernoch
Carol Svreck

In memory of Andrew Srubar

CDA Court #109 Our Lady of
Queen of the Clergy

In memory of Mildred Stavino

Acolyte

Joan Prihoda

In memory of Andrew Srubar

Candidate

CDA Court #797 Sacred Heart

Victor & Gail Dvorak
In memory of Father Dan Morales
In honor of installation of Fr. James
Dvorak as pastor of St. Anthony, Columbus
& St. Roch, Mentz

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 >.**

August 23, 2023

• General Seminary Burse

Lector

In memory of Andrew Srubar by:
Henry and Maxine Holub
Bob and Rita Srubar

Acolyte

In memory of Andrew Srubar by:
Donnie, Debbie and Heather Charanza
Gary and Judy Dusek

• CDA of the Americas Court Our Lady
Queen of Peace #1374 Seminary Burse

Lector

In memory of Dorothy Nixon by CDA
Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374

• Henry A. Schoenfeld Seminary Burse

Lector

In memory of Mary Louise Hunt by
Bernice Schoenfeld

• Rev. Charles Kolek, OSB & Parents,
John and Marie Kolek Seminary
Burse

Acolyte

In memory of Rev. Charles Kolek, OSB
and parents John and Marie Kolek by the
Kolek Family Reunion

• Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse

Lector

In memory of Jay Kennedy by
M/M Bernard Rother
In memory of Marcha Gassen by
M/M Bernard Rother

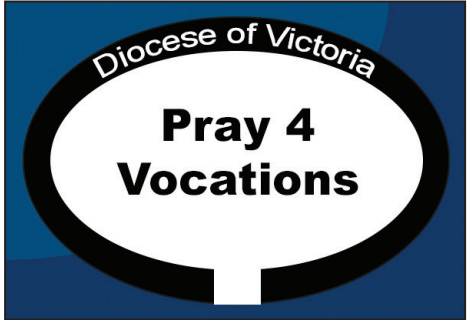
• Rev. Wayne Flagg and Rev. Philip
Brune Seminary Burse

Lector

In honor of Joan Brune's retirement by
Darry and Barbara Meyer, Brad, Rachel,
Lauren & Kathryn Klingenberg, Cody,
Andrea & Kyndal Glynn

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



Visit the new Facebook page for the Vocation
Office at: <https://www.facebook.com/victoriavocations>. Also, visit their new website
at: https://victoriavocations.org/?fbclid=IwAR0upcm2z4LBnAQ5jCEaG2q3GveNwqWYrIT14ctAbgs-q6DuZQM_gp2jz0w

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

Rev. Wayne N. Flagg	09/24/1988	St. Andrew Church, Hillje
		St. Procopius Church, Louise

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

Rev. Dan Morales	09/03/2016
Rev. Msgr. Werner Bockholt	09/08/1992
Rev. Marcus Valenta	09/09/1984
Rev. Msgr. John J. Hanacek	09/14/1994
Rev. Donald Hayden, O.Ss.T.	09/19/2009
Rev. Jude Belisle, O.Ss.T.	09/24/1994

For if we live, we live for the Lord, and if we die, we die for the Lord;
so then, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's. (Romans 14:8)



St. Joseph Catholic Church -Inez

150th Annual Church Picnic

Sunday, September 10, 2023
at Inez Community Center

**Famous Fried Chicken, Sausage & Brisket,
with All the Trimmings \$15**

Plates to Go at 10:30 a.m.

**The Raffle Drawing has over \$6,000.00 in gift cards
Raffle tickets are for a \$5 each donation.**

**All meals, Dine-In and To-Go, will be pre-plated
& served in plates-to-go.**
Serving Begins at 11:00 a.m.
Live Auction at 1:00 p.m.

Please check our website for updated information.
<https://www.stjosephineez.org/>

More Missionaries to the Family

SOUTH BEND, Ind. – Couples who just finished the yearlong Missionaries to the Family formation program pause for a photo at the grotto at Notre Dame in South Bend, Ind., where the program gets its formation and where it holds its retreats for the groups. Pictured from left are Jenny and Jonathon Ruiz from Our Lady of Sorrows parish in Victoria; Mark and Zoila Shoemaker, from Our Lady of Sorrows; Leslie and Bryan Book from Our Lady of Victory parish in Victoria; Bonnie and Kenny Malone of Our Lady of Sorrows and Erica and Noel Ramirez of St. Robert Bellarmine in El Campo.

The program was created by Paradisus Dei, an organization dedicated to “helping families discover the superabundance of God,” according to their mission statement. Those who go through the discernment and formation process are equipped to be leaders in their own parishes and evangelize through words and actions. *(Contributed Photo)*



In the beginning ...

VICTORIA – The Very Rev. Jacob Koether holds up a copy of a recommended study Bible for his “Introduction to the Bible” six-week course, the first of many Pastoral Institute courses to be offered over a three-year period. Father Koether said there is a real hunger among Catholics to discover more about the treasures within The Bible. The course began Aug. 22 and is held weekly on Tuesday mornings. It concludes Sept. 26 and the second course, on the historic and prophetic books, begins Oct. 3. Because it is recorded, people can still register and take the class asynchronously by watching the recordings. The live class had more than 40 participants – a full house – at the chancery. Altogether with synchronous and asynchronous learners, there are about 100 taking the class. Other sites to join in live via computer are St. Andrew in Hillje, Holy Cross in Yorktown and God’s Embrace Ministries in High Hill. For more information, visit www.victoriadiocese.org/pastoral-institute-1. There also are recordings from previous classes available for learners. *(Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)*

STS. PETER & PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH BBQ & RAFFLE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2023

11220 FM 237 | MEYERSVILLE, TEXAS



RAFFLE



Ruger American 6.5 Creedmoor
Savage Arms Axis II 22-250 Rifle
Pointer 20 Gauge O/U Shotgun
Winchester 12 gauge SXP Shotgun
Ruger 10/22 Rifle w/ scope

Taurus Tx22 Pistol
Intime 400 –Inflatable Raft
(4 person or 295# capacity)
Box of Choice Ribeye Steaks
\$150 VISA Gift Card
\$150 VISA Gift Card

*Winners of Guns must pass Federal Firearms Affidavit. Handgun winners must be 21 years or older & must pass NICS. Rifle winners must be 18 years or older & must pass NICS.

\$5.00 EACH OR 5 FOR \$20.00 ~ DRAWING TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 24TH

NEED NOT BE PRESENT TO WIN

Enjoy
Our

COUNTRY STORE

BBQ MEAL

DINE-IN OR TO-GO
11 AM – 1 PM

\$12



Good start for new school year

Continued from pg. 1

one of the things helping to boost enrollment. “I guess we’re doing something right.”

One new family came to the school with four children, he said, which makes an impact on a small school. His largest increase was in the pre-kindergarten classes.

Only three schools had a drop in enrollment, including St. Joseph High School in Victoria, which had a small incoming freshman class, Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca and St. Michael’s in Cuero.

Principal Sandra Stepflug, who started as a new principal last year at Cuero, said they are focusing more on marketing this year and are choosing fundraisers that have proven to be easy and successful, such as selling the Nothing Bundt Cakes, which was very popular last year.

Also, for the first time, the school has made contracts with parents requiring 10 hours of service involvement with fundraisers and such to help make the school more successful. It is common for the schools to require the service to ensure their programs and fundraisers are successful. Parents who do not fulfill the service hours are required to pay an extra charge. The number of hours and the amount of the fee differ from school to school.

What a lot of parents may not realize is that what they pay in tuition may only be half (depending on the school and the tuition) of what it actually costs to educate their child. That’s why private and parochial schools depend on parental involvement during fundraising campaigns.

In the long run, Stepflug knows that the cost is a value. “We give our kids a good

foundation,” she said. “We can reach every child every day.” She said the success of so many of their alumni proves that St. Michael’s has done a good job setting children up for success.

This school year’s theme is “Be still and know that I am God,” from Psalm 46. Ashley Novosad, who moved this year from the diocesan school office to be the office manager at Nazareth Academy, helped choose the theme. She said that comes from the heightened awareness of how vulnerable humans after several tragic school shootings in the nation. With all that we can humanly do to make our communities and schools safe, we cannot forget to put all of our trust in God, who is ultimately in control, she said.

The Diocesan School Advisory Council is putting a lot of emphasis on school safety with a required safety-training program and school safety audit for Catholic schools. Some schools have made security upgrades with new fencing and security doors on buildings.

“Amidst the ongoing summer heat enveloping our South Texas region, Catholic schools within our diocese have joyously offered incoming students a warm embrace of another enriching year,” Dr. Quarry stated. “As we embark on this year’s academic journey together, let us decide to firmly re-commit ourselves to the paramount cause of school safety. Let us labor hand in hand, bolstering and empowering each other, in order to cultivate an atmosphere that is not only secure and sound but also conducive to profound learning, as we live out this year’s theme.”



Sister Clare Underbrink, who teaches at St. Joseph High School, was the first to arrive at the retreat-style Catholic School Seminar for diocesan school staff members on Aug. 4. The theme for the new school year is projected above her. More than 300 educators and staff attended the annual event. This year the focus was on school safety and the staffs were treated to a talk from Emmaus Center counselors about self-care.
(Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)



Counselors from the Emmaus Counseling Center give self-care advice to teachers and staff of the Diocese of Victoria Catholic Schools. (Regina Matus-Janak/The Catholic Lighthouse)

OUR LADY OF THE GULF CATHOLIC CHURCH

FALL FESTIVAL

PORK STEAK DINNER

\$12/PLATE

DINE IN OR TAKE OUT

SEPT. 17, 2023

LIVE AUCTION

BEGINNING AT 1PM

RAFFLE

\$15,050 IN DEBIT CARD PRIZES!

