Inside ...

How to approach vocations
Our blessed pets
Red, White, and Blue Masses

The Catholic Lighthouse
The Cradle of Texas Immigration

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

Synod Phase 1:
The Church is listening

Pope Francis has called for a two-year process of dialogue and listening and has invited everyone to the table.

Synod 2021 – 2023: For a Synodal Church is a chance for the people who are occupying -- or not occupying -- the pews in our Catholic churches to join the discussion about synodality, or walking the path together into the future. Pope Francis has asked that particular attention be given to people those who feel isolated or marginalized.

The synod opened on Oct. 10 with Mass at St. Peter’s Basilica in Rome. The Diocese of Victoria opened its local phase with a Mass on Oct. 24, celebrated by Bishop Brendan Cahill.

“Today we join with the Church around the world, beginning a process that is listening, and is prayerful, opening our hearts to the Holy Spirit, and praying for God’s guidance for ourselves and for the whole world,” Bishop Cahill said at the beginning of Mass. He referred to Pope Francis’s “beautiful Synod 2021 2023
For a synodal Church
communion | participation | mission

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

Rosary Congress procession
PORT LAVACA — Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church and its mission churches in Calhoun County, St. Ann in Point Comfort, St. Joseph in Port O’Connor and St. Patrick in Seadrift, gathered for a rosary procession on Oct. 10, the final day of the Rosary Congress in the Diocese of Victoria. See Story, Page 20. (Contributed Photo)

Dinner-discussion focuses on happy, healthy, holy holidays

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

EL CAMPO — There’s a long-standing rule of thumb that, when you gather with extended family for the holidays, don’t talk about politics and religion.

Still, there may be some opportunities during such gatherings to bring people closer to Christ.

The Rev. Philip Brune, pastor of St. Robert Bellarmine, will give a talk on “Reaching out to loved ones over the holidays,” during a dinner and discussion on Nov. 19 at St. Robert’s parish hall. The event is sponsored by Marriage and Family Ambassadors of the Diocese of Victoria. Cost is $40 per couple or $25 per individual.

Father Brune said he will talk about how to navigate touchy subjects that do come up. “It can be a stressful time,” he said. “Conversations can be difficult.”

He said holidays should be joyful and families should be able to communicate without stirring up bad feelings. Before broaching a topic, he said, “What fruits will this produce? Discern whether another person is willing to receive what you’re going to say.”

Justin Reyes, Director of Family Evangelization, said the idea for the dinner/discussion came up this summer when the family ambassadors were discussing ways to evangelize. “How do we help people who just aren’t there?” he said. “A lot of us feel like we’re the only ones still practicing the faith in our homes.”

Both Father Brune and Reyes agreed that people want to feel welcomed and want relationships rather than doctrine. Reyes said, “It’s about getting real about where people are (in their faith),” in order to have the type of relationship that might lead them back to the sacraments.

“It’s more about living your faith during the holidays. Live it and just listen and love
See Dinner-discussion, pg. 4
Dear Brothers and Sisters,

“The Church of God, living in exile in Rome, to the Church of God, exiled in Corinth – to you who are called and sanctified by God’s will through our Lord Jesus Christ…” (Early Christian Fathers, ed. Cyril C. Richardson, Simon and Schuster: NY, NY, 1996, p. 43). Writing in the year 96, the third successor of St. Peter, as the leader of the Church in Rome, began a letter with these words which teach us even today about our ultimate destiny.

Pope Clement wrote to a community that was divided and fighting over earthly concerns, and this introduction called them to success, and this called them to

Concerns, and this introduction called them to

The Catholic Lighthouse

Pilgrims on a Journey

Church fathers encourage us to focus on ultimate destiny

A Shepherd’s Message

By Bishop Brendan Cahill

Mary and the saints. Our spiritual practices in the month of November remind us each year to keep our eyes on the prize.

