

Building on Faith



Hostyn breaks ground on new church

See story on page 20.

Parishioner and peer input help priests preach better

"...How can they hear without someone to preach?" Romans 10:14

The Diocese of Victoria has had several priests participate in the Institute for Homiletics' Preaching for Encounter cohort that completed their program in 2024, and more are invited to begin in 2026.

Because of the Institute for Homiletics, with its mission to renew Catholic preachers and their preaching, priests and deacons are realizing that homilies matter more than they knew. Preaching for Encounter gives them the help of homiletics coaches,

a group of peers, and input from a trained group of laity. With all this, preachers can go deeply into the Word and their own prayer life, allowing the Holy Spirit to help them create more encounters with Christ for their flock.

"Father Gabriel Bentil, our pastor at Holy Family, asked me to lead a group to partner with him during his Preaching for Encounter program," said Heather Kallus, the parish's Director of Faith Formation. Heather explained the first year was dedi-

See *Parishioner and peer input*, pg. 9

DOV office finds new ways to minister to deceased, families

VICTORIA — During the month of October, the Catholic community is intentional about showing respect for life from conception to natural death. In November, attention turns to the souls who have died and the dignity still due their bodies.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that, "The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection. The burial

of the dead is a corporal work of mercy; it honors the children of God, who are temples of the Holy Spirit." (CCC 2300)

Debbie Escalante, who heads the Office of Catholic Cemeteries that manages the Catholic cemeteries in Victoria, said it's important to her that the Catholic identity of the local cemeteries is seen and felt.

See *DOV office finds new ways*, pg. 13

5 Bishop leads a hope-filled retreat.

10 'Called By Name' Sunday a success.

12 Conversion doesn't happen just once.

17 Blessing of the Food.

Humble penitence and service also are Thanksgiving traditions

A Shepherd's Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

President Lincoln delivered the first Thanksgiving Day Proclamation for the United States in the midst of the Civil War, just three months after the Battle of Gettysburg. During that dark hour, he mentioned some of the blessings that had been received, even in that troubling time, and declared:

“It has seemed to me fit and proper that they should be solemnly, reverently and gratefully acknowledged as with one heart and one voice by the whole American people. I do, therefore, invite my fellow citizens in every part of the United States, and also those who are at sea and those who are sojourning in foreign lands, to set apart and observe the last Thursday of November next as a Day of Thanksgiving and Praise to our beneficent Father who dwelleth in the heavens. And I recommend to them



that, while offering up the ascriptions justly due to Him for such singular deliverances and blessings, they do also, with humble penitence for our national perverseness and disobedience, commend to His tender care all those who have become widows, orphans, mourners, or sufferers in the lamentable civil strife in which we are unavoidably engaged, and fervently implore the interposition of the Almighty hand to heal the wounds of the nation, and to restore it, as soon as may be consistent with the Divine purposes, to the full enjoyment of peace, harmony, tranquillity, and union.”

When I see the generosity of people who take the time to serve others during the Thanksgiving holiday I am reminded that humble penitence has been part of the Thanksgiving tradition since the first pro-

clamation. Each act of service – helping out another person who is suffering – reminds us that we are all in need of God’s mercy and that God is the Father of all.

Each act of service also reminds us that every life is precious, a gift of God. Writing in 1995, St. John Paul II worried about a new perverseness in the world, one that did not see each person as created by a loving God. In *Evangelium Vitae* he first used the term “culture of death” and called us to stand up for the value and dignity of every life:

12. ... it is no less true that we are confronted by an even larger reality, which can be described as a veritable structure of sin. This reality is characterized by the emergence of a culture which denies solidarity and in many cases takes the form of a veritable “culture of death.” This culture is actively fostered by powerful cultural, economic and political currents which encourage an idea of society excessively concerned with efficiency. Looking at the situation from this point of view, it is possible to speak in a certain sense of a war of the powerful against the weak: a life which would require greater acceptance, love and care is considered use-

less, or held to be an intolerable burden, and is therefore rejected in one way or another. A person who, because of illness, handicap or, more simply, just by existing, compromises the well-being or life-style of those who are more favored tends to be looked upon as an enemy to be resisted or eliminated. In this way a kind of “conspiracy against life” is unleashed. This conspiracy involves not only individuals in their personal, family or group relationships, but goes far beyond, to the point of damaging and distorting, at the international level, relations between peoples and States.

Our Thanksgiving traditions of service are part of the greater movement for creating a culture of life, a culture that sees the value of every person as a gift of God. Thank you for the many ways in which you witness this throughout the year, promoting life from conception to natural death.

May you and your families be blessed with the peace and joy of Jesus, may our hearts be thankful to God for the blessings we have received and may we be committed to defend and respect every life. Let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

La humilde penitencia y el servicio también son tradiciones del Día de Acción de Gracias.

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,

El presidente Lincoln pronunció la primera Proclamación del Día de Acción de Gracias para Estados Unidos en plena Guerra Civil, apenas tres meses después de la Batalla de Gettysburg. Durante esa hora oscura, mencionó algunas de las bendiciones recibidas, incluso en esos tiempos difíciles, y declaró:

“Me ha parecido adecuado que todo el pueblo Estadounidense los reconozca solemne, reverente y agradecidamente como si fueran un solo corazón y una

sola voz. Por lo tanto, invito a mis conciudadanos en todas partes de los Estados Unidos, y también a los que están en el mar y a los que residen en tierras extranjeras, a apartar y observar el último jueves del próximo noviembre, como día de Acción de Gracias y Alabanza a nuestro Padre benéfico que habita en los Cielos. Y les recomiendo que, al tiempo que ofrecen las atribuciones que justamente se le deben ofrecen las atribuciones que justamente se le deben por tan singulares liberaciones

y bendiciones, también, con humilde arrepentimiento por nuestra perversidad y desobediencia nacional, encomienden a su tierno cuidado a todos aquellos que han quedado viudos, huérfanos, dolientes o que sufren en la lamentable lucha civil en la que inevitablemente estamos involucrados, e imploramos fervientemente la interposición de la Mano Todopoderosa para sanar las heridas de la nación y restaurarla tan pronto como sea compatible con los propósitos Divinos para el pleno disfrute de paz, armonía, tranquilidad y

unión.”

Cuando veo la generosidad de quienes se toman el tiempo para servir a los demás durante el Día de Acción de Gracias, recuerdo que la humilde penitencia ha sido parte de la tradición del Día de Acción de Gracias desde la primera proclamación. Cada acto de servicio – ayudar a alguien que sufre – nos recuerda que todos necesitamos la

Ver La humilde penitencia página 7

Bishop Cahill's Schedule

November					
3	Victoria – 5 p.m. Diocesan Liturgical Commission meeting; chancery	15	Weimar – Catholic Rural Life Harvest Mass; Whistling Duck Winery	22	Victoria – Meal with OVISS sisters in Healthcare; IWBS convent
		16	East Bernard – 9 a.m. Mass for 100-year anniversary; Holy Cross Church		Victoria – 9:30 a.m. Amor Meus retreat “Jubilee of Hope: A Needed Virtue for Our Time,” IWBS Convent
		17-19	New Orleans – Installation of Most Rev. Jim Checchio as coadjutor archbishop of New Orleans		Victoria – 9 a.m. Sunday Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
		20	Victoria - Knights of St. Gregory Mass and dinner		Victoria – Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists
		21	Columbus – 8:15 a.m. school Mass and visit with St. Anthony		Schulenburg – 7 p.m. Mass and birthday celebration; St. Rose of Lima
4	Victoria – 9:15 a.m. PI Class – Ecclesiology; chancery				
5	Victoria – 10 a.m. Presbyteral Council meeting; chancery				
5-14	Baltimore – U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops meeting				
14	Houston – Irish Gala				
December					
				25	Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
				26-28	Chancery closed for Thanksgiving holiday.
				1-3	Houston – Advent mission at St. Bernadette

Note: Calendar is subject to changes.



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Diocese of Victoria mission:

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



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In Memoriam



Msgr. Albert Hubertus

Longtime pastor in Archdiocese of San Antonio passes away

SAN ANTONIO — Msgr. Albert Hubertus, a longtime pastor in the Archdiocese of San Antonio who earlier this year celebrated his 75th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood and would have turned 100 on Dec. 3, passed away in San Antonio on Oct. 13 at the age of 99.

Msgr. Hubertus was born on Dec. 3, 1925, in Comal County to Joachim Hubertus and Leonora Fey. His great-grandfather Hubertus immigrated to the United States in 1845 on the ship *Stralabo*, and his great grandmother immigrated after the Civil War. The family chapel was located a quarter of a mile from where St. John Paul II High School stands today.

Msgr. Hubertus, at the age of 13, went to live and study at St. John’s Seminary and remained there until 1950. He recalls that he “became a free man” when he was ordained on May 27, 1950, having spent 12 years at St. John’s.

Msgr. Hubertus had a large family with five siblings, including two who became priests: he and his brother, Msgr. Gerald Hubertus.

Msgr. Hubertus’ first assignment after ordination was at St. Mary’s in Fredericksburg. One of the requirements for this assignment was the ability to speak German.