TICKETS ARE AVAILABLE AT THE CHURCH OFFICE

WING-SPAN DRAWING

AUTHENTIC LOUIS VUITTON PURSE VALUED OVER \$3,500

LOUIS VUITTON

ARTS & CRAFTS

KIDS GAMES

SILENT AUCTION

COUNTRY STORE

BAKE SALE

FOOD BOOTHS

CAKE SPIN

FOR MORE INFO CALL: 361-552-6140

BAUER COMMUNITY CENTER

2300 STATE HWY. 35 N.

PORT LAVACA, TX



Register now for annual conference

Registration for the Annual Catholic Conference continues through Sept. 14.

The conference takes place 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 23, at St. Joseph High School in Victoria.

There are a number of workshops to choose from, including some in Spanish. Bishop Brendan Cahill and Father Juan Molina will be the keynote speakers. Father Juan will talk about “Eucharist and Synodality,” focusing on the three words that are the focus of the recent synod – communion, participation and mission. Bishop Cahill will discuss the gift of our bodies,

gender and faith. He will focus on questions such as: What is a man? What is a woman? and What is love?

The cost to attend is \$35 and lunch will be provided. Registrants will choose which workshops they want to attend and will also have time for roundtable discussions. At the end of the day, Bishop Cahill will celebrate Mass.

For more information, visit www.victoriadiocese.org or call Christella Alvarez or Alicia Olive at 361-573-0828, Exts. 2224 or 2225. You may also email them at calvarez@victoriadiocese.org or Alicia@victoriadiocese.org



A sustainable lifestyle brings justice and freedom

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



Sister Marian Sturm, IWBS

Meister Eckhart said, “The spiritual life is more about subtraction than it is addition.” Yet we are the biggest producer of trash on the planet with approximately 4.5 pounds per person per day, generating more than 17 percent of the world’s waste.

Approximately 40 percent of the food in the U.S. is thrown away. In the last article, we saw that San Francisco is attempting to become carbon neutral through zero waste by composting without a landfill or incineration. Composting waste can put carbon back into the soil. Recycling, eliminating plastics and living with only what we need can reduce trash waste in households.

Bea Johnson, known for a zero-waste lifestyle, is an example of Meister Eckhart’s spirituality. She refuses what is not needed, reduces and shares with others, reuses things, recycles what cannot be reused and composts. Her reason for living a zero waste lifestyle is to live a “simplicity that makes time for what matters most, i.e., life based on experiences rather than on things, on ‘being’ rather than on ‘having.’”

Lauren Singer, inspired by Bea Johnson, also lives a zero-waste lifestyle. She said it makes her “happier living in direct alignment with her values.” She “wants to be remembered for the things she did and not for the trash she left behind.”

It is important to see what our trash is, so that we know what to let go of and what to change.

Both women are examples of the correct

use of power and choice, things that make us uniquely human. Based on good values, this change in our lifestyle is the only path to life and freedom. Change in the spiritual life is always about our inner life being transformed by a presence, a power moving us to let go.

Once we see spiritually what is trapping us, we can be freed from our illusions, see that everything is a gift from God and we do not need more. This frees us from seeing ourselves as the reference point for everything, moving us outward to truly love. We become less self-centered, more prayerful, surrendering to God’s will and compassionately reaching out to those in need.

The way most of us now participate in the world is less than love, creating an environment of entitlement and greed. We tend to be a part of the system without even realizing it. Remembering Jesus Christ’s words can be helpful: “Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. ... Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them.” (Matthew 6:19, 26).

Francis and Clare of Assisi found both their inner and outer freedom by living their lives in a way that critiqued the systems of Church and society. By living a simple lifestyle and identifying with the marginalized people of society, they took their place in God’s great scheme to bring about justice. They lived outside the systems of production and consumption, not seeking security, possessions, illusory power, Church status, or divine favor. Rather, they found personal, mental and emotional freedom in humility. They responded to the injustice in the

See A sustainable lifestyle, pg. 21

169th ANNUAL MENTZ PICNIC



St. Roch Catholic Church – Mentz, Texas
Join us for the **Sacrifice of the Mass at 10:00 am**

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1ST

BBQ BEEF, PORK & SAUSAGE *Serving at 11:00 am*

Dine In & Plates To-Go \$15.00 ❖ Children 10 & Under \$10.00

HAMBURGERS AT 2:00 PM PLENTY OF KIDS ACTIVITIES

SILENT AUCTION • RAFFLE • COUNTRY STORE

DANCE INSIDE
12:00-4:00 PM

MUSIC BY:
BLUE DENIM

LIVE AUCTION
1:00PM

BINGO
1:00-5:00PM

Tax ID 74-130-5241

CORNHOLE TOURNAMENT
START TIME: 4:00PM
\$40/TEAM

INSIDE/BRING A PARTNER/
DOUBLE ELIMINATION/70% PAYOUT
PRE-REGISTER ON THE SCORNIOLIO APP
CONTACT: JORDAN 979-733-2145

Check out our Facebook page for any updates. (Saint Roch Mentz)



Annual Raffle Ticket Fundraiser

Proceeds Benefit Food Pantry Operation
September 29 at Noon • 108 N Liberty St. (Victoria/77901) • 361-572-0048

Over 30 Prizes

Including \$5,000 in H.E.B. Gift Cards

Need not be present to win.



Symbols' messages help guide our thoughts and actions

EDITOR'S NOTE: This sermon was written for the Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B. Father Kram titled it "Symbols and Reality."

The world is full of symbols. Take, for example, flowers: In the sickroom, they mean love and moral support. After a husband-and-wife fight, they mean, "I'm sorry." Around a casket, they mean sympathy and condolence.

Policemen's badges and judges' robes and generals' stars are symbols of authority. The eagle and the national anthem and the flag are symbols of patriotism.

The Christian world is also full of symbols. Kneeling down to pray is a symbol of our submission to God. A lighted candle is a symbol of self-offering and prayer. A nun's veil is a symbol of her dedication to God.

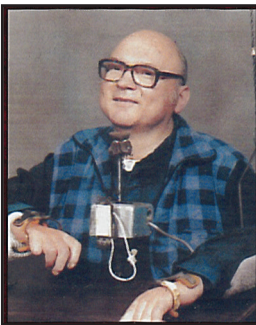
Jesus is at the center of the Christian world and we must strive to have a personal relationship with Him. We must not be satisfied with just knowing about Him; we must get to know Him in a personal way. Symbols can play an important part here.

Notice the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus on the candle stand in the front of the chapel. His heart is a symbol that tells us of the great love He has for us and for His Heavenly Father.

In Holy Communion, we receive the body and blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine as our spiritual food.

In the sacrament of anointing the sick, the oil and the prayer of faith are our plea for healing and forgiveness.

If we are looking for a symbol that is, more or less, all-inclusive and especially meaningful, it is the symbol of bread. In the



1929-2000

Father Charles Kram Corner

Lord's Prayer, we pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," meaning not just food, but also everything we need for body and soul.

Jesus is the Bread of Life, the Bread that came down from Heaven. Jesus is our heavenly Father's personal way of providing for his children. Or, as the Evangelists like to say, "Jesus is the answer." We must keep trying to know Him better and in a personal way.

Let me suggest a few old-fashioned practices that have been of great help to many in the past.

One suggestion is to keep a statue or picture of Jesus in your room to remind you of Him. A mother had me order a desk-size statue of the Sacred Heart for her teenager who was

going off to college.

Another suggestion is to make a visit to Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. I did that often when I was a teenager in school. Tell Him about your plans and about the things that bother or depress you. Ask Him for His blessing and His help. A personal visit like that means, "I love you, I trust in you," or almost anything you want it to mean.

A third tried-and-true way of promoting familiarity with Jesus is to say a prayer in the morning, offering Jesus your prayers, good works, joys and sufferings of the day, or during the day, dedicate certain things to Him by saying, "All for you, Jesus." Or say, as the Charismatic love to say, "Thank you, Jesus, thank you, Jesus." Our words signify our dedication and gratitude.

Yes, the world is full of symbols. Symbols carry messages. Symbols appeal to us. Symbols have power. From a flower to a piece of bread to a prayer, symbols are full of meaning to help us live our lives ever more fully.

Lord Jesus, thank you for being our Bread from Heaven. Help us always to seek YOU and to keep you at the center of our lives. Grant that, following you, we may find our way safely to our eternal home. Amen.

ST. PHILIP

the APOSTLE CATHOLIC CHURCH

PICNIC

SUNDAY, SEPT. 24, 2023

COLUMBUS CLUB

(K.C. Hall, Armory Rd. in El Campo - 11 a.m.-7 p.m.)

Dinner: BBQ Beef & Sausage
with all the trimmings!

Dine in -or- Plates to Go!
\$14.00 per plate

HUGE AUCTION!

Beginning @ 12:30 p.m.

LIVE MUSIC!
JOE ZETKA
and FRIENDS

10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

BINGO

PRIZE WHEEL
CAKE WHEEL
COUNTRY STORE
HAMBURGERS

Silent Auction

KIDDIE RIDES
AND GAMES

Everyone is invited to join us for a day of fun and fellowship!

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.



Yes, Christian, God's hand held back the storm

At times, I find myself surprised at the depth of faith small children have. I find myself surprised how much they can teach me.

My second nephew, Christian, is always making me take a step back and reflect on things he has to say. I call him my "little priest," and I pray that, if he has a vocation to the priesthood, he does not shy away from it. I ask you all to pray with me, too.

Christian is so excited about making his First Communion. He was sad when his brother was able to make his and go to his first reconciliation without him, and cried when he realized that he "had to hold his sins for a whole other year" before he could be forgiven. I tried comforting him, yet, when he started to tell me his "sins," I struggled to keep from laughing.

