Local Group Experiences Trip to the Holy Land

In the August 2019 Catholic Lighthouse, the front-page story was “Making Travel Sacred.”

It spoke about the meaning of pilgrimage, which is a journey to a place of special significance.

One group, in particular, the Knights and Ladies of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, along with other friends and family including Bishop Brendan Cahill, went on a pilgrimage.

Their 12-day pilgrimage took them to the Holy Land. On this journey they walked where Jesus walked, seen the place where Jesus was crucified, and many other holy sites.

At the end of the journey, the group celebrated Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which is the site of Calvary and the empty Tomb of Christ. Those that belong

See Local Group Experiences, pg. 16
Dear Brothers and Sisters,
In the middle of December I spent a quiet day of prayer and rest at the Spiritual Renewal Center. I wrote in my journal that day it was “warm and windy – a nice winter day in south Texas!” Taking a quiet day of prayer once a month has been a spiritual practice I’ve tried since I was ordained a priest in 1990. This spiritual practice, taking a “desert day,” follows the commitment of a fraternity of priests called Jesus Caritas. For my first 25 years as a priest I always belonged to this fraternity with about 5-7 brother priests, committed to praying for one another, meeting regularly and supporting each other in the ministry. When I became a bishop I discovered there were some Bishops’ Jesus Caritas fraternities, so I joined one and continued our spiritual practices.

The value of a “desert day,” or sometimes only a “few desert hours,” becomes apparent each time I get away. This past time it helped me reflect on some recent experiences and begin to look forward to a new year of possibility and hope. One of the most moving experiences for me this past year was a pilgrimage to the Holy Land with people from the diocese and from around Texas and Oklahoma. The weather on that warm, windy winter day in south Texas may have been the same as in the land where Jesus, Joseph and Mary lived 2000 years ago. The group of us who traveled the footsteps of the Holy Family could imagine and identify with the reality of their lives. As we believe, God so loved the world that in the fullness of time He took flesh and was born of the Virgin.

Among the many memories of that pilgrimage is the image of our group of 45 gathered around a rock in the Garden of Gethsemane. We arrived at this rock at about 10:45 in the morning and got ready to celebrate Mass. This is where Jesus asked his disciples to stay with him for an hour and prayed “Father, not my will but yours be done (Lk. 22:42).” The intensity of our prayer was deep, for forgiveness and healing, with resolution to be more faithful and trusting. After the Mass we were able to stay around the rock a little while and pray. A few minutes before noon we needed to leave so another group could come to the rock and pray.

It struck me at the time that we were able to stay with the Lord and pray. I often ask what more I can do and feel like I’m not doing enough for the Lord – it struck me that morning that he had asked us to stay with him for an hour and we had prayed. As we’re beginning a new year I think it is a good time to plan how we’re going to spend time with the Lord this year. The Rosary Congress in October blessed our diocese with literally thousands of hours of prayer with Eucharistic Adoration and the Rosary. The amount of grace and healing that flowed from these prayers is beyond our limited human understanding, yet many of us chose to stay with the Lord and pray. May we continue to place our trust in Him and pray for the salvation of all, especially those in most need of God’s mercy.

Once again 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 in 2020, let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan
What is an ad limina visit?
An ad limina visit is an obligatory visit made by all bishops to Rome during which they pray at the tombs of St. Peter and St. Paul. In addition, they meet with Pope Francis and Vatican officials.

What does ad limina mean?
It is from the Latin ad limina apostolorum (“to the threshold of the apostles”).

Bishop Cahill to Attend His First Ad Limina Visit With Pope Francis

Reverend Monsignor Joseph M. Hybner, 83, passed away Saturday, November 23, 2019. He was born November 11, 1936, in Shiner, one of the nine children born to Leo and Josephine (Kurtz) Hybner. He was ordained to the priesthood in his home town church of Sts. Cyril and Methodius (Kurzt) in Shiner in 2012 after serving his beloved Shiner in 2012 after serving his Lord as a priest for 56 years. He retired to his beloved Shiner in 2012 after serving his Lord as a priest for 56 years. He was elvated to Monsignor in 2012.

Survivors are his sister Rita Janak of Shiner; sisters-in-laws, Henrietta Hybner and Florene Hybner; numerous nieces, nephews and extended family. Preceded in death by his parents; sisters and spouses, Bernadette Valis (Frank Valis) and Agnes Pustka (Bobby Pustka); brothers and spouses, Bennie Hybner (Georgia Hybner), Theodore Hybner, Johnny Hybner, Alois Hybner and George Hybner; brother-in-law, Leo Janak.

A funeral Mass was held on Wednesday, November 27, 2019, at Saints Cyril and Methodius Church in Shiner. Pallbearers were Gerald Janak, Paul Hybner, Frankie Valis III, Leo Pustka, Greg Hybner and Kevin Hybner.
World Day for Consecrated Life Sunday, to be Celebrated February 2, 2020

The 8:30 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of Sorrows Church in Victoria on Sunday, February 2, 2020, will be designated for the World Day for Consecrated Life and Bishop Brendan Cahill will be the main celebrant. A reception following the Mass will be held at Our Lady of Sorrows Trinity Hall. Sisters from the various religious communities in the Diocese of Victoria will be in attendance. Families and especially young adults are encouraged to attend both the Mass and reception. Mark your calendars now and help spread the good news about this celebration.

This feast, also known to the Feast of the Presentation of the Lord consecrated life. This celebration is attached a day of prayer for women and men in religious communities in the Diocese of Victoria will be in Memory of Marlin Kuenstter

Sorrows Trinity Hall.

