



Contributed Photo

## Bishop: Sale of Presidio will benefit diocese and park visitors

GOLIAD – On Jan. 28, the Diocese of Victoria will ceremoniously transfer the ownership of the Presidio la Bahia to the Texas Historical Commission (THC) after many months of fine-tuning an agreement to sell the property while ensuring that the Our Lady of Loreto Chapel remains a Catholic Church.

Earlier this year, Bishop Brendan Cahill attended all Masses in Goliad to announce his intent to sell the fort and explain the terms, including the fact that the Our Lady of Loreto Chapel would continue to be a Catholic church in the Diocese of Victoria.

Father Ty Bazar, the pastor of Incarnate Word Catholic Church in Goliad who also administers the affairs of the chapel, said there has been no negative reaction to the announcement. “I think it’s all been positive,” he said. “The main concern is that we would continue to have Mass, and Bishop assured them of that.”

Father Bazar said there is Mass each Sunday evening at

*See Bishop: Sale of Presidio, pg. 9*

## 50 years ago

SHINER – Pictured here is a group of people who, 50 years earlier, were at the same place – Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church – to witness the ordination of Father Charles Kram Jr. Kram was stricken with polio as a young man that nearly prevented his becoming a priest, but he persevered and ministered to many people. This photo was taken after a special Mass in honor of Kram on Dec. 6, celebrated by Bishop Brendan Cahill. With Bishop Brendan were other local clergy, many of whom continue to draw inspiration from Father Kram’s quiet holiness and lifelong dedication to the Church. The presence of the ones who were there 50 years ago and the clergy he inspires provided a powerful link across generations, bearing witness to the enduring impact of Father Kram’s ministry. The Mass offered the community an opportunity to honor his legacy, reflect on the fruits of his priesthood and continue sharing his story so that future generations may also be inspired by his humble and faithful service. The Father Kram Project continues to work to promote the cause for sainthood for Father Kram. Recently Vatican officials bestowed him the title Servant of God. Excerpts of the Dec. 6 celebration and Bishop Cahill’s homily can be seen at <https://www.fatherkram.com/video>.

## Time to register for men’s, women’s conferences

VICTORIA – The annual Diocese of Victoria Women’s Conference is set for 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Jan. 24 this year at the Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center. The theme is “Be Who

you are Meant to Be: A Journey of Call, Gift and Mission,” and will be presented by the St. Catherine of Siena Institute of Colorado Springs, Colo.

The institute’s “Called and

Gifted” program is designed to help people explore their “unique role ... in the Church’s mission to the world. Why charisms are essential in helping laypeople serve others and build vibrant

Christian communities; the signs and characteristics of 24 common charisms; and, how discovering and using your charisms can

*See Time to register, pg. 5*

**4** Jubilee Year ending; indulgences are not

**5** Rhythm of life brings new things

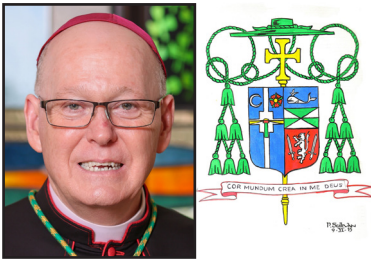
**12** Pope Leo appoints new bishops

**14** Blessing of Silence and Rest

# One may obtain indulgences in any given year

## A Shepherd’s Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

On Dec. 28, I celebrated the Mass for the Closing of the Jubilee Year at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. Back in January 2025 I referred to the teaching of St. Paul VI in *Indulgentiarum Doctrina* (Jan. 1, 1967) at the beginning of the Jubilee Year. Throughout the year many people would call and ask about how to obtain the plenary indulgence for the Jubilee.

As we now head back into an “Ordinary Year,” I want to take some time to teach about the practical value of the plenary indulgence in Catholic teaching and refer to the teaching of St. John Paul II in the *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum* (Fourth Edi-

tion: 1999).

First, what does it take to gain an indulgence.? An indulgence is defined as “the remission before God of the temporal punishment for sins, whose guilt is forgiven” and which a person can obtain for themselves or “can apply them to the dead.” Norm 20 of the *Enchiridion* states, “To gain a plenary indulgence, in addition to excluding all attachment to sin, even venial sin, it is necessary to perform the indulgenced work and fulfill the following three conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.”

Responding to a letter from EWTN, the Church clarified that the sacramental confession could be made about 20 days before or after the indulgenced work, and that one confession can satisfy the requirement for several plenary indulgences. Norm 20 of the *Enchiridion* teaches that the “condition of praying for the intention of the Holy Father is fully satisfied by reciting one Our Father and one Hail Mary.”

This process of seeking an indulgence begins with a pure heart that desires to make an offering of the heart in union with Christ. In a true way, simply by asking the question about how one can obtain an indulgence, the Christian is turning his or her heart towards the mercy of Christ and away from any attachment to sin. In communion with the Mystical Body of Christ, this offering may be acceptable to God and free a soul from the punishment of purgatory that a person deserves in justice, even after sins have been forgiven. The word “plenary” indicates “total;” or “complete.”

This fourth edition of the *Enchiridion* presented ways that can make the spirituality of the plenary indulgence a path of a daily cleaning of our hearts. Three practices that can become plenary indulgenced works are: “visit the Blessed Sacrament for adoration lasting at least a half hour” (Grant 7); “devoutly recite the Marian rosary in a church or oratory, or in a family, a religious community, or an association of the faithful, and in general when several of the faithful gather for some honest purpose” (Grant 17); and “read the Sacred Scriptures as spiritual reading, from a text approved by competent authority and with the reverence due to the divine word, for at least a half an hour” (Grant 30).

May the year 2026 be a year of special blessing and grace for you and your families, and may our hearts remain on fire for the mercy of God Who offers us the path to holiness and peace each day. Let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

## Se pueden obtener indulgencias en cualquier año

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,

El 28 de diciembre de 2025, celebré la Misa de clausura del Año Jubilar en la Catedral de Nuestra Señora de la Victoria. En enero de 2025, al comienzo del Año Jubilar, me referí a la enseñanza de San Pablo VI en la constitución apostólica *Indulgentiarum Doctrina* (1 de enero de 1967). A lo largo del año, muchas personas llamaron para preguntar cómo obtener la indulgencia

plenaria del Jubileo.

Ahora que volvemos a un “Año Ordinario”, quiero dedicar un tiempo a explicar el valor práctico de la indulgencia plenaria en la enseñanza católica y a referirme a las enseñanzas de San Juan Pablo II en el *Enchiridion Indulgentiarum* (Cuarta edición: 1999).

En primer lugar, ¿qué se necesita para obtener una indulgencia? Una indulgencia

se define como “la remisión ante Dios de la pena temporal por los pecados, cuya culpa ya ha sido perdonada”, y que una persona puede obtener para sí misma o “aplicar a los difuntos”. La norma 20 del *Enchiridion* establece: “Para obtener una indulgencia plenaria, además de excluir todo apego al pecado, incluso al pecado venial, es necesario realizar la obra indulgenciada y cumplir las tres condiciones siguientes:

confesión sacramental, comunión eucarística y oración por las intenciones del Sumo Pontífice”.

