The Catholic Lighthouse
The Cradle of Texas Immigration

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE DIOCESE OF VICTORIA IN TEXAS

VOL. 33, NO. 1 www.victoriadiocese.org MAY 2019

The Grace of the Family Meal

By Father Gary Janak, Pastor of The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria

In the hectic pace of everyday life, daily family meal time today is often just a fond memory. Eating on the run, grabbing whatever can be found in the refrigerator or eating at different times, and even different locations, often becomes more of the norm, instead of an exception to the rule. Yet, family meal time is a grace-filled event and one of significant importance in regards to faith and to the health and stability of family life.

There are numerous biblical references pertaining to the sharing of a meal. Jesus is often going to a meal, present at a meal or leaving a meal. His enemies even accused him of being a “glutton and a drunkard” (Matthew 11:19). Jesus was neither of these things, but he dined often, many times with the poor, the outcast and those labeled as sinners. Our faith teaches us that meals are more than the mere consumption of food. Sharing a meal is a grace-filled moment, in that such a meal is an expression of welcome, hospitality and friendship. In varying degrees,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

In the final years of his life, St. Pope John Paul II published three letters that have served as an inspiration for many people ever since. For me personally it’s been like reading letters on what really is important in life. A theme that seems to run through his writings at this time of his life was the primary importance of contemplating the face of Christ with Mary. Having lived through a World War and so much of the violence and upheaval of the 20th century, then dealing with his own declining health and physical limitations, his mature faith called him to teach us to trust in Jesus and the mercy that flows from His side. The three letters that develop this theme are Novo Milenio Ineunte, Rosarium Virginis Mariae and Ecclesia de Eucharistia.

St. Pope John Paul’s encouragement to “go out into the deep” and not be afraid to proclaim the good news of the fullness of beauty, truth and good in Jesus continues to give power and strength. His personal devotion to the real Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist and the motherly love of the Virgin Mary in the Rosary inspires millions of people today, including me, to aspire to be grounded in the tradition of our Church for the salvation of souls. In a way I think the personal witness of St. Pope John Paul II and many other saintly people led me to present to our Presbyteral Council the possibility of a Rosary Congress this year. Our priests responded very energetically and we are beginning to form a team of people to help organize a Rosary Congress in our diocese from October 6-13, 2019.

Father Bob Knippenberg and Father Tommy Chen have accepted to be leaders in organizing this Congress and we will be using advice and encouragement from other dioceses that have committed to this – information can be found at rosarycouncilusa.org.

There are a couple of special Masses that we will be celebrating this month that I want to highlight. May 15 is the Feast Day of St. Isidore, the Patron Saint of Farmers. For the past few years some of our parishes have held special Masses and blessings on this day. This year I’ll be in East Bernard to celebrate a Diocesan Mass of St. Isidore, praying especially for our farmers and their families. The diocesan Chapter of Catholic Rural Life will help organize this Mass and is developing ways we can support and love one another in our special work and mission to cultivate the land for the good of humanity. May 22 is a National Day in Honor of Mariners and all those who work at Sea. I will be at St. Anthony in Palacios that afternoon to pray for our shrimpers and fishermen and all those who bring forth the harvest of the Sea. We will be blessing the fleet and asking God’s blessing upon our laborers.

There is much to pray for, and God graciously shows us the path of prayer and love each day. As we prepare for these special Masses and the Rosary Congress I ask that we remain committed to pray especially the Rosary for the gift of peace in the world and for the family. As St. John Paul II invited us to pray this faithfully, I believe we can maintain our confidence in the power of this prayer – more than we ever know! May God bless you and your families, let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

---

Contemplating the Face of Christ with Mary

Queridos Hermanos y Hermanas,

En sus últimos años de su vida, el Papa Juan Pablo II publicó tres cartas que han servido de inspiración para muchas personas desde entonces. Para mí, personalmente, ha sido como leer cartas sobre lo que realmente es importante en la vida. Un tema que parece pasar por sus escritos en este momento de su vida fue la importancia primordial de contemplar el rostro de Cristo con María. Después de haber vivido a través de una guerra mundial y gran parte de la violencia y la agitación del siglo 20, a continuación, tratar con su propio deterioro de la salud y las limitaciones físicas, su fe madura le llamó para enseñarnos a confiar en Jesús y la misericordia que fluye de su lado. Las tres letras que desarrollan este tema son Novo Milenio Ineunte, Rosarium Virginis Mariae y Ecclesia de Eucharistia.

El estímulo del papa San Juan Pablo para “salir a las profundidades” es no tener miedo de proclamar las buenas nuevas de la plenitud de la belleza, la verdad y el bien en Jesús, continúa dando poder y fortaleza. Su devoción personal a la Presencia real de Jesús en la Eucaristía y el amor maternal de la Virgen María en el Rosario inspiran a millones de personas hoy, incluso a mí, a aspirar a basarse en la tradición de nuestra Iglesia para la salvación de las almas. En cierto modo, creo que el testimonio personal de San Papa Juan Pablo II y muchas otras personas santas me llevaron a presentar a nuestro Consejo Presbiteral la posibilidad de un Congreso de Rosario este año. Nuestros sacerdotes respondieron con mucha energía y estamos empezando a formar un equipo de personas para ayudar a organizar un Congreso de Rosario en nuestra diócesis desde el 6 al 13 de octubre de 2019.

Padre Bob Knippenberg y el Padre Tommy Chen han aceptado ser líderes en la organización de este Congreso y utilizaremos el asesoramiento y el aliento de otras diócesis que se han comprometido con esto; la información se puede encontrar en rosarycouncilusa.org.

El 15 de mayo es el día de la fiesta de San Isidoro, el santo patrono de los agricultores. Durante los últimos años, algunas de nuestras parroquias han celebrado misas y bendiciones especiales en este día. Este año estaré en East Bernard para celebrar una Misa diocesana de San Isidoro, orando especialmente por nuestros agricultores y familias. El Capítulo Diocesano de la Vida Rural Católica (Catholic Rural Life) ayudará a organizar esta Misa y está desarrollando formas en que podemos apoyarnos y amarnos unos a otros en nuestro trabajo y misión especial para cultivar la tierra por el bien de la humanidad. El 22 de mayo es un Día Nacional en Honor de los Marineros y todos aquellos que trabajan en el mar. Estaré en la parroquia San Antonio en Palacios esa tarde para orar por nuestros pescadores de peces y camarones y por todos aquellos que producen la cosecha del mar. Estaremos bendiciendo a la flota y pidiendo la bendición de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

Hay mucho por lo que orar, y Dios nos muestra amablemente el camino de la oración y el amor cada día. Mientras nos preparamos para estas Misas especiales y el Congreso del Rosario, les pido que sigamos comprometidos a rezar, especialmente el Rosario por el don de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

Sea. We will be blessing the fleet and asking God’s blessing upon our laborers.

Hay mucho por lo que orar, y Dios nos muestra amablemente el camino de la oración y el amor cada día. Mientras nos preparamos para estas Misas especiales y el Congreso del Rosario, les pido que sigamos comprometidos a rezar, especialmente el Rosario por el don de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

El 15 de mayo es el día de la fiesta de San Isidoro, el santo patrono de los agricultores. Durante los últimos años, algunas de nuestras parroquias han celebrado misas y bendiciones especiales en este día. Este año estaré en East Bernard para celebrar una Misa diocesana de San Isidoro, orando especialmente por nuestros agricultores y familias. El Capítulo Diocesano de la Vida Rural Católica (Catholic Rural Life) ayudará a organizar esta Misa y está desarrollando formas en que podemos apoyarnos y amarnos unos a otros en nuestro trabajo y misión especial para cultivar la tierra por el bien de la humanidad. El 22 de mayo es un Día Nacional en Honor de los Marineros y todos aquellos que trabajan en el mar. Estaré en la parroquia San Antonio en Palacios esa tarde para orar por nuestros pescadores de peces y camarones y por todos aquellos que producen la cosecha del mar. Estaremos bendiciendo a la flota y pidiendo la bendición de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

Hay mucho por lo que orar, y Dios nos muestra amablemente el camino de la oración y el amor cada día. Mientras nos preparamos para estas Misas especiales y el Congreso del Rosario, les pido que sigamos comprometidos a rezar, especialmente el Rosario por el don de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

May 22 is a National Day in Honor of Mariners and all those who work at Sea. I will be at St. Anthony in Palacios that afternoon to pray for our shrimpers and fishermen and all those who bring forth the harvest of the Sea. We will be blessing the fleet and asking God’s blessing upon our laborers.

There is much to pray for, and God graciously shows us the path of prayer and love each day. As we prepare for these special Masses and the Rosary Congress I ask that we remain committed to pray especially the Rosary for the gift of peace in the world and for the family. As St. John Paul II invited us to pray this faithfully, I believe we can maintain our confidence in the power of this prayer – more than we ever know! May God bless you and your families, let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

---

Bishop Brendan Cahill

A Shepherd’s Message

Contemplating the Face of Christ with Mary

Obispo Brendan Cahill

Mensaje del Pastor

“In the end, my Immaculate Heart Will Triumph.”