Christian loves Jesus. During Lent, he gave up sodas as a penance. He was only 6 at the time, and he kept true to his penance, not even drinking sodas on Sundays. He would refuse it even when it was offered to him or when we told him it was OK for him to drink some on Sunday. The reason? Christian explained it to us by pointing at a crucifix and saying that Jesus did that for us; we can do this for Him. Jesus did something big; we can do something little for Him.

One Sunday, I was visiting my family in

Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS



Bay City, and I had told my sister that I wanted to go to the beach for a little while just to be by the water. Christian found out that I was going to the beach, so he asked to stay with me because my sister was going out of town. I was not planning on going to the beach when the sun was beaming down at us hot enough to cook bread in a mailbox, so I said I would go around 5:30 p.m.

At 5 p.m., a storm blew in. I looked on the weather app, and it showed that Matagorda had no chance of rain, so I told my dad, Christian, his brother and one of my nieces that we are still going, and we ran through the rain to get into the vehicle. Christian was so happy that we were going to the beach, but his brother was scared. This was a horrible storm. The rain was heavy, there was a lot of lighting, the thunder was loud, the winds were strong, and it was very dark. I could hear

Ricardo, the older brother, talking to Christian as I drove through the storm telling him that we should go back home because it was raining too much. I heard Christian answer him, saying that I had said it was not raining at the beach and he believes me. I started praying that it was not, in fact, raining in Matagorda.

As we drove out of Bay City, the storm was not letting up. Ricardo began to really show fear, telling me to just go home. I began to doubt the weather app, too, and thought that maybe we should just go home, because it looked like the trip would be a waste of time. My dad started to look the weather up on his phone, my niece was in it just for the ride and snacks that we already had, but Christian kept the faith. I heard him tell Ricardo again that it was not raining at the beach, because God was going to let him go play. My heart broke a little because I thought to myself, "What am I going to tell this little boy if it is indeed raining at the beach?"

I said another silent prayer and kept driving.

Soon we could see the blue sky, and the rain was stopping. We still hadn't made it to Wadsworth, so I knew if it stopped here then for sure it wasn't raining at the beach. I began to breathe more relaxed, noticing for the first time that I had been holding my breath a lot during this drive.



Joshua Earle/Unsplash

Christian called out to me and asked if the rain was stopping. I told him it was. He said God stopped the rain, and before I could answer, Ricardo asked him, "What do you mean God stopped the rain?"

Christian said, "Yeah, He stopped it. He hold it with His hand." I looked in the rear-

See Yes, Christian, pg. 10

ANNUITIES, IRAS & ROTH IRAS

FLEX for any BUDGET
5.15 %* APY
*FIRST YEAR GUARANTEED RATE

*First year guaranteed.
Minimum guarantee is 2.60%.

CATHOLIC LIFE INSURANCE

Home Office: San Antonio, Texas · (210) 828-9921
www.cliu.com

*Interest rates are subject to change & vary by product.

Contact your nearest agent to learn more about your retirement plan options.



HALLETTSVILLE
Wendy Janak, FIC
(361) 798-4311



WEIMAR
Karen Kutac, FIC
(979) 743-0088



VICTORIA
Robert Melnar, FIC
(361) 550-8126



SCHULENBURG
Royce Shimek, FIC
(979) 743-4313



HALLETTSVILLE
Jennifer Kraatz
(361) 798-9181



WEIMAR
Mike Scardino, FIC
(979) 725-8860



SHINER
Patrick Klozik, FIC
(361) 594-8160



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

Meet the new teachers in the Diocese of Victoria Catholic schools:



Ginger Fink
Holy Cross
Bay City



Alex Seydler
Sacred Heart
Hallettsville



Reid Timm
Sacred Heart
Hallettsville



Rachel Birch-
Boggs
St. Michael
Cuero



Manthy Whitley
St. Michael
Cuero



Brittney Schlenker
St. Michael
Cuero



Lana Cox
St. Philip the
Apostle
El Campo



Heather Dertien
St. Philip the
Apostle
El Campo



Kelsey Bohuslav
St. Anthony
Columbus



Veronica Neal
St. Anthony
Columbus



Clifton J. Wenglar
St. Anthony
Columbus



Kayla Berry
Our Lady of
Victory
Victoria



Monica Brown
Our Lady of
Victory
Victoria



Madison Guerrero
Our Lady of
Victory
Victoria



Brandy Salazar
Our Lady of
Victory



Jessica Garay
Nazareth
Academy
Victoria



Megan Albrecht
Nazareth
Academy
Victoria



Brianna Janecka
St. Michael
Weimar



Cara Janecka
St. Michael
Weimar



Courtney Wied
St. Michael
Weimar



Sarah Dotras
St. Joseph HS
Victoria

Lord God, your spirit of wisdom fills the earth and teaches us your ways. Look upon these teachers. Let them strive to share their knowledge with gentle patience and endeavor always to bring the truth to eager minds. Grant that they may follow Jesus Christ, the way, the truth, and the life, forever and ever. Amen.

From the USCCB

Yes, Christian, God’s hand held back the storm

Continued from pg. 9

view mirror and saw Christian with his hand out in front of him like a divider showing Ricardo what he meant. I looked at the sky and saw that there was a clear division between the blue sky and the dark storm we just went through, almost as if a hand was holding the storm back.

Of course I was not going to tell him that there was never a chance of rain at the beach, especially since I was in fact doubting the weather app. At that moment, he was seeing God in the ordinary, and I was not going to take that from him.

Still, that whole incident made me think about the storms that we go through in life and the people that go through them with us. When we are going through a storm, will we keep on going, holding onto the hope that it will end?

When fear creeps in, can we console ourselves and console others knowing that the Lord can calm the storm? Can we keep ourselves from doubting that there will be good at the end of the storm?

And, even if or when we doubt, can we keep pushing forward? Can we trust others to help us get through the storm?

When the storm really doesn’t affect us,

can we be there with others, keeping them company and riding through the storm with them, showing them that they are not alone?

When everything seems out of our hands and we have no control of anything that is taking place, would we be able to see God’s hand working in our lives?

Christian is a child, a child who has already told us that he wants a purple suit for when he makes his First Communion (I told him that was not happening.). Still, I can see his child’s faith. It is innocent. At times, I need the reminder that that is exactly how we all should be -- innocent and trusting in the Lord.

“At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, “Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?” He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me.” Matthew 18: 1-5

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



FAMILY
GAMES
FOOD
CRAFTS

NAZARETH ACADEMY
CATHOLIC SCHOOL
FALL
FESTIVAL

WE ARE BACK TO OUR FULL,
IN-PERSON FESTIVAL
EXPERIENCE WITH OUR
FAMOUS
TURKEY AND DRESSING MEAL!

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2023
10:30 AM
VICTORIA COMMUNITY CENTER

for more information
Contact Ashley or Joel Novosad
at fallfestival@nazarethacademy.org

WYD pilgrim receives sight after Communion

Catholic News Agency

"I opened my eyes and I could see perfectly," said Jimena, a 16-year-old Spanish World Youth Day pilgrim who said she miraculously recovered her sight after receiving the Eucharist at Fátima, Portugal, during a Mass there.

This possible miracle has moved hearts and filled with hope all those who have been following the events at WYD, which brought together more than a million young people in the Portuguese capital last week.

Jimena traveled to Lisbon from Madrid with a group from Opus Dei. During the days prior, relatives and acquaintances of the young woman organized a novena to pray to Our Lady of the Snows, whose feast day is commemorated Aug. 5, the same day she recovered her sight.

For two and a half years, Jimena has suffered a loss of sight due to a myopia problem that left her with a 95% vision loss. On the morning of Aug. 5, when the Holy Father was also praying the rosary at the Fátima shrine, Jimena received what she herself describes as a "great gift" from the Virgin Mary.

Not long after having recovered her sight, Jimena told the Spanish radio station COPE that she woke up that morning "as I have been getting up for two and a half years, seeing super blurry, very badly."

She explained that she had gone to Mass with her friends "because we are at WYD and after receiving Communion I began to cry a lot, because it was the last day of the novena and I wanted to be cured and I had very much asked God please [cure me]."

"When I opened my eyes, I could see

perfectly," the young woman continued, "it was overwhelming; very many thanks must be given for the miracle, because I saw the altar, the tabernacle, my girlfriends were there, and I could see them perfectly."

In addition, she said that she was able to read the novena prayer that she was praying and that she still reads "quite well" -- she hadn't forgotten at all how to read.

The young woman said she is "super happy" and thanked all those who were part of the prayer group. "This has been a test of faith; the Virgin has given me a great gift that I will not forget," she said.

In an Aug. 6 statement to ACI Prensa, CNA's Spanish-language news partner, Cardinal Juan José Omella, the archbishop of Barcelona and president of the Spanish Bishops' Conference, referred to the possible miracle as "a grace from God" during the press conference at the end of WYD held at Eduardo VII park in Lisbon.

The cardinal said he was able to speak

with Jimena on a video call and that she explained what happened in a natural and unaffected manner. "The girl was very excited; she had been blind for a while and she had been learning the Braille method for two or three years," he said.

• This story was first published by ACI Prensa, CNA's Spanish-language news partner. It has been translated and adapted by CNA.*



ST. ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
PALACIOS, TEXAS

59TH ANNUAL SHRIMPOREE
Shrimporee Sunday
Oct. 8

Palacios Recreation Center
2401 Perryman, Palacios, Texas

Music **Lunch begins at 10:30am** **Games**
Shrimp or BBQ (Beef or Chicken)
Plus all the Trimmings
\$15 per plate
Dine In or Take Out **Fun for all ages!**

Live Auction Starts at 1 p.m.