For each of us life on earth is a precious, beautiful gift to be treasured, and we deeply mourn the loss of family and friends who have passed away. In rising from the dead and appearing to His chosen witnesses, Jesus showed us that on the other side of the

pain and emptiness is a glorious resurrection. In the glorified life, our bodies will no longer suffer pain or sadness, we will see and rejoice with our loved ones (and even many of our enemies) and all will be made clear.

This year, Pope Francis (the 266th Bishop of Rome) has invited the entire Church to think and pray about how our actions on earth line up with God’s will for our ultimate destiny. In this issue of the Lighthouse we will print the words of Pope Francis’ homily for the beginning of the “synodal process.” As he said in this homily, the synodal process represents walking with people, listening to one another and praying for direction – ultimately trusting in the merciful heart of Jesus.

May God bless you and may your families experience the peace, healing and comfort of faith in this month of remembrance of our beloved dead. And may all our departed, through the mercy of God, receive the forgiveness of their sins and the gift of eternal joy.

Let’s keep each other in prayer.

+Brendan

Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis

St. Peter’s Basilica Sunday, 10 October 2021

A certain rich man came up to Jesus “as he was setting out on his journey” (Mark 10:17). The Gospels frequently show us Jesus “on a journey”; he walks alongside people and listens to the questions and concerns lurking in their hearts. He shows us that God is not found in neat and orderly places, distant from reality, but walks ever at our side. He meets us where we are, on the often rocky roads of life. Today, as we begin this synodal process, let us begin by asking ourselves – all of us, Pope, bishops, priests, religious and laity – whether we, the Christian community, embody this “style” of God, who travels the paths of history and shares in the life of humanity.

Are we prepared for the adventure of this journey? Or are we fearful of the unknown, preferring to take refuge in the usual excuses:

“It’s useless” or “We’ve always done it this way”?

Celebrating a Synod means walking on the same road, walking together. Let us look at Jesus. First, he encounters the rich man on the road; he then listens to his questions, and finally he helps him discern what he must do to inherit eternal life. Encounter, listen and discern. I would like to reflect on these three verbs that characterize the Synod.

The first is encounter. The Gospel passage begins by speaking of an encounter. A man comes up to Jesus and kneels down before him, asking him a crucial question: “Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?” (v. 17). So important a question requires attention, time, willingness to encounter others and sensitivity to what troubles them. The Lord is not stand aloof; he does not appear annoyed or disturbed. Instead, he is completely present to this person. He is open to encounter. Nothing leaves Jesus indifferent; everything is of concern to him. Encountering faces, meeting eyes, sharing each individual’s history. That is the closeness that Jesus embodies. He knows that someone’s life can be changed by a single encounter. The Gospel is full of such encounters with Christ, encounters that uplift and bring healing. Jesus did not hurry along, or keep looking at his watch to get the meeting over. He was always at the service of the person he was with, listening to what he or she had to say.

As we initiate this process, we too are called to become experts in the art of encounter. Not so much by organizing events or theorizing about problems, as in taking time to encounter the Lord and one another. Time to devote to prayer and to adoration – that form of prayer that we so often neglect – devoting time to adoration, and to hearing what the Spirit wants to say to the Church. Time to look others in the eye and listen to what they have to say, to build rapport, to be sensitive to the questions of our sisters and brothers, to let ourselves be enriched by the variety of charisms, vocations and ministries. Every encounter – as we know – calls for openness, courage and a willingness to let ourselves be challenged by the presence and the stories of others. If at times we would rather take refuge in formality or presenting the proper image – the clerical and courtly spirit, where I am simply Monsieur l’abbé than Father – the experience of encounter changes us; frequently it opens up new and unexpected possibilities. Following today’s Angelus, I will meet with a group of street people who came together simply because a group of people made an effort to listen to them, sometimes just to listen to them. And from that listening they succeeded in setting out on a new path. So often God points out new paths in just this way. He invites us to leave our old habits behind. Everything changes once we are capable of genuine encounters with him and with one another, without formalism or pretense, but simply as we are.

