

# THE VALLEY CATHOLIC

VOLUME 11, ISSUE 4

SERVING MORE THAN A MILLION CATHOLICS IN THE DIOCESE OF BROWNSVILLE

SEPTEMBER 2019

## THE *Real Presence*



The Valley Catholic

### Poll: Eucharist misunderstood by many

By ANNA CAPIZZI GALVEZ  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON — Do Catholics believe that the Eucharist is truly the body and blood of Christ?

A Pew Research Center survey released Aug. 5 found that nearly 70% of U.S. Catholics believe that the bread and wine used for Communion during Mass are “symbols of the body and blood of Jesus Christ,” while about 30% believe that the bread and wine “actually become” Christ’s body and blood.

The findings clearly touched a nerve as commentators jumped to analyze the data, questioning the language that Pew had used in its survey questions.

Mark Gray from the Center for the Applied Research in the Apostolate wrote in a blog post that replacing the word “actually” with “really” might have led to different results. In previous surveys on the Real Presence, CARA used “Jesus is really present in the bread and wine of the Eucharist” vs. “Bread and wine are symbols of Jesus, but Jesus is not really present.”

Others found the results an affirmation of their belief that catechesis in the Church is in a sorry state.

“It represents a massive failure — and I include myself in this, we’re all guilty — a massive failure on the part of Catholic educators and catechists, evangelists, teachers,” said Los Angeles Auxiliary Bishop Robert E. Barron in a “Word on Fire” YouTube video. “If on this central matter of our belief and practice there is this much deep misunderstanding, something has gone substantially wrong.”

Pew’s finding “certainly shows a failure in catechetics, but I think the Church faces a greater problem,” Jesuit Father Thomas Reese wrote in a column for Religion News Service. “Catholics have an impoverished idea of what the Eucharist is really about.”

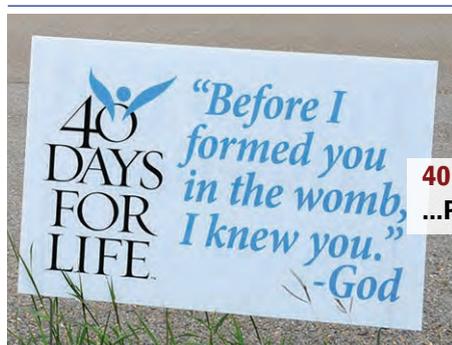
On June 23, the Solemnity of Corpus Christi, Bishop Daniel E. Flores spoke with no ambiguity about the Eucharist in his homily at Immaculate Conception Cathedral in Brownsville. The transcription was published in the July issue of

» Please see *Real presence* p.2



The Valley Catholic

The belief that the bread and wine offered at Mass is transformed into the body and blood of Christ through consecration – a process called transubstantiation – is a central pillar of the Catholic faith. This process makes possible the communion between the faithful and Christ himself in the sacrament of the Eucharist. But a Pew Research study released in August seems to indicate that a great number of today’s U.S. Catholics believe the result of consecration is symbolic rather than real.

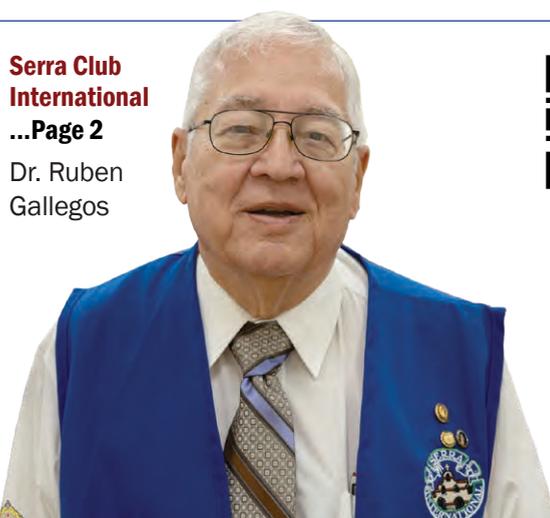


**40 Days for Life**  
...Page 3

Volunteers needed for campaign to end abortion

**Serra Club International**  
...Page 2

Dr. Ruben Gallegos



**EN ESPAÑOL**  
Páginas 9-10

Columnas sobre el V Encuentro y discípulos misioneros, la fea cara del racismo, y obra de nuestra manos

**For video and more photos**  
Visit the Diocese of Brownsville on its social media pages.



# Gallegos named Serra International president

## Educator's latest honor a Valley first

HARLINGEN — Dr. Ruben Gallegos was installed as the president of Serra International on June 22 at the 77th Serra International Convention in Mexico City. He is the first Serra International president from the Rio Grande Valley. Serrans from the Diocese of Brownsville hosted a luncheon in his honor Aug. 10 at St. Joan of Arc Church in Weslaco.

Serrans are Catholic lay men and women who promote and support vocations to the ministerial priesthood and consecrated life in the Catholic Church. Serra International has more than 1,100 Serra clubs, which have been chartered in 46 countries around the world, and a membership of more 20,000.

Gallegos joined the Serra Club of Brownsville in 1993 and served as club president, district governor, regional director, and board member of Serra's National Council for the United States and Serra International. In 1970 he graduated with a Ph.D.



from East Texas State University. He worked as a teacher, assistant principal, principal, and assistant superintendent in Brownsville. He also worked as assistant superintendent in Dallas and superintendent in Edinburg. He spent 33 years in the field of education with the last nine years as university professor. In 2001,

Brownsville named a school the Dr. Ruben Gallegos Elementary School for his contributions in the field of education for children in migrant, bilingual, and multicultural educational programs.

Dr. Gallegos retired in 2018. He is now the owner-broker of a real estate investment company.



Eddie Hernandez / The Valley Catholic  
Dr. Ruben Gallegos became the first president of Serra International from the Rio Grande Valley in June when he was installed at the 77th Serra International Convention in Mexico City. Clockwise from lower right, Dr. Gallegos makes a point while addressing the convention; at left, he shows off his cake; at top right, some of the trappings of office.



## Real presence

continued from pg. 2

The Valley Catholic.

Bishop Flores said of the Consecration, "... We know the great secret, the great mystery of faith. It is that the Lord did this at the Last Supper precisely to give us his own being. Because it is not bread anymore, it is not wine anymore. It is the Body of the Lord, Blood of the Lord.

"The Church ... recognizes that the treasure of faith is the presence of the Lord among us precisely in this Sacrament."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church looks to the Council of Trent to define its eucharistic doctrine: "By the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called

transubstantiation" (No. 1376).

Catholic theologians in the High Middle Ages turned to the Aristotelian philosophic categories of "substance" and "accidents" to expound the doctrine. Today, some argue those terms contribute to the

confusion around the Eucharist.

"The accidents are those things that we see. We see a host. We see wine," explained Father Frank Donio, director of the Catholic Apostolate Center in Washington, in an interview with Catholic News Service. "The



Paul Binz / The Valley Catholic

Bishop Daniel E. Flores raises the Body of Christ during consecration at the first Mass in San Juan Diego Church July 14 in Citrus City.

substance — the 'breadness' or the 'wineness' — is what it is."

By the words of consecration during the Eucharistic Prayer at Mass, the substance changes — transubstantiation — while the accidents remain the same.

It still looks like, acts like, tastes like bread or wine. But its substance has become the body and blood of Christ, Father Donio said.

"The difficulty is that because we don't help people to understand what that means, substance and accidents, it's harder for them to then understand what transubstantiation is," he added. "We do need to assist people in understanding" those terms.

But do those ancient terms resonate with modern-day Catholics?

"Sometimes we struggle to articulate a post-Enlightenment

understanding of what we mean by Real Presence" by relying on outdated vocabulary, said Michael Bayer, director of evangelization and adult formation at St. Clement Church in Chicago.

Father Reese put it bluntly, "Using Aristotelian concepts to explain Catholic mysteries in the 21st century is a fool's errand."

It is possible to teach the doctrine of transubstantiation without using the words "substance" and "accidents," said Timothy O'Malley, professor and director of the Notre Dame Center for Liturgy, in an interview. But eventually it is the appropriate way to teach it, he said.

"If the word 'substance' scares people off, you can say, 'what it really is,' and that is what substance is," O'Malley said. "What it really is, what it absolutely is at its heart is Christ's body and blood."

"The most helpful thing we can say is: This really, truly, actually is Jesus, in a way that it was not prior to the act of consecration," Bayer said in an interview. "It truly is Jesus and there's an aspect to this we simply don't understand. And we have to be a little comfortable in the face of that mystery."

"Faith is not purely an intellectual exercise," Father Donio said. "Reason informs (faith). Faith is that encounter with Christ."

How can the Church encourage that encounter with Christ? How can the Church help promote understanding of and love for the Eucharist?

Look to liturgical practice, what we do in our parishes, O'Malley said. "Are there eucharistic processions in public ways? Do we engage in practices like benedictions and other dimensions that hold up the eucharistic sacrament and the gift of this presence?"

Along with incorporating religious practices surrounding the Eucharist, pastors should preach about the doctrine of transubstantiation, especially on the feast of Corpus Christi, O'Malley added.

For Catholic speaker and author Katie Prejean McGrady, eucharistic adoration has been an essential part of her ministry.

"There's an opportunity to open people's hearts and minds to the idea that we get to sit in the presence of Christ. And if this was just bread, then this would be a complete waste of time," she said in an interview.

"It is important to recognize that the Lord's decision to offer this Eucharistic presence ... is a decision he made himself," Bishop Flores said June 23. "Why did he do it? Why did he leave us the Sacrament of the altar under the appearance of bread and wine, and why do we have to eat it? He did not simply say, 'Here I am in their minds, it is enough that they think of me.' No. That is good, but it is not enough.

"Whoever drinks my Blood and eats my Body will have my flesh, will have eternal life."

What the Pew survey has done — accurate or not — is spark conversation and critical thinking among Catholics leaders, educators and catechists on the best way to lead believers to a deeper understanding of the Eucharist.

"How do we take advantage of this conversation to help people encounter Christ more deeply in the Eucharist?" Father Donio said.

The Eucharist "is the real presence of Christ. How do we prepare for that encounter? How do we make that encounter? And what happens after that encounter?"

The Valley Catholic contributed to this report.

