



How cold is it? SNOW cold!

Contributed Photo

Father Albert Yankey, chaplain at Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Convent, plays with the snow on the morning of Jan. 21. He was one of a group of Diocese of Victoria priests who were on retreat at the Spiritual Renewal Center that week.

Advocacy Day in Austin set for April 1

Texas Catholics are asked to add their voices to those of the Texas Catholic Conference of Bishops at the State Capitol on Tuesday, April 1, supporting legislative initiatives that conform to Catholic teaching.

During Advocacy Day, representatives from all dioceses in the state are invited to attend a rally where the Texas bishops will speak to issues such as immigration reform, health care, religious freedom and school choice. Some will also have the opportunity to visit their legislators and discuss their concerns about any pending legislation touching on a topic of concern.

Representatives for the Diocese of Victoria are Texas Senator Lois Kolkorst and newly elected Rep. A.J. Louderback in the Texas House District 30 seat, which Geanie Morrison held for the past 25 years.

The Diocese of Victoria will coordinate

bus transportation for 23 people who want to attend the rally, leaving at 6 a.m. that day to meet with lawmakers. Attendees are recognizable by wearing matching T-shirts, which makes for impressive optics when the crowd from all dioceses gathers to hear the bishops speak on the steps of the capitol building. The DOV already has T-shirts available in various sizes. Those who attended last time and still have their T-shirt are encouraged to wear that if possible as the design has not changed.

Anyone can attend separately as well and the diocese will arrange for them to have a T-shirt. Anyone interested should email Brenda Ortmann at bortmann@victoriadiocese.org who is coordinating Advocacy Day for the DOV.

See Advocacy Day, pg. 9



EPIC
Engaging Practical Interactive Catholic
FAMILY GATHERING

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SWLC Study Week

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even if it's hard

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to get updates

13 Blessing of
New Life

Study Week a chance to deepen your participation in ‘the work of God’

Dear Brothers and Sisters,
On Oct. 11, 1992, St. John Paul II published the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In his introductory letter to the Catechism, St. John Paul wrote: “The principal task entrusted to the Second Vatican Council by Pope John XXIII was to guard and present better the precious deposit of Christian doctrine in order to make it more accessible to the Christian faithful and to all people of good will.”

The Catechism is structured in the “traditional order already followed by the Catechism of St. Pius V, arranging the material in four parts: the Creed, the Sacred Liturgy, with pride of place given to the sacraments, the Christian way of life, explained beginning with the Ten Commandments and, finally, Christian prayer.” The section on Sacred Liturgy (#1066-1690) is titled “The Celebration of the Christian Mystery” and teaches that the word liturgy in Christian tradition “means the participation of the People of God in ‘the work of God.’”

This month we will be hosting the annual Study Week of the Southwest Liturgical Conference from Feb. 5 to 8 at Holy Family

A Shepherd’s Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



Catholic Church in Victoria. The participants in this Study Week will be coming from all over the Southwest and Western parts of the country. The goal of the Study Week each year is to provide opportunities for all of us to reflect more deeply on what it means to actively participate in the work of God.

The website www.swlc.org presents all the speakers and topics that will be covered during the Study Week. One of the major themes will be how to celebrate our liturgies so that persons with disabilities can more fully participate. A keynote speaker, Charleen Katra, is the president of the National Catholic Partnership on Disability, and she has a long experience of teaching and providing practical ways to improve

our classrooms and our churches. I’m looking forward to her talk and also to a special Mass on Thursday evening, Feb. 6, at Holy Family that is called a “sensory friendly Mass.”

Our participation in the Sunday Mass, and in every Sacrament, is a participation in the healing power of Jesus Christ accomplished through His Passion, Death and Resurrection. This is the “work of God” that we are blessed to share in every liturgical celebration of the Catholic Church!

May God bless you and your families with His peace and joy, and may we grow each day in our confidence in the presence of God among us.

Let’s keep each other in prayer.
+Brendan

Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

February					
1	Palacios – 10 a.m. Mass for Lunar New Year, Our Lady of Lavang	11	Victoria – 8 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes; Feast Day Visit	23	Victoria – 9 a.m. Sunday Mass; The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
	Victoria – 3 p.m. evening praise and benediction at Incarnate Word Convent for Mother-Daughter Tea with Sisters event	12	Victoria – 6 p.m. CCD visit; Our Lady of Sorrows	24	Tyler – Bishop John Gregory Kelly installation as Bishop of the Diocese of Tyler
	El Campo – 5:30 p.m. 4th degree Knights of Columbus Mass and presentation; St. Robert Bellarmine	14	Shiner – 8:10 a.m. school Mass for Sts. Cyril and Methodius; Feast Day Mass	25	Victoria - 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
2	Victoria – 9 a.m. World Day of Prayer for Consecrated Life Mass; The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory	16	Victoria – 2 p.m. Confirmation Mass; The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory	26-28	San Antonio – Texas-Mexico Border Bishops’ Meeting
	Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center	17	Victoria – Noon meal with OVISS Sisters; IWBS Convent	March	
4	Victoria – 7 p.m. Mothers of Grace Meeting	18	Radio – 6:20 a.m. Morning Air Radio interview	1	Victoria – 2025 Men’s Conference
	Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center		Victoria – 9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center		Victoria – 6 p.m. meal and meeting with deacons and wives retreat; Spiritual Renewal Center
5-8	Victoria – Southwest Liturgical Conference Study Week, Holy Family		Hallettsville – 6 p.m. Deacon Community Board meeting; Sacred Heart	2	Wharton – 10 a.m. Confirmation Mass; Holy Family
	Victoria – Communities of Faith meeting	20	Bay City – 8:15 a.m. school Mass and visit; Holy Cross School		Shiner – 3 p.m. Confirmation Mass; Sts. Cyril and Methodius
10		22	Victoria – 5:30 p.m. Mass for Diocesan Women’s Conference; The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory		

Note: Calendar is subject to changes.

Here is a list of speakers for the SWLC Study Week

Feb. 5-8 • Holy Family, Victoria

- **Dr. Tony Alonso**
Aquinas Associate Professor of Theology and Culture, Director of Catholic Studies, Candler School of Theology, Emory University (Decatur, GA)
- **Christella Alvarez**
Diocese of Victoria, director of Office of Catechetical Ministry
- **Father Donald Bernard**
Pastor, St. Edward’s Catholic Church (New Iberia, LA)
- **Father Joseph Blackburn**
Parochial Vicar, Our Lady of Sorrows Church (Victoria, TX)
- **Leslie Book**
Parishioner, Victoria, TX
- **Adam Brill**
Director, Office of Worship, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
Pastor, Christ the Good Shepherd Community (Spring, TX)
- **Bishop Brendan Cahill**
Diocese of Victoria
- **Father Tommy Chen**
Pastor, Our Lady of the Gulf Church
- **Jaime Cortez**
Director of Liturgy and Music, Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church (Scottsdale, AZ)
- **Vern Crockett**
Saint Trainer, Homeschool Mom, and Catholic Enthusiast
- **Carmen Flórez-Mansi**
Director of Music, The Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi (Santa Fe, NM)
- **Father Kristopher Fuchs**
Diocese of Victoria Vocations Director, Diocese of Victoria
- **Esther Garcia**
Ministry Consultant on Catechesis, Disability, and Cultural Diversity
- **Sylvia M. Garcia**
Associate Director, Office of Worship, Diocese of Dallas
- **Dr. Daniel Girardot**
Associate Director for Liturgical Formation, Office of Worship, Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
- **Dr. Ana-Lisa Gonzalez**
Dean, School of Education and Human Services, University of St. Thomas (Houston, TX)
- **Father Chase Goodman**
Pastor, St. Michael the Archangel Church (Weimar, TX)
- **Kenneth Griesemer**
Liturgical Design Consultant, SWLC Board Member

See Here is the list, pg. 8



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Diocese of Victoria mission:

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



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DOV priest takes post at U.S. Air Force base

PORT LAVACA – Father Richard Barfield, parochial vicar for Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church waited more than two years for the news that came in early January from the U.S. military: Pack up and head to Georgia.