---

El 15 de mayo es el día de la fiesta de San Isidoro, el santo patrono de los agricultores. Durante los últimos años, algunas de nuestras parroquias han celebrado misas y bendiciones especiales en este día. Este año estaré en East Bernard para celebrar una Misa diocesana de San Isidoro, orando especialmente por nuestros agricultores y familias. El Capítulo Diocesano de la Vida Rural Católica (Catholic Rural Life) ayudará a organizar esta Misa y está desarrollando formas en que podemos apoyarnos y amarnos unos a otros en nuestro trabajo y misión especial para cultivar la tierra por el bien de la humanidad. El 22 de mayo es un Día Nacional en Honor de los Marineros y todos aquellos que trabajan en el mar. Estaré en la parroquia San Antonio en Palacios esa tarde para orar por nuestros pescadores de peces y camarones y por todos aquellos que producen la cosecha del mar. Estaremos bendiciendo a la flota y pidiendo la bendición de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

Hay mucho por lo que orar, y Dios nos muestra amablemente el camino de la oración y el amor cada día. Mientras nos preparamos para estas Misas especiales y el Congreso del Rosario, les pido que sigamos comprometidos a rezar, especialmente el Rosario por el don de Dios sobre nuestros labores.

May 22 is a National Day in Honor of Mariners and all those who work at Sea. I will be at St. Anthony in Palacios that afternoon to pray for our shrimpers and fishermen and all those who bring forth the harvest of the Sea. We will be blessing the fleet and asking God’s blessing upon our laborers.

There is much to pray for, and God graciously shows us the path of prayer and love each day. As we prepare for these special Masses and the Rosary Congress I ask that we remain committed to pray especially the Rosary for the gift of peace in the world and for the family. As St. John Paul II invited us to pray this faithfully, I believe we can maintain our confidence in the power of this prayer – more than we ever know! May God bless you and your families, let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

---

Contemplating the Face of Christ with Mary
Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

May

3  Cahill Classic KC Golf Tournament, Windrose Golf Course, Tomball

4  Mass for the Carmelites, Meyersville

9:00 a.m. Meet with Diaconate candidates at Our Lady of Sorrows Church, Victoria

5:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Joseph, Yoakum

5 10:30 a.m. Installation Mass for Fr. Kristopher Fuchs at St. Mary Church, Victoria

2:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria

6  Noon Mass for Missionary Catechists

8  6:00 p.m. Speak at the Morning Glory Helper’s meeting, The Cathedral Center, Victoria

9  1:30 p.m. Pension Board meeting, Chancery

10  6:00 p.m. 2nd Annual Emmaus Center Roast and Toast Gala, The Cathedral Center, Victoria

11  Mass for the Carmelites; Meyersville

6:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Holy Family Parish, Victoria

12  9:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Holy Cross Parish, Yorktown

4:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria

13  2:30 p.m. Communities of Faith meeting

5:00 p.m. Liturgical Commission

14  4:30 p.m. Supper with Healthcare Sisters at Incarnate Word Convent, Victoria

15  10:00 a.m. Presbyteral Council, Chancery

5:00 p.m. Mass of St. Isidore at Holy Cross Church, East Bernard

18  Maritime Day Mass at the Crypt Church of the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, Washington DC

21  6:30 a.m. Relevant Radio Morning Show

22  10:00 a.m. Kenedy Foundation Board meeting, Corpus Christi

5:30 p.m. Blessing of the Fleet and Prayer for Shrimpers/Fishermen, St. Anthony, Palacios

25  10:00 a.m. Diaconate Ordination at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria

June

1  5:30 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Robert Bellarmine, El Campo

2  10:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Sacred Heart, Hallettsville

3  3:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Anthony, Palacios

27  11:00 a.m. Closing Mass for Joshua Creed Family Retreat at the Spiritual Renewal Center, Victoria

29  6:30 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. John, Moravia

3-6  Catholic Rural Life Board Meeting at University of St. Thomas, Minnesota

CHRISM MASS 2019—Bishop Cahill blessed the holy oils and the priests of the diocese renewed their vows at the Chrism Mass. Throughout his sermon he shared, ‘Ever ancient ever new...how much I love Thee’, a reference from St. Augustine’s confessions.

Prayer for All Mothers

O almighty and eternal God, Lord of both the living and the dead, Your tender mercy embraces all men foreknown to be Yours by faith and a good life. Through the intercession of the Most Blessed Virgin Mary our Mother, and of all the saints, grant Your merciful pardon to all mothers for whom we pray, whether they still are living in this world or have departed from this flesh into the world to come. Especially, dear Lord, grant the requests I now make of You for my own beloved mother.

Happy Mothers Day!

May 12

The Chancery Offices will be closed Monday, May 27 in observance of Memorial Day

Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

May

18  4:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at Our Lady of Lourdes, Victoria

19  10:00 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Holy Family Church, Wharton

6:00 p.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Philip Church, El Campo

26  10:30 a.m. Confirmation Mass at St. Agnes, Edna
Please remember in prayer the priests of the Diocese of Victoria, who were ordained during the month of May:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Priest</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Parish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Gary W. Janak</td>
<td>05/14/1988</td>
<td>The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Michael W. Petering</td>
<td>05/15/1999</td>
<td>St. Agnes Church, Edna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Greg E. Korenek</td>
<td>05/15/1993</td>
<td>Holy Cross Church, Bay City</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Edward J. Winkler</td>
<td>05/17/1986</td>
<td>Sacred Heart Church, Fatonia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Rev. Brendan J. Cahill</td>
<td>05/19/1990</td>
<td>Ordination to the Priesthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Stephen Vacik</td>
<td>05/20/2017</td>
<td>St. Mary Church, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Jacob Mendoza</td>
<td>05/20/2017</td>
<td>St. Michael Church, Cuero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Robert F. Guerra</td>
<td>05/20/2000</td>
<td>Parish of the Nativity Church, Eagle Lake</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Phi Nguyen</td>
<td>05/20/2000</td>
<td>Incarnate Word Convent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Philip L. Brune</td>
<td>05/24/2014</td>
<td>St. Robert Bellarmine Church, El Campo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Jasper J. Liggio</td>
<td>05/24/2014</td>
<td>St. Michael Church, Cuero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily</td>
<td>05/24/1958</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Msgr. Joseph M. Hybner</td>
<td>05/25/1963</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Patrick Knippenberg</td>
<td>05/26/1963</td>
<td>Holy Family of Joseph, Mary and Jesus Church, Victoria</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Msgr. Casimir Jarzombek</td>
<td>05/26/1960</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Msgr. Arnold Anders</td>
<td>05/27/1950</td>
<td>Retired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Daniel P. Kahlich</td>
<td>05/28/1966</td>
<td>Holy Rosary Church, Hostyn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Msgr. Gerard Cernosek</td>
<td>05/28/1964</td>
<td>Sts. Cyril and Methodius Church, Shiner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev. Bryan O. Heyer</td>
<td>05/29/2004</td>
<td>Assumption of the BVM Church, Ganado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rev Kirby F. Hlavaty</td>
<td>05/29/1999</td>
<td>Ordination to the Priesthood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Most Rev. David E. Fellhauer</td>
<td>05/29/1965</td>
<td>Bishop Emeritus of the Diocese of Victoria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me; your rod and your staff comfort me. (Psalms 23:4)
DIACONATE ORDINATION NEARING—In preparation for ordination to the transitional diaconate, seminarians in their third year of graduate study at the Josephinum made the Profession of Faith and took the Oath of Fidelity in the presence of Reverend Monsignor Christopher J. Schreck, Rector, and the seminary community on January 24, 2019. Third Year Theology seminarians from the Diocese of Victoria, Dalton Ervin and Chase Goodman, made their Profession of Faith and took the Oath of Fidelity, in preparation for their respective ordinations to the transitional diaconate. They attend seminary at The Pontifical College Josephinum, in Ohio.

PREPARING FOR ORDINATION—James Dvorak, a Third Year Theology seminarian for the Diocese of Victoria, who is studying at St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston, made a Profession of Faith and took the Oath of Fidelity, in preparation for his ordination to the transitional diaconate. The group publicly declared to believe all that the Catholic Church teaches and to be faithful to that teaching in the ministry they exercise.

Seminarians’ Summer Assignments

James Dvorak: Deacon at Holy Family, Wharton
Dalton Ervin: Deacon at Our Lady of Sorrows, Victoria
Chase Goodman: Deacon at St. Michael, Cuero
Tran Dinh: Pastoral year at St. Philip, El Campo
Ryan Kapavik, Luke Prihoda, Adam Shimek: Spanish Immersion in Puebla, Mexico
Aaron Padilla: Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry - Chancery, Victoria
Shane Goertz and Philippe Dubourdieu: Diocesan Mission Program
Caleb Krischke: Summer School

"There is a great silence on earth today… The earth trembled and is still because God has fallen asleep in the flesh and he has raised up all who have slept ever since the world began."

These words from an ancient Holy Saturday homily are read by every priest and seminarian in today’s Office of Readings. I receive them as a turning point from Good Friday’s sadness to an eager anticipation of the Resurrection. As we wait today to rejoice in Easter gladness, let us unite our hearts to the Sacred Heart of Jesus and pray to remain with Him in this life, at the moment of our own death, and forever with Him in Heaven.
Congratulations to the 2019 Mother Elizabeth Ann Seton Award recipients. The Catholic Schools of The Diocese of Victoria selected one person each. The recipients are (left to right back row): John Pierce, Our Lady of Victory Catholic School; Bishop Brendan Cahill; Colleen Rasmussen, St. Philip the Apostle Catholic School; Jill Horelka, Nazareth Academy; Dr. William Sage, St. Michael Catholic School Cuero; Kelly Henke, St. Joseph Catholic High School; Michele Olivarez, St. Joseph Catholic School; Shon and Lisa Horan, Sacred Heart Catholic School; (left to right front row) Beth Collins, Shiner Catholic School; Connie Koopmann, St. Rose of Lima Catholic School; Tara Stech, St. Michael Catholic School Weimar; Janie Schmidt, St. Anthony Catholic School; Ida Curnutte, Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic School; and Sara Lyle, Holy Cross Catholic School.

