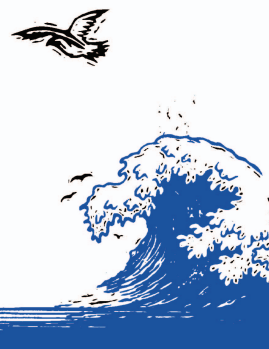


# The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



VOL. 19, NO. 11

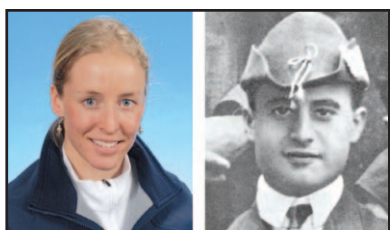
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

March 2006

## In This Issue



**Youth sing and gesture to "Lean on Me," sung by guest speaker Steve Angrisano YOUTH SPECTACULAR 2006, SEE PG. 8**



(CNS photo/courtesy of U.S. Olympic Committee/Catholic Press Photo)

**U.S. Olympic cross-country skier and Blessed Pier Giorgio U.S. SKIER MAKES BLESSED PIER GIORGIO KNOWN, SEE PG. 13**

**ARCHBISHOP FIORENZA RESIGNS IN GALVESTON-HOUSTON SEE PG. 16**



(CNS photo/Reuters)

**Coffin of slain priest carried into church in Turkey MUSLIM EXTREMISTS' VIOLENCE AGAINST CHRISTIANS INCREASE, SEE PG. 17**



Bishop Charles V. Grahmann

## 2006 DSA goal and theme announced

On February 8, Bishop David E. Fellhauer approved the 2006 Diocesan Services Appeal goal and theme.

The goal for this year is \$1,237,250, which is an increase of \$12,250 over last year's goal. The money is used to fund the operations of the diocese. Fifty-four percent of the monies go directly to funding programs benefiting members in parishes in the diocese. The remainder of the monies is used to cover the operating expenses of the diocese, including the Bishop's Office, Business and Finance Office, charities and support of the Holy See, and the occupancy cost of the chancery building.

"Returning Gifts to God With Increase," the 2006 DSA theme, was conceived by diocesan finance officer Mike Brown. "If God gave his greatest gift to us, his Son on the cross, why can't we return our gifts to God?" he said in a stewardship talk in the parishes of Sacred Heart in Wadsworth and Holy Cross in Bay City.

The DSA brochure and pledge cards were sent to members of the diocese on February 24. A pledge may be a one-time gift or made in monthly or quarterly installments.

As we begin Lent, let us make a con-

## Victoria's first bishop to celebrate triple jubilee in hometown of Hallettsville

DALLAS—The first bishop of the Victoria Diocese, the Most. Rev. Charles V. Grahmann, will celebrate his triple jubilee March 19 at Sacred Heart Church in his boyhood hometown of Hallettsville.

Currently Bishop of Dallas, Grahmann turns 75 years old this year and marks his 50th anniversary as a priest and his 25th anniversary of episcopal ordination. These milestones will be recognized in special ways throughout 2006.

The Hallettsville Mass and luncheon at the Knights of Columbus Hall will fall close to March 17, St. Patrick's Day, when Bishop Grahmann was ordained a priest in 1956 by the late Archbishop Francis Furey of San Antonio.

"I am looking forward to celebrating

50 years of my priesthood with family and old friends," Bishop Grahmann remarked. "The people of my native Texas are the most wonderful people in the world."

He was appointed the organizing first bishop of Victoria on May 29, 1982, by Pope John Paul II and served there until 1990 when he was appointed the sixth bishop of Dallas. He served as a priest in San Antonio for many years and had a short stint there as an auxiliary bishop before moving to Victoria.

Bishop Grahmann turns 75 on July 15 — one of three Texas bishops reaching that age this year. The other two are Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Galveston-

See Victoria's first bishop, p. 9

## Combat hatred of Christianity by living Gospel, says Vatican official

By Carol Glatz  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The best way to combat fear and hatred of Christianity in the world is for Christians to authentically live out the Gospel in all aspects of their daily lives, said a top Vatican official.

The Vatican's foreign minister, Archbishop Giovanni Lajolo, said while it was urgent that international organizations help take measures against religious intolerance and discrimination, individual Christians also play a crucial role.

The Vatican has appealed to organizations such as the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to include hatred against Christians in their fight against anti-Semitism and discrimination against Muslims, he said in a Feb. 22 interview with the Italian daily, Corriere della Sera.

But hatred or fear of Christians "is fought above all, I think, by having the person who calls himself a Christian try to be one (a Christian), with greater awareness and consistency in the family, at work, in politics," he said.

Archbishop Lajolo's comments came after deadly attacks against Christians and their places of worship in Pakistan and Nigeria. He called irresponsible the caricatures that denigrated the Muslim prophet Mohammed; the cartoons, originally published in a Danish newspaper, triggered the recent violence.

However, he said, much needs to be done to protect and guarantee the rights and dignity of religious minorities in mostly Muslim countries.

An important way to promote mutual respect, he said, is by fostering the exchange of students and university professors across cultures.

See Combat hatred, p. 17

The Diocese of Victoria is going to convert donors' checks to an electronic document for deposit purposes. The following notification is required.

### NOTIFICATION

Payments received by check will be electronically deposited, unless you pay by a non-consumer type check. You may opt out of this conversion program by paying with a money order or a traveler's check.

In the unlikely event your check (payment) is returned unpaid, we may elect to electronically (or by paper draft) re-present your check (payment) up to two more times.

## Pope names 15 new cardinals, including two from U.S.

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — In his first set of major appointments, Pope Benedict XVI named 15 cardinals, including U.S. Archbishops William J. Levada, head of the Vatican's doctrinal congregation, and Sean P. O'Malley of Boston. The pope announced the names at the end of his general audience Feb. 22 and said he would formally install the cardinals at a special consistory March 24.

The pope also convened the entire College of Cardinals for a day of reflection and prayer March 23 and said he would celebrate Mass with the cardinals March 25, the feast of the Annunciation of the Lord. It will be the first gathering of the College of Cardinals since they

elected Pope Benedict last April.

After the March 24 consistory for the creation of new cardinals, 15 of the 193 members of the College of Cardinals will be from the United States. Of the 15 U.S. cardinals, 13 will be under age 80 and eligible to vote in a conclave to elect a new pope.

Cardinal-designate William J. Levada was Pope Benedict XVI's first major appointee as prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Now, because of his rank and experience, the archbishop will be the first in line to receive his red hat at a special consistory March 24 at the Vatican. Cardinal-designate Levada, 69, See Pope names 15 new cardinals, p. 17





## Bishop Fellhauer's Schedule

### March

- 4 9:30 a.m., "Pilgrims' Reunion," St. Philip Church, El Campo
- 5 3:00 p.m., Rite of Election and Call to Continuing Conversion, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 6 7:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, St. John the Baptist Church, Hungerford
- 7 Texas Judicial Vicars' Conference, Oblate Renewal Center, San Antonio
- 8 10:00 a.m., Presbyteral Council meeting, Chancery Office
- 10 8:05 a.m., School Mass, golf tournament benefiting St. Michael School, Cuero
- 11 5:30 p.m., Mass, Girl Scout Religious Awards, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 15 10:00 a.m., Clergy Study Day, Holy Family Church, Victoria  
3:30 p.m., Diocesan Building Board meeting, Chancery Office
- 18 11:00 a.m., Mass, celebration of Monsignor Benton Thurmond's 60th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood, Inez Community Center  
5:30 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Family Church, Wharton
- 19 10:30 a.m., celebration of triple jubilee of Bishop Charles V. Grahmann (25th as Bishop; 50th to the priesthood; and 75th birthday), Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville
- 21 6:30 p.m., Catholic Daughters of the Americas 369 and the Knights of Columbus 1329, Clergy appreciation night, Knights of Columbus Hall, Victoria
- 25 8:30 a.m., Mass, Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Chapter Meeting, Incarnate Word Convent, Victoria  
5:30 p.m., Reception, Candlelight tour and dinner, Presidio La Bahia, Goliad
- 26 9:30 a.m., Confirmation Mass, St. Peter Church, Blessing  
12:00 noon, Mass, blessing of new kitchen and barbecue facilities, St. Joseph Church, Inez
- 29 7:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, St. Michael Church, Weimar
- 31 1:00 p.m., Knights of Columbus Council 9088, Bishop's Charity Golf Tournament, Colony Creek Country Club, Victoria

### April

- 1 10:00 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Cross Church, East Bernard
- 2 9:15 a.m., Confirmation Mass, St. Mary Church, St. Mary (Hallettsville)  
6:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Cross Church, Bay City
- 3 10:00 a.m., Texas Bishops' meeting, Oblate Renewal Center, San Antonio
- 9 9:00 a.m., Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 11 10:00 a.m., Chrism Mass, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 13 6:30 p.m., Mass of the Lord's Supper, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
- 15 7:30 p.m., Easter Vigil, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral

**Diocesan Building Fund Toyota Truck Fund-raiser ends March 31 — Call (361) 573-0828 ext. 32 for tickets.**



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#### Publisher

The Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer

#### Editor

Cindy Brewer — e-mail:  
[cbrewer@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:cbrewer@victoriadiocese.org)

#### Production/Advertising

Regina Matus-Janak — e-mail: [janakr@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:janakr@victoriadiocese.org)

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## Letters to the Editor

### Join the KC's

#### Letter to the Editor:

At the beginning of the twentieth century from 1915 until 1937, Mexico killed thousands of its own people in a persecution against Catholics and the Catholic Church.

Pope John Paul II beatified twenty-five martyrs on November 22, 1992. Twenty-two of these were diocesan priests; three were laymen who were killed in hatred of the faith. They were: Fathers David Galvan, Luis Batiz, Jenaro Sanchez, Mateo Correa, Julio Alvarez, David Uribe, Sabas Reyes, Roman Adame, Cristobal Magallanes, Agustin Caloca, Jose Isabel Flores, Jose Maria Robles, Miguel de la Mora, Rodrigo Aguilar, Margarito Flores, Pedro Esqueda, Jesus Mendez, Toribio Romo Gonzalez, Justino Orona, Atilano Cruz Alvarado, Tranquilino Ubarco, and Pedro de Jesus Maldonado and laymen David Roldan, Salvador Lara, and Manuel Moralez.

Six of these Mexican martyrs were members of the Knights of Columbus and are the first members of that organization to be beatified. As the persecutions in Mexico intensified the membership in the Knights grew and by 1923 there were forty-three councils with six thousand Knights who were in the forefront of the Catholic Action movement in defending the faith. The Mexican government outlawed the Knights and banned distribution of their publications.

Here in the United States the media refused to report the Mexican holocaust.

The U.S. Knights rallied support to help the Mexican Catholics and their publication, *Columbia*, ran dozens of articles accompanied by graphic photos regarding the persecutions. A million dollars was raised to support refugees and exiles.

The six beatified Knights and their respective councils are: Father Louis Batiz, 2367; Father Mateo Correa, 2140; Father Jose Maria Robles, 1979; Father Miguel de la Mora, 2140; Father Rodrigo Aguilar, 2330; and Father Pedro de Jesus Maldonado, 2419. The layman Salvador Lara is believed to have been a Knight, although no records can be found to confirm his membership.

Today, the Knights are again leading the charge against the persecution of the elderly, the physically disabled, and the unborn babies. If you are not a Knight you should consider becoming one.

**Wm. Paul Tasin**

#### Dear Bishop Fellhauer:

I write on behalf of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), to thank you and your parishioners in the Diocese of Victoria for your generous contribution of \$14,129.96 from your 2005 CCHD collection.

Last year, the incidence of poverty in our country rose for the fourth consecutive year, with most of the increases occurring among the working poor. Without the safety net provided by safe and adequate housing, reliable transportation, functioning schools, steady employment and dependable health care, even more people will slip into an intolerable existence. Through the support of parishioners in dioceses across the country, we were able to grant \$9 million in 2005 to anti-poverty, social justice projects in forty-nine states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. Your partnership with us helps break the cycle of poverty.

Respectfully yours in Christ,  
Timothy F. Collins  
CCHD Executive Director

### A reminder of the abortion and breast cancer link

#### Letter to the Editor:

The Association of American Physicians and Surgeons issued a statement in 2003 calling on doctors to inform patients about a "highly plausible" relationship between abortion and breast cancer.

According to a National Cancer Institute (NCI) commissioned study, teens who procure abortions before age 18, more than double their risk [Daling et al. (1994) *J Natl Cancer Inst* 86:1584-92]. Thirteen out of 16 U.S. studies report risk elevations. The NCI provided at least partial funding for 10 studies.

Karen Malec, president of the Coalition on Abortion/Breast Cancer, remarked "Women have been told lies about the research and have been cruelly exploited by two industries — breast cancer fundraising industry and the abortion industry. Women will not receive justice until they file civil lawsuits."

The first abortion-breast cancer lawsuit in the U.S. settled for an undisclosed amount on October 17, 2003. The case was filed in Philadelphia County Court of Common Pleas. The plaintiff was a 17 year-old Pennsylvania resident when a second-trimester abortion was performed in New Jersey without parental knowledge or consent. Although she hasn't developed breast cancer, she sued her abortion provider, Charles Benjamin, for neglecting to warn her about the physical and emotional risks of abortion.

The second lawsuit was settled for an undisclosed amount on January 24, 2005. The teenage plaintiff has a family history of breast cancer and indicated so on the clinic intake forms. The abortion clinic and physician who performed the abortion

*See Letters to the Editor, p. 4*

#### Dear Bishop Fellhauer:

We are so grateful to the people of your diocese for your gift of \$90,000 towards Catholic Charities USA's 2005 Hurricane Relief Fund, which will support the ongoing recovery efforts for Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma. This gift represents the full amount of your diocese's gift to the fund, not including individual gifts, nor those from organizations in your diocese.

Because of the overwhelming devastation of the hurricanes, Catholic Charities USA will be using each donation wisely — with approximately 96 percent of contributions used for direct assistance to the areas affected by these disasters. The services being provided range from relocating families from New Orleans and distributing food to those returning to the city, providing case management services in Baton Rouge, to operating 20 assistance centers in Biloxi. Your gift will also be used to fund long-term recovery efforts of rebuilding destroyed homes, counseling the hurricane victims, and working with communities to sustain their economic recovery. These efforts may take up to five years.

While much of the funding received by Catholic Charities USA is being used to meet the humanitarian needs of those in the path of these disasters, many have recognized the need to rebuild the diocesan structures that provide for the spiritual needs of the people in the affected areas.

Sincerely yours in Christ  
Rev. Larry J. Snyder  
President, Catholic Charities USA





## World Day for Consecrated Life celebrated at cathedral

By Cindy Brewer

Thirty-five religious sisters, representing the religious orders within the Diocese of Victoria, attended the Mass celebrating World Day for Consecrated Life at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria February 5.

The Vatican-sponsored event is marked on Feb. 2 in Rome on the feast of the Presentation of our Lord.

Msgr. Michael Harrold, pastor of OLV parish, celebrated World Day for Consecrated Life at the regularly scheduled, televised Sunday morning Mass.

All present consecrated women processed into the cathedral at the opening of Mass. Five religious sisters placed symbols of the consecrated life before the al-

tar. Carrying their communities constitutions to the altar were Sister Felipa Lara, provincial superior of the Missionary Catechists of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and Mary (MCSH); Sister Evelyn Korenek, superior general of the Congregation of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament; and Sister Elizabeth Riebschlaegar of the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, (CCVI). Sister Lois Marie Etzler, IWBS, carried a scroll representing the three vows of consecrated life: poverty, chastity, and obedience, and Sister Silvia Gomez, MCSH, carried a lamp which represented the freedom the religious receive from taking these vows. These items were presented along with an icon of the Transfiguration of Christ – an icon Pope John



Photo by Cindy Brewer

Sisters of several religious orders sit together in the Mass for World Day for Consecrated Life celebrated at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral February 5, presided over by Msgr. Michael Harrold, pastor.

## Seminary Burses


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

As of February 18, 2006

	TOTALS
<b>— Catholic Daughters of America Court Our Lady Queen of Peace 1374 Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$2,737.72
In memory of August Macha by Rita Borak Vackar	10.00
In honor of Carl and Dolores Priemeyer's 50th wedding anniversary by Rita Vackar	10.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,757.72</b>
<b>— Catholic Daughters of America Court of St. Ann 369 Burse No. 2</b>	
Previously reported	\$3,845.00
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi by Grace E. Rigamonti	80.00
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi by CDA Ct St. Ann 369	100.00
In memory of Andrew Marshall "Mike" Stevens Jr. by CDA Ct. St. Ann 369	20.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,045.00</b>
<b>— Catholic Life Insurance Victoria Branch No. 51— Rev. Msgr Eustace Hermes and Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$14,690.47
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi by M/M Robert Bochat	25.00
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi by Edwin Petering	25.00
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi by Mary Rea Finehout	100.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$14,840.47</b>
<b>— St. Mary Church – Praha Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$3,060.00
Gift from St. Mary Church – Praha	1,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$4,060.00</b>
<b>— Rev. John C. Peters Burse No. 3</b>	
Previously reported	\$8,466.00
In memory of I.W. Fuller and Dennis Fuller	20.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$8,486.00</b>
<b>— Rev. Theophil Okruhlik and Rev. Vincent Verdame Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$6,850.00
In memory of Denise Petru by Archie and Pat Dworaczyk	50.00
In memory of Bernard and Veronica Dworaczyk by Archie and Pat Dworaczyk	50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,950.00</b>

<b>— Mrs. Elorine Tumlinson Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$770.00
In memory of Elorine Tumlinson by M/M Charles Bluntzer	500.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,270.00</b>
<b>— Rev. Joseph A. Koebel Burse</b>	
Previously reported	\$5,388.00
In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by Harbert and Josephine Popp	25.00
In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by M/M Werner Pavlik	50.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$5,463.00</b>

Those wishing to begin a burse or to contribute to an existing seminary burse may do so by sending their contributions with the appropriate burse designation to:  
**Seminary Burse, P.O. Box 4070,  
Victoria, Texas 77903**



**Seminarian  
Gabriel Espinosa  
March 31**

Theology III  
St. Mary's Seminary  
9845 Memorial Drive  
Houston, Texas 77024  
*Gabriel is from Sts. Cyril and Methodius Parish, Shiner*

Paul II said expresses the essential characteristics of the consecrated life.

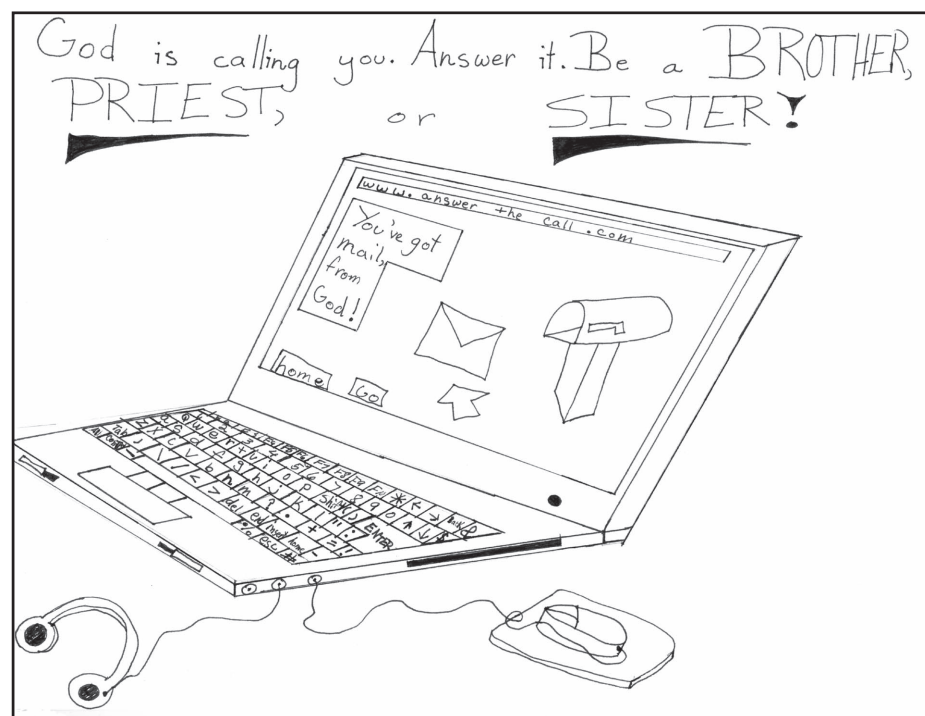
The Scriptures were proclaimed by Sisters Leonita Barron, IWBS, and Donna Bonordon, IWBS; the prayers of the faithful were prayed in English by Sister Amata Hollas, IWBS, and in Spanish by Sister Susanna Islas, MCSH.