He and his wife, Dawn, departed on Jan. 4 to prepare to take his post as the Catholic chaplain for Our Lady of the Skies Catholic Military Community for the 78th Air Base Wing at Robbins Air Force Base.

Father Richard had previously been an ordained minister and military chaplain before he converted to Catholicism and entered formation for the Catholic priesthood. He was ordained in the Diocese of Victoria in January of 2022 and began serving with Father Tommy Chen in the Calhoun County parishes. He was the only married priest of the diocese.

Father Richard said his official report to duty date was set for Jan. 26. “There are 50 other units on this massive base which is the largest single-industrial complex in all of Georgia. The base employs 22,000 civilians, Department of Defense contractors and members of the United States Air Force, Air Force Reserve and Air National Guard. That is about the size of two Port Lavacas,” he stated.

“Dawn and I are very thankful for all diocesan support,” he said, thanking Bishop Brendan Cahill for his leadership and support of the military. “Archbishop (Timothy) Broglio and Bishop (Richard) Spencer are tremendously excited, and thankful for the Diocese of Victoria. This is a critical mission for critical times.” Broglio is the ordinary of the Archdiocese of the Military Services, USA, and Spencer is vicar for military chapels in the eastern half of the U.S. for the archdiocese.

Father Richard said the air force base has been in need of help for a while and it will be a busy post. “We know that it will be arduous and challenging as Robins has a very challenging mission. However, we know that we are in the prayers of so many of the faithful here in the Victoria Diocese. We welcome whatever God has in store, and will share these many blessings with you, hopefully for many seasons to come.”



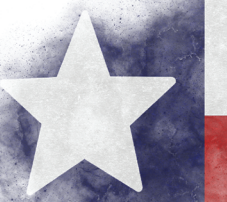
Father Richard Barfield at his send off celebration in Port Lavaca.





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 and on the mobile app.



Texas Independence Day Celebration Fr. Dan Morales Endowment \$10,000 Drawdown Fundraiser Saturday March 1, 2025

Holy Family Activity Center Victoria Texas
Doors Open 6:00 pm
Chicken Fried Steak Dinner 7:00-8:30 pm
Drawdown Raffle & Dance Begins 8:00 pm

Live Band Silent Auction Two Hearts Coffee Bucket Raffle

\$100 Ticket (donation)
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All proceeds for this event go to the
Fr. Dan Morales Endowment for the
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For More Info: www.frdanendowment.org

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 >.

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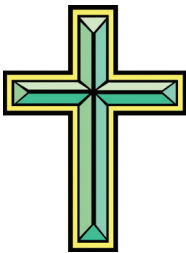
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Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria,

Heavenly Father, bless Your Church with an abundance of holy and zealous priests, deacons, brothers, and sisters. Give those you have called to the married state and those you have chosen to live as single persons in the world, the special graces that their lives require. Form us all in the likeness of your Son so that in Him, with Him, and through Him we may love You more deeply and serve You more faithfully, always and everywhere. With Mary we ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

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

Rev. Daniel O’Brien	02/07/2008
Rev. Msgr. Casimir Jarzombek	02/15/2019
Rev. Eugene Janson	02/17/2005
Rev. Brian Crookes	02/23/2003
Rev. Msgr. Vaclav J. Bily	02/23/1990
Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmidtzinsky	02/25/2005
Rev. Jerome Caponi	02/27/2009



*“Eternal rest granted unto them, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon them.
May they rest in peace.”*

Mission Trips Planned

Join the next mission trip
to Guatemala

The next mission trip to Las Obras in Antigua, Guatemala, will take place July 6-13. Registration will open on Feb. 1. Please make sure to register for your passport now.



Father Dan
Morales

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 our website at <https://www.coramdeotexas.org/>.

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 >.**

January 23, 2025

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

Acolyte
In memory of Wayne Conaway, Lorraine Hebert, Dave Kouba, Anna John, Donnie Shellenbarger and Frank Fojtik by CDA Court St. Ann #369

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

Lector
In honor of Rev. Philip Brune’s birthday by Mark and Sharon Kubicek

• Rev. Kristopher L. Fuchs Seminary
Burse

Acolyte
In memory of Robert “Bob” Burns Jr. by Paul and Helen Flessner

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

Acolyte
In memory of Rev. Joseph Vrana by the Knights of Columbus Barnabas Heldt Council #3371, Nada

• Rev. Robert Knippenberg Seminary
Burse

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

• Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Burse
Acolyte

In memory of Rev. Joseph Koebel by the Knights of Columbus Barnabas Heldt Council #3371, Nada

• Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Seminary
Burse #10

Acolyte
In honor of Rev. Msgr. John Peters’ 50th anniversary of ordination, 30 years as pastor of Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville and retirement by Rita Chase

• Rev. Luke Prihoda Seminary Burse
Acolyte

In memory of JoBeth McGuill Whitlow by the Joan Prihoda Family

• Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmidtzinsky
Seminary Burse

Acolyte
In memory of Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmidtzinsky by the Knights of Columbus Barnabas Heldt Council #3371, Nada

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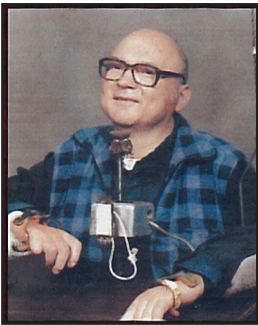
Not everyone is easy to love but as Christians we must try

EDITOR’S NOTE: The following sermon was written for the seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A. Father Kram titled it “Holiness.”

Matthew says, “You must be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.” Obviously no one can be as perfect as God is, otherwise they would BE God.

But everyone can, with God’s help, be more God-LIKE and fulfill better the purpose for which God made him. Since Jesus is God in the flesh, imitating Him and following his teachings will make us more God-like.

Jesus spoke of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth. This was called the law of talion – a very ancient law also found in the Old Testament. It provided for inflicting the same injury on an offender that he had inflicted on his victim. This sounds savage, but it had the beginnings of mercy, because, in earlier times, a whole tribe would rise up in retaliation against the tribe of an offender. But here, retribution was only against the actual offender.



1929-2000

Father Charles Kram Corner

Besides, the law of talion did not give the individual the right to revenge. Rather, it was a law to guide a judge to assess punishment on the guilty person. Furthermore, it was not applied strictly.

Jesus abolished the law of talion. Revenge and retaliation have no place in the life of a Christian. Vengeance belongs to God. Jesus gave several examples of what he meant. First, turning the other cheek means not to retaliate or be resentful when we are insulted. If someone slaps you on the cheek and then swings back the other way, you get hit on the other cheek with the back of the hand. Getting hit with the back of a hand was considered to be much more of an insult than just being slapped.

I’ve seen John Wayne do it in a movie and it IS rough.

