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# The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

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November 2023

## USCCB fall meeting to be livestreamed

*Bishops expected to discuss Eucharistic revival, mental health*

### PRESS RELEASE

WASHINGTON -- The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) will gather for the 2023 Fall Plenary Assembly in Baltimore, Nov. 13-16. Throughout the meeting, the bishops will spend time in prayer and fraternal dialogue with one another. Public sessions of the assembly on Nov. 14 and 15 will be livestreamed.

While the meeting agenda has not been finalized, the bishops are anticipating a full schedule that includes a number of items: updates on the 2021-2024 Synod of Bishops, the U.S. bishops' Eucharistic revival initiative and national congress, the Institute on the Catechism, and the recently-launched mental health campaign; a consultation of the bishops on the cause of beatification and canonization of Servant of God Isaac Thomas Hecker, priest and founder of the Missionary Society of Saint Paul the Apostle (the Paulist

*See USCCB fall meeting, pg. 9*



### A reason to celebrate ... a few, really

Rev. Msgr. John Peters, pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville received the F.I.R.S.T-Class Distinguished Alumni Award from St. Michael Catholic School in Weimar. He also recently celebrated his 75th birthday and will soon celebrate his 50th anniversary of priesthood as well as his 30th anniversary at Sacred Heart. He received a standing ovation during the awards ceremony on Oct. 16. To see all the honorees of the F.I.R.S.T-Class awards, see Page 10.



Bishop Brendan Cahill holds the winning entries of a Christmas card art contest for school children in the Diocese of Victoria. From left are entries by Maryclare Bricker, a kindergartener at Holy Cross in Bay City; Ashley Martinez, an eighth-grader at Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca; Layne Besetzny, a seventh-grader at St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg; and Andie Melnar, a fifth-grader from St. Michael in Weimar.

## Children share vision of Baby Jesus in the Eucharist

JANET JONES

*The Catholic Lighthouse*

The Eucharist shines in the image of the Baby Jesus on Bishop Brendan Cahill's chosen Christmas cards this year.

The art for the cards are winning entries of a contest organized

by the Office of Evangelism and Catechesis for the Diocese of Victoria. The inspiration for the contest is the desire to enkindle a deeper Eucharistic devotion through the National Eucharistic Revival of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops. The theme

for the art contest was "O Come Let Us Adore Him," which will be printed on the cards.

Four images were chosen from among dozens sent in to the chan-

*See Children share vision, pg. 11*



# Stay united in prayer, fasting and penance for peace

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Each Wednesday afternoon when he is in Rome, Pope Francis gives a talk and greets pilgrims who have traveled there.

On Wednesday, Oct. 18, he expressed his concern about the situation in the Middle East and the wars in different parts of the world. He asked us to join with men and women from around the world on Friday, Oct. 27, for a day of prayer, penance and fasting for peace.

The following words are published on the website [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va), under the section General Audience of Oct. 18:

## Appeal of the Holy Father

*“Today, too, dear brothers and sisters, our thoughts turn to Palestine and Israel. The number of victims is rising and the situation in Gaza is desperate. Please, let everything possible be done to avoid a humanitarian disaster. The possible widening of the conflict is disturbing, while so many war fronts are already open in the world. May weapons fall silent! Let us heed the cry for peace of populations, of the people, of the children! Brothers and sisters, war does not solve any problem: it*

## A Shepherd’s Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill



*sows only death and destruction, foments hate and proliferates revenge. War cancels out the future. I urge believers to take just one side in this conflict: that of peace. But not with words — with prayer, with total dedication. With this in mind, I have decided to call for a day of fasting and prayer, of penance, on Friday 27 October, to which I invite sisters and brothers of the various Christian denominations, those belonging to other religions and all those who have at heart the cause of peace in the world, to join in as they see fit. That evening, at 6 p.m., at Saint Peter’s, we will spend an hour of prayer, in a spirit of penance, to implore peace in our time; peace in this world. I ask all the particular Churches to participate by arranging similar activities involving the*

*People of God.”*

I realize that I’m writing this before Oct. 27 and you will be reading this after Oct. 27. But I also believe that as we offered our prayers, penance and fasting for particular intentions during the Rosary Congress, we can continue to join our prayers together. We can also invite other people to join us in praying for peace in the world, especially peace in the Middle East, and to ask God’s protection for our military personnel, especially those serving overseas.

Reflecting on the power of our prayer a few years ago, I gave a talk on the reasons we pray and fast.

First, the example of Jesus Himself who prayed and fasted in the desert for 40 days and

nights before beginning his public ministry.

Second, the example of Moses who prayed and fasted for 40 days and nights imploring God’s mercy for the Hebrew people in the desert.

Third, we gain clearer vision when we take away things that may be distracting us from the most important thing – love of God and neighbor.

Fourth, we gain greater compassion with all those who are involuntarily hungry each day. We may choose to give up a meal, but most of the world doesn’t even have that choice.

Fifth, we can learn even more deeply that everything we possess is a gift from God.

May our hearts continue to be united in prayers of Eucharistic Adoration and the rosary, may we offer penances and receive the sacrament of penance, and may we be attentive to the voice of our Lord Jesus, speaking especially in the readings and prayers of the Mass each day.

God bless you and your families. Let’s keep each other in prayer.  
+Brendan

## Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

November		December	
<b>1</b>	8:15 a.m. school Mass and visit with Nazareth Academy at Our Lady of Sorrows Church; Victoria	<b>9</b>	10 a.m. Presbyteral Council Seminary Alumni Day at St. Mary’s Seminary; Houston
	6 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Mary’s Church; Victoria	<b>10</b>	8:05 a.m. School Mass, visit, and veteran’s program at Sacred Heart; Hallettsville
<b>3</b>	Noon, First Friday Mass at the Chancery		God’s Embrace Benefit Dinner; Schulenburg
<b>5</b>	9:30 a.m. Veteran’s Day Mass and Ceremony; Praha	<b>11</b>	10 a.m. Mass for Knights of Columbus 100-year anniversary at Holy Cross; East Bernard
<b>6</b>	12:15 p.m. Mass at UHV; Victoria	<b>11-17</b>	United States Catholic Conference of Bishops meeting; Baltimore
<b>7</b>	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center	<b>18</b>	10:30 a.m. Diocese of Austin 75th Anniversary Mass; Round Rock
	5:30 p.m. Red Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory	<b>19</b>	8:30 a.m. CCD visit with Our Lady of Lourdes; Victoria
<b>8</b>	Kenedy Memorial Foundation Board Meeting; Corpus Christi	<b>20</b>	4:30 p.m. Meal with IWBS Healthcare sisters at IWBS Convent
	6:30 p.m. CCD visit with St. Phillip; El Campo	<b>21</b>	6:30 a.m. Morning Air Radio interview
			9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
		<b>22-24</b>	Chancery Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday
		<b>26</b>	9 a.m. Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory
		<b>27</b>	Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists
			7 p.m. Mass with St. Rose of Lima Spanish Prayer groups; Schulenburg
		<b>28</b>	9 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center
			6 p.m. Deacon’s Community Board Meeting; Hallettsville
		<b>29</b>	8:05 a.m. School Mass and visit with St. Michael’s Catholic School; Cuero
			6 p.m. Mass and then blessing of Resale Shop at Our Lady of Sorrows; Victoria
		<b>30</b>	University of St. Thomas Development Committee meeting; virtual
			6 p.m. Knights of St. Gregory dinner; Colony Creek; Victoria



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## Diocese of Victoria mission:

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



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## Time between synod assemblies may be 'most fertile,' spiritual adviser says

**BY COURTNEY MARES**

*Catholic News Agency*

Father Timothy Radcliffe said Monday that “the most fertile time” of the Synod on Synodality will be the months of “active waiting” leading up to the final 2024 synod assembly. Speaking at the livestreamed opening of the general congregation on Oct. 23, Radcliffe likened the months of waiting between the two synod assemblies to “a pregnancy.”

“In a few days’ time, we shall go home for 11 months. This will be apparently a time of empty waiting. But it will be probably the most fertile time of the whole synod, the time of germination,” the English Dominican said.

“These 11 months will be like a pregnancy,” he added. “We, my brothers and sisters, are pregnant with new life.”

Radcliffe, who serves as the spiritual adviser to the synod, also warned delegates not

*kSee Time between synod, pg. 5*

## Christmas at Sea gift collection

As the holiday season comes again, please consider helping with the Christmas at Sea program at the port in Point Comfort. Your gifts can brighten the life and console a seafarer far away from their family. While these gifts are not fancy or expensive, they are so important to those who receive them. The gifts are a reminder to the seafarers that someone cares about them.

Pack your gifts of love inside a shoe box (no boot or children size boxes, please) or a drawstring ditty bag (about 12”w by 15”h). If the packages are roughly all the same size, hopefully the gifts will be of approximately equal value.

Then wrap boxes securely as one unit in Christmas paper. As there are very few women onboard the ships, we would request that the gifts be packed for male seafarers.

Completed packages can be dropped off between Nov. 1 and Dec. 15 at these locations:

- Diocese of Victoria Chancery, 1505 E. Mesquite Lane, Victoria
- Holy Family Church, 704 Mallette Dr., Victoria
- Our Lady of the Gulf Church, 415 W. Austin St., Port Lavaca
- Russell Cain Real Estate, 2025 TX – 35, Port Lavaca



## Our Lady of Sorrows Knights of Columbus Coat Drive

VICTORIA — During the month of November the Our Lady of Sorrows Knights of Columbus will be collecting new and gently used coats of all sizes for children and adults. Drop off boxes are available at Our Lady of Sorrows Rectory or church entrances.

If you are in need of a coat please come to Our Lady of Sorrows CCD Building (407 S. Glass St.) Dec. 9, from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Coats will be distributed on a first-come first-serve basis. Open to everyone.

For more information contact Deacon Frank Tilley at (361) 649-2167.

## In Memoriam

### Barbara Vahalik's brother Paul passes away

Paul Mark Vahalik, beloved husband of Barbara Dlugosch Vahalik, entered eternal rest on September 24, 2023. He was a devoted husband, father, grandfather and brother. Paul was not only a pillar of strength for his family but also a beacon of love and support.