Incarnate Word religious sisters in formation, Louise Marie Jones and Josephine Martin, and Missionary Catechist aspirant, Marfelia Sierra, and Missionary Catechist, Sister Midory Wu, presented the offertory

gifts.

All the consecrated renewed their vows at the celebration.

Pope Benedict XVI stated in his homily to the consecrated men and women present at the Feb. 2 celebration at the Vatican, "Indeed, just as Jesus' life in his obedience and dedication to the Father is a living parable of the 'God-with-us,' so the concrete dedication of consecrated persons to God and to their brethren becomes an eloquent sign for today's world of the presence of God's Kingdom."



Vocation Art

Artwork by Kaitlyn Sestak • Grade 6 • St. Michael School, Weimar

### Consider the Religious Life!

Office of Vocations • Diocese of Victoria in Texas • P.O. Box 4070 • Victoria, Texas 77903 • (361) 573-0828; vocations@victoriadiocese.org or Incarnate Word Convent at (361) 575-7300; iwbsvoc@yahoo.com

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### Reporting Abuse

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

- Call the chancery at (361) 573-0828 and ask to speak with the bishop or the chancellor;
- or
- Call Rev. Gary Janak (979) 543-3770 or Sr. Emilie Eilers (361) 575-7111, Coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach;
- or
- Write to: Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer  
Diocese of Victoria  
P.O. Box 4070  
Victoria, TX 77903  
Mark your letter "Personal and Confidential"

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

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





## Body language: commentary on the intersection of faith, sex, and culture

By Christopher West

*A Message from Catholic Teaching:  
Christians Don't Value Sex Enough*

In his new encyclical letter "*God Is Love*," Pope Benedict XVI addresses the widely held notion that the Catholic Church devalues the body and sexuality. He admits that "tendencies of this sort have always existed" (No. 5), but he asks, is Christianity really to blame?

As I wrote in my book, "*Good News About Sex & Marriage*," (Servant, 2000): "The objective person will admit that a deep ambivalence about the body and its functions, particularly its sexual functions, is not a limited Christian phenomenon, but a universal human phenomenon. As such, Christians, like many others, have not been exempt from the failure to appreciate fully the goodness and beauty of sex."

Tragically, many Christians grow up considering their spirits "good" and their bodies "bad." Such thinking couldn't be further from the authentic Christian perspective! God made us as an integral unity of body and spirit, and "he found it very good." (Gn 1:31).

The idea that the human body is bad is actually a heresy — a blatant error repeatedly and ardently condemned by the church — known as Manichaeism. Mani, or Manichaeus — after whom this false teaching is named — condemned the body and all things sexual because he saw the source of evil in the material world.

In his Oct. 27, 1980, "theology of the body" audience, Pope John Paul II observed that, if the Manichaean mentality places an "anti-value" on the body and sexuality, for Christianity the body and sexuality constitute "a value that is not sufficiently appreciated." In other words, if Manichaeism says, "The body is bad," Christianity says, "The body is so good we have yet to fathom it."

Think about it: If the body is evil, then the Incarnation is blasphemy. Condemnation of the body attacks the very foundations of the Christian faith. In the fullness of time, God sent his son, a male child, born of a woman. That would be impossible if the body and sexuality are "bad."

Christianity doesn't "demonize" the body, as it is commonly claimed. No, quite the contrary, Christ has divinized the human body; he has raised it up to participate in the divine nature. As Catholics we believe that *right now* there is a male and

female body (the "New Adam" and the "New Eve," Jesus and Mary) participating in the eternal exchange of God's ecstatic, trinitarian love. The church teaches that this is God's invitation to everybody.

If the church's teaching regarding what we should and shouldn't do with our bodies here on earth is "strict," this is not be-

cause the church devalues the body, but because she values it so highly. The typical sentiment goes like this: If the church says you can't do this and you can't do that — everything that it seems people *want* to do — then the Church *must* think sex is bad.

Hold on a minute. "Handle with care" — or even "handle with *extreme* care" — in no way means "this is bad." What are those things in life that we handle with the most care? Are they not precisely those things that have the most inherent value?

There's a parallel here with the Eucharist. The church has many "strict" teachings about who can and cannot receive the Eucharist, how it's to be received and with

what spiritual dispositions. It would be absurd to conclude that the church is therefore down on the Eucharist. It's no less absurd to conclude that the church is down on sex. No, both the Eucharist and the union of man and woman are sacred mysteries of the highest value.

A problem with many Christians — both those who remain fearful of, or suspicious towards, sexuality *and* those who dismiss the church's moral teachings as antiquated or out of touch — is that we don't value sex enough. Similarly, our "pornified" culture does not overvalue the body and sex. The problem is that it has failed to see just how valuable the body and sex really are.

## Oblate School of Theology awarded grant money for lay women

SAN ANTONIO—The Henry Luce Foundation awarded The Oblate School of Theology a \$250,000 three-year grant to support a pastoral leadership development program for lay women. The new lay leadership *Sophia Community* Program is specifically designed to serve the growing population of women serving as pastoral leaders in Catholic parishes and dioceses. The purpose of the program is to address issues of time, finances, and distance to improve access to Catholic higher education as well as on-going formation.

The development of the *Sophia Community* Program is partly in response to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) 2003 recommendation that educational opportunities and formation programs be offered to women in the church.<sup>1</sup> The USCCB found that "during

the 1999-2003 period, women held on average 26.8 percent of the top ... positions ... including chiefs of pastoral services, finance, personnel, education, and community service."<sup>2</sup>

Additionally, five years ago, The Oblate School of Theology and Our Lady of the Lake began giving specific attention to the growing need for the preparation of lay women in ministry. Together we began a three-year process of meeting with women students at Oblate School of Theology to address issues of interest to them. The result of this process, called *Women of Faith Series*, documented the need for adapted theological programs that are not only affordable and cater to those living in geographically underserved areas, but that also provide a spiritual formation component. *The Sophia Community Pro-*

gram is a three-year accelerated Masters of Arts in Pastoral Ministry (MAPM) for lay women. The program addresses issues of time, finance and distance by providing accelerated programming over three summers for four weeks accompanied with individual study and work throughout the fall and spring.

The *Sophia Community* Program launches summer 2006. Women interested in applying should contact Sophia Community Director at [sophiacommunity@ost.edu](mailto:sophiacommunity@ost.edu) or (210) 341 1366.

The school will evaluate the success of the grant on an ongoing basis as well as end of program evaluation. The Oblate

See Henry Luce Foundation, p. 5

## Letters to the Editor

Continued from p. 2

on the 15-year-old girl did not inform her of the psychological risks and the increased risk of breast cancer.

A recent article in the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons (Vol. 10, Number 1, Spring 2005) states "Fewer than 20 years after *Roe v. Wade*, the rate of breast cancer in the U.S. had risen to 1 in 10, and *Time* magazine sounded a national alarm with a cover story describing it as the 'puzzling plague.' Yet the article did not mention abortion. Now the breast cancer rate has risen further to 1 in 7.5, but articles about causation have vanished from the established media."

"Three states do expressly require that abortion providers inform their patients that the operation may increase the risk of breast cancer: Texas, Mississippi, and Minnesota... Texas, the second most populous state, has a statutory mandate that informed consent be given 24 hours prior to an abortion... Additionally, the woman having an abortion must certify in writing that she has been informed of this increased risk. This law was enacted in 2003."

Yet, even with all the laws enacted about informing women about the ABC link, with all the medical studies confirming the ABC link, and with lawsuits that will surely cost physicians tremendously in the future, I think it is important that organizations like the American Cancer Society, the Susan G. Komen Foundation, and other cancer research organizations should lead the way in informing women of the ABC link. Either way, we with the Right to Life, will always alert the public.

Joan M. Janak  
President, Lavaca Right to Life  
Hallettsville, Texas



## Diocese of Victoria Library & Media Center



### Book of the Month

*Mother Teresa's Prescription: Finding Happiness and Peace in Service* — Cardiologist Paul Wright tells an inspiring story of transformation. Despite his success, he felt empty, depressed, and adrift. Mother Teresa gave him her prescription for good health: embracing both a life of service and the ten spiritual attitudes that accompany such a life.

### Other Books

- *The Lenten Pharmacy: Daily Healing Therapies* by Edward Hayes
- *Forty Days of Grace: Lenten Prayers and Reflections* by Laurin J. Wenig
- *An Evening Walk: Steps Toward Wisdom and Grace* by Cathleen L. Curry

### Video of the Month

*Foundations of Christianity Series: Mystery; Conversion; Faith; Hope; Love* by Rev. Michael Himes. In this video series Rev. Himes says that the most important things in life cannot be explained. Himes draws on poetry and Shakespeare to show that the only way we can speak of the deepest things are in metaphors. *All the videos are approximately 30 minutes in length.*

### Other Videos

- Lenny Learns About Lent
- Finding God in all Things
- Close Encounters with the Beatitudes
- Close Encounters with the Sacraments
- A Walk Through the Scriptures

The Library and Media Center is open to all persons in the Diocese of Victoria. It houses over 5,000 books and 1,400 videos. Office hours are 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., Monday - Friday, or visit us on line at [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org)



## DIOCESE OF VICTORIA PASTORAL INSTITUTE

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Sr. Digna Vela, IWBS — Instructor

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### Wharton Center

Holy Family Church  
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Mondays: Feb. 27 - April 3

### Victoria Center

Chancery Office  
1505 E. Mesquite Lane  
Tuesdays: Feb. 28 - April 4  
Thursdays: Mar. 2 - April 6

Classes are \$15.00 per six-weeks. Call the catechetical office at 361-573-0828, ext. 23 or e-mail [calvarez@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:calvarez@victoriadiocese.org) to register. You can also register the first night of class. All classes are from 7:00-9:15 p.m.

## CDA District 14 Meeting March 9

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, District 14, will be holding a district meeting Thursday, March 9, at St. Agnes Religious Education Center located at 202 W. Cedar St. in Edna.

Registration will begin at 6:15 p.m., with a meal served at 6:45 p.m., followed by the meeting.

RSVP to District Deputy Terri Beltran at (979) 578-3647 or Regent Theresa Martin at (361) 782-6824.

If you suspect a child has been abused or mistreated, you are required to report it to the Texas Department of Protective and Regulatory Services or to a law enforcement agency within 48 hours of the time you suspect the child had been or may be abused or neglected.

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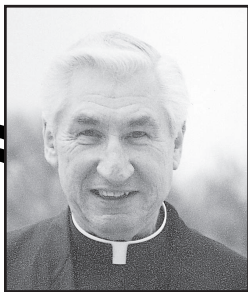




## Faith Point

By Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner  
Vicar General, Diocese of Victoria

For past articles: [www.stmaryvic.com/desk.htm](http://www.stmaryvic.com/desk.htm)



### Anti-Christians don't have to be hypocrites but many volunteer

If there is one quality that characterizes anti-Christians it is the use of a double standard. Examples abound and the ones listed below represent only a tiny sample.

The violent Muslim reaction to some Danish cartoons of Mohammed is a case in point. Not much is needed to turn a member of the "religion of peace" into a terrorist. Apart from the barbarism and immorality, it is stupid to slaughter people who had nothing to do with the cartoons. It is hypocritical to applaud kidnappings, cartoons of 9-11, beheadings of innocent persons on television, but to make drawing a cartoon poking fun at Islam a crime punishable by death. One could muster more sympathy for religious disrespect of Islam if their government-controlled media were not replete with cartoons depicting Jews as pigs and monkeys while accusing them of mythical crimes such as using the blood of boys to make their matzos. This is a calumny not limited to their lunatic fringe but one perpetuated by their college professors as in Egypt. Muslims may freely establish mosques and promote their religion in our country but no churches are allowed in Saudi Arabia and in most Islamic states Christian churches are either persecuted or operate under severe restrictions. Islam has two standards—it demands tolerance but gives none.

The Danish cartoons have also revealed a double standard in our largely secularist mainstream media. When museums displayed Andres Serrano's "Piss Christ," a work of "art" that had a crucifix in a container of the artist's urine and Chris Ofili's, "The Holy Virgin Mary" adorned with elephant dung and cut-outs of female genitalia, our media were champions of the blasphemy. The *New York Times* defended the right of the artists to "challenge" the public. Frank Rich of the *NYT* compared Mayor Giuliani's threat to cut off tax funds for the museum to the Nazi condemnation of "degenerate art." As for the Danish cartoons most of the media declined to print them out of "respect" for Muslims. The artists and critics were brave and bold when they knew that they had nothing to fear from offended Christians, but they were converted to newfound respect for a religion that might incite bombers to come to their homes. The *NYT* should adopt a new motto: "All the blasphemy that's safe to print." The editors of the *Times* are tone deaf when it comes to insults of Christians, but have high-gain antennas when it comes to slights against other groups.

In days past the Ku Klux Klan warned of a takeover of America by the Vatican if the Catholic candidate Al Smith were elected to the presidency. The libel of big-

ots in bed sheets was repeated by bigots in Gucci shoes at MoveOn.org which warned about a takeover of the judiciary by the Vatican if Bush's judicial nominees were approved. Senators charged with the responsibility of approving nominees to the federal bench often mutter about "deeply held beliefs" of some of them. That is a code word for traditional Catholic beliefs particularly as they relate to abortion and homosexuality. Of course Justices who support unfettered abortion and homosexual marriages are devoid of "deeply held beliefs." An unconstitutional religious litmus test has been added to the approval process. Here is a penumbra or emanation that contradicts the express wording of the "living" Constitution.

Christmas has been a national holiday since 1870 but secularists want all public Christmas displays banned, they demand that Christmas holidays be renamed winter holidays, and forbid singing of Christmas carols in public schools. There are efforts to ban Christmas crèches even on private property through zoning and signage laws. Secularists want to ban Christmas programs because they make others feel marginalized, but they would never think of forbidding Black History Month because whites feel left out.

A complaint was filed with the Village of Wellington, Florida to make invocations at meetings more inclusive and therefore eliminate the name "Jesus." The Anti Defamation League claims that such prayers are not inclusive of people and their differences. According to their reasoning if you say "Jesus" in public you get a state church. Apparently the Constitution holds that everyone has to be included in every invocation. There is no inclusiveness clause in the Constitution but there may be one in a penumbra or an emanation that only liberal Justices can detect and which spawns new rulings at will. Perhaps the secularists will soon sue to stop the president from taking his oath of office on the Bible so that there will be no establishment of a Christian church to the exclusion of Muslims, Hindus, Sikhs,

Wiccans, and atheists.

Secularists give kudos and Academy Award nominations to motion pictures that glorify homosexuality but go ballistic in response to motion pictures like *The Passion of the Christ* and *Chronicles of Narnia*. Cultural expressions of religion used to be considered quaint and gauche but now they are branded as bigoted and hateful. Christians are excoriated for exploiting films with a religious message or motif but films like *Philadelphia* which gives a sympathetic portrayal of a homosexual dying of AIDS and *Brokeback Mountain*, an affirmation of homosexual love, are praised.

A double standard is operating in New York City public schools where the Jewish menorah during Hanukkah and the Muslim star and crescent during Ramadan are allowed to be displayed but not Christmas crèches during the Christmas season. The first two are merely secular symbols said the Second Circuit Court of Appeals in Manhattan whereas the crèche is wholly religious. The dissenting Judge Chester J. Straub declared that the decision sends a message "that Judaism and Islam are favored and that Christianity is disfavored."

According to secularists only religious intransigence stands in the way of great breakthroughs in embryonic stem cell research, the true-blue stem-cell research. Never mind that adult stem cell research has already produced 65 therapies while embryonic stem cells have produced none

at all. Indeed embryonic stem cells have caused tumors in animals injected with them. Currently they cannot be safely injected into human beings while adult stem cells are altogether safe. Secularists are so ideologically committed to stem cell research that requires destruction of nascent human life that they will not consider adult stem cell therapies even though they already ameliorate some conditions from which they personally suffer. Secularists accuse President Bush of deciding scientific questions on the basis of religious ideology. It is actually they whose ideology makes them incapable of seeing the obvious promise of adult stem cells that offer therapies here and now. Whatever disadvantages religious ideology may have it is not so blind that it refuses to see what works.

Many more items could be added to the list but these few samples should serve to prove that anti-Christians operate under double standards and that there is a concerted movement to banish religion from the public sphere if not criminalize the religion of the Founding Fathers. All the more reason to elect representatives and appoint judges who respect the principles of our Founders. Historically Christians have promoted freedom and tolerance in allowing secularists to present their point of view. Secularists who prattle mightily about liberty are the ones who curtail freedom and limit expression of Christian values.

**The editors of the Times are tone deaf when it comes to insults of Christians, but have high-gain antennas when it comes to slights against other groups.**



**ST. MARY ALTAR SOCIETY INSTALLED**—Installation of the 2006-07 Altar Society officers from St. Mary Church in Victoria took place during a Mass held for St. Mary members and deceased members January 8, 2006. Msgr. James C. Brunner, pastor of St. Mary's, installed the pictured officers (from left): Deacon Dick Wearden, moderator; Adele Donalson, president; Sandy Hausman, first vice president; Pattie Stevens, secretary; Patty Schaar, treasurer; and Ann Carver, corresponding secretary. Not pictured is Nikki Halepaska, second vice president.

### Henry Luce Foundation Awards \$250,000 to Oblate School of Theology

Continued from p. 4

School of Theology will evaluate the success of the grant in 2008 and consider making the adapted program permanent.

#### (Footnotes)

<sup>1</sup> Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women & Youth. Women in Diocesan Leadership.

United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. Washington D.C. 20003.

<sup>2</sup> Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women & Youth. Women in Diocesan Leadership. United States Catholic Conference of Bishops. Washington D.C. 20003.

### Come Dance With Us!

Do you have a special occasion or event in which you need a nice hall, nice decorations and wonderful music — all for one price?

Why not try the new Victoria Dance Club at Sons of Hermann Hall in Dacosta on Hwy 87? Great for Birthdays, Anniversaries, Surprise Parties, etc.

A great year is planned with good music for social dancing — from country, to ballroom, to Latin:

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Sept. 9 - Herman Grueneberg

Feb. 10, 2007 - Nite Session

July 8 - Donnie Wavra

Dec. 9 - Gary Henneke

Yearly membership is \$75/couple; \$37.50/single or \$10 per person at the door. Guests welcomed — Bring your friends!

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## Locals earn honors from Catholic Life Insurance

SAN ANTONIO—Victoria Diocesan residents were honored recently by Catholic Life Insurance, the nation's 9th largest fraternal benefit society.

The Scardino Agency, led by Michael Scardino, FIC, was honored as one of the top "General Agencies of the Year" in the company. Scardino also earned the "Total Production Leader Award."

Clifton W. Lau, FIC, of Victoria also received top honors as the "Life Production Leader"; Lau has been with Catholic Life since May 1987.

Royce Shimek, FIC, of Schulenburg and Geraldine P. Martinez, FIC, of Bastrop each earned the prestigious Catholic Life Insurance "Twelve Apostle" award as leading producers of life insurance and retirement annuity sales.

The individuals were honored during a special awards ceremony held January 21, 2006, during the 2006 Leaders Conference in Austin, Texas.

Other associates honored for their ser-

vice include Albert Smaistrle, FIC, of East Bernard; Wendy Janak, FIC, of Hallettsville; Karen Kutac of Weimar; Patrick Klozik, FIC, of Shiner; Patsy Wiley, FIC, of Kingsland; Calvin Pfeil, Jr., FIC, of El Campo; Bert Kenna, FIC, of Yoakum; Charles Leopold of Hallettsville; Chris Merta, FIC, of Nada; Steve Labay, Jr., FIC, of Ganado; Ed Sula, FIC, of Fayetteville; Linda Holubec of College Station; John Jones of Columbus; Larry Sine of Weimar; Margie Janecka of Weimar; Renee Talas of East Bernard; Cynthia Beseda of East Bernard; and Laurie Reid of Weimar.

Founded in 1901, Catholic Life Insurance is the nation's 9th largest fraternal life insurer. The San Antonio-based company offers life insurance, retirement annuities, IRAs and fraternal benefits to individuals, families, and businesses. The company is financially strong with assets exceeding \$625 million and insurance-in-force surpassing \$1.69 billion.



Otto Bleier Jr. was awarded Knight of the Year, presented by Robert Leach.



Monroe and Mary Margaret Rieger were awarded the Knights of Columbus Family of the Year by Robert Leach.

