

# The Catholic Lighthouse

The Cradle of Texas Immigration



VOL. 24, NO. 11

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

March 2011



Msgr. Stanley Petru, pastor of parishes in Hostyn and Plum, thanks parishioners at his retirement Mass.

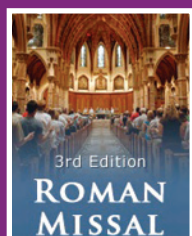


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## At 88 years, Msgr. Petru retires

By Cynthia Brewer

HOSTYN—At the age of 88 years, Msgr. Stanley J. Petru, pastor of Queen of the Holy Rosary Parish in Hostyn and Sts. Peter & Paul Parish in Plum, resigned Sunday, February 27, 2011, from his beloved parishes at which he had served since 1992 and 1998 respectively.

A beautiful celebration of love was held at Queen of the Holy Rosary Church for Msgr. Petru by current and former parishioners, from both near and far.

The celebration of Mass was presided over by Bishop David E. Fellhauer, concelebrated by Father Joseph Kariuki, parochial vicar, and Father Gus Petru, OMI, Msgr. Petru's brother, who is retired and lives in Mexico; they were assisted by Deacon John McCourt.

During his homily, Bishop Fellhauer said, "We're here to honor Msgr. Stanley Petru who was ordained for the Archdiocese of San Antonio in 1948. The history of Msgr. Petru includes a long list of services for the parishes."

In 1992 Msgr. Petru volunteered to serve in the Diocese of Victoria, and he was given the parishes of Holy Rosary in Hostyn and Sts. Cyril & Methodius in Cistern. In 1998 he was relieved as pastor in Cistern and received Sts. Peter & Paul in Plum.

"He has been in active, full-time ministry for 63 years," longer than most people get to do any one thing, Bishop Fellhauer said.

"He is an outstanding example of priestly ministry; I can't think of anybody who has more admiration of the priests of the diocese than Msgr. Stanley Petru. . . Msgr. has certainly been a Servant of Christ. We are so grateful for your service."

Bishop Fellhauer then announced the provisions for both parishes, for the time being; as of Sunday, Feb. 27, Deacon John McCourt is appointed Parish Director (administrator), according to Code of Canon Law (can. 517); Father Joseph Kariuki is to maintain ministry at Plum, but also sacramental ministry at Queen of the Holy Rosary, (Sacramental Minister); and Father Timothy Kosler, pastor of St. Rose of Lima in Schulenburg, is appointed Priest Supervi-

sor (can. 517).

He thanked Father Kariuki and Deacon McCourt for taking on more responsibility and told the congregation that thanks to the international priests, the permanent diaconate and the increase of vocations to the priesthood, the Diocese of Victoria is in better shape than many other dioceses.

"If we did not have the international priests, more than a dozen of our parishes would be seriously affected," he said.

The presentation of gifts was offered by this year's First Eucharist class of Hostyn/Plum: Avery Srubar, Aryn Srubar, Melissa Muras, Heather Hoffmann and their catechist, Linda Templin; altar servers were brothers, Ethan, Blane and Coy Heinrich.

Following Mass, presentations were made to Msgr. Petru.

Deacon McCourt thanked him for all

of the programs he helped to begin at the parishes, including a Christmas Pageant; encouraging Disciples on the Journey from which developed a group that began a scholarship breakfast, which last year presented \$15,000 in scholarships to the parishes' high school graduates and college students; the ACTS retreats, "which have revolutionized the whole church – we thank you and God"; for supporting the youth in Young Neighbors in Action; and for creating the Adoration Chapel, "which has been an obvious blessing." He also told Msgr. Petru that the parishioners purchased a flat-screen TV for him – "so that he could follow the US bishops' conferences," and then he presented him with a plaque from the two parishes.

Administrative Assistant Gina Kozelsky

See *At 88 years*, p. 11

## The Right to Life used to be self-evident

By Father Tommy Chen, director of Diocesan Pro-Life Concerns, from his talk at Pro-Life Novena in Hallettsville

*"We hold these Truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*

Thus, on July 4, 1776, our nation was founded on these bold words: words that testified to the "self-evident truth" . . . the obvious and apparent truth . . . that every human being possessed the intrinsic dignity, given by God, of the right to Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.

These words embodied the hope of a people seeking deliverance from a government that had become tyrannical . . . a government that was trampling upon the God-given rights of its people.

These words gave purpose to the great Revolution which gave birth to this great nation . . . a nation whose existence emerged from the rubble of an oppressor's disrespect for the Life, Freedom, and Happiness of fellow human beings

. . . and therefore this nation, learning from the error of its sovereign, became a nation that guaranteed to its citizens what at one time was denied to it . . . namely the Right to Life . . . the Right to Liberty . . . and the Right to Happiness.

This is our legacy as Americans! This was the inheritance that we received from our Founding Fathers.

And it was a heritage that we proudly preserved and strove to hold intact, at least until January 22, 1973.

On that fateful day, the Truths that were once professed to be "self-evident," apparent, obvious, and clear – seemed to become obscure and ambiguous, if not doubtful.

On that day, our government, through its Supreme Court, made an arrogant declaration against the very will of Almighty God . . .

On that day, the Supreme Court of this land, pronounced a presumptuous judgment that caused the Heavenly Courts to tremble and weep . . .

On that day, our nation, founded on the "unalienable Rights of Life, Liberty,

See *The Right to Life*, p. 16





## Bishop Fellhauer's Schedule

<b>March</b>	
<b>6</b>	8:00 a.m., Mass, Assumption Chapel, Palacios 11:15 a.m., Pilgrims' Mass, St. Philip Church, El Campo 1:30-4:30 p.m., Catholic Knowledge Bowl, Holy Family Church, Victoria 6:00 p.m., Mass, Girl Scout Awards, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
<b>11</b>	8:05 a.m., School Mass, St. Michael Church, and golf tournament benefiting St. Michael School, Cuero
<b>13</b>	8:00 a.m., Mass, the Stevenson Detention Unit, Cuero 3:00 p.m., Rite of Election, Call to Continued Conversion, Our Lady of Victory Cathedral
<b>15</b>	6:30 p.m., Catholic Daughters of the Americas and the Knights of Columbus Council #1329, Clergy and Religious Appreciation Night, Knights of Columbus Hall, Victoria
<b>16</b>	3:00 p.m., Diocesan Finance Board meeting, Chancery Office 4:00 p.m., Diocesan Building Board meeting, Chancery Office
<b>19</b>	4:00 pm., Confirmation Mass, St. Mary Church, St. Mary (Hallettsville)
<b>20</b>	10:00 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Family Church, Wharton
<b>27</b>	10:30 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Sacred Heart Church, Hallettsville
<b>30</b>	7:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, St. Mary Church, Nada, including St. John Church, New Taiton
<b>31</b>	6:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, St. John the Baptist Church, Hungerford
<b>April</b>	
<b>2</b>	6:00 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Family Church, Victoria
<b>3</b>	11:00 a.m., Confirmation Mass, Holy Cross Church, East Bernard
<b>8</b>	Knights of Columbus Council #9088 Bishop's Charity Golf Tournament, Colony Creek Country Club, Victoria
<b>9</b>	8:00 a.m., Mass, Teen ACTS retreat, Spiritual Renewal Center 2:00 p.m., Mass, DeLeon Family reunion, St. Mary Church, Victoria 6:30 p.m., Confirmation Mass, Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, Bay City

### Official Appointments By Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer

Effective February 27, 2011, the following provision is made for Queen of the Holy Rosary Church, Hostyn, and Sts. Peter and Paul Church, Plum:

The retirement of **Monsignor Stanley J. Petru** as pastor of both parishes is accepted; the **Rev. Timothy Kosler** is appointed "Priest Supervisor" of both parishes, while retaining his current assignment (Code of Canon Law, can. 517); **Deacon John McCourt** is appointed "Parish Director" of both parishes (can. 517); the **Rev. Joseph Kariuki** is appointed "Sacramental Minister" of both parishes.

## ~ IMPORTANT NOTICE ~

Due to the unexpected closing of Adgraphics Printing, the regularly scheduled print date of the first Wednesday of the month for *The Catholic Lighthouse* may be changed. The paper will be printed for the month of April, we just do not know the date yet. Thank you for your patience.

Sincerely,  
Cynthia Brewer, editor



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**DEADLINE IS THE THIRD TUESDAY OF THE PRECEDING MONTH.**

## Diocesan Directory Updates

### Page 44

Mass time change for New Taiton  
There has been a Mass time change for the Parish of St. John Nepomucene in New Taiton. The single Sunday morning Mass has been changed to two Sunday morning Masses. The weekend Masses are now Saturday: 4:00 p.m. (no change) and Sunday: 7:00 a.m. and 8:30 a.m.

### Page 61

Rev. Gabriel Bentil - change phone number to: (361) 782-3181

### Page 47

Mass time change for Our Lady of the Gulf in Port Lavaca - Saturday: 9:00 a.m. and 5:30 p.m. Confession: Saturday - 4:30 to 5:15 p.m.

### Page 64

Rev. Dominic Nguyen, C.S.S.R. - change phone number to: (361) 389-3626

### Page 92

Change (under Retrouvaille) Stanley and Judy Sulak's address to: 4062 S FM 647 Rd, Louise, Texas 77455

### Page 90

Faithful Navigator for Assembly 1131 is: Garry Mikeska, 218 Merchant St., El Campo, Texas 77437; (979) 541-3582

## Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates, Rite of Election — March 13 —

The Rite of Election will be held at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral Sunday, March 13, at 3 p.m. All are welcome. A reception will follow at the chancery building, behind Our Lady of Victory. The rite is always held on the first Sunday in Lent and the presiding celebrant is always the bishop or his delegate. The Rite of Election of Catechumens inaugurates the final period of preparation for the Catechumens (unbaptized adults, adolescents and children of catechetical age) before Christian Initiation, which is held on the Easter Vigil. Celebrated in the same ceremony as the Rite of Election is the Call to Continuing Conversion of Candidates (baptized but previously uncatechized adults, adolescents and children of catechetical age preparing to complete their Christian Initiation through the reception of the Sacraments of Confirmation and Eucharist).

## 14th Annual Bishop Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament is on the horizon

*It is almost impossible to remember how tragic a place this world is when one is playing golf. ~Robert Lynd*

The Youth and Vocations programs are about to get a much-appreciated boost with the help of the Knights of Columbus #9088 at Holy Family in Victoria. These two programs are the benefactors of the 14th annual Bishop Fellhauer Golf Tournament, scheduled for April 8, 2011, at Colony Creek Country Club in Victoria. Monroe Rieger, chairman of the tournament, along with the committee, has been busy preparing for this jam-packed day!

Funds received from this tournament will be used for new youth and vocations activities and to subsidize existing programs. Our diocese is very blessed to have active youth and vocation ministries that work hand in hand to minister more effectively to the young people of the diocese. Unfortunately, due to limited resources, some young people are unable to participate in the various activities without subsidization. The funds from this tournament will help alleviate that situation, as well as provide opportunities for new and innovative programming to be introduced. Past tournaments have allowed these offices to bring in adult-formation sessions in human sexuality and sessions in techniques to strengthen the family. They have also made it possible for all high school students who wish to attend the annual pro-life rally in Austin to do so. The proceeds of this tournament has also helped subsidize funding of an annual boys vocation camp, as well as an annual mission trip to an orphanage in Guatemala and allowed for expansion of the retreat programs for confirmation, junior high, and high school students — just to name a few of the many projects these funds have supported. In measurable outcomes, the diocese has realized a 300-percent increase in vocations since implementing the various camps and direct-contact initiatives and has sparked renewed enthusiasm for the tenets of Catholic social teaching by being given the opportunity to put their faith in action.

You can help with this fundraising event by being a sponsor. All Deacon Level sponsors and higher will be given first priority to play in the tournament. Sponsor signs will be displayed on the tee boxes and on a large display sign at the main scoreboard. Bishop Level

*See 14th Annual, p. 3*

## DSA & Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign Updates

### 2010 DSA

Diocesan Goal:	\$1,349,808.00
Parish Pledge Totals:	\$734,898.67
Parish Contribution Totals:	\$726,365.81
Number of Parish Families Participating:	3,757

### Reflection of Faith Capital Campaign

Diocesan Goal:	\$9,000,000.00
Parish Pledge Totals:	\$12,965,380.95
Parish Contribution Totals:	\$8,851,515.56
Number of Parish Families Participating:	6,766

## Have You Moved? Address Changed?

Call 361-573-0828 with the change in your address.

Saves Money!





## Changes to the peoples' part of the "Gloria" From <http://www.usccb.org/romanmissal/samples-people.shtml>

The use of the new Roman Missal begins Nov. 27, 2011. Between now and the implementation of the new Roman Missal on the First Sunday of Advent, *The Catholic Lighthouse* will highlight changes in the parts of the people in the Order of the Mass. Text that will change is marked with italics and bold printing.

### Present Text:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and ***peace to his people on earth.***

Lord God, heavenly King,  
***almighty God and Father,***  
***we worship you,***  
we give you thanks,  
***we praise you for your glory.***

Lord Jesus Christ,  
***only Son of the Father,***  
Lord God, Lamb of God,

you take away the ***sin*** of the world:  
have mercy on us;

you are seated at the right hand of  
the Father: ***receive our prayer.***

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus  
Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### New Text:

Glory to God in the highest,  
and ***on earth peace to people of  
good will.***

***We praise you, we bless you, we  
adore you, we glorify you,*** we give  
you thanks ***for your great glory,***  
Lord God, heavenly King, ***O God,  
almighty Father.***

Lord Jesus Christ,  
***Only Begotten Son,***  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
***Son of the Father,***  
you take away the ***sins*** of the world,  
have mercy on us;  
***you take away the sins of the  
world, receive our prayer,***

you are seated at the right hand of  
the Father, ***have mercy on us.***

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High, Jesus  
Christ, with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

## The Eucharistic Prayer: our response to God's invitation

By Lisa Maxson, *The Catholic Voice*, the newspaper of the Archdiocese of Omaha, Neb.

What congregations say and hear at Mass will change with the new English translation of the Roman Missal, but the meaning of what one Catholic theologian calls the greatest prayer of the Church is unchanged.

The Eucharistic Prayer, heard in the middle of every liturgy around the world, recalls the saving mystery of Jesus' death and resurrection and is the highest point of every Mass, says Msgr. Joseph DeGrocco, professor of liturgy and director of liturgical formation at Immaculate Conception Seminary in Huntington, New York.

The new translation does not change what's happening during the Mass, especially during the consecration, he says. It just brings the words said closer to the literal Latin translation.

"We believe that when the Church prays the Eucharistic Prayer, that mystery is actually made present," Msgr. DeGrocco says. "Within that prayer, as part of that making present the mystery, the bread and wine are transformed into the Body and Blood of Christ."

Various forms of the Eucharistic Prayer will continue to be used throughout the year, depending on liturgical seasons and special occasions, Msgr. DeGrocco says. Each form expresses the essential beliefs of the Catholic Church, but emphasizes different aspects of the theology, he says.

In addition to four principal Eucharistic Prayers, Eucharistic Prayer forms exist for Masses of reconciliation and Masses for various needs and occasions.

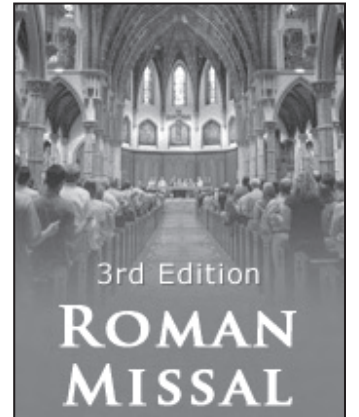
Essentially the priest is free to choose whichever prayer he wants to use, but there are guidelines and aspects of good liturgical practice and theology that make some prayers more appropriate at times than others.

Each of the expressions of Eucharistic Prayer offers an emphasis, says Eileen Burke-Sullivan, S.T.D., assistant professor of pastoral and systematic theology and director of the master of arts in ministry program at Creighton University in Omaha.

The reconciliation canons are usually prayed during Lent or during other times of public repentance or calls to repentance and forgiveness, she says.

The canons of various needs and occasions can be prayed when a group is gathered for a particular purpose,

*See The Eucharistic Prayer, p. 7*



## 2011 Study Week focuses on Revised Roman Missal – music showcases to be held in diocese

By Cynthia Goerig, director,  
Diocesan Liturgical Commission

The Southwest Liturgical Conference 49th Annual Study Week, held Feb. 2-5, 2011, concentrated on the Revised Roman Missal; its theme was "Ever-Ancient, Ever New: Preparing for the Revised Roman Missal." The conference was held at the Calvin L. Rampton Salt Palace Convention Center in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Some of the major speakers included Rev. Paul Turner, noted author and pastor in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph, Missouri; Dr. David Fagerberg, associate professor in the Department of Theology at the University of Notre Dame; the Most Reverend Gerald Kicanas, bishop of Tucson, Arizona; Dr. Jane Regan, associate professor of theology and religious education at Boston College School of Theology and Ministry, Boston, Mass.; and Rev. Jan Michael Joncas, theologian and musician, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Included also in the Study Week were four music publishers namely Good For the Soul Music, GIA, Oregon Catholic Press, and World Library Publications (J. S. Paluch), who showcased new and

revised musical settings for the Revised Roman Missal.

There were 1410 registrants who were catechized in the preparation of receiving the Roman Missal, which will be implemented on November 27, 2011, First Sunday of Advent, the beginning of the Church Year.

Those attending from the Diocese of Victoria were Mary Kay Heffley, St. Anthony Parish, Columbus; Judy and George Panza, St. Agnes Parish, Edna; Stephen and Vivian Spanihel, St. Mary Parish, Nada; Cynthia Sunderman, Parish of the Nativity, Eagle Lake; and Cynthia Goerig, St. Philip the Apostle Parish, El Campo.

As an aid to parish musicians and pastors, the Diocesan Liturgical Commission will be sponsoring various music showcases throughout the Diocese of Victoria featuring the new music settings for Mass. The showcases will be held in Columbus, El Campo, Shiner and Victoria. Sample booklets containing the music from WLP, OCP, and GIA will be made available. All parish music directors, organists and musicians should make time to attend. Watch for future details concerning these showcases.

## 14th Annual Bishop Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament is on the horizon

*Continued from p. 2*

sponsorships will also include your name on a specially designed flag, which will be prominently displayed. The flag will be yours after the tournament. Sponsorships for the tournament are categorized as follows: BISHOP-\$1,000.00; MONSIGNOR-\$500.00; PRIEST-\$200.00; DEACON-\$100.00; and SEMINARIAN-\$50.00. If you have any questions, please contact Monroe Rieger at 361-571-6535.