Mass Schedule  **Sat. 6 p.m.**
Sun. 8:30 a.m.
Fr. Eliecer Patino

21ST Annual **\$25/**
Tran Sport Boat Raffle **TICKET**



Boat Raffle Ticket & Gift Card Drawings at 4 p.m.
2nd, 3rd, 4th, & 5th Place Gift Card Prizes
For more information or questions, contact (361) 972-2446

Holy Family Catholic Church

FALL FESTIVAL

Turkey & Dressing with Trimmings
Dine In or Drive Thru
10:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
\$12 per plate

Live Auction begins at 12:30
Grocery Walk | Cake Walk
Split the Pot
Silent Auction | Raffle
Concession Stand | Pastry Booth
Bounce House
Obstacle Course | Petting Zoo | Games
Train Ride | Face Painting

OCTOBER 15th, 2023

2009 Briar Lane | Wharton, TX



Pope’s WYD message: ‘Be not afraid’

Catholic News Agency

“Be not afraid,” Pope Francis told young Catholics Sunday at the closing Mass of World Youth Day 2023 in Lisbon, Portugal, echoing the well-known call of his predecessor and the founder of the international youth gathering, St. John Paul II.

“Dear young people, I would like to look into the eyes of each one of you and tell you: Be not afraid, be not afraid,” he said Aug. 6 on a sunny morning in what organizers dubbed the “Field of Grace.”

Jesus, Pope Francis told young people, “knows your hearts. He sees our hearts. And he tells you today here in Lisbon, on this World Youth Day: ‘Be not afraid, be not afraid, take heart, be not afraid.’”

Francis celebrated Mass on the feast of the Transfiguration for an estimated 1.5 million people in Parque Tejo, where young people and their leaders had camped out overnight following a prayer vigil. Approximately 10,000 priests and 700 bishops concelebrated.

The Mass marked the official end of the international youth gathering, which drew hundreds of thousands of teenagers, young adults, and their leaders from almost every country in the world to the Portuguese capital Aug. 1–6.

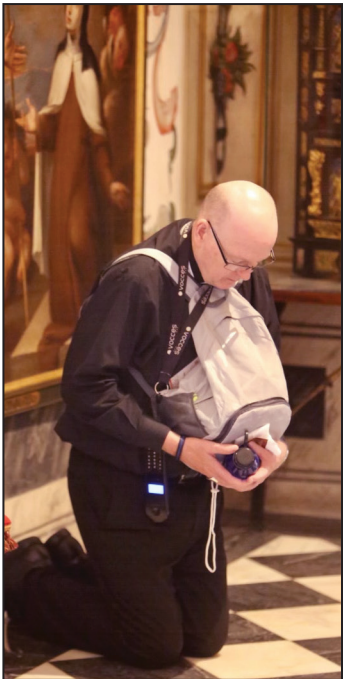
The week included prayer, Mass, music concerts, religious talks, and cultural events, among other activities.



Father Bryan Heyer, Bishop Brendan Cahill, Father Ryan Kapavik, Father Luke Prihoda and Fr. Michael Rother shown walking together as they prepare to celebrate Mass at the Basilica of St. Lawrence at the Royal Monastery in Escorial, Spain.

Photos by Taylor Janak/WYD pilgrim

Bishop Brendan Cahill prays before the tomb of St. Teresa of Ávila in Alba de Tormes, Spain.



(above) Diocese of Victoria pilgrims await the Papal Mass at World Youth Day after sleeping outside the night before in Parque Tejo in Lisbon, Portugal.



Jacob Twyford, Father Bryan Heyer and Joseph Twyford pray before the tomb of St. Teresa of Ávila.



(left) From left, Sara Perry, Jacob Pyatt and Katherine Robinson of the Diocese of Victoria make their way to the welcoming ceremony for World Youth Day in Lisbon.



Father Dalton Ervin pledges to seek guidance from his pastoral council and serve the people of the El Campo parish as a loving father. (Regina Janak/The Catholic Lighthouse)



(above) Father Dalton gets a hug from Rose Marie Janak, Bishop Gary Janak's mother. During his homily, Bishop Cahill quipped that one of the hardest things he will have to do as pastor in El Campo is preach in front of Bishop Gary's mother. (Photo by Taylor Janak)

(right) Father Chase Goodman promises to carry out his duties as pastor at St. Michael the Archangel in Weimar and Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Dubina. Bishop said Father Chase has proven to be a great writer and catechist with his weekly messages in the parish bulletin. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)



Youthful energy *Bishop installs first-time pastors*

JANET JONES

The Catholic Lighthouse

Three of the Diocese of Victoria's youngest priests, ordained together in 2020, this year took on pastor positions for the first time. Recently Bishop Brendan Cahill presided at special installation Masses in their parishes. The Rev. Chase Goodman was installed at St. Michael the Archangel in Weimar on July 29. The Rev. Dalton Ervin was installed at St. Philip the Apostle in El Campo on Aug. 16. And the Rev. James Dvorak was installed at St. Anthony in Columbus on Aug. 19.

During each homily, Bishop Cahill shared with parishioners his prayerful process in choosing their new pastors. And each one said yes right away, according to the bishop. Each of the priests bring with them a youthful energy, according to Bishop Cahill.

The rituals varied slightly at each parish, but each priest was formally introduced and made a public statement committing to serving their flocks with love. "Always be a loving father, a gentle shepherd and a wise teacher of your people so you can lead them to Christ, who will strengthen all that you do," Bishop Cahill said.

Bishop Cahill will celebrate one other installation this year. The Rev. Wayne Flagg will be formally installed as new pastor of St. Andrew in Hillje and St. Procopius in Louise on Sept. 24 at the 8 a.m. Mass at St. Procopius.



Father James Dvorak gets an approving applause from the other clergymen as well as the congregation when formally introduced as their new pastor at St. Anthony in Columbus. He also will be pastor of St. Roch in Mentz. (Photo by Taylor Janak)



Father James greets parishioners after his installation Mass. Bishop Cahill expressed his joy that Father James already had celebrated a Spanish-language Mass. (Regina Janak/The Catholic Lighthouse)



(above) Father Chase holds one of his nieces while taking time for family photos following his installation Mass. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Papal award recipients are models of discipleship

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

Pope Francis granted special recognition to 17 people from various areas of the Diocese of Victoria (one posthumously) who have consistently dedicated time and talents for the glory of God and the good of the Catholic Church. The awards represent their powerful examples of what it means to be a disciple of Christ.

Some were awarded the papal honor *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* (For Church and Pope), and some were awarded the *Benemerenti* (meritorious) award.

Among the recipients are deacons, religious sisters and lay people.

The awards will be handed to the recipients at a special Mass at 10 a.m. Oct. 7 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory.

The *Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice* award were bestowed on the following:
Deacon John and Mrs. Eileen McCourt (*Queen of the Holy Rosary, Hostyn*)

Deacon and Mrs. McCourt came from Northern Ireland in 1975 when the country was in turmoil and it was not safe for Catholic.

See Papal award recipients, pg. 15



Biggs' blessing

PORT LAVACA – Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic schoolteacher Patti Biggs is shown with her fourth-graders after a school Mass on Aug. 16. It was special because Biggs was confirmed and received the Precious Body and Blood of Jesus through First Holy Communion. It's always a joyful moment when someone is welcomed into the Church, but her fourth-grade class was especially surprised, according to an email from the school. The Rev. Tommy Chen, pastor of the OLG parish said having her sacraments during a school Mass instead of at the Easter Vigil was the right context for Biggs, because it was through her work at the school that she encountered the faith and “fell in love with the Catholic Church.” (*Contributed Photo*)



A happy day

Elia Martha Olachia, from Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church in Port Lavaca gives Bishop Brendan Cahill a hug as he presents her with her certificate of completion after finishing three years of leadership training in Hispanic Ministry. Many people received awards for first- second- or third-years completions of the program during a special Mass on July 29. Aldo Camacho, director of Hispanic Ministry for the Diocese of Victoria will start another training in the spring of 2024. (*Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse*)



35th Annual



Czech Heritage Festival

2023



Victoria County Czech Heritage Society



Victoria, Texas

Sun • Sep 24, 2023 • 10:30 am - 6:30 pm

Victoria Community Center • 2905 E. North St.

\$10 Admission • Kids 14 & younger get in free

For more information visit the Victoria County Czech Heritage Society Facebook page, or scan here. ➔



Papal award recipients are models of discipleship

Continued from pg. 14

lics with five children and one on the way. He became a businessman in the La Grange area and joined Queen of the Holy Rosary Church in Hostyn. The couple began serving right after they arrived and have been active in ACTS and marriage preparation. Deacon McCourt, ordained in 2006, inspired many conversions to the Catholic faith and his enthusiasm helped bring many back to the church. The couple has served in many roles in their church. According to Father Felix Twumasi, parochial administrator at Holy Rosary, their love for Jesus will forever be imprinted on the hearts and minds of the parishioners and community members.

Deacon Luan Van Tran and Mrs. Thao Tran (*Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bay City*)

Originally from North Vietnam, Deacon and Mrs. Tran, both shaped by their Catholic faith as children, had three children by the early 1970s. When the Communists began to

take over, they escaped the country by ship, eventually making it to the United States. In thanksgiving, daily Mass has been part of their lives since. They moved to Bay City in 1977 where they still live. Deacon Tran was one of the first deacons ordained in the diocese in 1987. The couple are devoted members of the Legion of Mary. Deacon Tran serves as the legion's spiritual director and helps other parishes begin their own curia. He is also in contact with the Vietnamese deacons nationwide and has written many theological articles for the Vietnamese magazines. The couple assists in the Quasi Parish of Our Lady of La Vang in Palacios. Both are longtime catechists and serve in many other ways. Their pastor, Father Gabriel Espinosa, stated, the couple "are generous and have found a way to assimilate the three cultures found in our region: Vietnamese, American and Mexican cultures within his ministry."