From 1969, Msgr. Hubertus served as pastor in El Campo for seven years. He was blessed with many priests who worked with him in the parish, including Fathers Jim Conway, Jim Henke, Sherrill Smith, and Tony Pesek.

Msgr. Hubertus served at St. Anthony Mary Claret for 12 years and retired at the age of 74.

Funeral was held at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church in Selma on Oct. 22, with interment at Holy Cross Cemetery.

To view a synthesis of Msgr. Hubertus’ history and thoughts, authored by Tom Krueger and John Halloran, go to <https://archsa.org/msgr-albert-hubertus-dies-at-99-funeral-mass-scheduled/>

Father Tran Dinh’s mother passes away

PALACIOS — Luu Thi Nguyen, 91, was called to her eternal home on Oct. 13. She was born on Oct. 30, 1933, in Bui Chu, Vietnam.

After entering the United States and being sponsored by the Hubbell family of Michigan, her family moved to Palacios, Texas, in 1978. She was a homemaker, gardener and a faithful member of her parish, Our Lady of La Vang Catholic Church.

She is survived by her children: Rev. Tran Dinh, Nhung Dinh, Thai Dinh and wife Trang, Huong Nguyen and husband Truong, Sanh Dinh and wife Trang Huynh, Lung Dinh and wife Thao, Thao Quach Dinh, and Chau Dinh; her grandchildren: Crystal Dinh, Diana Dinh and husband Lucas Carrillo, Jeffrey Dinh, Kim Chen and husband Daniel, An Pham, Thanh Diffley and husband Brian, Thu Pham, Lynn Pham, Kristine Nguyen and husband Carter Cohen, Eric Nguyen and wife Amanda, Emma Dinh, Eva Dinh, Nathan Dinh, Ryan Dinh, Regan Dinh, Lea Dinh; her great-grandchildren: Jordan Nguyen, Theodore Carrillo, Ethan Chen and Owen Chen. Mrs. Nguyen was preceded in death by her parents, Cam Thi Nguyen and Khoa Van Nguyen; husband Tien Tuong Dinh, son, Thuy Dinh, daughter, Lan Dinh, daughter-in-law, Don Nguyen and grandson, Emmanuel Dinh.

The funeral Mass was held on Oct. 18, at Our Lady of La Vang. Mrs. Nguyen’s son, Rev. Tran Dinh presided. The interment followed at the Palacios Cemetery.



Luu Thi Nguyen

DOV office welcomes a new team member

VICTORIA — The Diocese of Victoria’s chancery staff welcomed Tina Page as a new administrative assistant for the Office of Evangelization and Catechesis. She officially started her new role on Oct. 6.

Page will report directly to Father Jacob Koether, episcopal vicar for evangelization and catechesis, and will support administrative and coordination efforts within the offices he oversees.

She brings extensive administrative assistance experience, with a strong background in supporting team success within the medical and mental health fields in addition to the public safety sector. She also has served the community by working as parent-teacher liaison.

A proud Catholic, she is devoted to her faith and her family, striving to instill those values in her daily life. Page and her husband, Eric, have four sons, ages 35, 27, 24 and 15. She is a member of Our Lady of Victory parish.

You can reach Mrs. Page at tpage@victoriadiocese.org or by phone at 361-573-0828, Ext. 2224.

“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:18-22



Tina Page

The Chancery will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holidays, starting Nov. 26 at noon - Nov. 28.



The Chancery Offices will reopen
Dec. 1 at 8:30 a.m.

The Chancery will be closed for the Holy Day of Obligation Solemnity Immaculate Conception Dec. 8



The office will open on Dec. 9
at 8:30 a.m.

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

Acolyte

Candidate

Transitional Deacon

Conners Construction
Pamela and Scott Conners
In memory of Susana Moya

Priest

JB Gold Foundation
Betty Gold

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 >.**

Oct. 21, 2025

- **Rev. Msgr. Gerard “Gerry” Cernoch Seminary Burse**
Lector
In memory of Charles Erdelt by Helen Dolezal

• **Rev. Kristopher L. Fuchs Seminary Burse**
Lector
In memory of Mary Herman Wagner by Paul and Helen Flessner

• **Rev. Robert Knippenberg Seminary Burse**
Acolyte
In memory of James Barringer by Anastasia Barringer

• **Donald F. McDonald, Sr. Seminary Burse #6**
Priest
In memory of Arthur Bluntzer by Mrs. Olivia McDonald
- **Donald F. McDonald, Sr. Seminary Burse #7**
Priest
In memory of Donald F. McDonald by Mrs. Olivia McDonald

• **Donald F. McDonald, Sr. Seminary Burse #8**
Priest
In memory of Jeanette Bluntzer by Mrs. Olivia McDonald
In memory of Charles Bluntzer by Mrs. Olivia McDonald
In memory of Ruth Ann Bluntzer by Mrs. Olivia McDonald

• **Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Seminary Burse #10**
Lector
Donation in honor of Elsie Farek’s 94th birthday
In thanksgiving for all God’s blessings
In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters’ birthday by Lillian Rabel

• **Henry A. Schoenfeld Seminary Burse**
Lector
Donation in memory of David Tajchman by Bernice Schoenfeld

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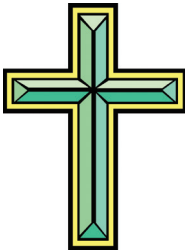


To contribute to an existing Seminary Endowment Fund, send contributions with the appropriate fund designation to:

Diocese Of Victoria
Seminary Endowment Fund
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Victoria, TX 77903

Please remember in prayer the priests who served in the Diocese of Victoria, who died during the month of November:

Rev. Msgr. Benton Thurmond	11/07/2009
Rev. Godfrey F. Kuratko	11/18/1983
Rev. John Kollannur	11/19/2017
Rev. Peter Higgins	11/20/2012
Rev. Msgr. Joseph Hybner	11/23/2019
Rev. Msgr. Anthony Matula	11/26/1994
Rev. Gregory O’Connor	11/26/1986
Rev. Raphael Baidoo, O.Ss.T.	11/30/2016



“May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace”

Official Appointments / Announcements



VICTORIA – Bishop Brendan Cahill appointed Father Joseph Blackburn to be the diocesan spiritual director for the Legion of Mary. He thanked Father Blackburn for his “faith-filled and dedicated participation with our new Praesidium at Santisima Trinidad, Maria Purisma ...” Blackburn is the parochial vicar for Our Lady of Sorrows and Santisima Trinidad.

HELP LOCAL FAMILIES STAY WARM THIS WINTER



This season, Council #8388 is collecting new and gently used coats — not just for kids, but for adults too. Many families in our area are in need, and your donation can help ensure no one is left out in the cold.

Saturday, December 6 • 8 a.m.- Noon
Our Lady of Sorrows CCD Center (407 S. Glass St., Victoria)

DONATION DROP OFFS NOV. 1- 30

Drop off bins will be located at St. Joseph High School, Nazareth Academy, Angel Lucy’s Funeral Home, & OLS Church/Santisima Trinidad



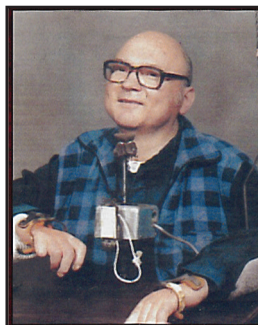
For more information, contact:
OLS Rectory/Front Desk at (361) 575-2293

Your bag is already packed; let God prepare you for departure

EDITOR'S NOTE: This sermon was written for the 33rd Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B. Father Kram titled it, "Hope for a Brighter Future."

God has surrounded us with so many reminders of our mortality and of the fact that one day all things will pass away. The buds of spring growing to maturity and then the harvest time and finally the dead of winter. The infant growing into childhood, then youth, then maturity and, finally, old age. The decay and disintegration of things that were once new – all these things keep before our minds the thought of how one day all things will come to an end, and so will we.

Such realizations can make one angry or frustrated or anxious. But rather than say, "What's the use?" we Christians say, "Death is the gateway to life," and



1929-2000

Servant of God Charles Kram Corner

"Thanks be to God for the many blessings he hides in our trials."

If we have no secure existence here, it is so much better to learn not to hold on too tightly to anything God has given us and to learn to love and cherish HIM above all things.

When Pope John [XXIII] was nearing death he said, "My bags are packed." He got ready, and soon he died. One cancer patient I visited in the hospital kept saying,

"I'm so ready." And soon she died.

Many a faithful soul has seen God's hand preparing him for his departure.

God has a kind way of preparing his children for their exit from this world. When the time comes, they are ready and can leave gracefully without any regrets.

So what if in the meantime many of our plans fail? What if happiness seems always to be just around the corner? What if we see the innocent suffer and the guilty prosper? God does not balance his books once a month, but there will one day be a day of reckoning for us all, when all our hopes will be fulfilled and every wrong made right.

But when will the end come for each of us? When will Jesus return and the world come to an end? Every now and then someone comes up with a prediction. You probably noticed a book on the market recently, again setting the time. As with other such predictions, the date came and went, and life goes on.