### Our Lady of Victory School

*National Blue Ribbon School of Excellence*



**2011-2012 New Student Registration  
Pre-K3 through 8th Grade**

**Thursday, March 10 — OLV Parishioners  
Friday, March 11 — All Other Students**

**8:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.  
School Office — 1311 E. Mesquite Lane**

**For more information,  
call the school office at 575-5391**

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





## Seminary Burses

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

As of February 28, 2011

<b>— Rev. John C. Bily Burse</b>		<b>— CDA Texas State Court</b>	
Previously Reported	\$8,739.00	Previously Reported	\$320.00
In memory of Frances Janak by:		Donation	1,000.00
William & Darlene Meiser	25.00	<b>Total</b>	\$1,320.00
Veronica Morrow	25.00	<b>— K of C Council #1329</b>	
Henrietta Cernosek	20.00	Previously Reported	\$10,207.50
Kathy & Jim Bertsch	20.00	In Memory of Jerry Steelman	100.00
Douglas & Sandy Pesak	20.00	<b>Total</b>	\$10,307.50
Bernice Leihardt	15.00	<b>— OLV Altar Society</b>	
CA & Joan Moeckel	10.00	Previously Reported	\$275.00
Donald & Karen Kutac	5.00	In Memory of Pauline Woods	25.00
Bernice Kutac	5.00	In Memory of Rita Cardosa	25.00
Jean J. Heger	5.00	<b>Total</b>	\$325.00
Daniel & Bernice Ulbricht	25.00	<b>— Rev. John C. Peters Burse #4</b>	
<b>Total</b>	\$8,914.00	Previously Reported	\$14,851.00
<b>— Msgr. Stanley J. Petru Burse</b>		In Honor of Rev. John C. Peters from	
Previously Reported	\$815.00	friends at Christmas	149.00
In Honor of Msgr. Stanley Petru by:		<b>Total</b>	\$15,000.00
Lawrence & Jody Hatfield	20.00	SEMINARY BURSE #4 COMPLETED	
Leo & Barbara Wick	25.00	<b>— Rev. John C. Peters Burse #5</b>	
Celestine Ermis	100.00	In Honor of Rev. John C. Peters at	
Albert & Rita Kozel - Paul, Edward,		Christmas by Margaret Dornak	100.00
Thomas, Elizabeth and Adam	100.00	<b>Total</b>	\$100.00
Clarence & Helen Faldyn	50.00	Those wishing to begin a burse or to	
Arnold & Helen Janda	25.00	contribute to an existing seminary burse	
<b>Total</b>	\$1,135.00	may do so by sending their contributions	
<b>— CDA Court #1374 Burse</b>		with the appropriate burse designation	
Previously Reported	\$5,457.72	to:	
In memory of Winston & Barbara Baker by:		<b>SEMINARY BURSES</b>	
Carl & Delores Priesmeyer	20.00	DIOCESE OF VICTORIA	
Emmett & Cherie Coufal	20.00	P. O. BOX 4070	
<b>Total</b>	\$5,497.72	VICTORIA, TX 77903	



## Support our Seminarians and Win a Car!

The Serra clubs of the Diocese of Victoria are sponsoring a car raffle to help defray some of the associated expenses with recruitment and education of our seminarians. In recent years the Diocese of Victoria has been extremely blessed to realize a 300-percent increase in the number of seminarians studying for the priesthood. The diocese is defying all national trends in this area! With this huge blessing, comes an equally huge responsibility and challenge for all Catholics. A few facts to consider:

- The cost of educating one seminarian is currently \$225,000.00; \$25,000.00 a year for nine years.
- To date we have ten seminarians studying for the Diocese of Victoria.
- There is a very real possibility that we will have an additional three seminarians before the end of 2011.
- The cost of relational ministry that has realized a 300 percent growth in semi-

narians for our diocese in the past 4 years is also a costly endeavor.

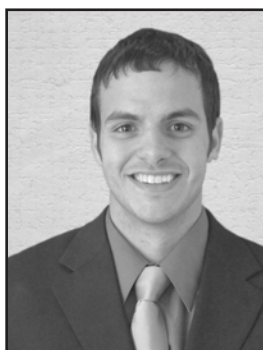
Since 1935, Serra International has responded to challenges similar to the challenges the Diocese of Victoria is facing at this time. Our goal as an organization is to support, assist and affirm dynamic men and women as they share their ministry in the service of the Church.

One very tangible way that Serra clubs of the Diocese of Victoria are showing their support for seminarians is to help insure that adequate recruitment and educational funds are available, through projects such as this car raffle.

The car, a NEW 2010 Toyota Corolla Sport, has been donated for this raffle, so 100 percent of the proceeds will benefit the vocation efforts of the diocese. The cost of a ticket is \$5.00 or 3 for \$10.00. Please contact George Wenzel at 361-649-7707 for more information or to obtain your tickets.

## Happy Birthday!

Matthew Soto is in Pre-Theology II at Holy Trinity Seminary in Irving. His home parish is Sts. Cyril & Methodius, in Shiner, and his birthday is March 29. Please show your support for our seminarian by writing to: Matthew Soto, Holy Trinity Seminary, P. O. Box 140309, Irving, TX 75014



## Prayer for Vocations

*Loving Father, through the intercession of our Blessed Mother, Queen of Vocations, may our youth joyfully respond to your call to follow Jesus in the priestly or religious life. Amen.*

Serra International

**European Tour**  
June 29-July 11, 2011

**Alaskan Cruise/  
Land Tour**  
Sept. 2-13, 2011

**Polka Cruise -  
Eastern Caribbean**  
February 12-19, 2012

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For information on vocations from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, please go to <http://www.foryourvocation.org/>.

**Our Lady of Sorrows**

**Fish Fry**

Dine-in or Take-out  
\$7 p/p

Friday, March 11 • 5-8 P.M.



Trinity Hall • 208 W. River

Fried Tilapia  
Coleslaw

Hushpuppies  
Corn on the Cob

## A Seminarian's Thoughts ...

By Philip Brune, Theology II

The greatest joy of being a seminarian is being able to experience the love of God with other people through my vocation. The joy of helping students prepare for confirmation, sharing the faith with those about to become Catholic and visiting with the dying, are all moments when God has clearly spoken to me. At these times God's love pours down and I receive so much more from those I minister to than I feel I could ever give them. Yet at the same time God is feeding their faith through me. If that's not the most humbling thing in the world, then I don't know what is. There is such a deep hunger to experience God's love and the love of others in the world, but most of us don't really recognize that need in ourselves. One of my greatest joys is being with someone when they do realize that hunger for love, and they desire to receive it.



Of the several times I've experienced this, one time was at the UT Southwestern Medical Center in Dallas. I knocked on the door of the patient's room, asked if I could come in, and he said I could. After a little conversation I found out he had a painful disease that had taken many of his family members and he was going to die next. He was married. It didn't take long for him to tell me what was on his mind when he said, "I've talked with a

lot of preachers and they all tell me that I'll go to hell if I commit suicide. Do you believe I'll go to hell if I commit suicide?" I responded with the correct Catholic theological answer, "Suicide is a really serious sin, but I'm not God and I don't know if you'd go to hell or not. No one can know that." He wasn't satisfied with the answer and I felt he just wanted to hear me say that I thought he'd go to hell. Then he said, "If you heard that I jumped out of this window on the five o'clock news, would you think I went to hell, yes or no?" I paused and felt for what God wanted me to say, and then I said what I felt. I said, "I'd be really sad if you jumped out of that window, and your wife would be very sad also. She's been by your side because she loves you and I'd be sad because I love you. God loves you too, and we would miss you." The room was silent for a while. I don't know what ever happened to that man, but at that moment I knew God was speaking to both of us.

My greatest joy as a seminarian is encountering God wherever I may find him. I find him in my family, my friends, in the beauty of creation and even in situations that seem hopeless. I find Jesus, the joy of man's desire, through living my vocation.

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## Come & See Event

The Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana, will hold a Come & See event March 18-20 for single, Catholic women between the ages of 18 and 40. Get to know our Benedictine sisters, share in our community life and prayer and meet other women who are considering religious life - no pressure, no commitment! For more information or to register online, visit [www.thedome.org/vocations](http://www.thedome.org/vocations), call Sister Michelle Sinkhorn at 800-734-9999, or e-mail [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org).

## Volunteer Opportunities for Young Adults

Heart's Home, an international Catholic organization committed to promoting a culture of compassion, is currently accepting applications for volunteers. Heart's Home provides an opportunity for young people to dedicate at least 14 months of their lives to serve the most suffering people in the world. Founded in 1990 by Father Thierry de Roucy, the organization has 35 communities located in 20 countries, in addition to having recruited and trained more than 1,400 missionaries from 21 countries and from every continent. Mission countries include France, Italy, Thailand, Kazakhstan, Senegal, Peru, India, El Salvador and the U.S. Heart's Home accepts volunteers at any time during the year. Young Catholics interested in this opportunity should visit the Web site at [www.heartshomeusa.org](http://www.heartshomeusa.org) or call (718) 522-2121.



### By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Women entering religious orders today are highly educated and active in parish ministries, according to a new national survey.

The results of "The Profession Class of 2010: Survey of Women Religious Professing Perpetual Vows" were released in advance of World Day for Consecrated Life Feb. 2.

It was conducted by the Georgetown University-based Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate and commissioned by the U.S. bishops' Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

The survey was sent to sisters represented by the two conferences of religious women in the United States — the Leadership Conference of Women Religious and the Council of Major Superiors of Women Religious — and to contemplative communities.

Major superiors of women religious who participated in the survey reported a total of 79 women who professed perpetual vows in 2010. Of that number, 68 responded by Dec. 15, representing 52 religious congregations, provinces or monasteries, according to a news release from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The 2010 class of women religious was more diverse by race and ethnicity than the U.S. population of women religious in general. Six in 10 identified themselves as white; one in five as Asian and one in

10 as Hispanic. Six percent were African-American or African.

Among other findings:

- The average age for these new women religious is 43. Women religious making perpetual vows in 2010 ranged in age from 25 to 62.

- Eighty-seven percent of the sisters were born Catholic and eight in 10 came from families where both parents are Catholic.

- Although 71 percent of the new women religious were born in the United States, the new women religious came from 10 different countries of origin. The most popular non-U.S. countries of birth were Mexico (7 percent), Philippines (4 percent) and Nigeria (3 percent).

- Half of responding women religious attended a Catholic elementary school.

- More than 25 percent earned a graduate degree before entering their religious institute. Nearly six in 10 entered religious life with at least a bachelor's degree.

- Most women religious were active in parish life before entering their religious institute. Four in 10 participated in a youth group and three in 10 participated in a young adult group; 85 percent had ministry experience before entering their religious institute, most commonly in liturgical ministry, faith formation or social service.

- Half said they were under age 18 when they first considered a religious vocation; the average age when a vocation was first considered was 20.

- Seventy-five percent of the sisters and nuns regularly participated in retreats before they entered their religious institute. Two-thirds regularly prayed the rosary or participated in eucharistic adoration. Six in 10 regularly participated in a faith sharing or Bible study group or regular spiritual direction.

- Nine in 10 women religious said they

were encouraged to consider religious life by someone in their life. Of those who reported this, more than half said they were encouraged by a religious sister. A third of the sisters said they were introduced to their institute by the recommendation of a priest or adviser.

- Even though these women were encouraged by other religious to pursue their vocation, two-thirds of respondents said they were discouraged from considering a vocation — most often by parents or family members.

- Most women religious of the class of 2010 participated in some type of vocation program or experience prior to entering their religious institute. Most commonly this was a "come and see" experience or a vocation retreat.

"We are proud of the vocation, sacred commitment and service that women religious have made in the Church," said Archbishop Robert J. Carlson of St. Louis, chairman of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations.

"Making the profession of poverty, chastity and obedience is countercultural," he said, adding that it requires "courage and fidelity to remain faithful to a religious vocation."

He promised the support and prayers of U.S. bishops for incoming and future women religious in the United States.

Sister Mary Joanna Ruhland, a Sister of Mercy of Alma, Mich., who is associate director of the Secretariat of Clergy, Consecrated Life and Vocations, said the study "demonstrates that family life and education are significant in forming children in the spiritual life."

The entire survey can be found at: <http://www.usccb.org/cl/ProfessionClassOf2010-FINAL.pdf>.

Pope Benedict XVI receives the official World Youth Day 2011 backpack from Cardinal Antonio Rouco Varela of Madrid during a private meeting at the Vatican Feb. 14. The backpack will contain, among other items, a rosary, a book of pilgrim's prayers, a city guide and a copy of *Youcat*, a catechism for young people. Spain is preparing to host World Youth Day in Madrid Aug. 16-21. (CNS photo/L'Osservatore Romano via Reuters)

## World Youth Day in Madrid announces pope's August schedule

By Sara Angle  
Catholic News Service

ROME (CNS) — When Pope Benedict XVI travels to Madrid for World Youth Day in August, he will hold special meetings with young university professors and with young religious sisters.

In early February, organizers of World Youth Day 2011 published what they said was the pope's "entire agenda" for his Aug. 18-21 trip to Spain.

WYD will begin Aug. 16, before the pope arrives; many of the events will take place near Madrid's central Plaza de Ci-

beles and at the Cuatro Vientos Air Base, organizers said.

The pope will arrive at the Barajas airport Aug. 18, where he will be greeted by the king and queen of Spain, they said. The usual welcoming ceremony with youths from around the world will take place that evening in the Plaza de Cibeles.

While much of the schedule repeats standard World Youth Day events, a couple of new appointments have been added to the pope's schedule, the organizers said.

On his second day in Spain, Aug. 19, the pope will meet young religious sisters at the Monastery of El Escorial, about 27 miles north of Madrid. Afterward, he will meet about 2,000 young university professors there.

In what has become a standard World Youth Day appointment, Pope Benedict will celebrate Mass Aug. 20 with seminarians in La Almudena Cathedral.

Also on the papal agenda is a visit with a delegation of disabled persons participating in World Youth Day and with residents at a center for those with handicapping conditions.

In addition, the organizers said, Pope Benedict will be present in the Plaza de Cibeles Aug. 19 for the beginning of the Stations of the Cross, which will be spaced out over just under a mile of a main Madrid street. Each station will focus on one of 14 statues contributed from 10 different cities across Spain. The statues normally are seen only during Holy Week.



NUN PLAYS WITH CHILD OUTSIDE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN GAZA CITY—Sister Mariam Almiron, a member of the Sisters of the Incarnate Word from Argentina, spins a small child around following Sunday Mass at the Holy Family Catholic Parish in Gaza. There are only some 3,000 Christians in Gaza, of which a little more than 200 are Catholic. (CNS photo/Paul Jeffrey)

## Twenty Something Blog available

Due to budget constraints, the editor of *The Catholic Lighthouse* cannot print as many freelance authors' columns as she would like. So, if you are a fan of Christina Capecchis's *Twenty Something*, please follow her blog at <http://www.ReadChristina.com> until we can print another one of her columns. Thank you, Cynthia Brewer, editor

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Participants of "Celebration of Life," held in Edna on Jan. 19, are pictured above. From left to right are John Arnold, Ann Arnold, Deacon Larry Hoelscher, Rev. Gary Roberts, and Mrs. Patricia Kromka, with the audience.

## Catholic Daughters host "life" program

EDNA—The Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #1350 of St. Agnes Parish in Edna, hosted "A Celebration of Life" program January 19, 2011, at the Jackson County Services Building. The ecumenical program explained the importance of all life from conception to natural death, the sanctity of life, and the need for respect, dignity and justice for the unborn, the aged and for all human life.

Those participating in the program were Rev. Gary Roberts of Shiloh Baptist Church in Edna, John and Ann Arnold and Deacon Larry Hoelscher, all of St. Philip

Parish in El Campo; Mrs. Leslie Kallus, Allison Genzer, Cale Hollas, Brooke Sablatura, Tate Darilek, Rev. Luis Mendiola of Mission Bautista in Edna, George and Judy Panza, Mrs. Patricia Kromka, CDA Court #1350 regent; and Mrs. Madeline Novian.

Many CDA members and St. Agnes parishioners helped in serving refreshments and assisted where needed, before and after the program. Some 175 people from Jackson and surrounding counties attended the event.



At the Sanctity of Life event held in El Campo January 26, the "Praise Life Band" sang the song selections "Let It Rain," "Open The Eyes of my Heart Lord" and "Amazing Grace."

## Sanctity of Life event held in El Campo

EL CAMPO—The Sanctity of Life Celebration was sponsored by El Campo Life Advocates and hosted by First Lutheran Church of El Campo on the evening of January 26, 2011, beginning with a welcome by Andy Taylor, pastor of the First Lutheran Church and speaker for the event. President Otha Edison of El Campo Life Advocates opened the evening with prayer.

The Lighting of Life Candle was lit by Ariel, Arianna and Avery Falcon and Abrianna Rodriguez of the First Lutheran Church, along with the participation of more than 115 people, including St. Philip the Apostle Catholic CCE students. All raised their Candles of Life in song and prayer to a video "Go Light Your World" by Kathy Troccoli in memory of the unborn who have died through abortion.

Denise Couey, an active member of St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church and the coordinating activity director for El Campo Life Advocates, works to keep the Sanctity of Life Pro-life event an ecumenical event, reaching out to all of God's people.

In preparation for a moment of silence Mrs. Couey stated, "Statistics have proved that we are one step closer towards tomorrow's justice, for our community, state, nation, and God's entire creation, for an end to abortion. Beginning with us here tonight, we are making a difference in God's world by honoring the sacredness of life that God has given to each of us and in

each conception ... to be born. We are the voice, the Pro-life advocates, of the silent cry ... of this pure and innocent gift, the unborn baby."

She continued, "Therefore, we would like to share our respect for life, in loving memory of the 50,000,000 unborn infants, who have died... through legalized abortion ..., and to also celebrate the life of a friend, Dennis Kana, who entered eternal life March 2010. Dennis was a founder and a charter member of El Campo Life Advocates and is dearly missed by many. Dennis' well lived life has left us with beautiful treasures."

Following the moment of silent prayer, Pastor Taylor invited Rev. Harold Simmons of New Life Ministries Church in El Campo to read the Scripture, Matthew 5:13-16, the similes of salt and light. Chaplain Don Storey of Houston Hospice also read a Scripture response.

Pastor Taylor followed with a message raising awareness concerning the atrocities of abortion and encouraging participants to create a culture of life. He then led everyone in a Prayer of Reparation and a prayer for those wounded by abortion.

Helen Kight, organist of the First Lutheran Church, played "Amazing Grace" while all joined in singing the hymn. Father Gary Janak, pastor of St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church, gave the closing prayer

*See Sanctity of Life, p. 7*

Father Gary Janak competed in the Chevron Houston Marathon on January 31, 2011. He completed the 26.2 mile event in 4 hours 58 minutes and 13 seconds with friends and parishioners cheering him on. He ran for a very special cause, the St. Philip Catholic School Scholarship Fund. Thanks to wonderful supporters, he raised nearly \$8,000.



## Local Priest Runs Marathon to Raise Funds for Catholic School Scholarship Fund

By **QUALA MATOCHA** at [lifestyle@leader-news.com](mailto:lifestyle@leader-news.com) and **Cynthia Brewer**

After running his first full marathon on January 30, Father Gary Janak, pastor of St. Philip the Apostle Catholic Church in El Campo, isn't sure he'll do that again. Oh, he doesn't have any regrets, it's just his body appears to be voicing its rebellion. "My legs are still mad at me," he said.

"After the marathon, while in pain and hardly able to walk, I said I would never do another one. Now after a few days of recovery, I would at least entertain the thought. I had never before pushed my body in such a manner. That kind of challenge was exciting. In reality, the half marathon would be more enjoyable for me." Father Gary ran the half-marathon last year in Houston.

"So, regarding next year, who knows?"

This year he finished the 26.2 mile Chevron Houston Marathon course in 4 hours, 58 minutes and 13 seconds. "My goal was to complete the marathon under five hours," he said.

Another goal was to run for the St. Philip Catholic School scholarship fund and prove to himself he could do it. "It was a great experience and I had the opportunity to raise close to \$8,000 for our Catholic school scholarship fund, from the pledges of some very kind and generous individuals and organizations," Father Gary said.

Leon Macha, who is one of Father Gary's parishioners, said, "We probably have one of the fittest pastors in El Campo." "I'm not so sure about that," Father Gary responded. "But exercise addresses the need we have as human beings for what I refer to as a sacred balance in life. Running greatly assists me not only physically, but also mentally and spiritually. St. Paul encourages us to 'glorify God in our bodies,' and so being in the best shape I can enables me to do so. It also gives me the energy I need to maintain the active ministry schedule I keep. When I am not taking care of my body, I believe I am not glorifying God and enabling my body to truly be a temple of the Holy Spirit."

Father Gary, who has always exercised, felt like he needed to increase his activity. "I have exercised mainly with my bicycle for approximately 20 years," he said. "Three years ago I needed to increase my endurance level and better cope with anxiety, so Coach James Harp introduced me to running. I literally started with a quarter mile or less and worked to a full mile. James [Harp] and Debbie Parson greatly assisted me in learning how to properly breathe and to run."

To prepare for the marathon, Father Gary followed a 16-week training program. "I had two great people to support and run with me, Debbie Parson and Coach Harp," he said. During those 16 weeks, Father Gary would do a long run on Saturdays, increasing it each week. "The longest run was 20 miles," he said.