En respuesta a una carta de EWTN, la Iglesia aclaró que la confesión sacramental puede realizarse unos 20 días antes o después de la obra que da derecho a la indulgencia, y que una sola confesión puede

*Vier Se pueden obtener indulgencias, página 3*

### Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

January					
1	Victoria – 9 a.m. Mass for Mary Mother of God at Our Lady of Victory	19	Victoria – 4:30 p.m. meal with OVISS healthcare sisters at Incarnate Word Convent	24	Victoria – 2026 Women’s Conference
4	Edna – 5 p.m. Ministry Dinner at St. Agnes Church Hall	20	• Radio – 6:30 a.m. Morning Air radio interview • Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center • Victoria – 7 p.m. dinner and meeting with Mothers of Grace at OLV Annex	25	Victoria – 9 a.m. Catholic Schools Week Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
5-9	San Antonio – Region X bishops’ retreat	21	• Online – Catholic Rural Life cabinet meeting • Online – Center for Migration Studies and the National Catholic Council on Hispanic Ministry webinar • Victoria – Building Board meeting; Chancery • Inez – 6:30 p.m. CCD visit with St. Joseph Church	26	• Victoria – Pension Board meeting • Victoria – Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists • Sweet Home – 6:30 p.m. Men’s Lavaca Group meeting at Queen of Peace
14	• Victoria – 10 a.m. Presbyteral Council • Victoria – 6:15 p.m. CCD visit with Our Lady of Victory	22-23	Dallas – Speaker at event for Office for Persons with Disabilities	27	Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
15	Victoria – 8 a.m. school Mass and visit with Our Lady of Victory School			28	• Goliad – 10 a.m. ceremony for transfer of ownership of Presidio La Bahia to the Texas Historical Commission • Corpus Christi – Installation Mass for Bishop Mario Aviles
16	Port Lavaca – 8:05 a.m. school Mass and visit with Our Lady of the Gulf School				
18	• Vanderbilt – 8:15 a.m. CCD visit with St. John Bosco • Weimar – St. Michael’s School fundraiser dinner				
				29	• Victoria – 8:15 a.m. school Mass and visit for St. Joseph High School • Victoria – 6:30 p.m. Candlelight March for Life beginning at Deleon Plaza
				30	• Weimar – 8 a.m. school Mass and visit with St. Michael School • Victoria – Deacon Aspirant Rite of Candidacy at Spiritual Renewal Center
				31	• Ganado – 10 a.m. Blessing of Seed and Soil
					<b>February</b>
				1	Victoria – 9 a.m. Mass for World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
				1-2	Dallas – Jesus-Caritas meeting
				3	Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center

Note: Calendar is subject to changes.



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



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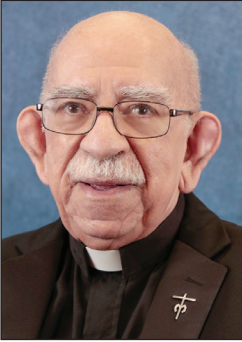
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**In Memoriam**

Father Jose Ramirez,  
Former teacher  
at St. Joseph  
High School,  
died.




**Former STJ teacher dies**

SAN ANTONIO – Father Jose Ramirez, a priest of the Society of Mary, died Nov. 17 at age 88 after 69 years of ministry. He was born Aug. 3, 1937, in Fort Worth where he grew up and attended school before joining the Marianists. As a religious brother who had recently graduated from St. Mary’s University in San Antonio, he spent several years in the early 1960s teaching at St. Joseph High School in Victoria. He later went on to further his studies and join the priesthood.

**Death notice**

COLOMBIA – Agustin Patiño, the father of Father Eliecer Patiño-Hurtado, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua in Palacios, passed away Dec. 12. His funeral took place on Dec. 15. No further details were available at press time.



Join in listening to Bishop Brendan Cahill every third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 a.m. on *Relevant Radio Morning Air with John Morales*. Listeners can call in with questions or comments. You can listen to past podcast online.

Relevant Radio® has been helping people bridge the gap between faith and everyday life through informative, entertaining, and interactive programming twenty-four hours per day, seven days per week. The Relevant Radio network is currently serving the Church with 127 stations reaching 39 states, with a potential listening audience of 133 million people. Programming can be heard worldwide via streaming audio at [relevantradio.com](http://relevantradio.com) and on the mobile app.

*“Follow me and I will  
make you fishers of men.”*  
Matthew 4:18-22



File Photo

This is a photo from the 2025 World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life Mass in Victoria. This year’s Mass will take place at 9 a.m. Feb. 1.

# Consecrated Life celebration Feb. 1

The World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life is celebrated annually throughout the Church on the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on Feb. 2.

The Diocese of Victoria will commemorate this special occasion with Bishop Brendan Cahill at the 9 a.m. televised Mass at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral on Sunday, Feb. 1. Families, and especially young adults, are encouraged to attend this special Mass with the Sisters.

On Oct. 9, in his homily during Mass in St. Peter’s Square marking the Jubilee of Consecrated Life, Pope Leo XIV stated that consecrated men and women, who abandon themselves “like children into the

arms of the Father,” spread the “fresh air” of authentic love throughout the world.”

The origin of this celebration dates back to 1997 when the pope, St. John Paul II, instituted a day of prayer for men and women in consecrated life. This celebration is attached to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord on Feb. 2, which is also known as Candlemas Day, the day on which candles are blessed symbolizing Christ who is the light of the world. So too, those in consecrated life are called to reflect the light of Jesus Christ to all peoples. We pray that many more women and men will respond to the call to Consecrated Life.

## Se pueden obtener indulgencias en cualquier año

*Continuación de la página 2*

cumplir el requisito para obtener varias indulgencias plenarias. La norma 20 del *Enchiridion* establece que “la condición de orar por las intenciones del Santo Padre se cumple plenamente rezando un Padrenuestro y un Ave María”.

Este proceso de búsqueda de una indulgencia comienza con un corazón puro que desea ofrecerse a sí mismo en unión con Cristo. De hecho, con solo preguntarse cómo obtener una indulgencia, el cristiano dirige su corazón hacia la misericordia de Cristo, alejándose de cualquier apego al pecado. En comunión con el Cuerpo Místico de Cristo, esta ofrenda puede ser aceptable a Dios y liberar a un alma del castigo del purgatorio que, en justicia, merece, incluso después de que sus pecados hayan sido perdonados. La palabra “plenaria” significa “total” o “completa”.

Esta cuarta edición del *Enchiridion* presenta maneras de convertir la espiritualidad de la indulgencia plenaria en un camino de

purificación diaria de nuestros corazones. Tres prácticas que pueden obtener la indulgencia plenaria son: “visitar el Santísimo Sacramento para la adoración durante al menos media hora” (Concesión 7); “rezar devotamente el rosario mariano en una iglesia u oratorio, o en familia, en una comunidad religiosa o en una asociación de fieles, y en general cuando varios fieles se reúnen con un propósito honesto” (Concesión 17); y “leer las Sagradas Escrituras como lectura espiritual, de un texto aprobado por la autoridad competente y con la reverencia debida a la palabra divina, durante al menos media hora” (Concesión 30).

Que el año 2026 sea un año de bendiciones y gracias especiales para ustedes y sus familias, y que nuestros corazones permanezcan llenos del amor de Dios, quien nos ofrece el camino a la santidad y la paz cada día. Sigamos orando los unos por los otros.

+Brendan

Education of Seminarian Fund

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

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

Lector

Catholic Daughters of the Americas  
Court #1990, Wharton  
*In memory of Margaret Zahn*

Acolyte

Candidate

Harvey Michna

Serra Prayer for Vocations

O God, Who wills not the death of a sinner, but rather that he be converted and live, grant we beseech You through the intercession of the Blessed Mary, ever Virgin, St. Joseph, her spouse, St. Junipero Serra, and all the saints, an increase of laborers for your Church, fellow laborers with Christ to spend and consume themselves for souls, through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, Who lives and reigns with You, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God forever and ever. Amen.



Transitional Deacon

Priest

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

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

Happy birthday  
to our seminarian

Christopher Leshikar who is in the Propaedeutic stage at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving. Christopher is adopted by Our Lady of Lourdes, Victoria. His birthday is Jan. 29. Write to Christopher at: Holy Trinity Seminary, 3131 Vince Hagan Dr., Irving, TX 75062.