Being willing to hand over one’s shirt as well as one’s coat means not to be insistent on one’s rights and privileges, but rather to think of one’s duties and responsibilities. Going the extra mile means not to think always of one’s freedom to do as one pleases, but rather to serve others generously, even cheerfully, even when the demand is harsh and unreasonable.

Finally, giving and lending to those in need does not mean indiscriminate giving. Sometimes giving can promote shiftlessness and laziness and just plain dishonesty. For example, just recently a man came to me asking for money for an urgent trip. I told him that I could not give him money, but I could have him charge some gas to me at the gas station. When the gas station gave me the bill, it was for a total of \$22.75 for gas and oil and \$11 in cash. The man had lied about our agreement.

On another occasion, a beggar came to a lady’s door and asked for something to eat. She gave him a sandwich and he was later seen throwing it away. Perhaps he preferred cheese. Things like this make us mad and tend to make us lose faith in human nature, but as Christians we should be happy to risk wasting our kindness on a few frauds rather than risk failing the neighbor who is in real need.

And now, about loving our enemies and praying for our persecutors: The Greek word for love that is used here is agape, which means unbeatable good will. In the case of those near and dear to us, love is easy. We can’t HELP loving them; in some cases we fall in love with them.

But having unbeatable good will

toward those who hurt us and whom we do not like, is a victory of the will. To cast out the anger and bitterness and resentment that would only eat on us, and to have a Christ-like love for all men is possible only with the help of Christ’s grace. But we CAN all do it. And we MUST all say to ourselves, “I am a Christian, so this means me.”

As far as praying for one’s persecutors is concerned, prayer that is sincere includes good will toward the one prayed for. Asking God’s blessing on one who is tempted to hate cannot help but drive the bitterness away. We cannot always forget, but we can forgive.

Being perfected, as our Heavenly Father is perfect, is accomplished through the love that Christ has taught us, because agape makes the lover like God.

Lord Jesus, thank you for teaching us how to forgive and how to love. Help us to overcome all resentment and hatred and bitterness and replace it with an ever-growing agape. Grant that nothing in life or in death may ever be able to separate us from the love of You. Amen.

Math winner

BAY CITY – Holy Cross Catholic School student Eric Lin has proven himself as one of the top 100 students nationwide for his work in the Mathletics program. He is the only one from the state of Texas in that number, according to the school. He received four platinum certificates and a small trophy for his work.



The Father Charles Kram Project, a non-profit corporation devoted to preserving the memory of Father Charles Kram Jr. and encouraging the promotion of his cause for sainthood, has begun filming interviews with people who knew Father Kram. To see one of the videos, use this link:
www.youtube.com/watch?v=yw57J1TnepY



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Don't undervalue the love of a good friend

Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS



Most of the time when we think of February, we think of Valentine's Day. I see many times on social media how moms have to help their children design Valentine boxes for school. I remember when I was in school, it was as simple as having a paper bag with a heart, not these works of art I see now.

I remember a time before I became a religious sister, when I was at work and would see all these ladies receiving flowers on Valentine's Day. I remember one year it seemed like a competition about who would get the biggest bouquet with the biggest balloon. I was always happy and excited to see people get flowers, because their faces would just light up and their smiles were so beautiful. I didn't like seeing the competitions; I liked seeing how little details seemed to mean the most.

One year, I kept hearing a coworker say all she wanted was a stuffed giraffe for Valentine's Day. I thought it was kind of a weird request when everyone seems to want bears and chocolate besides the flowers. The day came and people were getting these huge bouquets and balloons. (I felt bad for the wallets of the husbands and boyfriends.) Then this coworker received her delivery. It was a half dozen roses and a regular-sized balloon, but attached to it was the cutest little giraffe. She burst into tears and was so happy with her little giraffe, she didn't care what everyone else received. The effort he made to find her the little giraffe was enough for her. I love that memory and I think about it all the time.

Now, as a religious, I don't see the delivery of flowers as often as before. My circle of people is a little different, with mostly priests and religious men and women. We don't have significant others who will send us flowers. On social media, one of those famous TikTok/Instagram priests once posted how Valentine's Day is really Single Awareness Day and made him remember that he goes home alone every night. First, I thought that was a strange thing for a priest to post, and, second: Did he forget how beautiful our vocation is? It's true, we can get lonely at times, but there are times that

people in a relationship can feel lonely.

When I was going through formation, we were taught the value of friendship. I was watching a show and, someone said, "Un buen amigo vale mas que mil amores," which roughly translates to, "A good friend is worth more than a thousand sweethearts." Does that bring down the value of romantic love? No. I believe what it is trying to convey is that, at times, we don't truly value good friendships.

I have heard people say a parent or sibling is their best friend, and that is great as not everyone is born into a beautiful family where they can see their relatives as friends. Yet there is something special, too, about meeting a complete stranger and forming a bond when deciding to allow this person into your life. You will share experiences with this person, make memories, share laughter and tears. This person will become part of your family, even if there is no DNA shared.

I also have a "little giraffe story." Last year, a popular tumbler company released their mint color collection. I was happy with the tumblers I had but I really liked the mint color. Now I had no hope of being able to purchase one, especially when they sell out in about 15 minutes. I mentioned only once how the mint color was pretty and that

mint is my favorite color. After that, I pretty much forgot about it. Then to my surprise, I was given a Valentine's gift from a friend and I thought it would be candy because Valentine's candy is good. To my shock and delight it was the mint tumbler. I cried. Not because I was given the tumbler, but because this friend stayed up late and had other people helping to be able to purchase this tumbler. I did not expect my friend to work so hard in getting this tumbler for me, but because of the effort put into it, I will cherish that tumbler forever. Good thing they are almost indestructible – hopefully like our friendship.

What makes a good friend? A good friend is someone trustworthy, loyal, empathetic, respectful, honest, supportive, non-judgmental and a good listener. A good friend wants you to be the best you can be; therefore, when you are falling, they will bring you back up. They will call out your bad actions, yet they will do these things out of love. Good friends understand each other. Good friends forgive each other. Good friends don't have to see each other every day or even every month, but the moment you need something, they show up. The moment you see each other again

See *Don't undervalue the love*, pg. 7

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In Memoriam

Former finance board member
Roman Shimek passes away

HALLETTSVILLE — Roman John Shimek, former member of the Finance Board of the Diocese of Victoria, passed away peacefully Jan. 2, 2025, at the age of 93. He was born on Dec. 27, 1931, in St. John to Louis and Frances (Kutac) Shimek.



Roman Shimek

Roman married Gertrude Golsch on June 28, 1955. He and Gertie resided in Hallettsville, where they raised their five children. He began his employment at Peoples State Bank. He remained an active member of the board of directors until his passing.

He was a member of the Knights of Columbus Council #2433 and was a past grand knight. He was appointed a member of the Finance Board of the Diocese of Victoria by Bishop Charles Grahmann upon the board's formation. He remained an active member of the board until 2023 and received an award of appreciation from Bishop Brendan Cahill.

Roman is survived by: wife Gertrude; children, Michael, Donald, Kenneth, Melissa, and Gregory; 16 grandchildren and 28 great-grandchildren with three on the way.

To read the complete obituary go to <https://www.kubenafuneralhome.com/obituary/roman-j-shimek>.

Brother DuWayne Brisendine

SAN ANTONIO — Brother DuWayne Brisendine of the Marianist Residence Community died Dec. 18 in San Antonio at the age of 89 with 71 years of religious profession.