## THE VALLEY CATHOLIC

700 N. Virgen de San Juan Blvd., San Juan, TX 78589-3042  
Telephone: (956) 781-5323 • Fax: (956) 784-5082

**Bishop Daniel E. Flores**  
Publisher

**Brenda Nettles Riojas**  
Editor

**Paul Binz**  
Assistant Editor

**Ester Salas**  
Graphic Artist

**Ricardo Treviño**  
Content Developer

**South Texas Circulation**  
Circulation

**The Valley Catholic email:**  
editor@cdob.org

**Follow us on Facebook**  
Catholic Diocese of Brownsville  
www.cdob.org

**Subscription rate**  
\$15 per year • \$17 outside of Texas  
\$25 out of U.S.

The Valley Catholic, a publication of the Diocese of Brownsville, is published monthly

### Advertising

**Gustavo Morales**  
(956) 266-1527

**Gilbert Saenz**  
(956) 451-5416

**Paul Binz**  
(956) 784-5055

Parishes and missions please call Paul Binz at (956) 784-5055 for church rates.

# Help wanted: 40 Days for Life begins soon

## Sidewalk vigil aims to save babies' lives

By PAUL BINZ  
The Valley Catholic



The Valley Catholic

40 Days for Life is conducted twice a year, in spring and fall, sometimes even in cool weather. The campaign, which began in 2007 in Bryan, Texas, is now an international effort active across the United States and in several foreign countries.

McALLEN — Pro-life Catholics in the Rio Grande Valley are gearing up for this fall's local 40 Days for Life, an international peaceful and prayerful campaign to end abortion. The annual autumn vigil outside the Valley's only abortion clinic is set to begin on Wednesday, Sept. 25, and will continue through Sunday, Nov. 3.

Through prayer, fasting, constant vigil and community outreach, the goal is to create awareness about the realities and consequences of abortion. Some 60,000 babies are aborted each year in Texas alone according to the Texas Department of State Health Services. About 600,000 babies are aborted annually nationwide.

Volunteers are needed to pray on the sidewalk by the clinic, and the Rio Grande Valley's Catholics are all invited, said Deacon Rudy Sepulveda of Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish in McAllen, coordinator of 40 Days for Life. A commitment of just one hour is all that's needed, he said.

"The heart of the campaign is the vigil," he said. "The heart of everything is literally filling in those 12 hours a day for 40 days in prayer outside the abortion clinic. That makes or breaks the campaign."

He said the most difficult hours to fill are those in the early afternoon after lunch because of

work, weather, etc., and this fall he hopes more Catholic men will join in the effort.

"The ladies are more responsive; the ladies outnumber the men out on the sidewalk," he said. "Let this be a shout-out to the Knights of Columbus organizations and other men's clubs and Catholic men in general to come out and be the leaders in this effort."

Peaceful prayer warriors are needed not only for the mothers and babies affected by abortion, but also for those who work in the abortion industry.

"The clinical workers — some of them are working there by default," Deacon Sepulveda said.

"Like the saying says, nobody is born saying, 'When I grow up, I want to be an abortionist. When I grow up, I want to be pro-choice; when I grow up, I want to go against Church teachings. Nobody grows up like that."

"But circumstances in our lives — that's why we're compassionate and merciful with those who solicit this place because only God knows their hearts and their situations. We're there to offer hope."

The prayerful nature of 40 Days for Life can serve as a good example to change hearts and minds, Deacon Sepulveda said.

"It's not us against them, even though they might think that," he

said. "They see us out there every day for 40 days, and you know that they're looking out the window going, 'Don't these guys ever quit?' So they start trying to come to terms: 'What makes them tick? What makes them go?'"

"So we're also getting to the abortionist to have conscience, to dialogue with their conscience, with their heart."

The non-confrontational aspects of 40 Days for Life are key, Deacon Sepulveda said, even if the work sometimes has drawn backlash from pro-choice counter-demonstrators, particularly in other parts of the country.

"Many people think, 'Well, I would go, but I've seen videos

on the news or on YouTube,' " he said. "We have been blessed in our campaign that nothing like that has ever happened."

"We are there (to be) like Jesus. ... You need to be at peace," he said. "So if we are at peace out on the sidewalk, nothing like this should ever happen. We've been blessed to have been protected, and I do believe that is because of our guardian angels. But we need to do our part. not engage, no matter how much they insult, no matter what they do — do not engage."

Since the first coordinated 40 Days for Life in 2007, the campaign reports 16,004 babies saved from abortion, 190 people employed in abortion-related occupations have quit and 100 facilities offering abortions have closed. 40 Days for Life is active across the United States as well as other countries, including Mexico, Canada, the U.K., Australia, South Africa, Colombia, Russia, and Hong Kong.

Volunteers here can sign up and commit to a specific hour and day during the 40 Days for Life campaign at <https://40daysforlife.com/local-campaigns/mcallen/>. Parishes may consider volunteering as a group, and family groups are welcome, Deacon Sepulveda said.

For more information or to volunteer as a prayer warrior, please contact Deacon Sepulveda by phone at (956) 624-6300 or by email at [deacon\\_rudy@yahoo.com](mailto:deacon_rudy@yahoo.com).

"We are there to be a last sign of hope for the women who come out of desperation or ignorance or fear to say yes to life," he said. "We're the last visible sign of hope."

# Harlingen to host Convocation Sept. 28

## More than 1,200 expected at new convention center

The Valley Catholic

SAN JUAN — The Diocese of Brownsville's annual Catechetical Convocation is set for Saturday, Sept. 28 at the new Harlingen Convention Center.

For the diocesan Office of Catechesis, the event is one of the highlights of the year as some 1,200 of the diocese's more than 3,000 catechists will come together for a day of prayer, fellowship and reflection. Bishop Daniel E. Flores will address the convocation in English and Spanish, and distribute service pins to those catechists who have completed 10, 20, 25, 30, 40 or even more years of faith formation ministry. Some catechists have been active for half a century, said Rosa Gonzalez of the Diocese of Brownsville's Office of Catechesis.

"Every year we've had a couple who reach 50 years," she said.

All catechists who serve at the diocese's parishes, mission churches and Catholic schools are welcome and encouraged to participate. The convocation follows by about two weeks the Church's national observance of Catechetical Sunday, which will be celebrated on Sept. 15. The



The Valley Catholic

A day of prayer, song and recognition, the Diocese of Brownsville's Catechetical Convocation is a joyous occasion for many catechists, like these at the 2018 event at Jacob Brown Auditorium in Brownsville.

2019 theme is "Stay With Us."

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops calls Catechetical Sunday "a wonderful opportunity to reflect on the role that each person plays, by virtue of Baptism, in handing on the faith and being a witness to the Gospel. Catechetical Sunday is an opportunity for all to rededicate themselves to this mission as a community of faith."

As a special and distinct ministry in the Church, "Catechesis is intimately bound up with the whole of the Church's life ... her inner growth and correspondence with God's plan depend essentially on catechesis," the Catechism of the Catholic Church says.

The convocation's keynote speaker will be Rita Ann

Martinez of William H. Sadlier, Inc., a longtime publisher of Catholic books and educational material, Gonzalez said.

Martinez has 35 years in the catechetical field as a youth minister, DRE, and Catholic school teacher in the Archdiocese of San Antonio, Diocese of New Mexico and now in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. She teaches formation classes in both English and Spanish for other PCLs in the Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston. She is one of the founders of the Federation of Catechesis with Hispanics; has a BA in Religious Studies and a MA in Theology from the University of the Incarnate Word in San Antonio; certifications in youth ministry and pastoral ministry

coordination; and national certification of catechesis from the USCCB.

More than 50 exhibitors will be active at the convocation, including various ministries, dealers in religious articles and jewelry, media and publishers. The Harlingen Convention Center, which opened May 1, is at 701 Harlingen Heights Dr. in Harlingen.

For more information, call the Office of Catechesis at (956) 784-5013.

### Prayer for Catechists

O God, our Heavenly Father, you have given us the gift of these catechists to be heralds of the Gospel to our parish family.

We lift them up to you in thanksgiving and intercede for them concerning their hopes and needs.

May we be attentive to the presence of your Word in them, a Word that lifts up and affirms, calls forth and challenges, is compassionate and consoles.

We pray that our parish family will always be blessed with those who have responded to the call to share in Christ's prophetic mission as catechists. May we too be open to the universal call to service that Christ addresses to all of his disciples, contributing our gifts to the communion of faith, the Church.

We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

# Sister Pimentel receives LCWR Leadership Award

Catholic News Service

SCOTTSDALE, Arizona — Sister Norma Pimentel received the Leadership Conference of Women Religious Outstanding Leadership Award Aug. 16 at the organization's annual assembly in Scottsdale.

She was honored for her work as the executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley and the Humanitarian Respite center, which has served more than 150,000 immigrants to date.

"There are times we must decide who we are, what we stand for," Sister Pimentel, a member of the Missionaries of Jesus, told the nearly 700 Catholic sisters attending the assembly. "We must ask ourselves, dear sisters, 'What else must I do in the world today?' ... in times of extreme pain and suffering, extreme measures of love are needed."

The Respite Center has expanded from Sister Pimentel's request for temporary use of a parish hall during an influx of refugees in 2014. Her work has brought praise from Pope Francis, and media coverage on *60 Minutes*, *20/20*, CNN, Catholic News Service and *Texas Monthly* magazine.

# Winning videos submitted: How to make a rosary

The Valley Catholic

Leading up the Month of the Rosary in October, *The Valley Catholic* sponsored a contest challenging participants to create a short how-to video of up to three minutes explaining the process of making a rosary.

The two winning entries for the video challenge on how to make a rosary are available for viewing on Diocese of Brownsville YouTube channel. Isaac Rocha and Eddie Garcia of McAllen produced a video in English, and Leticia Treviño of Rio Grande City produced one in Spanish.

Both videos provide step-by-step instructions on making a knot rosary with some basic supplies including nylon thread, twine or satin cording.

Treviño's video focuses on making a komboskini knot rosary. The "komboskini" or "prayer rope" dates back to the fourth century where tradition notes that St. Pachomius used this as a devotional tool for himself and his monks. It is also attributed to St. Anthony the Great, the founder of monasticism.

Prizes for submitting the winning entries include a lavalier microphone and a mobile journalism bag.

Thank you to all who participated, including Graciela Mendoza Ruiz.



The Valley Catholic

For instructions on how to make a rosary, visit the Diocese of Brownsville YouTube page.

**Congratulations!**



ISAAC ROCHA



LETICIA TREVIÑO

Show us your hand-made rosaries. Post your photos on your social media pages and use the hashtag #RGVrosary.



## »Family Life

# The dignified work of our hands

As we approach this country's celebration of Labor Day, I am reminded of the sacredness of work, of labor. Labor Day became an official federal holiday in 1894 and is celebrated on the first Monday of September to honor the contributions that workers make to the building up of our society. Pope Francis reminds us "Work is fundamental to the dignity of the person. Work, to use an image, "anoints with dignity," fills us with dignity, and makes us similar to God who always acts."