Seminary Endowment Fund

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

Dec. 15, 2025

• Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily Seminary Burse #3

*Acolyte*  
Merry Christmas to Rev. Msgr. John Bily by Jesse and Nancy Lednicky

• Rev. Msgr. Michael Harrold Seminary Burse

*Lector*  
In memory of Robert Dornak by Helen Dolezal  
In birthday remembrance of Rev. Msgr. Michael Harrold by Helen Dolezal

• Rev. Robert Knippenberg Seminary Burse

*Acolyte*  
In honor of Rev. Robert Knippenberg’s ordination anniversary by St. Ann’s Altar Society, Frelsburg  
In honor of Rev. Robert Knippenberg’s birthday celebration by St. Ann’s Altar Society, Frelsburg

• Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Burse

*Acolyte*  
In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by CDA Court of Our Lady of the Rosary #1595, Nada

• Rev. Luke Prihoda Seminary Burse

*Lector*  
In memory of Irene Frances Prihoda by: Diane and Delphin Bartek  
Phyllis and Dennis Venghaus  
Cynthia Namken  
Henrietta Veselka

*Acolyte*  
In memory of Sir Knight David Fike by Knights of Columbus, St. Michael Assembly #1527 of Flatonia, Schulenburg and Weimar  
In memory of Sir Knight David Crabtree by Knights of Columbus, St. Michael Assembly #1527 of Flatonia, Schulenburg and Weimar  
In memory of Irene Frances Prihoda by Joan Prihoda Family

• Rev. Joe Vrana Seminary Burse, In Honor of his Golden Jubilee Year

In memory of Rev. Joe Vrana by CDA Court of Our Lady of the Rosary #1595, Nada

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

Diocese Of Victoria  
**Seminary Endowment Fund**  
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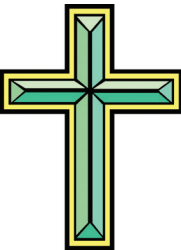
Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria, who were ordained during the month of January:

Rev. Dominic Trung Nguyen	01/04/2003	Our Lady of Lavang Quasi Parish, Palacios
Rev. Nelson Gonzalez-Nieto	01/23/2004	St. Anthony Church, Columbus
Rev. Richard Barfield	01/08/2022	Military Chaplain, Robins AFB, Georgia
Rev. Tran Dinh	01/08/2022	St. Patrick’s Church, Bloomington

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

Rev. Wolfgang Mimms, O.Ss.T.	01/02/2008
Rev. Jerome Stryk	01/05/1999
Rev. Msgr. Gino Bernasconi	01/31/2006

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



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2025 Lessons and Carols

From left, Very Rev. Frederic Janaček of the All Saints Orthodox Church, Rev. Steven Carson of St. Francis Episcopal Church, Rev. Michael Koehler of Trinity Episcopal Church, Rev. Celia Halfacre of First United Methodist Church and Very Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, pastor/rector of The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, sing during the afternoon of Lessons and Carols on Dec. 14. Dr. Glenn Hunter, music and choir director for The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, again coordinated the Advent gathering for the Communities of Faith, an interfaith group that meets regularly in the Victoria area. It consists of nine lessons from Scripture and songs that reflect on the message of each lesson. The Scriptures teach about God’s mercy from the fall of mankind to the promise of a Savior. Participants in the choir and attendees were from a variety of churches in the Victoria area.

Silent retreat focuses on discipleship

All are invited to participate in a one-day silent retreat, New Beginnings in Discipleship, led by Deacon Eddie Huse, at Amor Meus Spirituality Center, 1101 NE Water St. on Saturday, Jan. 17, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The retreat will help participants explore what discipleship can mean in 2026

and in the future.

“In the midst of so many competing agendas and priorities, we can easily lose track of who we are and what this life is about. What better way to begin the New Year reflecting on our call to discipleship,

*See Silent retreat focuses on discipleship, pg. 15*

Time to register for men’s, women’s conferences

Continued from pg. 1

transform your life, your parish, and the world around you,” according to the institute’s Web site.

This discernment workshop is an introduction meant to be followed up with other steps in the process afterward.

Cost for the program is \$60 for women and \$30 for each daughter they bring for the conference workshop. There is no charge for clergy or religious who attend. Registration is available at [www.victoriadiocese.org/2026-womens-conference](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/2026-womens-conference). The Web page also features a video that further explains the St. Catherine of Siena Institute’s program.

The Men’s Conference is set for Feb.



Women’s Conference QR-Code

21 and its theme is “St. Joseph: Patron Saint of Families.” The speaker chosen for conference is the Most Rev. Ronald A. Hicks, who in mid-December was named as the new Archbishop of New York after the retirement of Cardinal Timothy Dolan. For the past five years, Hicks has served as bishop of the Diocese of Joliet in Illinois. The announcement of his appointment came after his commitment to speak at the conference. At press time, his visit to Victoria was still to be determined.

Justin Reyes is coming to speak. He is the director of Catechesis and Evangelization in the Diocese of Joliet, who went to work for Bishop Hicks after serving as the director of the Office of Family Evangelization in the Diocese of Victoria. Reyes helped establish the leadership teams who still carry on the organization of events such as the men’s and women’s confer-

ences in the diocese.

Early bird registration is now ongoing for the men’s conference. Until Feb. 1, the fee is \$50 per man and \$25 per each son that comes with the registrant. The fees go up to \$60 and \$30 respectively after Feb. 1. To register, visit [www.victoriadiocese.org/men](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/men). Or get more information at [www.DOVmen.com](http://www.DOVmen.com). You can email [dovmensgroup@gmail.com](mailto:dovmensgroup@gmail.com) with questions.

Any updates to the conferences will be posted to the Diocese of Victoria Facebook page. The Office of Evangelization and Catechetical Ministry can be reached at 361-575-0828. The office is closed today (Jan. 1) for the holiday and will reopen on Friday, Jan. 2.



Men’s Conference QR-Code

Father Bob Knippenberg to teach about sacraments through Pastoral Institute

The Pastoral Institute Extended Program will begin 2026 with the first of two courses on “The Sacraments: How God is Perfectly Glorified and We are Sanctified.” Father Bob Knippenberg, pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul in Frelsburg will be the instructor.

It begins on Jan. 27 with the Sacraments of Initiation – baptism, confirmation and the Holy Eucharist. These sacraments are interrelated in such a way that they are required for full Christian initiation, according to canon law. These sacraments combine to bring the faithful to the full stature of Christ and to enable them to carry out the mission of the entire people of God in the Church and in the world.

Lex orandi, lex credendi means “the law of what is prayed is the law of what is believed.” Based on this theological motto, this Sacraments course will explore the prayers of the sacramental rites to delve more deeply into what the Church believes and teaches about Christ’s gift of the Sacraments and the “communication of His work of salvation,” as it states in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

“We recognize that the Sacraments have a visible and invisible reality, a reality open to all the human senses but grasped in its God-given depths with the eyes of faith,” the United States Conference of Bishops (USCCB) states on its website.

Father Knippenberg hopes to provide



Father Bob Knippenberg

Pastoral Institute participants the opportunity for a deeper appreciation for the gift of grace bestowed in each celebration of the sacraments.

The six-week course will be offered in person at the Diamond Center at Sts. Peter & Paul in Frelsburg; synchronously at the chancery in Victoria, and other sites; and asynchronously online. The classes are 9:15-11:30 a.m. on the following dates: Jan. 27 and 29; and Feb. 3, 10, 12 and 24. The next course will be Sacraments of Healing and Vocation, which begins Aug. 11.

All adults are welcomed to register online or call Christella Alvarez, director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry at 361-827-7171 for more information. Each course is \$30. Participants may register for both classes at one time.

“The Pastoral Institute continues to offer a means for adults to gather, listen and learn more about the Catholic faith, which ultimately is a journey of growth in their relationship with Christ,” Alvarez said.

Join us for lunch at our Monthly Travel Meeting on **Thursday, January 22** Sky Restaurant in Victoria (77904) 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m. Dutch Lunch **We look forward to seeing you!**

**Book NOW**

**Brochures available on the website.**

[pathwayswithpatti.com](http://pathwayswithpatti.com)

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April 26 – May 3
- **Glacier & Waterton National Parks**  
July 15 – 22

Contact Laurie to make a deposit and book your trip.

**Laurie Eder**  
Victoria, TX  
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For Trip Details See Website:  
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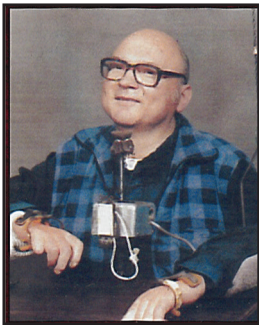
# Like the Magi, let us lay our best at Jesus’s feet

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** *Father Charles Kram Jr. wrote this sermon for the Feast of the Epiphany. It is one of three sermons for the feast day among his writings that have been collected.*

The Magi came from Persia. They were not really kings in the usual sense. They were the wise and holy men of their country – doctors, scientists, philosophers, dream interpreters, fortunetellers, astrologers.