## KC Council 9088 announces Knight and Family of the Year

Holy Family Knights of Columbus Council 9088 held their awards banquet January 17, 2006, at the church activity center. One hundred and forty brother Knights and their ladies honored the Family and Knight of the Year as well as those celebrating anniversaries and those who deserved special appreciation.

Otto Bleier Jr. was awarded Knight of the Year. He is a charter member, past grand knight, past district deputy, past state family chairman, and cooks for most council activities.

Monroe and Mary Margaret Rieger were awarded the Knights of Columbus Family of the Year.

The Knight of the Year and the Family of the Year were selected by a vote of council brothers at the December 2005 council meeting.

Grand Knight Robert G. Leach presented certificates of appreciation to all service program directors for 2004-2006.

Also honored with special plaques of

appreciation for dedicated and devoted service to council 9088 over the years were Milton H. Simon who has mailed/distributed the council monthly newsletter, the "Knights News," for 12 years; Gerald Bludau: council bereavement and visitation, RCIA program, and church stewardship; Bryan Ellis: former grand knight, state officer, and co-chair of the August fishing tournament; Dennis Lockstedt: council officer, co-chair of the August fishing tournament, Habitat for Humanity, and cooks for many council activities; Bill Spellacy: Habitat for Humanity, council construction, and involved in many council activities; Ed Lehnert: publications, cooks for many council activities, edits and prints master copy of monthly council newsletter, and makes all needed signs; Lester Hoerig: assists in many council activities and chair of council Thanksgiving raffle; Dan Jalufka, treasurer; and Jerry Hajek, financial secretary.



The Yoakum Fire Department demonstrates some special features of its new ladder truck for students of St. Joseph Catholic School February 8.

## St. Joseph school gets surprise during fire drill

YOAKUM—At 9:25 a.m. on Wednesday, February 8, the school fire alarm sounded at St. Joseph Catholic School. This was a monthly fire drill to help keep the students prepared for safely exiting the school in case of a real emergency. At the end of the drill, the students had a surprise visit by the Yoakum Fire Department in its new ladder truck.

The ladder truck pulled into the parking lot next to the gym. After making sure that everyone was at a safe distance from the truck, they raised the ladder and demonstrated some of the special features

available. The cheers and applause from the students showed their excitement and appreciation for the demonstration.

The first question of the "question and answer time" was, "Can I go up the ladder?" The fireman said, "No, but when you grow up and become a fireman you can." The firemen were able to highlight the fire truck by giving the students a walk-around tour of the truck.

The fire fighters were very gracious in coming to St. Joseph Catholic School. Their sharing of their time and the courage to do the job they have chosen is deeply appreciated by the whole St. Joseph Catholic School family — from students to teachers to parents.

## Msgr. Thurmond to celebrate 60th anniversary

Bishop David E. Fellhauer will celebrate Mass in honor of Monsignor Benton Thurmond's 60th anniversary of ordination to the priesthood on Saturday, March 18, at 11:00 a.m. at the Inez Community Center. A reception with lunch and a toast will be held following the Mass. Everyone is invited to celebrate this special event with Msgr. Thurmond.

## Nazareth Academy wins Best Buy Te@ch Award

Nazareth Academy was officially announced as a Best Buy Te@ch Award recipient, on January 30, 2006. Best Buy Te@ch program recognizes and rewards schools that make learning fun by integrating interactive technology into the K-12 curriculum.

The selection process for this award is extremely competitive (thousands of schools across the country applied). Best Buy Te@ch is a \$3 million program, and awards \$2,500 Best Buy Gift Cards to 1200 schools from across the United States. This is significant considering that there are over 124,000 public and private elementary and secondary schools - according to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES Web site) there are 95,615 public elementary and secondary schools in the United States (2002-2003 statistics) and 29,273 private elementary and secondary schools (2001-2002 statistics). Te@ch was available to accredited public and private nonprofit elementary, middle, and secondary schools located within 50 miles of a United States-based Best Buy store.

Winning schools use their Te@ch awards to extend, expand, or enhance their interactive, technology-based programs.

## CDA Multi District Retreat April 8

All ladies are invited to experience a special retreat hosted by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, District 28, St. Bernadette Court 1108 in East Bernard. The theme of this retreat is *The Steadfast Heart* presented by Olga Samaniego, CDA state regent from El Paso.

Other inspirational guest speakers include Father Don Ruppert, CDA state clergy consultant and Shannon Pickard, author of *The Choice Is Yours*, and others, along with a skit by the youth choir.

Cost is \$5 p/p which includes lunch. The retreat will be held at the Holy Cross Educational Building (839 Church Street).

Registration and hospitality is from 9:15 to 10:00 a.m. The retreat begins at 10:00 a.m. and concludes with the 5:00 p.m. Mass.

Reservation deadline is April 1. Make checks payable and mail to CDA St. Bernadette 1108; P.O. Box 683, East Bernard, Texas 77435.

Register with Dianne Viktorin (979) 335-4234 or Terrie Vacek (877) 810-1888 / terriev@wcnet.net.

*Yet even now, says the Lord, return to me with your whole heart.*

Joel 2:12

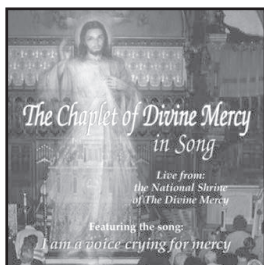
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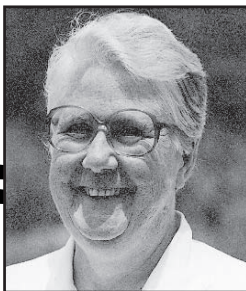
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## Sisterly Thoughts

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



### Those pesky weeds!

1 don't know if any of you face the problem that we have with our front lawn. Normally the turf is durable enough to weather the winter well. This year several factors, including chinch bugs and unusually dry conditions, have killed or at least weakened the grass to the point that weeds seem to be taking over.

Perhaps this is a phenomenon that we can apply to our spiritual life as well. If we are not nourished and tended spiritually, we may become weakened to the point that spiritual "weeds" begin to dominate our lives and prevent us from becoming the beautiful beings that we were created to be.

Now, don't lose heart. If our spiritual life is not as robust as we'd like, we can take advantage of the season of Lent and

strengthen ourselves through prayer, almsgiving, and sacrifice. Setting aside a few extra minutes each day to get in touch with God individually or with our families can enhance our spiritual vision so that we can see and decide what to do about those pesky spiritual "weeds." Sacrificing and sharing with others will help us toughen up our spiritual turf so that it doesn't so easily succumb to adverse conditions outside ourselves.

Therefore, may we all grow and become strengthened during this special time so that we can fully reflect God's creative love through the beauty of our lives. And, as far as our lawns go, we'll just have to pray for rain and do the best we can to eradicate the pesky weeds so that the grass can grow.

## Texas Czech Genealogical Society hosts tours

The Texas Czech Genealogical Society will host a research library and tours of the following churches March 18: St. Mary Catholic Church in Ellinger, Fayetteville Brethren Church, and St. John Catholic Church, also in Fayetteville, Texas. The day begins at 8:30 a.m. with refreshments at St. Mary's Church Hall. For your researching enjoyment, hundreds of genealogy books, as well as a copier, will be available.

The tour of St. Mary's begins at 11:00 a.m. with guest speaker, Johnny Walla.

A barbecue-chicken lunch will be

served at 11:30 a.m. after which will follow the tour of the Fayetteville Brethren Church where Liz Ripple will be the guest speaker. The last tour of the day will be

St. John's Church with Tom Pearson as guest speaker.

Cost for the day, including lunch, is \$7 per person. Make checks payable to TCGS, should reach Joann Tobias before March 10. Send to: 16211 Clay Road, Suite 106, PMB

402, Houston, Texas 77084. For more information contact Joann at (713) 817-4679.



## Original Tellez sculpture donated to Raphael's Refuge

FLATONIA—Raphael's Refuge is happy to report December cash donations of \$3,085. With matching funds from the Sanford Schmid Charitable Trust, this amount will be doubled to total \$6,170. A San Antonio resident, Barbara Christian Chumney, donated an original 1994 Tellez sculpture for the Raphael's Refuge future Chapel of the Holy Innocents. Others have contributed by praying, proofreading, book-keeping, consulting (engineering), architectural work, dirt work, and so on.

Director Midge Elam said she is very grateful for the support of those who have been helping and encourages others to join in the effort. The cost of construction for the chapel is estimated at \$250,000. Midge is counting on more volunteers to come forth to help with the construction and more

donations of labor and materials to help lower the cost. Also, she encourages people to take advantage of the Matching Fund by making cash donations by April 1.

"Raphael's is a small, non-profit organization with no members, just a board of directors," she said. "We are just folks coming together to fulfill a mission. That mission is to build a regional monument to the unborn and stillborn and to provide counseling and spiritual direction, without cost, on related issues."

Midge can be reached at (361) 865-3021. The site is located at 2715 West Hwy. 90, about two miles outside of Flatonia. Donations may be sent to Raphael's Refuge, P.O. Box 341, Flatonia, Texas 78941. The Web address is [www.raphaelsrefuge.org](http://www.raphaelsrefuge.org).



Pictured is San Antonio resident Barbara Christian Chumney with the original 1994 Tellez sculpture she donated for the Raphael's Refuge future Chapel of the Holy Innocents.



Pictured above are the Catholic Daughters of the Diocese of Victoria who attended the CDA State Retreat in San Juan, January 27-29. They represented the cities of Shiner, Hallettsville, Port Lavaca, El Campo, East Bernard, and Victoria.

## CDA's throughout Texas gather for retreat

SAN JUAN—Catholic Daughters of the Americas throughout Texas gathered for a retreat on the grounds of the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan Del Valle in San Juan, Texas, January 27-29.

Sister Ninfa Garza of the Missionaries of Jesus conducted the inspiring retreat with about 140 Catholic Daughters. She used many innovative and concrete examples illustrating her theme "God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit."

In her talks, Sister Ninfa strongly encouraged the Catholic Daughters to defend their faith. "We are made in God's image and therefore we are all beautiful. After the fall of Adam and Eve, everyone was anxious for the birth of the Messiah. Jesus left us his gift of the Holy Spirit." We are encouraged to utilize confession and receive communion. God gave us a free will to do things because we love our Creator God, not because we have to.

Sister Ninfa walked the attendees through a powerful healing-of-past-memories service. Her advice: "Let Go and Let God (handle it)."

Participants were witnesses to a heal-

ing service, along with testimonies of healing in the Basilica Saturday evening. They put their hands on each others shoulders to symbolize God's healing through them.

Sister Ninfa Garza's main charge is vocations. She requested that the Catholic Daughters pray for the seed of vocation to be planted and nourished in young people.

Olga Samaniego of El Paso, state regent, was the coordinator of the state retreat that concluded with a mariachi Mass Sunday morning. Other state officers attending the retreat were Second Vice State Regent Carolyn Bachmann of Scotland; Second Vice State Regent Sheila Martinka of Pearland; State Secretary Carolyn Malik of Shiner; and State Treasurer Peggy Rosales of Austin. Also attending was Third Vice National Regent Libby Ramirez of Victoria.

The Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan Del Valle in San Juan has been designated as a national pilgrimage site.

The motherhouse for the Missionaries of Jesus is in Brownsville. Sister Ninfa Garza and others work especially with the poor in the Lower Rio Grande Valley area and the border area.

## 21st annual living history program to be presented at Presidio La Bahia

GOLIAD—On March 25 and 26, 2006, the Crossroads of Texas Living History Association and Presidio La Bahia will stage a reenactment of the occupation of the fort by Col. Fannin and the Goliad Massacre of Col. Fannin and his men at Presidio La Bahia in Goliad, Texas, in 1836.

This annual event has been held for the past 20 years and has been of great interest to the public. Past years' admissions have exceeded 4,500. Many schools send their students, girl and boy scouts come on field trips, and parents bring their chil-

dren so that all can experience this unique reenactment of Texas history.

During the day on Saturday, battles will take place around the fort. The first skirmish begins at 10 a.m. There will be the sounds of muskets and cannons discharging and the air will be full of black powder smoke. The costumes worn will be those from that period in history. Visitors will have the opportunity to ask the reenactors about the roles they are reliving as well as attend lectures in the 227-year-old Our Lady of Loreto Chapel.

See 21st annual living history, p. 19

## El Campo K of C Spring Picnic

Knights of Columbus Council 2490

Sunday, March 26

at the K of C Hall located at Hwy. 71 and Armory Road

Food and Entertainment for the family



Antique Tractor Show

A Chicken-Barbecue Dinner Dine-in or Drive-thru

Serving begins at 11:00 a.m.

Free Dance!  
Music provided by Bobby Jones Polka Band  
1:00 to 5:00 p.m.





## Coming of Age

By M. Regina Cram  
Catholic News Service



### Two failures, then a success: Life pattern

OK, here's the scene. You're strolling around a sprawling oceanfront estate that once belonged to President Calvin Coolidge. The spectacular views of the Atlantic Ocean are not the focus, however, for today is graduation day — nursery school graduation day, to be specific. Folding chairs are neatly arranged for adoring parents and grandparents to watch as their little darlings put on a special performance. I'm the pipsqueak cowering in the back.

My job was to recite a poem to the audience. According to my parents, I perfectly memorized the poem, and for weeks I'd wandered around the house practicing it. I'm pretty sure I drove them crazy.

So the big day came. I walked to center stage, took one look out at the hushed crowd — and I bawled. No amount of coaxing would quiet me down. Still bawling, I was dragged off the stage in shame.

I was a failure, at 4 years old.

The following year I was given a speaking role in the kindergarten Christmas pageant. Once again, parents gathered for what promised to be a spectacular entertainment. Once again I bravely walked onto the stage, opened my mouth, and started to cry — and cried and cried. The teacher had to haul me off the stage in disgrace.

Another failure.

In first grade, my teacher was not about to allow another disastrous performance, so before the big day she pulled me aside. "Now Regina," she said in her sternest voice, "I heard that you cried in nursery school and in kindergarten. You're not going to do that this year, are you?"

I was outraged. How could she think that I, a sophisticated 6-year-old, would do such a thing?

And I didn't. As I remember, I was awesome.

Two failures, then a success. How often life works this way.

Fortunately, failures in childhood do not necessarily translate to failures in the teen years. Brilliant child that I was, I flunked traffic signals when I was in kindergarten. (I really was a loser, wasn't I?)

### Youth ministers discuss education for lay ministry, budget cutbacks

PORTLAND, Ore. (CNS) — Good formation for Catholic laypeople is essential as the number of lay ecclesial ministers in the U.S. continues to grow, an official of the U.S. bishops' conference told some 200 diocesan youth ministers meeting in Portland, including Debbie Vanelli, director of the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese of Victoria. Richard McCord, director of the bishops' Secretariat for Family, Laity, Women and Youth, spoke on the bishops' recent document "Co-workers in the Vineyard of the Lord," which acknowledges the huge number of laypeople with official positions in the church. He was addressing the annual meeting of the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, held Jan. 25-28 in Portland. The youth ministers also focused on doing more with less. With budget cutbacks in most U.S. dioceses and younger Catholics tending to give less, diocesan youth offices that once had a half dozen staff members now make do with one or two.

For years afterward, I thought that meant I never would be allowed to get my driver's license. I'm happy to report that I did, in fact, get a license, and I'm a pretty good driver, despite what everyone says about me.

But back to that public speaking thing. In junior high I wanted to run for student council, but I chickened out because it involved giving a speech to all my classmates. I hadn't forgotten my preschool fiascos and couldn't guarantee it wouldn't happen again.

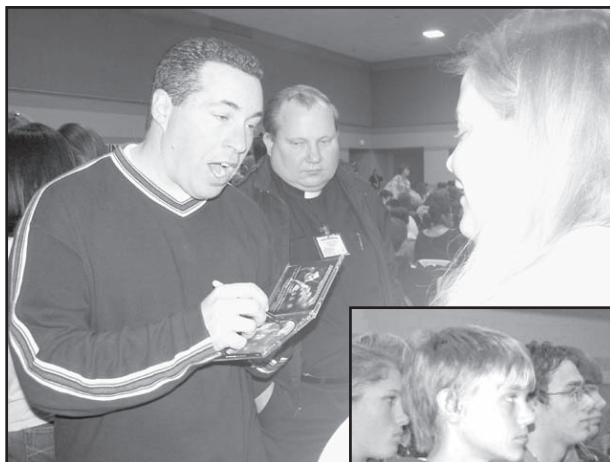
The funny thing is that as an adult my work involves giving speeches, and I actually enjoy it. The transformation started in high school when I did some volunteer work with a small group of junior high girls. That was easy, so I did a little more speaking in college, then still more in my first job. After awhile I was fine in front of any size group. I even liked it.

But do you think my family will forget my preschool failures? Fat chance. They insist on showing home movies of me sobbing on my first day of kindergarten, wearing a poofy dress and being nearly carried inside by the teacher. You'd cry too if you had to wear a poofy dress!

But I have great ammunition to get back at my family. I simply threaten to tell loser stories about them in my next speech.

Sweet!

*Alisha Camacho of Immaculate Conception in Goliad and Griffin Brown of Holy Family Parish were the winners of the Simon Says icebreaker.*



Steve Angrisano signs an autograph for Stephanie Mitchell of Our Lady of Victory Parish.



Holy Rosary youth from Hostyn listen deeply to Steve Angrisano's message.



Religious education teachers sell concessions to the youth.

## YOUTH CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 19 — Confirmation Retreat - St. Andrew in Hillje

March 25-26 — Youth Ministry Certificate Program - Justice and Service - for all adults interested in a nationally recognized certificate in youth ministry studies

March 26 — Confirmation Retreat - Our Lady of Victory in Victoria

March 31 — Golf Tournament - to benefit the youth activity building at the Renewal Center

May 7 — Youth Leadership Training - Camp David planning

June 9-10 — Youth Leadership Training - Camp David planning

June 11-16 — Camp David

June 26-29 — Discipleship Week

July 8-16 — Rocky Mountain High - Pagosa Springs, Colorado

July 31-Aug. 4 — Region X Directors Meeting - Laredo

For more information on any of these events, please contact:

Debbie Vanelli at the Office of Youth Ministry

at (361) 573-0828 ext. 32 or e-mail at [dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org)

or JoAnn Martinez at ext. 50 or e-mail at [jmartinez@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jmartinez@victoriadiocese.org)

Web site: [www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice)

### 2006 Youth Spectacular Rocks

It was a cold and blustery day, but that did not dampen the enthusiasm of the 600 plus young people and adults who attended the 2006 Youth Spectacular. Steve Angrisano, hailed as one of the most dynamic and effective communicators with Christian youth in the country, was the keynote presenter. His keynote, titled

*Trading Our Sorrows*, kept the audience spell-bound throughout the afternoon. During his talk, Steve related accounts from some of the survivors of the Columbine massacre that occurred April 20, 1999, in Littleton, Colorado. One common thread in all the survivor's recounts was that God is bigger than all of our problems

and regardless of the situation, God will win in the end. He related how no one believed the miracles as they happened in the Bible and miracles are happening today and we still do not believe these miracles are happening around us. An important message for young and old alike.

Sixty-two members of the youth leadership team from throughout the diocese energized the crowd with a variety of icebreakers, and the Holy



Youth play "Hot Potato" to warm things up.

Family ACTS band rocked the house as they provided interactive music throughout the day.

Following the thought-provoking and inspiring keynote, Liturgy was celebrated at Holy Family Parish. The Most Reverend David E. Fellhauer was the celebrant, and priests from all over the diocese celebrated. They included: Fathers Greg Korenek, Kirby Hlavaty, Tim Kosler, Ty Bazar, Samuel Appiasi, Donald Hayden, Michael Petering, Bryan Heyer, and Msgr. Stanley Petru.