Paul is survived by his wife, Barbara Fay Dlugosch-Vahalik, his daughter Jennifer and her husband Jason Jurica, his son Mark and his husband Angelo Bonilla, and his son Luke and his wife Melissa Muhlenkamp Vahalik. Paul is also survived by his grandchildren, and siblings Catherine, Dennis, Patricia, Phillip, and Barbara Jo. He is predeceased by his parents and brother, Michael.

Paul was a devout Catholic from a young age, and attended St. Patrick's Church in Bloomington with his parents and siblings, where he often served Mass. He was married at St. Michael Church in Cuero, and he and his wife Barbara have been members of Holy Family Church in Victoria for many years.

### Sister Emiliana Grafe's brother Ervin dies

Ervin Victor Grafe (Erv), 86, passed away peacefully on Friday, Oct. 6, 2023. He was born on Dec. 25, 1936, to Victor and Lena (Grahmann) Grafe in the family farmhouse near Hallettsville. He attended Sacred Heart School where he met his future wife, Mary Rose, when he was in the third grade.

Erv and Mary Rose married in 1958 and he studied for his engineering classes while bouncing their first child on his knee, working his way through school, and spending weekends and summer vacations with the Texas National Guard.

Erv was a devout Catholic and was an active member of Corpus Christi parish for 60 years.

Erv is survived by his beloved wife; four siblings: Dorothy Bujnoch (late George), Sister Emiliana, Tony (Diane), and David (Pam); his children, Marilyn Lacey (Tony), Linda Shook (Allen), Gerald (Lynda), and Tricia Murphy (Dennis); 12 grandchildren, 24 great-grandchildren (plus 2 on the way).

Funeral Mass was celebrated at Corpus Christi Church in Houston. Rite of Committal took place at Sacred Heart Cemetery in Hallettsville. In lieu of flowers the family requests donations be made to Corpus Christi Catholic Church or School (Houston) or Sacred Heart Catholic Church or School (Hallettsville).

To read the full obituary go to [www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/bellaire-tx/ervin-grafe-11486823](http://www.dignitymemorial.com/obituaries/bellaire-tx/ervin-grafe-11486823)

- Mikes on Main Café, 458 Main St., Palacios
- St. Robert Bellarmine Church, 512 Tegner St., El Campo
- Packard Law Center, 523 N. Main St., Schulenburg
- Point Comfort Seafarers Center – reservations required to pass through port security.

Visit our webpage [www.ptcomfortsc.org/christmas-at-sea/](http://www.ptcomfortsc.org/christmas-at-sea/) to learn more.

For more information email Rhonda at [stellamaris@olgulf.org](mailto:stellamaris@olgulf.org) or text her at 361-987-0569 for any questions, other arrangements, or reservations to visit the Seafarers Center inside the Port in Point Comfort. Suggested gift items are: band-aids; shampoo; body wash; deodorant; tissues; Q-tips; chap stick; lotion; powder; razors; shaving cream; toothbrush; toothpaste; dental floss; nail clippers/files; hairbrush/comb; wet wipes; Texas souvenir; sewing kit; ink pens; crew socks; t-shirts (medium or large); ski or ball cap; small games; gloves; picture postcards; snack crackers; non-perishable snacks; chips; nuts; M&M candies; trail mix; chewing gum; hard candies; microwave popcorn; cheap sunglasses; bait rigs; playing cards; flashlight w/batteries; fridge magnets.



## 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

Georgia Cerny  
*In Memory of Stuart Krischke*

### Acolyte

Catholic Life Insurance  
Brance #51

Carl, Kari, Ellie & Laynie Prihoda  
*In memory of Andrew Srubar*

### Candidate

Family & Friends  
*In memory of Stuart Krischke*

### Transitional Deacon

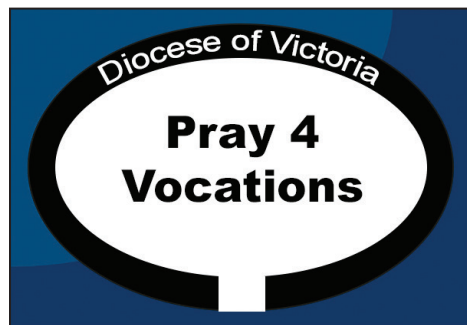
### Priest

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

**Aaron Padilla** is in Theology IV this year at St. Mary's Seminary, in Houston. His birthday is Nov. 15. Aaron's home parish is Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria. Write to Aaron at: St. Mary's Seminary, 9845 Memorial Dr., Houston, TX 77024.

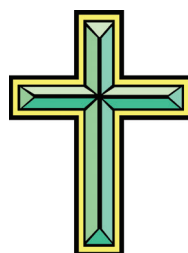


*Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria,*

Prayer from St. Augustine  
Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy.  
Act in me, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy.  
Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit that I love but what is holy.  
Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is Holy.  
Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

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

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



*"May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace"*

## 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 bourse 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 >.**

*October 23, 2023*

### • General Seminary Bourse

*Lector*

Donation in memory of Lois Boysen by Robert and Beatrice Welfl

### • Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner Seminary Bourse

*Candidate*

In loving memory of my brother, Rev. Msgr. James Brunner by LeRoy Brunner

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

*Acolyte*

In memory of Sylvia Kocian, Lydia Pargac, Josephine Schoenherr, Magdalene Potcinski, Marylene Taglibue, Margaret Alvarez, Fred Dorr, Fred Garcia, Richard Scheibelhut and Joseph Talamantes by CDA Ct St Ann, #369

### • Rev. Wayne Flagg and Rev. Philip Brune Seminary Bourse

*Lector*

Donation in honor of Rev. Wayne Flagg's 35th ordination to the priesthood by Jim & Michelle Kubicek

### • Rev. Kristopher L. Fuchs Seminary Bourse

*Lector*

In loving memory of the passing of Lois (Berkovsky) Boysen by Bea Welfl

### • R. J. and Josephine Margaret James Seminary Bourse

*Priest*

Donation in memory and in honor of my parents, R. J. and Josephine Margaret James, by John M. & Barbara A. James

### • Rev. Roman M. Janak & Rev. Msgr. Hubert J. Janak Seminary Bourse

*Lector*

In memory of Joe and Cecelia Fikac from the children of Joe and Cecelia Fikac

### • Rev. Paul P. Kaspar and Parents, John & Frances Babica Kaspar Seminary Bourse

*Acolyte*

In memory of Rev. Paul P. Kaspar, Son of John and Frances Babica Kaspar, by the Kaspar Family Reunion

### • Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Bourse

*Acolyte*

Donation by C.D.A. Court Of Our Lady of the Rosary #1595

### • Donald F. McDonald, Sr. Seminary Bourse #3

*Priest*

Donation by Mrs. Donald (Olivia Grace) McDonald

### • Rev. Dan Morales Seminary Bourse in Honor of his Work for Vocations

Anthony and Rose Marie Trippodo

### • Anthony & Rose Marie Trippodo Liggio Seminary Bourse #2

*Acolyte*

In memory of Mr. Alfonso Martinez by K of C Council 2902, Schulenburg

### • Rev. Msgr. John C. Peters Seminary Bourse #8

*Candidate*

Donation from a friend of religious vocations

### • Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Bourse

*Lector*

In honor of Rev. Michael Rother by Sylvia Peter

### • St. John the Baptist Church, St. John In Memory of Rev. Brian Crookes Seminary Bourse #2

*Lector*

In memory of Darlene Duffin by: Milton and Diane Holub  
Lorena Kubenka  
Leo and Joyce Janda  
Ralph and Bonnie Besetzny  
Eugene and Jo Marie Krupala

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

*Acolyte*

Donation by C.D.A. Court of Our Lady of the Rosary #1595

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

Diocese Of Victoria  
**Seminary Endowment Fund**  
P. O. Box 4070  
Victoria, TX 77903

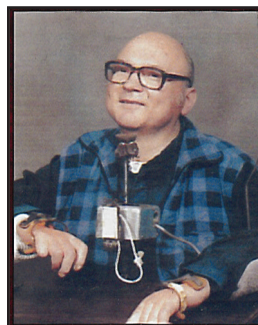
# One day God will answer ‘Why?’ so give thanks now

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** Father Kram wrote this sermon for the 30th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle B. He titled it “To See or Not to See.”

What is worse, to be physically helpless like many in the nursing home or to be deaf or to be blind? I have heard people say, “I sure hope I never get to the point where I have to depend on others and can’t do anything for myself.”

Advocates of abortion and euthanasia say, “Let’s do away with the unwanted babies before they are born and with the elderly when their productive lives are over.”

The deaf are in a special predicament. They live in a world of silence. They cannot hear the voices of others or the sound of



1929-2000

## Father Charles Kram Corner

music or talking book records.

The blind have to feel their way around or be led by others or by dogs.

In the face of all these things, some would say, “That’s why I can’t believe in God.”

Some evangelists say, “Write to us, and we will pray for your healing.”

Politicians say, “Elect us, and the government will provide.”

But the fact remains that God is still in charge of the universe and nothing escapes his kindly providence. Although miracles are few and far between, and the promises of politicians are often valid only until the election, God is still able to make all things work together for the good of those who love Him and for His final glory.

So, what if our bodily ailments make life more complicated with every passing year? What if our diminishing usefulness makes others resent and avoid us? What if God’s purpose for us becomes more and more dif-

ficult to understand?

We could idle our time away, waiting for something to happen, but the Christian tries to change for the better those things that he can; he patiently endures those things that he cannot; he trusts in God’s kindly purpose through it all.

A hundred years from now, none of us will be alive and God will have shown us why the things we now have to endure had to be the way they were, and we will rejoice.

One more thing we Christians can -- and should -- do often is to express our gratitude to God for all that He has given us. In fact, one of the best ways of ensuring God’s favor in the future is to say often, “Thanks, Lord, for all your past favors.”

We must keep trying. We must keep looking ahead. We must be trustful and thankful.

*Lord Jesus, thank you for taking care of us in so many ways, sometimes even by miracles. Help us always, in good times and in bad, in sickness and in health, always to trust in you. Grant that our faithfulness in our own struggles and in our efforts to help others in theirs, may lead to much happiness in this life and in the life to come. Amen.*

## Time between synod assemblies may be ‘most fertile,’ spiritual adviser says

*Continued from pg. 3*

to speak negatively when they return home from Rome, quoting St. Paul’s letter to the Ephesians: “Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths” (Eph 4:29).