The fact is that no one knows, and Jesus wouldn't tell, even when asked.

Meanwhile, we Christians, striving to persevere to the end and to be always ready, struggle on in full confidence that no man will be able to frustrate the final achievement of God's saving purpose, and that it will all be fulfilled.

Lord Jesus, thank you for bringing us such bright hopes for a happy future sooner or later.

Help us wisely to heed every sign that can guide us.

Grant that after all the disappointments of this life are over we may be found worthy to begin our lives anew with you Amen.

Bishop-led Amor Meus retreat celebrates hope

VICTORIA – The Amor Meus Spirituality Center is celebrating this Jubilee Year of Hope by hosting a guided silent retreat 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Nov. 22 at Incarnate Word Convent. Bishop Brendan Cahill will lead the retreat entitled "Jubilee of Hope: A Needed Virtue for Our Times."

Pope Francis declared 2025 as a Jubilee Year of Hope saying, "Hope does not disappoint." He called on the faithful to trust in God's promises and live as pilgrims of hope in a world that longs for God's light. He said, "Through our witness, may hope spread to all those who anxiously seek it."

Everyone is invited to spend time in silence, prayer and deep reflection to hear the Holy Spirit. It is meant to inspire retreatants to hope and live life in a manner that will prompt others to have hope.



Bishop Brendan Cahill,
retreat leader



Bishop Cahill, holds a doctorate in theology from Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, a masters in theology with a specialization in African-American Catholic Studies from Xavier University in New Orleans and has further studies at Casa Santa Maria (North American College) in Rome, and a master's in divinity and bachelor's in psychology from the University of St. Thomas in Houston. He was ordained a priest for the Diocese of Galveston-Houston on May 19, 1990, and was named Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria on June 29, 2015. As a priest he served in several parishes. He also served as formation director at St. Mary's Seminary, as Director of the Secretariat for Clergy Formation and Chaplaincy Services

and Vicar for Clergy of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. He taught at the University of St. Thomas School of Theology and was involved with several boards and organizations. He speaks English, Spanish, and Italian, and has a working knowledge of the Latin, French and German languages.

To register, call 361-575-7111 or email amormeuscenter@gmail.com. Sign-in begins at 9:30 a.m. Visitors are asked to park in front of the convent at 1101 NE Water St. and bring a lunch. A free-will offering will be accepted.

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November and December.
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- **Victoria & Skagit Valley**
April 26 – May 3, 2026
- **Alpine Lakes & Scenic Trains**
June 15 – 24, 2026
- **Glacier & Waterton National Parks**
August 23 – 30, 2026

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For Trip Details See Website:
pathwayswithpatti.com, scan qr code or
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Life lesson was couched in grandmother’s napkin stash

Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS



When I was growing up, my grandmother had a habit of saving all the leftover clean paper napkins after a meal. She kept them neatly folded inside her purse and, over time, that stack grew quite large.

After every restaurant visit, she would gather the unused napkins from our table. Just to be clear, it was only those given to us, not from the dispenser. She also saved leftover ketchup packets, later squeezing them into the one ketchup bottle we must have owned for years because I never remember her buying a new one, but that’s another story.

As a child, I didn’t understand why she saved all those napkins. It was even a little embarrassing when she opened her purse and revealed a stack from all sorts of restaurants. But one day, I learned my lesson.

We were traveling to Mexico and stopped at a rest area for a restroom break. When we went inside, we realized there wasn’t any toilet paper. Grandma to the rescue! From that moment on, I never questioned her napkin-saving habit again.

Yet the story doesn’t end there. I must have been about 6 years old at the time, marveling at how wise and prepared my grandmother was she was like a real-life Mary Poppins

with her purse full of necessities. Then, as another family entered the restroom, someone told them there was no toilet paper. The mother’s face fell; she clearly wasn’t prepared. Without hesitation, my grandmother took half of what I now considered her sacred stash and handed it to the grateful woman.

I was shocked. We were a family of five traveling far. We hadn’t even gotten into Mexico yet. What if we ran into the same problem again? When we had all piled back into the car, I asked why she gave them so much. She said gently, “I keep these for people who need them. Sometimes it’s us; sometimes it’s others. If we’re lucky enough to help someone, we should do it, because God helps us so we can help others.”

At 6, I didn’t think God cared much about napkins or rest stops, but I suppose I was wrong. It was a lesson on sharing I’ve never forgotten. And to this day, I keep a stash of napkins in the car I drive. They’ve come in handy more times than I can count.

Years later, when COVID-19 hit in 2020 and everyone began hoarding toilet paper, I remembered my grandmother’s words. When H-E-B announced that there was no shortage; that there was enough for everyone if we only took what we needed, I realized again how my childlike instinct had been to blame others for not being prepared, while my grandmother’s instinct had been to share.

This month we celebrate Thanksgiving, a time to give thanks for all we have. But perhaps this year, we should also focus on sharing. Every year I marvel at how people who have less than I do (and I don’t have much) often seem so joyful and grateful and they are also the most generous. My grandmother had very little, but if she had an abundance of something, like napkins, she made sure to share.

Hoarding doesn’t just happen with material goods. Sometimes we hoard things like opportunities, human rights, piety, ministry or knowledge.

We can hoard opportunities by excluding others -- by resisting policies that allow immigrants to work, study or receive healthcare.

We hoard human rights when we believe that dignity, safety or prosperity belong only to those with legal status or certain backgrounds.

We hoard piety and ministry when we do many “holy” things but don’t let them transform our hearts, or when we refuse to let others share in the ministry we’ve grown used to doing.

And we hoard knowledge when we keep learning but never share what we’ve learned with others.

Hoarding closes the heart; hospitality and sharing open it.

This Thanksgiving, let’s give thanks for what we have and then look for ways to share with others, remembering that God blesses us so that we can become a blessing for others.

“Dear friends, I express my heartfelt gratitude for all that you and those who work with your networks do each day to put into practice the Lord’s admonition to see and serve Him in the poor, hungry, homeless, and people in any kind of need.” (cf. Matthew 25:31–46). — *Pope Leo XIV, in a letter to Catholic Charities USA, read at their 115th annual gathering*

• Contact Sister Rosario at bishopsecretary.dov@gmail.com.

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Diocese of Victoria issues statement about unapproved donation pages recently created

VICTORIA — The GoFundMe company has recently created about 1.4 million pages to collect donations for nonprofit organizations without their consent or knowledge. We are conducting the research to determine the extent, if any impact to any parishes, schools and ministries within the Diocese of Victoria.

The diocese does not use GoFundMe to collect donations for any purpose. To make sure donated funds support parishes, schools, Diocesan Service Ap-

peal, or other ministries, give through the official and secure online platforms found on the diocesan website at <http://www.victoriadiocese.org>. This will ensure that every gift reaches its intended purpose.

For any questions regarding donations pages or inquiries regarding giving to diocesan ministries, contact the Business Office at 361-573-0828, or reach out directly to the parish or school.

The continued trust of those who generously donate funds to diocesan entities is of utmost importance.

La humilde penitencia y el servicio también son tradiciones del Día de Acción de Gracias.

Continuación de la página 2

misericordia de Dios y que Dios es el Padre de todos.

Cada acto de servicio también nos recuerda que cada vida es preciosa, un don de Dios. En 1995, San Juan Pablo II, escribiendo sobre la preocupación por una nueva perversidad en el mundo, una que no vea a cada persona como creada por un Dios amoroso. En *Evangelium Vitae*, utilizó por primera vez el término “cultura de la muerte” y nos llamó a defender el valor y la dignidad de cada vida:

12. En efecto, si muchos y graves aspectos de la actual problemática social pueden explicar en cierto modo el clima de extendida incertidumbre moral y atenuar a veces en las personas la responsabilidad objetiva, no es menos cierto que estamos frente a una realidad más amplia, que se puede considerar como una verdadera y auténtica estructura de pecado, caracterizada por la difusión de una cultura contraria a la solidaridad, que en muchos casos se configura como verdadera « cultura de muerte ». Esta estructura está activamente promovida por fuertes corrientes culturales, económicas y políticas, portadoras de una concepción de la sociedad basada en la eficiencia. Mirando las cosas desde este punto de vista, se puede hablar, en cierto sentido, de una guerra de los poderosos contra los débiles. La vida que exigiría más acogida, amor y cuidado es tenida por inútil, o considerada como un peso insoportable y, por tanto, despreciada de muchos modos. Quien, con su enfermedad, con su minusvalidez o, más simplemente, con su misma presencia

pone en discusión el bienestar y el estilo de vida de los más aventajados, tiende a ser visto como un enemigo del que hay que defenderse o a quien eliminar. Se desencadena así una especie de « conjura contra la vida », que afecta no sólo a las personas concretas en sus relaciones individuales, familiares o de grupo, sino que va más allá llegando a perjudicar y alterar, a nivel mundial, las relaciones entre los pueblos y los Estados.