Over the course of preparation, Father Gary encountered several obstacles. "To say the least, I learned a lot about my body. At several points, I was overly fatigued and at other times incredibly hungry," he said. "Debbie, my faithful running partner, who is also a fitness trainer, assured me it was a normal reaction. I kept on and learned better what to do when I 'hit the wall,' as more experienced marathoners call it."

That moment came again during the marathon. But it was friends who kept Father Gary going until he crossed the finish line. "Several parishioners were present to cheer me on at the starting line," he said. "I was totally surprised by their presence and the signs they had made. That support was a tremendous help to me." He felt the "first 20 miles were relatively easy, despite the wet, and later, humid weather." But at mile 20, he said he experienced something new. "My legs didn't want to move! It was as if cement had been poured in my veins. I knew I had to keep running. In fact, running was less painful than walking."

He stopped to stretch before moving on. He didn't want to lose too much time. "I was concerned about losing time, but the pain was a greater concern. I attempted to pray myself through it," he said. "At mile 23, with only three miles to go until the finish line, I was struggling. At that point I saw Debbie, Coach Harp and some of their family members. They were on the sideline, cheering me on. That encouragement made all the difference for me. When they said, 'we'll see you at the finish line,' I knew I had to keep going. Those last three miles were the most difficult I had ever experienced."

Still experiencing the pain, he said, "I was approximately a quarter mile away from the finish line, Debbie could see on my face that I was in pain, so she, from the sideline, began running with me, in her boots, voicing words of encouragement! I kept running and I reached the finish line!" "In the end, it was worth the experience," Father Gary said.

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## Parish Catechetical leaders attend Webinar at three sites

By Sister Digna Vela, IWBS, director of the Office of Catechetical Ministry

On Thursday, February 17, 2011, technology made it possible for 75 parish catechetical leaders, catechists, Catholic school teachers and others in the Diocese of Victoria to participate in a Webinar taught via the Internet from Chicago, Ill.

In a two-hour professional development Webinar, "Connect, Awaken, & Share," Tom McGrath and Joellyn Cicciarelli from Loyola Press in Chicago modeled innovative ideas and experiences that can energize parents and help them become active participants in their children's faith formation.

Gathered by means of the Internet at Sacred Heart School in Hallettsville, Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Parish in Wharton, and the chancery building in Victoria, participants learned more than a dozen practical, effective tips and ideas for how to connect with parents, awaken their desire for a faith that matters, and share ways they can nurture the faith of their

children.

This interactive workshop had people getting out of their seats and engaging in various activities. Some of the ideas in the packet each catechist received were: Getting Parents Through the Door, Mealtime Matters, Forty Ways to Foster Prayer in Your Home, Sunday: God's Special Day, Teachable Moments, Practicing Virtue, 3-Minute Daily Retreat and much more.

Many catechists, who themselves are parents, left saying I can use these ideas right now with my own children and with the parents of the children I teach!

This Webinar was sponsored by the Diocese of Victoria Organization of Catechetical Leadership (OCL).

The theme for the four 2010-2011 OCL meetings is marriage and family. The program for the final OCL meeting, scheduled for April 5, 2011, at St. Agnes in Edna is titled "Great Expectations: Partnering With Parents in Religious Education." More information will follow.

## Pastors take different approaches when parishioners skip Communion

ALBANY, N.Y. (CNS) — Father Adam Forno occasionally notices parishioners skipping the Eucharist at St. John the Evangelist and St. Joseph parish in Rensselaer, where he is pastor. Sometimes, a Massgoer doesn't receive Communion because he or she has remarried without having a first marriage annulled. Other times, it is because of personal shame. "We've got some people who just feel they're not worthy," Father Forno explained. "People have a strong sense of not being in right relationship with God, and so they honor that by not going to Communion as they were taught. But my sense is that you need Communion more than ever then." A man in one of Father Forno's former parishes attended daily Mass, but he never received Communion. Father Forno approached him and said: "You come to supper with the Lord, but you don't eat." The priest asked if the man needed to reconcile anything with God and offered to help. Several pastors

throughout the Albany Diocese said they have spotted handfuls of Catholics at their parishes abstaining from the Eucharist, occasionally or habitually. They noted that many parishioners falsely believe being divorced or forgetting to pray are reasons to abstain. Massgoers who stay seated during Communion present pastors and parish leaders with complex tasks of spiritual guidance. Whenever possible, parish leaders are advised to teach about church rules but help people differentiate between mortal and venial sin. "It calls for such pastoral nuancing," Father Forno said. "It's not black and white." According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, parishioners who are "aware of having committed a mortal sin must not receive holy Communion, even if (they experience) deep contrition, without having first received sacramental absolution, unless (they have) a grave reason for receiving Communion and there is no possibility of going to confession."

## The Eucharistic Prayer: our response to God's invitation

Continued from p. 3

such as an assembly of school teachers, or a Eucharistic Congress, or a convention of musicians. While the assembly is probably not a regular Sunday congregation, it would be appropriate to pray one of the versions of this canon at a Eucharistic celebration that, for example, missions the parish council or liturgical ministers, Burke-Sullivan says.

In 1973, Eucharistic Prayers for Masses with children were added to offer a simplified version of the Eucharistic Prayer to help children better understand the mystery and be engaged in the prayer, says Father Peter Mitchell, a professor of liturgy at St. Gregory the Great Seminary in Seward, Neb. These prayers were reserved for liturgies where young children were the primary assembly. While these texts are not included in the new edition of the Missal, the Conference of Bishops will consider their future use.

The Eucharistic Prayer is the Body of Christ's response to the invitation it receives from God through the Word, Burke-Sullivan says.

"The response is always gratitude and it is always transformative," she says, but no words can possibly say it all.

By listening to the different Eucharistic

Prayers throughout the year, people gain a better understanding of the beliefs of the Catholic Church.

"The way the prayers are written gives a sense of why and when they help the assembly to understand more fully how it is called to act more fully in the person of Christ," she says.

Msgr. DeGrococo agrees.

"The greater number of texts allows us to explore and enter in to the mystery of Christ in all its richness and various facets in a deeper way."

### BACKGROUND:

*The Eucharistic Prayer is the prayer of thanksgiving and sanctification that takes place at the center of the Mass. During the prayer, one hears an account of Jesus' actions and his words at the Last Supper and the bread and wine become the Body and Blood of Christ.*

*The Eucharistic Prayer takes place after the Liturgy of the Word and the offertory and is introduced by a Preface. The congregation kneels or stands during the Eucharistic Prayer, which ends at the singing of the Great Amen.*



Father Michael Petering, pastor of St. Agnes Parish in Edna, awards door prizes at the Church Ministry Dinner held in the parish hall January 2.

## St. Agnes Ministry Dinner and Feast Day Celebrated

EDNA — St. Agnes Parish and its pastor, Father Michael Petering, held the annual Church Ministry Dinner Jan. 2, 2011, at the St. Agnes parish hall.

About 100 parishioners, serving in various ministries, were present. The ministries represented were Extraordinary Ministers, Lectors, Music, Religious Education, Ushers, Liturgical Environment, Prayer Blanket, Gabriel Project, Landscape, Money Counters and Parish Finance.

A catered meal with dessert was served, a time of fellowship was enjoyed and door prizes were awarded by Father Petering.

The month of January continued with opportunities for fellowship as St. Agnes parishioners celebrated the feast day of their patron saint, St. Agnes, on January 21. Following the evening Mass, a covered-dish meal, ice cream and the decorated St. Agnes cake were served. The St. Agnes statue, with the saint holding a lamb — Agnes means lamb — and a palm branch, which represents martyrdom, was on display near the registration table. Likewise, the dinner tables were decorated with greenery, lambs and flowers. Many door prizes were awarded during the fun-filled celebration at which approximately 75 parishioners attended.

## Question Corner

By Father John Dietzen  
Catholic News Service



## Did God command the killing of innocent people?

*Q. I am a regular reader of the Old and New Testaments, and have been troubled about how the Jewish people, with God's approval, treated their enemies so viciously as they progressed to the Promised Land. Joshua says they killed everyone and everything. Other instances in the Book of Deuteronomy are even more graphic and violent.*

*I know the Bible is the inspired word of God, but are we to take all these violent actions against women and children liter-*

*ally? (Maryland)*

**A.** The practice to which you refer was known as the ban. Conquering armies (including the Hebrews), often following some alleged divine sign or command, massacring everyone. As you note, Joshua observed the ban after taking the city of Jericho, "putting to the sword all living creatures in the city: men and women, young and old, as well as oxen, sheep and asses" (6:21).

We probably will never have a completely satisfying answer to your question, but I believe a few points are helpful.

Because the sacred authors always necessarily wrote in the context of their own beliefs and cultures, Scriptures generally speak of God and his actions anthropomorphically, describing God in human terms, and with human characteristics.

In fact, the only way we can speak of God is with our inevitably limited human words and experiences. When we say God is loving or gracious or jealous or just, we're speaking analogously; we mean only

See *Did God command*, p. 13

## Sanctity of Life event held in El Campo

Continued from p. 6

for the celebration.

The active board members of El Campo Life Advocates are Charlie Merta - Vice President, and spouse Ella Merta, Frank Milder - Treasurer, and spouse Barbara Milder - Secretary, Denise Couey - Coordinating Activity Director, and spouse Blair Couey Sr., all of St. Philip The Apostle Catholic Church, and President Otha Edison.

The ecumenical "Life Praise Band" members consisted of Anne Marie Novosad - keyboard, Chris Skinner - percussion, Denise Couey - vocals, Heath Bush - lead guitar, Kerry Brandl - bass guitar, Kyle Poenitzsch - vocals and Stephen Deiss - rhythm guitar and vocals; Tiffany Joy Taylor sang a solo, "A Baby's Prayer."

A reception followed the celebration in the Fellowship Hall.



**Barbara A. McCain**  
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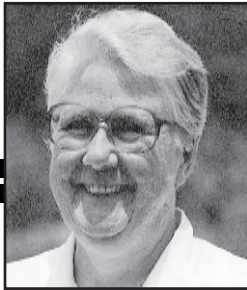
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## SISTERLY THOUGHTS

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS



### Lent, Time to Care

**H**eadlines of natural disasters, political unrest, violent crimes, disease outbreaks, and other calamities bombard us every day. Closer to home, even in our own homes and local communities, we see the results of unemployment, home foreclosures, accidents, illnesses, consequences of poor judgment and numerous other personal misfortunes. Sometimes we feel so overwhelmed with these woes that we give up. Consequently we may think, "What can I do? There's only so much that one can do." As a result we may end up doing nothing, which only makes the situation worse because of the non-caring example that we give to those about us.

Fortunately, the Church in its wisdom provides us with liturgical seasons, which help us pause and reflect upon our relationship with our God and our neighbor. Lent is such a season; it calls us to conversion through prayer, fasting and giving alms.

Let us explore how these activities address the woes that have been described above. For example, we can pray for the victims of adverse conditions. Through praying we can strengthen our relationship with God by repeatedly giving praise, asking for favors, and then giving thanks for favors that we have received, even though they may not have been the favors for which we have prayed. We may underestimate the power of prayer; even scientific research has showed that hospital patients who have been prayed for have quicker recovery rates than patients who have not

been prayed for.

Along with prayer, we are called to fast during this penitential season. Now we all know that the minimum required fast days (Ash Wednesday and Good Friday) are for Catholics between the ages of 18 and 59, unless one has a legitimate excuse. Now, some of us might not meet these age requirements for fasting from food; however, there are many other ways all of us could deprive ourselves or refrain from anything that may be endangering our relationship with God and one another. We may also want to deny ourselves legitimate goods or desires; foregoing some such pleasurable but non-essential things or experiences, done in a spirit of penance, can illustrate our solidarity with those who are experiencing difficult times. Moreover, the money and time we can save through this voluntary self-denial leads us to the third means of conversion, that of almsgiving.

Regarding almsgiving, we are so constantly being beseeched to give to various causes that it is hard to decide how to set priorities in our giving. While it is wise to investigate the various causes and give where it is most needed, our motivation for giving is most important. Let us give in a spirit of charity and remember, "Whatever you do ..."

Therefore, may this penitential season be a time of continuing conversion as we embrace prayer, fasting and almsgiving as a means of strengthening our relationship with God and with one another.



**MEMBERS RECEIVE 50-YEAR MEMBERSHIP PINS**—Hostyn KJT Society #3 member Bruce Mozisek receives a 50-year membership pin from Hostyn KJT Society President Benedict Kallus. Pictured with Bruce, in back row, l. to r., is his daughter, Whitney Mozisek; parents, Margie and Bernard Mozisek; brother, Brian Mozisek; wife, Tammy; and Hostyn Vice President, Patrick Janda. Also receiving 50-year pins from Hostyn KJT Society, but not pictured, were Henry A. Svec and Nicholas P. Havelka.

### Reporting Abuse

*If you or someone you know has been sexually or physically abused by a member of the clergy or other church personnel:*

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

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

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

***If the abuse involves a minor, civil authorities should be contacted prior to reporting to the bishop, chancellor or coordinators of Pastoral Care and Outreach. If the child is in immediate danger, call 911.***



Patrick Sohrt, a junior football kicker at St. Joseph High in Victoria, placed second in the Ray Guy National Championships in Dallas. Photo by Genna Martin, *Victoria Advocate*

Sohrt at the Ray Guy National Championships  
Average Kickoff Distance: 59 yards  
Average Kickoff Hangtime: 3.59 seconds  
Field Goal Accuracy: 90 percent



Ray Guy National Championship National Top Finishers

1. Kyle Federico, Ponte Verda, Fla.
2. Patrick Sohrt, Victoria St. Joseph, Victoria, Texas
3. Dominik Kozlowski, Lawrence Academy, Mass.

### St. Joseph's Patrick Sohrt takes top spot at regional kicking competition, second nationally

By Albert Alvarado,  
*The Victoria Advocate, Advsports*

Patrick Sohrt may only make it onto the field for a handful of plays, but his coach knows how he can affect the outcome of a football game.

"Having that range brings a whole new arsenal in," said St. Joseph football coach Donnie Slatter. "It's always a real dangerous threat if you have a good kicker."

Even in the offseason, Sohrt's leg is turning heads as he finished second overall among kickers in the High School Division at the Ray Guy National Kicking Championships.

"I was a little bit nervous going into it, but once I started, doing it didn't really matter," said Sohrt about the competition.

In 2010, the junior kicker hit 62 percent of his field goals including one from 44 yards out and averaged 61 yards per kickoff with 17 of his 37 kicks going into the end zone for touchbacks.

Sohrt punted 27 times for an average of 41.1 yards per punt.

The Ray Guy National Championship is a kicking competition held in Dallas, Phoenix and Tampa where kickers are judged on kickoff distance, kickoff hang time and field goal accuracy.

Sohrt competed at the University of Texas-Arlington's Maverick Stadium in November and finished first in the High School Division at that location and second nationally.

Kyle Federico of Ponte Verda High School in Florida finished ahead of Sohrt in the national competition.

Sohrt boomed a kickoff for a competition best 73 yards in addition to having an average kickoff distance of 59 yards. He also hit 90 percent of his field goals.

"It gives them no chance to run it back," said Sohrt about the importance of long kickoffs.

Even though Sohrt was more accurate kicking field goals, Federico had a better average kickoff distance and kickoff hang time.

Sohrt played soccer from four years old to 12, smoothing over the transition to being a football kicker at St. Joseph.

"Kicking just came naturally to me," Sohrt said.

Although many football fans will overlook and even poke fun at the kickers on their favorite football team, they can have a huge role in deciding the game.

Kickers can turn a stalled drive into one that results in three points and can back the opposition up with a kickoff or punt.

And at any point of the game kickers can be called up to hit a field goal to tie the game or win.

Slatter has no doubt Sohrt is capable of coming through in the clutch for the Flyers next year.

"He's got the confidence and the leg that helps with his confidence," Slatter said.

Added Sohrt: "You can't really think about kicks you've previously done, you have to move on because your next kick might be in that instant."

The Flyers finished the 2010 regular season with a 4-6 record and were eliminated by eventual TAPPS Div. I State Finalists Fort Worth Nolan Catholic in the Area Playoff round.

During his time as an assistant at New Braunfels Canyon, Slatter saw Wes Zunker went on to kick for the University of New Mexico of the Mountain West Conference.

And he thinks Sohrt can make a similar leap. But is he good enough to kick at the college level?

"He's got the potential to be a good kicker at the next level," Slatter said.

Sohrt said he hasn't been actively looking for colleges to kick for, but he said the best way to get noticed is to meet his responsibilities on and off the field.

"Just keep practicing and keep doing everything I need to so I can get to the next level," Sohrt said.

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## Coming of Age

By Karen Osborne  
Catholic News Service



### Don't ruin your future by texting and driving!

It seems like such a silly little thing, something ordinary and completely normal that people do every day.

You're driving down a highway or a street or a little country road, and your phone beeps. Someone has texted you.

So, while driving, you fish out your phone, check your texts, and respond quickly with your eyes glancing to the road every so often to make sure you're still on target.

No harm done, right?

Alex Brown thought so. A high school senior with curly blond hair, Brown sang soprano, played basketball, served as the school mascot at football games, and had her sights on becoming valedictorian at her Texas high school.

Her room, as shown on the television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition," was filled with medals and trophies earned from sports and activities. She was very much like a lot of the teenagers today that I know — happy, normal, full of dreams and excited about life.

But Alex took her eyes off the road to look at her cell phone on her way to school in November 2009, and because of that, she lost control of her vehicle. Her truck skidded off the road and flipped over. Since Alex wasn't wearing a seatbelt, she was thrown from the truck.

Her mother, frantic after hearing she hadn't arrived at school, retraced her drive and found her dying by the side of the road.

It was a sunny day. There were no other cars on the road. There was no rain and no snow.

Today, her parents take the destroyed white pickup truck to schools across the country to inform teenagers of the dangers of texting and driving. Every day, Alex's family faces the horrible thought of life without her.

Alex's family was recently featured on the television show "Extreme Makeover: Home Edition." In a surprising segment, the show hired two NASCAR drivers — professionals who spend hours upon hours behind the wheel, training to drive cars safely at ridiculous speeds.

With their eyes on the road, the drivers were perfect, but while receiving texts from assistants on the side of the road, the pros looked more like teenagers on their first driving lesson.

We all know that it is dangerous and illegal to drive drunk.

We all know that drunk driving lengthens your response time and makes it difficult to control your vehicle.

But did you know that texting while driving can be much worse?

*Car and Driver Magazine* once compared results from tests on people who drove drunk with people who were sober but texting. The shocking news was that the texters did far worse than the drunks!

The texters drifted into neighboring lanes, slammed on the brakes far later than they should have and generally drove like they'd had eight beers at a keg party.

Responsible, good people who would never think of imbibing and getting behind the wheel text and drive every day. But just because we're completely sober doesn't mean we're completely safe.

In 2009, distracted driving — texting, fiddling with the radio, checking e-mails, chatting and not paying attention to the road — killed more than 5,000 people.

So when you're behind the wheel, remember Alex Brown. If your phone rings, resist the temptation to check your texts until you've arrived safely at your destination.

If you're in a car and a parent or friend is checking e-mail while driving, tell them to put down the phone and pay attention to the road, to the other cars on the road and stay focused.

You have a bright and amazing future ahead of you. Don't ruin it by texting and driving!

**Editor's Note:** According to the diocesan Youth Office staff, there are at least two apps available to assist drivers by either answering texts/e-mails for them or by preventing their phone from receiving texts/calls while driving. Thanks to Debbie Vanelli and Jose Ortega.