The second verb is listen. True encounter arises only from listening. Jesus listened to that man’s question and to the religious and existential concerns that lay behind it. He did not give a non-committal reply or offer a prepackaged solution; he did not pretend to respond politely, simply as a way of dismissing him and continuing on his way. Jesus simply listens, for whatever amount of time it takes; he is not rushed. Most importantly, he is not afraid to listen to him with his heart and not just with his ears. Indeed, he does more than simply answer the rich man’s question; he lets him tell his story, to speak freely about himself. Christ reminds him of the commandments, and the man starts to talk about his youth, to share his religious journey and his efforts to seek God. This happens whenever we listen with the heart: people feel that they are being heard, not judged; they feel free to recount their own experiences and their spiritual journey.

Let us ask ourselves frankly during this synodal process: Are we good at listening? How good is the “hearing” of our heart? Do we allow people to express themselves, to walk in faith even though they have had difficulties in life, and to be part of the life of the community without being hindered, rejected or judged? Participating in a Synod means placing ourselves on the same path as the Word made flesh. It means following in his footsteps, listening to his word along with the words of others. It means discovering with amazement that the Holy Spirit always surprises us, to suggest fresh paths and new ways of speaking. It is a slow and perhaps tiring exercise, this learning to listen to one another – bishops, priests, religious and laity, all the baptized – and to avoid artificial and shallow and pre-packaged responses.

See Homily of His Holiness, pg. 5
### Bishop Cahill’s Schedule

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<th>November</th>
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<td>3</td>
<td>8:05 a.m. School Mass and visit at St. Michael’s Catholic School; Cuero</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>St. Mary’s Seminary Alumni Reunion; Houston</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>8:10 a.m. School Mass and visit at Shiner Catholic Schools; Shiner</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Mass with Carmelites; Meyersville</td>
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<td>10 a.m. KJZT State Convention Mass; Hallettsville</td>
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<td>7</td>
<td>9 a.m. Red Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory; Victoria</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Catholic Rural Life Board Meeting; Virtual</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>Kenedy Board of Directors meeting; Corpus Christi</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>10 a.m. Presbyteral Council meeting; Chancery</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>Pastoral Institute Class; The Church; Chancery</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Irish Gala; Houston</td>
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<td>13-19</td>
<td>United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; Baltimore, MD</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>10 a.m. Catholic Rural Life Thanksgiving Mass at Whistling Duck Winery; Weimar</td>
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<td>8:05 a.m. School Mass and visit with Our Lady of the Gulf; Port Lavaca</td>
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<td>4:40 p.m. supper with IWBS sisters in Healthcare at IWBS Convent; Victoria</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center</td>
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<td>12</td>
<td>Irish Gala; Houston</td>
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<td>13-19</td>
<td>United States Conference of Catholic Bishops; Baltimore, MD</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>10 a.m. Catholic Rural Life Thanksgiving Mass at Whistling Duck Winery; Weimar</td>
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<td>21</td>
<td>11 a.m. Confirmation Mass at Sacred Heart Catholic Church; Flatonia</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Noon Mass with Missionary Catechists</td>
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<td>23</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center</td>
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<td>24-26</td>
<td>Chancery Closed for Thanksgiving Holiday</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>Mass with Carmelites; Meyersville</td>
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<td>28</td>
<td>9 a.m. Mass at The Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory; Victoria</td>
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<td>29</td>
<td>6 p.m. Diocesan School Advisory Committee; Chancery</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>9:30 a.m. Legion of Mary Praesidium meeting; Cathedral Center</td>
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**Knights raise money for charities**