DuWayne Brisendine was born on Dec. 13, 1935, in Addison, Mich. He was one of two sons in the family of Edgar and Ardith (Cheesbro) Brisendine.



Brother DuWayne Brisendine

He received his bachelor of science in mathematics at St. Mary's University in San Antonio and began his teaching career at St. Joseph School in Victoria in 1956.

From the very start of their teaching careers at St. Joseph School, Marianist Father Al McMenemy remembers relying on Brother DuWayne's insights and professionalism. "My classroom was right next to DuWayne's, and I remember on a number of occasions asking him for help and advice with the students," Father McMenemy said. "He was always very gracious, going out of his way at times to assist. That was DuWayne. It think this was characteristic of him for the rest of his long teaching career in the many places where he ministered. He could be stern, but always for the sake of the young men."

A memorial Mass was celebrated Dec. 28 at the Marianist Residence Chapel.

To read the complete obituary go to: <https://www.theangelusfuneralhome.com/obituary/bro-duwayne-brisendine-sm>

Don't undervalue the
love of a good friend

Continued from pg. 6

after time apart, you are able to pick up exactly where you left off as if you had just seen that person the day before. If you find someone with these qualities, that is someone you want to keep in your life. If you are lucky enough to have someone with those qualities already in your life, keep them close and cherish that friendship. Also, be sure to look into yourself to see if you are that kind of friend.

This Valentine's Day, when the world is pushing romantic love -- and romantic love is a beautiful thing -- if we don't have that in our lives, let us not be saddened but comforted knowing that we do have the One who is Love in our life. When Jesus talks about His love for us, He calls us His friends: "No longer do I call you slaves, for the slave does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends,

because all things that I have heard from My Father I have made known to you." (John 15:15) "Greater love has no one than this, that a person will lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13) So let us also remember that friendship is also a very beautiful thing.

"Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres. Love never fails ..." (1 Corinthians 13:4-8)

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



Contributed Photo

KCs give to St. Michael-Weimar

WEIMAR – Knights of Columbus Council #2153 continually support St. Michael Catholic School with funds acquired through fundraising efforts by its membership. Members of the KCs have a strong commitment to enhancing their parish school. The members recently voted to donate \$5,000 to St. Michael Catholic School for the needs within the school and to support the teachers with their respective needs and continual growth of this school. Shown here are Francis Janacek, Council #2153 treasurer; Judy Roeder, St. Michael's principal; Joe Jimenez, Council #2153 grand knight; and Stephen Helmcamp, Council #2153 financial secretary.

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Diocese of Victoria
Youth and Young Adult Ministry



**Strength for the Journey
to host retreat**

Strength for the Journey will host a retreat on Saturday, March 8, in the St. Gabriel Room of the Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center, 3201 N. Laurent St. in Victoria. This retreat is for parents whose children have passed away. It will be 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Registration fee is \$10 per person and snacks and lunch are provided. Preregistration is required and can be completed at www.victoriadiocese.org/grief-support or scan the QR code.

A Grief Ministry for Parents whose children have died

Strength for the Journey

Pathways with Patti
Let's Travel Together in 2025!

Join us for lunch at our
Monthly Travel Meeting on
Thursday, February 27, 2025
Sky Restaurant in Victoria (77904)
11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Dutch Lunch
We look forward to seeing you!

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Best of Eastern Canada

Christmas Holiday in New York

Spotlight on South Dakota

2025 Group Tour Brochures available on website or email for more information.

Laurie Eder
Victoria, TX
925-285-6658

For Trip Details See Website:
pathwayswithpatti.com, scan qr code or
Email: gowithlaurie@gmail.com



Here is a list of speakers for the SWLC Study Week

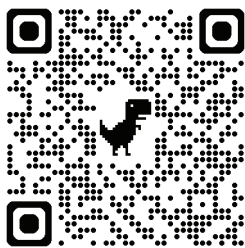
Feb. 5-8 • Holy Family, Victoria

<https://swlc.org/study-week-2025>

Continued from pg. 2

- **Kenneth J. Griesemer & Associates**
 - **Father Dat Hoang**
Pastor, St. Faustina Church
(Fulshear, TX)
 - **George Hoelzeman**
Artist, Designer and Consultant,
G.R.Hoelzeman Studios
 - **Charleen Katra**
Executive Director, National Catholic
Partnership on Disability
 - **Barbara Kielaszek**
Committee Member, Ministry with
Persons with Disabilities, Archdiocese
of Galveston-Houston
 - **Father Jacob Koether**
Episcopal Vicar for Evangelization and
Catechesis; Pastor of Our Lady of
Sorrows and Santísima Trinidad
(Victoria, TX)
 - **Peter Kolar**
Senior Editor, Spanish and Bilingual
Resources, GIA Publications, Inc.
 - **Brian Lennox**
Director of Faith Formation, St.
Faustina Church (Fulshear, TX)
 - **Father Mike Lewis**
Administrator, Most Holy Trinity
Church & School (El Paso, TX)
 - **Father Norbert Maduzia**
Pastor and Episcopal Vicar St. Ignatius
of Loyola Church (Spring, TX)
 - **Anne McGuire**
Professor, College of St. Mary
 - **Father Jacob Mendoza**
Pastor, St. Michael Church (Cuero, TX)
 - **Father Ivan Montelongo**
Judicial Vicar/Vocations Director
Diocese of El Paso
- **Daniela Muneton**
Liturgy Coordinator, Archdiocese of
Denver
 - **Lois Paha**
Formation Director, Diocese of Tucson
Pastoral Center
 - **Margaret Adams Parker**
Liturgical Artist and Theological
Educator Virginia Theological Seminary
 - **Sarah Romero**
Associate General Counsel,
Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston
 - **Leon Strieder**
Seminary Professor, St. Mary’s
Seminary (Houston, TX)
 - **Rita Thiron**
Executive Director, Federation of
Diocesan Liturgical Commissions
 - **Teresa Vincent**
Music teacher, music minister, and
choir director Our Lady of Victory
Catholic School
 - **Dr. Joseph White**
Associate Publisher, Catechetical
Resources OSV Publishing

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THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 27

Let's taco 'bout babies



The Gabriel Project 4th Annual Bingo Benefit
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St. Rose of Lima School building getting updated

SCHULENBURG – The main building at St. Rose of Lima School turns 95 years old this year, but it still has good bones. And the school will give it some modern updates while keeping its historical integrity.

Rosanne Gallia, principal, said, “Over the years we have kept up as much as we can with making repairs and putting in lines for technology.”

But cracks in the walls and other problems due to moisture seeping through the buildings bricks have led to a need for more work. The school put together a community to see if renovation was possible and engineers checked to see if it was structurally sound. Because its skeleton and floor joists are solid, the school can keep the building and make the following improvements – replace subfloor, update electrical, HVAC and plumbing, put in new windows and insulation, level the sidewalks, seal the exterior brick and replace interior walls.

After the initial talk of upgrades, donors came on board with funds to get the project started. Gallia said they have a very organized committee of 12 people.

She said the project will mean bigger classrooms, a larger science lab and better ADA accessibility.

Gallia said the security of the school will be improved as well because some of the exit doors will be removed and the entrance will include a vestibule for visitors and one entry point. “We still have enough exits to satisfy the fire code,” she said.

The school is mindful about having

the original look of the building when the upgrades are made.