Following the Mass will be Celebrated February 2, 2020

In Memory of Marlin Kuenstter

Paz and Andrea Morales
in Memory of Fr. Dan Morales

Wayne & Leah Rother
in Memory of Martin Kuenstter

Family of Martin Kuenstter
in Memory of Martin Kuenstter

Harvey Michna
in Honor of Fr. Tim Kosler

Knight of Columbus #1329, Victoria
in Memory of Leroy Verdine

To contribute to the Education of Seminarian Fund, send contributions to:

Diocese Of Victoria
Education of Seminarian Fund
P. O. Box 4070
Victoria, TX 77903

The Chancery Offices will be closed
Monday, January 20
for
Martin Luther King Day
Offices will reopen
Tuesday, January 21
at 8:30 a.m.

Seminary Endowment Fund

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

Donation Categories:  Lector – $.01 - $99.99; Acolyte – $100 - $499.99; Candidate – $500 - $1,499.99; Transitional Deacon – $1,500 - $2,499.99; Priest – $2,500 >.

December 13, 2019

• Rev. Msgr. John C. Bily Seminary Burse #2

Acolyte

In memory of Sir Knight Leonard Bartos by St. Michael Knights of Columbus Assembly #1257 at Flotation, Schulenburg and Weimar

In memory of Sir Knight Joe Bargas by St. Michael Knights of Columbus Assembly #1257 at Flotation, Schulenburg and Weimar

• Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner Seminary Burse

Transitional Deacon

In memory of Rev. Msgr. James C. Brunner by Leroy P. Brunner

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

Lector

In memory of Earline Shimek by Lambert and Carol Brunner

In honor of Jo Ann Canik’s birthday by Bill and Carolyn Schuette

• Rev. Msgr. Joseph Hybner KC #3204 Seminary Burse

Lector

In memory of Rev. Msgr. Joseph Hybner by Arnold and Rosemary Riske, Julian and Barbara Guerra, Tony and Jennifer Herrera

• Josephat R. Janak Seminary Burse #2

Lector

In memory of Josephat R. Janak’s 21st anniversary of his death on Nov. 30, 1998 by Rose Marie Janak family

• Rev. Daniel P. Kahlich Seminary Burse

Acolyte

Donation by Holy Rosary Hostyn KJT Society #3

• Rev. Joseph Koebel Seminary Burse

Acolyte

Donation by Knights of Columbus, No.3371 Nada

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

Lector

In memory of Edith Kocurek by CDA Court Our Lady of the Sea #2133

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

Lector

Merry Christmas from a friend

• Rev. Michael Rother Seminary Burse

Acolyte

In memory of George and Betty Morris Kana, Arvid and Louise hurtta Loff, Jerome and Vlasta Supak Kovar, Virgil and Adela Kutach Farley, Lester and Florence Antoine Morton, Dorothy Shimek Kocurek and Edith Shimek Kocurek and Ernest Matlock by Annie, Helen and Billy Dolezal

• Rev. Msgr. Victor Schmidtinsky Seminary Burse

Acolyte

Donation by Knights of Columbus No. 3371, Nada

• Henry A. Schoenfeld Seminary Burse

Lector

In memory of Christine Netek Black, Rudy Netek, Daniel Neiser, Connie Kosarek by Bernice Schoenfeld

• Rev. Jerome J. Stryk Seminary Burse #2

Acolyte

In memory of Mr. & Mrs. Frank A. Stryk by Daniel Stryk

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

Lector

In memory of Adela Kubos by: Patricia Berger Ralph and Bonnie Besetzy Len and Paula Polasek Albert and Dorothy Olsovsky Ronnie and Debbie Genzer

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

Acolyte

Donation by Knights of Columbus No. 3371, Nada

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 4 — January 2020
Carrying the Spirit of Christmas into the New Year

We are continuing the spirit of the season that we are now winding down. My wish this Christmas that the spirit of generosity and goodwill would permeate the whole year. I’m reminded of a story, hopefully, one that happened, a story that is making its rounds. The story takes place on a cold wintery night in New York City in 1935 during the Great Depression.

The courtroom was packed with petty criminals, people with traffic violations and New York City police officers. That night the mayor, Mayor LaGuardia, who was a very compassionate man, turned up and dismissed the judge for the evening and took over the bench himself. Now I understand that in those days, the mayor had the power to serve as a magistrate.

Within a few minutes, an older woman in tattered clothing was brought before him; she had been charged with stealing a loaf of bread. She told LaGuardia that her daughter’s husband had deserted her, her daughter was sick, and her two grandchildren were starving.

But the shopkeeper, from whom the bread was stolen, refused to drop the charges. “It’s a real bad neighborhood, your Honor,” the man told the mayor. “She’s got to be punished for teaching other people around here a lesson.”

LaGuardia sighed. He turned to the woman and said, “I’ve got to punish you. The law makes no exceptions. Ten dollars or ten days in jail.” But even as he pronounced sentence, the mayor was already reaching into his pocket. He pulled out a bill and tossed it into his hat, saying, “Here is the ten dollars fine, which I now remit. Furthermore, I am going to fine everyone in this courtroom fifty cents for living in a town where a person has to steal bread so that her grandchildren can eat. Mr. Bailiff, take this hat and collect the fines and give them to the defendant.”

Like the mayor in the narrative above, are we continuing the Christmas spirit reaching out to those who are suffering in our midst? To those who are spiritually or materially poor? We have a model in Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta who wrote, “We should not serve the poor like they were Jesus. We should serve the poor because they are Jesus.”

Let us then continue to recognize Jesus as we demonstrate our faith through our kindness as we carry the Spirit of Christmas into 2020 and beyond. May we all have a Happy New Year!
DUKE NOMINEES — The faculty and staff of St. Philip School in El Campo are pleased to announce that (front row l-r) Emma S., Cadence D., Dylan J., Brooke B., (back row l-r) Landon B., Lake W., and Bryan C. are invited to join the Duke University Talent Identification Program’s prestigious 7th Grade Talent Search. Each year, the Duke University Talent Identification Program identifies a group of academically talented students in the United States based on their exceptional grade-level standardized test scores. Seventh-grade students who have achieved a qualifying score at or above the 95th percentile on these recent standardized tests are eligible to participate. Participation includes the opportunity to take the SAT or ACT – yes, the tests designed for college-bound high school students – as seventh graders. Score summaries and feedback are provided after the testing. Other newsletters, educational resources, and a wide range of educational programs are also included to help academically talented students reach their full academic potential. Very few students qualify for the 7th Grade Talent Search, so it is an honor to be invited to participate. Congratulations to these students again on their accomplishments!