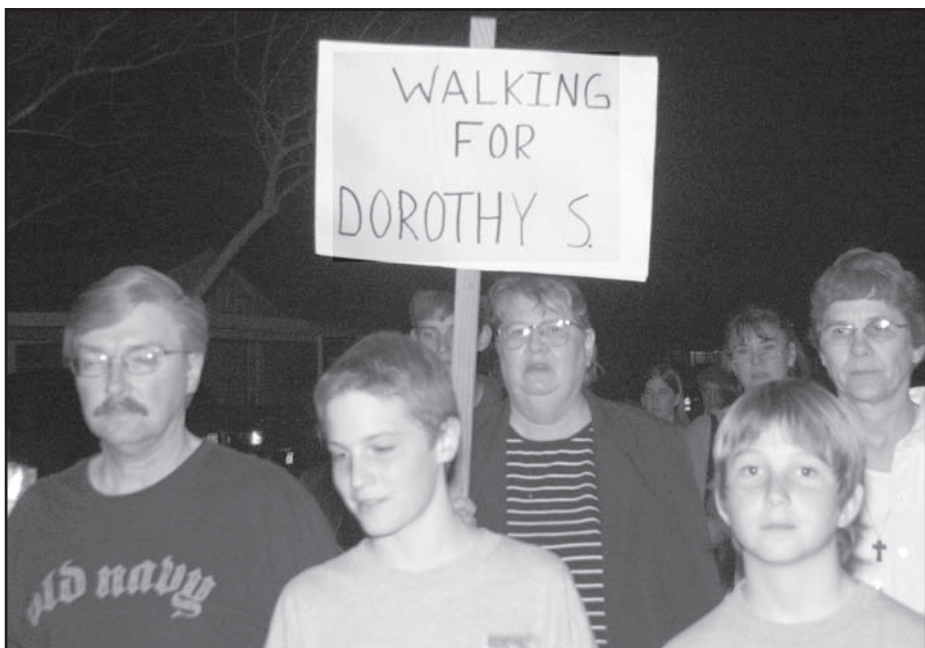


Photo by Cindy Brewer

Jeanie Blalock of Cuero marched in the 20th annual Candlelight March for Life in Victoria February 2 for long-time pro-life advocate Dorothy Stathis who, because of her battle against cancer, was unable to march. In closing remarks, Judy Gillespie asked everyone in attendance to pray for Dorothy, whom she called "the biggest, most wonderful, magnetic champion for the unborn in the universe." She also stated that she could not begin to imagine what this community would be like without the likes of Dorothy.

## 20th annual Candlelight March for Life brings big crowd

By Cindy Brewer

One of the largest crowds in recent times attended the 20th Life and Family Advocates' sponsored Candlelight March for Life in Victoria Thursday evening, February 2. Over 300 men, women, and children marched with lighted candles from the College Church of Christ on Ben Jordan Street to Our Lady of Victory Cathedral where Bishop David E. Fellhauer opened the program with prayer and the announcement of good news regarding pro-life politics, especially President George W. Bush's December signing of the Stem-Cell Therapeutic and Research Act of 2005.

Mrs. Patti Tuttle of Our Lady of Guadalupe Parish in Helotes near San Antonio, delivered the keynote presentation. Although she was suffering from a sore throat and an almost inaudible voice, Patti Tuttle received a standing ovation from the large audience who heard the story of her recovery from an abortion in her youth which nearly destroyed her life and marriage to her husband, Dave.

The audience knew of Patti and Dave's history of having fostered nearly 200 children, but Patti began her story saying that she would not be speaking about all the blessed children who they had fostered or adopted, but about "the tiny voices that you will not hear, the little lives that will not get to grow into fruition," and the little lives that will not come to be because of abortion.

Her story began just a few months before she and Dave were to be married. Although she and Dave had had sex only once when engaged to be married and then decided they had made a mistake and should remain chaste until their marriage, that one act created an unplanned pregnancy. Dave said they should just tell their parents and get married sooner than they had planned.

But Patti couldn't bear to tell her father, who adored her so much. She was her Daddy's little girl and she was afraid

it would destroy him and their relationship if he learned she wasn't so perfect. She had the abortion on her own.

Dave still married Patty as planned. And although he had forgiven Pattie for aborting their first child and she knew God had forgiven her, she could not forgive herself. This led her to withdraw from her other newborn children and created serious depression. Eventually she and Dave separated.

But before divorcing they decided to attend a Marriage Encounter weekend, not thinking they had any chance of recovering their marriage, but just so they could tell their kids that they tried everything to save their marriage. That weekend proved to be the instrument God used to heal their marriage and allow Patti to learn to forgive herself for having the abortion.

There were many young people in attendance. To them Patti appealed, "Save yourself for your marriage, it is not old fashioned. It is a gift." And to those who had not waited for marriage but would like to start over she said, "God is a God of second chances. God is a God that continues to give."

To the others in the audience she requested them to consider becoming a foster parent. "Even if you don't become a licensed foster parent, you can help. There are young children, parents, and adults out there who need our help, our touch, our affirmation. We are called to be the body of Christ," she said.

Closing remarks were made by Judy Gillespie, a founder of Victoria's Life and Family Advocates and of Love for Life. She requested people to pray, especially for all those considering having an abortion. She then pleaded for volunteers to donate just four hours per month to the pro-life movement. Those interested in donating their time are asked to call Judy at (361) 575-8159.

The final prayer was offered by Rev. Roger Moon, pastor of College Church of Christ, the church where the evening began.



Patti Tuttle tells her story of God's healing and forgiveness.

## Texas continues to recruit foster/adoptive parents

Sometimes, it takes a congregation to raise a child. The State of Texas is asking for your help. There is no greater responsibility than parenting a child. Surely there is no greater joy.

**Congregations Helping in Love and Dedication (CHILD)** is a unique collaboration between Texas' faith-based communities and Child Protective Services to find loving homes for children who have come into the state's care due to abuse and neglect. The goal of CHILD is to recruit and license as foster parents at least two families from each participating congregation. Additionally, each congregation will have the opportunity to develop supportive services for their foster families. These services could include:

- respite care,
- reduced tuition for day care,
- tutoring and after-school programs,
- transportation,
- celebrations for special occasions,
- enrichment activities

### Meet Matthew and David:

David and Matthew are wonderful children who are fun to be around. They have endless energy and a zeal for life. David and Matthew are active and enjoy going on outings and doing new activities. They especially enjoy one on one attention from caregivers and adults. Matthew

is a precious little boy who is courteous, polite, and sensitive. He is a friendly child who is very imaginative and always has something to say. Matthew makes friends easily and enjoys playing in the playground, playing video games, and watching TV.



Matthew and David

### Family Matthew and David want:

David and Matthew state that they would like a forever Mom and Dad. Due to past issues David and Matthew will need a slow transition into their new adoptive home. Their new mom and dad need to be experienced parents who are patient. They will need to be able to set well-defined limits, structure, and consistent rules and routines. David and Matthew will respond well to plenty of consistent structure. David and Matthew would do best if they were the only children in the home and will respond well to positive behavior management. Their forever family will need to be a family that offers a lot of love and attention and will motivate them to accomplish their goals.

**Child's web page:** <http://tare.dfps.state.tx.us/search/ChildDetail.jsp?TareId=18304>

**Child's Contact:** [Felicia.mason-edwards@dfps.state.tx.us](mailto:Felicia.mason-edwards@dfps.state.tx.us) (512) 438-4516

To view the state adoption Web site, please go to [www.adoptchildren.org](http://www.adoptchildren.org)

## Multicultural workshop offered

Mexican American Cultural Center in San Antonio announces its April 10 – 15, 2006, workshop "Celebrating Liturgy with Hispanics." The essence of celebrating the liturgy is universal in the Roman Catholic Church. This workshop will examine the ways that Hispanics, mainly Mexican-Americans, express their faith during liturgical celebrations, bringing something from their heritage and creating something new for the entire church in the United States.

MACC's Pastoral Formation Program is accredited by the USCCB Commission on Certification and Accreditation. Participants may receive academic credit from an accredited university/seminary with permission from their academic dean before applying.

To register or apply for a scholarship, contact the registrar at (210) 732-2156, ext. 7102, [register@maccsa.org](mailto:register@maccsa.org), [www.maccsa.org](http://www.maccsa.org).

## University of Dallas competes with institutional powerhouses

Irving, Texas—In a recent study conducted by the Institute of International Education, a relatively unknown Catholic university in Texas held it's own against the nation's largest and most reputable universities. The University of Dallas is a small Catholic, liberal arts school in Irving, Texas, and it now ranks among the nation's elite in the number of Fulbrights awarded to American students. According to the study, the University of Dallas, which has just over 3,000 students (1,200 undergrads), received a total of seven Fulbright awards. It competes with the likes of Harvard and Yale for the number of Fulbrights awarded. The Fulbright Program is sponsored by the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs and are granted to U.S. citizens and nationals of other countries for a variety of educational activities, primarily university lecturing, advanced research, graduate study and teaching in elementary and secondary schools.

## Victoria's first bishop to celebrate triple jubilee in hometown of Hallettsville

*Continued from p. 1*

Houston and Bishop John W. Yanta of Amarillo. Bishop Yanta was a classmate of Bishop Grahmann at St. John and Assumption seminaries in San Antonio.

Invitations to the Hallettsville celebration went to members of Bishop Grahmann's family, which are numerous in the area, priests, and others. The San Antonio Liederkrantz Choir is scheduled to sing in English and German for the 10:30 a.m. celebratory Mass at Sacred Heart. Father John Peters is pastor at Sacred Heart and host for the celebration.

Bishop Grahmann grew up in a German-Czech community and speaks fluent German in addition to Spanish. He was the fourth son of Nicholas and Anne Grafe Grahmann, who were tenant farmers and children of German immigrants from the Westphalia area of Germany. There were 11 children: two became nuns, Incarnate Word Sisters Sylvia (Alice Marie) and Anastasia (Mildred — now deceased) and one became a professed brother, Christian Brother Nicholas (James) Grahmann. His other siblings are Marcus, Rita, Jerome, Fred, Anita Rose, Mary Ann and Nicholas Jr.





## Sacred Heart wins first place at Victoria Advocate Knowledge Bowl

The Sacred Heart Catholic High School "Tribe One" team from Hallettsville won first place in the high school division of the Annual Victoria Advocate Knowledge Bowl. Their combined score was 67. Victoria Memorial High School won second place with a combined score of 57 and Victoria St. Joseph High School won third place with a combined score of 44. Other high schools competing were Cuero High School and Industrial High School and some entered two teams.

The four members of each team work together to answer 150 questions about science, sports, government, history, art and literature, geography, and more. There are three rounds of action and the totals are posted after each round of competition.

"The competition was intense, but thankfully we came out on top," said "Tribe One" member Kyle Demel. Another "Tribe One" member, Robert Appelt said, "It was great to win because we worked very hard to get the team together."

Team members included Jessica Kallus, the daughter of Henry and Frances Kallus; Robert Appelt, the son of Daniel and Donna Appelt; Kyle Demel, the son of Barry and Diane Demel; and Steven

Warzecha, the son of Marvin and Virginia Warzecha. All four team members are seniors.



*Sacred Heart Catholic High School placed first in the high school division of the Annual Victoria Advocate Knowledge Bowl. "Tribe 1" team members are, left to right, Steven Warzecha, Robert Appelt, Kyle Demel, and Jessica Kallus.*

Sacred Heart Catholic High School also entered a second team, "Tribe 2", which placed sixth with a combined score of 36. Members of "Tribe 2" team were junior Jessica Janak, sophomore Nicholas Barton, and freshmen Lyndsie Blundell and Jennifer Kallus.

Congratulations to these Knowledge Bowl winners and participants; your school is proud of you.



**OUR LADY OF VICTORY MATHCOUNTS TEAM WINS 2ND PLACE**—Our Lady of Victory School Mathcounts team members—8th graders Shaleen Vasavada, Kurt Kotzur, Jolynn Hoang and Sahil Parikh (second from left) – placed 2nd in the area mathematical competition. Kurt Kotzur also placed 4th individually and advances to the state competition to be held in Austin on March 18. Special thanks goes to the team sponsor Mrs. Georganna Meisner (far left). Mathcounts is a national competition sponsored locally by the Texas Society of Professional Engineers for area middle school students.

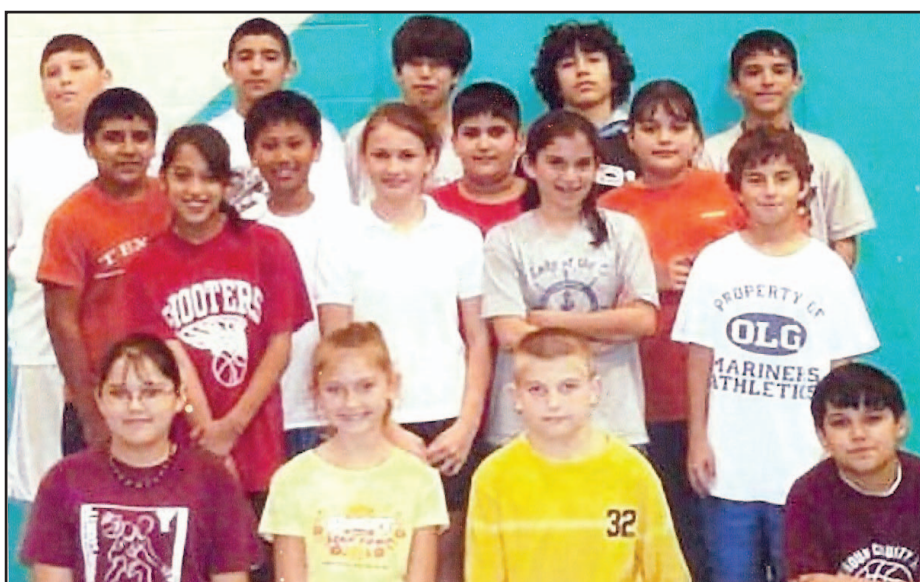


**NJHS INSTALLATION**—On Wednesday, February 8, the St. Joseph School National Junior Honor Society, in Yoakum, inducted new members for the first half of the 2005-2006 school year. Current members include the following eighth grade students: Weston Barton, Alicia Fikac, Michelle Frerich, Dalena Hagan, Frank Jalufka, Sarah Kusak, Adam Kvinta, and Hailey Lauer. New members included Jack Matusek, Collin Brewer, Jeremy Kelley, and Jeff Tuttle. The candle lighting ceremony was performed by the eighth grade members and explained that membership has been earned by the effective demonstration of the many qualities held in high esteem by the society: Scholarship, Service, Leadership, and Character. Congratulations to all the members of the St. Joseph Catholic School National Junior Honor Society for their dedication to these important principles.

**VICTORIA KC COUNCILS SPONSOR BASKETBALL FREE THROW COMPETITION**—The Knights of Columbus Councils of Victoria 1329 and Holy Family 9088 sponsored a Basketball Free Throw District Competition at the Our Lady of Victory Gym on Sunday, February 12. Pictured from left to right are co-chairman Steve Lesak of Council 9088, Cameron Zafereo, winner of the 10-year-old division, Ryan Williams, winner of the 13-year-old division, Christian Wenske, winner of the 11-year-old division, and chairman Chris Bludau of Council 9088. Williams and Zafereo advanced to the Diocesan Regional which will be held later in Hallettsville. Not pictured is co-chairman Robert Stryk of Council 1329.



**NAZARETH ACADEMY BOYS WIN DIOCESAN DISTRICT CHAMPIONSHIP**—Nazareth Academy Boys' A-Team won the Victoria Diocese District Championship Feb. 1 over St. Michael, Weimar, by a score of 44-18. The game was played at the St. Joseph High School gym. This game closed out a terrific season for the Jets (22-2) whose only two losses were to Patti Welder public school's 8th Grade A-Team. On the way to their outstanding record, Nazareth Academy defeated Crain public school's 8th Grade A-Team and Howell public school's 8th Grade A-Team. Front row from left: Matthew Mayes, Bracen Eichhorn, and Hayden Veselyn; back row from left: Don Paul DuBose, Travis Cole, John Villafranca, and Kevin Daniels.



**FREE THROW**—The Knights of Columbus Council 3253 from Port Lavaca sponsored their annual Free Throw Competition on Feb. 9. The first place winners were: Andri Cordova- 10 yr. old girl; Sarah Daniels- 11 yr. old girl; Kati Durham - 12 yr. old girl; Adriel Cordova - 10 yr. old boy; Isaac Cardona - 11 yr. old boy; Kevin Bunurai - 12 yr. old boy; Andy Cardona - 13 yr. old boy. The first place winners were presented plaques and advanced to district Feb. 26 at the Travis Middle School Gym. All participants received certificates of participation.





## Active OLV parishioner celebrates 100 years

Submitted by Judy Bellanger

Oscar Michael Becker celebrated his 100th birthday with over 100 family members and friends Sunday at the KC hall in Victoria Feb. 5, 2006. Mr. Becker has been a member of Our Lady of Victory Parish and the KC council 1329 since he moved to Victoria in 1977.

Special guests were his 95-year-old brother, Charlie, who drove from Beeville, and Joyce Valliant, Oscar's son in law's sister, from New Orleans.

He was born February 4, 1906, in Cyclone, Texas, in Fall County to Cecelia Winkler and Anton Becker who lived in Rosebud, Texas. The family moved their possessions by railcar to Poth, Texas, in 1912.

Oscar is the third oldest of six sons; he went to school and started working in the cotton gin where he got to work by riding a horse.

On April 19, 1930, he joined the Knights of Columbus Council 2618 in Poth, and in June of 1940 he married



Mr. Oscar M. Becker

Bessie Shortner of Karnes City, Texas. They lived in Poth until World War II when they had to move to San Antonio in order

for Oscar to find work. He did carpentry work for the government, and then began building homes until 1955 when he moved to Alice, Texas. He continued as a finish carpenter on thru his move to Victoria in 1977, where he retired at 67 years of age. He continued to work in his workshop until he was almost 94 years old.

Oscar attends weekly Mass every Saturday evening at Our Lady of Victory. Five days a week he goes to the Senior

Center for lunch and to play chicken foot and bingo. His wife of 66 years (this June) is his driver. He had been an avid hunter and fisherman all his life.

He has three children: Judith Bellanger of Victoria; Michael who resides in Penn.; and Lawrence, of Port Lavaca. He has six grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.



Fifth grade girls from St. Joseph Catholic School in Yoakum work on their science project for Catholic Schools week.

## St. Joseph School stays active throughout CSW

St. Joseph School, Yoakum

Mr. Michael J. Fisher, principal

Catholic Schools Week (CSW) at St. Joseph Catholic School in Yoakum is a time for students, families, teachers and staff to remember, use, and develop the skills that are core elements of the Catholic faith that is the core of our education. The theme for CSW this year is Character, Compassion, and Values. These concepts were highlighted during CSW, January 29 – February 4, from different perspectives: Parish, Community, Our Students, Our Nation, Our Vocations, and Our

Faculty and Staff.

The first day began on Sunday with the focus on parish. Mass started at 10 a.m. and involved all students, teachers, and staff. Included in the Mass was a short history of St. Joseph Catholic School and a poem about the school. Alumni speakers, Kendra Ward and Matthew Kvinta, shared thoughts about their Catholic Education at St. Joseph. An open house at the school followed Mass, as well as the availability of religious articles from Heavenly Helpers, sponsored by Jeannie Janak.

Monday focused on community. Students were on a local radio station, visited and assisted local businesses, as well as visited local nursing homes to deepen their ongoing relationships with the residents. The eighth grade collected hats and sent them to the children at MD Anderson Hospital in Houston.

Tuesday focused on the students. Activities included: no homework night, treats for students, giving students tokens of appreciation, and Super Sock Day.

Our nation was the focus of Wednesday's activities. The day started with the wearing of red, white, and blue. Guest speaker and former teacher at St. Joseph Catholic School in Yoakum, Paula Houston, and the Yoakum High School Jazz Band concluded the school day. That evening, there was an Endowment Stew Dinner.

The students wore ties on Thursday for the theme of vocations, and students held a Parent/Grandparent Luncheon. Three guest speakers spoke with the students about vocations: Deacon Harper and Dennis Kutach spoke on Thursday. Tommy Chen spoke with the students on Friday, January 27.

Friday concluded CSW by focusing on the faculty. Eighth grade students were Teachers-For-A-Day. The faculty was also honored with snacks and tokens of appreciation. A change this year ended Catholic Schools Week with a Mass just as it started the week. The Mass allowed focus on First Friday and the blessing of throats on the feast of St. Blaise.

Catholic Schools Week theme of Character, Compassion, Values offered a time for students, faculty, family, and community to be involved and reflect on the experiences of the week. The goals of the week were high for all involved; however, all continue to carry on the focus of this Catholic Schools Week long after CSW ended.

*Editor's note: The Catholic Lighthouse staff sincerely apologizes for leaving out St. Joseph School in its Catholic Schools Week special edition in the February issue.*

## True Love Waits continues to touch teens' lives

EAST BERNARD, Texas—Respect for one's self is often lost in our fast paced society and this nation is no longer shocked by the promiscuous behavior of unmarried partners. Compromising one's sexual purity can be hazardous to our mental, physical, and spiritual health.

"Our teenagers deserve better than compromise," said Terrie Vacek, project coordinator of the East Bernard community's True Love Waits program. "There is a better way. It is ABSTINENCE."

The True Love Waits program for East Bernard teens was held at various churches as well as the community's public school over a period of four weeks, from January 29 to Feb. 19.