Many of our Catholic Schools are hiring! We're looking for teachers, principals, assistant principals, athletic directors and coaches, and many other support staff to journey with our students on the road to college and heaven! Check out our listings today, and share them with other excellent educators you know.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
~ Nelson Mandela

Eighth graders from St. Rose of Lima, Schulenburg, their teachers, Father Felix Twumasi, and Father Tim Kosler, pastor of St. Rose of Lima Parish, attended the Chrism Mass at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory.

STJ STUDENT RECEIVES SCHOLARSHIP—Tatum E., a senior at St. Joseph High School, received the Thomas Followwill Memorial Scholarship at the 2019 Aggie Muster. Tatum will be attending Texas A&M University, in College Station in the fall. She is pictured with Dr. and Mrs. Followwill who presented the scholarship.

Seeing the tomb—PreK-4 students from Shiner Catholic School visited the “tomb” with Mrs. Sharon Patek after Easter break. The children enjoyed “seeing” the tomb and discussing the resurrection. One of the little ones said “Jesus is going to heaven to be with God and his angels.” So sweet!

Jesus is Risen! Alleluia!
Bishop Emeritus David E. Fellhauer confirmed the students of Holy Cross Parish in East Bernard, on Sunday, March 31 at the 10:00am Mass. Father Charles Otsiwah, Pastor, co-celebrated the Mass.

The Columbian Squires is the official youth organization sponsored by the Knights of Columbus #1329 for young Catholic men 10-18 years-old. Being a member of the Squires enables you to better serve your parish, help those in need and grow your faith. Squire circles are sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, but are run by and for young men, under the guidance of several Knights, who serve as counselors. Squire counselors are Safe Environment certified. Membership is open to all parishes and schools in Victoria. Applications are now being accepted for boys to join Columbian Squires.

For more information in joining, please contact Donald Shellenbarger at (361) 649-9556, Joe Rainosek at (361) 550-3113 or email kcsquiresvictoria@gmail.com.

KC Squires Seeking New Members

The Columbian Squires is the official youth organization sponsored by the Knights of Columbus #1329 for young Catholic men 10-18 years-old. Being a member of the Squires enables you to better serve your parish, help those in need and grow your faith. Squire circles are sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, but are run by and for young men, under the guidance of several Knights, who serve as counselors. Squire counselors are Safe Environment certified. Membership is open to all parishes and schools in Victoria. Applications are now being accepted for boys to join Columbian Squires.

For more information in joining, please contact Donald Shellenbarger at (361) 649-9556, Joe Rainosek at (361) 550-3113 or email kcsquiresvictoria@gmail.com.

Experience Camp David

Jr. High: Session 1 June 9-11
Session 2 June 12-14
A fun-filled retreat offered for junior high age (student entering sixth to finishing eighth grade). Two different overnight sessions are being offered. The cost per person is $75 (includes food and lodging for two nights). Space is limited to 50 participants per session and registration will close when this number is reached. A $25 non-refundable deposit is required to reserve a space.

Elementary: June 12
A fun-filled retreat for students entering third grade to students entering fifth grade. A trained staff of high school and college youth, supervised by qualified adults, from throughout the diocese serve as leaders for these young people. The cost per person is $25, which includes food and all craft supplies. Pre-ordered T-shirts are available for $10. Space is limited and will close when spots are filled.

Permission and a medical release forms are required of everyone attending these retreats. Visit www.victoriadiocese.org/campdavid or call (361) 573-0828 to register.

Rocky Mountain High Retreat in Pagosa Springs, Colorado
July 13-21, 2019

This unique, week-long retreat, in the heart of the San Juan Mountains in Southern Colorado, is an opportunity for high school age young people to take time away from their daily routine. They will experience the wonder and grandeur of the great outdoors (courtesy of Sonlight Camp), spending time reflecting on important issues of life, faith, family, and friends. A trained staff of qualified adults, from throughout the diocese, offer caring relationships to assist the youth on their journey. Small group discussions, presentations on key topics, unique prayer and liturgical experiences, plus a wild and crazy rafting excursion on the Animas River in Durango, help make this an unforgettable week.

Registration deadline is Friday, May 24, 2019, although this retreat typically fills up before the deadline date. For more information contact: The Office of Youth Ministry, weggert@victoriadiocese.org; (361) 573-0828 ext. 2232.

Pregnant?
Need Help?
Confidential and caring assistance available for the following needs:
• Emotional • Material • Spiritual • Educational • Providing immediate and practical help.
We have a special concern for you and your unborn child.
Victoria Gabriel Project
Toll Free 1-866-MARY AID
1-866-627-9243
www.victoriagabrielproject.org

KC Squires Seeking New Members

The Columbian Squires is the official youth organization sponsored by the Knights of Columbus #1329 for young Catholic men 10-18 years-old. Being a member of the Squires enables you to better serve your parish, help those in need and grow your faith. Squire circles are sponsored by the Knights of Columbus, but are run by and for young men, under the guidance of several Knights, who serve as counselors. Squire counselors are Safe Environment certified. Membership is open to all parishes and schools in Victoria. Applications are now being accepted for boys to join Columbian Squires.

For more information in joining, please contact Donald Shellenbarger at (361) 649-9556, Joe Rainosek at (361) 550-3113 or email kcsquiresvictoria@gmail.com.

Incarnate Word & Blessed Sacrament Gift Shop
(361) 575-7111
1101 NE Water St.
(in Old Victoria)
Victoria, TX 77901
Monday-Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 4:30
Bibles, Books, Rosaries, Medals
Statues, Baptism & Wedding Items
Inspirational Gifts
‘Unplanned’ – the Movie You Have to See!

By Tony Magliano

“Unplanned” is an inspiringly powerful movie that will deeply touch your heart. It will move you to feel uncomfortable, angry, sad, enlightened, encouraged, vindicated and joyful. You’ll probably even shed some tears, as I did.

“Unplanned” tells the compelling story of Abby Johnson’s total conversion from being Planned Parenthood’s youngest clinic director in the U.S., their “Employee of the Year” for Houston and Southeast Texas and a hater of the pro-life movement, to becoming a committed Christian (Catholic) and founder of the pro-life ministry “And Then There Were None.”

This unique ministry has helped nearly 500 abortion clinic workers, including seven doctors, transition out of the ugly death-dealing abortion industry into life-affirming lives and jobs (see: https://abortionworker.com/).

Amazingly an actor in “Unplanned” who performs an abortion is actually Dr. Anthony Levatino, who formerly aborted approximately 1,200 unborn babies. He is now pro-life!

But it wasn’t until Johnson actually assisted with an ultrasound-guided abortion did she shockingly realize that she needed to get out! On the monitor screen she saw a 13-week-old unborn child trying to move away from the suction tube, and moments later she saw only an empty womb.

Johnson’s first-hand experiences makes “Unplanned” the only movie that takes you inside the real-life world of the single largest abortion provider in the United States – Planned Parenthood – which performs over 300,000 abortions every year.

In an interview I had with Abby Johnson, she said “Planned Parenthood’s entire business model is based upon telling women they can’t raise a child and have a career or finish school. That’s not empowerment. Planned Parenthood is about making money off of abortion. Abortions start at around $450 and go up over $800 depending on gestational age.”

Johnson added, that “Former Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards testified in Congress that 86 percent of their revenue is from abortion. Planned Parenthood has abortion quotas, and they do push their affiliates to sell the procedure” (see: https://bit.ly/2v7MFvp).

She said Planned Parenthood required the clinic she directed to sell 1,135 abortions per year to pregnant women.

Johnson added, “The only way to make a profit off a pregnant woman is to sell her an abortion. Because Planned Parenthood does not provide any prenatal care or ob [obstetrics] care, and they don’t get any sort of a kickback if a woman decides to place her baby for adoption” (see: https://bit.ly/2PV1jC6).

Planned Parenthood receives over $500 million from taxpayers each year. There are three bills in the U.S. House of Representatives that would defund it: H.R. 369, H.R. 833 and H.R. 888. Please urge your representative to co-sponsor these bills. And urge her or him to sign the petition to discharge H.R. 962 the “Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act.”

Johnson told me, “The pro-life movement needs to be one of love. We cannot dehumanize women seeking abortions and abortion workers.”

Despite its R-rating, “Unplanned” is suitable for teenagers. In fact, it’s a must see.

At the end of “Unplanned” this hopeful message is presented on screen: “Your life matters. If you’re a woman or a man who wants to talk with someone about your abortion, your pregnancy, or taking action to support life … text HOPE to 73075. If you work in the abortion industry and want out, we can help you.”

Help is also available by visiting www.ablove.com, calling (888) 570-5501, or emailing info@abortionworker.com.

Watch the inspiring story behind the inspiring story – how this movie amazingly all came together by God’s grace (see: https://bit.ly/2DjcaPc).

And then … go see “Unplanned”!