Astrologers believed that the star under which an individual was born determined his destiny.

There are various viewpoints regarding the nature of the star that guided the Magi. Some say it was Haley’s Comet; others say it was the conjunction of the planets Saturn and Jupiter; still others say it was the star



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## Servant of God Charles Kram Corner

Sirius, the name of which means “the birth of a prince.”

It would seem that it was a miraculous star, for the Scriptures say that it went ahead of the Magi and came to a standstill over the place where the child was, which, by the way was described, not as a manger, but as a house.

This, together with the fact that Herod

ordered all the baby boys 2 years old and under to be put to death, indicates that the wise men did not visit the baby Jesus at the time of his birth, but later.

Some say the Magi were kings; some have given them names – Casper, Melchior and Balthasar, and described them as young, old and black, respectively.

But actually, how many Magi were there? Some have said up to 12, although we usually think of them as three in number because the Scriptures mention three gifts – gold, a tribute to Jesus’ kingship; frankincense, a tribute to his priesthood and his divinity; and myrrh, a tribute to his death. Myrrh was an aromatic balm sprinkled on corpses.

Even though our Nativity scenes and the pictures on our Christmas cards may not depict the visit of the Magi exactly the way it happened, still we joyfully celebrate the appearance of the guiding star that led the Magi to find the infant Jesus and was the occasion for him to manifest himself to them.

We call this day on which we commemorate the manifestation of Jesus to the Magi the feast of the Epiphany, because Epiphany means manifestation or showing or appearance.

Jesus had shown Himself to the Jews at Christmas by way of the shepherds. Now He showed Himself to the Gentiles (the non-Jews) by way of the Magi. The Jews, God’s chosen people, were given first choice.

We were not there when the Magi were, but by faith we, too, know that Jesus our Messiah has come.

So today, as we celebrate once more the Feast of the Epiphany, we rejoice to have our Savior with us. We resolve to keep our faith strong by faithfully practicing it. We strive to help others to grow in faith and love by our prayers and example.

A good way to show that we really mean what we profess is to make one good

solid New Year’s resolution. This is only January 2/3, so this is still a good day. Make your resolution definite, and try to choose one that will attack some fault that causes other faults. The power of New Year’s resolutions is in their quality, not in their quantity.

My resolution for 1993 is to quit complaining. Complaining is easy to do. Anyone can do it. I have noticed that so often, when someone voices a complaint, it makes others do the same.

Complaining seldom accomplishes anything useful. It has a way of generating ill feeling in those who make the complaints as well as in those who hear them. It spreads disrespect and discontent, and often even harms someone’s reputation by broadcasting faults that are no one else’s business. Even worse, complaining can easily become a habit, like an ex-smoker who still reaches for a cigarette because years ago that is what he always used to do.

When your resolution gets under way, ask yourself every night at bedtime, “How did I do with my resolution today?” Not so good? “Here’s what I’ll do tomorrow so it won’t happen again.”

In conclusion, let me leave you with an exciting thought:

*Mighty oaks form little acorns grow.*

*Tiny drops make mighty rivers flow.*

Regardless of the fault we conquer first, little by little, we could all become living saints. Think about it.

*Lord Jesus, thank you for being born and laid in a manger – like us in every way except sin.*

*Help us always to love you and honor you and bring the best we have and lay it at your feet.*

*Grant that our faith in you may be a bright and guiding star to help bring all mankind to you.*

*Amen.*

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# Consider quitting things that are bad for your soul

## Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS



**EDITOR’S NOTE:** This column was originally published in January 2022.

It is a new year, and we are bound to see posts on social media declaring “New Year, New Me.” Many people will go out and start a gym membership because this will be the year that they will get into the shape they desire. Diets will begin and all other kinds of New Year’s resolutions will be announced.

It seems to me that what is announced is usually something new being added to one’s lifestyle, but never something that someone will quit doing.

I understand that quitting has always seemed like a negative thing. We should always strive to keep going, to work harder to get to that finish line that we are striving to reach.

Yet, there are some things that may be

beneficial for us if we quit them. Quitting smoking has never hurt anyone; it’s actually pretty beneficial for one’s body. There are other things that we can quit that will be beneficial to our souls. What are things that we can quit that aren’t helpful to us and replace with things that will be helpful?

Quit complaining and start finding solutions. When I say to quit complaining I do not mean to not speak up when something is unjust. Those are times we need to be heard. What I mean is that there are times that we complain a lot about things we could change, not knowing that by spending so much time complaining, we are making the environment we live in toxic.

Many times when I’m complaining, I don’t take the time to realize that I’m complaining over things that are happening because of my own decisions. Am I complaining that I have too much work? If so, did I set boundaries to not be overworked? Am I feeling overwhelmed because I have so much to do and so little time? If so, did I procrastinate and that is why I now have less time? Next time, when I think about complaining, let me first think of how I can change the situation about which I’m complaining. At times, that may require me to

make a decision that I do not want to make, but have to.

Quit retail therapy and begin actual therapy. Retail therapy is a quick fix for when we are down or upset about something, but does it really solve the issue? Aren’t our closets bursting at the bolts and we still feel upset later? There is nothing wrong with finding a therapist to talk to who will help you heal.

Quit holding onto grudges, resentment and unforgiveness and learn to let go. In the movie “The Mission,” there is a scene where Robert DiNiro is hiking up a mountain with his armor tied onto his body. He’s carrying them in a net over his shoulder as a form of penance for killing his brother. A priest tries to cut it away from him but he goes down to retrieve it. It wasn’t until a native cut it away from him and showed him how easy it would be to climb without it that he understood what he was doing wasn’t helping him at all.

We’ve heard many times that holding onto grudges, resentment and unforgiveness doesn’t hurt anyone but us, but do we believe it? There is no way we are going to like everyone we meet, and there will be people who hurt us severely. When we forgive people who hurt us, it doesn’t mean we then have to become best friends. We may never speak to them again. But, in forgiving

them, we are taking back the power they had over us. The power to change our mood whenever we see them or hear their name mentioned. When one has an open wound, it cannot heal if we keep picking at it. Before we know it, it will become infected. The same applies to a wound in our spirit. Holding onto grudges, resentment, and unforgiveness is just infecting that wound. Let it go, and let the Lord heal it.

Quit only seeing Jesus in the people we like, and start recognizing that He is in everyone.

Quit saying curse words, and start praising God and sending out blessings.

Quit being grumpy and/or angry, and find the root cause of those feelings so you may allow joy to enter into your life.

Remember what is written about a life based on love in Ephesians 4: 25-32: *Therefore, cease your lying and speak the truth to each other, for we are all members of one another. If you are angry, do not sin. Do not let the sun set on your anger, and do not give the devil an opening. Anyone who has been stealing must no longer do so; rather, let him labor, performing some honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with those in*

See Consider quitting things, pg. 8

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## Candlelight March on Jan. 29

**VICTORIA** – Hundreds walk the streets of downtown Victoria last Jan. 30 while praying the rosary and carrying signs in the hopes that legal abortion will be one day be a thing of the past. This year's march will take place Jan. 29 in Victoria. Those who want to participate will gather at DeLeon Plaza at 6:30 p.m. The prayerful procession will go from there to Our Lady of Sorrows Church on River Street for a short program. This is the 39th year for this event that is attended each year by people of all ages.



## Gifts ahoy!

Sherry Smalley, left, and Rhonda Cummins, bottom picture, led the charge in gathering hundreds of gifts for the 2025 Christmas at Sea. Above, the chancery staff helped Bishop Brendan Cahill load the gifts for Cummins to deliver to ships at the port in Point Comfort.