To fully understand virginity and abstinence, the True Love Waits participants focus on "sexual purity" which begins with the mind (Matthew 5:27-30). These teen participants are introduced to purity as a direction, a pursuit, and a cause that starts in one's heart. Understanding the difference between sexual behaviors and sexual morality result in a Godly perspective where they find their worth in a relationship with God, said Mrs. Vacek.

On Saturday, January 28, the True Love Waits community program hosted in East Bernard began its first of four consecutive Saturday group sessions in the school cafeteria with a special appearance by the StraightWay team. This group of teens shared their hearts and reasons for

following the will of God through song and dance. A unique skit titled "Turn Around" served to remind participants that God desires u-turns, that we can always turn away from temptations, and what the consequences are when we don't. Special guests for the evening were Hanna Garcia and Carter Prine, highlighting the freedom in right choices and waiting for God's timing.

Fifty-eight teens and parents listened to co-host of "Teen Talk" and author Shannon Pickard present his biblical message about abstinence at the Holy Cross edu-



*In East Bernard's True Love Waits third session, Feb. 11, an open discussion panel couple explains that when we want God's best for us, it's like having your favorite pie served on a clean plate ... in contrast to it being served on a paper plate covered with dirt when we settle or compromise God's plan.*

cational building on Saturday, February 4. With humor and the direct word of God, he discussed the long list that teens often use to justify sex outside of marriage. The message to save sex for marriage was clear and consistent: love is not shameful, love has no regrets, love does not transmit S.T.D.'s, love is selfless, and love brings

you into a closer relationship with God. Praise and worship music was provided by Reverend George and Mrs. Linda Kutach.

On Saturday, February 11, several couples came together to form a discussion panel for the True Love Waits participants. Returning guest speakers were Steven and Lindsey Hlavinka; Lindsey is a former TLW participant now teaching first grade in Orchard. Steven is teaching fifth grade science in Katy. The second couple was Andrew and Jennifer Vacek; Andrew is also a former TLW participant working in Sugar Land. Jennifer was a participant in a similar program in Houston and now teaches fourth grade in the Cy Fair School District.

The final True Love Waits session was held at the First United Methodist Church in East Bernard. Praise and worship music was provided by N2Christ. Lori Kuykendall was the featured guest speaker for the final session on Saturday, February 18. Lori's presentation included the basic medical statistics on teens but emphasized the 'great plan,' God's creation and the order he selected. She stressed that biblical truths and medical truth must remain in proper order or we will experience total chaos and a growing number of epidemics.

The four-week program held its closing ceremony February 19 at Holy Cross Catholic Church. Parents presented a gift to their teen that is to serve as a reminder of their promise and will be the treasured gift they in return can present to their future mate as a symbol of their purity.

**St. Paul wrote: "Once you were darkness; now you are light in the Lord. Conduct yourselves as people who belong to the light."**

— Ephesians 5:8





## CCC Plans Major Resources in Response to The Da Vinci Code Movie Release

Dan Brown's best-selling novel *The Da Vinci Code* and the highly anticipated release of the film version of the story on May 19, 2006, have prompted enormous interest and countless questions about Catholic teaching on Jesus and the origins of Christianity.

The USCCB Communications Committee and the Catholic Communication Campaign are developing several resources to assist in responding to the questions and the controversies generated by these works of fiction.

In mid-March 2006, the CCC will launch an Internet Web site, [www.jesusdecoded.com](http://www.jesusdecoded.com), which will be a source of definitive information on Jesus Christ, Catholic teaching, and the various topics explored in *The Da Vinci Code*. This Web site will include articles from theologians, Church historians, media commentators, art experts and others

that expose the false information presented in the novel and explain Catholic beliefs.

Also available in March will be a booklet, *The Authentic Jesus*, which will address the types of questions that *The Da Vinci Code* and similar popular portrayals of Jesus Christ often raise. This new booklet from the USCCB Committee on Communications presents authentic Catholic teaching about Jesus and his divinity, the Bible, Gnostic gospels, women and the church and other important topics in a convenient question-and-answer format. *The Authentic Jesus* booklet will be available for individual and bulk sale from USCCB Publishing at reasonable prices. USCCB Publishing will also make available a series of bulletin inserts that will draw upon the same material. The bulletin inserts will be available for free download or in print for purchase.

On May 17/18, 2006, a new documentary from CCC that brings authentic Catholic teach-

ing about Jesus Christ back into focus will be available for broadcast on NBC stations. *Jesus Decoded* is an hour-long documentary that presents clear and accurate information about the person of Jesus, his disciples, and the formation of the books included in the official canon of the Bible. Shot on location in Israel, Turkey, and Italy for the CCC by New Group Media, *Jesus Decoded* offers a solid Catholic response to "Da Vinci Code believers," concentrating especially on the first three centuries of the development of the church. The program includes interviews with international scholars versed in art, history, and Scripture, that help separate the Catholic truth from fiction. The documentary will also be available for purchase on DVD from USCCB publishing on May 19, 2006

For more information, please check the Catholic Communication Campaign Web site, [www.catholiccommunicationcampaign.org](http://www.catholiccommunicationcampaign.org), or call (361) 573-0828 ext. 31.

## You're fired!

Catholic News Service

By Michelle Martin, staff writer with The Catholic New World, newspaper of the Chicago Archdiocese.

There's a reason we didn't name our son "The Donald." But maybe we should start calling him "The Frank."

After all, it was my adorable preschooler (who has much better hair than that guy with the real estate empire) who looked at me and said, "Mommy, if you don't listen in 30 seconds, I'm going to fire you!"

Never mind that Frankie isn't quite clear on how long 30 seconds is, or that I was trying to finish something. His statement worked: He got my attention.

Mostly, I wanted to find out what he meant by being fired.

"So does that mean you're going to stop paying me?" I asked him.

No.

"Does that mean I can stop cooking your dinner and washing your clothes? Stop picking you up at school and reading stories at bedtime?" No, no, no and no.

"Well, then. I don't think you really want to fire me," I told him, "which is good, because I'm your mother and I always will be. You can't fire your mother. Just like you're my son and always will be. I can't fire you, either."

That's the way families are. You are conceived and born into a family, and no matter what you think of that family, no matter even whether you have any contact with any of them after your birth, they will always be a part of you. That's what pushes adopted children to want to know something about their biological parents and that's what's behind the urge of children conceived through donor insemination to

look for their donors as well as half-siblings from other mothers.

The ties that bind do not come undone. Even if we want them to. Even if they are stretched almost to — or even beyond — the breaking point. No matter how broken our relationships, a connection remains, even if it is only in the hole left in our hearts.

But that's not the way a lot of people see it. We live in a society of disposable goods and often disposable relationships. People are to be used, like anything else, and then allowed to fall away, or be pushed.

In some contexts, there's nothing really wrong with that. If I never see the cabdriver who dropped me off at an appointment again, so be it. And I'm really not in the market for a deep personal relationship with the woman behind the counter at the post office.

But they are people who need to be treated with dignity and respect, no matter how short our interactions. That's relatively easy, of course. Often, it's much harder treating our family members with the same level of consideration.

It's said that familiarity breeds contempt. Something makes it easy to forget to treat those you love with the same consideration you show acquaintances.

But that's not an excuse. Business relationships might be simpler and more easily managed than families, but they don't have the same meaning. Your employer never has to take you in.

That's why firing me was not an option for Frank.

After my explanation of why he couldn't fire me, I gave Frank a hug and got the second attention-grabbing line of the day: "Mommy, stop. You're squishing me."

## FAMILY PUZZLE CONTEST

Puzzle Contest features the book "A Faith for Grown-ups" as prize

Congratulations to Marilyn Urban of St. Anthony's Parish in Columbus; she is the winner of the February family puzzle contest and will receive *Up and Running, The Inspiring True Story of a Boy's Struggle to Survive and Triumph* by Mark Patinkin.

The winner of the child contest was Sabrina Koerth (9) from Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville; she will receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop.

The March contest prize will be *A Faith for Grown-ups—A Midlife Conversation About What Really Matters* by Robert P. Lockwood, published by Loyola Press.

"With wit and keen understanding, in a narrative rich with anecdotes, Lockwood invites disconnected and passive Catholics to encounter a faith for grown-ups: one that is richer, stronger, and more satisfying than the fleeting images of a bygone Catholic era. It is a faith rooted in the Jesus of the Gospels, safeguarded by 2,000 years of tradition and reflections — a faith with answers to the questions adults ask," (from the book's cover).

If you have not won the puzzle contest within the past six months, please send completed puzzle, name, address, phone number, and parish name by March 25 to: Family Contest, The Catholic Lighthouse, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. Only youth need to include age.

## LITANY OF SAINT JOSEPH

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N R I E I S Z F V N U C F Q O  
F N G N U E L P M A X E E P L  
L A N F A T K T R O F M O C O  
U L E D O M K H V U N V H Y Y  
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BRAVE  
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GUARDIAN  
JUST  
LOYAL  
MODEL

NOBLE SON  
OBEDIENT  
PILLAR  
PROTECTOR  
PRUDENT

## THERESE en route to thousands

Luke Films On-Line Store worked around the clock to fill the thousands of orders placed in the weeks leading up to the February 14 release date of the THERESE movie on DVD. This trend is being felt by both our religious and mainstream retail partners throughout the country.

"I'm not surprised by the volume of advance sales," Luke Films VP-Operations, Lourdes Ambrose, explained. "People were very anxious for the DVD. Schools, parishes, youth groups, hospitals, prisons, and families began calling for it as soon as it opened in theatres."

The success of THERESE, includes 69 consecutive weeks of engagement in U.S. cinemas, accolades in Puerto Rico and Canada, and the award for First

Place at the International Third Millennium Film Festival in Guadalajara.

Citing the Feb. 5 issue of *Variety*, in which THERESE was mentioned together with *The Passion*, *Chronicles of Narnia*, and *End of the Spear*, director Leonardo DeFilippis said, "We are part of an overall movement in the film industry. More and more people are producing and supporting faith-based stories, stories of goodness and humanity, and the impact of God's grace in our lives."

The THERESE DVD sells for \$24.99 at the on-line store, [www.lukefilms.com](http://www.lukefilms.com), or at Luke Films, 5319 SW Westgate Drive, Suite 130; Portland, OR 97221; (503) 546-5685.

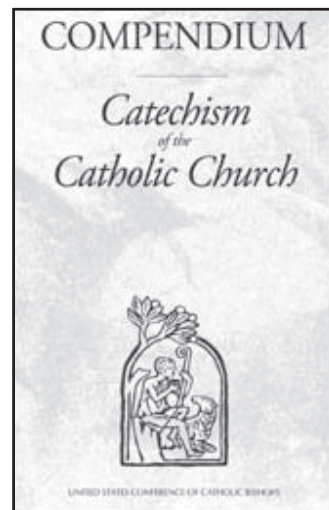
## Compendium of catechism goes on sale in paperback March 31

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, a 200-page synthesis of the 1992 catechism, will be available in

paperback March 31 from USCCB Publishing, the publishing office of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. A hardcover edition will follow shortly after. Both versions will be published in English and Spanish. The compendium, made up of 598 questions and answers, echoes to some degree the format of the Baltimore Catechism, which was standard in many U.S. Catholic parishes and schools from 1885 to the 1960s.

It also includes two appendices — a list of Catholic prayers in English or Spanish, side by side with the Latin versions, and a list of "formulas of Catholic doctrine," including the Ten Commandments, the beatitudes, the theological and cardinal virtues, and the spiritual and corporal works of mercy.

The paperback version of the compendium, in English or Spanish, will cost \$14.95; the price for the hardcover book will be \$24.95. The compendium may be ordered online at: [www.usccbpublishing.org](http://www.usccbpublishing.org), or by phone at: (800) 235-8722.







*Eight Time U.S. National Cross Country Ski Champion and top ranked U.S. Women's Nordic Skier, Rebecca Dussault of Gunnison, Colo., skis for the U.S. at the 2006 Olympic Winter Games in Turin, Italy. The cross-country skier has the name of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati on her skis and has been spreading his story. She said Blessed Pier Giorgio is helping her and she is helping him. (CNS photo/courtesy Sharbel Dussault)*

## Olympic skier attracts media attention for devotion to faith, family

By Carol Glatz

TURIN, Italy (CNS) — With a holy man on her skis and her husband and 4-year-old son close behind, a cross-country skiing Olympian from Gunnison, Colo., has taken Turin by storm.

In the first week of her Olympic debut at the games, Rebecca Dussault's manager, promoter, fundraiser, photographer and webmaster husband, Sharbel Dussault, was busy working the phones and hunting for Internet access in the remote Italian mountain village of Pragelato.

Their site, [www.dussaultskis.com](http://www.dussaultskis.com), was clocking 1,200 hits a day, Dussault said, and her husband had been staying up until 2 a.m. to go through the flood of e-mails, respond to requests for interviews and update the site launched early this year to document the family's pursuit of the Olympic dream.

In just the first few days after the Olympics began, Dussault had done interviews for big-name Italian and U.S. radio and newspaper outlets, including National Public Radio, The Washington Post and Turin's major daily, La Stampa.

"Even USA Today did a piece on Sharbel," she told Catholic News Service Feb. 15.

Not bad considering the media buzz usually circles around athletes who have been awarded a medal, not someone who took 48th place in Feb. 12's cross-country 15-kilometer pursuit. Even though 48th place still made Dussault the top U.S. finisher in an event dominated by Europeans, that was not the reason the mass media was hungry for her story.

"I think it's because of my faith," she said.

A devout Catholic and member of St. Peter's Catholic Church in Gunnison, Colo., Dussault said a lot of media hype was focused on her having the name of Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati on all the skis she was using during her two weeks of competition.

When she and her husband decided back in 2003 that she would end what had been an early retirement from elite racing to pursue the Olympics, they decided to make Blessed Pier Giorgio, a Turin-born mountaineer and avid skier, the patron of Dussault's journey to the Olympics. She said her dedication to Blessed Pier Giorgio and her

Catholic faith made her stand out from other competitors and gave reporters a hook for stories.

She said her story sparked interest because it was more than just about the Olympics; it was "how Blessed Pier Giorgio is helping me and I'm helping him" by spreading his name and stirring up interest in his life.

She said she believes God "is using me to get Frassati out there" to the wider public and that it was amazing how her story "is being eaten up."

But people have also been fascinated with how this humble but hard-as-nails 25-year-old has juggled Olympic training with being a wife, mother and Catholic who never misses Sunday Mass, even when stranded in remote mountain villages. Once, she said, she even paid an \$88 taxi fare just to get to the nearest church before a race in Norway.

"I'm paying witness to how life doesn't end after marriage and childbirth," she said. "You don't have to give up everything" in order to follow your dreams, but you do have to be stubborn.

Dussault tells donors and sponsors that when it comes to financing the expenses involved in traveling the cross-country skiing circuit throughout the year, she is a package deal: Wherever she goes, her husband and child must go, too.

Even though that triples their expenses, it's a price this family pays without question or hesitation.

Her son needs her when he wakes up in the morning and goes to bed at night, she said, adding that it is neat to have her family share in this dream. For the past three years "we worked together for this one goal," she said.

Dussault said her son and husband are also an enormous source of support and encourage-

ment.

"It's such a joy to see their smiling faces at the end of a race," she said.

The three were renting a house in Pragelato, not far from the competition venue, while the rest of the U.S. cross-country squad was housed in the Olympic village in Sestriere.

Dussault skied the anchor leg as the U.S. women placed 14th in the 5-kilometer relay Feb. 18, and she placed 43rd in the 30-kilometer race Feb. 24.

She also traveled to Turin to be the featured speaker at a Feb. 19 event sponsored by a diocesan Blessed Pier Giorgio organization.

Dussault said her first Olympics have been "fun and very exciting," but also stressful and challenging to have to wade through all the red tape to get the proper accreditation that would keep her family by her side throughout the games.

Going head-to-head against the world's best cross-country skiers also has had an impact on her No. 1 fan — her son Tabor.

Dussault said that after all her races her son always asks her, "Did you win?" In the United States, she almost always won and he'd reply, smiling, "Good job, Mommy."

"But here (at the Olympics) when he asks 'Did you win' and I say 'No, I got 48th,' he still sees that I am still the same person" and that defeat has not shattered her world.

She said this attitude makes her a valuable role model for her son, to see that no matter what, "I still have faith, love and I still try."

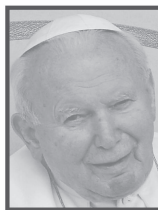
*Editor's note: Go to [www.dussaultskis.com](http://www.dussaultskis.com) and click FAITH to find several Catholic Web site links including three links for information on Blessed Pier Giorgio Frassati*

### Sunday readings from March 5 to April 9

March 5 — First Sunday of Lent	Genesis 9:8-15 Psalm 25:4-5, 6-7, 8-9 1 Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1:12-15
March 12 — Second Sunday of Lent	Genesis 22:1-2, 9a, 10-13, 15-18 Psalm 116:10, 15, 16-17, 18-19 Romans 8:31b-34 Mark 9:2-10
March 19 — Third Sunday of Lent	Exodus 20:1-17 Psalm 19:8, 9, 10, 11 1 Corinthians 1:22-25 John 2:13-25
March 26 — Fourth Sunday of Lent	2 Chronicles 36:14-16, 19-23 Psalm 137:1-2, 3, 4-5, 6 Ephesians 2:4-10 John 3:14-21
April 2 — Fifth Sunday of Lent	Jeremiah 31:31-34 Psalm 51:3-4, 12-13, 14-15 Hebrews 5:7-9 John 12:20-33
April 9 — Palm Sunday of the Lord's Passion	Mark 11:1-10 Isaiah 50:4-7 Psalm 22:8-9, 17-18, 19-20, 23-24 Philippians 2:6-11

### Steps to Sainthood

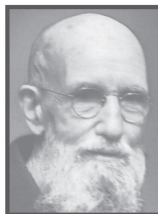
The steps to sainthood and some modern causes



#### 1. Servant of God

A candidate for sainthood is declared a servant of God upon the opening of his or her official cause for sainthood.

Pope John Paul II (1920-2005)  
• 2005 cause opened



#### 2. Venerable

The pope declares a person venerable after church officials conclude from their investigation that the person has led a life of heroic virtue.

Father Solanus Casey (1870-1957)  
• 1982 cause opened  
• 1995 declared venerable



#### 3. Blessed

The pope declares a person blessed after a miracle attributed to his or her intercession is canonically recognized.\*

Mother Teresa (1910-1997)  
• 1999 cause opened  
• 2002 declared venerable  
• 2003 beatified



#### 4. Saint

One is declared a saint in an elaborate ceremony after another miracle is canonically recognized.

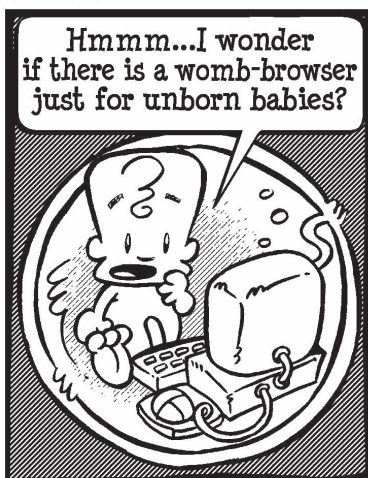
Mother Katharine Drexel (1858-1955)  
• 1964 cause opened  
• 1987 declared venerable  
• 1988 beatified  
• 2000 declared saint

\*A martyr may be declared blessed without a miracle.

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### Umbert the Unborn

by Gary Cangemi







## In Anticipation of Reconciliation

By Denise E. Bossert, M.A

One week before Easter Vigil, the RCIA class at my parish went through the sacrament of reconciliation. Due to a pending annulment from a first marriage, I could not participate in the sacrament. It was a difficult moment in my conversion to the Catholic faith, because I longed to make this part of the journey with my class and be reconciled to the Lord. Even though the pending annulment meant I couldn't participate, my classmates asked me to join them in a show of love and support, and so I went along somewhat reluctantly.

The idea of watching my friends enter the confessional and leave with clean hearts and souls (while I remained in the pew, still mired in sin and shame) weighed heavily on my mind. I am so glad that I decided to put that aside and go along as they suggested.

Although I had a desire to receive the sacrament of reconciliation, at that point in my journey I still had lingering doubts about why I needed to seek forgiveness through a priest. While I sorted through the intellectual doubts, my spirit sensed the necessity of this act of humility. My instincts were confirmed as I watched my new friends leave the confessional with radiant faces. The memory of it still blesses me in a profound way. After they had made their confessions, some suggested that I go in to receive a blessing.