Deacon Dennis Kutach (*St. Joseph, Yoakum*)

Deacon Kutach was the youngest of nine children, and his father died when he was 2. His mom put them all through Catholic school in Shiner, each child having to work two jobs to help afford their Catholic education. Deacon Kutach had a successful career in banking and he and his wife, Georgia Ann, raised four daughters in Yoakum who attended the Catholic School there. He was ordained to the diaconate on July 29, 2006. He spent 15 years as director of the Permanent Diaconate for the diocese. Before his ordination, he already was working with RCIA, adult education, catechetical instruction, ministry to the homebound and nursing homes, ACTS retreats, extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, Lector, choir member, parish finance council and helping with fundraising for the church and school. After his ordination, he expanded his work

to serve with ecumenical activities with Yoakum Ministerial Alliance as well as liturgical ministry/preaching. According to Father Matthew Huehlefeld, pastor of St. Joseph, "He is a man of prayer, understands the call of charity in discipleship and is reinforced in his faith through his marital union and family."

Deacon Joseph Machacek (*Sts. Cyril and Methodius, Shiner*)

Deacon Machacek of Shiner (ordained Dec. 19, 2009), is the committee leader for the canonization cause of Father Charles Kram since 2004, director of facilities and temporal goods at the Shiner parish 2008-2022, has many leadership positions in the Knights of Columbus, and has a long list of ways he has served his parish and cared for parishioners. He and his wife, Mary, have

See Papal award recipients, pg. 24

OCTOBER 7, 2023
RODEO STARTS 8:30AM
FINAL CALL WEIGH IN 3PM








CASH PRIZES!
\$5,000

**GULF STATES
 AQUACULTURE**
Fishing for Hope
REDFISH RODEO

www.gulfstatesaquaculture.com



Scan me to register online!

ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH
ANNUAL PARISH FALL PICNIC
COLUMBUS HALL (FORMERLY KC HALL) 1-10 W EXIT 693

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2023

FRIED CHICKEN & SAUSAGE Meal
 11 AM - 1:30 PM Dine In **\$12**
 11 AM - 1 PM Drive Thru **\$12**

RAFFLE
 TICKETS \$10 EACH or 6 for \$50
 Tickets available from parishioners or
 CHURCH OFFICE: 979-732-2562

MEXICAN FOOD
HAMBURGERS
ALL DAY FESTIVITIES
 Including Old Tyme Music by
DONNIE WAVRA & THE HI-LIGHTERS

BIG COUNTRY AUCTION
 Starts at 1:00 pm

CAKE & GIFT CARD WALK

BOUNCE HOUSE

BINGO* PLANT WALK * MEAT TO GO

SILENT AUCTION
 11am-4pm

STREET TACOS 1:00pm

AGUAS FRESCAS* KOLACHE BREAKFAST*

COUNTRY STORE

SPORTSMAN'S WHEEL* SLICED CAKE

KID'S GAMES
 * FISH POND*
 * BALLOON BUST*
 * COOKIE MONSTER*
 * KIDS' CAN DRAW*
 * RING TOSS*

FOR MORE INFORMATION. CALL 979-733-4089



Catholic Daughters No. 206 turns 110

YOAKUM — The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court Our Lady of Guadalupe No. 206 celebrated its 110th anniversary recently. The court was chartered on June 1, 1913. A Mass was followed by a reception and catered lunch for members and invited guests. Several Texas State Officers and members of surrounding courts joined the celebration. A history of the court was read, and 29 members received pins for 50 or more years as members of the court. The Junior Catholic Daughters joined the celebration commemorating their 80th anniversary. *(Contributed Photo)*



Blue Mass blesses first responders

Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS, gives prayer cards to first responders during the 2021 Blue Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate the 2023 Blue Mass at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, Sept. 29, Feast Day of the Archangels, Sts. Michael, Gabriel and Raphael. St. Michael is the patron of police officers. All are welcome and encouraged to come and pray for first responders in the Diocese of Victoria. *(Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)*



HOLY CROSS PARISH

BAZAAR

Riverside Hall - East Bernard

Sunday, October 8

Meal Served at 11:00AM

BAR-B-QUE BEEF * CHICKEN * SAUSAGE

WITH "HOMEMADE DRESSING" & ALL THE TRIMMINGS

Hamburgers Served at 3:00PM

Plenty of Pastries, Refreshments & Country Store Items

****GAMES****

11:00AM- 4:00PM

Grand AUCTION - 12:00 Noon

ENTERTAINMENT

The Dujka Brothers (Noon to 3:00PM)

The Red Ravens (3:00PM to 6:00PM)

Raffle Drawing ~ 7:30PM

Holy Cross Catholic Church Mass Schedule

Sunday, October 8 – 7:00AM, 9:00AM & 11:00AM (Spanish Mass)

EVERYONE INVITED!

192nd Anniversary of the first Mass celebrated in Hostyn!

Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish

Hostyn Festival



936 FM 2436 La Grange, TX 78945

6 miles South of La Grange off Hwy 77

hostynch@cvctx.com

www.HostynPlumCatholic.org

updates available on our Facebook page:

Queen of the Holy Rosary-Hostyn / Sts. Peter & Paul-Plum Catholic Churches

Mass - 10 AM

Outdoors - Under the Tent

Auction at 1 PM

Country Store, Drawings, Cake and Plant Wheels, Silent Auction, Games

Bingo at 1:30 PM

License 116976 260734

Music All Day!

11:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Czech Melody Masters

3:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Dujka Brothers

3:00 PM - Magic Show

Welcome to Hostyn!

Our wonderful parish and community continue to recover and work towards rebuilding our Church. Thank you for joining us.

"Go up to the mountains, bring wood and rebuild the temple, that I may be pleased with it and be glorified, says the Lord." Haggai 1:8

Hostyn Style Dinner

11 AM to 1 PM

Fried Chicken, Sausage & All the Trimmings - \$14.00

Drive through Line

11 AM to 12:30 PM - \$14.00

Hamburgers available after 3 pm

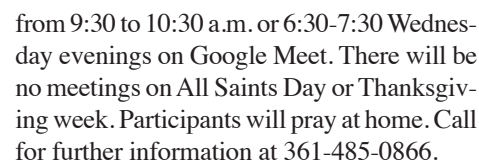


VICTORIA – This fall, the Amor Meus Spirituality Center at Incarnate Word Convent will host a workshop, two retreats and several ongoing group prayer services.

Saturday, Nov. 4, Christina Guerra, a spiritual director from the Archdiocese of San Antonio, will present “The Communion of Saints in our Relationships.”

The following are upcoming group prayer services:

Aug. 30 through Nov. 29, a 12-week Ignatian retreat, "Finding Christ in the World," will begin with group participation either in person for one hour on Wednesday mornings



Dec. 3-17, Advent Solemn Vespers will take place at 5 p.m., followed by benediction in the Incarnate Word Chapel

Feb. 18-March 24, Lenten Solemn Vespers in Incarnate Word Chapel takes place at 5 p.m., followed by benediction.

In the spring, two retreats, one retreat/

Saturday, Jan. 20, Deacon Eddie Huse will present the first retreat entitled "The Sacraments: Your Personal Spiritual Flotation Devices."

Saturday, Feb. 24, a workshop/retreat entitled "Life After Caring" will be facilitated by Deacon Leo Sharon and Terry Robinson.

All retreats and retreat/workshops begin with a check-in at 9:30 a.m. and end at 3 p.m. To register for any event or for further information, visit the website: www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org, call 361-575-7111 or email amormeuscenter@gmail.com.

The center is located on the grounds of the Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N. E. Water St. in Victoria.

PS Form 3526, July 2014

Turkey, Cornbread Dressing, Potatoes, Green Beans, Cranberry Sauce, & Dessert

\$15.00 per plate

Live & On-Line Auction
(Live Auction begins at 11:30 am)

Raffle

onlinefundraiser.events/HCCCFALLFEST

11:00 AM to 1:00 PM

Knights of Columbus Hall, 63 CR 216 (Nichols Rd), Bay City, TX





The Scandal of God's Mercy, Part 2

At Your Service

By Deacon Michael Tankersley



AUTHOR'S NOTE: Set side by side, the lives of Saint Maximilian Kolbe and Kommandant Rudolf Höss appear as opposites: good and evil, saint and sinner, the "Martyr of Charity" and the "Butcher of Auschwitz." One brought the songs of Heaven while the other the screams from hell. But while they were on opposing sides in the horrific scandal of man's cruelty to others, they became brothers in the scandal of God's mercy for all. This is the follow-up of the column written to the August issue.

When an audience hears of the circumstances of the death of Rudolf Höss, the typical feeling is one of relief, as if a great wrong was made right and good overcomes. One can sense a silent applause in the hearts of listeners upon hearing that the kommandant was executed at the very site that he had executed millions of others -- including St. Maximilian Kolbe.

Ask for comments, and they will come with certainty and little hesitation. "He got what he deserved" and "Justice was served" will usually be universal responses. Neither is there much pause when asked about Höss's eternal life ... what happened after his earthly death. Many embrace the notion that one who brings great evil into the lives of others should themselves be brought into the home of evil.

As one commenter bluntly suggested, "If that man ain't in hell, then there is no hell. That's simple justice!" But justice is rarely simple, and humans never are. And in the case of Rudolf Höss, thoughts of "simple justice" are challenged by the "appalling strangeness of the mercy of God."

Years before he put on the Nazi uniform, Höss wore the vestments of a Roman Catholic altar boy. Raised by a devout, but stern, father and with priests as frequent guests in the Höss home, Rudolf was steered toward a priestly vocation. His father even took Rudolf to Lourdes where the boy's life was dedicated to Holy Mary, and St. Bernadette of Lourdes was chosen as his patron saint. But circumstances changed. He changed. His mind became twisted and his heart so corroded in the cult of Nazism that even at his trial in March of '47 he showed no remorse for the millions of lives he took.