Nuestras tradiciones de servicio en Acción de Gracias forman parte de un movimiento mayor para crear una cultura de la vida, una cultura que valora a cada persona como un don de Dios. Gracias por las múltiples maneras en que dan testimonio de esto a lo largo del año, promoviendo la vida desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural.

Que ustedes y sus familias sean bendecidos con la paz y la alegría de Jesús, que nuestros corazones estén agradecidos a Dios por las bendiciones que hemos recibido y que nos comprometamos a defender y respetar cada vida. Oremos por nosotros.

+Brendan

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Shroud of Turin event comes to Yorktown

YORKTOWN – Holy Cross Catholic Church will host a special presentation on the Shroud of Turin Nov. 8 and 9, curated by the nonprofit Pilgrim Center for Hope in San Antonio. Hours are 3:30-4:30 p.m. and 6:30-8 p.m. Saturday and 1-3 p.m. Sunday at the church’s activity center.

The Shroud of Turin is a linen cloth that some believe could be the burial cloth of Jesus Christ, and is the most studied relic in the history of Christianity, according to a press release from Pilgrim Center for Hope.

The event, “A Journey with the Shroud of Turin... Who Do You Say He Is?”, features a full-size certified replica of the



Shroud and panels that give insights about the Shroud. Through science, medicine, art, history and faith reflections, the exhibit invites visitors to draw their own conclusions about the Shroud of Turin.

“Everyone is invited,” said Mary Jane Fox, lead presenter and co-director of the nonprofit. “Christians may journey through the presentation as a pilgrim,

while others can experience it as an observer. Everyone discovers something different.”

The event is free and open to the public. Food will be provided.

For more information, contact the church office at 361-564-2893.

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Live Auction begins at 12:30 PM | Silent Auction 10 AM to 3 PM
Arts & Crafts - Country Store - Game Booths - Cake Walk - Raffle
Entertainment by: *Clay Crockett and Band*

\$15 per plate



Contributed Photo

Leading the Rosary
YOAKUM — St. Joseph Catholic School eighth-graders participated in a celebration of the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary on Oct. 7 by leading a Living Rosary.



Photo credits: Kathleen Leiningner and Chuck Tomek

CDA Sunday celebrated
MOULTON — Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) Court Fr. Joseph Kopp gathered to celebrate CDA Sunday at Mass on Oct. 19. The many Catholic Daughters organizations provide prayers and good works for the community, the state and the world.

*Happy Birthday,
Bishop Cahill*



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8

Veterans Day Prayer

Lord God, Almighty Father, creator of mankind and author of peace, as we are ever mindful of the cost paid for the liberty we possess, we ask you to bless the members of our armed forces.

Give them courage, hope and strength. May they ever experience your firm support, gentle love and compassionate healing. Be their power and protector, leading them from darkness to light.

To you be all glory, honor and praise, now and forever. Amen.

USCCB (2021)

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Parishioner and peer input help priests preach better

Continued from pg. 1

cated to forming a ‘Saint Joseph’s Preachers’ group to learn what is important in a homily and how to truly listen to give valuable input. “All through that time, Father Gabriel was learning a lot, too, and it helped him become ready to hear what parishioners could share with him,” Kallus said. “And it has made a big, big difference for all of us.”

Father Bentil said, “Before this course, I believed that even without much preparation, I could have a pretty good message. I did not realize how I could wander. Now that I understand more, it has become clear the congregation wandered with me.”

To keep focus and help his listeners have a clear takeaway, Father Bentil developed consistent practices such as:

- Base the homily on the Word of God. The Sunday Scriptures are my guide. I don’t stray to talk about Mother’s Day or Father’s Day or whatever is happening that weekend.
 - Reflect upon the readings early. Get a theme and write the homily down on Monday. Continue praying and tweaking it during the week.
 - Stay focused on what listeners can take home. Don’t give parishioners “the whole pie,” just “a piece of the pie,” in 5-7 minutes.
 - Have a God-factor, Jesus-factor or Holy Spirit-factor. I plant the seeds. Including the Trinity in my homily helps it to blossom or bloom in its own time.
- “Heather says that his homilies now

bring new life into the Mass. We are all regularly doing something tangible with the takeaway, and every parent is asking their child to share what the big takeaway means to them.”

Father Bentil encourages his brother priests to join this opportunity. “I have been a priest for 40 years, and I still needed a reminder about how to be an effective preacher. I learned new ideas that enhanced my preaching skills,” he said. “The priest-priest interactions helped me to have different perspectives, the coaching guided me with constructive feedback and my St. Joseph’s Preachers (parishioner support group) has helped me in ways I did not know were possible.”

“It is a beautiful journey we are on,” Kallus said. “I’ve loved being able to lead the group, and now to continue to help him with his homilies. Father Gabriel understands that giving parishioners food for the soul this week is one of most valuable things he can do, and he is eager to keep learning how to make those connections.”

Father Richard Bediako serves as pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church in Meyersville and St. Aloysius Catholic Church in Westhoff. Reflecting on his time in the Preaching for Encounter program, he said, “I learned to focus on one thing and to use images to help people connect with it. That has made it easier for me to create my homily - and easier for people to receive it.”

“As a priest, I never cease learning,”



Dr. Karla Bellinger of the Institute for Homiletics talks to Father Richard Bediako, right. She said she enjoys helping preachers renew their own spirituality to help them renew others.

Father Bediako said. “Even when I am familiar with the readings or the situation, the Lord reveals Himself to me in a different way in this new moment.”

Father Bediako signed up for this course because he wanted to preach in a way that would help people to love God more. Through Preaching for Encounter, he discovered how to create deeper connections. “It begins with prayer -- both in the Word and for my people,” he explained. “When I began praying specifically for the individuals God has placed in my community, I shifted from talking at them to talking with them.”

Parishioners, first at St. Michael’s during the course, and now in Meyersville and

Westhoff, have all taken notice. “They tell me my homilies help them feel more open to the Holy Spirit,” Father Bediako said. “I’ve learned that when we connect with the faithful on an emotional and psychological level, it naturally leads us to the spiritual.”

He also encourages fellow priests to pray regularly for their parishioners. “Our preaching should show that we truly know our flock and can speak to their hearts,” he said. “I hope more priests will take advantage of the Preaching for Encounter opportunity when it begins again this spring.”

“When homilies touch the hearts of the faithful, they can then carry the fire of the Gospel into their homes, workplaces, and their everyday lives,” explains Dr. Karla J. Bellinger, the founding executive director of the Institute for Homiletics. “The opportunity for evangelization through the Sunday liturgical homily is tremendous.”

In addition to the Preaching for Encounter and Saint Joseph’s Preachers programs, thanks to a \$1.3 million grant from the Lilly Endowment of Indianapolis, the Institute also actively gathers, analyzes, and shares perspectives about faith. This fresh data, especially what is learned from teens and young adults, is provided along with other resources to help preachers engage listeners and invite them to what they are really longing for -- a connection with Christ.

For the progress report of the cohort that graduated in 2024 or more information, visit www.instituteforhomiletics.org and subscribe to the newsletter. Priests in the Diocese of Victoria who are interested in participating in the spring should contact Father Charles E. Otsiwah, episcopal vicar for clergy, at ceotsiwah@victoriadiocese.org.



Saint Joseph’s Preachers are trained listeners at Holy Family who give feedback to Father Gabriel Bentil, the pastor. Pictured from left are Heather Kallus, Eddie Longoria, Susan Longoria, Debbie Vanelli, Father Bentil, Melissa Arellano, Richard Arellano, Dolores Gonzales, Mike Gonzales, Judy Seiler and Father Ryan Kapavik, parochial vicar at Holy Family, who plans to be in the next cohort of the Institute for Homiletics program. (Not pictured is Rachel Medrano.)



Contributed photo

The Vocations Committee of the El Campo parishes, St. Robert Bellarmine and St. Philip the Apostle, hosted a “Called by Name” Sunday event, a first ever, to invite and encourage young men and boys who want to know more about the priesthood. Eighteen answered the invitation and with their families and the committee and pastors, there were more than 70 who gathered for the event.

Committee hosts first ‘Called By Name’ Sunday to encourage vocations

BY CARMEN LARA

EL CAMPO -- The El Campo Vocation Committee gathers once a month to pray for vocations, support the local priests and deacons and encourage seminarians through cards and letters of prayer and support.

The meetings are also a time for fellowship and faith-sharing between the members from both St. Robert Bellarmine and St. Philip the Apostle parishes, who work together to nurture future Church leaders.

“Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I dedicated you.” — **Jeremiah 1:5**

At the committee’s June gathering, Father Philip Brune, pastor of St. Robert, introduced the idea of “Called By Name” Sunday and expressed his hope that the El Campo parishes could be the first in the Diocese of Victoria to host this initiative. He reached out to Father Kristopher Fuchs, the diocesan vocation director, to share the idea and the spark was lit; the committee was eager to bring the project to life.

Father Brune shared this vision with fellow priests from the El Campo Deanery who were equally supportive. Plans were made, and “Called By Name” Sunday cards for the weekend of Aug. 23 were designed.