The Archbishop Drossaerts Assembly 1131 4th Degree Knights of Columbus (from the El Campo area) present a check for $6,540 to Bishop Brendan Cahill for the bishop’s charities. The funds were raised through a raffle sponsored by the Knights of Columbus. Hector Gutierrez, chairman of the event, far right, said, “Thank you to all the Knights of Columbus councils, assemblies, Knights of Columbus members, businesses and individuals that donated their time, money and talents that make this raffle a success.” Also pictured with Bishop Cahill, from left, are Daniel Garza, Harry Ike Isenberger, Joe Verver and Jose Martinez. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

**Returning to the Sacraments**

*Watch for more details in early 2022*

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**Prayer from St. Augustine**

Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

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

*Rev. Godfrey F. Kuratko 11/18/1983*  
*Rev. John Kollannur 11/19/2017*  
*Rev. Peter Higgins 11/20/2012*  
*Rev. Gregory O’Connor 11/26/1986*  
*Rev. Raphael Baidoo, O.Ss.T. 11/30/2016*

*May their souls and the souls of all the faithful departed rest in peace*
DINNER-discussion focuses on happy, healthy, holy holidays

Continued from pg. 1

people. You need to be Jesus at the table,” Reyes said. Referring to the Synod on Synodality that just began as a grassroots synod worldwide, Reyes said, “I love that we’re able to have a Synod at the table.”

So who should come to the dinner on Nov. 19? Father Brune said anyone who wants to have some fun, because that is one of the main goals for the evening. “I think we forget to have fun. Laughter really is the best medicine.”

To register online for the event, visit www.victoriadiocese.org/family-ambassadors. Space is limited. For more information, contact Reyes at jreyes@victoriadiocese.org or 361-573-0828, Ext. 2265.

Happy birthday to our seminarians Ryan Kapavik, Aaron Padilla

Belated Wishes to Shane Goertz

Shane Goertz this year is in Theology II at St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston. Shane’s hometown is Spring Prairie. His birthday is Oct. 28. Write to Shane at: St. Mary’s Seminary, 9845 Memorial Dr, Houston TX 77024.

Ryan Kapavik is in Theology III at St. Mary’s Seminary in Houston. Ryan’s hometown is Shiner. His birthday is November 14. Write to Ryan at: St. Mary’s Seminary, 9845 Memorial Dr, Houston TX 77024.

Aaron Padilla this year is in his Pastoral year at St. Robert Parish in El Campo. Aaron’s hometown is Victoria. His birthday is November 15. Write to Aaron at: St. Robert Church, 512 Tegner St, El Campo TX 77437.

“Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.”

Matthew 4:18-22
The faults of others can help us overcome our own

Father Charles Kram Corner

Homily of His Holiness Pope Francis

The Spirit asks us to listen to the questions, concerns and hopes of every Church, people and nation. And to listen to the world, to the challenges and changes that it sets before us. Let us not soundproof our hearts; let us not remain barricaded in our certainties. So often our certainties can make us closed. Let us listen to one another.

Finally, discern. Encounter and listening are not ends in themselves, leaving everything just as it was before. On the contrary, whenever we enter into dialogue, we allow ourselves to be challenged, to advance on a journey. And in the end, we are no longer the same; we are changed. We see this in today’s Gospel. Jesus senses that the person before him is a good and religious man, obedient to the commandments, but he wants to lead him beyond the mere observance of precepts.

Through dialogue, he helps him to discern. Jesus encourages that man to look within, in the light of the love that the Lord himself had shared with him (cf. v. 21), and to discern in that light what his heart truly treasures. And in this way to discover that he cannot attain happiness by filling his life with more religious observances, but by emptying himself, selling whatever takes up space in his heart, in order to make room for God.