Little has been made public regarding what will take place between the two synod assemblies. Synod spokesman Paolo Ruffini has confirmed that the [synod delegates] attending this month’s assembly will be returning to Rome next year for the October 2024 synod assembly. Synod organizers have also said that a new Instrumentum Laboris, or working document, for the 2024 assembly will be written based, in part, on the synthesis document produced at the end of the 2023 gathering.

Radcliffe described the gap between the synod assemblies as “a time of active waiting,” noting that it will be “hard for many people to understand what we are doing.”

“When we go home, people will ask, ‘Did you fight for our side? Did you oppose those unenlightened other people?’ We shall need to be profoundly prayerful to resist the temptation to succumb to a party-political way of thinking,” he said. “That would be to fall back into the sterile, barren language of much of our conflictual society. It’s not the synodal way. The synodal process is organic and ecological rather than competitive. It’s more like planting a tree than winning a

battle.”

Radcliffe encouraged the delegates to reflect on how their words can “nurture the tender plant that is the synod” after leaving the 2023 assembly. “Will we speak fertile, hope-filled words, or words that are destructive and cynical? Will our words nurture the crop or be poisonous? Will we be gardeners of the future or trapped in old sterile conflicts? We each choose,” he told the delegates.

Radcliffe is one of two “spiritual assistants” who helped to lead the meditations for the retreat and the prayers throughout the synod assembly this month, along with 79-year-old Mother Maria Grazia Angelini.

Angelini told the synod delegates in her spiritual reflection at the start of the final week of the assembly that the synod meeting has been a “month of sowing,” like Jesus’ parable of the sower.

“Today -- in a culture of striving for supremacy, profit, and ‘followers,’ or escapism -- the patient sowing of this synod is, in itself, like a deeply subversive ... and revolutionary act,” the Italian sister said. “Thus, the synod seems to me to find itself called to dare a synthesis-as-sowing, to open a path toward a new form, the reform that life itself demands,” she said.

## 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**

- Shannon Thomas, LMSW, 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 contact Shannon Thomas at (361) 827-7186 or [pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org).



## Take time to tend graves

VICTORIA — Resurrection Cemetery will have a cleanup on Saturday, Nov. 18. People who have items they are concerned about are asked to pick them up before the day of the cleanup. For more questions, call the Cemetery department at 361 573-0828.

Also during this month of special prayers for the souls of the dead, a Mass will take place at 7 a.m. on Thursday, Nov. 2, All Souls Day, in Catholic Cemetery No. 3.

The Victoria Catholic Cemeteries Office also has announced that clients are able to make payments for graves, niches or the mausoleum may do so online at [www.victoriadiocese.org](http://www.victoriadiocese.org). Click on “Offices” then go to Catholic Cemeteries and click online payments for your convenience.

Other parishes in the diocese are also asking for help in cleaning and sprucing up Catholic cemeteries in their areas. Look at the church bulletins to see if your church is one of them.



File photo



## St. Robert's royalty

EL CAMPO — St. Robert Bellarmine Parish named their annual King and Queen during a \$10,000 drawdown and coronation dance on Oct. 6. There were four candidates for King and two candidates for Queen and the winner was determined by how many raffle tickets were sold leading up to the event. This was the fifth consecutive year for the King and Queen Contest but the first time having a dinner and dance to crown the winners. Previously, the winners were crowned at the annual church festival. Pictured are 2023 King, Jericho Solis, with parents Kenneth and Jennifer Solis and 2023 Queen, Sofia Rodriguez, with parents Sergio and Samira Rodriguez. They will represent St. Robert's at different events for a year. (Contributed Photos)



## Pope Francis: To evangelize, 'faith must be inculturated'

BY MATTHEW SANTUCCI  
*Catholic News Agency*

Pope Francis in his ongoing catechetical series on apostolic zeal on Wednesday spoke about the example of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, the ninth-century “apostles of the Slavs” whose mission was built on three pillars: unity, inculturation, and liberty.

At the center of the pope's Oct. 25 general audience was an emphasis on the relationship — and harmonization — between culture and faith. This process of inculturation is seen in the example of Sts. Cyril and Methodius, whose task was to “study the culture of those peoples in depth,” the pope said. Pope Francis recounted the story of the two brothers as one of encounter with the Slavic people, who had to confront a “pagan” culture, thereby integrating the faith into the specific, local cultural context.

Sts. Cyril and Methodius, born circa 826 and 815, respectively, hailed from modern-day Thessaloniki, Greece. Pope Francis recalled how the brothers, who came from an aristocratic family, “renounced a political career to devote themselves to monastic life.”

Departing from his prepared remarks, the pope stressed that “faith must be inculturated

and culture must be evangelized. The inculturation of faith, evangelization of culture — always.”

At the center of the saints' effort to evangelize was localizing the faith. For Cyril, this work consisted of developing a native, Slavic alphabet. “Indeed, to proclaim the Gospel and to pray, one needed a proper, suitable, specific tool. So, he invented the Glagolitic alphabet. He translated the Bible and liturgical texts. People felt that the Christian faith was no longer ‘foreign,’ but rather it became their faith, spoken in their mother tongue,” the pope said.

The Holy Father went on to remark: “Just think: two Greek monks giving an alphabet to the Slavs. It is this openness of heart that rooted the Gospel among them.”

“Some opposition emerged on the part of some Latins, who saw themselves deprived of their monopoly on preaching to the Slavs,” he said.

Taking a moment to go off script, the pope emphasized: “That struggle within the Church, always like this.”

“Their objection was religious, but only

*See Pope Francis: To evangelize, pg. 8*

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# Pull over, let Jesus in, and find your destination

Every year, the first full week of November is dedicated to vocation awareness. Many times when we talk about vocations, we think only of priesthood and religious life, but married life and single life are also vocations. One must discern and pray to find out to which vocation God is calling one.

I believe God calls us all to a vocation. Being that it's a calling, we can choose to answer it or not. God gives us that choice. At times, I wonder if it would be easier for us if He did with us like He did with Jonah. When we try to run away from the call He puts us in time out (not necessarily in the stomach of a whale) and brings us back to where we are called. I think our discernment would be so much easier, because then there would be no doubt about where God was calling us. However, now we know that there will not be a whale to swallow us, nor will the Lord come down with all His glory and tell us which vocation to take. He leaves that for us to decide.

When I think of my own vocation story, I compare it to a NASCAR race track. Jesus is standing to the side and I'm trying to drive away from Him as fast as I can, but after a couple of left turns I see Him again asking to be allowed in the car with me. No matter how fast I tried to drive away, I would always

## Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, OVISS



come back around to Him. When I finally picked Him up (said "yes" to religious life), the track changed to a road where the journey was unknown. Though still a little nervous, I knew I wasn't alone. If Jesus was calling me to this, if He thought I could do this, then I told Him that he was going to have to come with me because there was no way I could do it alone.

I think many of us can say that they have heard the call of God to a certain way of life. Obviously, he didn't call us on our cell phone, send us a text message, or create a TikTok video; it's something we feel inside, a certain yearning. Maybe that yearning is to have your own family and, therefore, you are being called to the married life. Or maybe that yearning is something you feel when you see the priest celebrating Mass, or when you see a religious sister in prayer, or

you feel content serving the Lord as a single layperson. These yearnings are the call, but many times fear and social norms make us doubt that we can live the lives to which God is calling us.

So what happens if we do not answer the call? We know that God can make the best of every situation as long as we trust Him and invite Him into our lives. Our lives will still have value, we can still be an instrument God uses to show others His love, and we can still be happy.

When I went on the pilgrimage to Mexico City with Bishop Cahill and a group of people, I remember we went to a church where St. Juan Diego's uncle was cured. This church was built before cars were invented and before the technology we have today, so no microphones or sound system were invented. The church was beautiful, but when we were inside, it was hard to hear because of all the traffic that was happening outside. Our tour guide began to talk to us but his microphone made everything sound garbled. We tried to be good sports about it and just sat closer to him so he didn't have to use the microphone. Then we celebrated Mass and, like I said, the church was beautiful and it was wonderful to be there.

When our reader went up to read, the microphones still made it hard to understand

her, but we had the readings so it was OK. Then she sang and her voice carried beautifully throughout the church. It sounded like the skies had opened up and we were hearing the angels. It was then that I realized that this church was created with singing in mind. It was built where people didn't need microphones, (because, of course, they weren't invented) because they would be singing and the acoustics in the church were created for that.

Was the church still functional? Yes. Was it still beautiful? Yes. Could it still be used for what it was built for? Yes.

Just like us, we would still be functional, still beautiful and still be used for the purpose for which we were created. But if we took the time to discern our true vocation, whichever one it may be, and not settle for what we think is expected of us, just imagine how magnificently beautiful our lives would be.

Magnificently beautiful; not easy.

Therefore, we should also support one another. Pray for vocations, all of them, but especially for the priesthood and religious life in particular in the Diocese of Victoria. Study the discernment process so that you may walk with people who are discerning and understand it. Do not discourage people

*See Pull over, pg. 8*

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## Pope Francis: To evangelize, 'faith must be inculturated'

*Continued from pg. 6*

in appearance: God can be praised, they said, only in the three languages written on the cross: Hebrew, Greek, and Latin," Francis continued. Again departing from the prepared text, the pope excoriated those who opposed their efforts by saying: "These were closed-minded to defend their autonomy." The pope, showcasing Cyril's tenacity and love of God, said: "But Cyril responds forcefully: God wants every person to praise him in their own language."

The theme of unity has been at the center of Pope Francis' pontificate and at the fore of Synod of Synodality, which closes its first session this weekend. In the Sep. 30 public consistory for the creation of cardinals, Pope Francis [reminded] the newly-created cardinals that they were "representing the harmony and synodality of the Church."

"Mother Church, who speaks all languages, is one and is Catholic," he said, stressing that "the faith is transmitted in dialect." Dur-

ing Wednesday's audience, the pope went on to stress that the evangelical mission of Sts. Cyril and Methodius is one rooted in unity, between "the Greeks, the pope, the Slavs."