By messy, I mean that things are not always nice and neat in our day-to-day family life, but the consistent little loving things we do for one another are of utmost importance. In the Gospel of Matthew 6:21, we are reminded that "for where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." If the little things we do for one another in our family are what we most treasure, our heart (our love) will be full in the good times and in the difficult times.

My father, Vicente Reyna, worked as a truck driver for a butane/propane company for over 30 years and had a wonderful work ethic. When he died in 1985, one of his coworkers told us that my father often quipped that he was such a hard worker that he would probably die on Labor Day! He did not die on that day, but ironically, he was buried on Labor Day.

If we live with the premise that everything belongs to God including our life, our talents, and all our resources, including money, then it stands to reason that we honor God by how we do our work. This includes not only what we do for a paycheck, but also includes the work that we do at home for our family and the work we do for the Church and community.

For whatever reason, unbeknownst to me, in the past several months I have been acutely aware of how many people I have encountered do their work with passion and dignity. These people work to put food on the table for their families, but they do so with commitment and with a sense of service to others. Just this summer, I have noticed this sense of humble service in a number of places:

- the maintenance staff at our Pastoral Center who often go above and beyond to help all our departments as much as possible;
- the Walmart worker who stopped what they were doing to help us find an item;
- the Uber driver who made sure we were safe

before dropping us off in an unknown area;

- the shuttle driver who upon arriving at the final destination stated, "May you be blessed and may nothing today take away your joy";
- the cabinetmaker who specializes in only making cabinets so that each one is done to specifications;
- the Lowe's employee who takes the time to explain the differences in products;
- the groundskeeper at the parish who is constantly working at keeping the grounds beautiful for the parishioners;
- the parish secretary who helped carry items, checked on air conditioners and offered to help during set-up for a marriage preparation training;
- the H-E-B worker who opens another lane to help customers get home to their families sooner.

Every person who works at businesses that we frequent has a unique and special role. Many of us shop grocery stores such as H-E-B without much thought of how each person there makes it possible for us to feed our family. My uncle Ruben regularly tells his wife Rosita after dinner, "*Gracias a Dios, gracias a ti, y gracias a H-E-B!*"

It is important for us as parents and grandparents to teach our children and grandchildren the importance and dignity of work. Our grandson Elian graduated from kindergarten in May from St. Joseph Catholic School. Students introduced themselves at the graduation ceremony and stated their name and what occupation they hoped to have when they grew up. We thought he was going to say he hoped to be a meteorologist when he grows up because he is fascinated by tornadoes and likes to follow the weather forecasts.

Instead, he stood and said, "My name is Elian Pesina, and when I grow up, I want to be an H-E-B worker."

Apparently, his mother has been telling him that as soon as he turns 16 years old, he needs to start working, and the H-E-B is a great place to start. Either of these vocations is dignified work.

My hope and prayer for Elian and for all of us is that we recall the words of Psalm 90:17: "And may the gracious care of the Lord our God be ours; prosper the work of our hands for us! Prosper the work of our hands!"



Lydia Pesina

Director,  
Family Life Office

## »Sunday Readings

*The Word of God in the Life and Mission of the Church*

### SEPT. 1

*Twenty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Reading 1

SIR 3:17-18, 20, 28-29

Responsorial Psalm  
PS 68:4-5, 6-7, 10-11

Reading 2

PHMN 9-10, 12-17

Alleluia

MT 11:29AB

Gospel

LK 14:1, 7-14

### SEPT. 8

*Twenty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Reading 1

WIS 9:13-18B

Responsorial Psalm  
PS 90:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 14 AND 17

Reading 2

PHMN 9-10, 12-17

Alleluia

PS 119:135

Gospel

LK 14:25-33

### SEPT. 15

*Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Reading 1

EX 32:7-11, 13-14

Responsorial Psalm  
PS 51:3-4, 12-13, 17, 19

Reading 2

1 TM 1:12-17

Alleluia

2 COR 5:19

Gospel

LK 15:1-32 or

LK 15:1-10

### SEPT. 22

*Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Reading 1

AM 8:4-7

Responsorial Psalm  
PS 113:1-2, 4-6, 7-8

Reading 2

1 TM 2:1-8

Alleluia

CF. 2 COR 8:9

Gospel

LK 16:1-13 or

LK 16:10-13

### SEPT. 29

*Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time*

Reading 1

AM 6:1A, 4-7

Responsorial Psalm  
PS 146:7, 8-9, 9-10

Reading 2

1 TM 6:11-16

Alleluia

CF. 2 COR 8:9

Gospel

LK 16:19-31

Please send us an email or call to let us know if you would like to continue to see the Sunday Readings listed in *The Valley Catholic*. We value your feedback and will enter your name for a chance to win a gift certificate to a local restaurant. (More information at <https://www.cdob.org/the-valley-catholic/> or call: 956-785-5055.)



For video, photo  
and more

Catholic Diocese  
of Brownsville

» Making Sense of Bioethics

# Contradictory suicide messaging



**Fr. Tadeusz Pacholczyk**  
 Priest of the Diocese of Fall River, Mass.  
 Director of Education at The National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia.  
 See [www.ncbcenter.org](http://www.ncbcenter.org)

In July 2014, police found the body of 18-year-old Conrad Roy inside his truck in Fairhaven, Massachusetts, having died from carbon monoxide poisoning.

As the case unfolded, it became apparent that a friend of his, 17-year-old Michelle Carter, had encouraged him toward suicide. In a series of texts, she repeatedly pressured him to go through with it by sending messages like, “You keep pushing it off and say you’ll do it but u never do. It’s always gonna be that way if u don’t take action.”

As he sat in a remote spot in the Kmart parking lot, the truck’s cab filling up with fumes, he got cold feet and stepped out of his makeshift death chamber, seemingly conflicted about what he was doing. He then spoke with Michelle by phone, who coaxed him to continue the suicide. The call was not recorded, but months after his death, she texted another friend and recounted how Conrad had grown scared at the last moment, climbing out of the truck, and that she had told him to get back in. She then listened over the phone as he succumbed to the fumes 47 minutes later.

Following a high profile trial that received extensive media coverage, Michelle was convicted of involuntary manslaughter and sentenced to 2 1/2-years behind bars, of which she has to serve a minimum of 15 months. Prosecutors claimed that her motive may have been to gain attention and sympathy as the “grieving girlfriend.”

The case drew intense national and international attention, partly because it involved a relationship that had played out mostly through texts and Facebook messages. Even though Michelle and Conrad lived less than an hour apart, they rarely met in person.

As Michelle was led away from the trial in handcuffs, the court of public opinion was virtually unanimous in condemning her actions as reprehensible. Her actions and the trial proceedings, however, also opened up broader questions about provocation toward suicide in a society like ours that increasingly devalues human life. In fact, the public reaction to Michelle’s behavior reveals a striking irony at the heart of Conrad’s suicide.

The irony involves the moral outrage that surfaced regarding Michelle’s text messages. Similar indignation about encouraging someone to commit suicide is, paradoxically, almost entirely absent when it comes to “physician-assisted” suicide. Michelle’s text messages embraced the same key ideas that lawmakers in nine states have now enacted through legislation, namely, that it’s sometimes allowable to encourage and participate in suicide. Most legislation, however, only permits those in the medical field, those dressed in white lab coats, as it were, to be involved.

This requirement seems quite arbitrary, of course, if the real goal is to alleviate suffering by eliminating the sufferer. After all, Michelle was convinced she was acting compassionately by assisting Conrad to escape from what she claimed was his misery, depression and intense emotional and psychological suffering. Who is to say that Michelle was wrong if the white lab coats are right? If it were deplorable for Michelle Carter to facilitate Conrad Roy’s suicide, how can it be good for physicians and other health care workers to facilitate the suicides of their ailing patients who are at least as fragile and vulnerable as Conrad was?

This remarkable moral schizophrenia may soon be enshrined in a new piece of legislation that claims to outlaw participation in a person’s suicide. Massachusetts state lawmakers and Conrad’s family gathered in July 2019 at the Statehouse to introduce Conrad’s Law, a bill making it a crime to encourage or assist a person in taking his or her life. On the face of it, the law obviously seems like a sensible piece of legislation, but even as lawmakers were trying to stop people from assisting at suicides like Conrad Roy’s, they were simultaneously seeking to protect medical personnel who might assist at the suicides of their patients. The double standard was impossible to miss, with Conrad’s Law including an explicit subsection exempting those involved in physician-assisted suicide from prosecution. Even though physician-assisted suicide is not yet legal in the Massachusetts Commonwealth, another bill promoting it is under active consideration by the legislature.

» Please see **Bioethics** p.11



St. Gregory the Great is known for helping the poor and for possibly originating the sacred music that bears his name - Gregorian chant.

» Feast Day  
 Sept. 3

## Spotlight on St. Gregory the Great

St. Gregory I, also known as the Great, was Pope between 590 and 604 AD.

Gregory was born around 540 in Rome. Although the Western Roman Empire had collapsed long before his birth, many ancient Roman families still commanded great wealth and influence in the city. Gregory was born into one such family.

As a child, he and his family lived through plague and barbarian invasions, and it is thought they retreated to Sicily during part of that time.

Gregory was well-educated, excelled in all his studies and became an expert in law. At the age of 33, he became the Prefect of Rome, just as his father had been.

Pope Pelagius II, who reigned from 579 to 590, chose Gregory to serve as an ambassador to the imperial court of the Eastern Roman Empire in Constantinople.

In 590, Pope Pelagius II died, and Gregory was proclaimed pope by acclamation. This was not something Gregory wanted, but he accepted the burden nevertheless. Gregory made clear he preferred the monastic life in a series of writings praising it. He also referred to himself as a servant of God, a habit many clergy still practice to this day.

Pope Gregory was famous for the emphasis he put on missionary work. He sent many people out to bring others to Jesus and into the Church, including Anglo-Saxon Britain.

Pope Gregory may have also established *cantus planus*, which most today know as Gregorian Chant. Gregorian chant gives us the oldest music we still have in the original form, some dating to the centuries just after the death of Gregory.

Pope Gregory made many changes to the Mass, some of which remain today. The position of the Our Father in the Mass is still where Pope Gregory placed it.

He emphasized the aspect of service to the poor for deacons, and at least one was assigned to each church and ordained for this purpose.

Pope Gregory was well-known for his alms to the poor, and he gave quite generously of the riches donated to the Church by the wealthy people of Rome. He made clear to his subordinates that their duty was to relieve the distress faced by the poor.

When a famine struck Rome in the 590s, Pope Gregory ordered the Church to use its assets to feed the poor. Gregory himself refused to eat until his monks returned from their work of handing out food. He also made certain to dine with a dozen poor people at each meal.

Gregory is widely considered to be the first medieval pope, and he was a prolific writer.