Tony Magliano is an internationally syndicated social justice and peace columnist. He is available to speak at diocesan or parish gatherings. Tony can be reached at ttmag@zoominternet.net.
Easter: Source of Our Hope

A few weeks ago we diligently followed Jesus on his last journey to Jerusalem. During Holy Week we celebrated with many Christians around the world as we triumphantly entered our Churches singing and waving our palms, joining in spirit with Jesus’ triumphal entry into the Holy City. The expectations were at a fever-pitch; perhaps the long-expected Messiah had arrived! However, during the week we witnessed the shift in the mood as their (and our) hero was condemned and executed. Their hopes were shattered! All appeared to be lost!

It was then that the most amazing event in human history occurred! Jesus had risen from the dead! Joy filled their hearts and restored their hope. Little did they realize the everlasting significance of Jesus’ act of redeeming all humanity. Because of our redemption through Jesus’ death and resurrection, we hope; practicing the virtue of hope that each person receives at Baptism.

Then, what is hope? Along with faith and love, hope is an infused theological virtue given to us by God. Broadly defined, hope is “desire accompanied with expectation of receiving or fulfillment of what is promised.” We hear a lot about faith and love; however sometimes we are not aware of the significant role that Christian hope plays in our lives.

As a redeemed people, we live knowing that our death will not simply be the end of our earthly lives, but it will be a passage into the promised eternal bliss with our Redeemer. We know that the attainment of our promised future is difficult; however, Christian hope in God’s assistance sustains us in time of difficulty, trial, or any obstacles that we may encounter. It is reassuring to know that, in spite of any challenges that life may present, we have hope in the promises of a loving God whom we will join in everlasting happiness. I always think of the Easter Season as a Season of Hope.

May we all be filled with joy during this Easter Season as our Christian hope sustains us through our own resurrection and into our everlasting rejoicing over Christ’s Resurrection.

(For a more scholarly discussion on Christian hope, check out Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical letter, Spe salvi facti sumus (“In hope we were saved”) promulgated on November 30, 2007.)

EASTER WELCOMING NEW CATHOLICS—During the Easter Vigil Mass on Saturday, April 22, Father Tommy Chen, Pastor of Our Lady of the Gulf, in Port Lavaca, baptized and welcomed RCIA candidates into the church.

Sisterly Thoughts

By Sister Mildred Truchard, IWBS

Sacred Heart Parish
Spring 2019 Picnic

Sunday, May 26, 2019
Hallettsville

At the K.C. Hall in Hallettsville, Texas

DINNER: SERVING FROM 10:30 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
Dining in the KC Hall
Drive thru Plates-to-Go: 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.
Country Fried Chicken, Stew, Homemade Cornbread Dressing with all the trimmings!
Adults: $10 Children (10 & under) $5

Short Memorial at 1:00 p.m. given by Rev. Msgr. John Peters

Inside the air-conditioned K.C. Hall
Cake Walk
Country Store
Religious Articles Booth
Bingo ( Noon to 6:00 p.m.)

Washer Tossing Tournament
Begins at 5:00 p.m.
Delicious Hamburgers, French Fries, Nachos, Popcorn, Fajitas, Cakes, Snow Cones, Lemonade & Soda Vending All Afternoon!!

AUCTION SALE AT 1:00 PM
Cattle, Quilts, Antiques, Homemade Canned Goods, Noodles, Vegetables, Outdoor Furniture & more

2019 JOHN DEERE GATOR RAFFLE
w/ 12 ft. Load Trail Landscape Trailer

—AUCTION & ACTIVITIES UNDER THE PAVILION—

Church Picnic Raffle Tickets Available from Parishioners & at Picnic

There are 29 Cash Certificate Prizes to be given away at 10:00 a.m. (Total Value of the 29 Certificates $7,700)

Music on the Main Pavilion
J & S Pickups – 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m.
Free Dance on the Pita Pavilion/Biergarten
Tinas Sound Check & Red Knees
1:00 p.m.-7:00 p.m.

EVERYBODY WELCOME! FUN FOR ALL AGES!
Join the first Catholic Rural Life Chapter of Texas, CRL-Victoria, Texas for their first annual Rural Life Mass on Wednesday, May 15 at 5:00 p.m. This year, the Mass will be hosted by Holy Cross Catholic Church (839 Church Street) in East Bernard, Texas. Please join Bishop Brendan Cahill and co-celebrants Rev. Charles Otsiwah and Rev. Stephen Vacek in celebrating the feast day of St. Isidore. After Mass, there will be the blessing of implements, seed, and equipment.

**Tools for Work Blessing**

O God,
The fullness of blessing comes down from you, to you our prayers of blessing rise up.
In your kindness protect your servants, who stand here before you devout and faithful, bearing the tools of their trade.

Grant that their hard work may contribute to the perfecting of your creation and provide a decent life for themselves and their families.
Help them to strive for a better society and to praise and glorify your holy name always.
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

*From the Book of Blessings*

**BISHOP TO BLESS SEAFARERS**—The National Day of Prayer and Remembrance for Mariners and People of the Sea will be celebrated on May 22. The day is observed in conjunction with National Maritime Day in the United States of America, which has been celebrated since 1933 to honor those who serve as merchant mariners and to recognize the benefits of the maritime industry. Bishop Brendan Cahill, was appointed as the Apostleship of the Sea (AOS) promoter in the Summer of 2017. He will be celebrating Mass, Blessing of the Fleet, and praying for seafarers at St. Anthony Church, in Palacios. Please keep mariners and people of the sea in your prayers on this day.

**Mariner’s Prayer**

Our Lady, Star of the Sea, Mother of God and our Mother, you know all the dangers of soul and body that threaten mariners.
Protect your sons and daughters who work and travel on the waters of the world, and protect also their families that await their return.
Star of the Sea, Mother of the Church, give light and strength to those chaplains and lay ministers who bring the love of your Divine Son among mariners.
Fill their hearts with a supernatural and life-giving zeal for the apostolate.
Star of the Sea, light shining in the darkness, be a guide to those who sail amid the storms and dangers of life.
Enlighten the hearts of ardent disciples and bring us all to the safety of heaven’s port. Amen.
The following sermon was written by Father Charles Kram from the twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time, Cycle A.

One day a little boy handed his mother a bill which read: Mowing lawn, $8; Weeding, $3; Washing dishes, $2; Making bed, $1; Carrying out garbage, $1. Next day the mother handed the boy HER bill which read: Bringing you into the world, no charge; Burping and changing you, no charge; Teaching you how to walk and how to talk, no charge; Pulling you through measles and mumps, no charge; Feeding you and clothing you and getting you to school on time every day, no charge; I will consider YOUR bill if YOU will first consider MINE.

The little boy had to be reminded how much he depended on the generosity of his mother. We live by GOD’S gifts—the best things in life are still free—air, water, sunshine, life itself and all God’s gifts.

Some of our gifts are necessary to our nature. Without them we would not be human. The power to think, for example, is natural to us. It separates us from the animals.

Other gifts are SUPERnatural. Through God’s generosity we have the gift of Sanctifying Grace, by which our sins are forgiven, by which we become God’s adopted children, by which we become temples of the Holy Spirit and heirs of heaven.

The parable about the laborers hired at different hours of the day but being paid the same, was not meant to be a model for employers to imitate, but rather, it was meant to teach us how generous God is.

The evidence of his generosity is all around us. When he created the world in which we live, he created it in an ascending order from the lowest to the highest and placed us at the center.

In the lowest order he placed the plants—the trees, the grass, the flowers—vegetative life. Plants nourish themselves and grow and reproduce and serve the needs of animal life.

Next above the plants come the animals. They feed and grow and reproduce like the plants and besides, in their higher forms, they can see and hear and taste and smell and feel and be aware of their surroundings.

Next comes man. He is endowed with all the attributes that the plants and animals enjoy, but in addition, he possesses a spiritual soul that can never die. Furthermore, he is endowed with the power to think and to reason and to know. He has a free will that can say YES or NO, even to God. Made in God’s image and likeness, man lives in two worlds, one, the material world of the plants and animals, and the other, the immaterial world of the spirit.

In the highest order God has placed the angels, the pure spirits. They are of all God’s creatures, the most like him. They are endowed with intelligence far superior to our own. They exist in many ranks and in great numbers. They are God’s messengers and they are our companions and protectors.

God’s Generosity

Lord Jesus, thank you for reminding us how much we have received. Help us to appreciate even more, God’s generosity to us. Grant that we may learn to use ever better, every gift we have received.

Amen

Knights of St. Gregory
Support Bishop’s Charities

The Knights of St. Gregory invite you to share an evening with Bishop Brendan Cahill at the Bishop’s Annual Charity Banquet held at the Victoria Country Club. This year the event will take place Thursday, July 25. The social will begin at 6:30 p.m. followed by dinner at 7:15 p.m.

Proceeds will benefit Bishop Cahill’s special charities. Tickets are $100 per person. Seating limited to 250 guests, and reservations will be made in the order they are received. For ticket information, please call (361) 571-6668 or (979) 541-3502.

St. Michael Catholic Church
309 E. CHURCH ST.
CUERO, TX

* BINGO * GAMES * FOOD
* COUNTRY STORE * RAFFLE * AUCTION

FESTIVAL

AUCTION STARTS AT 12:15 P.M. INSIDE HALL

SUNDAY
MAY 19, 2019

Roast Beef, Gravy, Potatoes, Green Beans, Desserts

- - - Tickets: $10.00 - - -
Serving from 11:00 A.M. - 1:00 P.M.
Plates to go Available - Drive Thru
Dear Editor,

As a result of a good friend’s experience, I have begun an effort to get more churches involved with nursing homes. These facilities are emerging without a parish being aware, and most administrators are not Catholic, so they are not thinking about Communion. People are living longer, so there will be more people in nursing homes, sometimes just “spiritually vegetating.” I cannot just stand by and watch.