STUDENTS HELPING THE UNFORTUNATE DURING THE HOLIDAYS — St. Rose of Lima School, Schulenburg, celebrated their Annual Thanksgiving Mass on Thursday, November 21. Students and staff brought canned goods to donate to the Schulenburg Area Food Pantry, the total pounds collected was 358! Additionally, each class prepared a complete Thanksgiving meal basket for the Family Crisis Center. Thanks to Mrs. Kusy and Mrs. Hollas for delivering the baskets to St. Mark’s Medical Center in LaGrange for them. Pictured (left) are St. Rose of Lima students representing each grade level with their donations.

STUDENTS PRAYING FOR THE DECEASED — The 8th grade students from St. Michael School, Weimar, combined Spanish, art, and geography for their recent Religion unit project. After researching and learning about Dia de los Muertos, they set up an ofrenda in the main building.

May the souls of the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace. Amen.
Today, Catholics have an opportunity to take an intelligent and spiritual approach to reading the Bible. There are many ways to learn more about the Bible and grow spiritually, with this somewhat difficult and sometimes-intimidating book, which is often referred to as God’s love letter to us.

For many years, classes have been offered in Victoria and other places in the diocese, through the Pastoral Institute programs. Beginning January 2020, there will yet be another chance to begin the adventure of discovering/uncovering a deeper meaning through the Pastoral Institute programs. In Victoria and other places in the diocese, the United States Conference of Bishops state on the official website: www.usccb.org, “If Scripture remains just words on a page, our work is not done. We need to meditate on the message and put it into action in our lives. Only then can the word be “living and effective” (Hebrews 4:12).

Therefore, there is no time like the present to make this commitment and register for the upcoming six-week course. Cost is $30 per person. A Catholic Study Bible is available for $30. Contact Christella Alvarez at (361) 827-7171 or calvarez@victoriadiocese.org or Brunilda Ortiz at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2224 or pisecretary@victoriadiocese.org for more information. Register online at www.victoriadiocese.org.

Catechist Rally 2020
Save The Date – Saturday, February 22

Attention all catechists, catechist aides, parish catechetical leaders, assistants, and others who help with catechetical ministry in the parish: You are invited to make plans to attend Catechist Rally 2020, with Bishop Brendan Cahill. This is an event no catechist will want to miss! Saturday, February 22, beginning at 12:00 p.m. at the Knights of Columbus Hall in Hallettsville, an afternoon of fun, music, and fellowship for you to enjoy. Mark your calendar to join hundreds of catechists from throughout the diocese to laugh, learn, and listen to great presentations. The Catechist Rally is just one way that bishop can show his appreciation for all that you (catechists) are doing and have done to evangelize and catechize those who are in your care each week for religious formation and inspiration.

At the Catechist Rally, Bishop Cahill and a team of presenters from a national Catholic publishing company will offer inspiration and encouragement. Everyone will have a nice meal and Clay Crockett will offer praise and worship music. The event will end with the Sunday liturgy offered by Bishop Cahill.

More information will be sent in January to all those in catechetical ministry. Contact Christella Alvarez at (361) 827-7171 or calvarez@victoriadiocese.org or Brunilda Ortiz at (361) 573-0828 ext. 2224 or catecheticalsec@victoriadiocese.org, for more information. Online registration will be available at www.victoriadiocese.org.

Diocese of Victoria (DOV) received the Gold Healthy Trustor Award 2019 for healthier choices through Reta Trust healthcare plans. Pictured (l-r) are Kristen Dodd MS, RDN, CWWS, CWWFM who is a WebMD, Senior Wellness Coordinator; Melissa Salinas, DOV, Director of Human Resources; Tony Martinez, DOV, Chief Financial Officer; and Josh Costa, Reta Trust, Area Vice President of Client Services and Operations.

Diocese Receives Gold Award for Healthy Choices

The Diocese of Victoria (DOV) is one of the trustors of the Reta Trust. Reta Trust is a non-profit employer trust that has provided affordable, quality healthcare for employees and members of Catholic organizations nationwide for over 40 years. Importantly, all Reta Trust healthcare plans are designed to comply with the Ethical and Religious Directives of the Catholic Church. Also, the Reta Trust has partnered with WebMD to offer a very robust wellness program with incentives to the eligible employees and members of the Diocese of Victoria.

As a large-sized trustor, the DOV recently completed at least five or more wellness incentives/action items, in each of the following criteria areas:

- Strategic Planning
- Organizational Support
- Programs
- Participation Strategies
- Program Evaluation

By accomplishing this goal DOV earned the Gold Healthy Trustor Award for 2019. The DOV Core Team met regularly with our WebMD Wellness Coordinator to discuss strategies to encourage our members to participate actively. Seventy-six percent of the members utilize the wellness program, which includes the Health Quotient Assessment. By accomplishing this goal DOV earned the Gold Healthy Trustor Award for 2019. The DOV Core Team met regularly with our WebMD Wellness Coordinator to discuss strategies to encourage our members to participate actively. Seventy-six percent of the members utilize the wellness program, which includes the Health Quotient Assessment in 2019 and which is an overall increase of 20 percent from the prior year. Email communication, on-site location visits, and quarterly meetings with the Presbyteral Council were essential factors that assisted with the increase of the participation and engagement by our members. The DOV offers several wellness incentives such as walking challenges, gym membership reimbursements, healthy recipes, nutrition, and healthy living webinars. Through WebMD Health Coaches, healthy recipes, and a dynamic benefits plan to assist healthy, at-risk, and chronically ill populations.