With information from *Catholic Online*

» Formation for Ministry

# V Encuentro: Hope for the Church



**Deacon Luis Zuniga**  
 Director, Office for Pastoral Life & San Juan Diego Ministry Institute

A year ago the Catholic Church in the United States gathered in Grapevine, Texas for the Fifth National Encuentro of Hispanic Latino Ministry. Three thousand five hundred were in attendance, including 2,495 lay leaders, 125 bishops, 345 representatives from different lay ecclesial movements and Catholic Institutions, 219 volunteers, 216 exhibitors, staff and 80 media.

The main goal of the V Encuentro was to discern ways in which the Church in the United States can better respond to the Hispanic/Latino presence (especially those living in the periphery), and to strengthen the ways in which Hispanic/Latinos respond to the call of the New Evangelization as missionary disciples serving the entire Church.

The V Encuentro utilized a missionary process of evangelization and consultation starting at the parish, diocese, regional and national levels to gather input.

The consultation showed the need for a model of church that is more welcoming, missionary to the peripheries, and builds community through ecclesial integration (not cultural assimilation), as well as a great disposition for the Church to engage in formation and leadership development. The urgent need for the Church to invest in emerging Hispanic/Latino leaders was loud and clear.

The preliminary summary of the recommendations and initiatives also indicated the need to identify best practices in parish and diocesan ministry among Hispanic/Latinos and an increase of parish and diocesan intercultural competent staff and teachers in Catholic schools and seminaries.

Some of the significant recommendations:

1. Leadership development and formation of Hispanic young adults and those working with Hispanic youth and youth adults, including second and third generations;

2. Parishes and ecclesial movements getting more involved and providing accompaniment to families, so that they can flourish in faith, education, health, economic development and civic responsibility;

3. Renewed advocacy and solidarity efforts for new immigrants and their families suffering persecution, discrimination and separation;

4. Promoting a model of leadership and ministry based on an encounter with Christ, missionary discipleship and intercultural competency;

5. New pathways and methods for parents to be better formed, involved and equipped with excellent materials to transmit the faith, including family based catechesis with a strong scriptural foundation;

6. Offering solid formation for all ages on the sacrament of marriage with emphasis on family life.

These top 10 priority areas stood out as being of greatest importance for every diocese and every episcopal region: Evangelization and Mission, Faith Formation and Catechesis, Family Ministry, Hispanic Youth and Young Adult Ministries, Immigration, Intercultural Competencies, Justice and Peace, Leadership Development and Ministry Formation, Liturgy, and Spirituality and Vocations.

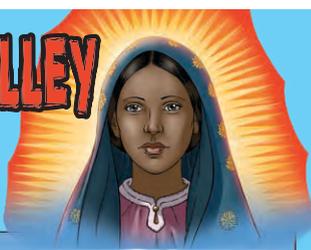
Pastoral practices in 28 ministerial areas were identified, including Campus Ministry, Care for Creation, Catholic Education (K-12), Communications & New Media, Ecclesial Movements, Ecumenism, Evangelization and Mission, Faith Formation and Catechesis, Family Ministry, Global Solidarity, Higher Education, Hispanics in Public and Professional Life, Human Development, Immigration, Intercultural Competencies, Justice and Peace, Latinas in Church and Society, Leadership Development and Ministry Formation, Liturgy and Spirituality, Migrant Ministry, Ministry Among People with Disabilities and Deaf Community, Ministry with Hispanic Young Adults, Ministry with Hispanic Adolescents, Ministry with the Incarcerated and Detained, Pro-Life Ministries, Scripture and Theology, Stewardship and Development and Vocations.

Without a doubt, the V Encuentro consultation and missionary activities have empowered the Catholic faithful to reach out with love and compassion to their neighbors in need, and to stretch their capacity for leadership, organization, and the use of technology to extend the mission of the Church.

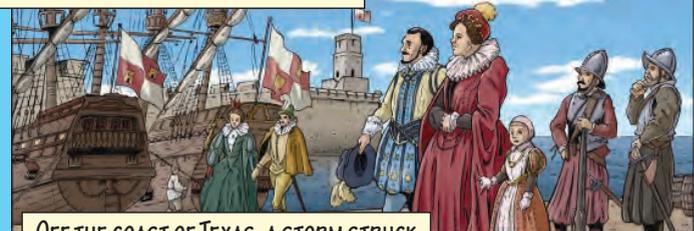
The V Encuentro process follows the thinking of Pope Francis: “Every Christian is a missionary to the extent that he or she has encountered the love

» Please see **Missionary** p.11

# Faith in the Valley



THIRTY YEARS LATER, A GROUP OF SPANIARDS LOADED THEIR FLEET OF TWENTY SHIPS WITH THE RICHES OF THE NEW WORLD AND SET SAIL FOR HOME.



OFF THE COAST OF TEXAS, A STORM STRUCK THE FLEET. HUNDREDS DIED THAT NIGHT. THREE HUNDRED SURVIVORS WERE CAST ASHORE ON PADRE ISLAND, AMONG THEM FIVE DOMINICAN PRIESTS AND BROTHERS.



THE SURVIVORS SOON ENCOUNTERED NATIVE WARRIORS WHO HAD NOT FORGOTTEN THE CRUELTY OF THE CONQUISTADORES.



FRAY HERNANDO BURIED FRAY DIEGO ON THE BANKS OF THE RIO GRANDE. IN A FEW MORE DAYS, HE TOO WOULD GIVE HIS LIFE, WITHOUT ACHIEVING HIS GOAL OF PREACHING THE GOSPEL TO THE NATIVE PEOPLES. BUT GOD WAS ALREADY REALIZING THEIR DREAM IN A WAY NO ONE COULD HAVE IMAGINED...



THEY EMBRACED THE CATHOLIC FAITH, AND THEY HAD A SPECIAL LOVE FOR THE MOTHER OF GOD. THIS HARSH LAND OF MARTYRS HAD BECOME A LAND OF MIRACLES.

TO BE CONTINUED

From Faith in the Valley: An Illustrated History of the Diocese of Brownsville

## Living Our Faith How do you witness your faith in the world today?



**Leticia Garcia**  
Volunteer  
Holy Spirit, McAllen

“ Mi fe la vivo a diario sirviendo a los demás, llevando les el amor de Cristo. En mi trabajo soy capellana

y yo estoy bendecida porque en vez de llevar yo la bendición a los demás, salgo bendecida yo.

El estar en el servicio de los enfermos para mí es algo muy grande porque allí encuentro a Jesús a diario. Mi corazón sale lleno de él. Sé que él esta conmigo en mis situaciones difíciles. En casos muy trágicos, muy tristes, sé que él me cubre. El Espíritu santo me llena de él. Y las palabras que salen de mí, sobre todo, vienen de Jesús.

Yo creo que con esto que yo siento y que he aprendido a sentir con mi vida diaria, me ha llevado a enfrentar cualquier situación en mi vida sin temor. Sé que él va estar conmigo.

“ I witness my faith by service. At my parish, I wear many hats: as an usher, as a lector, and as a Eucharistic minister. I'm an Oblate of St. Benedict trainee for the Monastery of the Good Shepherd. I'm also a Sir Knight, Grand Knight of my local Knights of Columbus council and a member of the Fourth Degree Knights' Assembly. I also serve as the Grand Commander for Mosara Caravan ... of the International Order of Alhambra. Our Caravan spearheads a monthly Special Needs Mass with Father Jorge Gomez, who is also our chaplain, at the Basilica. All are welcomed to this Mass, but

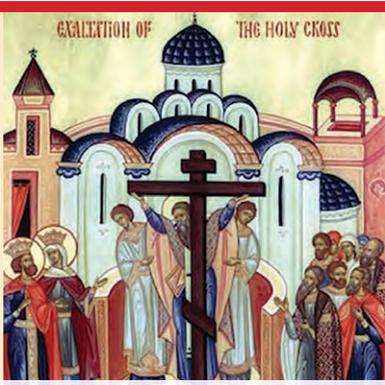


**Eduardo Saenz**  
Volunteer  
St. Isidore Church, San Isidro

it is made to serve children and individuals with special needs. Acceptance and inclusion are at the forefront of this Mass.

### What is The Exaltation of the Holy Cross?

## Q&A



We adore you, o Christ, and we bless you, because by your Holy Cross you have redeemed the world.

The feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross on Sept. 14 celebrates two historical events: the discovery of the True Cross by Saint Helena, the mother of the Emperor Constantine, in 320 under the temple of Venus in Jerusalem, and the dedication in 335 of the basilica and shrine built on Calvary by Constantine, which mark the site of the Crucifixion..

The basilica, named the Martyrium, and the shrine, named the Calvarium, were destroyed by the Persians in 614. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre which now stands on the site was built by the Cru-

saders in 1149. However the feast, more than anything else, is a celebration and commemoration of God's greatest work: his salvific death on the Cross and His Resurrection, through which death was defeated and the doors to Heaven opened.

The entrance antiphon for the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross is: "We should glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is our salvation, our life and our resurrection: through him we are saved and made free."

Source: www.catholicnewsagency.com

## » Birthday & Anniversary Wishes

The list of birthdays and ordination anniversaries is provided so that parishioners may remember the priests, deacons and religious in their prayers and send them a note or a card.

### September

- » Birthdays
- 3 Rev. Msgr. Juan Nicolau
  - 4 Rev. Raymond Nwachukwu
  - 7 Rev. Leonel Rodriguez
  - 9 Rev. Jesus G. Garza
  - 10 Rev. Jose E. Losoya, CO
  - 13 Rev. Richard Lifrak, ss.cc.
  - 16 Bishop Mario A. Aviles, CO
  - 17 Rev. Rafael Jaime Cabañas
  - 19 Rev. Thomas Luczak, OFM
  - 22 Rev. George A. Gonzalez
  - 23 Rev. Jose Rene Angel, JCL
  - 26 Rev. Martin De La Cruz
  - 30 Rev. Juan Rogelio Gutierrez
- 5 Deacon Felix Felix
  - 19 Deacon Carlos C. Aguilar
  - 19 Deacon Francisco Rugama
  - 20 Deacon Agapito Cantu
  - 22 Deacon Miguel Villarreal
  - 22 Deacon Mike Myers
  - 29 Deacon Robert Ledesma
- 6 Sister Colette Kraus, SSND
  - 21 Sister Nancy Boushey, OSB

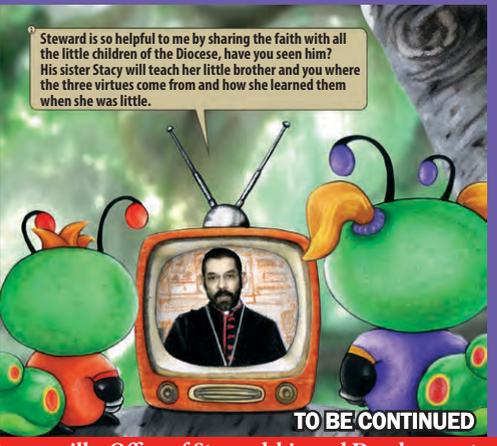
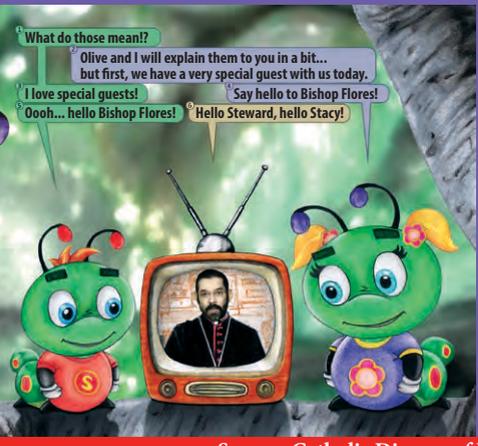
- » Anniversaries
- 7 Rev. Paul Wilhelm, OMI
  - 8 Rev. Rafael Jaime Cabañas
  - 8 Rev. Richard Phillon, OMI
  - 19 Rev. Esteban Hernandez
- 26 Deacon Juan Carlos Jasso
  - 30 Deacon Martin Jacques, Jr.