He continued: "At that time, there was an undivided Christianity in Europe, which collaborated in order to evangelize," the pope said. "Evangelizing culture and inculturation shows that evangelization and culture are closely connected. You cannot preach an abstract, distilled Gospel. No, the Gospel must be inculturated and it is also an expression of culture," the pope said. The saints hold a special place both for the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches. St. John Paul II, the first Slav to become pope, made the saints co-patrons of Europe, alongside St. Benedict, in 1980. They are also venerated in the Eastern Orthodox Churches as "equal-to-apostles," a title given to those saints whose contribution to the spread of Christianity is equivalent in scope and magnitude to the apostles.

## 'Holy orders is reserved for men,' pope tells journalists

BY HANNAH BROCKHAUS

*Catholic News Agency*

Pope Francis reaffirmed the impossibility of women becoming priests, or even modern Church deacons, in an interview for a book released Tuesday in Italy.

The question of whether some women in the early Church were "deaconesses" or another kind of collaborator with the bishops is "not irrelevant, because holy orders is reserved for men," the pope said.

The pope's answers to questions about women's roles in the Church were included in a book published in June in Spanish as "El Pastor: Desafíos, razones y reflexiones sobre su pontificado." The book, whose title means in English "The Shepherd: Struggles, Reasons, and Thoughts on His Papacy," was released in Italian on Oct. 24.

About the possibility of women deacons, Pope Francis pointed out that the diaconate "is the first degree of holy orders in the Catholic Church, followed by the priesthood and finally the episcopate." He said he formed commissions in 2016 and 2020 to study the question further, after a study in the 1980s by the International Theological Commission established that the role of deaconesses in the early Church "was comparable to the benedictions of abbesses."

In response to a question about why he is "against female priesthood," Francis told Argentine journalist Sergio Rubin and

Italian journalist Francesca Ambrogetti, the authors of the book, that it is "a theological problem."

"I think we would undermine the essence of the Church if we considered only the priestly ministry, that is, the ministerial way," he said, pointing out that women mirror Jesus' bride the Church.

"The fact that the woman does not access ministerial life is not a deprivation, because her place is much more important," he said. "I think we err in our catechesis in explaining these things, and ultimately we fall back on an administrative criterion that does not work in the long run."

"On the other hand, with respect to the charism of women, I want to say very clearly that from my personal experience, they have a great ecclesial intuition," he said.

Asked about women's ordination bringing "more people closer to the Church" and optional priestly celibacy helping with priest shortages, Pope Francis said he does not share these views. "Lutherans ordain women, but still few people go to church," he said. "Their priests can marry, but despite that they can't grow the number of ministers. The problem is cultural. We should not be naive and think that programmatic changes will bring us the solution."

"More ecclesiastical reforms do not serve to solve underlying issues. Rather, paradig

## Pull over, let Jesus in, and find your destination

*Continued from pg. 7*

or stand in the way of the vocation choice they believe is for them, but also don't push the vocation you believe is for them. This discernment is between them and God.

If you are discerning your vocation, look for a spiritual director, but, above all, pray. Allow the Lord to get in the vehicle that you call life and ride with you into the unknown, knowing that you are not alone and He will take care of you.

"I am not afraid, for God is with me. I was born for this!" St. Joan of Arc

• Contact Sister Maria del Rosario Resendez by e-mailing her at [bishopsecretary.dov@gmail.com](mailto:bishopsecretary.dov@gmail.com).

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## Scouts can sign up for St. George Trek and explore their vocation

ROCIADA, N.M. – The National Catholic Committee on Scouting is offering an opportunity for high-school-age scouts in Boy Scouts of America (BSA) programs to apply for the 2024 St. George Trek, a 16-day adventure, including 11 days of backpacking in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains at Philmont Scout Ranch in New Mexico.

According to a press release from NCCS, teens experience the sacraments and the Church's life of prayer as they explore the majesty of God's creation – and their vocation. The next St. George Trek is July 3-18, 2024. All eligible teens need to do to get started is to apply online at [www.nccs-vs-a.org/saint-george-trek/](http://www.nccs-vs-a.org/saint-george-trek/)

“Catholic Scouting encourages young people to dig deeper into their faith and form a real relationship with Jesus, truly discerning what God is calling them to do in their life. Sometimes this leads to a religious vocation,” said NCCS Chair John Anthony. “We know of 12 St. George Trek participants who have entered seminary formation over the past decade – and three have been ordained to the priesthood. We also know of several Trek participants who have begun formation with religious orders.”

Due to NCCS sponsorship and the generosity of supporters, the 16-day St. George

Trek only costs \$1,575. In many cases, local Catholic Scouting committees pay some or all of the Trek fee. Scouts are responsible for personal gear like hiking boots, as well as transportation from their home city to Albuquerque.

Male or female Scouts can apply. The Trek is not co-ed; there are separate hiking groups for male and female teens.

According to the press release, there is evidence that young people involved in Catholic Scouting are more likely to remain engaged in the Church and to consider a religious vocation. For example, being involved in Scouting is something many recent men ordained to the priesthood have shared. Since 2006, 30 percent of ordinands to the priesthood in the U.S. were active in BSA Scouting growing up, according to a survey conducted by the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University.

NCCS is a Church committee of concerned Catholic laity and clergy, which is advisory to the BSA and relates to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) through its Episcopal Liaison. NCCS-sponsored Catholic Scouting is the only Scouting program sanctioned by both the USCCB and BSA.

## USCCB fall meeting to be livestreamed

*Continued from pg. 1*

Fathers); and a consultation of the bishops to support the request of the bishops' conference of England and Wales asking the Holy Father to name Saint John Henry Newman a Doctor of the Church; a vote on the USCCB's 2024 budget; and a discussion and consideration of the reauthorization of the USCCB's Ad Hoc Committee Against Racism.

The bishops are expected to discuss and vote on several action items including: a new introductory note and materials supporting Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, the bishops' teaching document on the political responsibility of Catholics; the approval of a framework for indigenous ministry; a number of action items pertaining to liturgical texts from the Committee on Divine Worship; and replacing the current USCCB Strategic Plan cycle with a newly-proposed Mission Planning process.

During the assembly, the bishops will vote for the new conference secretary, as well as chairmen-elect of six conference commit-

tees. The terms for the bishops elected for committee chairmen will serve for one year as chairman-elect before beginning a three-year term at the conclusion of the 2024 Fall Plenary Assembly.

Public sessions of the assembly on Nov. 14 and 15 will be livestreamed at: [www.usccb.org/meetings](http://www.usccb.org/meetings) -- news updates, vote totals, texts of addresses and presentations, and other materials will be posted to this page. Those wishing to follow the meeting on social media are invited to use the hashtag #USCCB23 and follow on X (formerly known as Twitter) (@USCCB), as well as on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/usccb](http://www.facebook.com/usccb)) and Instagram (<https://instagram.com/usccb>).

The plenary will begin with an address by the Papal Nuncio to the U.S., Cardinal Christophe Pierre. The bishops will hear from Archbishop Timothy P. Broglio of the Archdiocese for the Military Services, USA, president of the USCCB.

• *From the USCCB Public Affairs office.*



Retired Houston Fire Chief Chris Chavez, left, presents Joseph Gamez of Shiner with the Kimberly Ann Smith Medal for living out his Christian values in his service to the community during the Firefighters Mass in Houston recently. Gamez is a firefighter/paramedic with the Village Fire Department in Houston.

## Firefighter/paramedic from Shiner parish honored for Christian service

HOUSTON – Joseph Gamez of Shiner, a member of Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church and a firefighter/paramedic for the Village Fire Department in Houston, was chosen to receive a special medal for living out his Christian values in his service to the community.

The Kimberly Ann Smith Medal was presented to him Oct. 15 at the Co-Cathedral of the Sacred Heart in the Archdiocese of Houston-Galveston during the annual Firefighters Mass in the archdiocese, with Cardinal Daniel DiNardo as the celebrant.

Kimberly Ann Smith was a Houston Firefighter killed in the line of duty at an arson fire on Feb. 14, 2000. She lived a faithful Catholic life by displaying Christian values and she believed in service to the community. The medal in her name is presented annually to a firefighter who espouses the same qualities.

Retired Fire Chief Chris Chavez of the St. Florian Society of the archdiocese presented the medal to Gamez saying, “The life of a paramedic is many times an arduous and sometimes thankless job. They are up all night tending to the sick or injured and sometimes they are there just to hold a person's hand to say that everything will be alright. This

person has worked in the poorest neighborhoods in the City of Houston for many years. However, the thing that separates him from the rest is that he does this with a smile, no matter the situation, no matter the time of day or night. Moreover, the smile is genuine and not contrived.

“Unfortunately for the Houston Fire Department, we let him get away and he now graces the streets of the Village. What do his fellow firefighters think of him? From his first day on duty, he set a standard which I hope all firefighters who follow behind him will follow. He is a natural leader, an excellent paramedic, and a firefighter who is extremely knowledgeable in all aspects of the fire service. One cannot help but notice that instantly upon meeting him that he always has a smile on his face and brings laughter to the shift day in and day out. Moreover, he always seems to bring light into the darkness that we all too often live in throughout our careers.”

St. Florian is the patron of firefighters. He was an elite Roman soldier, and a Christian, who lived in the Third Century and was martyred for not following orders to serve the Roman gods and persecute Christians. The St. Florian Society sponsored the Mass.



**The Chancery will be closed for the Thanksgiving Holidays, starting Nov. 22 at noon - Nov. 24.**

*The Chancery Offices will reopen Nov. 27 at 8:30 a.m.*



*Distinguished Alumni for 2023, pictured, from left, front row: Mertes Culak, St. Joseph in Yoakum; Lou Anne Kellman, St. Philip in El Campo; Shanna Clark, Sacred Heart in Hallettsville; Laurie Buchhorn Metting, St. Michael in Cuero; Rev. Msgr. John Peters, St. Michael in Weimar; back row: Dr. Travis Tomek, Holy Cross in Bay City; Dr. Kathleen McCullough, Nazareth Academy in Victoria; Deacon Rusty Theut, St. Anthony in Columbus; Marshall Herzik, St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg; and Lauren Tagliabue, Our Lady of Victory in Victoria. Not pictured are Dr. John McNeill, St. Joseph HS in Victoria, and Dwight Pesek, Shiner Catholic School.*

## Schools celebrate some of their finest grads, teachers

The Office of Catholic Schools for the Diocese of Victoria honored its schools outstanding alumni and teachers during the F.I.R.S.T.-Class Education Awards ceremony on Oct. 16.