The positive outcomes of our benefits and wellness program include the engagement of staff by incorporating healthy and fun competitions among one another and awareness of healthy eating habits. Did you know that walking may be the simplest way to work out? Walking helps your heart get stronger, lowers your blood pressure, and also eases stress while allowing you to sleep better. With our members’ responsiveness to a healthier lifestyle, we can minimize and reduce the annual medical claims through our program.

The DOV Core Team, Bishop Brendan Cahill, and Father Gary Janak would like to thank the pastors, parochial vicars, location administrators, school principals, school secretaries, and other key personnel for their assistance in coordinating the participation efforts for our members.
New Year’s Prayer for Church and State

Composed by Archbishop Carroll, First U.S. Bishop, 1791

ALMIGHTY and eternal God, You have, through Jesus Christ, revealed Your glory to all nations. We pray You to preserve the works of Your mercy, that Your Church, being spread through the whole world, may continue with unchanging faith in the confession of Your name.

We pray You, who alone are good and holy, to endow with heavenly knowledge, sincere zeal, and sanctity of life our Chief Bishop, Pope Francis, the vicar of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the government of His Church; our own Archbishop and Bishop; all other bishops, prelates, and pastors of the Church; and especially those who are appointed to exercise among us the functions of the holy ministry and conduct Your people into the ways of salvation.

We pray You, O God of might, wisdom, and justice, through whom authority is rightly administered, laws are enacted, and judgment decreed, to assist with Your holy spirit of counsel and fortitude the President of the United States, that his administration may be conducted in righteousness, and be eminently useful to Your people over whom he presides; by encouraging due respect for virtue and religion, by a faithful execution of the laws in justice and mercy, and by restraining vice and immorality.

Let the light of Your divine wisdom direct the deliberations of Congress, and shine forth in all the proceedings and laws framed for our rule and government, so that they may tend to the preservation of peace, the promotion of national happiness, the increase of industry, sobriety, and useful knowledge, and may perpetuate to us the blessing of equal liberty.

We pray for his Excellency, the Governor of this state, for the members of the Assembly, for all judges, magistrates, and other officers who are appointed to guard our political welfare, that they may be enabled, by Your powerful protection, to discharge the duties of their respective stations with honesty and ability.

We recommend likewise to Your unbounded mercy all our brethren and fellow citizens throughout the United States, that they may be blessed in the knowledge and sanctified in the observance of Your most holy law; that they may be preserved in union, and in that peace which the world cannot give; and after enjoying the blessings of this life, be admitted to those which are eternal. Amen.
The following sermon was written by Father Kram from the Epiphany (This is the third of three sermons for the feast of the Epiphany).

The Magi came from Persia. They were not really kings in the usual sense. They were the wise and holy men of their country – doctors, scientists, philosophers, dream interpreters, fortune tellers, astrologers.

Astrologers believed that the star under which an individual was born determined his destiny.

There are various viewpoints regarding the nature of the star that guided the Magi. Some say it was Haley’s comet; others say it was the conjunction of the planets of Saturn and Jupiter. Still, others say it was a star “Sirius,” the name of which means “The birth of a Prince.”

It would seem that it was a miraculous star, for the scriptures say that it went ahead of the Magi and came to a standstill over the place where the child was, which, by the way, was described, not as a manger, but as a house.

This, together with the fact that Herod ordered all the baby boys two years old and under to be put to death, indicates that the Wise Men did not visit the baby Jesus at the time of his birth, but later.

Some say the Magi were kings; some have given them names – Caspar, Melchior, and Balthasar, and described them as young, old, and black, respectively.

But actually, how many Magi were there? Some have said up to twelve, although we usually think of them as three in number because the Scriptures mention three gifts – gold, a tribute to Jesus’ kingship; frankincense, a tribute to his priesthood and his divinity; and myrrh, a tribute to his death. Myrrh was an aromatic balm sprinkled on corpses.

Even though our Nativity scenes and pictures on our Christmas cards may not depict the visit of the Magi exactly the way it happened, still we joyfully celebrate the appearance of the guiding star that led the Magi to find the infant Jesus and was the occasion for him to manifest himself to them.

We call this day on which we commemorate the manifestation of Jesus to the Magi, the Feast of the Epiphany because Epiphany means manifestation or showing or appearance.

Jesus had shown Himself to the Jews at Christmas by way of shepherds. Now He showed Himself to the Gentiles (the Non-Jews) by way of the Magi. The Jews, God’s chosen people, were given the first choice.

We were not there when the Magi were, but by Faith we too know that Jesus our Messiah has come.

So today, as we celebrate once more the Feast of the Epiphany, we rejoice to have our savior with us. We resolve to keep our faith strong by faithfully practicing it. We strive to help others to grow in Faith and Love by our prayers and example.

A good way to show that we really mean what we profess is to make one good solid New Year’s resolution. This is only January, so this is still a good day. Make your resolution definite, and try to choose one that will attack some fault that causes other faults.

The power of New Year’s resolutions is in their quality, not in their quantity.

May I suggest that a good resolution for this year could be a resolution to quit complaining. Complaining is widespread. Some people are chronic complainers. Most people do it at least occasionally. So often, when one individual voices a complaint, others add their own.

Destructive complaining seldom accomplishes anything useful. It has a way of generating ill feelings in those who make the complaints as well as in those who hear them. It spreads disrespect and discontent, and often even harms someone’s reputation by broadcasting faults that are no one else’s business.

Even worse, complaining can easily become a habit, which, like any other habit, has to be resisted by doing something definite to fight it.

Whatever your resolution may be, when it gets underway, ask yourself every night at bedtime, “How did I do with my resolution today?” “Not so well?” “Here’s what I’ll do tomorrow, so it won’t happen again.” Even if you succeed only part of the time, that’s still progress.

After all, tiny drops make mighty rivers flow, and mighty oaks from little acorns grow. So let’s make our project of the week to choose a personal fault and get to work overcoming it.

If you can’t think of one, take note of what little children or your enemies say about you. They often tell you more about yourself than you want to hear.