When I entered, the priest was already seated. He said something to me, and I realized that he was beginning the sacrament of reconciliation. I muddled through an explanation of my situation, and we talked briefly. Then, he blessed me.

When I left that little room, I

realized that my Protestant doubt in the confessional was gone. In fact, the experience turned my thinking around one-hundred-eighty degrees. Now, I had doubts in the validity of the Jesus-and-me style of private Protestant confession.

Somehow, I had been given the grace to recognize Jesus in his ordained one, the priest. Somehow, the Holy Spirit had helped me realize that the sacrament of reconciliation was not merely part of a sequence of events leading up to First Communion. The door to the confessional is the door to Jesus' forgiveness. From that point on, I realized that when I hear those words of absolution — whenever that blessed day comes along — the words will be spoken by a priest, but they will be the words of Jesus.

In the weeks and months that have followed, the desire to be made clean through this sacrament has consumed my spirit like holy fire. When I read verses from the psalmist — verses like "Take pity on me, Lord, in your mercy; in your abundance of mercy wipe out my guilt" and "Wash me ever more from my guilt and cleanse me from my sin . . . for I know how guilty I am: my sin is always before me" — I am filled with an unquenchable desire to be reconciled to the Lord through this sacrament.

I suppose one could contemplate the sacrament forever and never be able to grasp completely the fullness of the mystery, but I find myself trying to figure it out anyway. Why does the confessional trump individual prayers of confession? I think the question is answered in part by another verse in the book of Psalms. "The true sacrifice is a broken

spirit: a contrite and humble heart, O God, you will not refuse."

The confessional requires humility. Pride is wrestled to the ground, giving way to a broken spirit. The net result is deep remorse and a profound desire to turn from sin and temptation (which is the definition of repentance). Private Jesus-and-Me confessions too easily segue into a mere appeasement of a guilty conscience and not true repentance. Without contrition and humility there is no forgiveness, the psalmist says. The Lord has provided a way for me to know I am forgiven — through the sacrament of reconciliation. I realize now that it is next to impossible to sit before a priest and speak of one's darkest deeds without a profound sense of contrition and humility that leads to a serious desire to turn from sin.

If that weren't enough for me to embrace the sacrament, I only had to consider the Lord's words to his apostles, "Whatever you bind. . . whatever you loose." Forgiveness is ours because of the Blood of Christ and his atoning work on the cross of Calvary (something I'd always believed), but Jesus said that the one who has the authority to forgive in his name is the ordained one.

Recently, I received word from the Metropolitan Tribunal that I am not bound to my first marriage and the decision will be official within a few weeks. Words cannot describe the joy that comes with knowing that Jesus is drawing me closer, even now bending his finger to me, indicating that he wants me to come all the way home, and that eventually I will be able to receive him in the Holy Eucharist. I'm still anticipating my first confession; I long to hear the words of absolution. I'm ready to trade my ashes for beauty, ready to wear forgiveness like a crown. I know that Jesus is there and that he is waiting for me to receive the sweet sacrament of reconciliation no matter how long it takes for me to be ready.

## The Pope Speaks

Pope Benedict XVI



CNS photo from Reuters

## Pope asks for prayers for his ministry on the feast of Chair of St. Peter

By Cindy Wooden

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — With hundreds of candles lighting a sculpture of the Chair of St. Peter behind him, Pope Benedict XVI encouraged Catholics to grow in their faith and asked for prayers for his ministry as the successor of St. Peter.

Celebrating the Feb. 22 feast of the Chair of Peter, apostle, Pope Benedict held part of his weekly general audience in St. Peter's Basilica, where Gian Lorenzo Bernini's statue is located, and part in the Vatican audience hall, where he announced he would create 15 new cardinals.

In greeting Italian students in the basilica and in his talks in 10 languages in the audience hall, the pope offered a reflection on the ministry of St. Peter as Jesus' choice as leader of the apostles.

He encouraged the estimated 8,000 people in the audience hall to spend some time in St. Peter's Basilica, looking at the Bernini statue specially lighted for the feast day "and to pray in a particular way for the ministry which God has entrusted to me."

"Raising your gaze to the alabaster window just above the chair, invoke the Holy Spirit so that with his light and his strength he would always sustain my daily service to the entire church," the pope said.

Pope Benedict explained that the feast day celebrates the ministry of St. Peter as bishop of Rome, a ministry symbolized by his chair, the symbol of his responsibility for teaching the faith and of his authority.

"Providence led Peter to Rome, where he ended his service to the Gospel with martyrdom," the pope said.

"For this reason, the see of Rome, which received great honor, also received the responsibility Christ entrusted to Peter to serve all of the particular churches for the edification and unity of the entire people of God," he said.

As successor of St. Peter, he said, the pope is called not only to serve the church in Rome, but to guide the universal church.

"Celebrating the chair of Peter means, then, attributing to it a strong spiritual significance and recognizing it as a privileged sign of the love of God, the good and eternal pastor, who wants to gather the entire church and guide it on the path of salvation," the pope said.

## Parish mission features Father Weber

HALLETTSVILLE—Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville will be having a parish mission April 2-6 with Father Bernie Weber, C.P. as the speaker. This mission will speak to your heart as well as to your mind.

Father Weber brings with him years of experience as a missionary and pastor. His calling in ministry is primarily in preach-

ing, reconciliation, counseling, and healing.

The mission begins on Sunday with Mass at 10:00 a.m. with an evening service at 7:00 p.m. The Sunday evening topic will be *Jesus The Light of The World*. Each day of the mission there will be a morning and evening service.

Father Weber will also be available for personal ministry daily between 2:00 and 4:00 p.m.

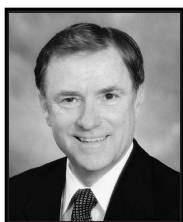
For information call Sacred Heart rectory at (361) 798-5888.

## No conflict: Truths of faith, science have God as source, pope says

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The truths of faith cannot be in conflict with the truths of science because God is the source of faith and creator of the world, Pope Benedict XVI said. The pope met Feb. 10 with 98 officials, members and consultants of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. When "the truth of faith is placed at the center of Christian existence with simplicity and decisiveness, people's lives are energized by a love that knows neither breaks nor boundaries," Pope Benedict said. Love for the truth, he said, pushes the human intellect to explore new horizons.

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# The FLOCK

By Jean Denton

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## Buscando Vida

Por Moises Sandoval  
Servicio Noticiero Católico



### La familia de un inmigrante arriesga todo, y pierde todo

Juan Jiménez, de 33 años, llegó a Brewster, una aldea 50 millas al norte de Nueva York, hace cuatro meses. Vino de San Marcos, un pueblo pobre en la sierra al oeste de Guatemala, cerca de la frontera mexicana, donde en un entonces visité a dos religiosas de Maryknoll. Viajó 45 días, cruzando el desierto de la frontera entre México y Arizona, donde no encontraba alimento o agua y dormía sólo dos horas. Fue afortunado, porque en el verano del 2004, 270 personas murieron intentando cruzar. Lo sostuvo la necesidad de proveer por su esposa, cinco hijos de dos a doce años, su madre y ocho hermanos, y de pagar los \$5,000 que costo el viaje.

Rubén García, director ejecutivo de Casa de La Anunciación, que en sus 28 años ha albergado 80,000 inmigrantes, dice que familias y comunidades enteras en América Latina hipotecan todo lo que tienen para enviar los más saludables, mejores trabajadores, más inteligentes y responsables. En turno, los elegidos envían ingresos para la supervivencia de sus familias o comunidades, en total decenas de millones de dólares cada año. Con sueldo diario de \$4, Jiménez nunca habría ahorrado bastante.

En Brewster, con muchos jornaleros, Jiménez se estacionaba en una esquina esperando que lo empleara algún contratista o dueño de casa. Cuando trabajaba, su sueldo llegaba a \$80 o \$85 por día. Los domingos asistía a la Misa en San Lorenzo O'Toole. Francis O'Reilly, un abogado, caracterizó a Jiménez como inteligente y elocuente, "un hombre simpático que vino para trabajar duro y enviar dinero a su familia. Estos son miembros de nuestra comunidad," dijo. Pero el 9 de Enero todo fracasó.

Ese día, templado y soleado, nadie le ofreció trabajo y, para pasar el tiempo, fue a jugar fútbol con siete Guatemaltecos indocumentados en un campo de la escuela primaria de Garden Street. Un alguacil de policía los arrestó, acusándolos del crimen de entrada sin derecho. Jiménez, el único

que no pudo pagar fianza de \$3,000, impuesta por el juez Richard O'Rourke, fue trasladado a Pennsylvania por agentes de inmigración. Allí enfrenta el juicio de deportación.

En cartas a editores de los periódicos, algunos aplaudieron las detenciones. Pocos días antes, se habían reunido 120 personas en Brewster para demandar acción en contra de los inmigrantes ilegales. Joseph Sabatella, el superintendente de escuelas, reconoció que cientos de personas "utilizan nuestras propiedades diariamente," y enfatizó que todos todavía tienen la bienvenida. Se prohíbe entrar sólo durante el día escolar, "para la seguridad de los niños," dijo.

Otros preguntaron si las detenciones ocurrieron sólo porque los futbolistas eran latinos indocumentados. En un editorial, el periódico local Gannett, The Journal News, se unió a los que sentían que cualquier otras personas sólo habrían recibido la advertencia de no jugar allí. Sugirió el autor que el alguacil y el Departamento de La Seguridad de La Patria tienen tareas más importantes, "perseguir malhechores reales ... y no a futbolistas."

Kat Nordgren, de 16 años, parroquiana de San Lorenzo O'Toole y residente de Lewisboro, sintió que las detenciones fueron "increíblemente injustas." Le dijo a un reportero: "Pensé que Martín Luther King los hubiera apoyado." Por eso, durante el fin de semana honrando el gran líder de los derechos civiles, ella y otros jóvenes, tuvieron ventas de panadería en varias comunidades para juntar los \$3,000 necesarios para pagar la fianza de Jiménez. Un hombre pagó \$200 por un mollete y una iglesia presbiteriana también contribuyó. Aunque muy tarde para liberar a Jiménez, quien lloraba que iba a perder todo, incluso su casa, la compasión de los jóvenes y otras personas fue lo más esperanzador de esta triste historia.

(Para mandar ayuda a la familia Jimenez, escriba a su abogado: Francis O'Reilly, 10 McMahon Place, Mahopac, NY 10541.)

### Combata el odio del cristianismo por el Evangelio que vive, dice a funcionario de Vatican

La CIUDAD de VATICAN (CNS) — La mejor manera de combatir miedo y el odio del cristianismo en el mundo está para que los cristianos vivan auténtico fuera del Evangelio en todos los aspectos de sus vidas diarias, dijo a funcionario superior de Vatican. El Ministro de Asuntos Exteriores del Vatican, Arzobispo Giovanni Lajolo, dicho mientras que era urgente que las organizaciones internacionales ayudan a tomar medidas contra intolerancia y la discriminación religiosas, los cristianos individuales también desempeñan un papel crucial. El Vatican ha abrogado a las organizaciones tales como los Naciones Unidas y la organización para la seguridad y la cooperación en Europa para incluir odio contra cristianos en su lucha contra ant-Semitism y la discriminación contra musulmanes, él dijo en un febrero 22 entrevista con el italiano diario, Sueros del della de Corriere.

### Los sacerdotes guardan el reloj con las familias en la entrada mexicana de la mina

Ciudad de México (CNS) — Como salvavidas avanzó lentamente a través de una mina derrumbada en un esfuerzo de ahorrar 65 centenares atrapados los hombres de metros debajo de la superficie, El padre Juan Renovato era sobre tierra, el intentar mantener esperanza viva.

La "gente está consiguiendo desesperada y hysterical," padre Renovato dicho febrero 20. hablando en su teléfono portátil cerca de la entrada con la mina de carbón de de Conchos de las pastas, cerca de la ciudad de San Juan de Sabinas en el estado de Coahuila de México.

El padre Renovato y otros sacerdotes rogaban con y aconsejaban a centenares de miembros de la familia y de amigos de los mineros, quienes fueron atrapadas antes del amanecer febrero 19 cuando se derrumbó una explosión del gas parte de la mina. Último febrero 25, después de seis días de esfuerzos del rescate, los funcionarios el minar y del rescate declararon a los 65 mineros absolutamente.

Obispo Alonso Garza Trevino de Piedras Negras mandó a los 12 sacerdotes en el área llevar las vueltas que estaban en la entrada la mina de modo que una de ellas estuviera siempre presente para los miembros de la familia de los mineros recolectados allí. Las parroquias locales llevaron a cabo masas para rogar para atraparon a mineros, y una misa fue celebrada fuera de la entrada a la mina febrero 20.

### New Orleans para cerrar siete parroquias, retrasa la abertura de 23 otras

New Orleans (CNS)—La Archidiócesis de New Orleans publicó un plan pastoral febrero 9 que llama para el cierre de siete parroquias y retrasa la reapertura de 23 otras hasta que hay bastantes feligreses en un área para autorizar la reasunción del ministerio pastoral. También llama para establecer seises centralizó escuelas primarias, cuál antes de la tormenta había servido sobre todo como escuelas primarias de la parroquia individual. La archidiócesis, en las consecuencias del huracán Katrina, está haciendo frente a proyecciones desconocidas con respecto a su población católica futura y los centenares de sus características sufrieron daño extenso. Arzobispo Alfred C. Hughes de New Orleans. Hughes proyectó que la archidiócesis, cuál antes de que Katrina fuera casero casi a los católicos de una mitad-millón en 142 parroquias, pudo ver a su población católica volver en los dos años próximos a solamente 60 por ciento a 65 por ciento de sus niveles de agosto 2005, cuál significaría una población católica de cerca de 295,000. El plan pas-

total, cuál tomará el efecto de marcha la 15, establece un marco para el ministerio pastoral en los siete deanatos que sostuvieron el daño más grande a partir del agosto 29 tormenta.

### El papa dice a obispos africanos que el trabajo con los musulmanes puede promover armonía

La CIUDAD de VATICAN (CNS) — trabajando con los musulmanes en proyectos de la caridad y del desarrollo puede promover armonía mientras que también sirve a los pobres, Papa Benedict XVI dijo a obispos a partir de cuatro naciones africanas del oeste. El papa resolvió febrero 20 con los obispos de Senegal, Mauritania, Guinea Bissau y Cabo Verde en el final de sus "visitas de los umbrales del anuncio", qué jefes de diócesis hacen cada cinco años. Papa Benedict elogió a católicos en los países africanos del oeste para dar el testigo al hecho que "ame para su vecino, arraigado en el amor del dios, es una parte esencial de la vida cristiana." Mientras que los cristianos tienen una obligación de enganchar a trabajo caritativo y social, él dijo, el "cristianismo no se debe reducir a la sabiduría humana mera o confundir con servicio social, porque es algo un espiritual mantenga." En el mismo tiempo, él dijo, "para los discípulos de Cristo, el ejercicio de la caridad no puede ser los medios del proselytism, porque el amor es gratuito."

### El compendio del catechism va en venta en el libro en rústica de marzo 31

WASHINGTON (CNS) — El compendio del catechism de la iglesia católica, una síntesis 200-página del catechism 1992, esté disponible en el libro en rústica de marcha la 31 de USCCB que publica, la oficina que publica del U.S. Conferencia de obispos católicos. Una edición del hardcover seguirá poco después. Ambas versiones serán publicadas en inglés y español. El compendio, compuesto de 598 preguntas y respuestas, ecos a un cierto grado el formato del catechism de Baltimore, cuál era estándar en muchos U.S. parroquias y escuelas católicas a partir de 1885 a los años 1960. También incluye dos apéndices — una lista de rezos católicos en inglés o español, de lado a lado con las versiones latinas, y una lista de "fórmulas de la doctrina católica," incluyendo los diez mandamientos, las beatitudes, las virtudes teológicas y cardinales, y los trabajos espirituales y corporales de la misericordia. La versión del libro en rústica del compendio, en inglés o español, costará \$14.95; el precio para el libro del hardcover será \$24.95. El compendio se puede pedir en línea en: [www.usccbpublishing.org](http://www.usccbpublishing.org), or by phone at: (800) 235-8722.

### La Plenitud de la Verdad Segunda Conferencia Anual de Cuaresma para la Evangelización de la Familia Católica, tema:



Presentando al padre Pablo Straub, Jesse Romero, Marta Fernández, padre Eduardo Montemayor y otros, el 1 y 2 de Abril del 2006 en el Centro del Banco Americano/Selena Auditorium en Corpus Christi, Texas. Programa especial para los jóvenes, concierto y teatro a cargo del grupo Radix.

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- Rev. Gary Janak al (979)543-3770 o a la Hna. Emilie Eilers al (361)575-7111, que son los coordinadores del Pastoral Care and Outreach;
- También puede comunicarse por escrito enviando su carta a:  
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Diocese of Victoria  
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Victoria, TX 77903  
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## Archbishop Fiorenza resigns in Galveston-Houston

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Pope Benedict XVI has accepted the resignation of Archbishop Joseph A. Fiorenza of Galveston-Houston.

With the resignation, Coadjutor Archbishop Daniel N. DiNardo automatically becomes head of the archdiocese.

The announcement was made in Washington Feb. 28 by Msgr. Lepoldo Girelli, charge d'affaires at the apostolic nunciature.

Archbishop Fiorenza turned 75 Jan. 25. Age 75 is when bishops are asked to turn in their resignation.

Archbishop DiNardo, 56, was appointed coadjutor in 2004. He had been the bishop of Sioux City, Iowa, since 1998.

From 1998 to 2001, Archbishop Fiorenza was president of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops-U.S. Catholic Conference, now called the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

He was appointed to Galveston-Houston in December 1984 and installed in February 1985. At the time it was a diocese. In 2004, it was elevated to an archdiocese, reflecting the area's rapid population growth. Currently, the archdiocese has a Catholic population of 1.5 million out of a total population of 5.3 million.

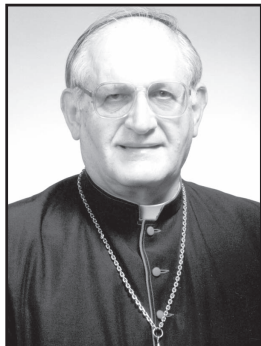
After his retirement was announced, Archbishop Fiorenza thanked the pope for accepting his resignation.

"The church has a very wise rule about bishops retiring at 75," he said.

The rule ensures that the local church

receives an infusion of "new vigor, new ideas and new leadership," he said at a Feb. 28 news conference in Houston.

At the same news conference, Archbishop DiNardo praised Archbishop Fiorenza for his 21 years of leadership in "this very dynamic archdiocese."



Archbishop Fiorenza

"I call it dynamic because we are the largest diocese in the Southwest made up of a wonderfully diverse Catholic population," Archbishop DiNardo said.

Last September, in the wake of Hurricane Katrina, Archbishop Fiorenza was appointed chairman of a task force created by the U.S. bishops to coordinate the Catholic response to recovery efforts in the devastated regions hit hard

by the hurricane. Some days after it was formed the work of the task force was expanded to address problems created by Hurricane Rita.

In a report to the bishops last November, Archbishop Fiorenza harshly criticized the federal government's response to hurricane victims. He said that church officials got the "run around" from the Federal Emergency Management Agency when they wanted to know what federal aid plans were.

During his tenure in Galveston-Houston, the archbishop often spoke out against the death penalty — in a state with a high number of executions.

At the press conference, the archbishop said he felt "truly blessed to have had the opportunity to have shepherded this won-

derful archdiocese," and looked forward to getting back to "the life of a priest," administering the sacraments and celebrating Mass. The archbishop said he was pleased to be leaving the local church in the "capable hands" of his successor.

In his remarks, Archbishop DiNardo said, "Coming from Pittsburgh and Sioux City in the Midwest, I found I had much to experience and learn about the many beautiful cultures that exist here and I look forward to continuing that experience."

Archbishop DiNardo also said he looked forward "to a strong collaboration with the nearly 500 priests, the religious women and men, and the people in the parishes."

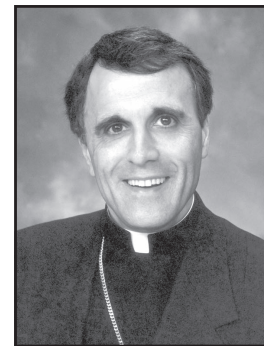
"I also look forward to being part of this community at large and to working

with other local faith and government leaders," he said.

Archbishop DiNardo, a former Vatican official, was born May 23, 1949, in Steubenville, Ohio. He was ordained a priest for the Pittsburgh Diocese in 1977. From 1984 to 1990 he was a staff member of the Vatican Congregation for Bishops. During 1990-97 he held pastoral posts in the Pittsburgh Diocese.