To date, the school has a \$1.65 million commitment and need to raise \$3 million total. When they get to \$2.3 million – 80 percent of the total – they can begin the work.

Gallia has been principal of the school for 19 years and also spent 16 years at Sacred Heart in Hallettsville as principal. She is retiring this year, but will remain on the committee for the renovation.

In a letter to potential benefactors, Gallia wrote, “It has been a pleasure to be part of the rich St. Rose history and to experience progressive growth over the last 19 years including technology updates, curriculum alignment, early childhood center and increased security measures. ... This renovation will preserve, enlarge, update and improve the safe educational environment of all students and teachers who walk the halls for the next generation.”

Father Jasper Liggio, pastor of St. Rose parish, wrote in a letter to stakeholders, “As your pastor, my vision is to ensure that St. Rose School continues to flourish as a spiritual heartbeat within our community, but now and for the next 135 years. The upcoming school remodel will further strengthen our mission to teach and evangelize our children and families far into the future. Education is among the most valuable gifts we can provide our children, and it is both a privilege and a responsibility for families and the Church to steward these gifts wisely. ...”

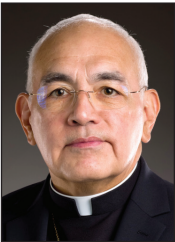
Pope Francis appoints Bishop Joe Vásquez as archbishop of Galveston-Houston

HANNAH BROCKHAUS
Catholic News Agency

In an important move for the Catholic Church in Texas on Monday, Pope Francis named Austin Bishop Joe Vásquez to replace 75-year-old Cardinal Daniel DiNardo as head of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston.

DiNardo, who was made a cardinal in 2007 and who led the U.S. bishops’ conference as president from 2016 to 2019, turned 75 — the standard retirement age for Catholic bishops — in May 2024.

The 67-year-old Vásquez is returning to the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston,



Bishop Joe
Vásquez

where he served as an auxiliary bishop from 2002 to 2010. The bishop is coming back to the archdiocese almost exactly 15 years after moving 160 miles to the northwest to lead the Diocese of Austin.

The Mexican-American bishop also served as apostolic administrator of the Diocese of Tyler from November 2023 to December 2024, after Pope Francis removed Bishop Joseph Strickland.

The Metropolitan Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston serves 1.7 million Catholics in 146 parishes across 10 counties in southeastern Texas. Houston is the fourth-largest city in the U.S. According to the archdiocese, the local Church is multicultural, with members coming from every

See Pope Francis appoints, pg. 9



Pope Francis appoints Bishop Joe Vásquez as archbishop of Galveston-Houston

Continued from pg. 8

An attendee of the 2023 Advocacy Day at the State Capitol holds up an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe in front of the platform where the Texas bishops gathered to address the faithful. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

continent. Liturgies are held in 14 different languages.

Vásquez, whose seminary education included five years in Rome studying at the Pontifical Gregorian University, was ordained a priest for the Diocese of San Angelo in 1984. He grew up the oldest of six children in the small town of Stamford in west-central Texas. Vásquez has served as a consultant to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities and as lead bishop for Region X for the V National Encounter for Hispanic/Latino Ministry.

Advocacy Day in Austin set for April 1

Continued from pg. 1

The TCCB has issued a list of its priorities for the 89th legislative session this year and the topics broadly include:

- Life and family life issues such as supporting alternatives to abortion, opposing gender ideology and supporting proposals that recognize the sanctity of marriage.
- Immigration reform, encouraging policies that are “targeted, proportional and humane.”
- Restorative justice, including the end of the death penalty and the concern for the needs of victims and compassionate treatment of prisoners.
- Education, including supporting the autonomy of private schools, opt-in policies for human sexuality instruction, security and safety for all students, elimination of the STAAR testing for public school students and prioritization of the poor and vulnerable.
- Healthcare initiatives such as affordable access to healthcare and respecting the dignity of patients and more mental healthcare resources.
- Maintaining religious liberty protections.
- Social concerns regarding the needy and disabled.
- Care for creation such as environmental policies that protect and make best use of resources.

To learn more about what the TCCB does and more details about their concerns for the 89th legislative session, visit www.tccb.org.



Contributed Photos

A season for giving

The students of St. Rose of Lima Catholic School in Schulenburg held their annual Christmas Service Project donation collections up until the Christmas holidays. Grades 3K, 4K and 5K collected for the local And Then non-profit organization that works with young adults to help them find meaningful purpose in life. Grades one through four donated new toys the Fayette County Sheriff’s Department’s Deputy Santa Program to help less fortunate children in the area. And grades four through eight collected items for the Gabriel Project of the Crossroads which helps protect the unborn by providing emotional, material, and spiritual support to pregnant women and their families in need.



Show them you’re a Christian with love that looks like a cross

The first time I went to Guatemala on the mission trip that is now “Coram Deo,” I didn’t know what to expect. I understood that it was something of an orphanage and that there were Franciscans who ran it and people who lived there. Beyond that, I didn’t know what I was getting myself into. When I finally saw the residents, I sadly have to admit that I was taken aback. The large number of people with extreme special needs, almost all of them in wheelchairs and non-verbal, was a little overwhelming. Though childlike, not all of them were

children, and were of all ages into adulthood. Lined up in the hallways, and in room after room, nurses hand fed the residents, cleaned them up, and comforted those who

In Communion

By Very Rev. Jacob
Koether



were distressed and yelling. What could we do? How could we interact with them? What was our mission? What impact could we have?

But, all my fears were put to rest when I saw them worshipping in Mass. What I had thought was a large group of people locked inside themselves, unable to understand anything we were doing, was anything but. The moment the first song started, everyone, each in their own ways and to their ability, cried out to the Lord in a jubilant chorus of praise. I couldn’t understand what they were saying in their song, but they knew that God could. He was with them in their extreme needs and loved them intensely. And they knew it and thanked Him for it. They experienced it daily in their caregivers, in the sacraments, in prayer, in the presence of the Franciscans, and in all the guests who came to shower affection on them. My understanding of the mystery that God is love changed for me then and became something much more real.

In the month of February, all the advertisements and stores seem only to be about Valentine’s Day and “love.” Usually, though, popular culture’s understanding of love is as sugary as the candies and as empty as the cards they push us to buy. Love looks a lot more like what I saw in Guatemala, which is a lot more like what Jesus shows us on the cross. Love is messy, sacrificial, humble, a choice; it doesn’t always smell good; it can make us uncomfortable. True love like this – received or given – can enlighten our understanding of who God is. Even more, it can break down walls we put up in front of Him and can help us to live Christian discipleship more fully and authentically.

I believe sometimes we can forget just how big of an impact works of love and mercy can have on people. Mass and class, sacraments and sacrament prep, Bible and book studies – these are not the only ways to hand on the faith. Love lived in real ways is sometimes more important for a person to grow in their relationship with the Lord or make that first step.

I sometimes wonder if this is something we neglect as an intentional pastoral strategy with regards to evangelization, whether we’re trying to make new disciples or persuade people to stay and make the faith their own. I’m thinking especially of youth and young adults. All of us know someone who has left the Church, and we’ve all heard the stories about “not getting anything out of the Mass” or “not knowing why we do what we do.” I have seen spiritual apathy in the faces of too many.

But something that can shock a person out of the experience of a vapid faith is the challenge of trying to meet the needs of someone whose problems are beyond our capacity to fix. In those moments of extreme need, we begin to see our need for God. Mass becomes a lot more understandable and valuable when you are forced to embrace the cross of your neighbor and help them carry it. The power of the Holy Spirit stops being an abstract idea when you’re the one God calls to bring healing and mercy to a person stuck in every form of abject poverty.