That weekend, priests delivered heartfelt homilies about their personal call to the priesthood. Parishioners were invited to prayerfully consider young men in their community who might have a vocation to the priesthood and to write their names on the Called By Name cards. More than 60 names were submitted. Each young man was contacted by a member of the Vocation Committee and invited to a pizza party to learn more about discerning a vocation to the priesthood.

“Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, ‘Whom shall I send? Who will go for us?’ And I said, ‘Here I am, send me!’” — **Isaiah 6:8**

On Sept. 27, the committee hosted the first-ever “Called By Name” Sunday pizza

party at St. Robert’s. Eighteen boys attended with their families. One even traveled from New Braunfels. More than 70 people were present, including Father Brune, Father Dalton Ervin, pastor of St. Philip, Father Collins Twum, parochial vicar of St. Philip, and Father Fuchs. Each priest shared his unique journey to the priesthood, offering encouragement and inspiration.

Seminarian Nelson Lagos participated also, and his testimony seemed to resonate deeply with those in attendance, prompting several of the young men to speak with him more about his journey.

“The harvest is abundant but the laborers are few; so ask the master of the harvest to send out laborers for his harvest.” — **Matthew 9:37–38**

The committee called the “Called By Name” Sunday initiative a “beautiful success,” the community looks forward to continuing its support and prayer for more vocations in the years to come.

• *Carmen Lara is coordinator of the El Campo Vocation Committee of St. Robert and St. Philip parishes.*

ST. ROBERT’S PRAYER FOR VOCATIONS

Loving Father, I thank you for calling me to live a life of holiness and thank you for the vocation you have given to me. I ask that my family members and friends who are called to be priests, deacons, nuns, or religious may have the grace and humility to say “yes” to the vocation you have given them. Let them be not afraid. Where there is fear in their hearts, may you place courage. Where there is ridicule, your peace. And where there is lack of support, your presence. Grant that many vocations may come from our families of St. Robert’s. Help me to support vocations with joy and enthusiasm as I seek to do your will. Mary, Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of Priests and Religious, pray for us.



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Blessing of the Pets

Father Matthew Huehlefeld, pastor of St. Joseph Catholic Church in Yoakum blesses a goat and other animals the children of the parish school brought on Oct. 3 to celebrate the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi. He is one of many parish priests who offered blessings for the animals that day. Below, Father Stephen Vacek, pastor of Holy Family Catholic Church, blesses a family pet for one of the students at Holy Cross School.



Antonia Salzano, right, the mother of St. Carlo Acutis, said her son showed her that it is not death that people should fear, but rather sin, the one thing that separates human beings from God.

St. Carlo’s mother explains what it’s like to be the mother of a saint

WALTER SÁNCHEZ SILVA
Catholic News Agency

Antonia Salzano, the mother of St. Carlo Acutis recently shared what it’s like to be the mother of a saint and offered valuable advice to other mothers who, like her, have gone through the painful experience of the death of a child.

Salzano shared having had the opportunity to attend the canonization with Assunta Carlini Goretti, the mother of St. Maria Goretti, who saw the child martyr of purity declared a saint on June 24, 1950.

When asked what it is like to be the mother of a saint, Salzano in an interview with “EWTN Noticias,” the Spanish-language broadcast edition of EWTN News, said: “Naturally, it’s a privilege, but also a duty, because first and foremost, I have to become a saint myself, because the call is also for me. I have to set an example.”

The mother of St. Carlo Acutis, who died at age 15 in 2006 from leukemia, emphasized that being the mother of a saint is also “a call to help others, because people are in darkness. Many people haven’t found God.”

The saint’s parents -- Salzano and her husband, Andrea Acutis -- accompanied by his younger twin siblings, Michele and Francesca, brought the offertory gifts to Pope Leo XIV during the canonization Mass on Sept. 7.

“If I can give advice, speak a good word to help souls, I do it gladly, with great love, because I think the most important thing is to find God in our lives and live in God’s light,” emphasized the

mother of St. Carlo, the “Apostle of the Eucharist” who created a virtual exhibition on Eucharistic miracles around the world.

Salzano’s counsel to those who have suffered the death of a child:

“The important thing is to understand that what matters is loving God and our neighbor. This is the most important thing. If you lose your child, it’s not that you’ve lost him or her for eternity. It’s not good-bye. It’s to find yourself in another, more beautiful life, with God, with God’s light,” Salzano said.

“Carlo said that death is the passage to true life. Whoever is afraid of death does so because they don’t trust in God, they don’t have faith in God. Because if we have trust in God, we cannot be afraid of death,” she continued.

The only thing we should fear, Salzano pointed out, “is sin, because this can separate us forever from God. Death is ultimately the encounter with the beloved, the encounter with the most beautiful thing in the universe with God.”

“Carlo began going to Mass every day when he was 7 years old. He wrote on that occasion: ‘To always be united to Jesus, this is my life plan,’” Salzano recalled.

“The encounter with Jesus was the most important part of his day. Naturally, this didn’t prevent Carlo from having a normal life, like all young people -- his studies, his sports, all his friends -- but for Carlo, the central focus was the encounter with Jesus truly present in the Blessed Sacrament,” Salzano said.

‘LUMINIOUS MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY INSPIRED BY SATANIC PRIEST!’

At Your Service

By Deacon Michael
Tankersley



Now that is a click-bait headline that should pull in readers. Those unfriendly to Catholicism will be satisfied (“*See, I knew there was something wrong about them.*”), while some Catholics will wring their hands while wondering, “Now what?”

This headline does present a legitimate, though shocking, fact, but it highlights only a piece of the story. The full story of the FORMER Satanic priest, however, testifies to a beautiful, positive, faith-affirming truth: that when we respond to the love of God, we will experience conversion into new life.

Bartolo Longo (1841-1926), was a wealthy Italian lawyer who grew to hate monks, priests and the Pope. His detestation of all things Christian, and especially Catholic, was so intense that he pledged his soul to a demon and was consecrated a satanic priest to do battle with God and His Church. Then came a change – a “burning bush” experience – a moving toward God that would lead to a conversion of the heart.

In this new life, Longo devoted himself to the Holy Rosary and Marian devotion. It was from Longo’s writings that Pope John Paul II found the idea of mysteries that

would cover Jesus’ public ministry and the individual mysteries plus what that package of mysteries should be called. When he proposed the new Mysteries of Light in his 2002 encyclical *The Rosary of the Blessed Virgin Mary*, Pope John Paul II spoke with admiration for this holy man whose conversion and subsequent holy life led to the conversions of so many others. In February Pope Francis announced that Longo had met the criteria for sainthood, and on Oct. 19 this former satanic priest was canonized.

“FROM SATAN TO SAINT:” That should be the headline.

Conversion stories are inspiring stuff. I am fascinated by the accounts of those who experienced radical, major overhauls to their lives in response to God’s call. There are atheists like Bartolo and pagan barbarian kings like Clovis (now St. Clovis) whose conversion in the fifth century laid the foundation for a Catholic France. Edith Stein (St. Teresa Benedicta of the Cross) would transition from Jewish to atheist to Catholic to sainthood. And we all know of the conversion account of St. Paul – the man once intent on killing out Christianity who later was willing to die for it. These conversions were not just cosmetic changes like slapping on a coat of paint to freshen up the look of a house or re-arranging the furniture. These were new constructions, new lives built on responding to the graces of God.

We can find valuable lessons in conversion stories, but we can also be vulnerable to getting only a piece of the lesson rather than its fullness. We can, for example, be



tempted to consider conversion as a “one and done” event, that one great “Aha!” moment in which the right path is cleared away and our course permanently set in the right direction. There is also the impulse to think that the need for conversion is reserved for villains and thugs, for agnostics and atheists, for non-Christians and non-Catholics ... for that guy over there.

But my friends, the call to conversion is a continuous call and that call goes out to all of us regardless of our station in life. It does go out to “that guy over there,” but it goes out to this guy – to me and to you – as well. Whether God’s call is by hushed whisper or through powerful shout, whether it be in a dramatic event or by slow drip, when we respond we experience a conversion through which we are shaped and molded into His image and into new life. This transformation into *alter Christus* (another Christ) means making daily choices in the light of the Gospel, however, and this is no simple task. It is not one that can be made living on auto-pilot. It is a challenge to remain alert so that we aren’t pulled in by the “gospel” of the world that preaches self and ego, pleasure and power, consumption and lust.

Similarly, we must stay attentive to the infection of spiritual complacency. It is poison to the soul when we ignore the ongoing call for conversion and listen instead to the toxic voice that tells us, “You’ve done enough! You’ve gone as far as you need! You’re fine just as you are!”

You and I are called into and meant for

divine life, not simply the half-hearted life of a mediocre churchgoer. Fullness of life is God’s offering, and the invitation to daily “conversions” – both the little and the big – is a lifelong and active invitation.

There is a famous (though unverified) story that when Michelangelo was asked how he carved out the beautiful statue of David from a block of marble, he said, “I just removed everything that is not of David.”

I often think of this quote when I am asked if it is true that I was a convert into Catholicism. My standard response is that, while I did convert, I am still being converted. Transformation is continuously and slowly, deliberately and sometimes reluctantly chipping away everything which is not of Christ Jesus. It is not a human project but a human response to the call of God.