But then circumstances changed and he changed. Perhaps it was the long hours of isolation in prison, or maybe the prayers from Maximilian Kolbe or Saint Bernadette of Lourdes that tugged at him. Maybe it was just fear or desperation. For whatever reason(s), his former faith began to simmer in his soul and the hardened heart of the "Butcher of Auschwitz" softened.

On April 4, Good Friday, he requested a priest for the purpose of returning to the Catholic faith and the offering of his sacramental confession. Finding willing priests was difficult, but Höss remembered the name of a priest he had released from Auschwitz years before: Father Wladyslaw Lohn, SJ.

Father Lohn heard Höss lengthy confession on April 10 after which Höss received



Kommandant Rudolf Höss being led to the gallows at Auschwitz. By Stanisław Dąbrowiecki, a press photographer. [1] - <http://historia.focus.pl/wojny/rudolf-hoess-komendant-auschwitz-na-szubienicy-214>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=38776102>

absolution and Holy Communion. Höss would later write a formal declaration to the world announcing his guilt and ended with the words, "I beg you to forgive me." Days later, Höss was led from Block 11 -- the Death Block -- the same block in which he had (St.) Maximilian Kolbe killed. As Father Tadeusz Zaremba recited prayers for the dying, Höss was hanged. He died in a state of grace on April 16, the feast day of St. Bernadette of Lourdes.

Most of us are uncomfortable and challenged by the idea of a repentant and forgiven Höss, and our answers to what should be his final judgement do not come as quickly and confidently as before. Our minds recognize that God forgives even the greatest of sins and sinner, but our impure hearts sense that something doesn't quite seem fair.

How is it that the killer of millions could be invited to the heavenly banquet and sit at the same table as St. Maximilian? The story of Höss doesn't afford us the luxury of considering God's Divine Mercy and Justice as an abstract theological exercise. It puts the issue in our faces and demands we respond. We are injected into the confusion and frustration of Jonah regarding the repentance of the Ninevites; as the older brother when the prodigal son is celebrated; with those who worked all day in the vineyard and then discover that the master had paid the latecomers the same as us. We have an unsteady hand in dealing with justice and mercy as if giving voice to one means silencing the other. Our eye for the sins of others is keen, but our vision dulls at our own. Disciplining other people's children becomes much easier than disciplining our own. We can as easily plead for God's mercy for our misdeeds as we can demand that others pay for theirs. Despite acknowledging our own sinful nature we can grant ourselves the role

to separate the "really bad sinners" from those of us who are only "mild" sinners; from those who deserve mercy and those who do not.

We find it scandalous that a man responsible for the deaths of millions could receive God's mercy. And it is scandalous. It is the scandal of God's mercy that is offered even to the Kommandant of Auschwitz. For, unlike us, God is never torn between justice and mercy. In the mystery of His nature, everything that seems paradoxical to us converges as one in Him: sorrow and joy, sin and salvation, faith and doubt, and even Divine Mercy and Divine Justice. His justice never comes at the expense of mercy but always as the expression of His mercy and as a greater form of justice. God delivers His Justice in mercy, and His mercy is never unjust whether to the saint or the kommandant.

The government officials sent to find Father Lohn faced a difficult task. In the aftermath of the war many people had been uprooted and millions were on the move. When the good priest was found, he was 44 miles from Auschwitz in Krakow, Poland. He was kneeling in prayer at the place he served as vicar -- at the Shrine of Divine Mercy.

My brothers and sisters, divine mercy is where our search should begin and end. Where mercy cannot be earned but is freely offered. Where mercy is not a reward for certification but experienced as healing transformation. This is where "Love and Truth will meet [and] justice and peace will kiss" (Psalms 85:11), and where the Father looks for our prodigal sons and daughters, for our prodigal spouses and parents, for our prodigal selves. This is the place where the light of God's merciful justice shines brightly, even against the darkness of the evil of an Auschwitz. It is a place where lives the "... appalling strangeness of the mercy of God."

Are you invested properly? Get a second opinion.



Kenny French Sr
Financial Advisor

1501 E Mockingbird Ln Ste 102
Victoria, TX 77904
361-576-0178

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING
edwardjones.com

Member SIPC

Jesus still wants a place at the sinners' table

In Communion

By Very Rev. Jacob Koether



When I was in high school, I only sat with certain people at lunch. It was a small school so we didn't have all the usual groups, but we had our cliques. We would sit with our friends, with people that we liked, with people that were like us. We shared similar schedules, we would share stories, we thought alike, and, over time, we would start to act alike.

I see the same thing happen today with adults. We're all kind of like that. We gravitate to the people we like and that are like us. And we become like the people we surround ourselves with. Many times, this happens in a negative way. I think a lot of people struggle with this at their place of work. Maybe your coworkers have the habit of falling into vulgar language or gossiping. Before you know it, you're talking just like them.

But when Jesus enters the picture, something different happens. He would often sit down at table with people who were nothing like Him. He chose them. And things would change for them. They would become like Him.

In the story of Zacchaeus, we see this play out. Zacchaeus was a chief tax collector and a wealthy man. The thing about tax collectors at that time in that part of the world was that they were allowed to set whatever amount for the fee they wanted over and above what the government required. They were able to use the foreign oppressing nation as a weapon of intimidation to extort money from their poor neighbors to make themselves rich. They were often selfish people. And for Zacchaeus to be a chief tax collector and a wealthy man meant that he must have hurt a lot of people along the way. He was nothing like Jesus.

But one day, Zacchaeus heard about this holy rabbi, Jesus, who was passing through his town. He wanted to hear Jesus' message

and see what He would do. Even though he was nothing like Jesus, there was still some openness and curiosity, strong enough that Zacchaeus was even willing to climb up a sycamore tree to get a good spot in the crowd.

When Jesus saw him, and his beginnings of faith, He blessed him by choosing him and showing him mercy. "Zacchaeus, I'm going to stay at your place today. I don't care that you're nothing like me. I want to sit down at table with you and show you mercy. I want to get to know you and your friends and family. I want to spend time with you."

The people of the town didn't like that too much; they grumbled against it.

"Doesn't Jesus realize who this guy is? Doesn't He realize that he's a tax collector and a sinner? Doesn't He know that Zacchaeus is nothing like Him?"

But Jesus corrects the crowd and tells them that that is exactly the reason why He came. He came to seek and save the lost. He came to find people who were nothing like Him and to sit down at table with them. And just like what happens when we share meals with our friends, Jesus influenced Zacchaeus. He said, "Because I've been shown this mercy, I want to show mercy to others. Half of all that wealth I accumulated, I'm giving it away. And if there's any money I extorted, I'm going to pay it back four times over."

Really, this story happens every time we go to Mass. We're Zacchaeus. If we're honest,

a lot of the time, we're nothing like Jesus. But Jesus chooses us. He says, "I see you and your faith and I want to bless you. I want to show you mercy. Today I'm coming to your house. I'm staying with you. I'm going to sit down at table with you and share my life with you." And when that happens, it should change us.

The Mass is a meal of mercy that makes us like Jesus. We have a conversation with God. We set aside time to meet Him, we acknowledge His presence when we get there, and, in the Liturgy of the Word, we let Him speak. At the high point of the Mass, we are nourished with Food from Heaven, approach-

ing the Table of the Lord and sitting with Jesus who abides with us in peace.

So, the Mass is a meal, but it is also a meal of mercy.

Confession is not the only way to receive God's mercy. The Mass is constantly offering mercy, forgiving sins and washing us clean. If you have any less serious sins, or venial sins, you can trust that when you come to this meal, they will be forgiven. Think of all the times we ask for mercy in the Mass: "May Almighty God have mercy on us, forgive us our sins, and bring us to everlasting life." "Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy."

When the priest or deacon proclaims the Gospel, afterwards they say a prayer that goes, "By the words of this holy Gospel, may our sins be washed away."

And again, at the high point of the Mass, when the Body and Blood of Jesus is held up,

See Jesus still wants a place, pg. 22

Celebrating 10 Years of Pilgrimages!

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

Last Chance!

Almost Full!!



Holy Land Pilgrimage with
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.

Contact Ceci Triska at ceci.triska@gmail.com or 979-543-8575

RATES ON THE *Rise*

Michele Rohde, AAMS
Financial Advisor
5606 N Navarro St Ste 207
Victoria, TX 77904

5.21% 6 MO. CD

5.32% MONEY MARKET

CONTACT US



361-575-2600

michele.rohde@ampf.com

ameripriseadvisors.com/michele.rohde



Ameriprise
Financial
Rohde Financial Group

Ameriprise Certificates are issued by Ameriprise Certificate Company and distributed by Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. Member FINRA and SIPC. Ameriprise certificates are backed by reserves of cash and qualified assets on deposit and are not federally or FDIC insured. Our third party certificates are FDIC insured. Rates effective 23-Aug-2023. Rates update weekly.

Necesitamos uno al otro; reunámonos pronto

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,
Hace unos años, algunos de los estudiantes de la Escuela Católica St. Joseph en Yoakum compartieron conmigo sus experiencias al visitar el Museo del Holocausto en Houston. Las imágenes históricas de ese museo recuerdan el mal y los horrores que la humanidad puede infligir, y la conversación con los estudiantes fue bastante sombría.

Ese día, su maestro, el señor Reardon, me regaló un libro escrito por Samuel Kassow titulado “¿Quién escribirá nuestra historia?” El libro detalla los esfuerzos de ciertos miembros de la comunidad judía en Varsovia para registrar recuerdos de sus vidas durante la ocupación nazi de 1939 a 1942. Casi todas las personas mencionadas en el libro sufrieron las horribles muertes de los campos de concentración.

Para mí, el libro es un testimonio de la resiliencia del espíritu humano y del valor de cada vida humana. Al escribir este registro histórico, Kassow recordó al lector que cada vida importa y tiene un valor. No es realmente una lectura ligera de verano, pero

Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill



aprecio que el tema del valor de cada persona humana parece ser un tema que une gran parte de cualquier discusión sobre nuestra fe en Dios.