## CATECHISM POP QUIZ

Check your knowledge. The following questions are derived from the Catechism of the Catholic Church. In parentheses is the number that refers to the paragraphs in the Catechism.

139. The anamnesis makes the sacrifice of Calvary present to us at every Mass (1362-1365):
- a. totally false
  - b. totally true
  - c. partially true
149. Which of the following is/are true (1402-1405):
- a. In the Eucharist we anticipate the glory of heaven.
  - b. Every Eucharistic celebration looks to Jesus' Second Coming.
  - c. While on earth Jesus hid his divinity. In the Eucharist he hides both his divinity and his humanity.
  - d. The Eucharist is the surest guarantee and the greatest sign of our hope in the new heavens and the new earth.

Source: Jim Seghers' Totus Tuus Ministries, http://www.totustuus.com



Source: Catholic Diocese of Brownsville, Office of Stewardship and Development

# ACE paves way to master's degrees for new Catholic teachers



By R. DANIEL CAVAZOS  
The Valley Catholic



**KATHRYN LIEDER**



**I see the experience as a privilege and vocation rather than a task or a job."**

*Kathryn Lieder*



**JOHN CUNNINGHAM**

BROWNSVILLE — Kathryn Lieder grew up admiring her English teachers in public school settings and imagined one day she could emulate her mentors in the classroom.

Her opportunity came in the form of the Alliance for Catholic Education, (ACE), a two-year fellowship in which participants teach in Catholic schools while earning a cost-free Master of Education degree from the University of Norte Dame. There are 10 ACE teachers working at Catholic schools in the Diocese of Brownsville for the 2019-2020 school year.

Lieder is one of those 10 teachers. The ACE program landed Lieder in Brownsville, where she teaches English at St. Joseph Academy.

"I wanted to teach in a Catholic school where I believed I could form stronger relationships and mentorships with my students," said Lieder, a Connecticut native and graduate of Boston College, a Catholic university. "I've had that at St. Joseph. The school has a very strong base of faith and tradition."

Lieder is in her second year of teaching English to ninth and 10th graders at St. Joseph. The school and community, she said, have been welcoming, and

learning about the area's border culture has been illuminating.

Learning about a new culture and gaining new experiences in community life is one of the three defining components of ACE. The other two are professional development and spiritual growth. Lieder is experiencing all three during her time in the program while teaching at St. Joseph. The professional development is rigorous with what's provided by Notre Dame and at the local level with area educators. Spiritual growth is an aspect she sees in herself and her students.

A prayer starts every class, she said, and as an instructor, she attends a weekly Mass with her students. Lieder has also gone to religious retreats with

her students and seen them grow spiritually as well as developing their intellects through study.

"I've come to trust in the goodness of God and the good nature of my students," Lieder said. "I see the experience (of teaching) as a privilege and vocation rather than a task or a job."

Another Brownsville-based ACE program participant is Matthew Madden. He grew up as a son of an ACE administrator in South Bend, the Indiana city where Notre Dame is located. Madden graduated with a degree in political science from the University of Dayton in Ohio. From there, he decided to give ACE a try after years of hearing about its merits. He teaches at Guadalupe Regional Middle

School and made a quick discovery.

"Teaching is harder than what I envisioned," said Madden, who's in his second year of teaching history and social studies at Guadalupe. "Classroom management, lesson plans, and the prep work it takes to be an effective teacher are all challenging."

Like Lieder, Madden praises Brownsville for being a welcoming community. He enjoys the family atmosphere of Guadalupe and the teacher-student relationships he has with his students. Madden's expectations going into his second year at Guadalupe are that he will see improvements over his first year of teaching.

"The first year you're thrown into the fire," he said. "In the

second year, I'm expecting that my quality of planning and efficiency will get better."

In McAllen, John Cunningham teaches social studies to middle school students at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic School. He's going into his second year of teaching in McAllen and said the familiarity he has with his students and they have with him will be a big plus. The work of teaching can be tiring, Cunningham said, but looking at his students every morning reminds him why he's there.

"I recognize that my students are children of God," said Cunningham, a Norte Dame graduate who's the son of the athletic director at the University of North Carolina and the grandson of educators. "That energizes me every morning. I love the fact that we pray together every day."

The three ACE teachers are unsure where their career paths will take them after completing the program, but they each said one indelible memory will always be the reception they've received in the Valley.

"I'm just blown away with how I've been welcomed here, by the school and the community," Cunningham said. "I feel like part of the community and not an outsider."



## Come Experience God's Healing Mercy

Acompáñenos cada ultimo sábado del mes para una **Noche de SANACION y DIVINA MISERICORDIA** en la Basilica de Nuestra Señora San Juan del Valle en San Juan, Texas a las 6:30 PM

Join us every last Saturday of the month for a **Night of Healing and Divine Mercy** at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle, San Juan, Texas at 6:30 PM **with Msgr. Juan Nicolau, Ph. D. leading us in prayer**

[www.olsjbasilica.org](http://www.olsjbasilica.org)



### Immaculate Conception Cathedral

#### Gift Shop and Museum



The source for Catholic Religious Articles sure to enhance your spiritual journey!

Bibles, Missals & Rosaries  
Spiritual Reading  
Prayer Cards & DVD's

1218 E. Jefferson Street, Brownsville TX 78520 | 956-546-3178

JOIN THE 2020 CENSUS TEAM  
**BE A CENSUS TAKER**

**APPLY ONLINE!**  
[2020census.gov/jobs](https://2020census.gov/jobs)

The U.S. Census Bureau is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

United States  
**Census  
2020**

**2020 Census jobs provide:**

- ✓ Great pay
- ✓ Flexible hours
- ✓ Weekly pay
- ✓ Paid training

For more information or help applying, please call  
**1-855-JOB-2020**

Federal Relay Service:  
1-800-877-8339 TTY/ASCII  
[www.gsa.gov/fedrelay](http://www.gsa.gov/fedrelay)



**CHRIS GARZA, Sales Consultant: "Come see me for your best deal. You won't regret it!"**



CELL: (956) 533-6822  
OFFICE: (956) 585-1601  
FAX: (956) 519-5580

# Lofty titles do not guarantee entrance to heaven, pope says

By JUNNO A. ESTEVES  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY — A life marked by humility, faith and love determines whether Christians enter heaven, not who they know, Pope Francis said.

Before praying the Angelus prayer with pilgrims gathered in St. Peter's Square Aug. 25, the pope said that the Lord will recognize those worthy of experiencing eternal joy if they have lived "a life of faith that translates into deeds" and not whether they have attended conferences or rubbed shoulders with church leaders.

"The Lord does not recognize us by our titles," he said. "Look, Lord, I belonged to this association; I was a friend of that bishop, of that cardinal, of that priest. No, titles do not count; they do not count," he said.

Greeting pilgrims after the prayer, Pope Francis had special words of welcome for the new seminarians, most from the United States, beginning their studies at the Pontifical North American College in Rome.

The pope urged the men to maintain a strong commitment to their spiritual lives and "fidelity to Christ, to the Gospel and to the magisterium of the church. Without building on these columns, it will be impossible to truly construct your vocation."

In his main talk, the pope reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading from St. Luke in which Jesus, while preaching in a village, is asked if only a few people will



CNS photo/Vatican Media

Pope Francis greets a child as he arrives for his general audience in St. Peter's Square at the Vatican Aug. 28, 2019.

be saved.

Jesus' response, the pope explained, doesn't focus on how many will be admitted into heaven but rather on the duty of God's children to "strive to enter through the narrow gate."

"With these words, Jesus makes it clear that it isn't a question of numbers, there isn't a limited number in paradise! But it is a matter of following the right path now, and this right path is for everyone, but it is narrow," he said.

The pope said that Jesus doesn't deceive his followers and tell them that the path to heaven is "a beautiful highway with a large door at the end," but rather is a confined passageway.

To save oneself, he explained, "one must love God and neighbor, and this is not comfortable."

"It is a 'narrow gate' because it is demanding; love is always demanding, it requires commitment, indeed, an 'effort,' that is, a firm and persevering will to live according to the Gospel," the pope said. "St. Paul calls it 'the good fight of faith.' It takes an effort every day to love God and one's neighbor."

To obtain the joy of heaven, Pope Francis said, Christians are called to be in communion with Christ by praying and receiving the sacraments and reading the Word of God which "keeps us in faith, nourishes our hope and revives charity."

"And in this way, through the grace of God, we can and we must spend our lives for the good of our brothers and sisters, fighting against all forms of evil and injustice."

Saint Theresa Catholic Church

FALL FESTIVAL

OCT. 5 & 6

5 PM - 10 PM

• Food • Rides •  
• Games • Music •

1300 Combes St.  
San Benito, TX. 78586

956-399-3247



» **Formación para el ministerio**

# V Encuentro: Esperanza para la Iglesia



**Diacono Luis Zuniga**  
Director, Oficina de Vida Pastoral e Instituto del Ministerio de San Juan Diego

**H**ace un año la Iglesia Católica en los Estados Unidos se congregó en Dallas, Texas para el Quinto Encuentro Nacional de Pastoral Hispana/Latina. En asistencia participaron 3,500 en la reunión, incluyendo 2,495 delegados (fieles laicos de diferentes diócesis) 125 Obispos, 345 representantes de diferentes movimientos eclesiales e Instituciones Católicas, 219 voluntarios, 216 exhibidores, y 80 miembros de los medios de comunicación.