## Consider quitting things that are bad for your soul

Continued from pg. 7

*need. Let no foul word ever pass your lips. Say only what is useful for edification, so that your words may benefit your listeners. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God who has marked you with his seal for the day of redemption. Remove all forms of bitterness and wrath and anger and shouting and slander, as well as all malice from your lives. Rather, be kind to one another and compassionate, and forgive one another as*

*God has forgiven you in Christ.*

Maybe this year we can pray and reflect on these questions: Is there something that if I were to quit, would make my life better? If so, what is it? Will I take up the challenge to quit it this year and remove it from my life?

• *Contact Sister Rosario  
at [bishopsecretary.dov@gmail.com](mailto:bishopsecretary.dov@gmail.com).*

## IWBS Sisters host vigil to protest deportation efforts

**VICTORIA** -- The Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament led a prayer service and public vigil outside of their convent on Water Street on Nov. 20. The event was part of the One Church, One Family campaign, a national movement of Catholics in the U.S. who are calling for people to demonstrate solidarity with "migrant families, assylum seekers and refugees," accordign to a press release from Sister Marian Sturm, OVISS, one of the event organizers.

The Incarnate Word Sisters' event is one of more than 100 events were being planned across the country as part of the effort.

“The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred since we were all created by God. Therefore, we all have dignity no matter what our national, racial, ethnic, economic and ideological differences may be,” said Sturm, who serves as Region 12 Justice Promoter. “That dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society, not only to love God but to love our neighbor as ourselves.”

In the Catholic tradition, Nov. 13 is the Feast Day of Mother Frances Xavier Cabrini, the patron saint of immigrants and the first American saint to be canonized. The 50-plus events across the country around that day culminated the campaign that began with more than 50 events on Oct. 13. The body of U.S. bishops, individual bishops, and Catholic organizations have been speaking out against the implementation of inhumane policies that go against the Catholic Church's teaching on migration, which is informed by the Bible and Catholic moral teaching.

“As Catholics and people of deep faith, we reject the culture of fear and silence that dehumanizes, and we choose instead to stand with migrants,” shared Jon Gromek of the Ignatian Solidarity Network, one of the principal organizers of the campaign. “Together, our voices will send a powerful message to defend the dignity of our neighbors, family members, fellow parishioners, classmates, coworkers and

*See IWBS Sisters host vigil, pg. 13*

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# Bishop: Sale of Presidio will benefit state and diocese

*Continued from pg. 1*

Our Lady of Loreto and the small chapels is usually full with 80-90 in attendance from different areas surrounding the chapel.

According to the terms of the deed, the THC will own the property and are obligated to ensure that the chapel continues to exist and be treated as a Catholic church. Bishop Cahill said he does not expect that THC would consider treating it otherwise. However, the Diocese of Victoria can buy back the property if necessary to keep the chapel operating as a church for the faithful of the diocese.

Bishop Cahill said he looks at this transaction not just as a bishop, but as a Texan, because the THC is better equipped and better endowed to handle the maintenance that the fort requires. “I guess my interest in this transfer is associated with the cost of maintaining it ... and what is the best for the future of the church and the historic site, the Presidio,” Cahill said. “There’s a high cost associated with this. On a practical level, it always struck me that our state

preserves historical sites well. I think the state has more resources for historical preservation.”

In 2022, the diocese entered into an operating agreement with the THC regarding the management of the fort as an historical site for visitors while the diocese maintained ownership. Cahill said that was done with the full understanding and support of the Friends of the Fort and the people who have financially supported the Presidio la Bahia.

Scott McMahon, the site director for the diocese, continued in the same role but as an employee of the state. Bishop Cahill said the general upkeep has been better since the agreement.



Photos of the inside and outside of the Our Lady of Loreto chapel. The age of the chapel inside the Presidio la Bahia makes it expensive to maintain. The diocese has reached an agreement with the Texas Historical Commission for the purchase of the fort for the benefit of its preservation and its importance in telling the story of the state’s history along with other state monuments. The chapel will continue to be operated as a Catholic Church under the direction of the Diocese of Victoria.



Photo from Texas Historical Commission  
An aerial view of the Presidio la Bahia property that was restored in the 1960s because of the generosity of Kathryn O’Conner. It is considered one of the most authentic restoration projects of its kind in the nation.

“We expanded our staff from one full-time person to seven full-time staff,” McMahon said. “With the expansion, we’ve been able to better maintain the site for visitor experience.”

They also were able to have a full-time interpreter/educator, more regular tours on weekends, more programming throughout the year, and more funding to maintain and promote the site, he added.

Recently, too, McMahon said the Texas Historical Commission took over the Fannin Monument and Angel of Goliad Plaza and various other smaller historic properties around the Presidio to preserve the viewshed around the Presidio. “I’m excited

about it. I think it’s a good deal for the site itself and, of course, for the visitors here,” he said. “There’s an aging infrastructure -- wiring and plumbing and stuff like that. We could only do so much of it with the management agreement. We had to move into the ownership role. In the long run it’s much better.”

The public event for the transfer of ownership on Jan. 28 is tentatively scheduled for 10 a.m. at the Presidio. Several honorees from the State of Texas have been invited to attend. The diocese will post any updates on its Facebook page as the details are firmed up.

The Presidio la Bahia was established in 1749. It has been called one of the finest examples of a Spanish frontier fort and was the most fought over fort in Texas history. It has operated under six different governments over the years. The Our Lady of Loreto Chapel has been continuously used for Catholic worship since the 1700s. In the 1960s, the fort was restored through the generosity of Kathryn O’Connor so it could continue standing with its sister shrines like the Alamo and San Jacinto. Today, it is considered one of the most authentic restoration projects in the U.S. In the mid-1800s, the town of Goliad turned over the title for the fort to Bishop J.M. Odin and it has been owned by the Catholic Church since that time. It came to the Diocese of Victoria when the diocese was created in 1982 from territories taken from dioceses of Corpus Christi, Galveston-Houston and San Antonio.

If there’s one thing that might be a negative in the sale, it’s that Bishop Cahill can no longer have the bragging rights of being the only bishop who owns a Spanish fort.

For more information about the Presidio la Bahia and its artifacts, visit <https://thc.texas.gov/historic-sites/presidio-la-bahia>.

# Life is about beginnings and endings ... and beginnings

## At Your Service

By Deacon Michael Tankersley



*“I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” Rev. 22:13*

When I was 6 years old I delighted in hearing the “snap, crackle and pop” of my Rice Krispies cereal in the mornings. Now, at 76, I can hear the “snap, crackle and pop” of my knees and neck throughout the day. As a youngster I could run and play for hours. Now I can’t run and an afternoon nap has become my preferred form of play.

Each of us is aware that our physical features have changed over time. So, too, have our goals and dreams, what and whom we treasured, of what brings meaning and purpose to our lives. In Charles Dickens’ *A Christmas Carol*, Bob Cratchet speaks of life as being full of “meetings and partings.” And there is truth in that. Life does have its meetings and partings; its beginnings and endings. There are times of surprising joy, celebrated with singing and applause, and other times that reduce

us to silence and tears. We have smiled during baptisms and mourned during funerals. And rarely do we get to choose our endings. Contrary to what this introduction might lead you to believe, this reflection is not an old man lamenting loss or preaching the principles of aging gracefully. Rather, I am writing this in December as one year is dying and a new year being born. It is a good time to think of time and change, of comings and goings, of necessary endings and new beginnings.

There are some who view life as a series of messy random events, without order or purpose, without pattern or rhyme. William Shakespeare had his protagonist Macbeth pronounce these words: *“Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing.”* Sadly, there are many “Macbeths” today who consider life void of meaning and lacking purpose other than what they assign to it. It is a sentiment that deadens the soul. Some will be reduced to indifference and emptiness while others will attempt at self-creation and self-defined personal truths. None of us are immune from this sentiment entirely. It can sneak into our lives at both our high and low points. Our egos can come disguised as “God’s will” and our leadership roles as means of power. On the other hand, we’ve all had our Gethsemane moments (“Take this cup from me.”) and our Calvary episodes (“My God, My God, why have you abandoned me?”). So how do we make sense of what can seem senseless, when relationships have snapped and dreams popped? How can loss bring gain and endings lead to new beginnings?