Ahora mismo, estoy preparando para mi charla en nuestra Conferencia Católica el 23 de septiembre. Estoy tratando de desarrollar algunos temas de un libro que leí el verano pasado, escrito por O. Carter Snead y titulado “Qué significa ser humano”. El profesor Snead es el director del Centro de Ética y Cultura de Nicola en Notre Dame y creo que escribe en un estilo que hace comprensibles los conceptos complejos. Uno de los temas básicos que desarrolla es el aprecio y la gratitud por el don de nuestro

cuerpo. Llegamos al mundo completamente dependientes de los demás y nunca dejamos de depender de los demás. La belleza del amor expresa nuestra necesidad de los demás y el mutuo dar y recibir del ser humano. Eso es parte de lo que significa ser humano, una persona encarnada que depende de una red de relaciones.

Snead expresa su preocupación porque gran parte de nuestro debate estadounidense moderno parece identificar al ser humano como una “voluntad individual” que intenta imponer su identidad a los demás. El cuerpo puede llegar a ser vivido como una carga o algo que hay que cambiar para adaptarlo a lo que nuestra voluntad quiere. Otras perso-

nas pueden llegar a ser consideradas como “un obstáculo”. El resultado puede ser que muchos individuos queden aislados unos de otros.

De cara a septiembre, tenemos muchas oportunidades para reunirnos y discutir nuestra fe en Dios. Para la Conferencia Hispana del 16 de septiembre y la Conferencia Católica Anual del 23 de septiembre, tenemos varios oradores interesantes.

Nuestras clases de CCD y escuelas católicas están comenzando y he oído hablar de muchos retiros, misiones y oradores interesantes en nuestras parroquias de la diócesis

Que ustedes y sus familias sean bendecidos en esta temporada, con el conocimiento de que nuestro Señor Jesús los conoce por su nombre y los ama en cada momento de su vida. Y que siempre respetemos y valoremos el don de cada persona, orando para que todas las personas puedan conocer el poder del amor de Jesús.

+Brendan



ST. ROBERT BELLARMINE CHURCH FESTIVAL
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2023
CIVIC CENTER
EL CAMPO, TEXAS



FESTIVAL
Begins at 10am

Co-Chairpersons:
Martin Medina
979-637-6638
Albert Cavazos
979-637-1532
Michael Rodriquez
979-616-7918

BBQ Brisket & Sausage
Buttered Potatoes, Green Beans
And all the trimmings
Plates \$15.00/Each
Best Brisket in El Campo! Period.
Dine In, To Go Plates, or Drive thru
Serving Begins at 11am (until Sold Out)

LIVE AUCTION
Begins at 12pm

Auction Item Donations:
Deacon Adrian Canales
979-253-0328

Accepting Cash,
Credit Cards,
and Checks

SRB King & Queen Contest
\$10K
Drawdown Raffle,
Dinner, Coronation & Dance
Friday, October 6,
6 PM to 11 PM

El Campo Civic Center
Tickets \$100/each
ONLY 400 Tickets Will Be Sold
Available at Church Office or
Call 979-543-4298



\$20,000 Gift Certificate
Drawing on
Sunday, October 8
Tickets \$100/Each
Only 600 Sold!
Grand Prize will be
last ticket drawn!
For Tickets Contact:
Frank Flores (979) 332-2317

Cake Walk	Gorditas	Aguas Frescas	Coke Toss
Plant Walk	Street Tacos	Homemade Desserts	Toilet Toss
Loteria	Hamburgers	Fruit Cups	Basketball Throw
Lottery Sombrero	Sausage on a Stick	Snow Cones	Nerf Gun
50/50 Raffle	Hot Dogs/Frito Pie	Facepainting	Goldfish



A sustainable lifestyle brings justice and freedom

Continued from pg. 7

cries of the world from a place of love and empowerment, committed to peace rather than aggression. Love and justice are one, harmonious, interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

As people of faith we are called to acknowledge God's love for all of creation, including human life, and to allow it to sustain and not destroy itself. Because our contribution of CO2 into the environment affects the climate of all other countries, we

must be free to critique the system to become carbon neutral.

American Activist Angel Kyodo Williams says, "Without inner change, there can be no outer change. Without collective change, no change matters." We have no other alternative if we want to save our planet and human life.

Contact Sister Marian at maristurm@yahoo.com.

Avoid Market Risk! How about an Annuity?

4.50% for 3 Years

with Bail Out Option • Rate for all 3 Years

5.80% for 5 Years

with Bail Out Option • Rate for all 5 Years



Call TODAY! Hollub Agency
Case A Hollub
979-725-8459

Credited rates effective 07/27/2023 and are subject to change without notice. Early withdrawals may be subject to Surrender Charges and Market Value Adjustments. The IRS may impose penalties for early withdrawals from qualified plans. Contracts issued by American Century Life Insurance Company. Annuity products are not FDIC insured. Annuity products contain charges, fees and limitations. Annuity products and/or features may not be available in all states and rates may vary by state.

Sunday Readings from Sept. 3 to Oct. 8

September 3 ~ Twenty-second Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Jeremiah 20:7-9
Psalms 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 8-9
Romans 12:1-2
Matthew 16:21-27

September 10 ~ Twenty-third Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Ezekiel 33:7-9
Psalms 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9
Romans 13:8-10
Matthew 18:15-20

September 17 ~ Twenty-fourth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Sirach 27:30—28:7
Psalms 103:1-2, 3-4, 9-10, 11-12
Romans 14:7-9
Matthew 18:21-35

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

Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign



September 24 ~ Twenty-fifth Sunday
in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 55:6-9
Psalms 145:2-3, 8-9, 17-18
Phil 1:20c-24, 27a
Matthew 20:1-16a

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

2023 TURKEY DINNER AND FALL FESTIVAL ST. PATRICK'S CATHOLIC CHURCH BLOOMINGTON, TX

Turkey & Dressing Plate-\$13 ea.

Turkey & Dressing with Gravy, Corn, Green Beans,
Cranberry Sauce, Cake, & Bread

DINE-IN or Plates-to-Go

Serving @ 9:30 am with Curbside Service

LIVE AUCTION starts at 11 am.

Dessert Sale, Country/Religious Store, Kids Games

Raffle tickets available from any parishioner.

FOR ORDERS ON FESTIVAL DAY CALL: (361) 897-1398 OPTION 5
FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:
MARSHALL LANGE 361-676-0365
THOMAS PRIBYL 512-657-1795

SEPT. 24, 2023

SERVING @ 9:30 AM

LIVE AUCTION @ 11 AM

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 July puzzle forms to arrive in The Catholic Lighthouse office, P. O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 by July 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.

Helen Motal from Hallettsville (adult) and William John from Victoria (youth) were the July 2023 book winners.

SEPTEMBER 24, 2023
25TH SUNDAY IN ORDINARY TIME
READING I – ISAIAH 55:6-9

A reading from the Book of the Prophet Isaiah: Seek the LORD while he may be found, / call him while he is near. / Let the scoundrel forsake his way, / and the wicked his thoughts; / let him turn to the LORD for mercy; / to our God, who is generous in forgiving. / For my thoughts are not your thoughts, / nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. / As high as the heavens are above the earth, / so high are my ways above your ways / and my thoughts above your thoughts.

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Parish: _____

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



Pray for Rain

Visit www.catholicrurallife.org to find prayers for rain and other prayers written for the rural communities. You also can find recipes and inspiring articles.

Jesus still wants a place at the sinners’ table

Continued from pg. 19

the priest says, “Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world. Blessed are those who are called to the supper of the Lamb.” Blessed are those who are called to sit down at this table! Blessed are those that get to eat this Food! It cleanses us and sets us free.

But after having received this mercy, we should not be the same. When we receive this mercy of Jesus when He sits down to share this meal with us, we should become merciful, too. Like Zacchaeus, we, who are nothing like Jesus, should start to become like Him.

We should start to think like Him and care about the things He cares about and love the things He loves. We should start to talk like Him and pick up His mannerisms. This is as simple as living out those traditional and often forgotten lists of the spiritual and corporal works of mercy. What should we do after sitting down at table with Jesus? Feed the hungry, clothe the naked, give drink to the thirsty, visit those in prison, instruct the ignorant, bear wrongs patiently and forgive.

Jesus wants to sit down at table with you, share a meal with you and show you mercy. If you have never experienced this mercy of Jesus, open yourself to it. Too often we hold on so tightly to our own way of doing things and living life how we see fit that we don’t let God give us anything better. Let go! Come down from the sycamore tree and let Jesus come into your home.

Imagine what our world would be like if we all responded to the Mass like Zacchaeus did.

•The Very Rev. Jacob Koether, pastor

of Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria, serves as episcopal vicar for Evangelization and Catechests for the Diocese of Victoria.



Join us for lunch at our Monthly Travel Meeting on
Thursday, September 28, 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.



**Now booking
Mackinac Island
Includes 2 Night Stay
at the Grand Hotel
Sept. 27 - Oct. 5, 2024**

NOW offering personal travel consulting services. Give me a call and let's work together to get you traveling.

Patti Fitzpatrick and Laurie Eder
Port Lavaca, TX Victoria, TX
361-552-2695 925-285-6658
For Trip Details See Website:
pathwayswithpatti.com or
Email: gowithlaurie@gmail.com



Crisis Pregnancy Ministry

24 Hour Hotline: 361-576-1156

Celebrating over 20 Years of Service to the Crossroads!

Victoria, Jackson, Calhoun, Lavaca, Matagorda, Wharton, DeWitt, Colorado, Fayette, & Goliad.

Praying for Bilingual Volunteer Angels

To Support our Mother Baby Services & our Russell Janecka Learn & Earn Program. These programs let participants earn points by taking on-line classes and then spend the points on items for Mother and Baby; like Cribs, Strollers and Car Seats. Find Out More By Visiting our Website. Thank You! For Being the Hands & Feet of Jesus!