La meta principal del V Encuentro fue de discernir formas en las que la Iglesia en los Estados Unidos pueda responder mejor a la presencia de los Hispanos/Latinos, y potenciar modos en que los Hispanos/Latinos respondan como discípulos misioneros al llamado de la Nueva Evangelización, sirviendo a toda la Iglesia.

El proceso del V Encuentro es una actividad prioritaria del plan estratégico de la Conferencia de Obispos Católicos de los Estados Unidos (USCCB, por sus siglas en Ingles) para el ciclo 2017-2020.

El V Encuentro fue y continúa siendo un proceso de reflexión y acción eclesial de 4 años que invita a todos los católicos en los Estados Unidos a una intensa actividad misionera, de consulta, desarrollo de liderazgo y discernimiento pastoral (en parroquias diócesis y regional episcopales).

El fin es la promoción de liderazgo e identificación de buenas prácticas ministeriales y prioridades que impactan la calidad del ministerio entre los católicos hispanos/latinos

bajo el liderazgo de los obispos y en el espíritu de la Nueva Evangelización.

El V Encuentro se inició al nivel de la base y promueve el desarrollo de recursos e iniciativas que mejor sirvan a la creciente población hispana en las diócesis, parroquias, movimientos eclesiales, y otras organizaciones e instituciones católicas a la luz de su tema: Discípulos misioneros: testigos del amor de Dios.

Todos los líderes en las diócesis, parroquias, movimientos eclesiales laicos y otras organizaciones e instituciones católicas fueron y siguen invitados por medio de este proceso a salir al encuentro de los católicos Hispanos/Latinos, particularmente aquellos que viven en la periferia, mediante del proceso misionero de evangelización y consulta del V Encuentro.

La conclusión de los procedimientos, y memorias del V Encuentro serán publicadas en el mes de octubre y se harán públicas, las implementaciones de las estrategias pastorales serán implementadas en todas la diócesis y parroquias de los Estados Unidos.

Según el reciente borrador de la memorias y conclusiones del V Encuentro ofrecen recomendaciones para las diez áreas prioritarias. Las diez áreas identificadas son: Evangelización y misión, formación en la fe y catequesis, pastoral familiar, pastoral juvenil hispana, inmigración, capacidades interculturales, paz y justicia, desarrollo del liderazgo y capacitación pastoral, liturgia y espiritualidad, y vocaciones.

Durante el proceso de consulta y dialogo del V Encuentro 28 áreas

ministeriales fueron identificadas como practicas pastorales más exitosas. Estas áreas ministeriales identificadas son los frutos del proceso y resultado a lo largo de las visitas misioneras y los Encuentros en la parroquias, movimientos, organizaciones, diócesis y regiones episcopales.

La 28 áreas ministeriales son la siguientes: pastoral escolar y universitaria, cuidado de la

creación, educación católica (K-12), comunicaciones y los nuevos medios, movimientos eclesiales, ecumenismo, evangelización y misión, formación en la fe y catequesis, pastoral familiar, solidaridad global, educación superior, hispanos en la vida publica y profesional, desarrollo humano, inmigración, capacidades interculturales, paz

» Por favor lea **Discípulos** p.10

**FE EN EL VALLE**

TREINTA AÑOS DESPUÉS, UN GRUPO DE ESPAÑOLES CARGARON SU FLOTA DE VEINTE BARCOS CON LAS RIQUEZAS DE NUEVO MUNDO Y ZARPARON A SU TIERRA.

FRENTE A LA COSTA DE TEXAS, UNA TORMENTA GOLPEÓ LA FLOTA. CIENTOS DE PERSONAS MURIERON ESA NOCHE. TRESCIENTOS SOBREVIVIENTES FUERON ARROJADOS EN TIERRA EN LA ISLA DEL PADRE, ENTRE ELLOS CINCO SACERDOTES Y HERMANOS RELIGIOSOS DOMINICANOS.

POCO DESPUÉS, LOS SOBREVIVIENTES SE ENCONTRARON CON GUERREROS INDÍGENAS QUE AÚN NO HABÍAN OLVIDADO LA CRUELDAD DE LOS CONQUISTADORES.

YA NO PUEDO SEGUIR, MI HERMANO. ENCOMIENDA MI ESPÍRITU A LA DIVINA MAJESTAD. QUE EL SEÑOR ESTE CON USTEDES

FRAY HERNANDO SEPULTÓ A FRAY DIEGO EN LAS ORILLAS DEL RIO GRANDE. EN UNOS DÍAS MÁS, EL TAMBIÉN DARÍA SU VIDA, SIN PODER LLEGAR A SU META DE PREDICAR EL EVANGELIO AL PUEBLO INDÍGENA. PERO DIOS YA ESTABA REALIZANDO SUS SUEÑOS DE UNA MANERA QUE NADIE PODRÍA HABER IMAGINADO.

1531. MEXICO.

¿POR QUÉ HE DE CREER TU HISTORIA EXTRAÑA? DAME ALGUNA SEÑAL COMO PRUEBA QUE ESTO VIENE DE DIOS.

DESPUÉS DE LA APARICIÓN, DECENAS DE MILES DE PERSONAS INDÍGENAS BUSCABAN EL BAUTISMO.

ES MORENA, COMO NOSOTROS. ES VERDADERAMENTE, NUESTRA MADRE COMPASIVA.

ABRAZABAN SU FE CATOLICA Y TENÍAN UN AMOR ESPECIAL PARA LA MADRE DE DIOS. ESTA TIERRA CRUEL DE MÁRTIRES SE HABÍA CONVERTIDO EN UNA TIERRA DE MILAGROS.

*Continuará*

WEEKDAYS | WEEKENDS | ONLINE  
BACHELOR'S | MASTER'S | DOCTORAL

## OUR FAITH AFFIRMS

INFO SESSION  
SEPT. 17 | 6 P.M.

956-227-0146  
1650 S. MAIN  
LA FERIA, TX 78559

**OLLU**  
OUR LADY OF THE LAKE UNIVERSITY  
RIO GRANDE VALLEY

ollusa.edu/RGV

## »La Alegría de Vivir

# La fea cara del racismo



Msgr. Juan Nicolau, Ph.D., STL

Sacerdote jubilado de la Diócesis de Brownsville

Todavía no nos reponíamos de noticia de Gilroy, CA, donde un joven armado dispara indiscriminadamente contra los asistentes al festival del ajo, cuando nos helo la sangre el tiroteo masivo en El Paso, TX. Después, en menos de 24 horas, otro tiroteo en Dayton, OH, nos dejaba muy claro que no podemos estar tranquilos pensando que eso nunca nos va a pasar, pues todos estamos expuestos al odio de un ser desequilibrado mental con acceso a un arma.

En el caso del asesino de al menos 22 personas, de las cuales 8 eran nacionales mexicanos que se encontraban de compras en una tienda muy popular, no cabe la menor duda sus intenciones, pues deja salvado en su computadora un manifiesto racista, en el que deja claro su intención de matar al mayor número de mexicanos, alega que los inmigrantes, con o sin documentos de residencia, constituyen una invasión al nuestro país.

Queda claro en ese documento que además de racista, ese joven es un ignorante. A sus 22 años tiene el corazón infectado por odio y muy poca capacidad para razonar, e indagar la historia de nuestro país y la formación del estado de Texas.

La razón del porque El Paso tiene un 80% de población hispana, es muy sencilla, ellos han estado ahí por

más de 5 o 7 generaciones, lo mismo pasa con el resto de los poblados en la frontera entre México y Estados Unidos, los pobladores originales de todo ese territorio eran exclusivamente hispanos, a parte de los nativos habitantes de esas tierras inhóspitas y deshabitadas que fueron exploradas y desarrolladas en comunidades prosperas por monjes y frailes acompañando a familias hispanas.

Los Estados Unidos, como país, se ha esforzado por evolucionar y dejar atrás los abusos que cometió la autoridad establecida en contra los integrantes de grupos minoritarios para que todos tuvieran acceso a las mismas oportunidades sin importar el color de la piel de los individuos. Hace más de cuarenta o cincuenta años, aquí mismo en nuestro Valle, se les quería prohibir a los jóvenes el hablar español en las escuelas.

Esa mala semilla del racismo persiste, y si queremos erradicarla hay que dejar claro en qué consiste el racismo, que es mucho más que un prejuicio personal o el fanatismo por querer una sociedad de puros anglosajones arios, el racismo involucra directamente el uso del poder, mejor dicho, el mal uso del poder que ejerce una mayoría contra una minoría.

Los prejuicios raciales y el

» Por favor lea **Fea cara** p.11

## En agradecimiento



Foto de cortesía

El primer rector diocesano de la Basílica de la Virgen de San Juan Del Valle, Msgr. Juan Nicolau, regala su cáliz al actual Rector Padre Jorge Gómez en agradecimiento por su aniversario de 15 años de sacerdote.

## »Vida Familiar

# La obra de nuestras manos

Al acercarse la celebración del Día del Trabajo en este país, esta me recuerda lo sagrado del trabajo, de la labor. El Día del Trabajo se convirtió oficialmente en un día festivo federal en el 1894 y se celebra el primer Lunes de Septiembre para honrar las contribuciones que hacen los trabajadores en la construcción de la sociedad. El Papa Francisco nos recuerda que "El Trabajo es fundamental para la dignidad de la persona. El trabajo, para usar una imagen, "unge con dignidad", nos llena de dignidad, y nos hace similares a Dios que siempre está en acción".

Mi padre, Vicente Reyna, trabajo como conductor de camión para una compañía de propano/butano por más de 30 años y tuvo una ética de trabajo maravillosa. Cuando murió en el 1985, uno de sus compañeros de trabajo nos dijo que mi padre con frecuencia bromeaba que él era un trabajador tan entregado que probablemente moriría un Día del Trabajo. Irónicamente no murió ese día, pero fue sepultado en el Día del Trabajo de 1985.

Si vivimos con la premisa de que todo le pertenece a Dios, incluyendo nuestra vida, talentos, y todos nuestros recursos, incluso el dinero, es razonable pensar que honramos a Dios en la forma que hacemos nuestro "trabajo". Nuestro trabajo incluye no solo lo que hacemos por paga; también incluye el trabajo que hacemos en casa por la familia y el trabajo que hacemos por la Iglesia y la comunidad.