True love gives flesh to our faith. For someone who’s struggling with holding onto their faith, perhaps God is calling them to give it away to others through tangible actions of service. They might be surprised to receive that faith back in greater portion. For someone who’s struggling to see the reality of the faith or to accept a relationship with the Lord, perhaps God wants to shower affection on them through the loving service of another and to experience the care of Jesus through His mystical Body. We might be surprised at how quickly they give their lives to Him.

Many people are wondering about the significance of our faith. What does it mean to follow Jesus? What does it mean to be Christian? They’ll know it by our love.

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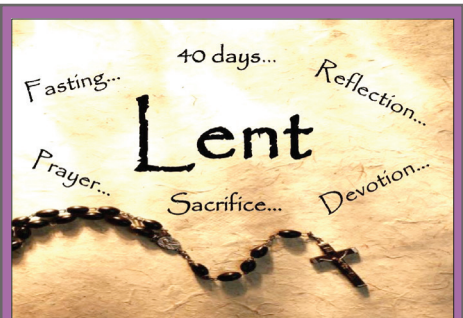
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Lent begins with Ash
Wednesday, March 5

‘Fan the flame of hope’ by showing that faith is reasonable

At Your Service

By Deacon Michael Tankersley



“We must fan the flame of hope that has been given us and help everyone to gain new strength and certainty by looking to the future with an open spirit, a trusting heart and far-sighted vision. The forthcoming Jubilee can contribute greatly to restoring a climate of hope and trust as a prelude to the renewal and rebirth that we so urgently desire” — Pope Francis Jubilee 2025 announcement

I have been slow to dive into the waters of the 2025 Jubilee Year of Hope. I’m still wading in the pool of my “must do” list for 2024. However, a recent encounter at the pharmacy pulled me into the Jubilee waters as I waited for my order of meds alongside a casual acquaintance. We exchanged pleasantries, shared a few “old times” stories, and found out we were both picking up pills for similar heart ailments.

After asking if I was still involved in “religious stuff,” and after my affirmative response, he said, “Well I think it’s good for some people who can have that trust. Me, I can’t trust that way. I just don’t place my hope in someone or something I don’t know ... someone invisible to me that’s just out there somewhere.”

His was a casual, non-combative comment that invited my response in kind: “Well, if you look a little deeper, you will find that you do trust plenty of people you don’t really know and do place faith in many who are just out there somewhere. And you do it every day. You trust the chemist who formulated your meds and the doctor who prescribed them for you. You trust the mechanic to do what you don’t know how to do to keep your car in safe working condition. You place faith in the pilot every time you board a plane and hope in the unknown driver of that 18-wheeler to stay on his side of the road. When the waiter brings your food, you don’t send it out for a toxicology report

before you eat it. Instead you trust that the unknown cook hasn’t laced it with poison or presented contaminated food. You and I both regularly and casually place trust in unknown and fallible people each day. We both trust them to do for us what we don’t know ourselves. For me, if I can do that for the lesser things ... if I can have so much faith in so many fallible people to help my life, I have no problem in going all in on trusting the infallible God who gave me life.”

Understand that my comment was not intended — or delivered — in a confrontational manner. Nor did his reaction indicate that it was received as such. However, in order to “fan the flame of hope that has been given us” as Christians, we do need to confront the fallacies of the “anti-faith” and “reason instead of religion” mindset that fills the air.

This “anti-faith” (and thereby anti-religion) bias flows in part from the shift of the valid pursuit of science (the systematic study of our natural world) into the perversion of “scientism” which reduces all knowledge to what is measurable and observable. While true science regards love and beauty, truth and faith as beyond its scope, scientism rejects their validity because they can’t be measured and quantified.

Followers of this mindset project themselves as enlightened rationalists -- free-thinkers who have thrown off the shackles of superstition and myth that chain the minds of the religious faithful. And friends, do not think that these anti-faith biases are shared only in the halls of academia. The spirit of scientism can be found in the young who have been seduced by the extraordinary successes of the physical and technological sciences. It can be seen in the “progressive” television sit-coms that portray those involved with “religious stuff” as simpletons. It can be heard even while waiting in line at the pharmacy.

I struggle to find patience for those in the “prove it” crowd who claim to reject God and religion and faith on the grounds that they are logic-based and driven only by objective, measurable facts. My patience is challenged not simply because their mindset is wrong, but that it is held with hypocrisy. I venture to say that any and every one of this crowd does believe

in and does hold dear what they cannot measure and prove: the love of a spouse or child, the beauty of song or art or sunrise, the wonder of thought, and the reality of sorrow and regret. None of these are quantifiable or logic-based. To reject religion on the grounds that it is only “faith based” would require anyone who is truly in the

“logic based, prove it” camp to reject all things that require trust and faith and hope. But every aspect of human activity is a faith initiative from taking pills to drinking water, from following doctor’s orders to

See ‘Fan the flame of hope’, pg. 12

ST. PROCOPIUS FRIED CHICKEN DINNER

**AT HILLJE PARISH HALL
SUNDAY, MARCH 2, 2025**

\$15/PLATE

**FRIED CHICKEN, WHITE RICE,
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TO GO

**BAKE SALE & RAFFLE
*RAFFLE DRAWING AFTER
PLATES TO GO***



La Semana de Estudio es una oportunidad para profundizar tu participación en ‘la obra de Dios’

Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo
Brendan Cahill



Queridos hermanos y hermanas,
El 11 de octubre de 1992, San Juan Pablo II publicó el Catecismo de la Iglesia católica. En su carta introductoria al Catecismo, San Juan Pablo II escribió: “La principal tarea confiada al Concilio Vaticano II por el Papa Juan XXIII fue la de custodiar y presentar mejor el precioso depósito de la doctrina cristiana, para hacerlo más accesible a los fieles cristianos y a todos los hombres de buena voluntad”.
El Catecismo está estructurado en el “orden tradicional ya seguido por el Cate-

cismo de San Pío V, ordenando el material en cuatro partes: el Credo, la Sagrada Liturgia, con lugar privilegiado para los sacramentos, el estilo de vida cristiano, explicado a partir de los Diez Mandamientos y, finalmente, la oración cristiana”. La sección sobre la Sagrada Liturgia (#1066-1690) se titula “La celebración del misterio cristiano” y enseña que la palabra liturgia en la tradición cristiana “significa la participación del Pueblo de Dios en ‘la obra de Dios’”.
Este mes celebraremos la Semana de

Estudio anual de la Conferencia Litúrgica del Suroeste del 5 al 8 de febrero en la Iglesia Católica de la Sagrada Familia en Victoria. Los participantes de esta Semana de estudio vendrán de todas partes del Suroeste y del Oeste del país. El objetivo de la Semana de estudio de cada año es brindar oportunidades para que todos reflexionemos más profundamente sobre lo que significa participar activamente en la obra de Dios.
El sitio web www.swlc.org presenta a todos los oradores y temas que se tratarán durante la Semana de Estudio. Uno de los temas principales será cómo celebrar nuestras liturgias para que las personas con discapacidades puedan participar más plenamente. Una de las oradoras principales, Charleen Katra, es la presidenta de la Asociación Católica Nacional sobre Discapacidad y tiene una larga experiencia en la enseñanza y en brindar formas prácticas

para mejorar nuestras aulas y nuestras iglesias. Espero con ansias su charla y también una Misa especial el jueves por la noche, 6 de febrero, en la Sagrada Familia, que se denomina una “Misa sensorialmente amigable”.
Nuestra participación en la Misa dominical y en cada sacramento es una participación en el poder sanador de Jesucristo realizado a través de Su Pasión, Muerte y Resurrección. ¡Esta es la “obra de Dios” que tenemos la bendición de compartir en cada celebración litúrgica de la Iglesia Católica!
Que Dios los bendiga a ustedes y a sus familias con su paz y alegría, y que crezcamos cada día en nuestra confianza en la presencia de Dios entre nosotros.
Oremos unos por otros.