Salvation history repeatedly reveals the pattern of necessary endings flowing into new beginnings for those with a living faith. New life came to believers on Noah’s ark just as the great flood ended the lives of others. While the Israelites of Moses thought their lives were ending in the wilderness, they were being prepared for new beginning in the Promised Land.

The life, death and resurrection of Jesus reveal how goodbyes become gateways into new beginnings. The very ending of His human life on the cross made possible our new beginnings in Divine life.

This pattern of endings and beginnings is illustrated again in John 16:7: *“But very truly I tell you, it is for your good that I am*

*going away. Unless I go away, the Advocate will not come to you.”*

Jesus had to depart in order for the Holy Spirit to arrive. This pattern of death and resurrection, of necessary endings giving birth to new beginnings, is reflected in our sacraments and in our liturgies that reveal our discipleship as a series of resurrections – of new hope.

St. Paul expressed this theme of change this way: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”* (2 Cor. 5:17) It signifies a profound spiritual transformation where a believer in Jesus Christ experiences a new beginning, leaving behind their former life and embracing a renewed identity and purpose in God, becoming a “new creation.”

*“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die ... a time to tear down and a time to build.”* (Ecc. 3:1-3). This, my friends, is the rhythm of divine life set upon our own. Life is not a chaotic stream of senseless events, one after another, until everything and everyone stops. Rather, our time on earth is one of necessary endings and new beginnings, all the while drawing us to fulfillment in Him, reshaping our identity

as His child, growing us into a people who look more and more like Jesus.

Certainly our life in Christ is not just a triumphal march from one success to another as we all joyfully sing “Glory, glory, hallelujah!” If we think that, we will become discouraged. You and I will experience many endings and losses that will knock us to our knees. We will take up our crosses in good faith, and we will stumble. We will need a Simeon to help us get up, and we will need to be a Simeon for others. We will need our own Veronica to wipe our faces and we will need to be a Veronica for others. We need to remind one another that God is always working, not just to bring us out of something, but to lead us to something better. Many are trudging through difficult times of transition at the present, living in that difficult zone when the experience of loss is stronger than the certainty of new beginning.

Take heart, for God is with you and is still writing your story. What may seem the end of your story is the beginning of a new chapter, because the Divine Author is still writing. Grieve if you must, and celebrate when you can, and know that every day we are on a pilgrimage of endings and beginnings toward fulfillment in Christ, the one who makes all things new.

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# Coming to your profession, for most, begins with a procession

My parents didn't encourage me to be a priest when I was growing up. It wasn't like they portrayed the priesthood as something bad or something that they didn't want me to pursue. They didn't discourage me from being a priest. We just simply never talked about it. Priesthood wasn't something bad, nor was it something that I was pressured into. It was just another vocation from God.

Some people might be under the impression that for a young boy to want to be a priest when he grows up, it takes a lot of encouragement, influence and pestering from authority figures. Of course I got a lot of invitations to consider the priesthood from peers, faith formation leaders, random parishioners, and clergy, which eventually got me discerning. But I know if my parents would've done that, I would've never been attracted to the priesthood. I know they knew it, too. I would've run away from the idea. Instead, understanding my personality and my own path towards God, they took an approach that was much less heavy-handed. And it was exactly what I needed.

Last month, I wrote about Sherry Weddell's book *Forming Intentional Disciples* that lays out various stages through which many will pass on their road to conversion to Christ. She recognizes how we move gradually in our relationship with God, normally, and will have different needs depending on where we are on the map. As Weddell explains, the process of conversion often begins with growing in trust, then

## In Communion

By Very Rev. Jacob Koether



moving to curiosity, followed by an openness to change. From there, a person enters a period of active seeking and, finally, makes a deliberate, conscious decision to follow Jesus as Lord.

It was that way for me with the priesthood, and I believe many others experience something similar in their relationships with God and in discerning their vocations. These same principles also underlie the diocesan initiative we launched in November in collaboration with the National Federation for Catholic Youth Ministry, called SacredTable. With the support and guidance of the SacredTable team, we have committed to growing in our capacity to listen to parish leaders, parents, and families, to better discern their spiritual and pastoral needs, and to accompany them as they take the next step in their journey.

The wide range of needs that parish leaders and parents must navigate – and the effort to find creative solutions to long-standing challenges in passing on the faith to the next generation – can feel overwhelming. Does it mean that we will

have to be like St. Paul who made himself all things to all people? Do we have to do everything and meet every possible need? An important component of this pastoral work is not only the needs we have but also the gifts we can bring to the table. St. Paul had a lot of gifts.

Not everyone is St. Paul. He knew that, too. To the Romans he said, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness." (Romans 12:4-8)

And similarly, to the Corinthians, he said, "To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of

tongues. All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills." (1 Corinthians 12:7-11)

The Church has many needs – but the good news is that God has also provided many gifts. Each of us has a unique role to play. Every one of us can bear the fruits of the Spirit for the building up of the Body of Christ at the right time, in the best way, to meet the specific need in front of us. In fact, this is exactly what our Women's Conference on Jan. 24 will focus on: discerning our spiritual gifts.

In addition to her work on forming disciples, Sherry Weddell founded the St. Catherine of Siena Institute, which offers "Called and Gifted" workshops to help people recognize their spiritual gifts and continue discerning how God may be inviting them to use those gifts. This year's Women's Conference will guide participants through this process and provide access to follow-up resources that extend for weeks after the event.

The Women's Conference will be held at the Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center on Jan. 24, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. The cost is \$60 per person. Ministries from around the diocese will be present to share the ways they are building up the Body of Christ, and vendors will offer goods and merchandise. Lunch is included. After the workshop, there will be a time of prayer and the opportunity for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We will finish in time to attend the 5:30 p.m. Vigil Mass at Our Lady of Victory.

St. Catherine of Siena is often credited with saying, "Be who God meant you to be and you will set the world on fire."

The Church truly has many needs – and God created you for a purpose. What gifts is He asking you to bring to the table?

## RATES WITH R.F.G.

Michele Rohde, AAMS  
Financial Advisor  
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Victoria, TX 77904

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Ameriprise Certificates are issued by Ameriprise Certificate Company and distributed by Ameriprise Financial Services, LLC. Member FINRA and SIPC. Ameriprise certificates are backed by reserves of cash and qualified assets on deposit and are not federally or FDIC insured. Our third party certificates are FDIC insured. Rates effective 2-Dec-2025. Rates update weekly.

## The Father Dan Morales Endowment

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

- Supporting medical and spiritual care for the poor and most needy in Antigua, Guatemala through Las Obras Sociales.
- Your gifts make a difference — monthly or one-time donations welcome.
- Scan the QR code to give or visit [www.frdanendowment.org](http://www.frdanendowment.org)

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



Pope Leo XIV will close the enormous bronze doors of St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican, through which nearly 30 million pilgrims have passed during the last 12 months seeking a plenary indulgence. These Holy Door are slated to be reopened in 2033, when the Church celebrates the Extraordinary Holy Year of the Redemption.

## Holy doors in Rome are closing

VICTORIA CARDIEL  
*Catholic News Agency*

On Jan. 6, 2026, Pope Leo XIV will be the one to close the enormous bronze door of St. Peter’s Basilica in the Vatican, through which nearly 30 million pilgrims have passed during the last 12 months seeking a plenary indulgence.

This Holy Door is slated to be reopened in 2033, when the Church celebrates the Extraordinary Holy Year of the Redemption. The schedule for closing rites of the Holy Doors of the main papal basilicas in Rome is as follows: The first Holy Door to be closed – and which will remain walled up until the next jubilee – is that of St. Mary Major Basilica. The rite was to take place on Dec. 25, as reported by the Holy See Press Office.

Two days later, on Dec. 27, closing ceremony at St. John Lateran Basilica was to be presided over by the cardinal vicar of Rome, Baldassare Reina, who would celebrate the Eucharist, and will feature the participation of the diocesan choir, directed by Monsignor Marco Frisina.

On Dec. 28, the Holy Door of St. Paul Outside the Walls Basilica were to be

closed. The solemn event would be presided over by Cardinal Archbishop James Michael Harvey.