Here is a valuable lesson also for us. The Synod is a process of spiritual discernment, of ecclesial discernment, that unfolds in adoration, in prayer and in dialogue with the word of God. Today’s second reading tells us that God’s word is “living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart” (Hebrews 4:12). That word summons us to discernment and it brings light to that process. It guides the Synod, preventing it from becoming a Church convention, a study group or a political gathering, a parliament, but rather a grace-filled event, a process of healing guided by the Spirit. In these days, Jesus calls us, as he did the rich man in the Gospel, to empty ourselves, to free ourselves from all that is worldly, including our inward-looking and outward pastoral models; and to ask ourselves what it is that God wants to say to us in this time. And the direction in which he wants to lead us.

Dear brothers and sisters, let us have a good journey together! May we be pilgrims in love with the Gospel and open to the surprises of the Holy Spirit. Let us not miss out on the grace-filled opportunities born of encounter, listening and discernment. In the joyful conviction that, even as we seek the Lord, he comes with his love to meet us first.

Do I act that way myself? How do others see me? What can I do to correct myself?

The equivalent attitudes are not unheard of in the church. Such weakness can afflict us all. A peculiar fact is that often a fault we most dislike in others is perhaps a major fault of our own. Bossy people hate to be told what to do. People who are slow hate to be kept waiting. Proud winners are often poor losers. We can use the faults we see in others as a clue to remedying our own.

There are so many children who are disobedient and disrespectful and rebellious. The equivalent attitudes are not unheard of in the church. Such weakness can afflict us all.

Proud winners are often poor losers.

The Tetons~June Yellowstone & The Tetons~June

Pathways with Patti

Subject to change due to COVID

~ Germany & Austria ~
Christmas Markets
Dec. 6-14 2021

Scotland & Ireland
Alaska & Hawaii

The Catholic Lighthouse
Page 5 — November 2021

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Port Lavaca, TX 77979
(361) 552.2695 or (361) 920.3216
e-mail: zkmmnt@tds.net
www.pathwayswithpatti.com

Wendy Eggert, Director
Shannon Thomas, Associate Director
ym@victoriadiocese.org
(361) 573-0828
www.victoriadiocese.org/youth-young-adult-ministry

Office of Youth & Young Adult Ministry

Father's image

2009-2000

1929-2000

Is there anyone you especially resent or dislike or to complain about?

Next time, why not take each such negative attitude and turn it around? Ask yourself some questions:

Do I act that way myself?

How do others see me?

What can I do to correct myself?

Sulking and complaining and blaming others is such fun, but it is likewise such a waste of time, because in every circumstance of life in which there is a possibility for criticizing, there is also a precious opportunity for self-examination and improvement.

To practice love and patience and endurance under difficult circumstances instead of complaining about others is one mark of a true Christian. The Christian knows beyond all doubt that perseverance to the end is the only way to lasting happiness.

Next time you are tempted to complain about someone, think about Zaccheaus -- the most resented man in the crowd, yet he was the one who was closest to Christ. Think about it.

Lord Jesus, thank you for showing us what really counts in our relationship with you. Help us to use the faults we see in others as likely clues to what may be lacking in us. Grant that through our tolerance and our patience as likely clues to what may be lacking in us. Allow there is also a precious opportunity for self-examination and improvement.

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Finding Beauty in Mystery

By Sister Rosario Resendez, IWBS

Once upon a time there was a little girl who thought about becoming a nun but didn’t know anything about religious life. The little girl didn’t know any sisters or nuns, didn’t know there was a difference between sisters and nuns, and thought they all wore black and white habits and maybe sang and danced like the ones in “Sister Act.”

It was me. I was that little girl.

Every year the Church has a week dedicated to vocations. This year that week will be Nov. 7-13. I’m guessing they do this because there are a lot of little boys and girls out there that have no idea how one finds his or her vocation.

In Church terms, when we talk about vocation, we are talking about four specific vocations. Those are the priesthood, religious and/or consecrated life such as religious brothers and sisters, marriage and single life.

It would appear a vocation is what we do with our life after we become an adult, right? Something that becomes part of us, part of our identity. How does one choose one’s vocation, as it is something to be taken very seriously? After all, we are talking about the rest of our lives.