Regardless of which fault we conquer first if we persevere, we could all, little by little, become living saints. Don’t you agree?

Lord Jesus, thank you for being born and laid in a manger – like us in every way except sin. Help us always to love you and honor you and bring the best we have and lay it at your feet. Grant that our faith in you may be a bright and guiding start to help bring all mankind to you. Amen.

Special Exhibit of St. John’s Bible Coming to St. Joseph High School

A special exhibit and presentation of The St. John’s Bible will be brought to St. Joseph High School by Dr. Bob O’Connor of St. Mary’s University. While all of our STJ students will be attending the exhibit during their theology classes, the exhibit will be made available to others on the evening of Thursday, January 16, at 6:00 pm in the theater of the David Pozzi Fine Arts Center. There is no charge for attendance, but reservations are required. You can sign up to attend at http://www.stjvictoria.com/flyer-life/stjohnsbible.cfm

This is a wonderful and unique opportunity to see first hand, the world’s newest handwritten, hand-illuminated, grand-scale Bible. The St. John’s Bible was commissioned in 1998 by the Benedictine monks of Saint John’s Abbey and University in Collegeville, Minnesota, and produced under the leadership of artistic director Donald Jackson, scribe to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. It is the first such Bible to be commissioned by a Benedictine Abbey since the advent of the printing press in the 15th century. The Saint John’s Bible Heritage Edition is a numbered, full-scale fine art reproduction of the original. Only 299 of the special Heritage Edition have been printed, and St. Mary’s University was the first in Texas to obtain the seven-volume set. For more information, visit https://www.stmarytx.edu/about/stjohns-bible/.
Sunday Readings from January 1 - February 2

January 1 ~ The Octave Day of Christmas
Solemnity of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Mother of God
Numbers 6:2-27
Psalms 67:2-3, 5-6, 8
Galatians 4:4-7
Luke 2:16-21

January 5 ~ The Epiphany of the Lord
Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalms 72:1-2, 7-8, 10-11, 12-13
Ephesians 3:2-3A, 5-6
Psalms 29:1-2, 3-4, 9-10
Acts 10:34-38
Matthew 2:1-12

January 12 ~ The Feast of the Baptism of the Lord
Isaiah 42:1-4, 6-7
Psalms 29:1-2, 3-4, 3-9-10
Acts 10:34-38
Matthew 3:1-12

January 19 ~ Second Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 49:3-5-6
Psalms 40:2, 4, 7-8, 8-9, 10
1 Corinthians 1:1-3
John 1:29-34

January 26 ~ Third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Isaiah 8:23-9:3
Psalms 27:1, 4, 13-14
1 Corinthians 1:10-13, 17
Matthew 4:12-23

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

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

Brought to you by: Catholic Communications Campaign

PUBLIC PRAYER—
In conjunction with the Rosary Congress, Sacred Heart Parish, Hallettsville held a Eucharistic Procession from the church to the downtown courthouse on Sunday, October 13. A statue of Our Lady of Fatima was carried in the process. After the procession the people prayed the Divine Mercy Chaplet. The event closed with benediction and a consecration prayer to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Note: For January Only Bishop Cahill will be on Morning Air at 7:00 a.m.

Journeys of Faith with Ceci
Experience pilgrimage in a whole new light!

Marian Shrines and Saints of France
October 6 - 18, 2020
Includes Marian Apparition Shrines in Paris, La Salette, and Lourdes
Pray with St. Catherine Laboure, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Therese the Little Flower, St. John Vianney, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and St. Bernadette
Registration opens January 5!

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!

The Emmaus Center
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.

Office of Family Evangelization

Both the retreat and workshop are from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. You are welcome to the Liturgy of the Eucharist at 8:30 a.m. in the Convent Chapel, but it is optional.
A free-will or love offering will be accepted. We are no longer purchasing box lunches, so please bring your own lunch.

To register, call (361) 575-7111 or email amormeus@yahoo.com.

PRAY with St. Catherine Laboure, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Therese the Little Flower, St. John Vianney, St. Margaret Mary Alacoque and St. Bernadette
Sacred Heart Church Turns 50 Years Old

HALLETTSVILLE—Fifty years ago, on November 23, 1969, the newly built Sacred Heart Church was dedicated by then-Archbishop Francis J. Furey of San Antonio.

The idea of building a new church came shortly after a new pastor, Father Lambert Laskowski, was installed in 1967. In 1968, a drive for funds was started for a new church. Upon approval of the church plans by the Chancery Office, demolition of the old church was completed in January 1969. During the construction of the new church, the Parish Hall served as a temporary location to have Mass. The Parish Hall was later demolished, and the location is now the parking lot for the church.

Father Stanley Petru became the pastor in 1969. Under his supervision, the construction of the new church was completed at the cost of approximately $200,000. The church was fully paid for even prior to its dedication.

The new church was constructed on the same site where the old church stood, seats 600 in a semi-circle around the altar. The first church’s old Crucifix, Stations of the Cross, Baptismal Font, two Sacred Heart statues as well as the statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and St. Joseph were placed in the new church.

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In addition, the original church’s bells, with 1883 imprinted on the bells, were installed in the new church bell tower.

The first couple married in the new church was Annette (Matula) and Paul Henke on November 29, 1969.

Our Lady of Guadalupe Honored

The Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe was celebrated throughout the Diocese of Victoria. She is the patron saint for the diocese. At Sacred Heart in Hallettsville, Msgr. John Peters and Father Scott Hill celebrated a Mass in honor of Our Lady of Guadalupe along with their Spanish music ministry.

ALTAR SERVERS HONORED—KJZT Society #111 from St. Agnes in Edna held their annual altar server luncheon. Gift cards were given to each server as well as door prizes for each family. Servers are pictured above with Father Michael Petering. Guest speaker for the luncheon was Jackson County Judge Jill Sklar, pictured left with KJZT President Doris Andel.