Finally, on Jan. 6, the solemnity of the Epiphany, Pope Leo XIV is scheduled to close the Holy Door of St. Peter’s Basilica before celebrating the Mass that will mark the concluding act of the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope. On that occasion, the pontiff will

invite pilgrims to return to Rome in 2033 for the Extraordinary Holy Year of Redemption.

The Holy Doors, as is tradition, have been solely those of the four papal basilicas of Rome: St. Peter’s in the Vatican, St. John Lateran, St. Mary

Major, and St. Paul Outside the Walls. However, on Dec. 26, two days after officially inaugurating the holy year, Pope Francis made an exception by traveling to the Rebibbia prison in Rome to repeat this gesture at another door as a symbol of hope.

The late pope wanted to extend this gesture of grace to prisoners by opening the door of this correctional facility in the Italian capital.

The date on which the closing ceremony for this fifth Holy Door will take place has yet to be announced.

Although the Holy Year is ending on Jan. 6, Bishop Brendan Cahill gives those seeking a plenary indulgence a lesson on how to obtain an indulgence in any given year. See *Shepherd’s Message, Page 2.*

### How to Support DSA

The Diocesan Services Appeal (DSA) is committed to fund administration offices and programs that help bring the light of Christ to each of the priorities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops in the Crossroads. Evangelization, Marriage and Family, and Human Life and Dignity are a few that Bishop Cahill has chosen as his focus. DSA also supports the retired and infirm priests, Permanent Diaconate, Spiritual Renewal Center, Emmaus Center, and many other ministries. To support the DSA contact the business office at 361-573-0828.

## Pope Leo XIV makes official appointments

### Pope accepts resignation of Bishop Gerald Barbarito of the Diocese of Palm Beach; appoints Reverend Manuel de Jesus Rodriguez as successor

WASHINGTON – Pope Leo XIV has accepted the resignation of Bishop Gerald M. Barbarito, 75, from the pastoral governance of the Diocese of Palm Beach, and has appointed Reverend Manuel de Jesus Rodriguez, as Bishop-elect of Palm Beach. Father Rodriguez is a priest of the Diocese of Brooklyn and currently serves as pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Corona (Queens), New York. The resignation and appointment were publicized in Washington, D.C., on December 19, 2025, by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

### Pope appoints Monsignor Peter Bui as Auxiliary Bishop of Phoenix

WASHINGTON – Pope Leo XIV has appointed Reverend Monsignor Peter Dai Bui, as Auxiliary Bishop of Phoenix. Monsignor Bui is a priest of the Diocese of Phoenix and currently serves as the diocese’s Vicar for Clergy. The appointment was publicized in Washington, D.C., on December 19, 2025, by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States.

### Pope accepts resignation of Cardinal Timothy Dolan of the Archdiocese of New York; Appoints Bishop Ronald Hicks, as successor

WASHINGTON – Pope Leo XIV has accepted the resignation of His Eminence Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, 75, from the pastoral governance of the Archdiocese of New York, and has appointed Most Reverend Ronald A. Hicks, currently Bishop of Joliet, as the Metropolitan Archbishop of New York. The resignation and appointment were publicized in Washington, D.C. on December 18, 2025, by Cardinal Christophe Pierre, apostolic nuncio to the United States. The Archdiocese of New York is comprised of 4,683 square miles in the State of New York and has a total population of 5,445,700, of which 1,572,580, are Catholic.

## Safe Environment

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

**Contact:**

- The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, within **48 hours**, at (800) 252-5400, [www.txabusehotline.org](http://www.txabusehotline.org), or local police department.  
**If person is in immediate danger call 911.**

and

- Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Outreach, Diocese of Victoria, (361) 827-7186, [pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org).

or

- Bishop or Chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria, (361) 573-0828  
Written allegations can be mailed  
marked “Personal and Confidential” to  
Office of the Bishop  
P.O. Box 4070  
Victoria, TX 77903



If sexual abuse by a member of clergy has occurred in another diocese, the Diocese of Victoria will help bring your concerns to church officials. For assistance call: (361) 827-7186 or email: [pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org)

# Throwback: 20 Years Ago



Photo by Cindy Brewer  
David E. Fellhauer, Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria in Texas, looks over the *Disciples on the Journey* Lenten project developed by the diocese’s Catechetical Ministry director Sister Digna Vela, IWBS, (l.). She is assisted by her editing team, Christella Alvarez (r.) and Laurie Dufilho Bautista (c.). *Disciples on the Journey* is a Lenten faith-sharing program in its third year of printing and is available in English and Spanish.

## Small Texas diocese sells Lenten program in U.S., Canada, Europe

By Cindy Brewer

VICTORIA, Texas (CNS) — It is said, “Good things come in small packages.” It may also be said that good Lenten programs come from small enterprises.

*Disciples on the Journey*, the faith-sharing booklet developed by the Catechetical Ministry Office of the Diocese of Victoria, is in the final stages of preparation for use as a Lenten resource in 2006.

This is the third year in a row the diocese has printed its own resource and marketed it throughout the United States, Canada, and Europe.

With a total of 50 parishes and 19 missions interspersed among crop fields and cattle and horse pastures, the Victoria Dio-

cese is considered very small and rural. But its Catechetical Ministry Office, directed by Sister Digna Vela, a member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, is on the cutting edge when it comes to its diocesanwide Lenten program.

The Texas diocese finished the Paulist National Catholic Evangelization Association’s three-year *Disciples in Mission* Lenten program in 2003 and didn’t want to lose the momentum the program had created.

In the summer of 2003, the office formed a diocesan committee and began production of its own Lenten program that

See *Small Texas diocese*, p. 5

Go to our website <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/the-catholic-lighthouse> click on 2006 and January

## IWBS Sisters host vigil to protest deportation efforts

Continued from pg. 8

friends.”

The local event was organized by Sturm and Sister Maria del Rosario Resendez, OVISS, representatives from Incarnate Word Convent, along with with other friends. Speakers included Resendez and two immigrant women who gave testimonies about their own experiences with deportation efforts.

The One Church, One Family cam-

paign is organized by the Ignatian Solidarity Network in partnership with several Catholic organizations, including multiple Jesuit provinces, Jesuit Refugee Service, Leadership Conference of Women Religious, NETWORK Catholic Social Justice Lobby, Pax Christi USA, the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Migration and Refugee Services, among others, according to Sturm.

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

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

Elie has created a total of 22 Bible Word Search Puzzle Books that bring scripture to life through engaging puzzles. These books are available for purchase at [www.searching-for-jesus.com](http://www.searching-for-jesus.com), on Amazon (search for “Elie Corpus Mejia”), or by calling 361-648-5832.

Stay connected and inspired by following Elie on social media:

Facebook: Elie’s Spiritual Treasures

Instagram: @Elies\_SpiritualTreasures

The November 2025 winner is Lupe Perez from Victoria. She attends The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory.

January 11, 2026

The Baptism of the Lord

READING II - ACTS 10:34-38

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles: Peter proceeded to speak to those gathered / in the house of Cornelius, saying: / “In truth, I see that God shows no partiality. / Rather, in every nation whoever fears him and acts uprightly / is acceptable to him. / You know the word that he sent to the Israelites / as he proclaimed peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, / what has happened all over Judea, / beginning in Galilee after the baptism / that John preached, / how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth / with the Holy Spirit and power. / He went about doing good / and healing all those oppressed by the devil, / for God was with him.”

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Age, if 12 or younger \_\_\_\_\_ Age, if 13 or older \_\_\_\_\_

# Blessing of Silence and Rest

The start of a new year: a time to renew and get back on track. But before carrying out our resolve for the year, it serves to remember that rest and silence are also valuable.

Winter’s natural stillness allows a welcomed pause to the frenzied pace of our lives. As the activities of the year come to an end, we may also feel the need to slow down. The boisterous hum of family life and work is now replaced by quietness, if only for a moment.

The month of January is a good time to avail yourself to silence and rest. Do these appear as strangers to us? With practice, silence and rest can become trusted friends that fill us with deeper awareness, recharge us, and provide greater creativity for the tasks that await us in the coming spring.