Dr. John Quarry, superintendent of Catholic schools, said, “The recipients of these awards emulate the five pillars of Catholic education in the Diocese of Victoria: faith, integrity, respect, scholarship and tradition.”

The alumni from each school are chosen by various members of their school community for the award. The teachers are nominated by their peers and chosen by clergy, teaching staff and the Catholic schools office.

The 2023 teacher honorees are:

**Mike Shimek of St. Joseph High School in Victoria, High School Teacher of the Year.** Shimek, theology teacher and coach, was given a standing ovation for his more than 40 years as part of STJ. Many people at the awards ceremony stood when asked if they or their children had been students of Shimek. He is known for living the values he teaches, and treating everyone with love and respect. He is also known for being a lifelong student of theology himself to bring more depth of understanding to his students. “Mike is one of the pillars of St. Joseph High School. He carries out the mission as part of his own personal identity,” STJ President John Gilley stated.

**Angie Decou of Shiner Catholic School, Middle School Teacher of the Year.** Decou is known as a true servant, walking with Jesus in and out of the classroom. She is the kind of person who will volunteer to help no matter how much she has to do herself. She teaches a challenging age group with grace, dignity and “lots of humor,” according to Principal Neely Yackel, and she goes above and beyond to help her students succeed and excel.

**Brooke Tomek, Elementary Teacher of the Year from Holy Cross Catholic School in Bay City.** Tomek is known for helping students succeed by using their unique strengths to overcome any struggles and helping them build a positive self-concept. She is also said to be always smiling and making lessons fun, inspiring children to work harder.

The 2023 alumni honorees are:

**Dr. Travis Tomek, a 2023 graduate of Holy Cross in Bay City.** Dr. Tomek is a family medicine physician who was the school’s consultant during the COVID-19 pandemic and still acts as the consulting doctor. He is an involved parent at the school, a member of the Knights of Columbus, medical director of Angels Hospice and medical director of the Women’s Pregnancy Center. He is married to Brooke Tomek, named Elementary Teacher of the Year for 2023.

**Dr. Kathleen McCullough, a 1987 graduate of Nazareth Academy in Victoria,**

where she became a strong student, eventually becoming the valedictorian of her class at St. Joseph High School. She is senior associate dean for Academic Affairs in the College of Business at Florida State University and Kathryn Magee Kip professor in risk manage-

ment and insurance at Florida State’s School of Business. She oversees academic policy and research programs. She and her husband,

*See Schools celebrate, pg. 12*



*From left, Dr. John Quarry, superintendent of Catholic schools for the Diocese of Victoria, Angie Decou, Junior High Teacher of the Year, Michael Shimek, High School Teacher of the Year, Brooke Tomek, Elementary Teacher of the Year, and Bishop Brendan J. Cahill.*

# Children share vision of Baby Jesus in the Eucharist

*Continued from pg. 1*

cery from classrooms across the diocese, to be the bishop's Christmas greetings this year.

The winning images were submitted by:

- Maryclare Bricker, a kindergartener at Holy Cross School in Bay City, who depicted Mary and Joseph adoring the Infant Jesus with the image of the Host suspended above the crib like a star.

- Andie Melnar, a fifth-grader from St. Michael in Weimar, whose image shows the Holy Family in the doorway of an open church building. Behind the church's altar is an open tabernacle colored gold. There also are gold-colored rays of light surrounding the infant that extend toward the tabernacle so that the tabernacle and light from the child seem to be reaching out to one another.

- Layne Besetzny, a seventh-grader at St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg, who depicted the magi approaching the base of a ciborium in which the Baby Jesus rests under a star imposed on a Sacramental Host that also rests in the ciborium with the human Jesus.

- Ashley Martinez, an eighth-grader from Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca, whose

card shows an ornate monstrance being lifted up with the image of the Infant Jesus imposed on the Host and trumpeting angels on either side of the monstrance.

Very Rev. Jacob Koether, episcopal vicar of evangelization and catechesis for the Diocese of Victoria, said children have a faith that is more in tune with the spiritual.

"A lot of times, we can be surprised at what they can see. They know that this is something important and different."

The images they drew demonstrate that they see the similarities in the Body and Blood and Jesus in the flesh – Jesus present in a physical way.

"They're beautiful in how they bring those two mysteries together," Father Koether said.

The Eucharistic Revival continues through the summer of 2024 when a national gathering will take place in Indianapolis, Ind. Pilgrimage teams from different parts of the nation will make the journey and meet up in Indianapolis for the National Eucharistic Congress in July.

One team of pilgrims will begin in Brownsville and journey through the Diocese of Victoria on May 27-30, stopping at our churches as they make their way to Indianapolis. Father Koether hopes to have as many people as possible involved in the pilgrimage while the core group of 10 people are here. There will be coordinated events and times for people to gather and walk with the pilgrims. Plans are still being made but the website [www.eucharisticpilgrimage.org](http://www.eucharisticpilgrimage.org) is available for those who want to be updated on the routes of the pilgrims.

The Diocese of Victoria also has passes for 100 people who want to attend the Eu-

charistic Conference in July. Father Koether said it is for people of all ages and he encourages parents to attend with their children. Anyone who wants to attend is encouraged to contact Father Koether at [jkoether@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jkoether@victoriadiocese.org).

In the meantime, Koether is offering mini-missions for local parishes to teach about the biblical foundations of the Eucharist. He said the website for the National Eucharistic Revival also has lots of resources for people who want to foster a deeper devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist in their small groups. Resources can be found at [www.eucharisticrevival.org](http://www.eucharisticrevival.org).



## National CDA Sunday

EAST BERNARD — Members of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court St. Bernadette #1108 are shown here with Rev. Charles E. Otsiwah, pastor of Holy Cross Catholic Church, and Deacon Joseph Blackburn. The photo was taken just after a Mass in celebration of National Catholic Daughters of the Americas Sunday on Oct. 15. Members participated as lector, extraordinary ministers, ushers, gift bearers and musicians. After Mass they celebrated with parishioners over coffee and donuts. *(Contributed Photo)*



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# Schools celebrate some of their finest grads, teachers

Continued from pg. 10

Doug, have set up an endowment fund for the Unconquered Scholars Program to provide supportive services to youth who are homeless or in foster care. She still supports NA.

**Lauren Tagliabue**, a 1993 graduate of Our Lady of Victory in Victoria. A successful caterer and restaurant owner (Back Door Catering and Double J Eatery), Tagliabue continues to support the OLV parish and the Diocese of Victoria. She is an active volunteer parent and serves on several school committees. She has served on the Gala Committee for 11 years.

**Shanna Clark**, a 1997 graduate of Sacred Heart in Hallettsville. Clark, whose children are the fifth generation to attend Sacred Heart, has been a teacher there for 17 years. She is involved in the Sacred Heart Booster Club and all activities and fundraisers for the school and the church. She is the elementary sectional leader, part of the COVID Safety Committee,

a cheer mom and helps prepare for school accreditation. This year she is instrumental in the school's new SHINE Program, designed to provide for students with special challenges. She also serves in the Catholic Daughters of the Americas, the Christian Mothers and the Lavaca-DeWitt Aggie Moms Club. Her husband, John Paul, is also a 1997 graduate of the school.

**Deacon Charles Russell "Rusty" Theut**, a 1980 graduate of St. Anthony Catholic School in Columbus. Deacon Theut has given endless hours of service to the church and school. He and his wife, Tracy, have five children who attended St. Anthony. He runs the family business, Theut Glass with his brother Scott, who graduated St. Anthony in 1982. They employ 70 people and support many youth organizations in the community. He was ordained a deacon in November 2020 and he is active in the ACTS community, the

Cathedral Oaks Worship and Retreat Center Board, Perpetual Help Ministries, the Knights of Columbus and many other community and church activities.

**Dr. John McNeill**, a 1978 graduate of St. Joseph High School. Dr. McNeill is well known in the community for his service and involvement in many things, including his guidance during the pandemic. He is a board-certified internal medicine and emergency medicine physician in private practice and serves as medical director for Citizens Medical Center and the Victoria Fire Department and EMS and is the Victoria County public health authority.

**Mertes Culak**, a 1956 graduate of St. Joseph Catholic School in Yoakum. Culak and her seven siblings attended Sweet Home School before transferring to St. Joseph to complete their education. She married her high school sweetheart, Bill, two years after graduation and their five children all attended St. Joseph in Yoakum. They were married 58 years before he passed away in 2016. The Catholic faith has always been central in her family. She is an active member of the St. Joseph Altar Society as well as the Catholic Daughters of the Americas. Today some of her great-grandchildren, the fourth generation, are students at St. Joseph.

**Laurie Buchhorn Metting**, who attended St. Michael's in Cuero from 1966 to 1974. She is currently the school's cafeteria manager and is known for showing her love of the school in all of her volunteer activities. She is said to be at every church and school event helping in some capacity, whether it's the Fall Festival, the end of school field day or teaching CCD. She also has a legacy of Mustangs who attend St. Michael's today.

**Rev. Msgr. John Peters**, a St. Michael-Weimar graduate of 1963. The pastor of Sacred Heart Parish in Hallettsville, Monsignor Peters has dedicated his whole life to serving God's people. He was ordained in 1974 at St. Michael in 1974 by Archbishop Francis J. Furey before the Diocese of Victoria was established. He served as a chaplain in the Texas Army National Guard in San Antonio, is a member of the Fourth Degree Knights of Columbus and the Knights of the Holy Sepulchre, the KJZT and KJT and much more. In a span of less than a year, he is celebrating his 75th birthday (Oct. 14), his 50th anniversary of his ordination (April 26, 2024) and the 30th anniversary at Sacred Heart Parish (Aug. 3, 2024).

**Lou Ann Kellman**, a 1960 graduate of St. Philip Catholic School in El Campo. Kellman and her husband Joe have two sons. Once

they left for college she moved to Chicago and completed law school at Loyola. She practiced in the Office of the Cook County Public Defender's Juvenile Division office. In Chicago she became involved with the Better Boys Foundation, an inner city group founded by her husband that offered after school programs and other support for youth in the Lawndale area of Chicago. She also served on the boards of Committee for the Prevention of Child Abuse and the John Howard Association, a prison advocacy group. In 2000 she and Joe moved to San Diego to be close to their sons and traveled between there and their home in Texas. After Joe passed away in 2010, Lou Ann made El Campo her home where she serves on several community boards including CASA and El Campo Hospice Support, and is part of the St. Philip church choir.