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3.80%* APY

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Hallettsville Native Takes Vows of Chastity, Poverty and Obedience

Cherise Klekar takes her vows at St. Mary Catholic Church in College Station. Cherise joined the community of the Apostles of the Interior Life.

Above, Cherise is escorted down the aisle at St. Mary Church in College Station by her parents Robert and Margaret Klekar. (left) Bishop Brendan Cahill was present for the special moment for Cherise. The main celebrant for the Mass was Bishop David Konderla from the Diocese of Oklahoma City.

PRAYING TOGETHER—Members of Holy Family, Wharton, who participate in the Diocesan Youth Leadership Training (YLT) led a living rosary on December 4, with students in the religious education program.

Students from St. Philip School in El Campo are invited to join the Duke University Talent Identification Program’s Talent Search.

St. Philip Students 4th-6th Grade Invited to Participate in Talent Search

EL CAMPO—Nineteen 4th through 6th grade students at St. Philip Catholic School have been invited to join the Duke University Talent Identification Program’s prestigious 4th-6th Grade Talent Search. Sixth grade students invited to join include Jaeden C., Malorie E., Paul J., and Allie Z.. Fifth grade students are Jax B., Presley H., Addelin Key, Addisyn M., Claire R., Scollie S., Croix S., and Abby W.. Fourth grade students include Charles A., Adalyn A., Paisley H., Cade K., Brinley K., Augustus R., and Mallory Z.

Each year, a select group of academically talented students in the United States are identified as academically gifted based on their exceptional grade-level standardized test scores at or above the 95th percentile. Those students are invited to participate in the 4th-6th Grade Talent Search and to take the optional PSAT 8/9, which is designed for eighth and ninth graders. Taking an above-grade-level test is an experience that allows these gifted fourth, fifth, and sixth graders to more accurately gauge their academic abilities and potential, as they need more advanced examinations than they find in their grade level.

Participants in the 4th-6th Grade Talent Search also receive a variety of support services and gain access to research and other information about using their academic abilities more effectively.

The faculty and staff of St. Philip Catholic School are proud to congratulate each of these students on their accomplishment!
March for Life, 2020
“Life Empowers”

The theme for the March for Life 2020 is: “Life Empowers” it is meant to be a healing remedy for the wounded mothers who have believed the deceptive message coming from the abortion industry! That message of freedom from pregnancy and freedom from the child within. This message is so destructive in so many ways. To destroy a life does not empower a woman, but only degrades and hurts her and all involved in the process as well as our whole world. The message of the theme is that the life of a child Empowers!, Pro-Life is Pro-Woman! Being a mother is a gift, something to be proud of not to be ashamed of.

The 33rd annual March for Life in Victoria will be on January 30. Please join them to show your commitment to the Right to Life Movement.

Those who cannot walk can meet at Our Lady of Sorrows Church. Those that will walk will gather at 6:30 p.m. in downtown DeLeon Plaza; the march will begin at 7:00 p.m. Please bring a flashlight. There will be transportation back to DeLeon Plaza. As they walk down the streets of Victoria, they will recite a rosary and go to Our Lady of Sorrows Church, where they will have guest speaker Claire Culwell.

When Claire met her biological mother in March of 2009, she was told her life was a miracle.

Claire’s biological mom became pregnant at the age of 13. Her biological grandmother took her birth mother to an abortion clinic at the age of 13. Her biological grandmother was told abortion would not be an option. Claire was born at 30 weeks gestation, weighing 3 lbs. 2 oz. She was adopted shortly after birth by an amazing family, whom she dearly loves.

Today Claire shares her miracle testimony nationally and internationally for churches, fundraising banquets, and college events. Her story encourages everyone to know that God has a plan for your life and to live with purpose and passion.

She has also been featured in the national media on Fox News, Focus on the Family and many other news outlets.

All denominations and everyone who is Pro-Life is encouraged to come!

Bishop Cahill to Attend His First Ad Limina Visit With Pope Francis

Continued from pg. 3

the diocese and more. The chapters roughly correspond to the departments and offices of the Vatican.

The Code of Canon Law dictates that the visits are supposed to occur every five years. But there are times it is a little longer than 5 years. The number of dioceses and bishops throughout the world has grown too large for that five-year schedule to be practical. There are currently 3,017 dioceses, prelatures and vicariates around the world. To maintain a five-year schedule, the Holy Father would need to meet with more than one bishop every single day. Even with Pope Francis’ practice of meeting with groups of bishops, the every-five-years timetable is not feasible given the other demands on the Holy Father’s time.
Papa Dice Que Oraciones de las Personas Mayores son Poderosas

Por Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

CIUDAD DEL VATICANO (CNS) — En vísperas de cumplir 83 años, el papa Francisco se reunió con un grupo de contemporáneos —aunque muchos eran un poco más jóvenes que él— y les dijo que “la vejez es un tiempo de gracia”.

“A los abuelos, quienes han recibido la bendición de ver a los hijos de sus hijos, se les ha confiado una gran tarea: transmitir la experiencia de vida y la historia de la familia, la comunidad y la gente”, dijo el papa el 16 de diciembre durante una audiencia con miembros de la Asociación Nacional Italiana de Trabajadores de la Tercera Edad.

La asociación representa a los trabajadores con al menos 20 años de antigüedad en una compañía, defendiendo los derechos de los trabajadores mayores y promoviendo el voluntariado a favor de los adultos mayores.

El papa Francisco, quien nació el 17 de diciembre de 1936, les dijo a los miembros de la asociación que los últimos años de uno deben ser “una temporada de diálogo”, porque “el futuro de un pueblo naturalmente da por sentado un diálogo y encuentro entre los jóvenes y viejos para construir una sociedad que sea más justa, más hermosa, que tenga más solidaridad y sea más cristiana”.

Al ponernos más viejos, dijo, “el Señor nos invita a preservar y transmitir la fe; nos insta a revitalizar la comunidad y la gente”, dijo el papa el 16 de diciembre durante una audiencia con miembros de la Asociación Nacional Italiana de Trabajadores de la Tercera Edad.