I worship at Notre Dame of Mt. Carmel, in Hanover Township, New Jersey. Thanks to the internet, I have a huge extended family! You are now part of that family. My aim is to reach my “family” throughout the entire country, and I will do it by contacting every diocese in the US with aid of the internet. (I am up to 148, as of today.) If I can get just one more Communion received, that would not otherwise have been received, I would be very happy, and it will be worth every minute of my time!

I realized some months ago, that reaching Eucharistic Ministers is the key to increasing attention to nursing homes, since they are the actual resources that the Church has created for such purposes. We have to make them aware of the chance to save souls, because I know, that they are eager to serve in this way.

Eucharistic Ministers can help to save souls by bringing Holy Communion to nursing homes. Most Catholics think that evangelization means “bringing people to Jesus,” but in a real sense, it includes “bringing the body of Jesus to people.” This form of evangelization is becoming more important because we have an aging population, with nursing homes becoming a growing part of many communities. These facilities are home to some people who have been practicing Catholics, and now they are denied the solace that had been the promise of their faith.

Nursing homes are fertile grounds for evangelization in three categories; first, there are Catholics who want to continue sharing their faith; second, there are “fallen-away” Catholics who might be looking for an opportunity to reach out for their eternal salvation; third, there are people of other faiths who may be touched by the attraction of seeing “how these Catholics love each other.” Eucharistic Ministers would perform Evangelization just by bringing Communion and by listening to residents, so no special evangelization training or skill is needed, and the prospect of helping a soul reach eternal salvation is a sufficient motivator.

Many parishes now have some visits to a nursing home, but we should consider going beyond a few days per month. The challenge is to create an extension of the parish Faith Community. Eucharistic Ministers who may have time during the day or in the evening can begin the process of “adopting” a nursing home. The arrangement could start with one day per week for Communion. The next steps might be to increase the number of visits, forming a prayer group, or an on-site Mass, etc. Bringing Communion once per week should grow into a model for how our Church can become Christ’s Body today.

Adolf Schimpf
Hanover Township

---

Dear Editor,

I would like to thank Reene Terrell for her response to the article written by Tony Magliano which presented his version of a state of the union address. Her concerns are shared by a number of us but while we were wringing our hands in anguish as to how to respond, she boldly spoke up. I for one am inspired to stand firm in my convictions and defend them.

Thank you Reene for your courageous example!

Michele Carpenter

---

To submit a letter to the editor write to:
Sarita Richmond
P O Box 4070
Victoria TX 77903
or srichmond@victoriadiocese.org
KNIGHTS DONATE TO FOOD PANTRIES—
The Knights of Columbus, St. Michael Assembly #1527 of the 4th Degree, chose to donate $500 to local food pantries, as their Food for Family Activity. Recipients of the donations were the Flatonia, Schulenburg, and Weimar Food Pantries. Pictured presenting a check to the Schulenburg Food Pantry (l-r): are Joan Estes Food Pantry Volunteer, Kenneth Berger KC 4th Degree member and Robert Fulton Food Pantry Volunteer.

RICE DONATION TO HELP THE NEEDY—Knights of Columbus members assisted with a large donation of rice as it was delivered to the Diocese of Victoria. The generous donation comes from Share the Harvest, through the efforts of Al Shimek of Zebedee Boats Foundation. The Knights of Columbus Council #9088 helps the diocese distribute the rice to any organization that gives or prepares rice for the needy. To request a rice donation, contact Tommy Trebyig at (361) 575-4052 or (361) 649-7250.

SHINER CATHOLIC CHURCH
SPRING PICNIC, SUN., MAY 26, 2019
KC PARK 102 S. Ave. G SHINER, TX

MUZIKA, MUSIK
FREE MUSIC & DANCING
Inside AIR CONDITIONED Hall

--- DINNER ---
10:30 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.
Air Conditioned Dining Room
Plate Includes THREE MEATS –
•Shiner Picnic Stew • Fried Chicken • Country Sausage
• Trimmings •
Drive thru “Plates to Go” from
10:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Or until sold out at the
KASPAR PAVILION
IN GREEN-DICKSON PARK
ALL PLATES $10.00

COUNTRY STORE
Canned and Baked Goods
• Kolaches • Pigs-in-Blanket
8:00 a.m. until
MEMORIAL TRIBUTE at 11:45 a.m.
BIG COUNTRY AUCTION - 12:00 p.m.
Cattle Auction: 3:00 p.m.
Bingo in A/C Dining Room
3:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.
Grocery Wheel – 5:00 p.m.

--- ACCORDION BAND ---
Saturday 5:00 p.m. (Polka Mass)
Sunday 7:30 a.m. & 9:30 a.m.

--- PRE-PICTIC ACTIVITIES ---
Saturday May 25
Motorcycle Run • Registration 11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.
Contest Michael Picha (361) 285-8085
or Lance Thompson (361) 295-8132
6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.
Barbque on Sun will be available
7:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. • Made by Mama Triad Band

--- DANCE ---
9:00 p.m. – 1:00 a.m.
THE EMOTIONS
Admission FREE for ages 21 and over

--- DRAWING ---
Drawing for Prizes at 10:00 p.m.
PETTING ZOO – 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.
Fun for the Whole Family!!!
For more information call: (361) 894-3636
Website: www.sscmshiner.org

--- KC DONATE ---
Members of the Schulenburg Knights of Columbus (KC) Council #2902 presented a $10,000 check to St. Rose School Cafeteria, in Schulenburg, in memory of Fourth Degree Knight Eugene Berger. Pictured are (l-r) Kenneth Berger, Carolyn Osina, Cafeteria Business Manager; Dennis Johnson, Council #2902 Grand Knight; James Brossmann, Leonard Korenek, Jennifer Moeller, Cafeteria Food Manager; and Ed Moeller.

KNIGHTS HELP SCHOOL—Members of the Schulenburg Knights of Columbus Council #2902 are shown presenting a $2,000 check to the St. Rose School Cafeteria, in Schulenburg, in memory of Fourth Degree Knight Eugene Berger. Pictured are (l-r) Kenneth Berger, Carolyn Osina, Cafeteria Business Manager; Dennis Johnson, Council #2902 Grand Knight; James Brossmann, Leonard Korenek, Jennifer Moeller, Cafeteria Food Manager; and Ed Moeller.
**St. Mary’s Parish Picnic**

**1836-2019 ~ 183 years**

**Sunday, June 9**

**Food:**
- Beer • Popcorn • Soda
- Snow cones • Hamburgers
- Ice Cream • Kolaches
- and more!

**Games:**
- Bingo • Ball Throw
- Ring Toss
- Toy Spin Wheel • Cake & Plant Walk • Train Ride
- Fish Pond • Country Store w/Arts & Crafts, Canned Goods, etc.

**Music:** 10:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
- Texas Sound Czech (10:30 a.m.-2:00 p.m.)
- J & S Playboys (2:00-5:30 p.m.)
- Red Ravens (5:30-9:00 p.m.)

**SV. OF LILY**

**St. Mary’s Parish Hall**

Halletsville, Texas

---

**Holy Week Across the Diocese**

Top left: Holy Cross, Bay City
Top center: St. Joseph, Yoakum
Top right: Our Lady of Victory, Victoria
Right: St. Michael, Weimar
Left: Our Lady of Sorrows and Santíssima Trinidad, Victoria

---

**SACRED HEART PARISH**

**FLATONIA, TEXAS**

**SPRING PICNIC**

**JUNE 2, 2019**

**Mass 10:00 a.m.**

**FRIED CHICKEN & STEW DINNER**

PLATES - $10.00
Serving Starts at 10:30 a.m.
DINE-IN OR DRIVE-THRU OR WALK-UP
MEAL SERVED INSIDE HALL UNTIL 1:00 P.M.

**BINGO**
12:00 P.M.
**LIVE AUCTION**
1:00 P.M.

Horseshoe Tournament (Tournament Shoes Only)
Country Store ** Hamburgers ** Cake & Plant Walk
Silent Auction ** Children’s Games

**KRAZY KIRB DJ - MUSIC AND DANCING**
AFTER LIVE AUCTION!

**SOMETHING FOR ALL AGES!**
NEW PASTOR INSTALLED—On Saturday, March 23, 2019, Bishop Brendan Cahill installed Father Charles E. Otsiwah as the new pastor of Holy Cross Church, in East Bernard. He praised Father Charles as “a wonderful priest with great experience and a pastor who says yes to God’s call and passes on our Catholic faith.” In his homily, Bishop Cahill remarked, “As we go forth today, my prayers are filled with confidence that from the first families that built this church, to our families today, to families 50 to 100 years from now this will be a place that is holy, a place where we encounter God personally, and a place where we have strength for whatever we my face when we leave these doors.”

KNIGHTS SERVE AS HONOR GUARD—The Knights of Columbus 4th Degree served as Honor Guard for Bishop Brandan Cahill, and Father Wayne Flagg, Pastor of St. Michael Church, Weimar, during the confirmation Mass. Attending Sir Knights were from Saint Michael Assembly # 1527 of Flatonia, Schulenburg, Weimar, and Knights of Saint Gregory, in Victoria. Pictured (l-r front row) Delphin Bartek, Charlie Herzik, Father Wayne Flagg, and Bishop Cahill of Victoria; Dennis Olsovsky and Jimmie Burch of Schulenburg; Back row (l-r) Larry “Bear” Kana of Sealy; Frank Janacek, Martin Luchak, James Zabransky, and Jack Muggli all of Weimar. Not pictured are the Knights of Saint Gregory.