He was named coadjutor bishop of Sioux City in 1997 and became bishop the following year.

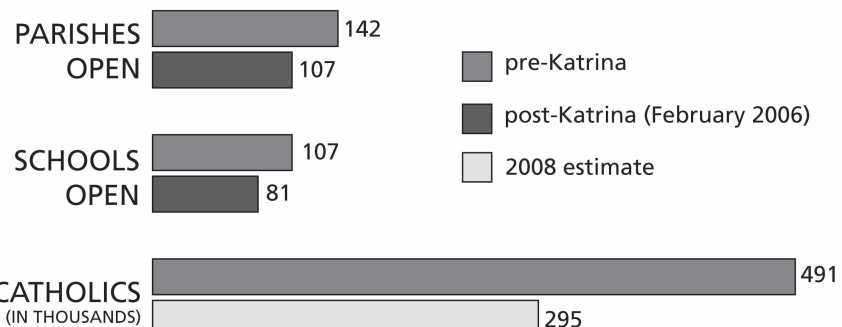
Archbishop Fiorenza was born Jan. 25, 1931, in Beaumont, Texas. He was ordained a priest for the Galveston-Houston Diocese in 1954. In 1979 he was named bishop of San Angelo, Texas, where he served until taking over the Galveston-Houston Diocese.



Archbishop DiNardo

### Status Report

The New Orleans Archdiocese plans to close seven parishes as a result of Hurricane Katrina. The storm caused an estimated \$84 million in damage to archdiocesan churches and facilities.



Source: Archdiocese of New Orleans

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### South Dakota Legislature bans nearly all abortions

PIERRE, S.D. (CNS) — By adopting legislation that would prohibit all intentional abortions except those to save a mother's life, the South Dakota Legislature moved toward a direct challenge of the U.S. Supreme Court's 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. If signed into law it would become the most sweeping ban on abortion adopted in any state since 1973. The South Dakota House of Representative passed the bill Feb. 24 by a vote of 50-18. The Senate had approved it Feb. 22, by a vote of 23-12, after slightly amending an earlier version adopted by the House. The House vote Feb. 24 incorporated the Senate's amendment. The amendment, an addition to the introductory legislative findings of the bill, said the Legislature finds that "the guarantee of due process of law under the constitution of South Dakota applies equally to born and unborn human beings" and that the mother and her unborn child "each possess a natural and inalienable right to life." The bill, called the Women's Health and Human Life Protection Act, specifically exempts women from any criminal conviction or penalty for obtaining an abortion. But it says that anyone who performs an abortion except to save a mother's life commits a Class 5 felony, which is punishable by a fine up to \$5,000 and up to five years in prison.

### Bishop congratulates Haitians and new president, urges global support

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The head of the U.S. bishops' international policy committee congratulated the Haitian people and their newly elected leader, President Rene Preval, and urged the in-

ternational community and U.S. Congress to offer assistance to the Caribbean country. In a Feb. 21 statement on Haiti's recent elections, Bishop Thomas G. Wenski of Orlando, Fla., noted that the challenges facing Haitians and their new president "are enormous and will require the cooperation of all sectors of society." "The people of Haiti have taken an important step forward in electing a president," he said. "Now the United States and the international community must take additional steps to accompany the Haitian people as they walk the long road to a future of democratic and economic revitalization."

### 'Pro-life, pro-poor' lawmakers rare but seek them out, activists told

WASHINGTON (CNS) — A major political challenge facing Catholics is finding the rare legislators who are "pro-life and pro-poor," said John Carr, head of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Social Development and World Peace. "We need to find the exceptions and support the exceptions," he said Feb. 13 at a plenary session of the 2006 Catholic Social Ministry Gathering. "We believe that life begins at conception but does not end there," he told 500 people involved in Catholic social ministry programs gathered from around the United States. The theme of the Feb. 12-15 gathering in Washington was "Bringing Good News to a Broken World." The annual meeting also included wrap-around sessions held Feb. 10-11. Carr said that Catholic public policy positions are nuanced and do not fall into the current polarized divisions of right versus left and Democrat versus Republican. "We are not the Democratic Party of prayer," he said. "We are not the religious caucus of the Republican Party."

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## Vatican official: Spiritual reform must begin with religious orders

By John Thavis

VATICAN CITY (CNS)— Pope Benedict XVI is seeking to revitalize the faith life of the church, a “spiritual reform” that must begin with the world’s men and women religious, said Archbishop Rode, head of the Vatican office that oversees religious orders.

That means religious congregations must take stock, recover their “apostolic dynamism” and shed the excessive secularism of the post-Second Vatican Council period, Archbishop Rode said.

Archbishop Rode, prefect of the Congregation for Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, spoke with Catholic News Service about the challenges facing religious life and the directions being set under Pope Benedict. After the CNS interview, Pope Benedict named Archbishop Rode a cardinal Feb. 22; he was to be elevated March 24.

The 71-year-old Slovenian, a member of the Vincentian order, said the vitality of religious orders has always been essential for spiritual reform in the church.

“Throughout the history of the church, religious orders and congregations were always the ones pushing forward, bringing dynamism and a call for holiness. They were always on the front lines,” he said.

For that reason, the “in-depth reform of consecrated life” is one of Pope Benedict’s goals, as it was for Pope John Paul II, he said.

For some congregations, such a reform will include the recovery of their original charism and the refocusing of apostolic energy, the archbishop said.

### Combat hatred of Christianity by living Gospel, says Vatican official

*Continued from p. 1*

In addition, more attention should be paid “to the social development” of women, making it well understood that the intention was not “to impose Western models” of womanhood on other cultures, he said.

The Italian archbishop said the church’s desire to engage in dialogue with the world’s Muslims “cannot dim in the face of recent difficulties.”

He echoed Pope Benedict XVI’s call to constantly improve the current dialogue between Muslims and Christians and to not let it become “a seasonal” event, taken up only in times of crisis.

Since the Second Vatican Council, he said, some orders have abandoned their traditional fields of apostolate, only to lose themselves in uselessness or unproductive activities. The result is stagnation, he said.

Archbishop Rode said he’s already seeing signs that the church is responding to the challenge with fresh energy and new forms of religious life.

**“The pendulum is swinging from, shall we say, a secularist euphoria back toward a certain severity. But note that this is not an imposed severity — these young people want it and demand it.” ~ Archbishop Rode**

He said he met in January with the pope to present a list of 25 requests for pontifical approval from new religious congregations and secular institutes. They shared some key characteristics, including the wearing of a religious habit as a visible sign of identity, significant

time reserved for daily prayer, and an emphasis on fraternal and community life.

“Far from the kind of dispersion that was widespread after the council, they are taking great care to promote cohesion of the religious community,” he said. “The pendulum is swinging from, shall we say, a secularist euphoria back toward a certain severity. But note that this is not an imposed severity — these young people want it and demand it.”

## Pope names 15 new cardinals, including two from U.S.

*Continued from p. 1*

was appointed last May as the pope’s successor to head the doctrinal congregation, the Vatican agency charged with protecting and promoting the church’s teachings on faith and morals. It was the first time a U.S. prelate has headed the congregation, which is the oldest of the Vatican’s nine congregations and is considered primary in responsibility and influence.

When Archbishop Sean P. O’Malley flew in to Boston less than three years ago on his first visit to his new archdiocese, the archdiocese was in financial and administrative disarray after 18 months at the epicenter of the national clergy sex abuse scandal. Less than a year after Archbishop Sean P. O’Malley’s installation in Boston July 31, 2003, the new cardinal-designate reached a widely hailed \$85 million settlement with more than 500 clergy sex abuse victims and sold off 43 acres of archdiocesan property, including the large mansion known as the cardinal’s residence, to pay off the settlement. His success in that area has been tempered by ongoing conflicts over his decision in 2004 to close one-sixth of the archdiocese’s

*Editor’s note: The below story was compiled from several CNS stories*

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—Although the violence of demonstrators throughout the Muslim world was sparked by the Danish publication of satirical cartoons of the prophet Mohammed, Christian leaders offer more in-depth reasons behind the continuing violence.

The first attack affecting the Catholic Christian community was the slaying of an Italian missionary priest in Turkey; attacks continued in the burning of Catholic churches throughout Africa.

In Turkey, the Feb. 5 killing of an Italian missionary priest has raised fears that Turkey, long one of the more moderate Muslim countries, could become a new home for Islamic fanaticism.

Father Andrea Santoro, 60, was murdered while praying in his church by a youth who yelled “Allahu akbar” (“Allah is great”) before firing his gun, according to church officials in Turkey.

On Feb. 18 in Maiduguri, Nigeria, violence was set off by a Muslim demonstration against the publication of the cartoons; when the demonstration got out of hand, a mob set fire to churches and the property of Christians, leaving several people dead, including a Catholic priest.

In the days that followed, Christians in some southern Nigerian cities rioted,

burning mosques and killing some Muslims.

A Catholic church and convent in Benghazi, Libya, were plundered and burned just days after anti-Italian protests turned violent. Protesters were condemning a recent incident in which an Italian government minister, Roberto Calderoli, had unbuttoned his shirt on Italian television to display a T-shirt bearing an image of one of the Danish cartoons. The Feb. 20 attacks against the two religious properties forced the apostolic vicar of Benghazi, the rest of his Franciscan community, and the religious men and women who lived and worked in the diocese to be evacuated to the Libyan capital, Tripoli.

With the killings increased in retribution for the bombing of a Shiite shrine in Iraq, the Rome-based representative of Baghdad’s Chaldean Catholic Patriarchate said “all of Iraq is in danger.”

“It’s not just about Sunni and Shiite, because they started three weeks ago on Christians,” Father Philip Najim told Catholic News Service Feb. 23, referring to the near-simultaneous attacks in late January in Baghdad and Kirkuk, a northern Iraqi city, launched just as some Sunday services had ended.

Father Najim said he believed the people behind the mid-February attacks in Iraq “came from outside Iraq and they (coalition forces) are doing nothing about it.” He said that as an Iraqi, he could assure people “100 percent that no Iraqi man would ever do this. Not a Sunni, not a Shiite.”

Such attacks against religious places of worship have “never happened in the whole history of Iraq” Father Najim said. The terrorists “want to take advantage of the situation, and they know that the most sensitive thing is people’s religious sentiments” so they aim at religious places, he continued.

Archbishop John Onaiyekan of Abuja, Nigeria, said the violence in Nigeria was not a “conflict of religions” as such, but the result of a number of simmering social problems, including economic uncertainty and ethnic resentment. He said criminal elements had, as always, taken advantage of the situation to loot shops and homes.

Archbishop Onaiyekan, who has helped maintain fairly good relations with local Muslim leaders, said the violence was also fueled by the inflated rhetoric of local Islamic preachers.

“Official Islam has difficulty in controlling these self-proclaimed preachers,” he said.

At a Rome symposium in 2004, he expressed concern that the Iraq War, seen by many Nigerian Muslims as a religious war, was increasing the appeal of Islamic extremists in the country.

Bishop Sylvester Magro of Benghazi, Libya, told Vatican Radio that the church’s relations with local Muslims had always been solid and peaceful.

“We have always lived in complete and absolute friendship with our neighbors,” he said.

The fires in Benghazi, he said, were caused “by a fanatic fringe, by fundamentalism that emerged in order to condemn” the publication of the offensive cartoons and their display by Calderoli.

Pope Benedict XVI condemned the recent violence that left mosques and churches destroyed and hundreds dead in Iraq and Nigeria. God will be severe in judging those who kill in his name, the pope said at a noon blessing in St. Peter’s Square Feb. 26.

## Garza, Garza & Garza

Attorneys at Law



Joseph G. Garza  
Former State and  
Federal Prosecutor  
Former J.A.G. Officer

570-3900

1101 N. Navarro  
Victoria, Texas



Marc Phillip Garza  
Attorney at Law

For the General Practice of Law





## Building bridges of solidarity with the one, human family

By Joan Neal, VP of US Operations, Catholic Relief Services

For the next 40 days, Catholics all over the world will forgo chocolate, TV, or some other indulgence as a way to focus on their relationship with Jesus. This year, I would like to invite you to enrich your personal and parish penitential experience by praying, fasting, learning, and giving through Operation Rice Bowl, Catholic Relief Services, (CRS) annual Lenten program for individuals, families, parishes, schools, and other groups.

Through Operation Rice Bowl, those of us in America can connect with the millions of people around the world who suffer from hunger and poverty. We can learn about the root causes of their hunger, share their experience by fasting in solidarity and by preparing and eating a traditional dish from one of the featured countries. Finally, we can do our part to alleviate world hunger by giving a portion of our financial resources. Through Operation Rice Bowl, we can understand our call to be a part of the one global community and we can all help to create a world of compassion, action and justice. Here are some stories from the 2006 Operation Rice Bowl Program.

In Kenya, Anna Akinyi and her husband work on their farm in Homa Bay. They did not grow enough food beyond what they ate to earn money for other household expenses. Through her participation in a small loan program supported by CRS for farming families, Mrs. Akinyi is now operating a small shop at the market near her home. With this money she has paid back her initial loan and has the extra money to pay tuition for her children's education as well as save for the future. Mrs. Akinyi shows us what is possible when we show **compassion** for the needs of our brothers and sisters.

In Vietnam, Nguyen Thi Minh lives with her son Trong, who suffers from Down's Syndrome. In the past, many local schools would not accept children with disabilities because they were unable to provide the extra care these children needed. Working with the National Institute for Education Strategies and Curriculum, CRS helped create training and resources to make it possible to include children with disabilities in classroom and school activities. Best of all, Trong's class-

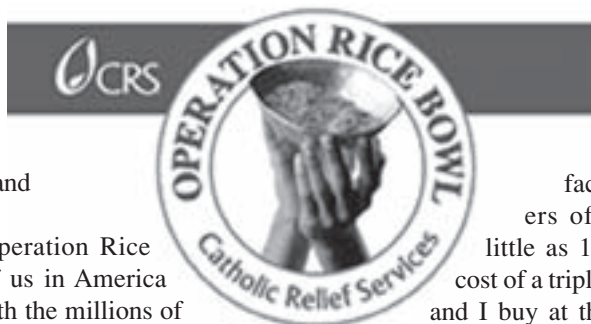
mates, teachers, and parents worked hard to help Trong adjust and now he has graduated to the next grade level with the students from his class. Mr. and Mrs. Thi Minh and their community teach us that **action** is a powerful way to make the world better, whether it is for one little boy or a nation.

In Nicaragua, Mariá Antonio Blandon Guillen and her family are coffee farmers in Las Nubes. A few years ago, she was selling her coffee for 8¢ per pound. In fact, coffee farmers often receive as little as 1 percent of the cost of a triple skim latte you and I buy at the corner shop.

However, she is now part of a coffee cooperative that participates in the CRS Fair Trade Program and recently sold her coffee for \$1.25 per pound. By working together, these farmers are able to receive a fairer price for their crops, which allow them to feed their families, send their children to school, and provide for their needs year round. Mrs. Guillen is a great example of how working for **justice** can make a difference.

This Lent, it is my hope that we can continue to work together to promote global solidarity and help create a world that embodies the ideals of compassion, action, and justice. May our prayers during Lent help us to achieve our goals and give hope to all those who are suffering.

Joan Neal is the Vice President of U.S. Operations for Catholic Relief Services. She oversees Operation Rice Bowl and the agency's other domestic programs.



## Holy Land documentary — March 22 — Chancery

The office of *The Catholic Lighthouse* will be showing the Media Education Foundation's film *Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land — U.S. Media and the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict* Wednesday, March 22, at 7 p.m. at the chancery office in Victoria.

This pivotal documentary exposes how the foreign policy interests of American political elites — working in combination with Israeli public relations strategies — exercise a powerful influence over news reporting about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

Combining American and British TV

news clips with observations of analysts, journalists, and political activists, *Peace, Propaganda & the Promised Land* provides a striking media comparison, and an examination of factors that have distorted U.S. media coverage and, in turn, American public opinion.

All interested in current events in the Holy Land and U.S. news reporting and media are urged to attend and invite others to this riveting film. Please be advised that this program does contain scenes of graphic violence and viewer discretion is advised.

If interested in attending, it is requested but not required, that an RSVP be made to *The Catholic Lighthouse* office so that an appropriately sized room will be prepared for the evening. The chancery building is located at 1505 E. Mesquite Lane behind Our Lady of Victory Cathedral in Victoria. For more information please call Cindy Brewer at (361) 573-0828, ext. 31.

## Question Corner

By Father John Dietzen  
Catholic News Service



### A daughter's question about hunger and homelessness

**Q.** I need an answer for my daughter. In the Bible it says that Jesus performed a miracle of multiplying fish and loaves of bread, and fed thousands of people. Why, she asks, doesn't he perform the same miracle for all the millions of people starving and homeless today? It's a good question, but I couldn't come up with a good answer. Please help. (Kentucky)

**A.** Your question has been asked thousands of times over the centuries by Christians and others. Ultimately, I believe, there is no clean-cut final answer, because we're dealing with a huge mystery of creation, the mystery of evil.

An essential part of the explanation we can give is the basic truth that Jesus became flesh on earth not to take away all suffering, but to be part of it, to help us find a way through it by our compassion and love for each other.

Why did a good, wise, and gracious God not remove all the pain? Or why did God not eliminate disease for everyone, not just for a few? Theoretically he could have, so obviously God sees something in the whole picture that we miss, something perhaps that we are simply incapable of seeing because of our extremely limited perspective.

For some reason he made us responsible for each other and accountable for the consequences when we refuse that responsibility, when we abuse, reject, and

isolate ourselves from our brothers and sisters on this planet.

The solution Jesus gave us was simple, but not easy: The first and basic command is to love God with your whole heart, mind and soul, and love your neighbor as yourself. He expanded on this often, most specifically in his description of the final days when we will be judged on how we fulfilled our duty to feed, clothe, and support each other.

God has, then, given us the keys to the elimination of suffering and moral evil. All his saving grace and love, all his call to discipleship, is to give direction and to help us use those keys.

In other words, God has bound himself to depend on our hands. He does all he can to walk with us and help us. But he respects our humanity, our dignity, so much that he refuses to despair of our potential, to shove us out of the way and take over everything himself. Therefore, our responsibility here is enormous.

Why did Jesus cry in the presence of death (Jn 11:35)? Why did he weep when he realized his own people were rejecting him (Lk 19:41)? We must conclude that he shares deeply our hurt and pain, but he would not repent of the trust, hope, and love he invested in the human family at the beginning.

We need to ask questions; it is good and important that we do so. In the end, however, we need a good dose of humility before this mystery.

Does this mean God ceased to love us or to care? Absolutely not. It explains, in fact, why Jesus was so obedient to the Father, who wanted the Son to live a perfect human life, with all its weaknesses and heartache, obedient even to death on the cross. He honors his Father by bringing us to honor our Father with that same obedience.

Does this require some faith? Yes. But it makes more spiritual and common sense, and reflects more wisdom, than to try to reduce God to our size just so we can understand and be emotionally uncomfortable with everything harsh this earthly life holds for us.

(A free brochure on ecumenism, including questions on intercommunion and other ways of sharing worship, is available by sending a stamped, self-addressed envelope to Father John Dietzen, Box 5515, Peoria, IL 61612.

(Questions may be sent to Father Dietzen at the same address, or e-mail: [jjdietzen@aol.com](mailto:jjdietzen@aol.com).)

### SS. Cyril & Methodius Parish Shiner, Texas

### CATHOLIC ITALY JOURNEY

With Father Bob Knippenberg

October 1-10, 2006

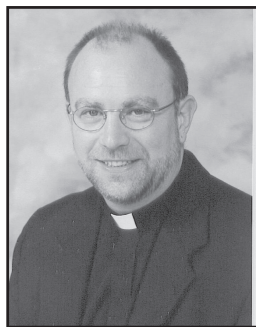
\$2599 from Houston

\$50 Discount if booked by May 1, 2006

- Rome/Vatican City
- Orvieto
- Assisi
- Loreto



- Montesilvano
- Lanciano
- San Giovanni Rotondo
- Subiaco



For information and reservations, contact Fr. Bob Knippenberg, SS. Cyril & Methodius Parish, 306 South Avenue E, Shiner, Texas 77984—Telephone 361-594-3836, Email [frbobknip@hotmail.com](mailto:frbobknip@hotmail.com) or check [www.Unitours.com/client/FrKnippenbergItaly](http://www.Unitours.com/client/FrKnippenbergItaly).