“Los mayores, abuelos, tienen una capacidad única y especial para entender la mayoría de las situaciones problemáticas”, prosiguió el papa. “Y cuando ellos rezan por estas situaciones, su oración es fuerte, es potente”.

El papa Francisco participa en una audiencia con personas que participan en un curso sobre matrimonio patrocinado por la Rota romana, en el Vaticano, el 30 de noviembre de 2019. La Rota Romana es un tribunal del Vaticano que se encarga principalmente de casos de matrimonio. (Foto CNS-Vatican Media)

Papa Celebra 50 Años de Sacerdote
Presentando Obras de Guía Espiritual

Por Cindy Wooden
Catholic News Service

ROMA (CNS) — Como parte de las celebraciones del 50 aniversario de su sacerdocio, el papa Francisco escogió presentar personalmente una colección de varios volúmenes de escritos de quien fue por muchos años su director espiritual, el ahora fallecido padre jesuita Miguel Ángel Fiorito.

Además de presentar la colección en español, “Escritos”, en una conferencia en la sede jesuita el 13 de diciembre, el papa Francisco escribió la introducción diciendo que la publicación es “un consuelo para todos los ‘discípulos’ del padre Fiorito. El editor, el papa Francisco, quien nació el 17 de diciembre de 1936, les dijo a los miembros de la asociación que los últimos años de uno deben ser “una temporada de diálogo”, porque “el futuro de un pueblo naturalmente da por sentado un diálogo y encuentro entre los jóvenes y viejos para construir una sociedad que sea más justa, más hermosa, que tenga más solidaridad y sea más cristiana”.

Al ponernos más viejos, dijo, “el Señor renueva su llamado en nosotros. Nos llama a preservar y transmitir la fe; nos insta a orar, especialmente a interceder; nos pide que estemos junto a aquellos que están en necesidad”.

“Los mayores, abuelos, tienen una capacidad única y especial para entender la mayoría de las situaciones problemáticas”, prosiguió el papa. “Y cuando ellos rezan por estas situaciones, su oración es fuerte, es potente”.

Al vivir la tercera edad como un regalo y un tiempo para el diálogo, dijo, los mayores muestran lo falso que es “el tradicional estereotipo de los ancianos: enfermos, discapacitados, dependientes, aislados, acorralados por el miedo, olvidados, con una identidad frágil luego de perder su rol social”.

Las personas mayores activas, dijo, también enfrentan un sistema que se enfoca más en “costos y riesgos” que en “recursos y potencial”.

“El futuro –y no es una exageración– yace en el diálogo entre el joven y el viejo”, dijo. “Todos estamos llamados a luchar contra esta venenosa cultura del descarte. Estamos llamados tenazmente a construir una sociedad distinta, una que sea más acogedora, más humana, más inclusiva”, una donde los jóvenes no sean ignorados porque no están trabajando aún y los viejos no sean ignorados porque la gente piensa que sus años financieramente productivos se acabaron.

“Recuerden,” les dijo el papa, “hablarles a los jóvenes, no ‘machacarles’, no. Al escucharlos, se siembra algo. Este diálogo es el futuro”.

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...
**January**

**Bloomington**—Knights of Columbus #10751 Scholarship Fundraiser, Jan. 5, at St. Patrick’s Parish Hall, from 10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. A spaghetti and meatball dinner meal with dessert for $10 p/p. Presale tickets available by calling (512) 657-1795.

**Yoakum**—Catholic Daughter Court No. 206, Annual Fundraiser Chicken Fried Steak Dinner, Jan. 26, at the St. Joseph’s Family Center. From 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Dine-in or plates-to-go available. **Pre-Sale Tickets Only** are $10 each and can be purchased at the St. Joseph Pastoral Center, Crossroads Bank, Prosperity Bank, Yoakum National Bank, or CDA members. Raffle, Country Store/Bake Sale and homemade noodles will also be available for sale. Come and enjoy some great food and fellowship.

**Victoria**—St. Joseph High School Open House for Prospective Students and Families, Jan. 26, 2:00 p.m. in the STJ Flyer Dome (110 E. Red River). If you are considering St. Joseph High School for your son or daughter, please join them for their open house. There will be campus tours, meet the faculty, and get answers to your questions. For more information, visit STJVictoria.com/admissions.

**East Bernard**—Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court St. Bernadette #1108, annual Chicken Noodle Soup and Sandwich Supper, Raffle, and Silent Auction, Wednesday, January 29, American Legion Hall (Hwy. 60). Serving begins at 5:00 p.m. until sold out. Soup is $3 a bowl and a chicken salad sandwich is $3. Dine-in or bring your own containers and enjoy at home. A large variety of pastries will be available.

**February**

**Bloomington**—Knights of Columbus #10751 Annual Superbowl Sunday BBQ, Feb. 2. A whole bbq chicken for $10 each or bbq chicken plate at $10 p/p with dessert at the parish hall. Curbside service available beginning at 9:00 a.m. Call ahead for orders at (361) 897-1398.

**Victoria**—Holy Family Altar Society Lenten mini-retreat, Saturday, Feb. 15. Beginning with a Mass at 8:00 a.m. in the main church. The retreat will be held in the Activity Center following the end of Mass, with Father Christopher Fuchs leading the retreat. All are welcome, men and women. There is no fee for the retreat. A light breakfast and lunch will be served. In order to prepare enough food, we need you to please call and sign-up with Betty Frederick (361) 578-7572 before attending.

**Victoria**—at Incarnate Word Convent. Are you perhaps being called to join the Sisters of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament as authentic, contemplative women and stewards of the earth? For more information, contact (361) 575-7111 or email iwbsvoc@yahoo.com.

**Edna**—St. Agnes Church, will sponsor a “Celebration of Life” Mass on Feb. 14. For more information contact (361) 782-2933.

**El Campo**—Patricia Talbot to speak at St. Robert Bellarmine on Feb. 2, immediately after the 11:00 a.m. Mass. She will speak on a call to true conversion. See pg. 5 for more information.