DriveSafe.ly™ is a mobile application that reads text (SMS) messages and e-mails aloud in real time and automatically responds with the message: "I am driving right now. I will respond shortly" without drivers touching the mobile phone. Information and download is available at <http://www.drivesafe.ly/>

LocationLabs' DriveSmart Plus application is a one-time opt-in subscription service that automatically prevents the driver from receiving or making calls or texts while driving. Learn more at: [http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-13746\\_7-20029063-48.html](http://reviews.cnet.com/8301-13746_7-20029063-48.html)

### Planned Parenthood program in public school draws Catholic-led protest

By Dan McWilliams  
Catholic News Service

KNOXVILLE, Tenn. (CNS) — A young parishioner in the Diocese of Knoxville who was upset over a Planned Parenthood (PP) presentation in her public high school classroom last fall said she never dreamed the issue would grow as it has.

Sophomore Alayna McCormick, who attends Hardin Valley Academy in Knoxville, and her mother, Kym, were among the speakers at a recent information session for parents at Sacred Heart Cathedral School that drew an audience of nearly 200 and considerable media coverage.

Alayna, a member of St. John Neumann Parish in Farragut, said the presentation in her lifetime-wellness class at Hardin Valley in October was supposed to be about abstinence, but the subject never came up.

Later, the student and her mother saw the graphic material posted on the "Info for Teens" portion of the PP Web site; the site address was given to students in the presentation. The material includes detailed descriptions of the male and female body, reproduction and pregnancy.

That prompted Kym to launch a campaign to remove PP from the list of approved speakers for Knox County Schools.

Nationally, PP partners with many public school systems to provide sex education materials for the classroom.

Kym told the Sacred Heart audience of her frustrations in dealing with school officials, especially over the fact that no consent form was provided to parents regarding the PP visit. Such forms are normally provided for anything with the remotest possibility of inappropriate content, even the showing of "G-rated movies," she said.

## Youth Calendar of Events

- March 1, 2, 3 — NET at Sacred Heart in Hallettsville
- March 4 — NET at Our Lady of Sorrows in Victoria
- March 5 — NET at Immaculate Conception in Goliad
- March 6 — NET at St. Joseph in Moulton
- March 6 — Catholic Knowledge Bowl
- March 12 — Foundations Youth Ministry Class
- March 14 — Our Lady of Guadalupe Confirmation Retreat at SRC
- March 27 — Diocesan Confirmation Retreat at St. Michael's in Cuero
- April 2 — Foundations Youth Ministry Class
- April 6 — Texas Catholic Conference Advocacy Days
- April 8 — Bishop Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament
- April 10 — Diocesan Confirmation Retreat
- April 17 — Camp David Planning Meeting



Find us now on Facebook! At Diocese of Victoria — Youth Ministry

For more information on any of these events, please contact: Debbie Vanelli or José Ortega at the Office of Youth Ministry at (361) 573-0828 ext. 32 / ext. 50 or e-mail at [dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:dvanelli@victoriadiocese.org) or [jortega@victoriadiocese.org](mailto:jortega@victoriadiocese.org) Web site: [www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/youthoffice)

## A Personal Paparazzi

By Camille Mica, a senior at East Bernard High School and parishioner of Holy Cross Church

Status updates. Friend requests. Chat, comment, like. The possibilities are virtually endless on Internet sites like Facebook.

In today's crazy world, Facebook is a great tool for staying connected. Social networking over the Internet is one of the best ways to be in touch with friends and family, and it's even better for keeping up with people we meet at camps or don't see very often. Some people even find contacts for future jobs on Facebook. Of course, sometimes it's just perfect for killing time when we are bored.

I remember when I first made my Facebook account a few years ago. I was ecstatic! The virtual world was at my fingertips; with a click of a mouse I could chat online, join groups, find out what was happening in my friends' lives, and tell everyone about mine. I was having a blast.

But a few weeks after creating a Facebook account, I found myself spending way too much time online. Almost every free moment, I would go to the computer and log on.

What happens when we become obsessed with sharing every moment and thought of our lives with others? We've all probably seen status updates along the lines of "Bye guys, I'm taking my shower now!" Five minutes later: "Brushing my teeth!" And then without fail: "Okay, about to go to bed!" This always makes me laugh, but sometimes our "Facebooking" can become extreme.

Recently, I've read several very personal status updates online. Sometimes, we

forget that everyone can read everything we post online. It's so easy to reveal extremely personal information about our lives without realizing that others might see. I've heard plenty of stories of people tracking someone's every online conversation and actually taking pleasure in this person's struggles or emotional problems.

It finally hit me: Through Facebook, we are sometimes creating our own paparazzi. When we share everything online, our accounts become just like magazine tabloids, where celebrity secrets, relationship issues and personal problems are publicly displayed for everyone to see.

In the Bible, the book of Proverbs says, "With closest custody, guard your heart... let your fountain be yours alone, not one shared with strangers" (4:23, 5: 17). Certain pictures, relationship problems, emotional struggles and details of our lives are like our fountain, meant to be guarded in our own hearts or shared only with our closest friends. Just like celebrity paparazzi, there will always be people watching and waiting for us to make mistakes. The only difference is that when we post very private information on Facebook, we are being our own paparazzi. We don't always realize that this information can be damaging to our social lives and used against us behind our backs.

Facebook is a great, convenient site to help us relax, have fun and keep up friendships. I am so happy I can stay in touch with so many friends through my own account. But every once in a while, it is a good idea to step back and make sure we are not going too far. The last thing we want is for rumors about our online posts to spread and hurt our social lives. So, let's have fun, but always guard our hearts against our own personal "paparazzi."



**OLV PLACES 2ND IN LOCAL MATHCOUNTS COMPETITION**—Our Lady of Victory School's eighth grade team of (l to r) Sterling Lykes, Madison Hoang, Kyle Polasek and Randall Nelson placed second in the recent Mathcounts competition with eight Victoria area middle schools. The competition was sponsored by the local chapter of the Texas Society for Professional Engineers. Madison Hoang also placed second in the individual competition. Mathcounts is a national mathematics competition for middle school students.





## Holy Family KC #9088 holds awards banquet

Knights of Columbus Council #9088 held its awards banquet at the Holy Family Church activity center in Victoria Tuesday, January 18, 2011. The Council celebrated its 25th Anniversary. The event was made special by the attendance of twelve of the past Grand Knights of the council, including Gaylan Duncan, George Wenzel, Otto Bleier, Rueben Petrusek, Richard Ramano, Gerald Bryant, Carl Kirst, Bryan Ellis, Michael Gabrysch, Bob Leach, Bob Bryarly and Dennis Lockstedt, in the order they served; not present was David Hahn.

Grand Knight Charles Bluntzer and Deputy Grand Knight and Financial Secretary Jerry Hajek presented membership pins and certificates, including numerous 25-year certificates and pins to the members who were a part of Council #9088 since its beginning. Honorary Membership certificates and pins were given to the members who had reached the age of 65 with 25 years of continuous service and Honorary Life Membership certificates were given to those members who had reached the age of 70 with at least 25 years of continuous service.

Plaques were presented to the 12 Knights of the Month with the honor of Knight of the Year going to Emory Migura. Plaques were presented to the Families of the Quarter: Marlin and Betty Frederick,

1st qtr.; Emory and Betty Migura, 2nd qtr.; Nick and Janie Castro, 3rd qtr.; and Edwin and Julie Stryk, 4th qtr. The honor of Family of the Year went to Emory and Betty Migura. The Miguras have been very involved with Holy Family Church. Betty has been a CCD teacher for many years and prepared the students for first Communion. She is a member of the Altar Society and Catholic

Daughters. She has served as chairperson for the Altar Society Bake Sales. Emory is known for his dedicated service in the kitchen washing dishes. He is always there to help whenever and wherever help is needed. The Miguras recently celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Congratulations to Emory and Betty Migura.



Above are the grand knights who have served KC Council #9088 since its founding, 25 years ago. Charles Bluntzer, center, is the current grand knight. Not present was former grand knight David Hahn.



Grand Knight Charles Bluntzer presents Emory and Betty Migura with the Family of the Year award and Emory Migura with Knight of the Year.



Phyllis Appling receives the Distinguished Alumni Award from her grade school, St. Philip Catholic School in El Campo, during Catholic Schools Week 2011. Mrs. Gwen Edwards, principal of St. Philip's, presented her with the award at the Mass opening Catholic Schools Week.

## SPS presents Distinguished Alumni Award to Phyllis Appling

ELCAMPO—St. Philip Catholic School annually recognizes a distinguished graduate whose accomplishments continue to reflect the values and character of the school. Phyllis Appling was this year's recipient. Following her graduation from St. Philip School in 1974, the former Phyllis Parma carried out her love of education in her profession as a teacher, reaching out to those in most need of extra instruction. Not only teaching the mind, she tries to instill good moral values to help students succeed in everyday life.

She proved her appreciation of her own Catholic school education by seeing her three children also educated through the doors of SPS. During those years, she was very active as a room mother, volunteer coach, and a School Advisory Board member. Phyllis continues to carry on her sense of service to the Church by working with Vacation Bible School, teaching CCE, currently working with confirmation candidates and by working on various committees to promote the church and school.

To this day, she feels a sense of family, community, and God, with a strong emphasis on academics is the foundation on which she believes is vital to a student's growth. Most recently, Phyllis worked on helping to organize the 60th anniversary celebration of St. Philip School.

Her name is engraved on a perpetual plaque that hangs in the lobby of the school.



**SCOUT SUNDAY CELEBRATED AT CATHEDRAL**—Boy Scout Troop #364 and Cub Pack #364 observed Scout Sunday February 6, 2011, with Mass at Our Lady of Victory Cathedral, which was celebrated by Rev. Charles Otsiwah, parochial vicar, who was assisted by Deacon Larry Rossow. After Mass, Deacon Larry presented religious awards to members of the Cub Scouts. Members who received the Light of Christ award were Zachary Shaver, Hunter Aldridge, Reed Rivera and Nicholas Zerangue. Those who received the Agnus Dei award were Jackson Stefka, Reed Rivera and Trey Lawrence. Parvuli Dei awardees were Alex Bonorden and Logan Rivera; Grayson Seals received the God and Me award. The Scoutmaster of Troop 364 is Thomas Gwosdz and the Cub Master of Pack 364 is Charles Bonorden; Roger Lawrence of the Cub Pack organized the Scout Sunday Event. Cub Scouts from Pack 364 are pictured with Deacon Larry Rossow. Front row: Zachary Shaver; middle row, l. to r.: Hunter Aldridge, Jackson Stefka, Reed Rivera, Grayson Seals, Trey Lawrence and Nicholas Zerangue; back row: Alex Bonorden, Logan Rivera and Carson Young.



**SCHOOL THANKS BENEFACTORS**—St. Michael Catholic School in Weimar holds their volunteer/benefactor meal during Catholic Schools Week each year. This event shows the school's appreciation for people in the community who donate their time, money or talents to the school, even when they do not have children attending. During this year's meal, Mr. Jerry Mikeska made a \$2,000 donation to the school. The eighth-grade class helps at this meal to usher in the guests, provide hospitality, and clean tables. Pictured, left to right are Todd Heger, Lane Hasse, Bailey Cernosek, Clay Harmon, Ms. Kim Patek, principal; Mr. Jerry Mikeska, Shelby Vacek, Jacob Horton, Hayden Sestak, Michael Mason and Drew Adamcik.



**DISTRICT CHAMPS**—The 2010-2011 Nazareth Academy Lady Jets Basketball Team won the South Zone Championship and District Championship. Pictured in top row, from left, are Coach Patrick Matthews, Lacie Linam, Maddy Schaar, Allie Blain, Kensity Marshall and Coach Dennis "Poppy" Leita; bottom row: Shelbie Vanbeveren, Brandy Chamrad, Gabby Perez and Clara Smejkal.





## “Msgr. Stanely Petru is a priest for all people ... . He will truly be missed!”

Sister Liliane Janda, IWBS

During his homily, Bishop Fellhauer speaks of Msgr. Petru’s 63-year priestly career.

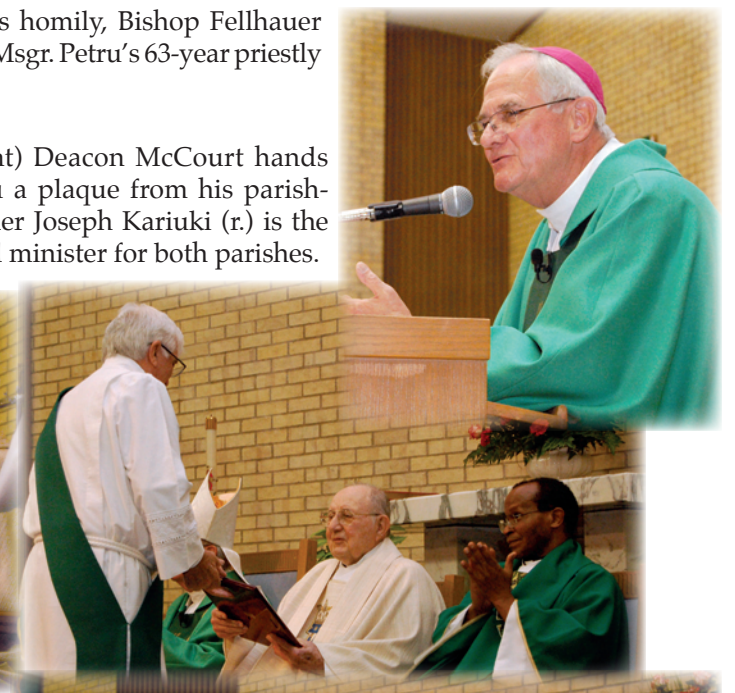
(below right) Deacon McCourt hands Msgr. Petru a plaque from his parishioners. Father Joseph Kariuki (r.) is the sacramental minister for both parishes.



Gina Kozelsky and Jenifer Boening (not shown) display to the congregation the handmade quilt that was presented to Msgr. Petru. Parishioners signed each quilt square.



Msgr. Petru hands bulletins to his “bambinos.” Pictured with him are Matthew Marek, Grace Marek, Zachary Janda and Austin Wick. Bishop Fellhauer assists him.



Ben Petru (kneeling), shares stories with his uncles, Msgr. Stanley Petru and Father Gus Petru, following Mass. Parishioners and friends wait to congratulate Msgr. Petru.

## At 88 years, Msgr. Petru retires

Continued from p. 1

and Jenifer Boening presented Msgr. Petru with a quilt that was made by Diana Barnes with assistance from Peggie Creuzbaur and Mary Vasek. It was signed by parish families from Hostyn and Plum.

Grand Knight Mark Ulrich of KC Council #2574 thanked him for providing guidance as chaplain for the KC council.

Debbie Klam, director of the parishes’ ACTS core group, presented Msgr. Petru with a plaque and thanked him “for what he started.”

Gene Kruppa, representing Sts. Peter & Paul Parish, Plum, and Ed Hughes, representing Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish, Cistern, also shared kind words from their parishes.

Many people have also made a donation to the Rev. Msgr. Stanley J. Petru Seminary Burse.

After announcements and presentations were made, Msgr. Petru addressed the parishioners.

“Lord have mercy; with all of that, I may get re-hired.”

He reiterated the story Deacon McCourt told of how he became known for praying for rain. Before his installment at St. Cornelius Parish in Karnes City in 1958, the whole county had been suffering from a severe drought, but at his installment, when he knelt before Bishop Leven, there was a huge clap of thunder and rain came pouring down, even through the roof of the church, onto his head. This was a sign to him that he should always include in his prayers the request for sufficient rain for the farmers.

He then shared his gratitude for Bishop Fellhauer, Gina Kozelsky and all his parishioners.

Msgr. Petru explained how he had come to Hostyn. After spending 12 years at St. Gregory the Great in San Antonio, he contacted the Diocese of Victoria at the suggestion of Msgr. Alois Goertz.

“You have a good bishop there; ask if you could come there,” Msgr. Goertz said.

“When I went ... looking for an appointment, the first thing the bishop asked me was, ‘What parish do you want?’”

“I said, ‘Beggars can’t be choosers,’ but Lord, what he gave me? Thanks be to God, practically the entire Fayette County, and what beautiful people.”

He said if he began naming people, he might miss some. “But there’s one person, I must [say something about], she’s had this job longer than I have.” He was speaking of his secretary, Gina Kozelsky.

“She has served so diligently and yet so gently. I hope the saints in heaven will help me to pay her overtime,” he said of her tireless work.

He appreciated all the help he had

received from the parishioners in starting various programs in the parishes, particularly Disciples on the Journey, Generations of Faith and ACTS.

“There is no end [to the parishioners]; a number of them went to heaven without asking me. It was a great loss for us, but I’m sure a great gain in heaven. It’s so difficult when you stay so long [in a parish]; when they [parishioners] die, we miss them as if our own brothers and sisters, but help comes from the Holy Spirit who we turn to constantly.”

Sister Liliane Janda, IWBS, who was raised in Hostyn and is now the librarian at Nazareth Academy in Victoria, said, “Msgr. Stanley Petru is a priest for all people; I am

bleamed to know him. He shares his talents with all those he meets and relates to all ages. God has gifted him; therefore, blessing all Msgr. comes in contact with. I am motivated by him to do God’s work. He will truly be missed!”

The Breakfast Reception and celebration that followed Mass was hosted and prepared by the Hostyn and Plum parish

families. All the beautiful rose arrangements in church and the parish hall were donated by the Holy Rosary ACTS.

Msgr. Petru now lives at the Oblate Madonna Residence in San Antonio.

**Editor’s note:** To learn more about Msgr. Stanley Petru, please look at the May 2010 issue of *The Catholic Lighthouse* on our Web site.

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Michael Koeth Weimar  
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## Catholic By Grace

By Denise E. Bossert  
catholicbygrace.blogspot.com



### We can't hide our Catholic faith

I tell people that I'm a contemplative by nature. And there's actually some truth to that. It is also true that I am a bit agoraphobic. I am more comfortable at home than I am anywhere else.

One of the hardest things about being Catholic is the simple fact that we do not have a private faith. We may have a private prayer life. Conversion may begin as a quiet, hidden movement of the Spirit. But when we receive the Eucharist, we are sent out to do something about it. Our faith gets turned inside out.

We cannot hide from our neighbors. We cannot hide from work. We cannot hide from making friends and trying new things.

As much as I would like to receive Our Eucharistic Lord and then head home until next Sunday, I can't do it.

I grew up in a pastor's home, and for a couple of years I was even a pastor's wife. For a reason I never quite understood, the parishioners enjoyed getting the inside scoop on life in the parsonage (Protestant equivalent of the rectory). Those years in the pastor's fishbowl had an impact on me. The once-outgoing-girl is now a slightly anti-social grown-up.

There's no place like home. Indeed!

Reclusive writer. Sign me up!

I'm not great at chit-chat. I'd rather take an on-line class than become part of a Bible study. One of the best inventions was the telephone answering machine. I just don't do crowds, shopping, or socializing.

Some people thrive on meeting and greeting the world. I'm just not one of

### Church's programs offer healing after abortion for both women and men

ST. LOUIS (CNS) — Maria Thompson was a teenager when she became pregnant. The 18-year-old was living in Mexico City. The father, 11 years older than her, didn't want anything to do with the baby. Her parents, as she recalled, "would not tolerate any deviation." So when they found out she was pregnant, "I had no place to go." The year was 1973. Abortion was illegal in Mexico, and the father of her child sent her to have an abortion. At that time, abortions were performed in the home of the doctor, Thompson recalled. For the first several months after the abortion, Thompson said it was "very difficult for me to see a baby." She supported a woman's choice to have an abortion, noting "it was the thing to do." It wasn't until later that she realized "it was nothing but to cover the pain and anguish" of her own abortion. She also considered suicide. Years later, Thompson married and had a child. She later became pregnant again, but lost that child through a miscarriage, an experience she said was sent to her by God. "The child I lost in a miscarriage was the same age of the aborted child," she recalled in an interview with *The Review*, newspaper of the St. Louis Archdiocese. "That's when life really became worse for me. I realized what had been bothering me." Thompson, who had strayed from her Catholic upbringing, returned to the Church. She sought forgiveness through the sacrament of reconciliation and attended a retreat through Project Rachel, the Church's ministry to those who have experienced an abortion. Today, she helps organize the local semi-annual 40 Days for Life campaign, an effort which calls on people of all faith backgrounds to pray and fast for an end to abortion.

them.