When it comes to a religious vocation or that of the priesthood, I think there is a misconception that some little girls are born with veils and some little boys are born with collars. That it is something determined at birth. I can assure you that is not the case. Other times it seems that people may think there is a special garden or orchard where priests and sisters are harvested and sent to where they are needed. That is a little closer to the truth; however, that garden or orchard is your family.

Many times men and women believe that if they are attracted to someone, then marriage must be the vocation for them. That is also not necessarily the case. St. Francis of Assisi, St. Teresa of Avila, St. Ignatius of Loyola and Mother Jeanne Chezard de Matel were all very popular. They liked people, and people liked them. However, they found their way to religious life and became great leaders of the Church. If finding someone attractive is the determining factor on whether one should be married, I don’t think there would be any religious or priests. There will always be attractive people. Our Lord is an artist and there are times that He creates masterpieces.

I believe that, because vocations are important, and it is the way we will live the rest of our lives, we should approach it slowly, but we should approach it. It will be no help to anyone if a young man or a young lady thinks about religious life but hides from the thought of visiting a seminary or a convent. Visiting does not mean you made a commitment. Learning more about the way of life does not mean you have made a commitment. Similar to dating, one does not marry the other on the very first date; therefore, we will not force anyone to sign up to enter the convent or the seminary when one comes to visit.

How will one ever find one’s soul mate if he or she never goes on a date? If they stay locked away in their home at all times? One’s soulmate will not be found inside one’s home, and if someone is in there that does not live there, more than likely it’s a burglar.

At times it takes many years for our vocation to unfold before us, but I don’t think we will ever be 100 percent sure that we have chosen the right vocation. There may be times when we are 99.9 percent sure and then there will be times that we are only .01 percent sure. Keep in mind: When we say yes to a vocation, we will actually be saying several “yeses” throughout our life. The key is to say the first yes: “Yes, I will go and see.”
Bishop Cahill poses for a photo with the seven who received the sacrament of confirmation Sept. 28. They were prepared through the Adult Confirmation course offered at Our Lady of Victory parish. The next course for adults to prepare for the sacrament begins Jan. 25. (Contributed Photo)

Victoria Deanery celebrates 7 adult confirmations


Over the past five years, 134 adults have been prepared and blessed with the reception of the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of confirmation through this Adult Confirmation course, developed in 2016 by Chris Kallus, catechist, and Jennifer Vincent, pastoral associate at the cathedral.

This course is offered to any Catholic adults within the Victoria Deanery that have, for whatever reason, missed out on the preparation and reception of the sacrament of confirmation.

The course is taken over five weeks and assumes the candidates have had some prior religious education.

This fall’s adult candidates were: Yajaira Ayala, Marlene Clark, Mariana Jimenez, James Faires, Alejandro Romero, Stephanie Jimenez and Orestes Romero.

The next Adult Confirmation course begins Jan. 25 and continues on Tuesday evenings through Feb. 22, with the Adult Confirmation Mass on Sunday, Feb. 27, at 2 p.m.

Seminarians win at golf tourney

Seminarians Aaron Padilla, right, and Deacon Tran Dinh, left, work during the 24th Annual Bishop David Fellhauer Invitational Golf Tournament on Oct. 8. Clay Crockett, one of the golfers is shown in the center. The Knights of Columbus and the Office of Youth and Young Adult Ministry in the Diocese of Victoria hosted the event Colony Creek Country Club. The event raised more than $54,000. A large portion of the money -- $29,000 -- will go to the education of seminarians in the Diocese of Victoria. Other funds raised with benefit youth ministries and other vocational ministries in the diocese. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Are you invested properly? Get a second opinion.