**ACTS Retreats**—Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS Retreats in the diocese should email dovaactschapter@victoriadiocese.org.
to the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem later received their Pilgrim Shell. Following is just a little reflection of their journey to the Holy Land.

Aaron Kovar: This trip was a tremendous blessing. I learned so much about Scripture, and it was wonderful to walk in the path of Jesus, in the places where He spent His earthly pilgrimage.

Pamela Kovar: Life-changing...To have a singular focus each day where, as a pilgrim, the focus is learning about Jesus. The result is that my covenant union with Him has grown more intimate, and the yearning to know more about Him has increased. Scripture has come to life as I now have the actual places in my mind where events occurred.

Joe Morris: One thing that surprised me was the number of tourists in the Holy Land. Several of my favorite places were our boat ride in the Sea of Galilee, renewing our marriage vows in Cana, and visiting the Garden of Gethsemane. We attended Mass and touched the rock upon which Jesus prayed. We celebrated a Solemn High Mass at the Church of the Holy Sepulchre at 6:30 a.m., where I was the lector. Receiving my Pilgrim Shell from the Latin Patriarchate was another highlight of my trip. A very humbling experience. I would advise that if you haven’t been to the Holy Land, make an effort to go within your lifetime.

Sister Kathleen Goike: As I reflect on this experience, I still have to sit, ponder, and stare at pictures in wonder and awe! When first asked by Bishop Cahill if I would like to go, I think I was dumb-founded, stuttering over my words, questioning if the time was right, etc. before uttering my “yes.” Saying yes, however, brought many graces, inspirations, knowledge, and above all, a greater appreciation for Scripture. My spiritual life has expanded as I have come to realize the workings of God in people’s lives. The words of the Our Father – give us this day, our daily bread – have a whole new meaning as I experienced and witnessed in others’ lives the power of these words. This daily bread came in the form not only of the daily Eucharist but extended in the form of our co-pilgrims. Being there for one another to assist or help to assure that everyone had the opportunity to participate in the various events. We journeyed; we were Christ to one another as we experienced Jesus in the multiple sites where He may have walked, healed, prayed, touched, all signs of love.

One of my favorite experiences on this pilgrimage was the boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. The water was like glass, and it was so peaceful. One could sense that Jesus was in the boat, calmed the sea, and welcomed us into his presence.

As a Sister of the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament, I appreciated the Church of the Annunciation – Mary’s fiat has always played an essential part in my numerous yeses over the years.

The Way of the Cross also has more significant meaning as we walked over rough and slippery cobblestones, making our way to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It was a powerful walk, as one could easily slip or stumble on the way – an image of the reality of our lives. However, with Him and in Him, we come to the Resurrection – the journey that we never make alone, for the Lord always puts his angels there to help us.

This pilgrimage was indeed a holy and blessed experience that leaves me proclaiming – Praise be the Incarnate Word in the Most Blessed Sacrament!

Joyce Morris: A trip of a lifetime, not enough words to express all we took in this pilgrimage. I am grateful I could make the trip. We attended a Mass and then went down to the Grotto of the Nativity, where we were able to touch a silver star that marks the spot of Jesus’ birth. The significant experience was to view and touch the tomb where our Lord was laid after his death. Able to attend Mass every day in some beautiful churches with Bishop Brendan Cahill as celebrant. Also, going to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre twice. The last morning in Jerusalem, we started early in the morning with the Via Dolorosa (The Way of the Cross) at the Antonia Fortress, where Jesus was condemned to death by Pontius Pilate.

For those members of the Equestrian Order of the Holy Sepulchre of Jerusalem, our trip was complete by receiving our Pilgrim Shell in a special ceremony. This only gives some thoughts of a very spiritual, inspiring, and humbling pilgrimage. Sepulchre of Jerusalem later received their Pilgrim Shell.

Richard Evans: Following outdoor Mass on the Mount of Beatitudes, our group joined hands in a large circle in prayer and, in turn, we each shared what it was that brought us to this place. Many spoke of fulfilling a lifelong dream to visit, in person, the places that Holy Scripture had taken them in their minds. Others spoke of walking in the footsteps of Jesus to better know his word. Others from the Order of the Holy Sepulchre spoke of our duty, made clear at our investiture, to make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land in support of our Christian brethren. When my turn came, I made mention of all those things, I added that my wife Karen, and I also sought a deepening of our marital spirituality by making the journey together. Besides, being in my final year of diocesan formation, I expressed my anticipation of having the experience lend an element of authenticity to my teaching ministry. By the trip’s end, all of these things that we had been in hopeful anticipation of became a reality as did a deeper, more complete relationship with our faith.

For me, the pilgrimage became so much more than anything I could have predicted. In the days and weeks since we have been back at home, I am still working to comprehend the magnitude of everything we saw and experienced fully. I was overcome with emotion as I ascended the steps at the Grotto of the Nativity. I realized that I had just touched the exact spot where St. Joseph and our Blessed Virgin Mary welcomed the infant Jesus into this world. Because of that birth, the world would be forever changed. At the foot of the Mount of Olives, in The Garden of Gethsemane, I said a prayer as I touched the rock where Jesus prayed the night before he gave up his life for our salvation. On the last day of our trip, I served at the Mass in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. I placed my forehead on the cool marble covering the stone slab where Jesus had laid as Bishop Brendan elevated his body. I never felt more in communion with my Lord as I did at that moment.

As a Catholic, I returned from the Holy Land spiritually rebuilt. As a husband and father, I returned with fresh resolve. As a Knight of the Holy Sepulchre, I returned with a new clarity of purpose in supporting the plight of the few remaining Christians in the Holy Land. And finally, as a pilgrim, I have a deep sense of gratitude for Bishop Cahill, our spiritual director, Father Mark Salas, our new friend and Mchile Malloy, our tour director, all for making this pilgrimage indeed a once in a lifetime experience.