Por alguna razón, ajena a mí, en los últimos meses he estado muy consciente de la cantidad de gente que he encontrado haciendo su trabajo con pasión y dignidad. Estas personas trabajan para alimentar a sus familias, pero lo hacen con compromiso y un sentido de servicio a los demás. Solo este verano, he notado este sentido de servicio humilde en:

1. el departamento de mantenimiento de nuestro Centro Pastoral que normalmente hacen más de lo que les toca para ayudar a los demás

departamentos lo más posible;

2. el empleado de WalMart que para lo que está haciendo para ayudarnos a encontrar un artículo;

3. el conductor de Uber que se aseguró de que estuviéramos bien antes de dejarnos en un área desconocida;

4. el conductor del autobús quien al llegar al destino final declaro "Sean bendecidos y que hoy nada les quite la alegría";

5. el fabricante de gabinetes que se especializa solo en hacer gabinetes para que estén bien hechos según las especificaciones;

6. el empleado de Lowe's que toma tiempo para explicar la diferencia de los productos;

7. el jardinero de la parroquia quien continuamente trabaja para mantener hermosos los terrenos de la parroquia para los parroquianos;

8. la secretaria de la parroquia quien ayudo a cargar artículos, ajusto el aire acondicionado y ofreció su ayuda en acomodar para un entrenamiento de preparación matrimonial;

9. el empleado de HEB que abre otra caja registradora para ayudar a que los clientes lleguen más rápido a sus casas con sus familias.

Cada persona que trabaja en los negocios que frecuentamos tiene un rol único y especial. Muchos de nosotros compramos nuestros alimentos en tiendas como HEB sin detenernos a pensar como cada persona que allí trabaja hace posible que podamos alimentar a nuestras familias. Mi tío Ruben le dice a su esposa Rosita después de cenar "Gracias a Dios, gracias a ti, y Gracias a H-E-B!

Es importante que nosotros como padres y abuelos enseñemos a nuestros hijos y nietos la importancia y dignidad del trabajo. Nuestro nieto Elián se graduó en Mayo del Jardín de Infancia de la escuela católica St. Joseph. Los estudiantes se presentaron individualmente durante la ceremonia de graduación diciendo su nombre y que ocupación querían tener cuando

» Por favor lea **Nuestras manos** p.11

## Discípulos

continúa de pág. 9

y justicia, latinas en la Iglesia y la sociedad, desarrollo de liderazgo y capacitación pastoral, liturgia y espiritualidad, pastoral de migrantes, pastoral con personas con discapacidades y la comunidad sordomuda, pastoral de jóvenes hispanos, pastoral con adolescentes hispanos, ministerio con encarcelados y detenidos, ministerio pro-vida, sagrada escritura y teología, corresponsabilidad y desarrollo y vocaciones.

En *Evangelii Gaudium*, el Santo Padre Francisco nos recuerda: "Todo cristiano es misionero en la medida en que se ha encontrado con el amor de Dios en Cristo Jesús; ya no

decimos que somos «discípulos» y «misioneros», sino que somos siempre «discípulos misioneros»." (EG, 120) También nos reta e invita a ser: "La Iglesia en salida es la comunidad de discípulos misioneros que primerian, que se involucran, que acompañan, que fructifican y festejan." (EG, 24).

El V Encuentro ha sido una gran bendición y esperanza para la Iglesia Católica y sin duda seguirá dando frutos para festejar como Iglesia Hispana en salida a las periferias. El comité diocesano de implementación está trabando en un plan para presentarlo al Señor Obispo Flores con la esperanza de desarrollar las mejores prácticas y recomendaciones del V Encuentro en las parroquias de nuestra diócesis.



MICHAEL RAMIREZ, Team Leader:

"If you want to pay more, that's your business!  
If you want to pay less, that's my business!  
I'm working first for you!"



CELL: (956) 207-0640

OFFICE: (956) 519-5521

EMAIL: mramirez@spikesford.net

**1 MASS FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

The Mass for children with special needs and their families is scheduled for 1-2 p.m. Sunday, Sept. 1, at Holy Family Church, 2405 E. Tyler in Brownsville.

**2 DIOCESAN OFFICES CLOSED**

The offices of the Diocese of Brownsville will be closed Monday, Sept. 2 for the Labor Day holiday.

**5 HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS (CONSECRATED LIFE)**

This Holy Hour dedicated for an increase in vocations to consecrated life and for our religious sisters and brothers and the success of their missions will be 7-8 p.m. Thursday, Sept. 5 at St. Joseph Adoration Chapel, 723 E. Bowie Ave. in Alamo.

**7 MOBILE JOURNALISM WORKSHOP**

Daylong workshop where participants can learn how to use their smartphones to document events and tell stories. The workshop will be conducted at the Immaculate Conception Cathedral School Building in Brownsville; contact the Communications Office at (956) 784-5055 to register.

**12 HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS (DEACONS)**

Every second Thursday of each month the Holy Hour will be dedicated for the intentions of the deacons (permanent and transitional) of the diocese and their families. This month Holy Hour for Vocations (Deacons) is set for 7-8 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 12 at St. Joseph Adoration Chapel, 723 E. Bowie Ave. in Alamo.

**13-14 BENEDICTINE MONASTERY RETREAT: FACING THE LOSSES IN OUR LIVES**

For all: Facing the Losses in our Lives. Presenters - Oblate Alicia Perez and the Benedictine Oblate Team. English. The Benedictine Monastery of the Good Shepherd, 705 Monastery Lane in Rio Grande City. For more information, call (956) 486-2680 or email sanbenito@grandriver.net.

**19 GALA AND AUCTION FOR SAN JUAN NURSING HOME**

San Juan Nursing Home will have its Annual Gala and Silent Auction 6:30-10 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 19 at Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish Hall. Bishop Daniel E. Flores will be the guest speaker. Tickets are \$100.

**19 HOLY HOUR FOR VOCATIONS (MARRIED LIFE)**

Families, engaged couples, and couples in the Family Apostolic Movements and in other marriage ministries are invited

to gather and pray for the sanctification of the Vocation of Matrimony from 7-8 p.m. on Thursday, Sept. 19 at St. Joseph Adoration Chapel, 723 E. Bowie Ave. in Alamo.

**21-22 ENCUESTRO DE TEXAS 2019 - APOSTOLADO DE LA CRUZ**

Encuentro de Texas 2019 Apostolado de la Cruz  
 Fechas: 21 y 22 de septiembre  
 Para más información:  
 apostoladodelacruz2019@gmail.com

**25 40 DAYS FOR LIFE BEGINS**  
 40 Days for Life, a focused pro-life campaign to end abortion through prayer, fasting and peaceful vigil outside the abortion facility in downtown McAllen, begins at 7 a.m. Wednesday, Sept. 25 and continues daily through Nov. 3. To volunteer for an hour or more as a prayer warrior for 40 Days for Life, contact Deacon Rudy Sepulveda at (956) 624-6300 or deacon\_rudy@yahoo.com.

**28 CATECHETICAL CONVOCATION IN HARLINGEN**

The annual Catechetical Convocation of the Diocese of Brownsville has been scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 28 at the new Harlingen Convention Center in Harlingen. All catechists serving the Diocese of Brownsville's parishes, mission churches and Catholic schools are invited and encouraged to participate

» Monthly calendar

SEPTEMBER 

in the day of prayer, reflection and fellowship. The Harlingen Convention Center is at 701 Harlingen Heights Dr. in Harlingen.

**28 NIGHT OF HEALING AND DIVINE MERCY**  
 Msgr. Juan Nicolau, Ph.D., leads the faithful in prayer for a Night of Healing and Divine Mercy at 6:30 p.m. at the Basilica of Our Lady of San Juan del Valle-National Shrine.

**SUBMIT YOUR EVENTS TO:**  
 Paul Binz at pbinz@cdob.org or call (956) 784-5055.



» The Holy Father's Prayer Intentions for September

The Protection of the Oceans  
 That politicians, scientists and economists work together to protect the world's seas and oceans.

**Bioethics**

*continued from pg. 5*

Society really can't have it both ways, glamorizing the act

of suicide in some cases and demonizing it in others. By yielding to the proposition that suicide is not an evil to be repudiated, but a form of "relief"

to be conferred on those who suffer, we effectively abandon our neighbors, the Conrads and countless others, in their moment of greatest need.

**Fea cara**

*continúa de pág. 10*

fanatismo llegan a convertirse en racismo cuando los individuos de un grupo adquieren el poder sistemático y lo usan para oprimir o subyugar a otro grupo de individuos. Lo cierto es que Estados Unidos es una nación de inmigrantes, y también es verdad que en nuestro país se han tenido siempre prejuicios contra los inmigrantes, ya fueran alemanes, polacos, italianos, españoles, asiáticos, y por supuesto mexicanos o latinos, en los diferentes momentos de su historia en los que se daba una inmigración masiva de dichos grupos hacia los Estados Unidos.

Sin embargo, quienes fueron objeto del racismo en su forma más cruel fueron los africanos que no inmigraron por voluntad propia, sino que fueron traídos como esclavos

a estas tierras siglos atrás, y los nativos americanos, los grupos indígenas que habitaban este mismo continente antes de la llegada de los blancos.

Aun con el paso de muchas generaciones que ya habían conseguido su libertad, en el caso de los afroamericanos, y ganado poco a poco los mismos beneficios de cualquier otro ciudadano americano después de la guerra civil, en los estados del sur seguían sufriendo discriminación racial; aquí mismo en el Valle durante los cincuenta se consideraba al mexicano aparte, se le negaba el servicio en ciertos establecimientos, se le llamaba "espaldas mojadas" y hasta se le prohibía hablar español!

Gracias a Dios los tiempos han cambiado, y depende de cada uno de nosotros el superar los prejuicios que hemos heredado de nuestros progenitores y romper los

estereotipos que adjudicamos a un grupo minoritario dentro de la sociedad multicultural en la que vivimos ahora.

Entendamos que las personas que ve a otros como inferiores, sufre un complejo de inferioridad, se siente menos que sus semejantes, y cuando no se aceptan a sí mismos, no aceptan a nadie. Escribamos a nuestros representantes y congresistas para que controlen el fácil acceso a las armas de asalto por cualquier persona, sobre todo a quienes tienen trastornos mentales o han expresado posturas radicales que ponen en peligro nuestra sociedad.

Pongamos en oración a las 22 almas de quienes asesinaron en El Paso, las 9 acaecidas en Dayton y las 2,291 que van desde los 26 inocentes asesinados masivamente en la escuela Sandy Hook, que brille para ellos la luz perpetua ... y recuerda que Dios te ama y yo también.

**Missionary**

*continued from pg. 5*

of God in Christ Jesus: we no longer say that we are 'disciples' and 'missionaries,' but rather that we are always 'missionary disciples.' ... Let us look at those first disciples, who, immediately after encountering the gaze of Jesus, went forth to proclaim Him joyfully: 'We have found the Messiah!' (John 1:41). (*Evangelii Gaudium*, 120).