AWARDS PRESENTED—Catholic Daughters of the Americas (CDA) Court Our Lady Queen of Peace #1374 of St. Philip, El Campo, presented awards on April 15, to students who placed 1st, 2nd and 3rd in the annual CDA Education Contest. The 1st place entries were sent to the state competition; those 1st place entries will then be forwarded to the national competition. Those attending the ceremony were (front, l-r) Krista I., Madelyn R., Addelin K., Abby W., Addisyn M., Makayla B., and Layni R.; (back, l-r) Pastor and CDA Court Chaplain Father Michael Rother; Court Regent Dana Sterndel; Carlee B., Alexandra S., Bryce R.; and Court Vice-Regent Rose Ann Mitchell. They hosted the students at their monthly meeting. After the award ceremony, students, families, and members enjoyed pizza and ice cream.

The Emmaus Center provides individual, couple, family, adolescent and children’s counseling as well as specialized support groups from a Catholic perspective. For more information or to schedule an appointment, please call (361) 212-0830.

Holy Family K of C Council #9088 Presents the

SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL

FISHING TOURNAMENT

AUGUST 2 & 3
PORT O’CONNOR COMMUNITY CENTER

DOOR PRIZES ★ CASH PRIZES ★ RAFFLE

FOR INFORMATION ON ENTRIES, CONTACT:
SISTER ANN MELETIO AT 361-485-2044
BRENDA HERMES AT 361-564-8361
GEORGE WENZEL AT 361-649-7707

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT NAZARETH ACADEMY SCHOOL, VICTORIA
Flames and smoke billow from the Notre Dame Cathedral after a fire broke out in Paris April 15, 2019. Officials said the cause was not clear, but that the fire could be linked to renovation work. (CNS photo/Benoit Tessier, Reuters)

Blaze erupts at Paris’ iconic Notre Dame Cathedral; cause unknown

By Catholic News Service

PARIS (CNS) — A major blaze engulfed the iconic Notre Dame Cathedral April 15, sending pillars of flame and billowing smoke over the center of the French capital.

The fire erupted about 6:30 p.m. local time. Authorities said the cause was not certain, but that it could be linked to renovation work that the cathedral was undergoing, the BBC reported.

Officials ordered an evacuation of the area around the 850-year-old cathedral that has withstood world wars and political turmoil throughout France’s history.

Le Monde, a Paris daily newspaper, reported that the fire erupted in the attic of the cathedral and that the fire reached the roof at the back behind the cathedral, behind the nave, was in flames and yellow-brown smoke and ash filled the sky.

City officials cordoned off the area around the Gothic-style church and urged people to evacuate the immediate surroundings.

As the sun set over Paris, the fire consumed the upper portion of the cathedral and the main steeple was filled with flames. It eventually collapsed into the church.

“Everything is burning. The framing, which dates from the 19th century on one side and the 13th on the other, there will be nothing left,” Andre Finot, a spokesman for the cathedral, told Agence France-Presse.

At one point, emergency responders entered the cathedral in an attempt to preserve priceless art and statues from destruction.

The blaze elicited emotional responses from throughout France as Christians began the observance of Holy Week.

“I had a scream of horror. I was ordained in this cathedral,” Bishop Eric Moulin-Beaufort of Reims, president of the French bishops’ conference, said in reaction to the disaster.

This tragedy reminds us that nothing on this earth is made to last forever. I think a lot about the Diocese of Paris. The Chrism Mass will not be celebrated. It is a part of our flesh that is damaged. But I hope this will create a new momentum, a universal movement.”

French President Emmanuel Macron tweeted, “Our Lady of Paris in flames. It is emotional for a whole nation. Thoughts for all Catholics and for all French. Like all our countrymen, I’m sad tonight to see this part of us burn.”

The magnitude of the fire resonated with church leaders as well as those involved in preserving culturally important sites around the world.

The Vatican issued a statement in the evening saying that it learned “with shock and sadness the news of the terrible fire that has devastated the Cathedral of Notre Dame de Paris, symbol of Christianity, in France and in the world.”

“We express our closeness to the French Catholic and to the people of Paris. We pray for the firefighters and for all those who are doing everything possible to face this dramatic situation,” the statement said.

“The horrific fire that is engulfing the Cathedral of Notre-Dame de Paris is shocking and saddens us all, for this particular cathedral is not only a majesty church, it is also a world treasure,” said Cardinal Daniel DiNardo of Galveston-Houston, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

“Noble in architecture and art, it has long been a symbol of the transcendent human spirit as well as our longing for God,” the cardinal said in a statement April 15. “Our hearts go out to the archbishop and the people of Paris, and we pray for all the people of France, entrusting all to the prayers and intercession of the Mother of God, especially the firefighters battling the fire.”

“We are a people of hope and of the resurrection, and as devastating as this fire is, I know that the faith and love embodied by this magnificent cathedral will grow stronger in the hearts of all Christians,” he added.

Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan of New York, said in a statement from the archdiocese that he immediately went to St. Patrick Cathedral next to his office in downtown Manhattan and asked through “the intercession of Notre Dame, our Lady, for the cathedral at the heart of Paris, and of civilization, now in flames!”

“God preserve this splendid house of prayer, and protect those battling the blaze,” he said he prayed.

Audrey Azoulay, director general of UNESCO, the United Nation’s cultural agency, said in a tweet that her office “stood at France’s side to save and restore” the cathedral, which was added to the organization’s world heritage list in 1991.

She described the cathedral as “a priceless heritage” and that the agency was monitoring the effort to fight the blaze.

In addition, the Diocese of Rome tweeted, “We are close to our brothers and sisters of the Church of #France, to the ecclesial community and to all Parisians. United, let us pray to the Virgin Mary, revered to #NotreDame, as mother of hope and all consolations.”
SPAIN HOLY WEEK PROCESSION MALAGA—Spanish Legionnaires carry a large image of the crucified Christ in the rain April 18, 2019, outside a church in Malaga, Spain, during a Holy Week ceremony. Dozens of brotherhoods process through the streets of the city with religious images during Holy Week. (CNS photo/Jon Nazca, Reuters)

Pope Urges Students to Fight their Addiction to Phones

By Carol Glatz
Catholic News Service

VATICAN CITY (CNS) — Pope Francis told high school students to break their phone addiction and spend more time on real communication with others and in moments of quiet, personal reflection.

Young people need to learn about “healthy introspection” so they can listen to their conscience and be able to distinguish it “from the voices of selfishness and hedonism,” he said.

The pope made his remarks April 13 during an audience with teachers, students and their family members from Rome’s oldest classical lyceum — the Ennio Quirino Visconti Lyceum-Gymnasium. Some notable alumni include Eugenio Pacelli, the future Pope Pius XII, and Jesuit Father Matteo Ricci.

The pope told the high school students to “please, free yourselves from your phone addiction!”

Looking up at his audience as they applauded, the pope said he knew they were aware of the many forms and problems of addiction. But, he warned, an addiction to one’s mobile phone was something “very subtle.”

“Mobile phones are a great help, it marks great progress. It should be used, and it is wonderful everyone knows how to use it” for the “wonderful” activity of communication, he said.

“But when you become a slave to your phone, you lose your freedom,” he said.

USCCB President Decrees Terrorist Bombings in Sri Lanka on Easter

By Catholic News Service

WASHINGTON (CNS) — The president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops termed as “a great evil” the Easter terrorist attacks in Sri Lanka targeting the country’s minority Christian community as worshippers packed three churches.

Sri Lankan government officials April 22 blamed the little-known Islamic group National Thowheed Jama’ath for the bombings, which also were directed at three luxury hotels, Islamic State later claimed responsibility, but the claim could not be confirmed immediately. The multiple bombings left more than 300 people dead and over 500 injured.

“This great evil targeted these churches as they were packed full of worshippers who were celebrating Easter, the day in which Christians around the world celebrate the rising of the King of Peace from the dead,” said Cardinal Daniel N. DiNardo of Galveston-Houston in a statement April 21.

He said the churches were St. Sebastian’s Catholic Church in Negombo, St. Anthony’s Catholic Shrine in Colombo, the nation’s capital, and Zion Church in the eastern city of Batticaloa, which is an evangelical church. The hotels that were attacked were the Shangri-La, Kingsbury and Cinnamon Grand, all in Colombo.

“We offer our prayers for the victims and their families. And we join with all people of goodwill in condemning these acts of terrorism,” Cardinal DiNardo said. “This evil cannot overcome the hope found in our Savior’s resurrection. May the God of hope who has raised his Son, fill all hearts with the desire for peace.”

The majority of those killed and injured are believed to be Sri Lankan nationals, many of whom were attending church services. The government said those killed included at least 39 foreign nationals from the United States, United Kingdom, India, China, Japan, Australia, Turkey, Australia and other European countries.

At the Vatican, after his Easter blessing, Pope Francis expressed his sadness over the bombings in Sri Lanka.

In the United States, several Catholic Church leaders issued statements offering condolences and prayers for Sri Lanka the day of the bombings, including Chicago Cardinal Blase J. Cupich.