In the spirit of this month’s blessing, consider fasting or preparing a simple meal on the day of the blessing. Gather with family or friends in the early evening. Light a candle. After a moment of silence, begin this service:

## OPENING PRAYER

Loved ones, let us open our hearts. God of the ages, You call your people to seek You in the quietist of places. Free us from what detracts and blinds us; let us behold your marvelous Presence. Renew us by the teachings of your Word so that we may live more abundantly. When life around us appears dark, make us a harvester of Light. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.



## SONG OF PRAISE:

Verses from Psalm 62 (2-3, 8-9, 11-12)

**Response: Only in God will my soul be at rest.**

My soul rests in God alone/ from whom comes my salvation./ God alone is my rock and salvation./ my fortress; I shall never fall. **Response**

My deliverance and honor are with God./ my strong rock; my refuge is with God./ Trust God at all times, my people!./ Pour out your hearts to God our refuge! **Response**

Do not trust in extortion;/ in plunder put no empty hope./ On wealth that increases./ do not set your heart. **Response**

One thing God has said:/ strength and mercy belong to God;/ For You repay to each of us/ according to our deeds. **Response**

## READING:

Luke 10:38-42

As they continued their journey, Jesus entered a village where a woman whose name was Martha welcomed him. She had a sister named Mary, who sat beside the Lord at his feet listening to him speak.

Martha, burdened with much serving, came to him and said, “Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me by myself to do the serving? Tell her to help me.”

The Lord said to her in reply, “Martha, Martha, you are anxious and worried about many things. There is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part and it will not be taken from her.”

SELECTIVE READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE: Exodus 20:8-11; Psalm 62:1-2, 5; Psalm 116:7; Isaiah 40:28- 31; Matthew 11:28; 1 John 3:19; Philippians 4:6-7  
(Silent reflection or invite sharing of thoughts and feelings)

## CLOSING BLESSING

(Invite everyone to gather around a lit candle. Dim or turn off other lights.)

**Let us pray:** O Lord, we long for your peace. We come to you like Martha, racing about with busy hands and minds, but with our hearts that are left closed and empty.

We also come to you in silence, like Mary who ceased all activity to sit at your feet and listen, ready and willing to receive what you alone can give.

Bless this silence. Teach us to recognize the treasures it gives and to desire it more often. Bless this rest. Help us to trust it with the same faith which we give to work. Strengthened by our participation in holy silence and rest, may we come to see in winter not a death that is a final ending, but rather an opening that leads to the next life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

# Sunday Readings from Jan. 4 to Feb. 8

- Jan. 4 ~ The Epiphany of the Lord  
Isaiah 60:1-6  
Psalm 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13  
Ephesians 3:2-3a, 5-6  
Matthew 2:1-12

Jan. 11 ~ The Baptism of the Lord  
Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7  
Psalm 29:1-2, 3-4, 3, 9-10  
Acts 10:34-38  
Matthew 3:13-17

Jan. 18 ~ Second Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 49:3, 5-6  
Psalm 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10  
1 Corinthians 1:1-3  
John 1:29-34
- Jan. 25 ~ Third Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 8:23—9:3  
Psalm 27:1, 4, 13-14  
1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17  
Matthew 4:12-23 or 4:12-17

Feb. 1 ~ Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Zephaniah 2:3; 3:12-13  
Psalms 146:6-7, 8-9, 9-10  
1 Corinthians 1:26-31  
Matthew 5:1-12a

Feb. 8 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Isaiah 58:7-10  
Psalms 112:4-5, 6-7, 8-9  
1 Corinthians 2:1-5  
Matthew 5:13-16

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit [www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings).  
Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign



**Seed and soil blessing on Jan. 31**  
GANADO – Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate the annual Blessing of Seed and Soil Mass as part of the Diocese of Victoria’s Catholic Rural Life ministry on Jan. 31 at 10 a.m. The location is 713 County Road 202 in Ganado. All are welcome to attend this Mass and blessing. Bring soil and seed samples from your field or garden to be blessed.

File photo

Meals • Picnics and More

January

**VICTORIA** – Amor Meus will host a silent retreat focusing on discipleship on Jan. 17. See pg. 5 for more information.

**VICTORIA** – Women’s Conference Jan. 24 at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. For more information go to the diocesan website at [www.victoriadiocese.org/2026-womens-conference](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/2026-womens-conference).

**EAST BERNARD** – Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Saint Bernadette #1108, East Bernard, will hold their annual Chicken Noodle Soup and Sandwich Supper, raffle, and silent auction on Wednesday, Jan. 28, American Legion Hall (Hwy. 60). Serving from 5 p.m. until sold out. Soup is \$5 a bowl and a chicken salad sandwich is \$5. Eat in or bring your own containers and enjoy at home. A large variety of pastries will be available. Raffle drawing for 87 prizes will begin at 7 p.m.

**VICTORIA** – Candlelight March for Life on Jan. 29, 6:30 p.m. beginning at DeLeon Plaza and proceeding to Our Lady of Sorrows.

**GANADO** – Seed and Soil Blessing on Jan. 31, at 10 a.m. at 713 County Road 202. All are welcome to attend this Mass and blessing. See more information on pg. 14.

February

**Mentz** – Catholic Daughters of the Americas and Knights of Columbus Turkey Dinner, Feb. 1 at St. Roch Parish Hall starting at 11 a.m. Dine-in or drive-thru available for \$15 each plate. There will be a Tasty Treat Live Auction and a Silent Auction.

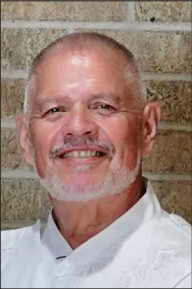
**Victoria** – St. Mary’s Parish Festival Feb. 1 at the Victoria Community Center. See ad on pg. 6 for more information.

Silent retreat focuses on discipleship

Continued from pg. 5

which remains the same since the time of Jesus – to prepare for an encounter with Christ in our lives,” stated a press release from Amor Meus.

Deacon Eddie Huse, ordained to the permanent diaconate in July 2016 for the Diocese of Victoria, serves at



Deacon Eddie Huse

The Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus Parish in Victoria. He has presented several retreats at Amor Meus Spirituality Center in the past, gathering many people who find his words to be words of wisdom.

For further information or to register, call 361-575-7111 or email, [amormeus-center@gmail.com](mailto:amormeus-center@gmail.com). Sign-in is at 9:30 a.m. Participants should bring a lunch and park in front of the convent. There is no charge, but a free-will offering will be accepted.

Mission Trips Planned

Mark your calendar for summer mission trip

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

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

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

For more information, please visit the website at [www.coramdeotexas.org](http://www.coramdeotexas.org).



Father Dan Morales

Young Adult Ministry



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



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

For more information, contact Lydia Whitten, at [lwhitten@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:lwhitten@victoriadiocese.org) or call 361-573-0828.

Ministries • Ongoing Activities

**ACTS Retreats** – Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS retreats in the diocese should e-mail [dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org).

**Catholic Family Services** – To find Catholic organizations that focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at [www.nacflm.org](http://www.nacflm.org).

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

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

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

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

Amor Meus



**AMOR MEUS**  
Spirituality Center

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

**Do you have any events for the Lighthouse?**  
Submit to  
[lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org)

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

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

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

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

**Our Lady’s Healing Center** – Our Lady’s Healing Center is an apostolate with the mission to bring Christ’s divine healing in the Catholic Tradition. Our 12-month healing journey begins with a 5-day residential healing program at our beautiful facility in Seadrift. OLHC has developed a healing program centered on the life of Christ and acceptance of His invitation to be healed and transformed through the sacraments. For more information, call 361-785-2191 or visit [ourladyshalingcenter.com](http://ourladyshalingcenter.com).

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

**Retrouvaille** – Retrouvaille, meaning “re-discovery,” is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Call 1-800-470-2230 to speak confidentially to a local couple; or visit the [www.helpourmarriage.org](http://www.helpourmarriage.org) for more information.



*All of the offices of the Diocese of Victoria wish all of our readers and their families a merry Christmas and happy New Year.*