**Marshall Herzik**, a 1972 graduate of St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg. It was said that if Herzik isn't working at his business, Herzik's Milk and Grain, he is at Mass or volunteering somewhere in a parish activity. He and his wife sent all three of their children to St. Rose and now they have three grandchildren there. He works at all church picnics, ushers and supports the parish through donations and being present for any activity.

**Dwight Pesek**, a 1990 graduate of St. Paul High School in Shiner. Pesek has worked for Dow Chemical for more than 20 years in the U.S. and Saudi Arabia. He is also a licensed Realtor, a member of the Texas Association of Realtors and co-owner of Pesek Properties. He is from a family of leaders with servant hearts and can be found helping in many areas of the church, school and community. He is a member of the Knights of Columbus, a committee member for the Sts. Cyril and Methodius Catholic Church picnics, has been on the School Advisory Council and has worked with school and religious leaders to help with retreats and the state and national level.

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# Papal Awards Mass



VICTORIA — Bishop Brendan Cahill presented papal awards to 17 people Oct. 7 during a Mass that also opened the Rosary Congress in the Diocese of Victoria. Each was given their medal – some the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice medal and others the Benemerenti Medal. Before receiving her own Benemerenti Medal, Minnie Cormier of Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca, (above right) receives the same award on behalf of her late husband, Ralph Cormier, who died June 14 at age 85. Bishop Cahill presents an award to Sister Evelyn Korenek, OVISS, (above left) one of the recipients of the Pro Ecclesia et Pontifice awards, honoring her for her work for the church and the pope. The clergy present at the Mass are shown during the Liturgy of the Eucharist with the framed certificates from Rome shown on a table placed in the sanctuary. (Photos: Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)



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# Your work must show in order to pass the test

## At Your Service

By Deacon Michael Tankersley



*“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter.” (Matthew 7:21)*

In 1964, my freshmen year at Premont High School, Mr. Pat Caruthers was my Algebra I teacher. (He was also my Driver’s Ed instructor until I backed into the Superintendent’s new automobile.) Mr. Caruthers was an intimidating figure -- stern with a ruddy face and gruff voice -- who announced his class rules as if they had been brought down from Mt. Sinai with those other commandments.

I remember being shocked to see that my first test was decorated with a huge red X that went from corner to corner of the page. When I discovered that my answers were identical to a fellow student who got a perfect score, I approached Mr. Caruthers for an explanation to this injustice.

“It’s simple” he said, “You didn’t show me how you got the answer. You failed to show your work.”

As I remember, I quickly launched into a passionate and solid defense: “There is no work to show, because I figured it out in my mind. I shouldn’t be penalized because I can see the answer without doing the steps that others need.” (I probably should have kept

the references to being a “boy genius” and him harming my chances for a math scholarship to myself.)

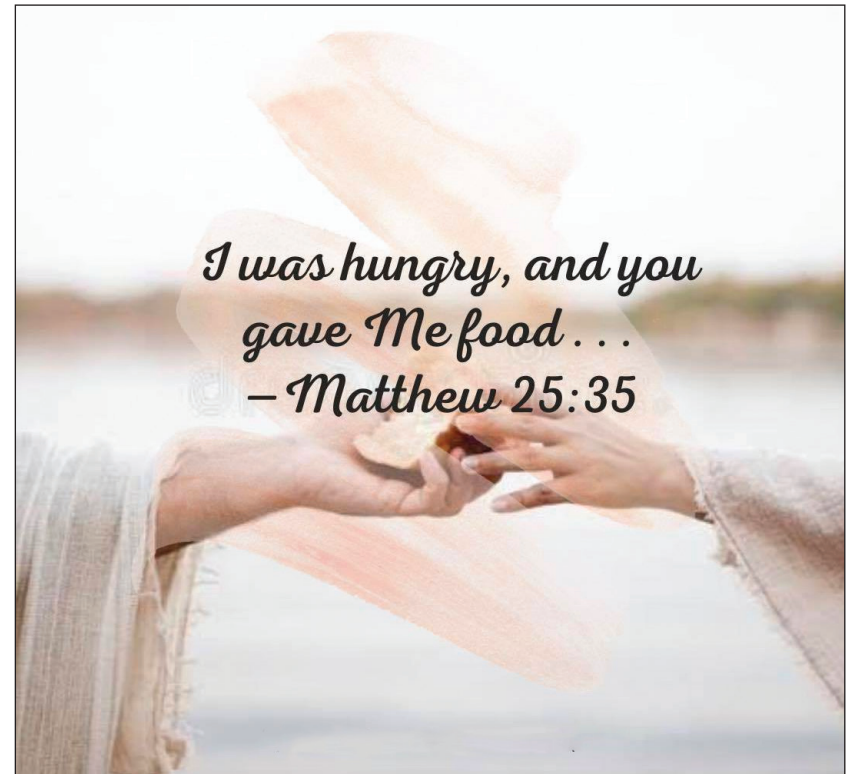
After exhausting my plea, Mr. Caruthers rose and spoke forcefully: “Son, my tests are not about what you know in your head. The real test is in showing your work with your hands.”

About 33 A.D. at the Mount of Olives, just east of Old City of Jerusalem, another teacher held class. It was His final session with His disciples before His Passion story would begin. Jesus spoke of the signs of the end of the age and of His return to earth. He described in parables those who would be prepared (“Parable of the Ten Virgins,” 32nd Sunday), those who were invested in Him (“Parable of the Talents,” 33rd Sunday), and those who would be eventually called to the heavenly banquet. (Solemnity of Christ the King).

On that day of final judgment, we hear that Christ Jesus will return as king and assemble all who have ever lived. “*And he will separate them one from another, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. He will place the sheep on his right and the goats on his left.*” Those on the right will hear the sweet sounds of “*Come you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you.*” Those on the left, however, will taste the bitter words: “*Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire.*”

And by what measures will the King determine who is on the right or left? Whether sheep or goat? Who is invited to “come” and who is ordered to “depart?”

Listen: “*For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and*



*you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.” (Matthew 35,36)*

Notice that value is placed on doing rather than knowing and on practice of love over the profession of love. It is as if Jesus is saying to His sons and daughters, “My test is not about what you know in your head. The real test is in showing your work with your hands.”

It is often suggested in commentaries and homilies that this gospel passage highlights the importance of seeing Jesus in all peoples, especially in the most vulnerable. In this telling, the righteous (the sheep) lent their aid because they saw Jesus in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger and naked and ill and imprisoned. And because they helped, they passed the test. Conversely, because the goats failed to see Jesus in the vulnerable, they neglected to act and failed the test.

I have no quibble with the personal goal of seeing Christ in others as a source of inspiration to service, but the message of this gospel goes beyond that. The fact is, when Jesus commended the sheep for feeding Him “when I [He] was hungry, etc.,” the response of the sheep was identical to the response of the goats who failed to act.

Both groups replied, “Lord, when did we see You hungry and feed You, or thirsty and give You something to drink? And when did we see You a stranger and invite You in, or naked and clothe You? When did we see You sick or in prison and come to You?”

The point is that neither the sheep nor the goats saw Jesus in those who were in need.

The righteous did not help because it mattered that it was really JESUS who was in need. They helped because it didn’t matter WHO was in need, only that someone, anyone was in need. The sheep did not act because they saw Jesus in those who were hurting, rather they saw those hurt AS Jesus saw them.

The righteous, then, had become who they believed in; had become who they had faith in; had become like Christ the King.

Authentic faith is a restless child, unable to sit idly in silence for long. It must get up and move outside of thought into action. It cannot be contained in the confines of head or heart, but must express itself in words and deeds. As we move to close out this liturgical year in the celebration of the Solemnity of Christ the King, it is worthwhile to reflect on the poem attributed the St. Theresa of Avila:

Christ has no body but yours; No hands, no feet on earth but yours;  
Yours are the eyes with which He looks Compassion on this world;  
Yours are the feet with which He walks to do good;  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, Yours are the eyes;  
You are His body.

No one can embrace Christ the King as simply an idea without the impulse to respond in the service to others – to those in whom we can see Christ as well as those who appear as other.

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# Eucharistic Revival brings to mind a moment when faith became real

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** *Father Jacob Koether has been away on Church business, so this month we are reprinting his first column, which appeared in November 2022.*

When I was in high school, I had the opportunity to go to a weekend youth conference. I didn't know what to expect and didn't have any big hopes for it. I mostly went because of the friends who had already decided to go. My faith at the time was OK. I went to Mass because I had to, and I knew the answers to most of the questions in CCD.

At the conference I was met with something different – Christians who were alive. There was joy, passion, excitement, vitality. It shook me in a good way and caused me to wonder about my faith more deeply.

What stands out to me the most is a moment during the conference when we had time for Eucharistic Adoration. The consecrated Bread from Mass was brought out and placed in a beautiful vessel that allowed us time to reflect on the mystery of Communion. We sang songs of praise, glorifying the Lord Jesus who continues to make Himself present to us.

Eventually, after some time of prayer, I was surprised to see the priest take the Eucharist from the altar and begin to solemnly process through the crowd, bringing Jesus close. When he finally got near enough to our group, something changed in me. My faith was no longer an abstract idea. I had gone to Mass my whole life, went to Catholic school, had been receiving Holy Communion for years, but it was at that point that I realized – this is Jesus. And it started me down a path that I am very grateful to God for.

I wish everyone could know Jesus in

## In Communion

By Very Rev. Jacob Koether



the Eucharist. I'm sure most of you reading this article have the same desire to share the mystery of Eucharistic Communion with everyone. You can probably think of similar experiences of encounter and transformation and can relate with my story.

We can also number some challenging experiences when it comes to the mystery of Jesus in the Eucharist: trying to teach our First Communion classes about the beauty of this Gift, the struggle of persuading parents to worship in Mass every Sunday, our friends and family members who have left the Catholic Church because they weren't being fed, the lack of reverence some show in church because no one introduced them to the One who abides in the tabernacle, and all the many ways we ourselves don't allow the grace received in Communion to make us like Jesus.