My friends, Christ’s drum call into conversion continues to beat for all of us. May we help one another to march to him and may we invite bystanders to join in the Divine parade.

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Diocese of Victoria

Pray 4

Vocations

DOV office finds new ways to minister to deceased, families

Continued from pg. 1

When she first took over the office, Escalante said she met with Bishop Brendan Cahill and asked if they could name the blocks of the very large cemetery with saints’ names instead of having letters and numbers representing the resting places of the deceased. “He liked the idea and he would like to go with Marianist saints. Last year, he gave me a list of names – saints – and all of them are Marianist saints.”

The staff at the cemetery recently completed installing the new signage for the blocks naming them St. John Paul II, St. Theresa of Lisieux, St. Faustina, Sts. Francisco and Jacinto Marto, St. Juan Diego, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Margaret Mary, St. John de Matha, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Bernadette of Lourdes, St. Padre Pio, Mother Teresa and St. Carlos Acutis.

“It’s really just to make people feel that and see that it is a Catholic cemetery. We really want our families to feel that peace.” Escalante said. The signs will still indicate the letter or number of the blocks as well.

According to Escalante, people have noticed and think it’s nice to have the names to help recognize and recall the areas where the burial plots are located. For some people, it’s easier to remember a name than a digit.

Special attention was already given to the areas where babies are laid to rest. The areas are marked at Holy Innocents after the first church martyrs, babies killed at the command of King Herod after Jesus’s birth. The cemetery office placed angel statues in the cemetery to designate those special areas.

“It is sacred ground. All of that ground has been blessed. And we’re just adding more of God’s grace and blessings to Resurrection (Cemetery),” Escalante said.

Julie Galvan, who began working in the cemetery office with Escalante this year said she didn’t realize the impact their office has on families who are losing or have lost a loved one and are seeking some guidance.

“I didn’t think of it as a ministry before, I thought of it as a job. But I can

see that now. I can see the service part of it. ... It’s a beautiful thing, walking them through the process,” Galvan said.

Escalante and Galvan attend the funerals with the families they have worked with and they also provide the names of the deceased so they can be remembered in prayer at the weekly Mass at the chancery office.

They help the families navigate not only the logistics of services and the burial or cremation process, but introduce them to resources such as grief counseling through the Emmaus Counseling Center, another office of the Diocese of Victoria. And they have

worked to make their web pages on the diocesan website (www.victoriadiocese.org/catholic-cemeteries) more helpful and informative and developed a brochure for the families to understand the rules and regulations of the cemetery.

They also minister by keeping the graves and the cemetery as nice as possible. “We don’t sell perpetual care; we give it. We do it to the best of our ability,” Escalante said. Not only do the staff members of the cemetery work to keep the property clean and tidy, her office gets help through volunteers, such as the youth at Our Lady of Sorrows and some from Holy Family who participated in a cleanup on Oct. 18. “The cemetery looks really nice,” she said.

Other cemeteries in the diocese also have cleanups and often this time of year as the Church anticipates the Feast of All Saints on Nov. 1 and the Feast of All Souls on Nov. 2.

Escalante said Father Kristopher Fuchs, pastor of St. Mary’s in Victoria, will be a Mass for All Souls Day in Victoria at Catholic Cemetery No. 3 on Sunday, Nov. 2, at 4:30 p.m. and will bless graves of loved ones at the families’ requests.

All Saints Day is a holy day of obligation in the Church. Because it falls on a Saturday this year, the obligation is abrogated, but the faithful are strongly encouraged to attend Mass to honor the saints in Heaven.

“... we’re just adding more of God’s grace and blessings to Resurrection (Cemetery).”

– Debbie Escalante
Cemetery Manager



Regina Janak / The Catholic Lighthouse

At Resurrection Cemetery, located at the corner of Laurent and Mockingbird, angel statues now designate the areas known as “Holy Innocents” where babies are buried.



Special Mass of Thanksgiving 50th Anniversary of the Ordination of Servant of God Father Charles Kram



Celebrated by
Most Reverend Brendan John Cahill
Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas
First Saturday of December
December 6, 2025 - 8:00 AM

Saints Cyril & Methodius Catholic Church – Shiner, Texas

Join us for a special Mass to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Servant of God Father Charles Kram, a priest whose heroic witness of faith and joyful perseverance continues to inspire the faithful.



For more about Father Kram and his cause for canonization, visit:
www.fatherkram.com

Pope Leo XIV: Lives of the newly canonized saints are ‘luminous signs of hope’

ALMUDENA MARTÍNEZ-BORDIÚ
Catholic News Agency
Pope Leo XIV on Monday highlighted the life testimony of the saints canonized Oct. 19, as “luminous signs of hope” for today’s Catholics.

“The men and women we proclaimed saints yesterday are luminous signs of hope for all of us, because they offered their lives for love of Christ and their brothers and sisters,” the pontiff said to the pilgrims, representatives of the clergy, and civil authorities who had traveled to Rome to participate in the canonization of the seven new saints.

Leo XIV expressed his hope that the canonization of Venezuela’s first two saints, Carmen Rendiles and José Gregorio Hernández, would be “a strong incentive for all Venezuelans to come together and recognize themselves as children and brothers and sisters of the same homeland, reflecting on the present and the future in the light of the virtues that these saints lived in a heroic manner.”

Pointing to the faith of both saints, the pope emphasized that “God was present in their lives and transformed them, turning the simple existence of a normal person,

like any one of us, into a lamp that illuminated everyone with a new light in their daily lives.”
The Holy Father emphasized that these two saints, whose lives can illuminate the present, were “people very similar to ourselves, who lived confronting problems

“ . . . people very similar to ourselves, who lived confronting problems that are not unfamiliar to us and which we ourselves can face as they did . . .

that are not unfamiliar to us and which we ourselves can face as they did, following their example.”

The Holy Father also indicated that “if God is our eternal reward, our work and our struggles cannot end in goals that are not only unworthy and degrading but also ephemeral.”

He also invited his listeners to recognize that “those who live alongside me – like

– Pope Leo XIV

me, like them – are called to the same holiness; I must therefore see them, above all, as brothers and sisters to be respected and loved, sharing the journey of life, supporting each other in difficulties and building the kingdom of God together with joy.”

• St. Ignatius Maloyan, a pastor after the heart of Christ

Regarding the Armenian Catholic archbishop St. Ignatius Maloyan, Pope Leo XIV emphasized that he was “a pastor after Christ’s own heart, and in times of



One can pray to the new saints and be inspired by their example. You can pray for the new saints to intercede for you, asking for their prayers and inspiration, similar to how one might ask any other saint for their intercession. A general prayer can include their names.

heavy difficulties, he did not abandon his flock; rather he encouraged them in order to strengthen their faith.”

He also noted that “when he was asked to renounce his faith in exchange for freedom, he did not hesitate to choose his Lord, even to the point of shedding his own blood for God.”

The Holy Father therefore prayed for the intercession of this saint “torenew the fervor of believers and bring fruits of reconciliation and peace for all.”

• St. Peter To Rot, defender of truths of the faith

For Leo XIV, St. Peter To Rot, the first native Papuan saint, offers “an inspiring example of steadfastness and fortitude in preaching the truths of the Gospel when confronted by difficulties and challenges, even threats to our lives.”

The pope prayed that the example of this saint from Papua New Guinea “would encourage us to defend the truths of the faith, even at the cost of personal sacrifice, and to rely always on God in our trials.”

Murdered at the age of 33 in 1945 for defending the sanctity of marriage, he demonstrated, according to the pontiff, “extraordinary courage by risking his life to carry out his apostolate in secret, because his pastoral work was prohibited by the occupying forces during the Second World War.”

• St. Maria Troncatti, an example of charity

Regarding the new Salesian saint who dedicated her life to serving the Indig-

enous peoples of Ecuador, Pope Leo noted that “she cared for the bodies and hearts of those she assisted with the love and strength she drew from faith and prayer.”

“Her truly tireless work,” the pontiff continued, “is an example for us of a charity that does not give up in the face of difficulties but rather transforms them into opportunities for free and total self-giving.”

• St. Vicenta Maria Poloni: Perseverance in service to the weak

Pope Leo XIV highlighted St. Vicenta Maria Poloni, founder of the Sisters of Mercy, for her compassion toward the sick and marginalized.

Her example, the Holy Father explained, “encourages us to persist in daily service to the most fragile: It is precisely there that holiness of life flourishes!” he exclaimed.

• St. Bartolo Longo and love of Mary in the rosary

Finally, he emphasized that the Italian St. Bartolo Longo “devoted all his energy to works of corporal and spiritual mercy, promoting faith in Christ and affection for Mary through charity toward orphans, the poor, the desperate.”

“Grateful to its founder, may the Shrine of Pompeii preserve and spread the fervor of St. Bartolo, apostle of the rosary. I wholeheartedly recommend this prayer to everyone, to priests, religious, families, and young people,” the pontiff encouraged.

With this prayer, the Holy Father said, “we assimilate the Gospel and learn to practice it.”

Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate the

2025

Catholic Rural Life

Harvest Mass

10 a.m., November 15

at Whistling Duck Winery

1211 CR 273, Weimar, TX 78962

Join the celebration!



Harvest festivals are an ancient practice. The great American feast of Thanksgiving follows that tradition. It reminds us that another year’s work of growing food is over. We are thankful for all we can store to get us through the winter and continue to enjoy our land’s abundance and variety. We also take time to remember God who has given us so much.

As all are seated at table for this meal of giving thanks, we begin with prayer.



OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray: Creator who sustains all your creatures with food, drink and friendship, we enjoy this moment of special pleasure. We acknowledge your gifts and your goodness. We thank you this day, for you have blessed us beyond measure. From us as people filled with praise, filled with faith in you, filled with the generosity you have shown to us. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE (Psalm 65:10-14)

Response: To you we owe our hymn of praise, O God of Zion.

- You visit the earth and water it, make it abundantly fertile. God’s stream is filled with water; you supply their grain. **Response**
- Thus do you prepare it: you drench its plowed furrows, and level its ridges. With showers you keep it soft, blessing its young sprouts. **Response**
- You adorn the year with your bounty; your paths drip with fruitful rain. The meadows of the wilderness also drip; the hills are robed with joy. **Response**
- The pastures are clothed with flocks, the valleys blanketed with grain; they cheer and sing for joy. **Response**

READING: Leviticus 26:2-6

The Reward of Obedience

Keep my sabbaths, and reverence my sanctuary. I am the Lord. If you live in accordance with my statutes and are careful to observe my commandments, I will give you your rains in due season, so that the land will yield its crops, and the trees their fruit; your threshing will last till vintage time, and your vintage till the time for sowing, and you will eat your fill of food, and live securely in your land.

I will establish peace in the land, and you will lie down to rest with no one to cause you anxiety. I will rid the country of ravenous beasts, and no sword shall sweep across your land.

SELECTIVE READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE:

Exodus 34:22; Leviticus 19:9-10; Deuteronomy 16:14-15; Amos 9:13; John 4:36; Revelation 14:15

Silent Reflection, or invite sharing of thoughts.

CLOSING BLESSING

(Each person lifts a dish of food or glass of drink.)

Blessed are you, Lord our God. You have lavishly provided for us the fruits of the earth. As you have always promised your faithful people, you fill us with good things. Bless us as we share this food, knowing that we will share with you in the eternal celebration one day. We prayer to you as one voice: “Bless us, O Lord, and these Thy gifts, which we are about to receive from Thy bounty, through Christ our Lord. Amen.”

Praise to our God who gives life and joy!

Sunday Readings from Nov. 1 to Dec. 8

Nov. 1 ~ Solemnity of All Saints Revelation 7:2-4, 9-14 Psalms 24:1bc-2, 3-4ab, 5-6 1 John 3:1-3 Matthew 5:1-12a	Nov. 23 ~ The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe 2 Samuel 5:1-3 Psalms 122:1-2, 3-4, 4-5 Colossians 1:12-20 Luke 23:35-43
Nov. 2 ~ The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed (All Souls) Wisdom 3:1-9 Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 Romans 5:5-11 John 6:37-40	Nov. 30 ~ First Sunday of Advent Isaiah 2:1-5 Psalms 122: 1-2, 3-4, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9 Romans 13:11-14 Matthew 24:37-44
Nov. 9 ~ Feast of the Dedication of the Lateran Basilica in Rome Ezekiel 47:1-2, 8-9, 12 Psalms 46:2-3, 5-6, 8-9 1 Corinthians 3:9c-11, 16-17 John 2:13-22	Dec. 7 ~ Second Sunday of Advent Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalms 72:1-2, 7-8, 12-13, 17 Romans 15:4-9 Matthew 3:1-12
Nov. 16 ~ Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time Malachi 3:19-20a Psalms 98:5-6, 7-8, 9 2 Thessalonians 3:7-12 Luke 21:5-19	<i>Holy Day of Obligation</i> Dec. 8 ~ Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary Genesis 3:9-15, 20 Psalms 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4 Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12 Luke 1:26-38

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



Christmas at Sea gets underway



You can help brighten a seafarer’s Christmas by providing a small box of useful gifts that can mean the world to someone spending Christmas at sea. Gifts should be packed inside a regular-sized shoebox (no boots or children size boxes) or a drawstring ditty bag (about 12 inches wide by 15 inches high). If the packages are roughly all the same size, hopefully the gifts will be of approximately equal value. Suggested items are:

Shampoo, body wash, toothbrush & toothpaste, tissues, Q-tips, lip balm, lotion, powder, razor, shaving cream, deodorant, wet wipes, dental floss, nail clippers, hair comb.	Snack Crackers, M&Ms, jerky, nuts, trail mix, chewing gum, hard candy, microwave popcorn.	T-shirts (M or L), ski or ball caps, gloves, socks, sunglasses, Band-Aids, playing cards, flashlights with batteries .
Personal care items	Snacks	Clothing, Accessories and extras

It can be anything a seafarer (male) would appreciate on a long journey. Completed packages can be dropped off between Nov. 1 and Dec. 15 at these locations:

- Diocese of Victoria Chancery, 1505 E. Mesquite Lane, Victoria
- Holy Family Church, 704 Mallette Drive, Victoria
- Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church, 415 W. Austin St., Port Lavaca
- Russell Cain Real Estate, 2025 Texas Highway 35, Port Lavaca
- Mike’s on Main Café, 458 Main St., Palacios
- St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church, 512 Tegner St., El Campo
- Packard Law Center, 523 N. Main St., Schulenburg
- Point Comfort Seafarers Center – Reservations required to pass through port security.

Contact Rhonda Cummings at stellamaris@olgulf.org or text 361-987-0569 if you have any questions, need other arrangements, or to make reservations to visit the Seafarers Center inside the port in Point Comfort.

Discover the joy of faith through Elie Corpus Mejia’s Bible Word Search puzzles!

Elie Corpus Mejia is deeply passionate about spreading God’s Word and is thrilled to offer a monthly puzzle based on the Mass Readings. Join the fun and inspiration by completing the puzzle and submitting it to The Catholic Lighthouse office at P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 by the end of the month. Each submission gives you a chance to win the Sampler Edition of Elie’s book, Elie’s Spiritual Treasures, Volume 3 – The Old Testament: The Book of Exodus.

Elie has created a total of 22 Bible Word Search Puzzle Books that bring scripture to life through engaging puzzles. These books are available for purchase at www.searching-for-jesus.com, on Amazon (search for “Elie Corpus Mejia”), or by calling 361-648-5832. Prices range from \$4.99 to \$19.99, plus tax. Explore her works in the Elie’s Spiritual Treasures series, or purchase directly from her website.

Stay connected and inspired by following Elie on social media:
Facebook: Elie’s Spiritual Treasures
Instagram: @Elies_SpiritualTreasures

New Series Alert!

Elie’s latest Catholic Word Search Puzzle Series, Guided by Grace, now features two editions available on Amazon: The Catholic Saints Edition and The Passion and Resurrection, Easter Edition. Dive into these faith-filled puzzles to enrich your daily life and deepen your connection to God’s Word. Be on the lookout for upcoming additions to the series: Family Love and Sympathy & Healing.

The September 2025 winner is Helen M. Janda from LaGrange. She attends Holy Rosary in Hostyn.

NOVEMBER 1, 2025
ALL SAINTS
READING II – 1 John 3:1–3

A reading from the first Letter of Saint John: Beloved: / See what love the Father has bestowed on us / that we may be called the children of God. / Yet so we are. / The reason the world does not know us / is that it did not know him. / Beloved, we are God’s children now; / what we shall be has not yet been revealed. / We do know that when it is revealed we shall be like him, / for we shall see him as he is. / Everyone who has this hope based on him makes himself pure, / as he is pure.

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

Holy Innocents Mass

FLATONIA – Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate the Mass of the Holy Innocents at Raphael’s Refuge in Flatonia on Monday, Dec. 29, at 11 a.m. The Feast of the Holy Innocents is on Dec. 28, which is a Sunday this year. Therefore, the Mass, held yearly at Raphael’s Refuge, a monument to babies who have died, was changed to the 29th to allow other priests to be a part of the celebration. The day is in remembrance of the first martyrs of the Church, the infants slaughtered at the command of King Herod after Jesus was born. For more information, visit www.raphaelsrefuge.org.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Parish: _____

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

Meals • Picnics and More

November

PORT LAVACA – Our Lady of the Gulf Altar Society Turkey Dinner, Nov. 2 at the St. Jude Hall (300 W. Austin) for \$14 each plate, catered by Werner’s from Shiner, with dine-in or drive-through available. There will also be a bake sale and raffle.

VICTORIA – St. Mary’s Altar Society Harvest Bazaar, Nov. 7-8 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.) at the church hall (401 S. Liberty St.). Homemade potato soup for lunch to-go. See ad on pg. 16.