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Member SIPC
Getting the job (interview) done

WEIMAR — This week, seventh- and eighth-grade students at St. Michael Catholic School came to class dressed for their randomly assigned job position interviews, which included a welder, teacher, waiter, fruit farm worker or nurse. Principal Judy Roeder, Ms. Sarah Moore and Ms. Michelle Koeth conducted interviews, and applicants were notified of their job status by the end of the day. All of the students did a great job by preparing informative resumes and conducting themselves professionally during their interviews. From left are Brinson Huette, Dylan Moeller, Hunter Shupak, Trey Billeck, Hudson Rowland, Kylie Ohnheiser, Nicolas Vasquez, Trevor Bentley, Carson Klam, Madelyn Rerich, Trey Silcox, Tucker Janak and Emma Koeth. (Contributed Photo)

National essay winner

SCHULENBURG — Miranda Bonner, center, daughter of Matt Bonner and Erin Bonner, won first place in the local, state and national levels of the Catholic Daughters of the Americas annual essay contest. Her essay is titled “Show Love to One Another.” She was honored at the September CDA meeting and at a recent school Mass. She is pictured with Cynthia Kosler, local CDA Regent, left, and Wendy Becka, her English/writing teacher. (Contributed Photo)

Praying for the unborn

Every October, the Houston Coalition for Life organizes a 40 Days for Life rally from the end of September through October. Bishop Brendan Cahill, the Rev. Scott Hill, Pastor of St. Rose of Lima School, teacher Mrs. Lindsey Schiffli, and eighth-graders from St. Rose and St. Michael made the trip to Houston to peacefully pray outside of the abortion clinic on the Gulf Freeway. They prayed a couple of rosaries, the divine mercy chaplet, and a litany to the Blessed Mother for the conversion of hearts and that the sanctity of life may be respected and restored. (Contributed Photo)

Catholic Schools Employment Opportunities

— Holy Cross School: Bay City, Texas
  • Principal (immediate)
  • EC 5th Grade Teacher(s)
— St. Michael School: Weimar, Texas
  • ELAR-5th and 8th Grade Teacher(s)
  • Social Studies/Religion-5th Grade Teacher
— St. Michael School: Cuero, Texas
  • Principal (2022-2023 school year)
  • PreK Teacher

For detailed job descriptions and qualification requirements visit: www.victoriadiocese.org/employment-opportunities
Submit applications to:
Dr. John Quary, Superintendent
by email: jquary@victoriadiocese.org
or by mail: PO Box 4070, Victoria 77903

Dinner & Discussion

With Father Philip Brune

Reaching out to loved ones over the holidays

We all know family members and friends who may not be practicing the Catholic faith. Father Philip Brune, pastor of St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church in El Campo, will lead us in a discussion about how to love these people who are so close to our hearts over the upcoming holidays, inviting them into deeper relationship with us, Christ and His Church. Open to adults ages 18 and up.

Friday, November 19 from 6pm to 7:30pm
Adoration & Confession available afterwards
St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church Parish Hall
512 Tegner St, El Campo, TX 77437
$40 per couple, $25 per individual (dinner included)
Register at www.victoriadiocese.org/family-ambassadors
Space is limited, please sign up soon!

Questions? Please contact 361-573-0828 x 2265 or jreyes@victoriadiocese.org
This event is sponsored by the Marriage & Family Ambassadors of the Diocese of Victoria
EDITOR’S NOTE: This is from the series “From the Archives” of Catholic Rural Life. It was published in the Catholic Rural Life Magazine in September of 1961.

By Grace Schilllinger

From pets children learn sympathy, tolerance, love and punctuality. When our first three children were small, my husband bought Spotty, a brown and white Shetland pony. “How will they learn to ride him?” I worried. “Just get on and ride!” was his quick reply. And that was the way they did it. We had an old apple orchard, closed in with a high hedge fence. This was their learning field. There was a thick matted grass beneath the trees and when they fell off, as all three did, they weren’t injured. They just jumped up and got on again.

It wasn’t long before all three could ride Spotty and the pony seemed to know that he should be careful with them. Animals and small children seem to have an understanding that grown-ups don’t share.