Like it or not, as a Catholic, I'm under the microscope even more than I was as a preacher's daughter or preacher's wife. The laity doesn't have an eye on me any more. But the non-Catholic world is watching — and the world is watching you. The world wants to know whether or not Catholics really live what they profess. They are fascinated by our weaknesses, though they often ignore our strengths. We're under a microscope, and that complicates things.

I don't know about you, but that makes me want to hide. If I keep to myself, I can control what gets judged. And I like it that way.

The saints set the record straight. We are meant to engage the world. Clothe yourself in Christ and get out there. The saints are like the friendly coach who pats his JV kid on the back and says go get 'um. The coach watches from the sidelines, knowing all too well that the kid is afraid of the ball, afraid he might miss a shot or afraid of getting creamed by some oversized opponent.

If I could have a chat with my guardian angel, I suppose he would have a bit of wisdom for me. He'd probably say what angels have always said when they greet someone. "Don't be afraid."

I'm glad my little phobia is just that — little. It is something I can wrestle with and overcome through the gift of God's grace. It only has the upper hand if I let it. When I manage to set aside the fear of looking like a weak specimen of the faith, then it's not so overwhelming.

That's when I get out there and strike up conversations and let those conversations touch on the things that matter most.

Oh, I'd still prefer the life of a reclusive writer to that of an active Christian. I'd still prefer to be on my knees after receiving the Eucharist rather than out in that very challenging world where anger and fear and pride hit me at every turn. But this faith isn't an either/or kind of faith. It is a both/and faith. Eucharist and society. Contemplation and action. Prayer and participation.

I'd still rather call myself a contemplative than admit that I have social anxiety.

Sure, I could spin it. I could even deceive myself and keep the world at arm's length. And then I might miss the opportunity to share the Gospel in word or deed. I might miss the chance to connect with someone who might teach me a thing or two about this journey to God.

So, I listen to the wisdom of the saints and my guardian angel. I leave the fear on the bench, and I go get 'um.

*Bio: Ms. Bossert is a convert to the Catholic Church. Her column Catholic by Grace has appeared in 43 diocesan newspapers. She lives in the Archdiocese of St. Louis and is a member of Immaculate Heart of Mary in New Melle, Mo.*

## LENT

www.wordgamesforcatholics.com



ABSTINENCE  
ASH WEDNESDAY  
BEFORE EASTER  
FAST  
HOLY THURSDAY

HOLY WEEK  
LAETARE  
LITURGICAL YEAR  
PALM  
PASSION SUNDAY

PENANCE  
ROSE  
SACRIFICE  
SEASON  
VIOLET

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parish: \_\_\_\_\_  
Age if 18 or under: \_\_\_\_\_



### Family Puzzle Contest Winners!

Annie Munsch of St. Anthony Parish in Columbus is the winner of the February Family Puzzle Contest and "The Hope Prayer" by Father Liam Lawton. Congratulations. The winners of the youth contests (individual and school or CCD group) are Taylor Hlavac (7) of Sts. Cyril & Methodius Parish in Shiner and Katherine Gubbels (9) of St. Philip School in El Campo. Each will receive a gift from the Incarnate Word Gift Shop.

If you have not won the puzzle contest within the past six months, please send completed puzzle and contest form to *The Catholic Lighthouse*, P. O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903, by March 25 for a chance to win "What Catholics Really Believe" by Karl Keating. See book review on this page.

### Apologetics book to be prize for Puzzle Contest

*What Catholics Really Believe* by Karl Keating will be the March Family Puzzle Contest prize.

Have you heard these common misconceptions?

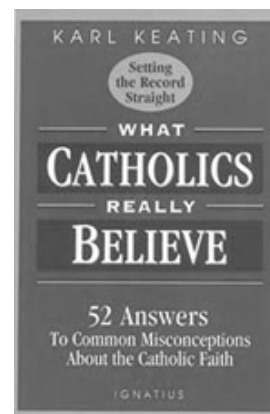
- Whatever the pope says is the gospel truth.
- At every Mass Jesus is sacrificed again.

This book addresses these and another fifty of the most common misconceptions about the Catholic Faith. Drawing upon Scripture and Catholic Tradition, Keating not only shows the logical errors in these positions, but also clearly spells out Catholic teaching

and explains the rationale behind frequently misunderstood doctrines and practices. An excellent guide to what Catholics really believe and why. Paperback. 155 pages. Price: \$13.00 on various Web sites.

Karl Keating is founder and president of Catholic Answers, a lay-run apologetics and evangelization organization. He is the author of the best seller *Catholicism and Fundamentalism*.

Please complete puzzle and send into *The Catholic Lighthouse* by March 25 to have a chance at winning this book from a random drawing.



### Umbert the Unborn







Ross and Clarabelle Snodgrass of Kerrville, Texas, were married 77 years. This recent photo of the Snodgrasses was taken on Valentines Day 2009.

## Winners of Longest Married Couple Project announced

San Bernardino, Ca.— Worldwide Marriage Encounter, the original faith-based marriage enrichment program in the United States, announces the winners of the Longest Married Couple Project to be Marshall and Winnie Kuykendall of Lordsburg, NM. They were married 82 years on Feb. 14, 2011.

“What a privilege and honor it is to recognize the Kuykendalls for their commitment to marriage,” said Scott and Karen Seaborn, the United States Ecclesial Team for WWME. “We look forward to personally recognizing them on Feb. 12 in their hometown of Lordsburg,” they added. The Seaborns serve with Father Tom Griffith, SVD, as the U.S. leadership for the marriage enrichment movement.

The Kuykendalls were married Feb. 14, 1929. Originally from Arizona, they eloped to get married five months after meeting each other. They have a daughter, who is married 56 years, and two grandchildren.

The New Mexico couple achieved the honor of being the longest married couple based on the over 300 nominations submitted to Worldwide Marriage Encounter beginning in October of 2010. It should be noted that a couple from North Carolina who are married longer (86 years) were also nominated, but they and their family chose to graciously pass the honor onto the Kuykendalls.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter undertook the project to highlight marriage in America

and to show young couples that marriage really can go the distance. “What an inspiration Mr. and Mrs. Kuykendall are to all of us. They made a commitment to each other 82 years ago and they have kept that commitment over these many years. They truly are a sign of hope to us all,” the Seaborns said.

The winners of Worldwide Marriage Encounter’s Longest Married Couple Contest for the state of Texas were Ross and Clarabelle Snodgrass of Kerrville, who were married 77 years. Sadly, Mr. Snodgrass, who was 107 years old, passed away shortly after he and his wife were announced as the Texas winners. Mrs. Snodgrass was presented their award Feb. 11.

Worldwide Marriage Encounter has been offering weekend experiences for over 42 years and is considered the original faith-based *marriage enrichment* program. WWME offers married couples the opportunity to spend time together away from the busyness of the world to focus on each other. It offers tools for building and maintaining a strong, Christian marriage in today’s world. To learn more go to [wwme.org](http://wwme.org), or call 1-800-795-LOVE (English) or 1-800-599-AMOR (Spanish).

## Christians in Libya face uncertainty as opposition strengthens support

BEIRUT (CNS) — Christians in Libya are afraid that a takeover of the country by Islamic fundamentalists, should leader Moammar Gadhafi fall, would threaten their safety, said a Franciscan priest who has served in the North African nation for seven years. “Under Gadhafi, we’ve been protected,” the priest told Catholic News Service from Rome Feb. 24, eight days after leaving the country on a pre-planned trip. He asked not to be identified so as not to jeopardize his return to Libya. The priest said he left Libya the day before a revolt against Gadhafi started in the eastern city of Benghazi. The uprising is the most recent and most violent in a tide of protests against autocratic leaders in the region. Gadhafi rose to power following a coup in 1969. One of 13 Franciscans serving the apostolic vicariates of Tripoli, the Libyan capital, and Benghazi, the priest said it was difficult being away from the parishioners he serves during a time of distress. “At this time I feel I should be with the people. I could be a support to them. Even though we wouldn’t have access to a lot of communication, we could be in touch with one another somehow,” he said.

## Prayer For Peace

**Mary, Queen of Peace, save us all, who have so much trust in you, from wars, hatred, and oppression. Make us all learn to live in peace, and educate ourselves for peace, do what is demanded by justice and respect the rights of every person, so that peace may be firmly established. Amen.**

Pope John Paul II (1920-2005)  
From Today’s Missal by OCP.org

## Sunday Readings from March 6 to April 10

March 6 — Ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time	Deuteronomy 11:18, 26-28, 32 Psalms 31:2-3, 3-4, 17, 25 Romans 3:21-25, 28 Matthew 7:21-27
March 9 — Ash Wednesday	Joel 2:12-18 Psalms 51:3-4, 5-6ab, 12-13, 14 & 17 2 Corinthians 5:20, 6:2 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18
March 13 — First Sunday of Lent	Genesis 2:7-9; 3:1-7 Psalms 51:3-4, 5-6, 12-13, 17 Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11
March 20 — Second Sunday of Lent	Genesis 12:1-4a Psalms 33:4-5, 18-19, 20, 22 2 Timothy 1:8b-10 Matthew 17:1-9
March 27 — Third Sunday of Lent	Exodus 17:3-7 Psalms 95:1-2, 6-7, 8-9 Romans 5:1-2, 5-8 John 4:5-42
April 3 — Fourth Sunday of Lent	1 Samuel 16:1b, 6-7, 10-13a Psalms 23:1-3a, 3b-4, 5, 6 Ephesians 5:8-14 John 9:1-41
April 10 — Fifth Sunday of Lent	Ezekiel 37:12-14 Psalms 130:1-2, 3-4, 5-6, 7-8 Romans 8:8-11 John 11:1-45

## — Holy Week Begins — April 17 with Palm Sunday

All daily and Sunday readings, as well as a daily reflection video, are available in text or audio at:

[www.usccb.org/nab/](http://www.usccb.org/nab/)

Brought to you by the Catholic Communications Campaign — please be generous.



Scene from movie ‘Of Gods and Men’  
(CNS photo/Sony Pictures Classics)

## Of Gods and Men

By John Mulderig  
Catholic News Service

NEW YORK (CNS) — A brilliant dramatization of real events, “Of Gods and Men” (Sony Pictures Classics) is a restrained religious masterpiece and a memorable viewing experience from which every adult — as well as many mature teens — can expect to profit.

The film recounts the fate of a small community of French Trappists living in Algeria during that nation’s civil war in the 1990s.

Targeted by violent Muslim extremists — the Algerian

conflict pitted militant Islamists against a secularly oriented military government — the monks must decide whether to continue their medical and social work for the vulnerable local population or abandon them by fleeing to safety.

The film, in French with subtitles, contains brief gory violence, some unsettling images and a single instance each of rough and crass language. The Catholic News Service classification is A-III — adults. The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Editor’s note: Please see news brief on Christians in Libya on this page. It seems ironic that this movie seems to tell the story of what is happening right now to the Franciscans in Libya.

More reviews are available online at [www.usccb.org/movies](http://www.usccb.org/movies).

## Did God command the killing of innocent people?

Continued from p. 7

that God is “something like” what we mean when we apply those words to human beings.

Similarly, when someone deliberately hurts us badly, our instinct is to punish them, hurt them in return. When they’re nice, we try to be nice in return. We tend to assume, wrongly of course, that God reacts in the same way.

When the Hebrew people win or lose a battle, it is because God is either for them or against them at the moment. God is either punishing or rewarding them, depending on his feelings that day. In other words, their ways of thinking are projected onto God.

One essential element of God’s holiness throughout the Scriptures is his righteousness, his justice. The Hebrew word (“sedek”) has a legal background; God is righteous because he desires and helps people to achieve the rights to which they are entitled.

God expresses a fierce concern for those who have nothing to depend on except his righteousness. God’s “anger” is toward those who would deprive the poor

and the weak of what is rightly theirs. This is the source of what we have come to refer to as God’s option for the poor.

We have here at least hints about the apparent divinely inspired viciousness of the Jewish treatment of their enemies. God, they believed, considered as his own enemies any who would destroy or violate the existence of the insignificant people he had mysteriously chosen as peculiarly his own.

Originally, the ban was considered a Hebrew offering to God. Later on, details changed and eventually the practice lost nearly all religious connotation. As the Jewish concept of God matured, it gradually disappeared.

After King Saul’s slaughter of the Amalekites (1 Samuel 15) about 1,000 years before Christ, the practice does not reappear in the historical books of the Old Testament.

Tragically, the mass murder of innocent populations by victorious religious and other military forces has continued through the centuries, up to our own day.





## Join the IWBS Sisters for Lenten Vespers

Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Amor Meus Spirituality Center invites all to attend Lenten Vespers at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water Street, Victoria, from 5 to 6 p.m. on the Sundays during Lent, March 13 to April 17. Evening Prayer (or Vespers) is an ancient prayer form that predates the Church. It is a gift from our Jewish brothers and sisters. Evening Prayer finds its base in the prayers of the Psalms. This prayer calls us to give praise and thanksgiving to our loving God. It can prepare us for the great feast of Easter.



**Prayer for Lent**  
**O God, bless us during this season of spiritual renewal. Fill our minds and hearts with love, that we may be a sign of Jesus to all those living in our midst.**

From Today's Missal by OCP.org

## THE POPE SPEAKS

Pope  
Benedict XVI



CNS photo from Reuters

## Pope says Lent is time to renounce selfishness

By Cindy Wooden  
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Lent is a time for self-examination and to let go of all traces of selfishness, which is the root of violence, Pope Benedict XVI said.

“The greed of possession leads to violence, exploitation and death,” which is why during Lent the Church encourages almsgiving, “which is the capacity to share,” the pope said in his annual message for Lent.

The theme of the pope's message was taken from the Letter to the Colossians: “You were buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him.”

Pope Benedict said Lent is a special time for people either to prepare for baptism or to strengthen the commitment to following Christ originally made at baptism.

“The fact that in most cases baptism is received in infancy highlights how it is a gift of God: No one earns eternal life through their own efforts,” the pope said.

In his message, the pope took the year's

Lenten Sunday Gospels and used them to draw lessons he said would be helpful in making the Lenten journey toward Christian conversion.

The Gospel account of Jesus' victory over temptation in the desert “is an invitation to become aware of our own fragility in order to accept the grace that frees from sin and infuses new strength,” he said.

The story of Jesus meeting the woman at the well is a reminder that all people, like the woman, desire the “water” of eternal life, he said. Only the water offered by Jesus “can irrigate the deserts of our restless and unsatisfied soul until it ‘finds rest in God,’” as St. Augustine said.

The Gospel account of Jesus healing the

man born blind “is a sign that Christ wants not only to give us sight, but also to open our interior vision so that our faith may become ever deeper and we may recognize him as our only savior,” the pope said.

The story of the raising of Lazarus, read on the fifth Sunday of Lent, reminds Christians that their destiny is eternal life with God, who “created men and women for resurrection and life,” he said.

The Lenten process of conversion, he said, is designed “to free our hearts every day from the burden of material things, from a self-centered relationship with the ‘world’ that impoverishes us and prevents us from being available and open to God and our neighbor,” Pope Benedict wrote.

Through fasting, almsgiving and prayer, he said, “Lent teaches us how to live the love of Christ in an ever more radical way.”

Fasting helps people overcome selfishness and self-centeredness; almsgiving is a reminder of the sharing that should mark each day of a Christian's life; and time dedicated to prayer is a reminder that time belongs to God and his desire is for people to spend eternity with him.

The text of the pope's message for Lent 2011, may be found under Messages, Lent at [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/index.htm](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/index.htm)

*You are so generous, Heavenly Father. Deliver Your Holy Spirit upon us so that we grow to our full capacity in our faith of our Lord and Savior, Christ Jesus. Amen.*

*Guardians of His Faith  
Inspirational Prayers to Encourage Catechists  
By Timothy J. McMullen*

## The 2011 Lenten Season

From the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Web site at <http://www.usccb.org/lent/>

Our observance of Lent begins this year on March 9, Ash Wednesday, a day of fast and abstinence for Catholics. At Mass on Ash Wednesday, the imposition of ashes replicates an ancient penitential practice and symbolizes our dependence upon God's mercy and forgiveness.

During Lent, the baptized are called to renew their baptismal commitment as others prepare to be baptized through the Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults, a period of learning and discernment for individuals who have declared their desire to become Catholics.

The three traditional pillars of Lenten observance are prayer, fasting and almsgiving. The Church asks us to surrender ourselves to prayer and to the reading of Scripture, to fasting and to giving alms. The fasting that all do together on Fridays is but a sign of the daily Lenten discipline

of individuals and households: fasting for certain periods of time, fasting from certain foods, but also fasting from other things and activities. Likewise, the giving of alms is some effort to share this world equally — not only through the distribution of money, but through the sharing of our time and talents.

The key to fruitful observance of these practices is to recognize their link to baptismal renewal. We are called not just to abstain from sin during Lent but to true conversion of our hearts and minds as followers of Christ. We recall those waters in which we were baptized into Christ's death, died to sin and evil, and began new life in Christ.

On this Web site, you will find a variety of suggestions and resources to support your Lenten practice, enhance your prayer, and embrace your baptismal commitment. The calendar on the site provides daily suggestions for action, reading, reflection and prayer.

To view the following, go to <http://www.usccb.org/lent/>



### What We Believe

In this section, we invite you to discover the beauty of the Catholic faith that is articulated in our Catechism and the writings of our Holy Father, Pope Benedict XVI.



### What We Celebrate

Catholics celebrate the Christian mystery through our liturgy and the seven sacraments of the Church. Learn more about the sacraments, especially the sacraments of Baptism and Reconciliation (Confession) during Lent.



### How We Live

Christian living means following the teaching and example of Christ, the Ten Commandments, the precepts of the Catholic Church and its principles of moral life. In this section, learn more about Christian morality and the special emphasis on fasting and charity during Lent.



### How We Pray

Through prayer, we raise our hearts and minds to God in thanksgiving and praise. Learn about the types of Christian prayer and the special prayers and devotions of Lent.

Graphics by CNS Graphics/Emily Thompson

## Common Practice of Penance for Lent

### Dear Friends in Christ:

The season of Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, March 9. All Christ's faithful are obliged by Divine Law, each in his or her own way, to do penance.

“Be converted and do penance for all your iniquities, and iniquity shall not be your ruin” Ezech. 18:30.

However, so that all may be joined together in a certain common practice of penance, days and seasons of penance are officially prescribed by the Church. On these days, Catholic people are, in a special way, to devote themselves to prayer, to engage in works of piety and charity and to practice self-denial, especially by observing the fast and abstinence regulations prescribed by the Church, namely:

1. Fasting and abstinence from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.
2. Abstinence from meat on all Fridays of Lent. The law of abstinence from meat is required of all those fourteen years of age and older.
3. The law of the fast means that only one full meal may be taken during the day; two light meals are permitted in addition. The consumption of solid food between meals is prohibited, but liquids may be taken at any time.
4. The law of fast binds those between the ages of 18 and 59.

Those who, by reason of their young age, are not bound by the laws of fast and abstinence, should be taught the true meaning of penance.

Apart from the special Lenten activities of individuals and parishes, Lent affords a special opportunity for families. Penitential practices and devotions should be conducted on a family basis. Families are encouraged to remove the distractions to works of piety and reintroduce family prayer, Scripture services, and other appropriate devotions.

May this holy season of Lent be a time of conversion and renewal for all.

Sincerely yours in Christ,  
Rev. Msgr. Thomas C. McLaughlin, V.G.  
Chancellor, Diocese of Victoria

### Como reportar un abuso.

Si usted o alguien que usted conoce ha sido abusado sexualmente por un clérigo o cualquier miembro del personal de la iglesia puede registrar su queja.