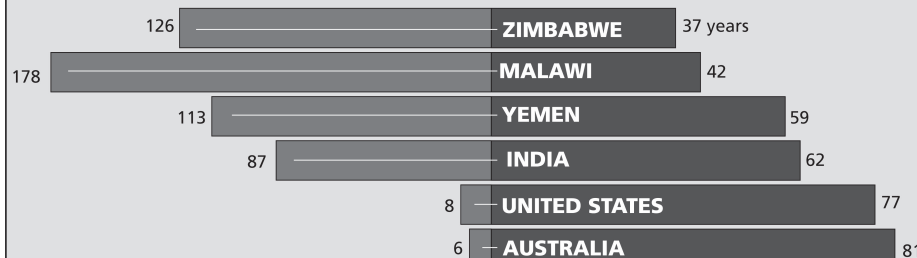


## Health Divide

Two key indicators show the great health divide between rich and poor countries.

NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER 1,000  
LIKELY TO DIE BEFORE AGE 5

LIFE EXPECTANCY AT BIRTH



Source: World Health Organization  
©2006 CHS





# EVENTS

The Catholic Lighthouse  
Page 19 — March 2006



## 21st annual living history program to be presented at Presidio La Bahia

Continued from p. 7

In the evening, candlelight tours will be conducted through the barracks, the Mexican officer's quarters, and there will be a hospital scene in the chapel where the "Texian" prisoners will be held.

On Sunday, the death march will begin inside the presidio and go to the loca-

tion of where one of the massacres actually took place. The program will conclude with a memorial service that begins in the chapel, followed by a procession to the Fannin Memorial.

Daily admission is \$3 for ages 12 thru 59, \$2.50 for 60 and older, and \$1 for ages

6 thru 11 years old. There is no charge for children five and younger. There is an additional \$2 per person fee for admission to the candlelight tour.

A schedule of events can be viewed at [www.presidiolabahia.org](http://www.presidiolabahia.org).

## Last chance to own Czech Family Histories Vol. I & II

For a limited time only Texas Czech Genealogical Society is taking orders for the sold out *Czech Family Histories Volumes I & II*. The price per two-volume set is \$100, includes shipping & handling.

All orders must be postmarked on or before March 15. Order forms and additional information go to [www.txczgs.org](http://www.txczgs.org).

### Special Collections

**Operation Rice Bowl** — Sundays of Lent and Easter Sunday

**Catholic Relief Services** — March 26

**Holy Land** — April 14 (Good Friday)

### Ongoing Events

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

**Victoria—St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans** — For meeting dates call Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858.

**Our Lady of the Rosary Fraternity Emerging/Secular Franciscans**— meets every other Wednesday from 7:00-9:00 p.m. For dates and location call Jay Howard at (361) 574-8487.

**St. Padre Pio Prayer Group** meets the 2nd Saturday of each month at St. Mary Church Activity Center (audio-visual room) in Victoria for a 7:30 a.m. Mass, followed by prayer and light refreshments.

**Tridentine Mass (Latin)**—is held the first and third Sunday of each month at St. Mary Church, St. Mary (outside of Hallettsville on FM 340) at 11:00 a.m. For more info. call (361) 594-3024.

**Engaged Encounter**—Register as soon as you have contacted your pastor due to limited space. **It is strongly recommended that you attend an encounter weekend four to six months prior to your wedding date.** For a registration form, contact your pastor, visit the **Web site at [www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm)** or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The dates for 2006 are: May 5-7, June 23-25, Sept. 15-17 and Nov. 17-19. For more info. call (361) 573-0828 ext. 56. A date cannot be reserved for any couple unless a cashiers check or money order is sent in the amount of \$190 for weddings being held within the Diocese of Victoria or \$245 for weddings being held outside the Diocese of Victoria.

**Marriage Encounter**— Weekends are held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. For more info. or to register, write or call Milton and Diane Rejcek, 2512 Hillcrest, Bay City, Texas 77414; (979) 245-0323; [www.mevictoria.org](http://www.mevictoria.org)

**Retrouvaille** — For troubled marriages—The word Retrouvaille means 'rediscovery.' It is a program that offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse, and a loving relationship in your marriage. Tens of thousands headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending. The next Retrouvaille weekend will be held Sept. 1, 2006, in Victoria. To register, please call Gerd and Linda Conner at (979) 648-2276. For more information or for other dates in Texas, please go to [www.retrouvaille.org](http://www.retrouvaille.org).

**Cursillo News—Ultreya:** Witnessing to God's working in our everyday lives — song and prayers, Fridays, 7:45 p.m.; **Sabatina:** Rosary and devotion to Mary, Saturdays, 8:00 a.m.; **Holy Hour:** Every 1st Tuesday, 7:45 p.m. Events held at Our Lady of Sorrows Church and Trinity Hall.

**Singles**—Catholic Singles, 40 and over, meet every second and fourth Thursday of the month at Holy Family Education Building at 7:00 p.m. Call Sue at (361) 578-3106 or Eleanor at (361) 575-5314 or Jean at (361) 578-8760.

**Singles**—Young Adults between the ages of 21 and 45 meet for an evening of fellowship and good company every 1st and 3rd Thursday at Holy Family at 7:00 p.m. Call Jim Wearden at (361) 579-9737 or Laura (361) 579-6516.

**ACTS Retreats**—Upcoming ACTS retreat dates. **Men's ACTS** retreats: March 23 — hosted by Holy Cross in Bay City, Texas Baptist Encampment (TBE); April 6 — Assumption, Ganado, TBE; May 18 — OLS, Victoria, TBE; June 1 — St. Philip, El Campo, Spiritual Renewal Center (SRC); August 17 — Holy Family, Victoria, SRC. **Women's ACTS** retreats: March 30 — Sacred Heart, Hallettsville, Cathedral Oaks, (CO); April 27 — St. Philip, El Campo, TBE; April 27 — OLV, Victoria, SRC; May 4 — Assumption, Ganado, TBE; May 11 — Holy Family, Victoria, SRC; July 13 — Holy Cross, Bay City, SRC; July 20 — OLG/Spanish, SRC; July 27 — OLS, Victoria, SRC; Aug. 3 — Sacred Heart, Hallettsville, Women/Teens, CO; Aug. 10 — Assumption, Ganado, TBE. **Teens ACTS** retreats: June 15 — Sacred Heart, Hallettsville, CO; July 27 — St. Philip, El Campo, CO; Aug. 3 — Sacred Heart, Hallettsville, Women/Teens, CO. For more information see the ACTS Web site at [www.actsmissions.org](http://www.actsmissions.org).

**Natural Family Planning**—For **bilingual** (Spanish or English) sessions of the **Sympto-Thermal Method (S-TM)** in Palacios, call Rene and Wilma Galvan at (361) 972-5030. Available for counseling and classes. Introductory presentations on the **Creighton Model Ovulation Method**

are offered in Wharton at Our Lady of Mount Carmel Church and in East Bernard at Holy Cross Catholic Church. Please contact Melissa Morse at (979) 335-7306 for more information or to register for classes. For information about the Creighton Model in the Victoria area, contact Rudy and Stella DeLosSantos (361) 573-2624. **Natural Family Planning is the only church approved form of family planning.**

**Goliad**—Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center — a National Historic Landmark — is the only Spanish fort remaining in possession of the Catholic Church in North America. A tour program is available to groups. The presidio is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on major holidays. Admission is \$3 for adults and \$1 for children under 12. The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information call (361) 645-3752. **Upcoming March 25 and 26** — the 21st Annual Goliad Massacre — Fort Defiance Living History Program. A recreation of the occupation of the fort by Col. Fannin and the Goliad Massacre — the only event of its kind in the State of Texas, Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and then candlelight tours from 7:00-9:00 p.m., first skirmish is at 10:00 a.m. followed by other events throughout the day. On Sunday, following the Massacre Reenactment at 10:00 a.m., there will be a memorial service and a pilgrimage to the Fannin Memorial. For a complete schedule of events go to the Web site. **For other upcoming events see the Web site at: [www.presidiolabahia.org](http://www.presidiolabahia.org)**

**Picnics, Activities, etc.**

### March

**East Bernard**—KC Fish Fry and CDA bakesale all Friday's of Lent. Call (979) 335-7551 for more information.

**Victoria**—Our Lady of Victory Youth Group will be having their Annual Lenten Fish Fry each Friday of Lent through April 7 at OLV School Cafeteria. Dine-in or plates-to-go will be available from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m.

**Weimar**—K of C Council 2153 will be having a fish fry every Friday night during Lent through April 7 at St. Michael Family Center. Fresh fish, wedge-fried potatoes, hush puppies, and coleslaw — all you can eat for \$7 p/p — serving from 5:00 to 7:30 p.m. Drive-thru plates only \$6.50.

**Hillje**—St. Procopius Spring Festival March 5 at the parish hall. A fried-chicken dinner will be served starting at 11:00 a.m. with dine-in or drive thru plates-to-go available at \$6 each. There will also be a bake sale.

## When & Where

**Hungerford**—KJT Society No. 79 and KJZT Society No. 57 will be hosting their annual barbecue-chicken and sausage dinner March 5 at the Hungerford Community Center. Serving begins at 10:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. All plates will be \$7. Plates to go will be available. There will be an auction, free dance until 5:00 p.m. Music by Bobby Jones Czech Band.

**Edna**—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, District 14, will be holding a district meeting Thursday, March 9 at St. Agnes Religious Education Center located at 202 W. Cedar St. in Edna. Registration will begin at 6:15 p.m., with a meal served at 6:45 p.m., followed by the meeting. RSVP to District Deputy Terri Beltran at (979) 578-3647 or Regent Theresa Martin at (361) 782-6824.

**Victoria**—The Sisters of Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament are hosting a Discernment Weekend for single Catholic women between the ages of 18 and 50 years of age on March 11-12 at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria, Texas. If you are interested, please call (361) 771-3325 or 575-7111 or e-mail [iwbsvoc@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc@yahoo.com) for more details.

**Victoria**—Knights of Columbus Council 1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser March 19 at the KC Hall. The price is \$5 per chicken. Beans and Spanish rice available for \$1 per pint. Sale starts at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit council's projects.

**Victoria**—A Holy Land documentary will be presented March 22 by the *Lighthouse*. See page 18 for more information.

**Yoakum**—St. Ann's Mission Church, Petersville area, will have a kettle-fried-chicken dinner March 26 at Turner Hall (Hwy. 111). Serving begins at 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., dine-in or plates-to-go, \$6 per plate. Country store and silent auction held during the meal. Co-sponsored by KJZT No. 37.

**Victoria**—Spirit Wind Retreat Ministry will hold a retreat for bereaved parents March 24-26 at the Spiritual Renewal Center. Two professionals of state and national renown, Khrist Ford and Dr. Ken Druck (specializing in men's grief), will lead parents through a healing grief retreat. This ecumenical retreat is open to couples as well as single mothers and fathers, regardless of when the loss of their child was experi-

enced. The cost for the retreat is \$200 for single parents and \$350 for couples, which covers speakers, food, and lodging for three days. Grants are available if cost is a deterrent. If you are interested in attending, please send your non-refundable deposit of \$100 for each parent, made payable to Spirit Wind Ministry, as soon as possible to: Susan Oakley, 103 Woodmere, Victoria, TX, 77904. For more information please contact: Mary Cox, (361) 576-3003; Madeline Dodson, (361) 573-2583; Father Kirby Hlavaty, (361) 277-9062; or Susan Oakley, (361) 576-1515, [smoak53@msn.com](mailto:smoak53@msn.com).

**El Campo**—KC Spring Picnic March 26 at the K C Hall (Hwy. 71 and Armory Road). A chicken-barbecue dinner serving begins at 11:00 a.m. There will be an auction, cakewalk, free dance with music by Bobby Jones Polka Band, and an antique tractor show.

**Corpus Christi**—2nd Annual Fullness of Truth Catholic Family Evangelization Conference is slated for March 31-April 2, 2006, at the American Bank Center and Selena Auditorium. Confirmed speakers include Father Corapi, Tim Staples, Rosalind Moss, Carl Olson, Father Mitch Pacwa, Dr. David Marzak, and Christopher West. Bishop Carmody, Father Eduardo Montemayor, and Msgr. Michael Heras are expected to be on hand as well. A simultaneous Spanish tract will be anchored by Father Pablo Straub, Jesse Romero and others, while the youth tract will feature RADIX's Doug Barry and Eric Genuis. For early bird tickets and hotel information, call 1-877-21TRUTH(218-7884) or visit [www.fullnessoftruth.org](http://www.fullnessoftruth.org).

### Upcoming Events

**Goliad**—A musical concert at Mission Espiritu Santo in Goliad State Park April 2 at 3:00 p.m. will feature the Victoria College Choir and the Victoria Civic Chorus under the direction of Dr. Marylynn Fletcher. The concert will be accompanied by strings, harp, and organ. The program will open with the combined chorus singing Faure's *Cantique de Jean Racine*. The Victoria College Choraliers will sing Raminsh's *Prayer of St. Francis*. The combined chorus will end the program with the master work *Requiem* by Faure. For more info. contact Goliad State Park at (361) 645-3405. The park is located 1/2 mile south of Goliad on Hwy. 183. The concert itself is free, but there will be a \$2 fee for entry into the park.

**East Bernard**—All ladies are invited to experience a special retreat, April 8, hosted by the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, District 28, St. Bernadette Court 1108. The theme of this retreat is *The Steadfast Heart* presented by Olga Samaniego, CDA state regent from El Paso. Cost is \$5 p/p includes lunch. The retreat will be held at the Holy Cross Educational Building (839 Church Street). The retreat begins at 10:00 a.m. and concludes with the 5:00 p.m. Mass. Reservation deadline is April 1. Register with Dianne Viktorin (979) 335-4234 or Terrie Vacek (877) 810-1888 / [terriev@wcnet.net](mailto:terriev@wcnet.net). See page 6 for more details.

**El Campo**—The Hispanic Education Project will host its 14th annual scholarship banquet on Saturday, April 8, at the El Campo Civic Center. Hospitality hour begins at 6:00 p.m. with dinner and program starting at 7:00 p.m. Tickets are \$15 adults and \$10 students. Guest Speaker and entertainment will highlight the evening. Net proceeds benefit the HEP scholarship fund. For ticket information call Andrew Garza at (979) 543-2218 or Bobby Perez at (979) 543-2753.

**Victoria**—St. Mary's Altar Society Annual Games Party Tuesday, April 25, noon to 4:00 p.m. A lunch of chicken casserole, salad, garlic bread, cookies, and drinks will be served at 1:00 p.m. A country store will feature homemade goods and craft items. Admission is \$7. For reservations call Ann Carver at (361) 575-2050, Geraldine Jurica at (361) 573-3949, or Martha Hamel at (361) 575-1932.

**Bloomington**—St. Patrick's Annual Spring Festival and Barbecue April 30. Half pound barbecue brisket and sausage plates will be served starting at 11:00 a.m. at \$6 per plate. Drive-thru plates-to-go available. There will be an auction, country store, cakewalk and a kid's room. Located at 13316 State Hwy. 185.

**Victoria**—Holy Family Festival April 30 at the community center. A barbecue-beef and sausage dinner served from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. with curb service available for plates-to-go. There will be a country store, cake wheel, children's games, and more. Auction begins at 1:00 p.m.

**Wharton**—Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Annual Bazaar and Barbecue Dinner May 7 on the church grounds (506 S. East Ave). A barbecue dinner of chicken, beef, and sausage will be served from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. for \$7 each. Dine-in or drive-thru serving available. There will be an auction (1:00 p.m.), live music, Mt. Carmel Folklórico Dancers, games, cakewalk, food booths, plant walk and much more.





Third in Suffering Church Series

By Susan Brinkmann  
CS&T Correspondent

**D**amare Garang was only 7 years old when government-backed soldiers attacked his Sudanese village and sold him into slavery.

He was bought by a member of an Arab-backed extremist group in Tuobon and charged with milking the camels.

According to Voice of the Martyrs reporter Tom Zurowski, Garang, a Christian, came home late one morning from a prayer service. His master demanded to know where he had been. "To church," Damare said.

Infuriated, his master went into the barn, grabbed a wooden board, several spikes and a hammer. He dragged Damare to the edge of the compound and forced the boy to the ground. Draping Damare's legs over the board, he proceeded to drive the spikes through his knees, nailing him to the board. The master walked away, leaving Damare on the ground, screaming in pain.

Thankfully, a man happened to be walking by and heard Damare's cries. Summoning help, the man transported the

million people have lost their lives and another four million have been displaced.

The country sits on an invisible border separating Arab and Black Africa, which sparks conflicts of culture, geography, ethnicity, and religion. According to a U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Sudan Update, the ongoing conflict "has been marked by a systematic campaign of terror by the government in Khartoum against Christians and practitioners of African traditional religions." Various relief agencies report widespread persecution of Christians who are raped, tortured, enslaved, or burned to death.

Roger Winter, executive director of the U.S. Committee for Refugees, reported seeing people crucified and beheaded. Even infant children have been nailed to trees with steel spikes.

Sudanese government forces have been

known to spray civilians with helicopter gunfire to drive them off of oil-rich land. Hospitals, schools, relief centers, and marketplaces are frequent targets for bombing.



CNS photo by Paul Jeffrey

**REFUGEE CAMP IN DARFUR REGION OF SUDAN**—A refugee camp is seen in late May 2005 in the Darfur region of Sudan. Millions of black Africans have fled their homes because of attacks by Arab militias backed by the Sudanese government. As many as 180,000 people have been killed in the most recent conflict (since Feb. 2003), according to U.N. estimates.

boy to a hospital where the nails were removed.

Damare is 15 years old today and has been adopted by a kind and loving family in Mario Kong. "He is sad that he cannot run fast like the other boys," Zurowski writes, "but he says he has forgiven the man who nailed his legs to the board. He knows that Jesus was nailed to a cross so all our sins could be forgiven."

A violent civil war has been raging for two decades in Sudan, Africa's largest country. The initial outbreak of violence occurred in 1983 following the imposition of an extreme version of a Muslim law called Shari'a, in southern Sudan. Since that time, more than two



CNS photo from Reuters

**SOLDIER STANDS IN FRONT OF NUNS AND PRIESTS IN SUDAN**—A Sudan People's Liberation Movement soldier stands in front of nuns and priests in Bor, Sudan, Aug. 5, 2005, during mourning for late rebel leader and Vice President John Garang, who was killed in a helicopter crash. A Sudanese cardinal said the country's fragile peace process could collapse unless the government guarantees the rights of non-Muslims.

## SUDAN, AFRICA: 'Tell our brothers and sisters to intercede for us'

**WOMAN COOKS ON EFFICIENT STOVE SHE BUILT IN REFUGEE CAMP**—Action by Churches Together and Caritas have helped thousands of women build stoves that are more efficient, and thus consume less firewood. This is critical in refugee camps where women have been raped and killed while foraging for firewood outside the camps. Kaltouma Harroon Musa, shown here with her stove in late May 2005, was trained by aid workers to make her stove. In the following two weeks she taught 10 other women to make a similar stove.



CNS photo by Paul Jeffrey

An executive summary prepared by the International Crisis Group (ICG) warns that "without a rapid international response, what UN officials are already calling the worst humanitarian situation in the world today could claim an additional 350,000 lives in the next nine months, mainly from starvation and disease."

The current crisis in Darfur erupted in February 2003, when two loosely-allied rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) attacked Arab-

Militia attacks and a scorched-earth government offensive have led to massive displacement, indiscriminate killing, looting, and mass rape, all in contravention of ... Geneva Conventions that prohibit attacks on civilians."

Story originally printed in Oct. 2004 with the CS&T, the Philadelphia diocesan newspaper. Since then a peace treaty was signed in January 2005 by the Muslim-dominated government and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement to end the



CNS photo from L'Osservatore Romano

**SUDANESE CARDINAL GREET POPE AT VATICAN**—Cardinal Gabriel Zubeir Wako of Khartoum, Sudan, greets Pope Benedict XVI during the pontiff's meeting with a delegation of Sudanese Catholics at the Vatican Nov. 28, 2005.

backed Sudanese military installations. The rebels took up arms to protect their people from "Janjaweed" militias, recruited from Arab populations in Darfur and Chad.

According to ICG reports, "These Janjaweed militias have over the past year received greatly increased government support to clear civilians from areas considered disloyal.

North-South civil war and the adoption of a new constitution. The peace agreement included provisions for a six-year period of North-South power sharing, after which Southerners — the majority of whom are Christian or followers of traditional African religions — will decide, in a referendum, whether to remain a part of Sudan or declare their independence.

For more information on how to help the suffering church, contact The Society for the Propagation of the Faith at (215) 587-3944, Aid to Church in Need (800) 628-6333, or Pontifical Mission Societies in the U.S. (212) 563-8706.