COVID was a critical point, when it became clear to many in the Church that the Eucharist does not appear to be the "source and summit" of our Christian lives. Most parishes are still reporting Mass attendance numbers that have not recovered from the pandemic.

Flowing from this dissatisfaction in the difference between our faith and the lived experience of so many, the bishops decided that now is the time to launch a multi-year Eucharistic Revival, a time of reflection, formation, renewal and conversion, so everyone could

grow in devotion to Jesus in the Eucharist.

The Eucharistic Revival began on Corpus Christi Sunday this year and will continue for the next few years first with a diocesan phase, then a parish phase and, lastly, a year of missionary renewal.

To transition between the Eucharistic Revival and the launch of the year of mission, there will be a national Eucharistic Congress. Our diocesan Office of Evangelization and Catechesis has been tasked with implement-

ing the Eucharistic Revival in our area and assisting parishes in doing their own processes of renewal. There will be events to come and more information to follow.

As we begin, I invite you to make the Eucharistic Revival your own and to join in this important work. Spend some time reflecting on your own experience of the Eucharist. How has the Lord impacted you through Communion? How has the Mass transformed you? What if everyone could not only know about Jesus in the Eucharist but truly meet Him there?

What would our nation look like if the Eucharist were truly the source and summit of our lives?

• Contact Father Jacob Koether at [jkoether@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jkoether@victoriadiocese.org).



*Our prayers are with the Holy Land.*

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Our Holy Land pilgrimages for 2024 are still open. We are monitoring the conditions in Holy Land and will make determinations for these groups in a timely manner. If you are registered, be patient with us. You will be kept updated by email.

Thank you for entrusting your pilgrimage journeys with me.

*Ceci Triska*


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# Manteneos unidos en oración, ayuno y penitencia por la paz

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,  
Cada miércoles por la tarde, cuando está en Roma, el Papa Francisco da una charla y saluda a los peregrinos que han viajado hasta allí.

El miércoles 18 de octubre expresó su preocupación por la situación en Medio Oriente y las guerras en distintas partes del mundo. Nos pidió que nos uniéramos a hombres y mujeres de todo el mundo el viernes 27 de octubre para un día de oración, penitencia y ayuno por la paz.

En el sitio web [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va), en la sección Audiencia general del 18 de octubre, están publicadas las siguientes palabras:

## LLAMAMIENTO

*“También hoy el pensamiento va a Israel y Palestina. Las víctimas aumentan y la situación en Gaza es desesperada. ¡Se haga, por favor, todo lo posible para evitar una catástrofe humanitaria!”*

*Preocupa la posible prolongación del conflicto, mientras en el mundo ya hay muchos frentes de guerra abiertos. ¡Callen las armas! ¡Se escuche el grito de paz de los*

*pueblos, de la gente, de los niños! Hermanos y hermanas, la guerra no resuelve ningún problema, solo siembra muerte y destrucción, aumenta el odio y multiplica la venganza. La guerra cancela el futuro. Exhorto a los creyentes a tomar en este conflicto una sola parte: la de la paz; pero no de palabra, con la oración, con la dedicación total.*

*Pensando en esto, he decidido convocar, el viernes 27 de octubre, una jornada de ayuno y oración, de penitencia, a la cual invito a unirse, de la forma que consideren oportuno, a las hermanas y los hermanos de las varias confesiones cristianas, los pertenecientes a otras religiones y a cuantos tienen en el corazón la causa de la paz en el mundo. Esa tarde a las 18.00 en San Pedro*

## Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill



*viviremos, en espíritu de penitencia, una hora de oración para implorar sobre nuestros días la paz, la paz en este mundo. Pido a todas las Iglesias particulares que participen, preparando iniciativas similares que involucren al Pueblo de Dios”*

Me doy cuenta de que escribo esto antes del 27 de octubre y que lo leerás después del 27 de octubre. También creo que al ofrecer nuestras oraciones, penitencia y ayuno por intenciones particulares durante el Congreso del Rosario, podemos continuar uniéndonos a nuestras oraciones juntas. También podemos invitar a otras personas a unirse a nosotros para orar por la paz en el mundo, especialmente la paz en el Medio Oriente, y a pedir la protección de Dios para nuestro personal militar, especialmente aquellos que sirven en el extranjero.

Hace unos años, reflexionando sobre el poder de nuestra oración, di una charla sobre las razones por las que oramos y ayunamos.

Primero, el ejemplo del mismo Jesús que oró y ayunó en el desierto durante 40 días y 40 noches antes de comenzar su ministerio público.

En segundo lugar, el ejemplo de Moisés que oró y ayunó durante 40 días y 40 noches implorando la misericordia de Dios para el pueblo hebreo en el desierto.

En tercer lugar, obtenemos una visión más clara cuando eliminamos las cosas que pueden distraernos de lo más importante: el amor a Dios y al prójimo.

Cuarto, ganamos mayor compasión con todos aquellos que involuntariamente pasan hambre cada día. Podemos optar por renunciar a una comida, pero la mayor parte del mundo ni siquiera tiene esa opción.

Quinto, podemos aprender aún más profundamente que todo lo que poseemos es un regalo de Dios.

Que nuestros corazones sigan unidos en las oraciones de la Adoración Eucarística y el rosario, que ofrezcamos penitencias y recibamos el sacramento de la penitencia, y que estemos atentos a la voz de nuestro Señor Jesús, hablando especialmente en las lecturas y oraciones de la Misa cada día.

Dios bendiga a ti y a tu familia. Mantengámonos unos a otros en oración.

+Brendan

## Dos eventos espirituales previstos para la diócesis

La Oficina del Ministerio Hispano de la Diócesis de Victoria se complace en anunciar los últimos dos eventos espirituales del año.

En sintonía con el recientemente promulgado Plan Pastoral Nacional para el Ministerio Hispano por la conferencia de Obispos Católicos de Estados Unidos, estaremos ofreciendo dos encuentros espirituales que nos pueden ayudar a profundizar y enriquecer nuestra relación con la Santísima Trinidad.

El primer encuentro será un “Día de reflexión espiritual: Familia y Eucaristía” a cargo del Padre Ricardo Ramirez quien ejerce su ministerio sacerdotal en la parroquia de St. Ann Catholic Church en la Arquidiócesis de San Antonio. Este encuentro se está llevando a cabo en colaboración con el Padre Eliecer Patiño y se impartirá en la Parroquia de St. Antony, Palacios, el día sábado 11 de noviembre de 9 am a 12:30 pm.

Padres de familia que tengan niños en

clases de catecismo y adultos en general de la diócesis están cordialmente invitados.

Nuestro segundo encuentro y con el cual concluimos las actividades del año es un “Retiro Espiritual Bilingüe de Meditación y Silencio” a cargo del Padre Robert Moreno Jr. quien ejerce su ministerio en la parroquia de St Benedict Catholic Church de la Diócesis de Brownsville.

Este retiro se llevará a cabo del 17 al 19 de noviembre en el Spiritual Renewal Center y es para hombres y mujeres mayores de edad que quieran experimentar tres días de silencio y oración para meditar en el amor y misericordia de Dios en sus vidas cotidianas.

Para más información y/o registrarse para los eventos, por favor de comunicarse con Aldo Camacho, director de la Oficina del Ministerio Hispano al 361-573-0828, extensión 2227, o al correo electrónico [acamacho@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:acamacho@victoriadiocese.org).



## Nueva ministra de prisiones

VICTORIA — Mariela Lozano recibiendo su certificado por haber completado el Programa de Formación Fundacional ofrecido por Catholic Prison Ministries Coalition de manos del Obispo Brendan J. Cahill. Ella es feligresa de Nuestra Señora del Golfo en Port Lavaca y miembro del equipo del ministerio hispano. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

## Warmth for the winter

FLATONIA — Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court Sacred Heart of Mother Teresa #2570, donated \$75 to the Flatonia Lions Club for the Heater/Blanket Drive held Nov. 1-Dec. 13. Distribution will be Thursday, Dec. 14, at Celebration House, a local food bank. Donations are being accepted to help families in need with new heaters and new blankets, with drop-off locations at Fayette Savings Bank, Flatonia National Bank and Prosperity Bank. Pictured, from left, are, front row. Jeanette Zouzalik, CDA regent; Isabel Garcia, Lions Club president; Liz Miller, CDA treasurer; Karen Novak; Rev. Eddie Winkler; and, back row, Lucy Manzano; Jenn Brown; Beverly Ponder; Gretchen Zapalac; CDA Vice-Regent Janet Stanley; Pam Svatek; Naomi Espinosa; Julia Webster; and CDA District Deputy #30 Kathleen Svatek. *(Contributed Photo)*



## Sunday Readings from Nov. 1 to Dec. 8

### Holy Day of Obligation

#### November 1 ~ Solemnity of All Saints

Revelations 7:2-4, 9-14  
Psalms 24:1bc-2, 3-4ab, 5-6  
1 John 3:1-3  
Matthew 5:1-12a

#### November 2 ~ All Souls

Wisdom 3:1-9  
Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6  
Romans 6:3-9  
John 6:37-40

#### November 5 ~ Thirty-first Sunday

in Ordinary Time  
Malachi 1:14b-2:2b, 8-10  
Psalms 131:1, 2, 3  
1 Thessalonians 2:7b-9, 13  
Matthew 23:1-12

#### November 12 ~ Thirty-second Sunday

in Ordinary Time  
Wisdom 6:12-16  
Psalms 63:2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8  
1 Thessalonians 4:13-18  
Matthew 25:1-13

#### November 19 ~ Thirty-third Sunday

in Ordinary Time  
Proverbs 31:10-13, 19-20, 30-31  
Psalms 128:1-2, 3, 4-5  
1 Thessalonians 5:1-6  
Matthew 25:14-30

For daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, visit  
[www.usccb.org/bible/readings](http://www.usccb.org/bible/readings).