VictoriaGabrielProject.org





Meals • Picnics and More

September

- Hallettsville** – Indian Open Golf Classic Sept. 2,
Cuero – Our Lady of Guadalupe Annual Jamaica, Sept. 3 on the parish hall grounds. Serving BBQ dinner from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. for \$12 each plate.
Hallettsville – Sacred Heart Parish Fall Picnic, Sept. 3 at the KC Hall. Serving fried chicken stew, homemade cornbread dressing dinner for \$13 each plate from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m.
High Hill – St. Mary's Parish Picnic, Sept. 3 on the parish grounds. Serving fried chicken and stew dinner beginning at 11 a.m. for \$13 each plate.
Nada – St. Mary's Parish Festival and Homecoming, Sept. 3. Serving BBQ beef and sausage dinner from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. for \$12 each plate.
Shiner – Sts. Cyril and Methodius Fall Picnic, Sept. 3 at the KC Park. Serving stew, fried chicken and sausage dinner from 10:30 a.m.-2 p.m. for \$13 each plate, in a/c dining room.
Vanderbilt – St. John Bosco Fall Festival Sept. 3 at the Trinity Family Center. Serving BBQ brisket and sausage plates 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m.
Inez – St. Joseph Church Annual Picnic at the Inez Community Center on Sept. 10. See ad on pg. 4.
Yorktown – Holy Cross Festival at Community Hall on Sept. 10. At Yorktown Community Hall serving from 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. sausage and should clod meal for \$15 each plate.
Holman – St. Wenceslaus Annual Feast (9937 FM 155, between Weimar and La Grange) is on Sept. 17. There will be a drive-thru only meal of fried chicken, sausage and all the trimmings beginning at 10:30 a.m. Also, there will be an online auction at www.charity-auction.bid/HolmanPicnic.
Port Lavaca – Our Lady of the Gulf Fall Festival at Bauer Community Center on Sept. 17. See ad on pg. 6 for more information.
Bay City – Holy Cross Fall Festival on Sept. 24 at the KC Hall. See ad on pg. 17
Bloomington – St. Patrick's Fall Festival on Sept. 24. See ad on pg. 21
El Campo – St. Philip Picnic on Sept. 24 at Columbus Hall. See ad on pg. 8.
Meyersville – Sts. Peter and Paul BBQ and Raffle on Sept. 24. See ad on pg. 5.
Sweet Home – St. John the Baptist (Koerth) Fall Picnic, Sept. 24, at the Sweet Home Community Center. Stew and sausage dinner available with dine-in or plates-to-go. Raffles, live and silent auctions, cakewalk, country store and activities for the children.
Victoria – Victoria Czech Heritage Society Festival Sept. 24 at the Community Center. See ad on pg. 14.

October

- Hostyn** – Queen of the Holy Rosary Festival Oct. 1 on the parish grounds. See ad on pg. 16 for more information.
Hungerford – St. John Bazaar Oct. 1 at the Hungerford Hall. See ad on pg. 3 for more details and activities.
Mentz – St. Roch Parish Picnic Oct. 1 on the parish grounds. See ad on pg. 7 for all the activities happening that day.
Victoria – Nazareth Academy Fall Festival Oct. 1 at the Victoria Community Center. See pg.10 for more information.
East Bernard – Holy Cross Bazaar Oct. 8 at Riverside Hall. See ad on pg. 16.
El Campo – St. Robert Festival Oct. 8, see ad on pg. 20.
Palacios – Shrimporee Oct. 8, see ad on pg. 11.
Columbus – St. Anthony Parish Fall Picnic Oct. 8 at the Columbus Hall. For more details see ad on pg. 15.
Victoria – The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory Festival Oct. 8, at the Victoria Community Center.
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 (1:00 p.m.).
Wharton – Holy Family Fall Festival, Oct. 15. For more information see ad on pg. 11.

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. Sept. 12 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 "re-discovery," 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>



Papal award recipients are models of discipleship

Continued from pg. 15

five children. Rev. Bryan Heyer, pastor of Sts. Cyril and Methodius in Shiner said he has great compassion and his a humble and loving servant. “I believe him to be an excellent model of the diaconate and laborer for Christ. He is truly deserving of all recognition and honor that can be afforded to him,” he stated.

Sister M. Evelyn Korenek, OVISS

Originally from Garwood, she went to school at St. Mary’s in Nada and Nazareth Academy high school. Sister Evelyn, over a span of more than 50 years, has served in many schools in the Diocese of Victoria as well as in the Archdiocese of San Antonio. She was the first inductee into the Nazareth Academy Teacher Hall of Fame and has received many other awards and honors for her outstanding service in Catholic education. She has served her congregation’s Leadership Team and served two consecutive terms as Superior General at the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament convent in Victoria. Sister Kathleen Goike, superior general, stated, “Her passion for Catholic education endeared her to many. To this day she enjoys teaching fifth-grade religion to her ‘darling angels’ – a term she uses to refer to her students.”

Sister M. Stephana Marbach, OVISS

Sister Stephana has been a member of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament sisters for more than six decades and has served as administrator and teacher for schools in the Diocese of Victoria in Texas, the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. She was formation directress of her congregation in the 1970s and ’80s, guiding countless young women in their discernment of religious life. She also has been part of the Leadership Team and served two consecutive terms as Superior General. She is currently serving as Assistant General. Bishop Cahill recently appointed her as vicar of religious for the Diocese of Victoria in Texas. According to Sister Kathleen, many people seek her out for spiritual advice and find her easy to confide in and converse with “as her welcoming manner gives credence to the phrase ‘all are welcome.’” She is the oldest of 13 children born in Converse and went to school in Selma. She made perpetual vows Aug. 6, 1964.

Sister M. Laura Toman, OVISS

Sister Lauara made her religious profession on June 8, 1962. During her more than six decades as a professed religious sister, she has dedicated herself to education, teaching and administrating in Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of San Antonio and the Diocese of Victoria in Texas. She spent 23 years at St. Michael in Weimar and the



Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice Award

school received numerous awards, including the designation as a Blue Ribbon School. After her many years as a school administrator, she began work with Promise Pointe, a community of formerly homeless people who are now in their own “tiny houses.” She has served on her religious congregation’s Leadership Team and has a passion for prison ministry and helping people who struggle academically as well as socially, physically and mentally. She spends time visiting or writing to inmates and tutors children who need extra help in their studies. According to Sister Kathleen, “Sister Laura is known for her friendliness, compassion, understanding and knowledge as she embraces the many people that she encounters.”

Others were given the *Benemerenti* (meritorious). It was first awarded as a military decoration for the Pope’s Army, but is now given for dedicated service. Recipients are:
Dr. Michael Fonseca (*St. Rose of Lima, Schulenburg*)



Benemerenti Award

Born in Ajmer, India, Dr. Fonseca was a Jesuit priest for the Archdiocese of Ranchi, India. His assignments included teaching college courses and serving as a much-sought-after retreat master and spiritual director. In 1990 he left the priesthood and served as a layperson in the Diocese of Gaylord (Michigan) and the Diocese of Victoria for more than 20 years. He has extensive experience as a spiritual formation and spiritual director, has worked with clergy who suffered from addictions in a clinical setting and has authored many books to help form disciples. His many insights led him and his late wife, Cherrie, to begin God’s Embrace Ministries. He also has a new role as Director of Healing for Our Lady’s Healing Center in Seadrift. Leading healing retreats in the facility.

Ms. Ana Licia “Alicia” Gutierrez (*St. Robert Bellarmine, El Campo*)

Gutierrez served as church secretary at St. Robert Bellarmine 1988-1991 and 1995 to present. In her role, she has been a counselor, assistant, record keeper, bookkeeper,

Safe Environment coordinator, trainer, host of fundraisers and much more. She is a founding member of Guardias de Honor (2022). As a child, she helped her parents make breakfast for parishioners and raise funds for the parish, so her service has been lifelong. She has been called the “backbone” of her parish and was caretaker for former pastor, Monsignor Lawrence Matula, in the later years of his life.

Mr. Ralph (deceased) and Mrs. Minnie Cormier (*Our Lady of the Gulf, Port Lavaca*)

Ralph, who died in June, was originally from Beaumont. He was a lifelong educator and has served as a counselor for many years. He was a catechist for high school students, member of the Knights of Columbus for 31 years. He and Minnie raised four children and were the best of friends. They were known for their strong example of a holy marriage and praying the rosary together daily. Minnie also had a career as an educator and counselor. She has been a member of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas for 31 years. Both Ralph and Minnie have volunteered in many capacities including as counselors for Our Lady of the Gulf’s school in the parish they serve.

Mr. and Mrs. Arturo and Carolina Lara (*Holy Family, Victoria*)

The Laras are said to lead an exemplary moral life. Arturo is lector, counselor for marriage support, regular adorer of the Blessed Sacrament. They are also known for their strong marriage and inspiring and positive influence on the church community. They have lived the mandate of making disciples. Carolina is a retired pediatric nurse and home health provider. Her volunteer work includes religious education, altar society, hospice, Catholic Daughters of the Americas and Gabriel Project. She participates regularly in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament with her husband.

Mr. and Mrs. Ismael and Graciela Perez (*St. Patrick, Bloomington*)

Ismael and Graciela attend daily Mass together and never hesitate to help and show others the ways of the faith in their actions and words. Graciela was a teacher for 40 years and Ismael also was an educator as well as an administrator. Together they help with baptism and marriage preparation for others. Both are lectors and extraordinary ministers. Ismael teaches confirmation students and Graciela is a member of the rosary group, Catholic Daughters and Guadalupanas. They are willing to work on their church festival and anywhere else they can be helpful.