+Brendan

Save the date for an EPIC ‘Gen-Hope’ event

No matter what family life looks like for you, the Diocese of Victoria plans to celebrate it June 14 at the El Campo Civic Center during the EPIC Family Gathering. This event is taking the place of the traditional annual Catholic conference and is designed differently to demonstrate the benefit it can have for anyone and everyone who wants to dive a little deeper into their Catholic faith.

The committee for the EPIC (engaging, practical, interactive and Catholic) event has been carefully crafting the events of the day to ensure that all people feel that they are a part of the Church that desires to bring them ever closer to the fellowship and communion that can be found within Her.

The keynote speaker for the day is Father David Michael Moses of the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. Moses is a young priest whose youthful energy attracts all ages. He has gained a following on YouTube giving spiritual reflections and advice as well as showing off his skills as a skateboarder, musician and entertainer.
Father Moses’ session at the EPIC

event is titled “Gen-Hope: God’s Blueprint for a Faithful Family.” Through captivating stories, humor, music and video, he will explore the foundations of faithful family life. He states that, “this lively session aims to inspire families to cultivate a Christ-centered home. Expect laughter, heartfelt moments and practical insights that will encourage a deeper connection within families and with God.”

The day also will have breakout sessions and activities for children as well as adults and will be bilingual.

“As we prepare for The EPIC Family Gathering, Bishop Cahill invites all families to mark their calendars to join in

on this major diocesan family event. At the EPIC Family Gathering, we will celebrate ‘family,’” according to Christella Alvarez, director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry. “There will be time for families to explore and engage in practical interactive events, which will reflect the value of Christian family life. Gathering as families of faith, there will be fun, fellowship, and lots of food.”
The event begins at 8 a.m. and continues to 3:30 p.m. Registration has not yet

open, but anyone interested should watch for future announcements in *The Lighthouse* and on Facebook and the Diocese of Victoria website www.victoriadiocese.org. The committee is continuing to work on the day’s schedule of events and other important details of the day, so more information will be released as soon as possible.
“Today, most of us are pulled in many directions; there are many options, and many opportunities, which can be beneficial, and the EPIC Family Gathering is one such event,” Alvarez said.



**Workshop
cancelled**

VICTORIA — The Amor Meus Spirituality Center staff at Incarnate Word Convent, has regretfully announced that the March 1 caregiver workshop/retreat entitled “Life After Caregiving” has been cancelled.

‘Fan the flame of hope’ by showing that faith is reasonable

Continued from pg. 11

trusting in God. But isn’t there a difference between trusting in a doctor and trusting in the existence of God, you ask? There is, and therein lies the rub. To place trust and hope in God begins with the acceptance that I am not the center of the world; that I am not in control; that there is Truth beyond and higher than the petty “truth” I want.
Trading in “my will be done” for “Thy will be done” is not an exchange that many are willing to make. Instead, many will

choose the path that leads to an impoverished spirit, distrusting heart and short-sighted vision of doubt rather than “*open spirit, a trusting heart, and farsighted vision*” of hope. This is our call in this Jubilee Year of Hope: to “*fan the flame*” of hope that can lead to the immeasurable joy of life in the transcendent good and true and beautiful — to “*fan the flame*” of trust that “there is a power already at work in you that can do infinitely more than you can ask or imagine.” (Eph. 3:20)

Blessing of New Life

Birth is an elusive mystery: an everyday occurrence in nature and rural life that is nonetheless marvelous to behold. Its wonder and splendor are fresh with each new entrance into creation. At the appointed time, a universal labor of intense energy opens the womb of Nature’s gate-way and ushers into the world an innocence and hope that is always a gift.

In a moment of revelation, we are privileged to witness and perhaps assist the birth of the latest member of our renewing world. Hand in hand with the Creator, we grasp the rhythm of new life, new breath and new hope.

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

OPENING PRAYER

Let us pray: Lord of life and birth, you enter our lives through gentle messengers, infants of earth with greetings from heaven. May your unending array of hope and promise never fail to move us with awesome wonder and tender love. Teach us to serve your crea-tures with gratefulness and marvel. Give us a sensitivity to the fragile web of creation and the wonder of the miracle of life. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

SONG OF PRAISE: Verses from Psalm 139 (13-14, 15) and Psalm 71 (5-6)

Response: You knit me in my mother’s womb.

You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I praise you, because I am wonderfully made; wonderful are your works! *Response*

My very self you know. My bones are not hidden from you, When I was being made in secret, fashioned in the depths of the earth. *Response*

You are my hope, Lord; my trust, GOD, from my youth. On you I have depended since birth; from my mother’s womb you are my strength; my hope in you never wavers. *Response*

READING: Isaiah 45: 8, 12-13, 18

“Shower, O heavens, from above, and let the clouds rain down righteousness; let the earth open, that salvation and righteousness may bear fruit; let the earth cause them both to sprout; I the Lord have created it.” For thus says the Lord, “I made the earth and created man on it; it was my hands that stretched out the heavens, and I commanded all their host. I have stirred him up in righteousness, and I will make all his ways level; he shall build my city and set my exiles free, not for price or reward,” says the Lord of hosts. For thus says the Lord, who created the heavens, who formed the earth and all its inhabitants: “I am the Lord, and there is no other.”

SELECTIVE READINGS FROM SCRIPTURE:

Genesis 1:24, Isaiah 43:18-19, Isaiah 65:17-25, Colossians 3:9-10, John 3:3, 2 Corinthians 5:17

(People may mention births that have occurred recently or are to happen soon, remem-bering the people and households involved.)

CLOSING BLESSING

Creator God, bless the fresh-born creatures of our land. Oversee their needs with atten-tive care. Bear them into this life as the continuing newness of creation and your faithful cycle of promise and hope.

As you imbue them with the breath of life, breathe the freshness of your Spirit into our labored lungs.

And bless all mothers for their sacrifice of love in your creative partnership, to bring forth your love enfleshed in new life.

We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.