The hope is that Catholic parishes, dioceses, schools and lay movements commit to work

in a spirit of pastoral de conjunto to advance the Church's mission among Hispanic/Latinos in the United States.

In our diocese, an Implementation Committee of delegates who attended the regional and national encuentros will recommend ways to Bishop Flores pastoral strategies that can be implemented here.

May the Blessed Mother, Our Lady of Guadalupe continue to intercede and inspire us to be like Juan Diego, sent as a faithful messenger so that we can become missionary disciples, witnesses of God's love.

**Nuestras manos**

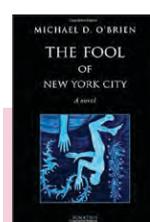
*continúa de pág. 10*

crecieran. Pensamos que él iba a decir que esperaba ser un meteorólogo porque le fascinan los tornados y le gusta seguir los pronósticos del tiempo. Sin embargo, se puso de pie y dijo, "¡mi nombre es Elian Pesina y cuando yo crezca quiero ser un emplea-

do del H-E-B!" Aparentemente, su madre le ha estado diciendo que tan pronto cumpla dieciséis años necesita empezar a trabajar y que HEB es un gran lugar para empezar. Cualquiera de estas vocaciones es trabajo digno. Mi esperanza y oración para Elian y para todos nosotros es que recordemos las palabras del Salmo 90:17 "Que la dulzura del Señor nos cubra y que El confirme la obra de nuestras manos".

**ANSWER KEY:** 139. c, 149. a

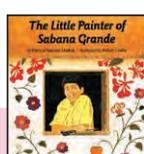
» From the Bookshelf



**The Fool of New York City**

Length: 279 pages  
 Publication: Ignatius Press (2016)  
 Author: Michael D. O'Brien

"A wistful startling read." The Fool of New York City is an absorbing meditation on memory, identity, and the human capacity for survival and love in the midst of the most devastating of tragedies. A Novel Adults



**The Little Painter of Sabana Grande**

Length: 29 pages  
 Publication: Bradbury Press, First American Edition 1993

Authors: Patricia Maloney Markun  
 Illustrated by: Robert Casilla

When Fernando's teacher tells him how to make his own paints, he knows he how will spend his dry-season vacation. He will make wonderful pictures with beautiful colors. Children ages 5-10.



**San Agustin San Pedro**

Formato: DVD  
 Duración: 200 minutos  
 Producción: Cine Religioso  
 Dirección: Guilo Base Italiano, Español & Ingles

Su conversión al Cristiano y su actividad episcopal hasta su return a Hiponia. San Pedro ...perseguido y tras el incendio romano, la culpa recae en los cristianos, por lo que Pedro huye y comprende que debe seguir al Mesias hasta que lo sacrifican. Su sacrificio pone fin a las persecuciones y elimina la tensión que vivía a la comunidad cristiana. Adultos

» Worth Watching



**EVERYONE'S HERO**

"A Big League Hit"

Format: DVD  
 Run time: 87 minutes  
 Production: IDT Entertainment 2006

Ten-year-old baseball fanatic Yankee Irving is always the last one picked for sandlot baseball games. But when Babe Ruth prized bat is stolen during the 1932 World Series, Yankee steps up to the plate to help retrieve it for his beloved idol. He embarks on a wild cross-country journey that teaches him the stuff real heroes are made of, and along the way, Yankee learns the importance of perseverance and the true meaning of friendship. Languages: English, Spanish, and Closed Captioned Ages G

Recommended by  
 SISTER MAUREEN CROSBY, SSD  
 Coordinator of the Media Resource Center - Diocese of Brownsville

For a complete listing of titles, visit the Media Resource Center online at [www.cdob.org/media-resource-center](http://www.cdob.org/media-resource-center) or call Sister Crosby at (956) 784-5041.

Our Catholic Family

# 'Bread Angels' bring food and faith to Donna's peripheries

By R. DANIEL CAVAZOS | The Valley Catholic

DONNA — The Bread Angels are busy folding clothes at St. Joseph Catholic Church in Donna.

It's an early Friday evening and they're discussing an upcoming delivery of food, clothing — and bread — to colonias north of Donna.

"We're doing what we hear about every Sunday," said Rene Cardenas, one of the leaders of the group. "We're helping others as Jesus would want us to do."

It was four years ago that a group of St. Joseph's parishioners got the idea to form a band of volunteers to take donated goods to communities in need. They started with bread.

"Wheat bread, white bread, hot dog and hamburger buns, cakes too," Cardenas said, ticking off the donations they would get from area stores. "We packed it up in bags and took it out to the colonias."

The Bread Angels were born, and Cardenas said the inspiration came from the pastor of their church — Father Eka Yuantoro. The Bread Angels would come to have another nickname, thanks to their pastor.

"Eka's Little Elves is what we are," Cardenas said. "He's the catalyst for all of this."

On a recent Friday, it meant turning piles of donated clothes into neat rows of folded shirts and pants. A midst their work, there was talk of picking up canned goods and other items at a food bank in Pharr. Those goods, too, will make their way back to St. Joseph, where they will be organized



**We're letting them know the church is there to help them.**

*Haydee Lopez*

and packed in bags for a monthly delivery to one of Donna's rural colonias.

It's not just about the deliveries and the good works. There's a message to be shared as well.

"We're evangelizing while we're out there," Haydee Lopez said. "We're letting them know the church is there to help them."

Residents in the colonias have signed up their children for CCD classes, baptisms and weddings have been set, and new parishioners brought in to attend weekly Masses.

"It has had an impact," Cardenas said of the contact and connections the group has made in the rural neighborhoods. "We let them know they're welcome, no matter where they are from. The doors (of the church) are open to them."

The Bread Angels are a group of about 12 St. Joseph's parishioners. Their camaraderie and Christian fellowship are evident as they go about their work folding clothes. They do so with abundant good cheer, putting their faith and beliefs into action with selfless good deeds.

"I had a police officer say, 'You guys are going out there?'" Cardenas recalled as they were recently getting ready to make a rural delivery. "He said, 'We request back-up when we go out there.'"

"I said, 'Officer, we go out there for a different

reason then you all do."

Voices rise and eyes light up when the Bread Angels talk about the reception they typically get as they make their way into the rural neighborhoods. Children often come running out to greet them and their trucks filled with much-needed goods and provisions.

"The smiles on the kids' faces," Lopez said with her own face beaming. "They're so appreciative. It makes everything we do worthwhile."

The group is proud of its efforts in laying the groundwork for what will be St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church on Mile 13 Road. The church is to be built in the northern rural areas where the Bread Angels have been going for years, spreading word of the Gospel and their faith along with the deliveries. Cardenas said it has been vitally important for the Church to have a presence in the rural areas.

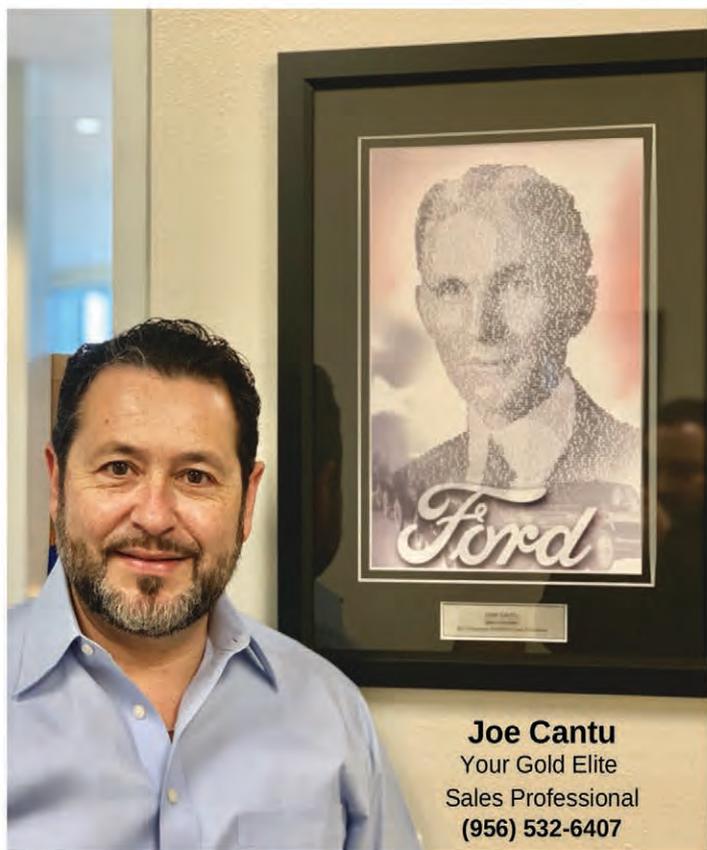
"The areas we go out to are growing," he said. "What are doing as Catholics? If they don't find a Catholic church and its representatives, they will go where they are invited."

The "elves" who double as the Bread Angels have made it clear there's no need to go anywhere else. Their Church — and faith — will always welcome them.



The Valley Catholic

Father Eka Yuantoro, pastor of St. Joseph Parish of Donna, looks on as one of the parish's Bread Angels prepares to demonstrate how the group distributes food packages.



**Joe Cantu**  
Your Gold Elite  
Sales Professional  
(956) 532-6407

**WESLACO FORD** 2401 E. Expressway 83 Weslaco  
(956) 968-3151

# Pueblo

## TIRES & SERVICE

**THINK TIRES... THINK PUEBLO!**

**YOUR FAMILY CAR CARE CENTER**

**VISIT US AT SHAMPOOZIE.COM**

**Pueblo**  
TIRES & SERVICE

**Standard oil change & filter**  
**\$21.99**

Includes FREE 4-tire rotation! Install new filter! Refill up to 5 quarts motor oil! Lubricate chassis!\*

Print this coupon or refer to #17-A-COUOL. Offer good at all Pueblo Tires locations through 09/30/2019. Not valid with any additional coupons or special offers. Coupon applies to most vehicles. Coupon not valid for Commercial Accounts. Chassis lubrication only applied if necessary for oil change process. Oil recycling fees and labor not included. Tax not included. See store for details and restrictions. Offer not valid at Total Lube (#14) or Alice (#11) locations.

**Pueblo**  
TIRES & SERVICE

**\$10 OFF WHEEL ALIGNMENT**

Inspect vehicle's steering and suspension! Align vehicle to manufacturer's specifications!

Print this coupon or refer to #17-A-COUWH. Offer good at all Pueblo Tires locations through 09/30/2019. Not valid with any additional coupons or special offers. Coupon applies to most vehicles. Coupon not valid for Commercial Accounts. Inspection and alignment service times may vary by location. Tax not included. No cash value. See store for details.