- Llame a la cancillería al (361)573-0828 y pida hablar con el Obispo o su canciller; o puede llamar a:
  - Rev. Gary Janak al (979)543-3770 o a la Hna. Emilie Eilers al (361)575-7111, que son los coordinadores del Pastoral Care and Outreach;
  - También puede comunicarse por escrito enviando su carta a:  
Most Rev. David Fellhauer  
Diocese of Victoria  
P.O. Box 4070  
Victoria, TX 77903  
Por favor, escriba en el sobre:  
“Personal and Confidential”

También podemos ayudarle a comunicar su queja a cualquier otra diócesis donde haya ocurrido el abuso si ahora usted se encuentra viviendo en la nuestra.

Si no se encuentra seguro de proceder con la queja o necesita más información, por favor comuníquese con el Rev. Gary Janak al (979)543-3770.





## Straining for Sabbath amidst the Demands of Phones and Computers

By Father Ron Rolheiser, OMI

A comedian recently quipped that today's information technologies have effectively rendered a number of things obsolete, most notably phone-books and human courtesy. That's also true for human rest.



Today's information technologies (the Internet, email, software programs like Facebook, mobile phones, i-phones, pocket computers, and the like) have made us the most informed, efficient, and communicative people ever. We now have the capability, all day, every day, of accessing world events, world news, whole libraries of information, and detailed accounts of what our families and friends are doing at any moment. That's the positive side of the equation.

Less wonderful is what this is doing to our lives, how it is changing our expectations, and robbing us of the simple capacity to stop, shut off the machines and rest. As we get wrapped up more and more in mobile phones, texting, e-mail, Facebook, and the Internet in general, we are beginning to live with the expectation that we must be attentive all the time to everything that's happening in the world and within the lives of our families and friends. The spoken and unspoken expectation is that we be available always - and so too others. We used to send each other notes and letters and expect a reply within days, weeks, or months. Now the expectation for a reply is minutes or hours, and we feel impatient with others when this expectation is not met and guilty inside of ourselves when we can't meet it.

And so we are, daily, becoming more enslaved to and more compulsive in our use of mobile phones and the Internet. For many of us it is now existentially impossible to take off a day, let alone several weeks, and be on a genuine holiday or vacation. Rather, the pressure is on us to constantly check for texts, e-mails, phone messages, and the like; and the expectation from our families, friends and colleagues is precisely that we are checking these regularly. The sin-du-jour is to be, at any time, unavailable, unreachable or non-communicative.

But the rhythm of time as God designed it is meant to give us, regularly, weekly, some time off the wheel, some "Sabbath-time" when ordinary life, ordinary pressures, ordinary work, and ordinary expectations are bracketed and we give ourselves permission to stop, to shut things down and to rest. Today, nowhere is this more appropriate and urgent than

in regards to our use of phones, notebooks and computers. They, more than anything else, constitute regular time, servile work, and the occupations and preoccupations from which the commandment to keep holy the Sabbath asks us to refrain.

I know a woman who works for her church, as does her husband. Since they are both in ministry, they need to work on Sunday mornings and often into the afternoon as well. So they begin celebrating the Sabbath late afternoon on Sunday. Here is how she describes what they do: We start our celebration of the Sabbath at 4:00 p.m. (1600 hours) on Sunday and we begin it symbolically by unplugging our computers, turning off our mobile phones, disconnecting our house phone, and turning off every information gadget that we own. For the next 29 hours we don't receive any calls and we don't make any. We are on a cyber-fast, non-contactable, off the wheel, unavailable. At 9:00 p.m. (2100 hours) on Monday night we end our Sabbath the way we began it, symbolically: We break our cyber-fast and fire up again our phones and our computers and begin answering our messages. We get back on the wheel for another week. Sometimes making ourselves unavailable like this irritates our families and friends, but if we are to celebrate Sabbath, given our pressured lives, this pulling away is the most important single thing that we have to do. It's either that - or working seven days a week!

When I was young, both our churches and our culture still took the concept of Sabbath (for Christians, especially the idea of not working on Sunday) more seriously. A popular question was always: What are you allowed to do on a Sunday and what are you not allowed to do? Mostly this focused on different kinds of physical labor: May you work in your garden on a Sunday? May you harvest your apple tree on a Sunday? Today, I worry less about gardening or picking apples on a Sunday. The more important issue is: Can we step off the treadmill of phones and computers on Sundays and be genuinely available to celebrate Sabbath?

Sabbath, as Wayne Muller tells us, is time off the wheel, time when we take our hand from the plough and let God and the earth take care of things, while we drink, if only for a few moments, from the fountain of rest and delight. Today that plough looks a lot like a mobile phone or a computer.

Centuries ago, the mystic poet, Rumi, wrote: I have lived too long where I can be reached!" Haven't we all!

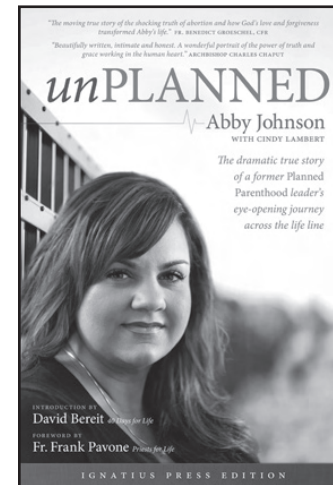
Web site: [www.ronrolheiser.com](http://www.ronrolheiser.com)

## Cardinal Wuerl's new book seeks to deepen Catholics' love for the Mass

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Washington Cardinal Donald W. Wuerl and author Mike Aquilina have teamed together to write a new book on the Mass, and they hope that their labor of love will enkindle a deeper love and devotion for the Mass among Catholics, and inspire them to share that love with others. Titled "The Mass: The Glory, the Mystery, the Tradition," the book was published by Doubleday. It was launched at a Feb. 1 book signing that Cardinal Wuerl held at the bookstore of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception in Washington. The signing, which drew more than 100 people, "was for me a very joyful experience," said Cardinal Wuerl in an interview the next day with the Catholic Standard, the archdiocesan newspaper. "I did not anticipate there would be that many people, a

whole range of Catholics from a university professor to a mother and her children, from a college student to a manual laborer," he said. "The one thing they all shared in common was their desire to learn more about the Mass." Cardinal Wuerl said he senses a hunger among people to understand what is taking place in the Mass, and to experience the beauty of the Mass in a more profound way. Helping Catholics have a deeper appreciation for the Mass is the "starting point of the book," he said, noting that the introduction begins, "The Mass is what Catholics do. It's the heart of Catholic life, for individuals and for the community." In the interview, the cardinal said, "The primary purpose for the book is to re-propose, to reintroduce people to the beauty and mystery of the Mass."

Bookcover of "Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of the Planned Parenthood Leader Who Crossed the Life Line to Fight for Women in Crisis," written by Abby Johnson with Cindy Lambert. (CNS)



## Former Planned Parenthood director, now pro-life, to become Catholic

SAN FRANCISCO (CNS) — A woman who walked away from her job as a Planned Parenthood clinic director after helping with an ultrasound-guided abortion is preparing to enter the Catholic Church. Abby Johnson, 30, who has been speaking at pro-life events around the country, will become a Catholic, along with her husband, Doug, in her native Texas within the next few months. The couple has a 4-year-old daughter. "When we went to the Catholic Church for the first time, we knew that was where we were supposed to be and we have been there ever since," said Johnson, who said she particularly loves the Church's reverence for Mary as the mother of God. "The more we started learning about the beliefs of the Church and the Eucharist and ev-

everything, it seemed like this was what had been missing our whole lives." After eight years as a Planned Parenthood volunteer and employee, Johnson walked away from her job as director of a Planned Parenthood clinic in Bryan/College Station, Texas, Oct. 6, 2009, during a prayer vigil by 40 Days for Life. Johnson, who had one abortion at age 20 and another at 23, first began working as a clinic escort while a student at Texas A&M University. Assisting with an ultrasound during an abortion in September 2009 turned her into a pro-life advocate. She describes the experience in her book "Unplanned: The Dramatic True Story of the Planned Parenthood Leader Who Crossed the Life Line to Fight for Women in Crisis," written with Cindy Lambert (Ignatius Press, 2011).

## Celebrations planned to mark progress in Father Baker's sainthood cause

LACKAWANNA, N.Y. (CNS) — As Msgr. Nelson H. Baker continues on the road to canonization, the Diocese of Buffalo has planned two special celebrations to honor the priest who devoted his life to helping those in need in the name of Our Lady of Victory. A March 18 vespers service for parishioners of Our Lady of Victory National Shrine and Basilica in Lackawanna has been scheduled, along with a March 19 Mass of thanksgiving for invited guests and employees of the Our Lady of Victory Institutions founded by the priest commonly known as Father Baker. March 19 marks the 135th anniversary of Father Baker's ordination as a priest, as well as the feast day of St. Joseph, patron saint of the Diocese of Buffalo. Father Baker, a Civil War-era soldier and grain dealer who became a Buffalo diocesan priest in 1876, served as pastor of Our Lady of Victory



Msgr. Nelson H. Baker

for more than 50 years. He operated soup kitchens and a hospital, as well as homes for unwed mothers, homeless and troubled boys and abandoned infants. "I ask all in the Diocese of Buffalo, and those whose lives were touched by Father Baker in some way, to join me in praying that, if it be God's will, Venerable Nelson Baker be canonized," said Buffalo Bishop Edward U. Kmiec at a Jan. 25 news conference at the basilica. Bishop Kmiec noted that a Vatican decree issued Jan. 14 confirmed Father Baker's heroic virtue and added the title Venerable to his name. The development completes the first step in a three-step process toward canonization. "Pope Benedict has recognized the exemplary life led by Father Baker, a simple diocesan priest whose devotion to Our Lady of Victory and service to the least among us was extraordinary," he added.

## Pauline Books & Media offers Mobile App on Contemplative Prayer

BOSTON — Pauline Books & Media and the Daughters of St. Paul are pleased to announce the release of their newest Catholic app: Beginning Contemplative Prayer. The app, which is available for download through iTunes and soon-to-be available to Android users, is based on best-selling author Sister Kathryn J. Hermes' new book of the same title. Father Timothy Gallagher, OVM, said of the book: "[Hermes'] tone is warm and encouraging; her content is solidly rooted in the Catholic spiritual tradition. I warmly recommend [it.]"

The Beginning Contemplative Prayer app features:

- Step-by-step preparation for deeper prayer with the Lord
- 8 twenty-five minute audio prayer experiences
- A five-week personal plan for growth

in contemplative prayer, which includes a different Morning Contemplation, Midday Pause, and Evening Prayer for each week

- Journal and photo gallery (settings include personalized backgrounds, text color, and text size)

- Prayer starters to guide you to a deeper relationship with God.

Sister Kathryn Hermes says "Those who have used this guide in retreats and conferences have unearthed a greater sense of God's presence and love for them." This latest addition to Pauline Books & Media's growing collection of Catholic apps continues to demonstrate the publishing house's passion for the mission of evangelization through all modern means available. Beginning Contemplative Prayer is available for download in the App Store on iTunes.





## Dr. Nathanson, abortion proponent turned pro-life advocate, dies at 84

By Nancy Frazier O'Brien  
Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — Dr. Bernard N. Nathanson, once a leading figure in the movement to legalize abortion and to keep it legal, spent the last decades of his life raising awareness about the horrors of abortion and repenting for the tens of thousands of abortions for which he felt responsible.

Nathanson, who died of cancer Feb. 21 in New York, also described himself for many years as a Jewish atheist but was baptized a Catholic in 1996 by Cardinal John J. O'Connor, then the archbishop of New York.

Nathanson, who was 84, was one of the founders of the organization now known as NARAL Pro-Choice America (originally the National Association for the Repeal of Abortion Laws) and director of New York's Center for Reproductive and Sexual Health, which he described as the largest abortion facility in the Western world.

But he first began expressing doubts about his involvement in abortions in a 1974 article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in which he said he was "deeply troubled by my own increasing certainty that I had in fact presided over 60,000 deaths."

Nathanson stopped performing abortions in the late 1970s and later narrated "The Silent Scream," a 28-minute film depicting the abortion of a 12-week-old fetus. He also wrote and lectured widely about the evils of abortion.

"We see the child's mouth open in a silent scream," he said as the ultrasound image showed the child attempting to move away from the surgical instruments. "This is the silent scream of a child threatened imminently with extinction."

Former Sen. Gordon Humphrey told *Time* magazine in 1984 that the film represented "a high-technology 'Uncle Tom's Cabin,' arousing public opinion just as Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 anti-slavery novel ignited the abolitionist movement."

Father Frank Pavone, who said he

visited with Nathanson in the week before his death, described the doctor's life as a remarkable story of God's mercy and power.



Dr. Bernard N. Nathanson, undated photo from Wikipedia

"I will never forget the workshop at which I introduced him at the 1994 Human Life International conference in Irvine, Calif.," said the national director of Priests for Life. "He was supposed to talk about chemical abortion, but at the last minute decided instead to speak of his spiritual journey.

"At the end of his talk, he said that he was standing on the brink of conversion to the Catholic Church. The room exploded. People were leaping into the air," Father Pavone continued. "He said that he hoped God could

forgive him and I said, 'Dr. Nathanson, he already has.' And I reminded him of that exchange just last week."

Jeanne Head, who represents the National Right to Life Committee at the United Nations in New York, said Nathanson "was probably one of the individuals most responsible for *Roe v. Wade* and, once he realized his error, he dedicated the rest of his life to reversing it."

In his 1996 autobiography, "The Hand of God," Nathanson wrote: "Abortion is now a monster so unimaginably gargantuan that even to think of stuffing it back into its cage ... is ludicrous beyond words. Yet that is our charge -- a herculean endeavor."

In his autobiography, Nathanson acknowledged performing an illegal abortion of his own child when a girlfriend got pregnant in the 1960s.

In all, Nathanson said he performed about 5,000 abortions, presided over 60,000 of them as director of the New York clinic and instructed fellow doctors in performing 15,000 more.

More than a decade after he became pro-life, Nathanson was baptized in a private ceremony at St. Patrick's Cathedral by Cardinal O'Connor. Joan Andrews Bell, who spent more than a year in jail because of abortion clinic protests, was his godmother.

## US bishops criticize Obama administration's decision on marriage law

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The U.S. bishops' Office of General Counsel said the Obama administration's decision to no longer support the Defense of Marriage Act in legal challenges ahead "represents an abdication" of its "constitutional obligation to ensure that laws of the United States are faithfully executed." The office said in a statement issued Feb. 23 after President Barack Obama instructed the Justice Department to stop defending the federal law passed by Congress and signed into law in 1996 by President Bill Clinton: "Marriage has been understood for millennia and across cultures as the union of one man and one woman." The Defense of Marriage Act says the federal government defines marriage as a union between one man and one woman and that no state must recognize a same-sex marriage from another state. "The principal basis for today's decision is that the president considers the law a form of impermissible sexual orientation discrimination," the Office of General Counsel said. In a Feb. 23 statement, Attorney General Eric Holder said that although the administration has defended the 1996 law in some

federal courts, it will not continue to do so in cases pending in the 2nd U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals. Unlike in the previous cases, said Holder, the 2nd Circuit "has no established or binding standard for how laws concerning sexual orientation should be treated." In response to the announcement, the National Organization for Marriage, which opposes same-sex marriage, called on Congress to "get lawyers in the courtroom who actually want to defend the law, and not please their powerful political special interests."

## California couple found joy in sailing, handing out Bibles, says priest

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The pastor of Jean and Scott Adam, a California couple killed along with two other Americans by their Somali captors on the high seas off the coast of East Africa, said they died sharing the Bible. "They were extraordinary people who wanted to make a difference in the world," said Msgr. Lloyd Torgerson, pastor of St. Monica Church in Santa Monica. He told the *Los Angeles Times* and *Catholic News Service* that the Adams, who were active members of the

See *California couple found joy*, p. 17



**25,000 CHRISTIAN INDIANS PROTEST REPORT ON CHURCH ATTACKS**—Archbishop Bernard Moras of Bangalore, India, third from right, leads a prayer during a massive protest involving more than 25,000 Christians at the St. Mary's Cathedral compound in Bangalore Feb. 21 to protest what they called a biased report on the 2008 church attacks in Karnataka state. The president of Catholic Bishops Conference of India, Cardinal Oswald Gracias of Mumbai, added his voice to the rising tide of critics of a controversial report that cleared Hindu fundamentalists, police and local government leaders of a series of attacks on Christian targets in September 2008. Churches, Christian groups and various church leaders have led public protests calling upon the Indian government to conduct its own inquiry into the attacks since the commission's report was given to the Indian government Jan. 28. (CNS photo/ Anto Akkara)

## The Right to Life used to be self-evident

*Continued from p. 1*

and the pursuit of happiness," renounced its inheritance and became the very tyrant that it swore it would never become ... a tyrant that would trample upon the most fundamental God-given right, the Right to Life. And not only that, it would direct its tyranny at the most vulnerable of its citizens, an unborn child.

This wicked and errant decision of our United States Supreme Court declared war on Life itself. The victims? Unborn babies ... incapable of speaking for themselves ... powerless to defend their own lives ... unable to escape the cruelty that would be leashed upon them... And the battleground? The womb of the mother, which was created by God to be the safest, most secure place for a child to be nourished and protected from dangerous elements until the day of his birth.

We are Americans who live in one of the wealthiest nations in the world, and yet we impoverish the least among us, the unborn, of their right to live.

We are Americans who boast of our medical advancements, and yet we regress to a primitive state when we use the knowledge and skills that were intended to be life-giving instead to destroy human life at its most vulnerable stage.

We are Americans who are concerned about "homeland security" so that terrorists may never again invade our country, and yet our common "homeland," the place that we all spent the first nine-months of our lives ... in the womb ... has become one of the most insecure places in this land, and through the unjust laws which have legalized abortion in this country, our nation has allowed the security of the mother's womb to be violated and terrorized.

All this under the supposed banner and battle-cry of "Freedom and Liberty" ... but for whom?

How far have we strayed from where we began? How will we ever be able to recover a culture of life in this nation?

You see, our Founding Fathers of this great nation had it right when they stated the "unalienable Rights" in their proper order: Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness.

The Right to Life necessarily comes first because it is the most basic and fundamental of all the rights. The very gift of Life...of existence...comes from the goodness of God our Creator who breathes life into the human person at the very moment of his conception. The father's sperm and the mother's egg united is the moment that God breathes forth life and

a new human being comes into existence. Call it a zygote...call it a fertilized egg... call it a fetus or an embryo...but never deny this is a living human being!

The Right to Liberty... of freedom to choose what is good comes secondary. Liberty does not exist, unless there is life. Dead people cannot choose. And we know that the Right to Liberty carries with it a heavy responsibility to choose the good. True liberty...true freedom only comes about when the good is being sought. When the Right to Liberty is misused to choose sin and evil, a person who squanders the gift of liberty becomes enslaved by his sin and his freedom to choose what is good becomes inhibited. This is why it is a falsehood to say that in order for our nation to respect the "Liberty" of women, a right to choose abortion must exist. It is not the correct exercise of a woman's Liberty when a mother chooses to kill her unborn baby. We are not guaranteeing her freedom when our law permits a woman to become shackled by the guilt of abortion. True exercise of Liberty cannot be against Life.

Finally, the Right to the Pursuit of Happiness ranks last, because a person must enjoy the Right to Life and be alive in order for him to exercise his Right to Liberty, which is his freedom to choose what is good...and in his choice of what is good in this world, he truly pursues what will make him happy. This final Right to the Pursuit of Happiness depends on the previous two Rights of Life and Liberty, and this pursuit of happiness cannot offend our own or another's Right to life and Liberty. Why?

Because we, people of faith, know that ultimately our pursuit of happiness hinges on how we use our Life and our Liberty to seek God and to do his will. And what will truly make us happy will never include the murdering of another human life and will not infringe upon the legitimate liberty of another.