Sunday Readings from Feb. 2 to March 9

Feb. 2 ~ Feast of the Presentation
of the Lord
Malachi 3:1-4
Psalms 24:7, 8, 9, 10
Hebrews 2:14-18
Luke 2:22-40 or 2:22-32

Feb. 9 ~ Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 6:1-2a, 3-8
Psalms 138:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 7-8
1 Corinthians 15:1-11
Luke 5:1-11

Feb. 16 ~ Sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Jeremiah 17:5-8
Psalms 1:1-2, 3, 4 & 6
1 Corinthians 15:12, 16-20
Luke 6:17, 20-26

Feb. 23 ~ Seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time
1 Samuel 26:2, 7-9, 12-13, 22-23
Psalms 103:1-2, 3-4, 8, 10, 12-13
1 Corinthians 15:45-49
Luke 6:27-38

March 2 ~ Eighth Sunday in Ordinary Time
Sirach 27:4-7
Psalms 92:2-3, 13-14, 15-16
1 Corinthians 15:54-58
Luke 6:39-45



March 5 ~ Ash Wednesday
Joel 2:12-18
Psalms 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 and 17
2 Corinthians 5:20—6:2
Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18

March 9 ~ First Sunday of Lent
Deuteronomy 26:4-10
Psalms 91:1-2, 10-11, 12-13, 14-15
Romans 10:8-13
Luke 4:1-13

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

Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign



2025 Diocese of Victoria Men's Conference

Coming March 1
8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center

Featuring
Gabriel Castillo
Expert on Marian devotion and the rosary
and
Most Rev. Brendan Cahill
Bishop of the Diocese of Victoria

... behold, your son

Cost: \$50; bring your son for \$25
After Jan. 31: \$60/\$30
Priests, deacons, seminarians are free
Email: dovmensgroup@gmail.com
or visit dovmen.com



Contributed Photos

CDA grants wishes

VICTORIA – Catholic Daughters Court St. Ann #369 recently donated some “wish list” items to the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament. They donated a refrigerator and H-E-B gift cards. Pictured with the refrigerator are Sister Mary Jean Bludau, Sister Ann Meletio, Sister Bernarda Bludau, and the ladies of Court St. Ann. Receiving the gift cards are Sister Donna Bonorden and Sister Kathleen Goike, local superior.



Safe Environment

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

Contact:

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

and

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

or

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



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

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, 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*.

To date, Elie has created a total of 20 Bible Word Search Puzzle Books that bring scripture to life through engaging puzzles. These books are available for purchase at www.searching-for-jesus.com, on Amazon (search for “Elie Corpus Mejia”), or by calling 361-648-5832. Prices range from \$4.99 to \$19.99, plus tax. Explore her books in the Elie’s Spiritual Treasures series, or purchase directly from her website.

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

New Series Alert! Elie’s latest Catholic Word Search Puzzle Series, *Guided by Grace: Prayers & Scriptures for Daily Inspiration*, is now available on Amazon. Dive into these faith-filled puzzles to enrich your daily life!

Congratulations to Louise Jurena from Yoakum, who was the Dec. 2024 winner. She attends St. John the Baptist Church in Koerth.

FEBRUARY 2, 2025
FEAST OF THE PRESENTATION OF THE LORD
READING II – HEBREWS 2:14–18

A reading from the Letter to the Hebrews: Since the children share in blood and flesh, / Jesus likewise shared in them, / that through death he might destroy the one / who has the power of death, that is, the Devil, / and free those who through fear of death / had been subject to slavery all their life. / Surely he did not help angels / but rather the descendants of Abraham; / therefore, he had to become like his brothers and sisters / in every way, / that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest before God / to expiate the sins of the people. / Because he himself was tested through what he suffered, / he is able to help those who are being tested.

F	E	A	R	S	R	A	T	H	E	R	T	E	S	T	E	D
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I	N	W	I	Y	R	E	V	E	M	S	R	E	T	S	I	S
V	I	H	S	E	L	F	R	E	E	S	D	M	W	L	H	M
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I	T	I	P	F	R	E	E	B	E	C	O	M	E	H	B	I
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G	E	R	S	H	A	R	E	H	I	M	S	E	L	F	C	T

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone number: _____

Parish: _____

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

Meals • Picnics and More

February

VICTORIA – St. Mary’s Parish Festival Feb. 2 at the Victoria Community Center from 10:30 a.m.-3 p.m. A BBQ brisket and sausage, German potatoes, green beans and dessert served from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. at \$14 per plate. Live and silent auctions, cake wheel, games and more.

VICTORIA – Women’s Conference “Hearts of Mercy: Embracing Love for Our Enemies” Feb. 22 at the Cathedral Center featuring Cameron Fradd. For more information, visit www.victoriadiocese.org/events/womens-conference.

VICTORIA – Let’s Taco ‘Bout Babies bingo on Feb. 27, to benefit Gabriel Project and Bethlehem Home, at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Center. See pg. 8 for more information.

March

VICTORIA – The Diocese of Victoria’s 2025 Men’s Conference “...Behold Your Son” will be March 1 at the Cathedral Center from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Bishop Brendan Cahill and Gabriel Castillo will be the keynote speaker. For more information, visit www.DOVmen.com.

VICTORIA – Holy Family Altar Society will host its annual half-day Lenten Mini-Retreat on March 1 following the First Saturday Mass at 8 a.m. in the main church (704 Mallette Dr.). Retreat Leader will be Father Joseph Blackburn, parochial vicar at Our Lady of Sorrows. Coffee and breakfast sweets will be served in St. Peter’s Hall. A light lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. Women and men of all parishes are invited. There is no fee. In order to prepare enough food, we need you to please RSVP by leaving a voice message at 361-576-6508 or by calling Mary Alice Hernandez at 361-571-9726.

VICTORIA – Fr. Dan Morales Endowment Fundraiser, March 1 at Holy Family Activity Center. See pg. 3 for more information.

Save the Date

Join Us for the Diocese of Victoria Women’s Conference

HEARTS OF MERCY

Embracing Love for Our Enemies

2

22

25

\$50 per person Register early by Jan. 3 for a \$10 discount

www.victoriadiocese.org/women

“Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful” -Luke 6:36



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Ministries • Ongoing Activities

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

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

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

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

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

Engaged Encounter – 2025 Dates: Jan. 24-26; April 25-27; Aug. 15-17; and 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 <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.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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



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



Bishop Brendan Cahill holds up a proclamation that named Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church in Dubina a shrine. It was the first church in Texas to be named after the saints. It is also where the Czech Catholic Foundation of Texas was commissioned by Bishop Cahill a few years earlier.

Czech Catholic Foundation plans pilgrimage to shrine in Dubina

DUBINA — On Saturday, Feb. 15, many Texas Czechs will gather at Sts. Cyril and Methodius for annual Czech Catholic Foundation of Texas Mass to commemorate the founding of the organization by the late Marvin J. Marek Sr. and ask God to bless the Foundation’s work.

With the blessing of Father Chase Goodman, the pastor, the 11 a.m. Mass will be celebrated in Czech and English. A combined choir of singers from neighboring parishes, coordinated by Jane Dostal Spakes, will lead the singing of Czech hymns before and during the Mass.

In honor of the missionary work of Saints Cyril and Methodius (a bishop and monk of the Eastern Church), Father Elias Rafaj, CCFT

board member and a Byzantine Rite priest, will sing the Communion hymn taken from the Divine Liturgy of the Byzantine Rite. The offering to be collected at the Mass will serve to benefit Sts. Cyril and Methodius

Church, named a diocesan shrine by Bishop Brendan Cahill three years ago.

After the Mass, all are invited to a covered-dish luncheon in the church hall. Attendees are asked to bring a covered dish to share. After lunch, the board will hold the annual meeting to give a report to the membership about this year’s work of the Czech Catholic Foundation of Texas. All members and prospective members are invited.

For any questions regarding the pilgrimage, contact Father Paul Chovanec, board member, at pchovanec@jmtx.com or 281-556-6116.

For any questions regarding the annual meeting, contact Michael Jaska, CCFT president and chairman at michael@askjaska.com or 832-788-8025.



Saints Cyril and Methodius: Champions of the Gospel - National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception