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#### November 23 ~ Thanksgiving Day

Sirach 50:22-24  
Psalms 145:2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, 10-11  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9  
Luke 17:11-19

#### November 26 ~ The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe

Ezekiel 34:11-12, 15-17  
Psalms 23:1-2, 2-3, 5-6  
1 Corinthians 15:20-26, 28  
Matthew 25:31-46



#### December 3 ~ First Sunday of Advent

Isaiah 63:16B-17, 19B; 64:2-7  
Psalms 80:2-3, 15-16, 18-19  
1 Corinthians 1:3-9  
Mark 13:33-37

### Holy Day of Obligation

#### December 8 ~ Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Genesis 3:9-15, 20  
Psalms 98:1, 2-3ab, 3cd-4  
Ephesians 1:3-6, 11-12  
Luke 1:26-38

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Credited rates effective 10/18/2023 and are subject to change without notice. Early withdrawals may be subject to Surrender Charges and Market Value Adjustments. The IRS may impose penalties for early withdrawals from qualified plans. Contracts issued by American Century Life Insurance Company. Annuity products are not FDIC insured. Annuity products contain charges, fees and limitations. Annuity products and/or features may not be available in all states and rates may vary by state.

## Request grants to fight hunger, poverty by Nov. 15

One-fourth of the funds collected in the Diocese of Victoria during the Lenten Rice Bowl campaign remains in the diocese to help alleviate hunger locally.

The same percentage of the Catholic Campaign for Human Development collection in the diocese stays local. The CCHD dedicated to breaking the cycle of poverty by funding programs that encourage independence.

The funds are used to provide grants to organizations that work for these causes in our diocese. Applications and criteria for the grants are now available at <https://www.victoriadiocese.org/grants>. Deadline for submitting the grant applications is Nov. 15.

If you have questions about either of these grants, contact Debbie Vanelli, coordinator for Catholic Relief Services for the Diocese of Victoria, at [dvanelli@hfccvic](mailto:dvanelli@hfccvic).

## Spiritual Renewal Center

### Looking for a place for your family reunion?

The Spiritual Renewal Center (SRC) is located on approximately 40 acres nestled along the banks of the San Antonio River and about a 25-minute drive from Victoria.

The SRC participates in the mission of the church of Victoria as well as the universal Catholic Church by providing a place apart from the demands of everyday life where individuals may go seeking God more deeply in their lives.

The SRC is open for small or large group which can be a one-day or over night with a kitchen staff to provide meals. There is also an open pavilion for outdoor activities.

Handicap accessible.

For more information or to reserve the SRC contact Matthew Boyle, director, by email [src@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:src@victoriadiocese.org) or at 361-572-0836.



Elie Mejia's passion is to continue to spread God's Word and is delighted to include a monthly puzzle from the Mass Readings. Please mail all completed October puzzle forms to arrive in The Catholic Lighthouse office, P. O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 by Oct. 31 to be entered into a drawing for a chance to win one of the following books:

For 2023, the monthly winner of the puzzle contest will receive a sampler copy of *Elie's Spiritual Treasures, Volume 2 – The New Testament: Matthew and Mark* and the monthly winner of the youth contest will receive a sampler copy of *Elie's Spiritual Treasures, Volume 2 – The New Testament: Matthew and Mark, Children's Series*.

To date, Elie has published 20 books. Most of her books can be purchased at [www.searching-for-jesus.com](http://www.searching-for-jesus.com), Amazon or by calling 361-648-5832. The prices range from \$4.99 and \$19.99.

Congratulations to Shirley Moczygemba of Yorktown on being our September 2023 adult winner, she'll receive the Adult version of the Matthew and Mark Sampler Book!

**NOVEMBER 1, 2023**  
**ALL SAINTS**  
READING II – 1 JOHN 3:1-3

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

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Parish: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Age, if 12 or younger \_\_\_\_\_ Age, if 13 or older \_\_\_\_\_

## November: Blessing of Food

### From Catholic Rural Life



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

#### OPENING PRAYER

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

#### SONG OF PRAISE: Psalm 65:10-14

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

You visit the earth and water it,  
make it abundantly fertile.  
God's stream is filled with water;  
you supply their grain. **Response**

Thus do you prepare it:  
you drench its plowed furrows,  
and level its ridges.  
With showers you keep it soft,  
blessing its young sprouts. **Response**

You adorn the year with your bounty;  
your paths drip with fruitful rain.  
The meadows of the wilderness also drip;  
the hills are robed with joy. **Response**

The pastures are clothed with flocks,  
the valleys blanketed with grain;  
they cheer and sing for joy. **Response**

**READING:** Leviticus 26:2-6

### The Reward of Obedience

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

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

#### SELECTIVE READINGS:

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

*Silent Reflection, or invite sharing of thoughts.*

#### CLOSING BLESSING

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

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

Praise to our God who gives life and joy!

## RATES ON THE *Rise*

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## Meals • Picnics and More

## November

**Victoria** – Our Lady of Sorrows Knights of Columbus is having a Coat Drive during the month of November. New and gently used coats of all sizes for children and adults, can be dropped off at OLS Rectory or Church entrance (boxes available for donation). If you are in need of a coat please come to the CCD Building (407 S. Glass St.) Dec. 9, from 9 a.m.-12 p.m. coats will be distributed on a first come first serve basis. Open to everyone. For more information contact Deacon Frank Tilley at (361) 649-2167.

**Port Lavaca** – Our Lady of the Gulf Altar Society Turkey Dinner Nov. 5 at St. Jude Hall (300 W. Austin St.). A turkey and dressing dinner catered by Werners of Shiner will be served from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m. for \$12 per plate, with dine-in or plates-to-go available. There will be desserts and raffle for sale.

**Victoria** – St. Mary's Altar Society Harvest Bazaar Friday, Nov. 10 (9 a.m.-5 p.m.) and Saturday, Nov. 11 (9 a.m.-7 p.m.) at the St. Mary's Parish Hall (401 S. Liberty St.). For more information see ad on pg. 6.

**Victoria** – Our Lady of Lourdes Parish Festival Nov. 12 at the Community Center. A traditional Turkey Dinner with their famous Lourdes dressing will be served beginning at 11 a.m. inside and plates-to-go available at 10:30 a.m. See ad on pg. 8 for more information.

Healing center offers  
day-long retreats

**SEADRIFT** – Our Lady's Healing Center is offering a series of one-day retreats. The first, "Come and See: Have You Met Jesus?" is set for Saturday, Nov. 4, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. The retreat invites people to accept Jesus' invitation to spend time with Him and discover the purpose of living life in, with and through Him.

The retreats are limited to 25 people. They cost \$50 and include a light breakfast and lunch. Registration is at [www.ourlady-healingcenter.com/day-retreat](http://www.ourlady-healingcenter.com/day-retreat). For more information, contact Sandy Reese at 979-541-6881 or [sreese@ourladyshalingcenter.org](mailto:sreese@ourladyshalingcenter.org).

The retreat center is at 163 Stella Maris Ranch Lane (formerly 165 Falcon Point Rd.).

The next retreat is Feb. 10 and is titled "You are the Messiah and Lord!"

Others are "My Lord and My God" on March 9, "Come and Follow Me" on April 13, and "Go and Make Disciples of All Nations" on June 8.

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Diocese of Victoria

Ministerio Hispano

Catholic Schools

Youth and Young  
Adult Ministry

## Amor Meus

Contact: Sr. Digna Vela, IWBS  
(361) 575-7111

e-mail: [amormeus@yahoo.com](mailto:amormeus@yahoo.com)  
website:

[www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org](http://www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org)  
IWBS Convent • 1101 NE Water St. •  
Victoria

*The Communion Of Saints  
In Our Relationships*

A Silent Retreat  
Saturday, Nov. 4 • 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.  
Presented by: Christina Guerra

A Silent Retreat:  
Saturday, Dec. 16  
*How Near the Gift: Praying the  
Third Sunday of Advent*

Presented by: Sister Lou Ella Hickman,  
OVISS



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

## 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 <http://www.nacflm.org>.

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

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

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

**Engaged Encounter** – 2023 Dates: Nov. 10-12. Registration is on a first-come, first-served basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For information, call 361-573-0828 or visit <http://www.victoriadiocese.org>.

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

**Grief Ministry** – Please join Strength for the Journey team for their monthly meeting, 6:30-8 p.m. Nov. 14 in the parish hall at Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Catholic Church, 108 6th St. in Ganado. The meeting is open to anyone who has experienced the death of a child at any age. For more information, contact Pat Hoelscher 979-257-9984 or [phoelscher@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:phoelscher@victoriadiocese.org).

**Healing Through Grace grief support group** – Please join us at the Emmaus Center in Victoria on the first and third Wednesdays of each month at 9 a.m. at the Cathedral Center (St. Raphael meeting room). Please call 361-212-0830 for more information and to register.

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

**Mothers of Grace** – A mothers' group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For information, contact Leslie Book at [book.leslie@gmail.com](mailto:book.leslie@gmail.com) or visit their Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/Mothersofgraceolv/](http://www.facebook.com/Mothersofgraceolv/).

**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](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).

**Raphael's Refuge** – Raphael's Refuge is the home of the Monument to the Innocents which honors babies who have died (from conception to one year). We are a non-profit organization located outside of Flatonia, Texas. Peer counseling is available for those suffering the loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death or abortion. For information, call Therese at 361-258-1514, e-mail [raphaelsrefuge@att.net](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. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at [jbvjov@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jbvjov@sbcglobal.net) or 361-580-2770; or call 800-470-2230; or visit <http://www.helpourmarriage.org>



## White Mass

Bishop Brendan Cahill celebrated the Feast Day of St. Luke on the evening of Oct. 18 by offering a White Mass, especially blessing all healthcare professionals in the Diocese of Victoria. He is shown on the steps of the cathedral with some of the healthcare workers who attended the Mass. Father Peter Nimo, the hospital chaplain for the Diocese of Victoria, is shown delivering the homily for the Mass and reminding the healthcare workers that they are the hands and feet of Jesus, the Divine Healer, in their vocation. He said just their presence brings hope and healing to the patients they serve.



## Blue Mass

Bishop Cahill is shown with law enforcement personnel honored during the Blue Mass on Sept. 29. Father Ryan Kapavik, who serves as the police chaplain in Victoria, delivered the homily. "You are not alone," Father Ryan, shown to the right of the bishop, told the men and women who serve in law enforcement and emergency services. Like the archangels Michael, Gabriel and Raphael, whose feast day is Sept. 29, the first responders were created to serve, he said. That desire to serve is from the Creator. He encouraged officers to pray the prayers to the archangels for intercession, particularly to St. Michael, their patron. And he reminded them that he and many others were there to support them and pray for them.