**Reporting Child Abuse • Hotline**  
**1-800-252-5400**

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





## California couple found joy in sailing, handing out Bibles, says priest

*Continued from p. 16*

parish, “died doing what they wanted to do.” When news of their capture reached the priest Feb. 18, the church offered all of its weekend Masses and a candlelit service in the Adams’ name. “We were praying for their safe return,” said Msgr. Torgerson told CNS in a telephone interview Feb. 23. After the four Americans were reported dead Feb. 22, they were remembered at three Masses at St. Monica Church. According to news reports, the couple had gone on many sailing adventures over the years and carried Bibles with them to distribute to people in the communities they visited, including poor villages and hospitals. “After they retired, they sold their house and bought a boat,” Msgr. Torgerson told CNS. “They decided to bring Bibles to the remote corners of the world.” On this trip they were accompanied on their yacht, Quest, by Phyllis Macay and Robert Riggle of Seattle. Word that the Quest had been kidnapped by Somali pirates came to light Feb. 19 and a Navy warship began following them. The scene turned deadly Feb. 22 when the Americans were killed in a storm of grenades, gunfire and hand-to-hand combat. When U.S. forces boarded the yacht, they found that all four hostages had been shot. A couple of them were still alive and were given medical attention, but they could not be saved, according to U.S. officials.

## Vatican condemns murder of Pakistani minister for minorities

VATICAN CITY (CNS)—The Vatican condemned the killing of a Catholic government minister in Pakistan who had spoken out against anti-blasphemy

laws. “The assassination of the Pakistani minister for minorities, Shahbaz Bhatti, is a new and terribly serious act of violence. It demonstrates that the pope is correct in insisting on the issue of violence against Christians and against religious freedom in general,” Jesuit Father Federico Lombardi, the Vatican spokesman, said March 2. Bhatti, the first Catholic to serve in that position, received several threats against his life after criticizing the country’s anti-blasphemy laws, which have been used to persecute Christians and other religious minorities. Bhatti was received by Pope Benedict XVI last September and spoke about his commitment to promoting peaceful coexistence between the religious communities of his country. “Along with prayers for the victim, with the condemnation of the unspeakable act of violence and with assurances of closeness to Pakistani Christians who are suffering from hatred, we urge that everyone will now realize the dramatic urgency of the need to defend religious freedom and Christians targeted by violence and persecution,” Father Lombardi said. Bhatti was attacked in his car in Islamabad March 2, when gunmen opened fire on his vehicle and proceeded to drag him out, according to press reports. Bhatti was immediately taken to the hospital, where doctors were unable to save him from massive gunshot wounds. A note found at the crime scene led authorities to believe Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, a radical Muslim group, was responsible for the murder, the Catholic agency AsiaNews reported. Since the Jan. 4 assassination of the governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, who defended a Christian woman accused of blasphemy, Bhatti had been one of the only public figures to speak out against the laws. Despite threats, Bhatti continued promoting religious and social harmony.

## US cardinal keeps watchful eye on situation unfolding in Middle East

PHILADELPHIA (CNS) — Cardinal John P. Foley is keeping a watchful eye on the revolution in Egypt and other nations in the Middle East, despite his recent retirement and resignation as grand master of the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher of Jerusalem. The organization helps to raise funds for the works of the Church in that region. “I can understand the current unrest – it’s an expression of desire for democracy, but I hope it doesn’t become a situation in which Christians are further discriminated against in any of these countries,” Cardinal Foley said. “The situation is so unstable there, and of course Christians are such a minority there.” In Egypt, about 10 percent of the population is Christian, primarily Coptic Orthodox, he explained. “We had just been asked by the Holy Father to help especially the Latin-rite Christians in Egypt and Lebanon in addition to Israel, Palestine and Jordan,” Cardinal Foley said. The latter three countries are part of the Latin Patriarchate of Jerusalem, which the Knights of the Holy Sepulcher support. “Egypt and Lebanon are separate Latin dioceses, but they are in need of assistance also and are considered part of the Holy Land,” he added. The support aids parishes and schools in those lands, and to help Christians maintain their institutions and presence in a heavily non-Christian environment, as well as some humanitarian assistance, the cardinal said. “We certainly want to maintain the continued presence of Christians in the Holy Land, the successors of the original followers of Christ, in the land where he was born, where he lived, where he died and where he rose from the dead,” Cardinal Foley said. “That’s very important, I think. And it’s been a privilege to have been associated with it.”

## Strong earthquake puts Diocese of Christchurch ‘out of action’

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand (CNS) — A devastating midday earthquake Feb. 22 caused at least 160 deaths, seriously damaged the Catholic Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament and put the Diocese of Christchurch “out of action.” The magnitude 6.3 jolt struck the city of 350,000 during the bustling noon hour, sending many buildings tumbling and people rushing into the streets. The earthquake was the second to hit Christchurch, located on the east coast of New Zealand’s South Island, since Sept. 4. A magnitude 7.1 temblor shook the region then. Rescue workers worked around the clock to dig out survivors trapped in the rubble and recover bodies of those who died. Authorities expected the death toll to rise. Prime Minister John Key declared a state of emergency Feb. 23, a day after saying the disaster that hit the country’s second-largest city resulted in “New Zealand’s darkest day.” In addition to the Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament, several of the city’s historic churches were damaged or destroyed. Among them was the iconic Anglican Christchurch Cathedral in the city center, which lost its 200-foot steeple. Christchurch Bishop Barry P. Jones told the NZ Catholic newspaper that diocesan headquarters was “out of action” and that he was relying on a cell phone for communications with diocesan staff. “So I’m not in a position to get information,” he said. In a statement to the diocese, Bishop Jones said he was “stunned and deeply saddened by the loss of so many lives, the serious injuries to so many and the destruction of property that has been visited upon us so violently and suddenly.”

*“Commit to the Lord whatever you do, and your plans will succeed.”*

Proverbs 16:3



# Thank you!



Marie Claude Calixte and the transitional shelter that CRS built for her. Photo by Benjamin Depp for CRS

The overwhelming generosity of Catholics in the United States has helped Catholic Relief Services move earthquake survivors from destruction and despair to transitional shelter and new hope for a better life.

Follow the progress of our work in Haiti at [crs.org/emergency/haiti/index.cfm](http://crs.org/emergency/haiti/index.cfm)



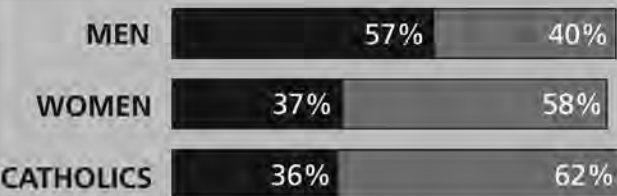
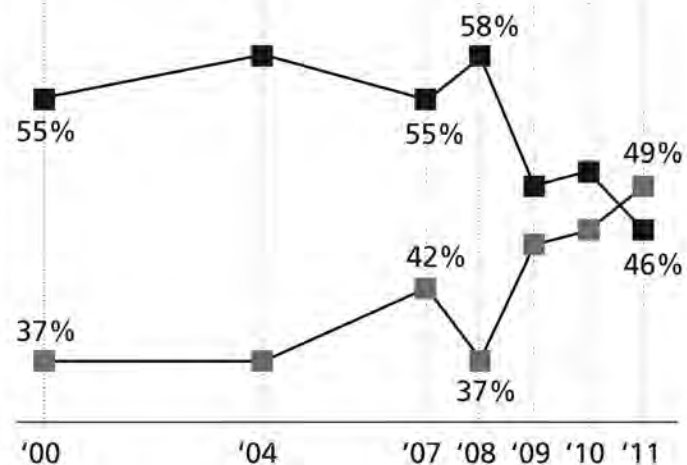


## Guns: Divided Views

*Q: What do you think is more important – to protect the right of Americans to own guns, or to control gun ownership?*

### PERCENT WHO RESPONDED

■ protect right to own ■ control ownership



Data for 2011 from survey taken after the Tucson shootings. Breakouts are from Sept. 2010 survey. Don't know and refused responses not included.  
Source: Pew Research Center ©2011 CNS

## Tucson shooting spree prompts renewed debate on gun-control issue in US

By Marylynn G. Hewitt Catholic News Service

DETROIT (CNS) — Avid outdoorsman and hunter Father Joe Classen, associate pastor at Holy Spirit Parish in Maryland Heights, Mo., has a permit to carry a concealed weapon.

"I rarely ever conceal and carry, but sometimes if I'm in a very bad area, I do take protection," he said. "I tell people all life is sacred, including mine."

A few states away, Father Theodore Parker said he knows he has the constitutional right to own a gun, but can't see any reason why he would. The pastor of two inner-city Detroit parishes said, "The real purpose of a gun in our culture is violence." And there's just too much of that, he contends.

One point on which both priests agree is that personal responsibility is mandatory for those who possess firearms.

The shooting rampage at U.S. Rep. Gabrielle Giffords' Jan. 8 community meeting in Tucson, Ariz., which left Giffords and 12 others wounded and six dead, has renewed debate on gun control.

While bishops across the nation have decried the violence, few have recently addressed the issue of gun control.

In a phone interview with Catholic News Service, Tucson Bishop Gerald F. Kicanas said, "Whenever there's a tragedy, we look at what can be done, what we can learn from it and that's where we're at in this time of

grieving and sadness." He said he and other Tucson community leaders are "taking the time to assess what we should do and the directions taken."

Father Parker and the 400 members of St. Cecilia's, one of his parishes, have targeted street violence by pitching in their own money, working with police and hosting three gun-buyback programs in recent years.

Most of the guns they bought back "for a very low price of \$20," came from the area, which he described as "poor, mostly African-American, not many businesses." The buybacks, he told CNS, are "letting people be freed from their worry and freed from the consequences of what could happen to them."

John Snyder, founder of the Washington-based St. Gabriel Possenti Society based in Arlington, Va., also uses the freedom theme when he talks about guns. But his intent is very different. Gun ownership, he said, "is a way for people to maintain their freedom. It's a way for people to protect themselves from a criminal."

He said he has spent 44 years in support of the right of firearms owners and 22 years trying to get the Vatican to name St. Gabriel Possenti as the patron saint of handgun owners.

In terms of guns and violence, studies have shown there's not much evidence that states with tough gun control laws have fewer gun crimes, said Bob

## Gun control: Church firmly, quietly opposes firearms for civilians

By Carol Glatz Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — The Catholic Church's position on gun control is not easy to find; there are dozens of speeches and talks and a few documents that call for much tighter regulation of the global arms trade, but what about private gun ownership?

The answer is resoundingly clear: Firearms in the hands of civilians should be strictly limited and eventually completely eliminated.

But you won't find that statement in a headline or a document subheading. It's almost hidden in a footnote in a document on crime by the U.S. bishops' conference and it's mentioned in passing in dozens of official Vatican texts on the global arms trade.

The most direct statement comes in the bishops' "Responsibility, Rehabilitation and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Crime and Criminal Justice" from November 2000.

"As bishops, we support measures that control the sale and use of firearms and make them safer -- especially efforts that prevent their unsupervised use by children or anyone other than the owner -- and we reiterate our call for sensible regulation of handguns."

That's followed by a footnote that states: "However, we believe that in the long run and with few exceptions -- i.e. police officers, military use -- handguns should be eliminated from our society."

That in turn reiterates a line in the bishops' 1990 pastoral statement on substance abuse, which called "for effective and courageous action to control handguns, leading to their eventual elimination from our society."

On the world stage, the Vatican has been pushing for decades for limitations not just on conven-

Homant, a professor of criminal justice at the University of Detroit Mercy in Detroit.

"It probably helps a little bit in terms of individuals buying guns in the heat of the moment, if there's an immediate crisis or a problem they are facing. But if guns are tight, they might settle for a knife" or any other weapon.

"Criminals aren't going to get their guns through legal means," said Father Classen. "Evil lies in one's mind and in one's heart ... so it's not a matter of demonizing one particular inanimate object."

Homant said the real issue is why someone buys a gun. "We can do a better job as a culture of exploring our own reasons for wanting guns," he said.

Father Classen's love of hunting, fishing and the outdoors has spawned many of his ministry outlets. "Hunting for God, Fishing for the Lord" is one of three of his published books, he hosts "Faith Adventures" on the Covenant Radio network and his Web site is [www.huntingforgod.com](http://www.huntingforgod.com).

tional weapons of warfare, such as tanks and missiles, but also for stricter limitations on the illegal and legal sale, trade and use of small firearms and weapons, said Tommaso Di Ruzza, the expert on disarmament and arms control at the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

Di Ruzza told Catholic News Service that the Vatican is one of just a handful of states that would like to see small arms and weapons included in the U.N. Arms

*... while many countries are open to limits on larger weapons systems, most nations aren't interested in regulating small arms even though they "cause more deaths than all other arms (conventional and non-conventional) together."*

Trade Treaty, which would better regulate the flow of conventional arms.

He said while many countries are open to limits on larger weapons systems, most nations aren't interested in regulating small arms even though they "cause more deaths than all other arms (conventional and non-conventional) together."

The Vatican's justice and peace council is working to update its 1994 document, "The International Arms Trade," to further emphasize the importance of enacting concrete controls on handguns and light weapons, he said.

The current document calls on every nation and state "to impose a strict control on the sale of handguns and small arms. Limiting the purchase of such arms would certainly not infringe on the rights of anyone."

The more weapons there are in circulation, the more likely terrorists and criminals will get their hands on them, the document said.

The Catholic Church recognizes that "states will need to be armed for reason of legitimate defense," as Pope Benedict XVI said in a message to a Vatican-sponsored disarmament conference in April 2008.

However, armed defense is something appropriate for nations, not for all individual citizens in a state where rule of law is effective, said Di Ruzza.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, individuals have a right and a duty to protect their own lives when in danger, and someone who "defends his life is not guilty of murder even if

he is forced to deal his aggressor a lethal blow."

How that "lethal blow" could be licitly wielded is unclear, but the catechism clarifies that repelling the aggressor must be done "with moderation" in order to be "lawful" in the eyes of the Church; using "more than necessary violence" would be unlawful, it says.

According to the catechism, the right to use firearms to "repel aggressors" or render them harmless is specifically sanctioned

for "those who legitimately hold authority" and have been given the duty of protecting the community.

Di Ruzza said that in "a democracy, where there is respect for institutions (of law), the citizen

relinquishes his right to revenge onto the state," which, through its law enforcement and courts system, aims to mete out a fair and just punishment.

"There is a sort of natural interest to defend the common interest and the common good, and in 1791 (when the United States passed the Second Amendment), my right to have a weapon served the common good because there wasn't an army; the democratic institutions were young and a little fragile, and I could have been useful in a time of war as a soldier," said Di Ruzza.

But once a nation has a functioning army, police force and court system, "do I still serve the common good with my gun or do I put it at even greater danger?" and promote a lawless kind of "street justice where if you steal my car, I shoot you," he asked.

The Vatican's justice and peace council's 1994 document said, "In a world marked by evil and sin, the right of legitimate defense by armed means exists," but, Di Ruzza said, it wasn't lauding the potential of weaponry as much as it was lamenting the existence of arms in an imperfect world.

Nations have a duty, the document said, to reduce if not eliminate the causes of violence.

And as Pope Benedict wrote in his message to the disarmament conference, no reduction or elimination of arms can happen without eliminating violence at its root.

Every person "is called to disarm his own heart and be a peacemaker everywhere," the pope said.

## Nonviolence speaker comes to Houston

Father John Dear to speak at Pax Christi Texas State Conference on April 16, 2011, at the Dominican Center for Spirituality at 6501 Almeda in Houston.

John Dear is an internationally known voice for peace and nonviolence. He is a Jesuit priest, peace activist, organizer, lecturer and retreat leader. He is the author/editor of 25 books, including *Questions of Jesus*, *Living Peace*, *Mohandas Gandhi: Essential Writings*, and his auto-

biography, *A Persistent Peace*. From 1998-2000, he was executive director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation, the largest US interfaith peace organization. In 2008, Archbishop Desmond Tutu nominated him for the Nobel Peace Prize.

Suggested donation of \$40 includes lunch; need-based scholarships available -- no one will be turned away. For registration and details, please go to [www.paxchristitexas.org](http://www.paxchristitexas.org)





## Special Collection Aid to Church in Europe (Ash Wed.) - March 9

### Operation Rice Bowl - Sundays of Lent and Easter Sunday Ongoing Events

**Gabriel Project**—a ministry providing help to pregnant women in a crisis pregnancy – an alternative to abortion – holds monthly meetings open to everyone interested. Meetings, including a light supper, are held in Victoria the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 101 W. Convent behind St. Mary's Catholic Church at 6:30 p.m. An Angel Workshop is held at the same location the 3rd Saturday of each month from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Please call Barbara at (361) 649-1612 or Linda at 655-3008 for more information. Meetings are held in Wharton the 4th Tuesday of each month at Holy Family Church in Wharton (2011 Briar Lane) at 6:30 p.m. For more information, please call (979) 532-3593 M-F, 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**Catholic Family Services**—For a listing of e-mail addresses and Web sites of Catholic organizations that focus on the family from marriage preparation to marriage enrichment, fatherhood, parenting, healing, bereavement, separated or divorced, and widowed, please go to the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at <http://www.nacflm.org/>

**St. Francis and St. Clare Fraternity/Secular Franciscans**—For more information, please go to their Web site at [www.lostrescompaneros-sfo.org](http://www.lostrescompaneros-sfo.org). For meeting dates, please call Mary Ann LeBlanc at (361) 575-1858.

**Marriage Encounter**—The Marriage Encounter Weekend is open to married couples, Catholic and non-Catholic. Worldwide Marriage Encounter is designed to make good marriages even better. For more information, see [www.wvme.org](http://www.wvme.org); or for upcoming weekends, please contact Milton and Diane Rejcek at (979) 245-0323 or at: [register@mevictoria.org](mailto:register@mevictoria.org).

**Retrouvaille** — The word Retrouvaille means 'rediscovery.' Retrouvaille is a program that offers the chance to rediscover yourself, your spouse and a loving relationship in your marriage. Tens of thousands headed for divorce have successfully saved their marriages by attending. Go to <http://www.retrouvaille.org> for more information, or to register for the Aug. 19 weekend Victoria Retrouvaille, please go to: <http://www.retrouvaille.org/dates.php> or contact Gerd and Linda Conner at [lbconner@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lbconner@sbcglobal.net), (979) 543-3493. Other contacts are at (800) 470-2230 and [www.helpourmarriage.org](http://www.helpourmarriage.org)

**The Beginning Experience**—The Beginning Experience is an international ministry that helps divorced, separated and widowed individuals resolve their grief surrounding the loss of a marriage partner. It is a ministry of the San Antonio Archdiocese Family Life Office. For more information, go to their Web site: [www.beginningexperience.org](http://www.beginningexperience.org); e-mail: [sanantonio@yaho.com](mailto:sanantonio@yaho.com); phone: (210) 734-2146.

**Natural Family Planning**—For information about the Symptothermal Method in the Victoria area, contact David and Annie Coffey at [victorianfpteachers@yahoo.com](mailto:victorianfpteachers@yahoo.com). Some great links: <http://learn-nfp.org/nfpmyths.html>; [www.onemoresoul.com](http://www.onemoresoul.com); and [www.priestsforlife.com](http://www.priestsforlife.com)

**Goliad**—Presidio La Bahia Museum and Visitor Center — a National Historic Landmark — is the only Spanish fort in the possession of the Catholic Church in North America. A tour program is available to groups. The Presidio is open daily from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. and is closed on major holidays. Admission is \$4 (ages 12-59); \$3.50 for 60 and older and military personnel and \$1 (ages 6-11), with children five and younger admitted free. Group rates are available with advance reservations. A re-enactment will be available for school groups with advance reservations. The fort is handicapped accessible. For more information call (361) 645-3752 or see the Web site at [www.presidiolabahia.org](http://www.presidiolabahia.org). Coming March 26-27 Goliad Massacre - Fort Defiance Living History Program. Schedule of events: Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. – recreation of occupation; Saturday, 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. – Candlelight Tours; Sunday – massacre re-enactment at 10:00 a.m. followed by a pilgrimage to the Fannin Memorial for a service.

**Engaged Encounter**—Register as soon as you have contacted your pastor due to limited space. *It is strongly recommended that you attend an encounter weekend four to six months prior to your wedding date.* For a registration form, contact your pastor, visit the Web site at [www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm](http://www.victoriadiocese.org/family/ee.htm), or write to: Engaged Encounter, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, Texas 77903. The weekend is held at the Spiritual Renewal Center. The dates for 2011 are: June 24-26, Sept. 8-11 and Nov. 11-13. For more info., call (361) 573-0828 ext. 2230. All registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form.

### Picnics, Activities, etc. March

**Blessing**—The Blessing Knights of Columbus Council #4307 will sponsor their annual fish fry, auction and raffle Sunday, March 6, with proceeds benefiting scholarships and charities. Fried catfish with all the trimmings will be served from 10:30 a.m. till 1:00 p.m. at St. Peter parish hall. Plates - \$8 p/p (includes dessert and drink). Raffle tickets are available from any #4307 Knights of Columbus member.

**El Campo**—Everyone is invited to the Annual Pilgrim Reunion that will be held March 6 at St. Philip Parish Hall, 304 W. Church St. Registration will begin at 9:30 a.m. with coffee, juice and doughnuts. Mass with Most Rev. David Fellhauer will be at 11:15 a.m. in the church. A covered-dish lunch will follow. For more information, please contact Betty Urbanovsky at (979) 543-2333 or at [burbanovsky@sbcglobal.net](mailto:burbanovsky@sbcglobal.net).

**Hungerford**—KJT Society #79 and KJZT Society #57 will be hosting their annual barbecue-chicken and sausage dinner March 6 at the community center. Serving begins at 10:30 a.m. with dine-in or plates-to-go available. There will be an auction and a free dance until 4:00 p.m. with music by The Texas Legacy Czech Band.

**Victoria**—Golden Crescent CASA presents "MY BIG FAT

GREEK WEDDING" Dinner Improvisation in an effort to raise funds and friends to support child advocacy in Calhoun, Colorado, DeWitt, Goliad, Gonzales, Jackson, Lavaca, Refugio, and Victoria counties. Tickets are \$35/person, and sponsorships are available starting at \$250. The event will be held at St. Mary's Activity Center in downtown Victoria on Thursday, March 10, from 7 – 10 p.m. Call the Golden Crescent CASA office at 361-573-3734 for more information.

**Victoria**—Our Lady of Sorrows Fish Fry will be held on Friday, March 11, from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.; take-out or dine-in at Trinity Hall, 208 W. River. Plates are \$7 p/p and include fried tilapia, coleslaw, hush puppies and corn on the cob. For more information, please call Rey Rosas at (361) 920-2912.

**New Taiton**—St. John's Altar Society Annual Chicken Dinner March 13 at the community center. Serving begins at 11:00 a.m. with fried-chicken, homemade dressing and all the trimmings (dine-in or plates-to-go available). There will also be an auction, cakewalk, country store and more.

**Victoria**—KJZT #101 will hold a Bake Sale at Holy Family Catholic Church after all Masses March 19 and 20. All proceeds will go to the Victoria Senior Citizens Center.

**St. Mary (near Hallettsville)**—St. Isidore Society kettle-fried chicken dinner March 20 from 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. at St. Mary's Church Hall (1648 FM 340). Four pieces, giblet rice, green beans and dessert. Plates to-go only at \$7 p/p.

**Yoakum**—St. Ann's Mission "Save the Bell Tower" kettle-fried steak dinner March 20 at St. Joseph's Family Center will be served from 11:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at \$7 p/p with dine-in or take-out available. There will also be a silent auction and country store. The event is sponsored by KJZT Society #37.

**Victoria**—Knights of Columbus Council #1329 chicken-barbecue fund-raiser March 20 at the KC Hall. The price is \$6 per chicken. Beans and Spanish rice available for \$1.50 per pint. Sale starts at 8:30 a.m. Proceeds benefit council's projects.

**Houston**—If you are interested in traveling with First Victoria to see Paula Deen at The Metropolitan Cooking and Entertaining Show at the Reliant Center in Houston on Sept. 17, please call Tracy at (361) 574-8431 or Doris at (361) 572-6566 before March 30.

### Upcoming Events

**Victoria**—Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament, Friday, April 8, at Colony Creek Country Club, benefiting the Youth and Vocation Activities of the Diocese of Victoria and sponsored by the Knights of Columbus Council #9088. For more information, please see page 2 or contact Monroe Rieger at 571-6535 or Benny Vitek at 576-5354.

**San Antonio**— "Fiesta" Luncheon and Style Show with Fashions by Julian Gold, benefiting various charities of St. Matthew Catholic Daughters of the Americas Court #2241, will be held Sunday, April 10, at Omni Hotel beginning with social hour at noon and luncheon at 1:00 p.m. To purchase tickets, at \$40 p/p, please contact Peggy at (210) 558-8460. Omni is located at IH -10 West at the Colonade.

**Edna**—Man to Man (M2M) is sponsoring Rez Fest, a benefit concert, April 21 with Mercy Me, Brandon Heath and Natalie Grant, sharing their music and story, on the Lovewell Live Tour at the Brackenridge Main Event Center in Edna. Purchase of tickets support the outreach of the Family Outdoor Expo and give one a chance to enjoy a great evening of music and inspiration. Tickets can be purchased at [www.itickets.com](http://www.itickets.com) ! You can print them right off and receive group discounts with 10 or more in your group. More information at [www.mantomanonline.org](http://www.mantomanonline.org).

**Victoria**—St. Mary's Altar Society will hold its Annual Games Party Tuesday, April 26, at 401 S. Liberty Street from 11:30 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Admission is \$7 p/p, which includes lunch, beverages and other refreshments. There will be a country store, raffle and many door prizes. For reservations, please call: Ann Carver (361) 575-2050 or Martha Hamel (361) 575-1932.

**Hostyn**—Holy Rosary Mayfest May1 beginning with a Polka Mass at 10:00 a.m. Dinner will begin at 11:00 a.m. with music, activities and games all day.

**Victoria**—Holy Family Parish Festival May 1 at the community center with a barbecue-beef and sausage dinner starting with plates-to-go at the curb for fast service from 10:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. at \$7 p/p or dine-in from 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. at \$7 p/p for adult and \$4 p/p children under 10. There will be a cake wheel, children's games, country store, plant booth and more. Entertainment will be Rusty Steins in the dome and DJ Chris Hessler in the annex from 11:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m. A live auction begins at 1:00 p.m.

### Masses • Retreats • Conferences

**Victoria**—Holy Family Mini-Retreat Saturday, March 5, from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Father Greg Korenek, pastor, will be the speaker. His theme for the retreat is Union with God. For more information, call the rectory at (361) 573-5304.

**Victoria**—Amor Meus Spirituality Center will hold a silent retreat, *Prayer: Our Lenten Journey to Surrender*, on Saturday, March 5, from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. at Incarnate Word Convent, (1101 N.E. Water Street).

**Victoria**—The Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Sisters are hosting "Come and See" visits for single Catholic women (high school graduates through 50 years of age) on March 5-6 and April 9-10, 2011, at Incarnate Word Convent in Victoria. If you are interested, please check out the Web site at [www.iwbsvictoria.org](http://www.iwbsvictoria.org) or call (361) 575-7111 or e-mail [iwbsvoc@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc@yahoo.com) or [iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com) for more details or to make a reservation.

**Victoria**—Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament Amor Meus Spirituality Center invites all to attend Lenten Vespers at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water Street, Victoria, from 5 to 6 p.m. on the Sundays during Lent, March 13 to April 17.

**Indiana**—Come & See Event Sisters of St. Benedict, Ferdinand, Indiana - March 18-20 - for single, Catholic women between the ages of 18 to 40. For more information or to register online, visit [www.thedome.org/vocations](http://www.thedome.org/vocations), call Sister Michelle Sinkhorn at 800-734-9999, or e-mail [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org).

**Bay City**—Healing Mass and prayer at Our Lady of Guadalupe Church, 1412 12th Street, March 27, at 3:00 p.m. with Father Phi Nguyen, chaplain of IWBS convent. For more information, please contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at [iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com)

**San Antonio**—6th Annual Catholic Men's Conference Friday evening, March 25 through Saturday, March 26, at St. Matthew Catholic Church's McDonald Center. Men are invited to be challenged, encouraged and inspired by dynamic speakers Jesse Romero, Deacon Harold Burke-Sivers, Father John Jesus Maloney and Greg Alexander and to celebrate Mass with Archbishop Gustavo Garcia-Siller. For further details, brochure and registration information, please contact The Pilgrim Center of Hope at (210) 521-3377, [dtmjfox@pilgrimcenterofhope.org](mailto:dtmjfox@pilgrimcenterofhope.org) or [www.pilgrimcenterofhope.org](http://www.pilgrimcenterofhope.org). Also join our NEW Facebook page!

**Port Lavaca**—Our Lady of the Gulf Church invites you to a charismatic conference and Mass with Father Jacinto Olguin on June 18.

**Victoria**—Healing Mass and Prayer at Our Lady of Lourdes Church, 105 N. William St., on the first Saturday of the month at 10:00 a.m. with Father Phi Nguyen, chaplain of IWBS Convent. For more information, please contact Sister Louise Marie Jones at [iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com](mailto:iwbsvoc2@yahoo.com).

**Bay City**—Weekly Men's Group, "That Man is You! ~ A Light to the Nations," meets at Holy Cross School cafeteria each Friday morning beginning with breakfast at 5:45 a.m. and ending by 7:10 a.m. All men are welcome. That Man is You! is transforming men, families and society as it presents the vision of man fully alive! Combining the teachings of the Church and wisdom of the saints with the best research from modern science in an interactive, multimedia format, That Man is You! puts this vision within the grasp of every man ([www.thatmanisyou.org](http://www.thatmanisyou.org)). Questions? Call Mike Allison at (979) 479-1370 or Allen Green at (979) 245-2598.

**Indiana**—Summer Camps will be offered by the Sisters of St. Benedict in Ferdinand, Indiana - Camp is for girls who will have completed 5-8th grade. 5-6th grade Camp is June 13-15 and 7-8th grader Camp is June 16-18. These camps take place outdoors, including campfires, games, crafts and sleeping in tents. Registration is open March 15th. Camp size limited. Register online at [www.thedome.org/vocations](http://www.thedome.org/vocations) or e-mail Sister Michelle at [vocation@thedome.org](mailto:vocation@thedome.org). A valid e-mail address is required.

**Victoria**—Missing something in your life? Do you need an uplifting experience? Why not try some PRAISE and WORSHIP. Come join Incarnate Word Prayer Group on Monday nights from 7:30-9:00 p.m. at Incarnate Word Auditorium. For more information call Paula at (361) 575-7120 or Sr. Louise Marie at (361) 575-7111.

**Tivoli**—Our Lady of Guadalupe Church invites you to a Healing Mass and Prayer Service every First Friday of the month at 7:00 p.m. Mark your calendars now for next month. Mass is followed by praise and worship/adoration, healing prayers, praying over, etc. Counseling available. Please come; bring your family and friends; and experience the healing touch of the Lord! For more information, please contact Rev. Gabriel P. Coelho at (361) 286-3349.

**ACTS Retreats**—For information on ACTS retreats, please go to ACTS Web site at [www.actsmiissions.org](http://www.actsmiissions.org).


## Pre-1930 Photographs Solicited for Museum Exhibit

At the Museum of the Coastal Bend, we tell the stories of the people who have played a role in the heritage of Victoria and the Coastal Bend region of Texas. You're invited to share your family's story by contributing to a special exhibit of historical photographs, all dating from before 1930.

Whether your family has always lived in the Coastal Bend or you're a newcomer to the region, we want your participation! Bring in your favorite photographs of your family from before 1930—whether they're formal portraits, pictures of the family business, or special occasions—we'll scan the photos, collect your information, and return the originals to you immediately.

Now's your chance to "Share Your Story!" Photo collection began in February and will continue throughout the year. Photographs will be exhibited at the museum and select locations at Victoria College during 2011 and 2012.

The Museum of the Coastal Bend is located on the campus of Victoria College, Victoria, at the corner of East Red River and Ben Jordan. Business hours are Tuesday – Saturday, 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. For information, e-mail [sue.pruddhomme@victoriacollege.edu](mailto:sue.pruddhomme@victoriacollege.edu) or call (361) 582-2436.



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## Betty takes final pilgrimage tour

By **Quala Matocha,**  
**El Campo Leader-News,** and  
**Cindy Brewer,**  
*The Catholic Lighthouse*

With worn feet and arthritis, Betty Urbanovsky led her final pilgrimage to the Holy Land last November. She has walked the streets where Jesus was born. She has led countless pilgrims to Bethlehem and other religious sites across the globe for the past 25 years. And because of the tourism she has brought to the Holy Land, Betty received the key to the city of Bethlehem during her trip last November.

"I had no clue," she said, "This has never been done before. A key to the city has never been given to a pilgrimage leader. I was never so surprised and so honored to have the key of Bethlehem presented to me by the mayor."

Also, the Kando Family, owners of Kando Store that specializes in religious items, presented Betty with a 30" olive wood carving of "Jesus, the Good Shepherd." Shibly Kando told Betty it was fitting to present her with the statue because "she was like a shepherd that brought many pilgrims to the Holy Land."

"Betty was recognized and honored for the many pilgrimages she has led to the Holy Land, and especially to Bethlehem," said Ceci Triska, who has been on three trips with her.

At one time, tour groups were not allowed into Bethlehem because of political unrest, but that didn't stop Betty.

"Nothing deters Betty because she says she is doing the Blessed Mother's work," Ceci said.

While Betty's last trip as a pilgrim leader has a great ending, she isn't calling it quits just yet. She plans to continue organizing trips to Italy, the Holy Land and other religious places, but she won't be leading them. Her friend Paul Mazoch will be taking over that role. He has been on many trips with Betty and each trip has about 40-50 pilgrims. Finding Jesus, this is the main goal Betty insists her pilgrims encounter on a tour.

"Every trip is different because everybody experiences it differently," Betty said. "I tell them to find Jesus wherever they can. I ask them, 'Where would you like to have a conversation with him?' It might be through a 12-year-old or a dancer. When I met Jesus, we danced in the wheat fields."

Betty said the trips are not a tour. "It is a pilgrimage. Everyone receives something." But how did all this begin? Known for its healing waters, Betty and her late husband Vic made a trip to Lourdes, France, for his ailing heart. They also visited Fatima. This was in 1983.

"Vic had a heart attack and I thought taking a bath in the miraculous waters he would be healed," she said.

Wearing a neck and back brace, Betty had ailments of her own. She took off her braces and they both immersed themselves in the waters, but to her surprise, she was the one who received the healing. She had tried to put the brace back on, but couldn't. It was then she noticed she didn't need it after all.

"Then I realized I was the one who received the healing," she said.

She believes God's healing powers also enabled her to lead many tours. "I could lead pilgrimages for the past 25 years," she said.

On average, she and her late husband, who have seven children and 20 grandchildren, led five to six tours a year. With her failing health, she has been using a walker to get around for years now, on trips and at home. How she made her recent journey to the Holy Land could truly be a miracle itself.

After the trip to Lourdes and Fatima, a Portuguese town where Our Lady appeared to three small children, Betty was

approached by the leader of the Fatima trip who suggested she needed to visit Medjugorje, which she had never heard of. Medjugorje, located in Bosnia near the Croatian border, is a popular site for religious pilgrimages due to reports of the Virgin Mary who appeared to six local Catholics.

The leader came to her house and delivered a green metal box resembling

a fishing tackle box containing the names of pilgrims who had been on trips with the man before. He suggested that she become a tour leader. She set it aside thinking she wouldn't do it. But she said something compelled her to call the touring company in Houston to book a trip. "I called and told them to reserve me 20 seats," she said. "This did not go along well with Vic, but he helped me get a list of pilgrims. That's how we really got started."

On this trip, she discovered rosary chains were turning gold. She returned and began spreading the word at churches, both Protestant and Catholic.

"I was talking at churches all over to promote Our Lady," she said. "We pray to her to ask Jesus to help us. We do not worship her; we honor her. She is the mother of Jesus and anything you ask through Our Lady, He will answer her."



Betty (c.) is presented a 30" olive wood carving of "Jesus, the Good Shepherd," by Emile (l.) and Shibly (r.) Kando, owners of a religious items store in Bethlehem.



Dr. Victor Batarseh, the mayor of Bethlehem, presented Betty Urbanovsky with a Key to the City of Bethlehem in thanksgiving for all the tourism she has brought to the Holy Land. She was there giving her last guided pilgrimage in November 2010.



Following Mass, Father Khoa Xuan Nguyen, (hidden), Father Bryan Heyer, Father Dominic Trung Nguuyen, Deacon Vieira and altar boys process out of the Assumption Chapel. The altar was decorated in the Tet Lunar New Year colors of red and yellow, chrysanthemums, symbolizing longevity, and hoa mai, a yellow tree decorated with red ornaments and firecrackers.

## Palacios Vietnamese Community Celebrates New Year

PALACIOS—The Vietnamese community of the Assumption Chapel in Palacios celebrated the Vietnamese Lunar New Year February 3-5, 2011, by celebrating Mass Saturday, February 5, feasting on favorite Vietnamese foods, lighting firecrackers, holding a Dragon Dance, and having a dance for the young people Saturday evening.

The New Year, or Tet Festival, is the most important and most exciting holiday of the year in Vietnam. Its celebration

marks the arrival of spring, based on the Lunar calendar.

Father Dominic Trung Nguyen, C.Ss.R., personal pastor of the Vietnamese Apostolate at Assumption Chapel in Palacios, Father Bryan Heyer, pastor of St. Anthony of Padua in Palacios and retired priest, Father Khoa Xuan Nguyen of Palacios, celebrated the Mass; they were assisted by Deacon Michael Vieira.

Chuc Mung Nam Mor! - Happy New Year!

"Medjugorje was the beginning. I truly never planned on being a tour operator. I call it pilgrim leader though. It was a mission that was given to me."

Her travels have taken her to many religious sites, as well as secular places. The first time she went to Rome was for the canonization of Blessed Agnes, who was from Czechoslovakia. Agnes was a medieval Bohemian princess who chose a life of charity over a life of luxury. Betty's group was there with 15,000 Czechoslovakians who came from behind the Iron Curtain to honor one of their own.

Betty has also been to Assisi and Loreto, Italy, both of which are known for their religious sites. Assisi is best known as the birthplace of St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of Italy and founder of the Franciscan order. Loreto is mostly famous as the seat of the Basilica della Santa Casa, a popular Catholic pilgrimage site. "I have been to all the shrines in Italy at different times," Urbanovsky said.

She has also been to France, Spain, Portugal, Ireland, Czech Republic, Austria, Mexico, Canada and sites in the United States.

Numerous times she told herself she was quitting as a leader of pilgrimages. "But when God asked me to do this, I said yes," she said.

Her husband made many of the trips with her or leading some himself until his passing in 1991.

"Vic is a miracle," she said. "Doctors do not understand how this man with open heart surgeries and so much blockage, nine vascular implants and an aneurism can lead a group. Yet he took many trips and pilgrims."

Looking back, God has been gracious to Betty. He has allowed her to lead many individuals on pilgrimages, allowing each a unique spiritual experience, like Ceci Triska.

"Betty has done many pilgrimages to many different places," Ceci said. "It was so fitting that her last trip to travel would be to the Holy Land."

"It's a blessing to travel with Betty's pilgrims," Ceci said. "The pilgrims become one big family, and we stay in touch through the years." "Betty has an annual pilgrim reunion, which is for all pilgrims," she said. "It gives everyone a chance to reconnect and share their experiences."

The next reunion is scheduled for March 6, 2011, at St. Philip the Apostle Parish Hall in El Campo. All are welcome to attend.

While Betty won't be on foot for future pilgrimages, she continues to "build trips" with two set for Lourdes-Fatima in October and the Holy Land in November.



Visiting from Our Lady of the Gulf Parish and its missions were the Vietnamese Dominican Sisters. Pictured from l. to r. are Sr. Kim Chau O.P., Sr. Immaculata Therese, O.P., Sr. Francesca, O.P.