VICTORIA – The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court 2665, will have a craft sale/ bake sale Nov. 8 and 9 at Holy Family Church’s St. Peter Hall. Hours are 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. Saturday and 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Sunday. Proceeds go toward scholarships and charitable donations. See ad on pg. 15.

WEIMAR – The Diocese of Victoria Chapter of Catholic Rural Life is hosting the annual diocesan Harvest Mass on Nov. 15 at 10 a.m. Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate the Mass at the Whistling Duck Winery (1211 CR 273, 78962). All are welcome to attend.

December

YORKTOWN – Holy Cross Catholic Daughters Santa Café and Craft Show Dec. 6 at the Community Hall, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

SHINER – Special Mass of Thanksgiving for the 50th anniversary of the ordination of Servant of God Father Charles Kram, Dec. 6 at 8 a.m. See pg. 13 for more information.

FLATONIA – Holy Innocents Mass at Raphael’s Refuge on Monday, Dec. 29, at 11 a.m. See pg. 18 for more information.

Young Adult Ministry



Third Mondays!
Join other young adult Catholics at Froggy’s, 6:30-8:30 p.m., for fellowship and talks about theology.



Second Tuesdays (Aug. - May)
In His Presence a gathering for young adults (18-39) with Mass (6 p.m.) at Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria, adoration (6:30 p.m.) and confession. Followed by pizza and fellowship from 7:30 - 9 p.m. with pizza provided by the diocese.

For more information, contact Lydia Whitten, at lwhitten@victoriadiocese.org or call 361-573-0828.

Mission Trips Planned

Mark your calendar for summer mission trip

The next Coram Deo mission trip to Las Obras in Antigua, Guatemala will be in July 12-19, 2026.

Registration will be open soon and those who plan to go should register for their passport as soon as possible to ensure they have it in time.

The late Father Dan Morales led many mission trips to the orphanage and an endowment in his name was created to help support Las Obras.

For more information, please visit the website at www.coramdeotexas.org.



Father Dan Morales

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 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 www.couragec.net.

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 – 2025 Dates: Nov. 7-9. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For information, call 361-573-0828 or visit www.victoriadiocese.org/engagedencounter.

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.

Find Us On
facebook

Grief Ministry – Emmaus Counseling and Spiritual Direction Center sponsors a monthly grief support group for any kind of death or loss. Meetings are held in the Victoria area - 1st Tuesday of each month at 9:30-11:00 a.m. at the Cathedral Center (St. Clare Room), 1508 E. Airline, Victoria and in the El Campo area - 2nd Tuesday of each month at 9:30-11:00 a.m. at St. Philip’s Meeting House, 701 Hoskins Broadway, El Campo. Please contact the Emmaus Center for information or to register, 361-212-0830

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.

Natural Family Planning – NFP is the only church-approved form of family planning. For the CREIGTON 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.

Our Lady’s Healing Center – Our Lady’s Healing Center is an apostolate with the mission to bring Christ’s divine healing in the Catholic Tradition. Our 12-month healing journey begins with a 5-day residential healing program at our beautiful facility in Seadrift. OLHC has developed a healing program centered on the life of Christ and acceptance of His invitation to be healed and transformed through the sacraments. For more information, call 361-785-2191 or visit ourladysh healingcenter.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. 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. Call 1-800-470-2230 to speak confidentially to a local couple; or visit the www.helpourmarriage.org for more information.

See upcoming retreat:
Bishop-led Amor Meus retreat celebrates hope on page 5.



Amor Meus
Spirituality Center
1101 N. E. Water St.
Victoria, TX 77901
(361) 485-0866
(361) 575-7111
amormeuscenter@gmail.com

The Father Dan Morales Endowment

Help Us Continue Fr. Dan’s Legacy of Faith and Service

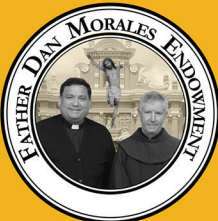
Supporting medical and spiritual care for the poor and most needy in Antigua, Guatemala through Las Obras Sociales.

Your gifts make a difference — monthly or one-time donations welcome.

Scan the QR code to give or visit www.frdanendowment.org



Our Two Hearts Coffee proceeds all go to the Fr. Dan Endowment. Have you tried it? Check the website for locations, or order online to be shipped to your door!



Building on Faith

Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish in Hostyn breaks ground for new church

HOSTYN -- Three years after an explosion and fire destroyed the church building of Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish on June 9, 2022, a piece of the ground where it once stood was turned with gold-colored shovels as the ceremonial beginning for construction of a new church.

The groundbreaking, held Oct. 4 on the eve of the parish's annual festival, followed a Mass celebrated by Bishop Brendan Cahill, along with the church's new pastor, Father Eddie Winkler, Father Paul Appiah-Ochere, parochial vicar; and, Msgr. Dan Kalich who was pastor there until he retired in 2020.

During the homily, Father Winkler said when he was named pastor at Hostyn, he knew he was facing a big project and many people encouraged him to be the one to get it done. "There were a few that would come to me and say, 'Well, you know, it's a small community out there. There's not a town. ... Do they really need to build a church? Now I can see it on your faces what you would say to them.'"

He had read the from the Gospel of Luke where Jesus answers the Apostles request, "Increase our faith" by telling them that anyone with faith the size of a mustard seed could perform miracles.

In his homily, he said, "Today's gospel really solidified it more than anything. We do have the faith the size of a mustard seed. We are a small community, but we are a community. Whether we have a town or not, whether we have other businesses around, we are a community of faith, and this faith is strong enough for us to rebuild our church. This faith is why we have to build this church -- because of you that are here."

He pointed out that those present were not only there for the Mass, but would be returning the next day to work all day at the church festival. "All of that is an expression of faith and why we need this church."

Father Winkler also acknowledged the grief and patience of the community who have continued to be dedicated to the parish. They had to see the rubble of their previous church building for almost a year before it could be cleared away, leaving a scar on the ground where it once stood.

They were tested by the events of June 9 and the long aftermath, Winkler said. "That is a testing that we have to live with," he said. "We know that life is not joyful all the time. We know that there's going to be problems. ... We have to express that as a grief, but it is a grief within faith. We know that our God will always be with us."



Monica Muras, a parishioner of the Hostyn parish, wears a pendant containing bits of stained glass from the church building destroyed by fire in 2022.



A rendering of what the exterior of the Queen of the Holy Rosary church building in Hostyn will look like once completed. The Westfall Group out of Houston is the contractor and Brad Kocurek of RMA Architects of Cuero is the designer.

After the Mass, the gathering moved to the bare spot of ground where the new building will replace the old one. Father Winkler said, "Bishop I am here to attest to you that this community is not only ready, but endowed with faith enough to build this church. I praise God that you named me pastor."

"We do our ceremonial shovels for this, but there will be real shovels out pretty soon," Bishop Cahill said, blessing the crowd before the ceremonial breaking of ground. He said he felt blessed to be a part of the event and thanked the congregation for their seeds of faith in the community.

Brad Kocurek, architect for the project, said the new building will have a more traditional look. "There's going to be lots of stained glass windows. Lots of room for everybody. ... It's going to be the best of all worlds."

The church has stained glass panels salvaged from a church in Port Arthur that was damaged by a hurricane. The windows depict four of the sets of mysteries of the rosary. Cavallini Glass, a San Antonio company, made the windows and will now make the panels for Luminous Mysteries, the only mysteries they lack.

Kocurek has a personal connection to the parish, saying his wife was descended from some of those first families of the church and his family members are parishioners of Dubina. His great-grandparents were married in the Hostyn Church.

"We've done additions and renovations (on churches), but it was really nice to be able to actually do a Catholic Church," Kocurek said.

Also attending were first responders who were working at the site during the tragic fire. Several of whom are parishioners at the parish. They included Bill Harrington Fayetteville VFD, Todd Johnson, La Grange VFD, Glenn Knigge from La Grange VFD, Matthew Machacek, Fayette County EMS, Ben Garrett from the Fayette County EMS, Chris Kaspar La Grange Fire Department, John Vanderver, Fayette EMS, Conner Zeller, Fayette County EMS.

Parishioner Monica Muras, who witnessed the church explosion said she has some mixed emotions. She still grieves the loss, and, at the same time, she "can't wait"

for the new one to be built. She not only lost her church building, she helped then-pastor Father Felix Twumasi carry Verlene Kuntschik out of the building. Kuntschik was the only person in the church when it exploded. She died three weeks later in the hospital.

Muras was given a pendant with pieces of the stained glass from the old church as well as precious pieces of crystal from the chandelier that hung in the church. She said it's the only one like it and she realizes how special it is.

Others have purchased art made from parts of the previous church such as the shattered stained glass or marble from the altar that was ground and molded into sacred images.

All of that and other donations are what is helping the parish rebuild. They also have an ongoing campaign for donations to fund the \$9.167 million project. They have another \$2.5 million to raise.

To learn more about the Hostyn parish, visit www.hostynplumcatholic.org.



Father Eddie Winkler shows his congregation the permit to begin construction of the new Queen of the Holy Rosary church building in Hostyn. The parish has waited more than three years. The former building was destroyed by fire on June 9, 2022.