“With profound sorrow, we offer our prayers to the Christian community of Sri Lanka, and all those devastated by today’s horrific acts of violence,” he said.

“In solidarity with the survivors and their loved ones, we grieve the dead and pray for God to heal the wounded, comfort the mourners, and instill ever more deeply in all peoples a commitment to peace, which our creator fervently desires for all his children,” Cardinal Cupich added.

Los Angeles Archbishop Jose H. Gomez, who is vice president of the USCCB, said he hoped the dead would know “the promise of the Resurrection. … May God bring comfort to their families and their loved ones.”

Journeys of Faith with Ceci

Experience pilgrimage in a whole new light!

2019 Pilgrimage to Poland and Prague

September 18 - 28 ~ $3,895
Join Father Greg Korenek, pastor of Holy Cross in Bay City and Catholic singer/songwriter Anna Nuzzo and visit Warsaw, Czestochowa, Auschwitz, Krakow, the Salt Mines, Lagiewniki-the boyhood home of St. John Paul II! We visit the Divine Mercy Shrine built at the convent where St. Faustina received the Divine Mercy Image and Prayers. Concludes with a beautiful drive through the Czech Republic to Prague. Register before June 1, to receive a free copy of Anna Nuzzo’s Divine Mercy CD featuring Father Dan Cambra (limit one CD per household).

Ceci Triska · (979) 543-8575 · Select (800) 842-4842
ceci.triska@gmail.com · www.selectinternationaltours.com
You can follow Journeys of Faith with Ceci on Facebook!
NOTRE DAME CATEDRAL FUEGO PARIS—Los escombros rodean una representación de la Piedad de Nicolas Coustou en la Catedral de Notre Dame, el 16 de abril de 2019, un día después de que un incendio destruyera gran parte de la estructura de madera de la iglesia. Los funcionarios investigaban la causa del incendio, pero sospechaban que estaba relacionado con los trabajos de renovación que comenzaron en enero. (Foto CNS / Christophe Petit Tesson pool a través de Reuters)

Inciendo devasó icónica Catedral de Notre Dame en París

Por Catholic News Service

PARÍS (CNS) — En un gran incendio se vio surmida la icónica Catedral de Notre Dame el 15 de abril, generando columnas de llamadas y oleadas de humo sobre el centro de la capital francesa.

El fuego comenzó aproximadamente a las 6:30 p.m. hora local. Las autoridades dijeron que no saben con certeza la causa del incendio, pero podría estar vinculado al trabajo de renovación que se estaba realizando en la catedral, según reportó la cadena BBC.

Una evacuación del área fue ordenada por las autoridades alrededor de la catedral que tiene 850 años y ha resistido guerras mundiales y conflictos políticos a lo largo de la historia de Francia.

Le Monde, un periódico diario de París, informó que el incendio surgió en el ático de la catedral. En imágenes televisadas se podía ver cómo ardía y caía la simbólica aguja de la iglesia.

En 2018, la Iglesia Católica en la Arquidiócesis de París comenzó una urgente recaudación de fondos para salvar la catedral, la cual estaba empezando a desmoronarse. La Prensa Asociada informó que la alcaldesa de París, Anne Hidalgo, declaró -- una hora después de que comenzara el fuego -- que los bomberos estaban intentando contener “un horrible incendio” en la catedral.

Un reportero de AP en la escena, describió cómo el techo en la parte de atrás de la catedral, detrás de la nave, se estaba incendiando y cómo un humo marrón-amarillento y cenizas se expandían por el cielo.

Funcionarios de la ciudad acordonaron el área alrededor de la iglesia estilo gótico y le pidieron a la gente que evacúe la inmediaciones.

Cuando el sol se ocultó en París, el incendio había consumido la parte superior de la catedral y la aguja principal estaba sumida en llamas. Eventualmente colapsó al interior de la iglesia.

“Todo está ardiendo. De la estructura, que data del siglo XIX por un lado y del XIII por el otro lado, no quedará nada”, dijo Andre Finot, un portavoz de la catedral, a la agencia France-Presse.

En cierto momento, los equipos de respuesta ante emergencias ingresaron a la catedral en un intento por evitar la destrucción del arte y las estatuas de valor incalculable.

El incendio suscitó emotivas reacciones a lo largo y ancho de Francia, cuando los cristianos justamente empiezan la conmemoración de la Semana Santa.


“Para un parisino, Nuestra Señora es el centro”, dijo. “Estuve aquí esta tarde. Esta tragedia nos recuerda que nada en esta tierra está hecho para durar para siempre. Pienso mucho en la Diócesis de París. La misa crismal no se llevará a cabo. Es como si una parte de nuestra carne se ha dañado. Pero espero que esto cree un nuevo ímpetu, un movimiento universal”.

El presidente francés, Emmanuel Macron, envió un mensaje por Twitter: “Nuestra Señora de París en llamas. Es conmovedor para toda la nación. Mis pensamientos están con todos los católicos y todos los franceses. Como todos nuestros compatriotas, estoy triste esta noche al ver esta parte de nosotros ardiendo”.

La magnitud del incendio tuvo resonancia entre los líderes de la iglesia así como entre aquellos involucrados en preservar los sitios culturalmente importantes alrededor del mundo.

El Vaticano emitió un comunicado en la noche diciendo que recibió “con conmoción y tristeza la noticia del horrible incendio que ha devastado la Catedral de Notre Dame de París, símbolo de la cristianidad, en Francia y en el mundo”.

Ven y Síguelme Clase en Español

Ven y Síguelme: Primer curso al discípulado
Sesión 4: Sacramentos, Liturgia y Devociones
Presentador: Padre Eliecer Patiño
Donde: St. Robert Church, 512 Tegner St., El Campo, TX 77437
Cuando: 11 de mayo 2019, 10:00 a.m. a 4:00 p.m.

Estas clases se llevan a cabo sin costo alguno para usted vengan y pasen un día explorando su fe. Se dará la comida de mediaño. Guardería de niños está disponible.

Para más información contactar a:
Diocese of Victoria/Sister Rosario (361) 573-0828 ext. 2216;
Sister Miriam Perez, MCSH: (361) 676-9302; Mauricio Santiago: (979) 616-0421;
Heriberto Castillo: (361) 208-5014

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

Contact:
• The Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, within 48 hours, at (800) 252-5400, www.txtabusehotline.org, or local police department. If person is in immediate danger call 911.
• Vicki Pyatt, LMSW, Coordinator of Pastoral Care and Outreach, Diocese of Victoria, (361) 827-7186, pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.
• Bishop or Chancellor of the Diocese of Victoria, (361) 573-0828.
Written allegations can be mailed to Office of the Bishop, P.O. Box 4070, Victoria, TX 77903 marked “Personal and Confidential”.

If sexual abuse by a member of clergy has occurred in another diocese, the Diocese of Victoria will help bring your concerns to church officials. For assistance contact Vicki Pyatt at (361) 827-7186 or pastoralcare@victoriadiocese.org.
**Meals • Picnics and more**

**May**

Victoria—Holy Family Festival May 5, at the Community Center. BBQ brisket dinner will be served beginning at 10:30 a.m. Dinner-in or take-out is available at $10 adults/$6 children. Live auction begins at 1:00 p.m. There will be games, silent auction, and country store.

Victoria—Emmasa Center Roast and Toast, Friday, May 10. For more information contact (361) 212-0830.

Wharton—CDA Pre-Mother’s Day Bake Sale, Friday, May 10, Holy Family Life Center starting at 7:30 p.m. For more information contact Bessie at (979) 532-4369.

Cuerro—St. Michael Festival, May 19, see ad on pg. 8.

Hallettsville—Sacred Heart Parish Picnic, May 26 at the KC Hall. For more information, see ad on pg. 9.

Shiner—Sts. Cyril and Methodius Picnic, May 26 at the KC Hall. For more information, see ad on pg. 13.

**June**

Flotation—Sacred Heart Parish Picnic June 2, see ad on pg. 14.

East Bernard—Annual Czech Kolache Klobase Festival—Saturday, June 8, 10:30 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. at Riverside Hall sponsored by KJT Society No. 40. Admission is $8 p/p and children 12 and under free. Entertainment indoors and under pavilion with water fan cooled comfort. Sausage/BBQ chicken plate lunches available for purchase beginning 11:00 a.m. Hamburgers and sausage sandwiches available in the afternoon. Arts/crafts and family fun. For more information, go to www.kekfest.com or call (979) 335-7907.

Bay City—Our Lady of Guadalupe Annual Live Auction and Mexican Meal, June 9, at the Family Education Building (Parish Gym). A Carnitas de Puerco (Shredded Pork) plate with rice, beans and tortillas at $10 p/p. Dine-in begins at 11:00 a.m. with drive-thru plates-to-go beginning at 10:30 a.m. Auction begins at 11:30 a.m. along with fun and games.

St. Mary—St. Mary’s Picnic June 9, at the parish hall (1648 FM 340 just outside of Hallettsville). Mass will be celebrated at 9:15 a.m. A stew and sausage dinner begins at 10:30 a.m., $10 p/p. For more information see ad on pg. 14.

Schulenburg—St. Rose of Lima Annual Parish Picnic June 9, at the KC Hall. A fried-chicken and sausage dinner will be served starting at 11:00 a.m. Games, music and more throughout the day.

Port Lavaca—Catholic Daughters Court #2267 of Our Lady of the Gulf will host the annual games party on Monday, June 10, 1:00-5:00 p.m. at St. Jude’s Hall (415 West Austin), $8 p/p. Bring your games, your friends and enjoy the afternoon and a variety refreshments at 2:00. For more information, and/or table reservations, call: Margaret (361) 552-3233; Doris (361) 987-2387, or Georgia (361) 552-6844.

Ammansville—St. John the Baptist (FM 1383) Fathers Day Picnic June 16. A fried-chicken and sausage dinner served. Entertainment throughout the day.

Plum—Sts. Peter and Paul Plum Feast, June 30, serving sausage and fried-chicken from 11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m., auction at 1:30 p.m., music during the day by Ken Brothers. There will be a free dance from 6:00-9:30 p.m. with music by Johnnie Holub Polka Band.

LaGrange—Vocation Camp: Quo Vadis, June 30-July 3. For more information see pg. ??.

**Catholic Family Services**—To find Catholic organizations which focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at www.naclfml.org.

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

**Crisis Pregnancy Center of Victoria**—An organization staffed by volunteers that offers help to girls and women who find themselves in a difficult situation due to an unplanned pregnancy. Office located at 1501 E. Red River, is open 1:00-4:00 p.m. on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. A free pregnancy test is offered and medical referrals are made for prenatal care. They are a sister organization to the Gabriel Project. New volunteers are welcome. For more information call (361) 575-6171.

**Emmua Center**—Offers individual, couple, family, adolescent and children’s counseling as well as specialized support groups. Spiritual direction is also available on request. Appointments may be made by calling (361) 212-0830. For more information see pg. 15.

**Engaged Encounter—2019 Dates:** May 31-June 2, Sept. 20-22, and Nov. 15-17, registrations are on a first come, first serve basis. Fee must accompany registration form. For more information, call (361) 573-0828 or visit www.victoriadiocese.org.

**Gabriel Project**—Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy-an alternative to abortion. **Victoria:** Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 101 W. Convent. Light supper included. For angle workshop/training dates, contact Lisa Kainer (361) 676-3246 or lisa_heysquierdo@yahoo.com; **Meyersville:** Meets the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. (during the school year) at 11220 FM 237 (77974), the coordinators for DeWitt Chapter are Wayne and Margie Smith (361) 564-3742; **Lavaca County:** Meets 6:00 p.m. (during the school year), contact Julie Kubena Lavaca County Coordinator at (361) 798-3579 for dates and location. See ad on pg. 7.

**Masses • Retreats and more**

**ACTS Retreats—Victoria**—The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory Mens Retreat May 16-19 at the Spiritual Renewal Center. Registration forms are available at olvcathedral.org or the parish office. For more information, contact Jeremy at (361) 935-3473. Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS Retreats in the diocese should email dovactschapter@gmail.com.

**Grief Ministry**—An on-going Grief Group meets at Holy Family Church, Victoria in the Conference Room, 7:00 p.m., on the 1st and 3rd Thursday of every month. Adults who have experienced the death of a loved one, may attend (after three months have passed). Please call Sharon at (361) 578-7572 before attending.

**I.d.9:16 Ministry**—For adults in their 20s-30s, single or married. Held at Holy Family in Victoria every first Thursday of the month. Starts with the 6:00 p.m. daily Mass, dinner, a talk live streamed from the headquarters in Michigan followed by fellowship. Childcare is available to those who RSVP. It is open to all young adults of the diocese. For more information or to RSVP for events, email id916victoria@gmail.com.

**Incarnate Word Prayer Group**—Praise and worship on Mondays 7:30-9:00 p.m. in the auditorium at Incarnate Word Convent, 1101 N.E. Water Street. For more information, contact Sr. Louise Marie Jones at (361) 575-7111 or amormeus@yahoo.com.

**Mothers of Grace**—A new mothers’ group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For more information contact Jennifer Ruiz at jenniferchokey Ruiz@yahoo.com.

**Natural Family Planning—NFP** is the only church-approved form of family planning. For the CREIGHTON MODEL Fertility Care System (CrMs) featuring NaPro TECHNOLOGY™ contact Susanne Koch in Wharton at (505) 710-0903 or susamnekoch614@gmail.com.

**Raphael’s Refuge—RR’s mission is to build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Flotation. Peer counseling and spiritual direction are available for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death, or abortion. For more information, contact Midge Elam at (361) 865-3021, (361) 258-1514, or visit www.raphaelsrefuge.org.

**Retrouvaille—Retrouvaille, meaning rediscovery, is a marriage-healing ministry offered in the diocese to couples in difficult marriages. Contact John and Jennifer Vincent at jbvjoy@sbcglobal.net or (360) 580-2770; call (800) 470-2230; or visit www.helpourmarriage.org or www.retrouvaille.org. See ad on pg. 12.

**Amor Meus**

Contact: Sr. Emillie Eilers at (361) 575-7111 e-mail: amormeus@yahoo.com website: www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org IWBS Convent • 1101 NE Water St. • Victoria

**Spiritual Direction**—Amor Meus offers opportunities for guidance and discussion of one’s spiritual journey with experienced spiritual directors.

**Private / Directed Overnight Retreats:** Renew, reflect and relax! Enjoy the peaceful accommodations at the Amor Meus Spirituality Center. Whether you prefer one day or a few days overnight, an individual retreat can be created to fit your needs.

**God’s Embrace**

For more information call (979) 361-8883 e-mail: info@godsembrace.org website: www.godsembrace.com

**Upcoming Events**—Weekly Prayer: Mondays, 6:30-8:30 p.m.; Adoration in GEM Chapel, Tuesdays, noon-3:00 p.m.
The Grace of the Family Meal

Continued from pg. 1

these traits are common to all cultures in the world. It certainly was in the time of Jesus and it continues to be so today.

One of the greatest gifts Jesus gave the world is the Eucharist. It was at a meal, the Last Supper, that he gave us his Body and Blood to be shared with one another, until his return at the end of time.

According to the National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University, children and teenagers who share family dinners three or more times per week are less likely to be overweight; are more likely to eat healthy food; perform better academically; are less likely to engage in risky behaviors such as drugs, alcohol and sexual activity; and have a better relationship with their parents.

Sharing a meal as a family offers the opportunity to emotionally connect with one another. I know families who use the time to discuss pertinent topics of the day, read scripture and share stories, all while learning how to listen more intently to others and to be fed in body, mind and spirit.

Over the years, I have learned so much about the lives of my parishioners simply by sharing a meal with them in their homes.

Eating together as a family is indeed a spiritual activity that goes beyond the grace prayer. Praying before and after a meal is an important component in the spiritual life of our families, but grace is also found in the actual sharing together of that particular meal. Make regular meal time a part of your weekly schedule and discover again the grace of the family meal.

Blood to be shared with one another, until his return at the end of time. Even the very rejection of Jesus by Judas occurred at the Last Supper and with food: “So he dipped the morsel and took it and handed it to Judas, son of Simon the Iscariot. After he took the morsel, Satan entered him” (John 13:26-27). Heaven itself is often referred to as a banquet: “…and I confer a kingdom on you…that you may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom” (Luke 22:29-30).

Father Jacob Koether, Pastor of Our Lady of Sorrows paralleled in a recent homily the connection between the Eucharistic celebration and eating as a family around the table. He explained, “At every Mass the father welcomes us home to enjoy a banquet of reconciliation with Jesus at the center. What we do here at Mass is God modeling for us what should be happening in the home.” His practical advice was to eat together as a family; to turn off the TV; turn off the game; put away your phones; make time even if for a little bit to sit with each other; pray together, share stories, catch up, and laugh.

Dr. Anne K. Fishel, a clinical psychologist, author and a co-founder of The Family Dinner Project, writes in her research on the importance of families sharing meals together: “Over the past fifteen years researchers have confirmed what parents have known for a long time: sharing a family meal is good for the spirit, the brain and the health of all family members. Recent studies link regular family dinners with many behaviors that parents pray for including lower rates of substance abuse, teen pregnancy and depression, as well as higher grade-point averages and self-esteem. Studies also indicate that…stories told around the kitchen table help our children build resilience…What else can families do that takes only an hour a day and packs such a punch?”

Dr. Fishel offers great ideas and suggestions for family meal time, including conversation starters for children of all ages, dinner menus and much more, at the website, www.thefamilydinnerproject.org.

These suggestions include turning off televisions and cell phones during meal time.

“We probably eat dinner as a family at least 3 times a week. The kids take turns as to who leads our prayer and we talk and even have a few laughs!”

Velma E.

“We eat together 3 times a week. I grew up, sitting at the table together. So many impactful conversations & advice given/received. Lots of complaining, fights over cleanup, but ALL cherished memories.”

Carolyn H.

“It’s something that’s very important to me. The kids really miss it when we have a busy week and can’t sit down. It’s our time to connect. We talk about best and worst parts of your day, something you learned, etc.”

Andi

“For the most part we really strive to eat together because we have all said it’s not the same. I think it has made the kids less picky eaters because we have only one meal.”

Claire M.

“It’s a chance to have us all together, looking at one another, listening to the stories and feelings of the day.”

Meggins S.

“Praying before and after a meal is an important component in the spiritual life of our families, but grace is also found in the actual sharing together of that particular meal. Make regular meal time a part of your weekly schedule and discover again the grace of the family meal.”

This article was first published in the KJZT Family Life Journal (March/April 2019). Contributing to this article was Editor, Sarita V. Richmond. In the “bubble quotes” on this page, families shared why eating together is important to them. How wonderful that many families still value eating together at the dinner table!