When the three children were late coming in at bedtime, we knew they were at the barn telling Spotty goodnight and giving him a last drink of water or a graham cracker or an apple. Many times 3-year-old Carol would save him something special from her dinner, even though Spotty didn’t always relish her choice of foods. Yes, Spotty helped teach unselfishness to our children.

One summer two young crows, Bertram and Gertrude, joined our family group. There was a severe windstorm and they were blown from their nest in one of the pine trees in our yard.

Sunny hurried home extra fast with the cows so she could bring the animal in to show me. Should I have made her get rid of the baby muskrat? How could I? There was a radiance in her eyes as she looked at it. In all our years here on the farm we have never turned a pet away.

Punctuality was learned, too, by keeping pets. They had to be fed regularly, even though other things more fun were waiting.

But of all the virtues learned through having pets, love for nature and all its creatures was highest on the list.

The little creek’s banks were overflowing with swirling water; trash, sticks and mud went hurrying along as she watched. The strange noise sounded like a kitten meowing.

She found a little baby muskrat, all wet and bedraggled, that had been washed from its nest along the creek bank by the high water.

Sunny hurried home extra fast with the cows so she could bring the animal in to show me. Should I have made her get rid of the baby muskrat? How could I? There was a radiance in her eyes as she looked at it. In all our years here on the farm we have never turned a pet away.

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But of all the virtues learned through having pets, love for nature and all its creatures was highest on the list.

Pets teach us many things
DOV mourns the loss of longtime co-worker and friend

JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse


Garcia had worked for the Diocese of Victoria since 2009. He was Pension Plan Administrator and handled the accounting functions for the Catholic cemeteries as well as managing the Diocesan Services Appeal.

His death was a shock to coworkers who gathered in the chapel shortly after his death to receive the news and pray.

“My heart goes out to Dena (Garcia’s wife) and her family,” Bishop Brendan Cahill said. He added that there are many great qualities to recall about Garcia, but Cahill especially wanted to recall the work Garcia did for the diocese.

“I appreciate it deeply.”

His coworkers in the business office all will remember him as a devoted family man with a passion for baseball. He was a die-hard NY Yankees fan, but especially loved being involved in Little League with his sons and coaching every year, they said.

“Yes, he enjoyed talking baseball with anyone, actually, but especially with Bishop Cahill because Rene did NOT like the Astros,” according to Zoila Shoemake who worked with Garcia in the DOV’s business office. “He loved to visit with Bishop (Emeritus) (David) Fellhauer so he could update him on what the boys were doing and how much they were growing.”

“Family and friends were very important to (Rene),” Jeri Joseph, another coworker said. “He had a great network of both. He loved weekend barbecue with ribs, chicken, sausage … the works.” One thing all of his coworkers mentioned was Garcia’s “famous” cheese dip.

Tony Martinez, Diocese of Victoria’s CFO and Garcia’s supervisor, said Garcia was a “by the routine” employee, aligning his schedule annually with yearly goals, but he added some character to the office. “I’ll miss his ‘Star Wars’ light sabre ring tone and the ‘Million Dollar Man’ notification,” Martinez said.

“He had the most interesting or annoying text alerts and phone call alerts on his phone,” said Shoemake. “And it was never on silent.”

Garcia is survived by his wife, Dena; sons, Sean, Ryan and Landon; daughter, Anissa; grandchildren, Noah and Chloe; sisters Brandy Davis (David) and Candice Botello (James); sister-in-law, Priscilla Ambriz; numerous nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts and uncles; and his beloved fur baby, Whitney.

Challenge met!

John and Dorothy Gehrke, left, the Rev. Kirby Hlavaty, and Sandra Stelpflug, all from the parish of Our Lady of Victory completed a walking challenge of 480 miles recently. They were among 14 people in the Diocese of Victoria who walked the “virtual” mission trail from France across Spain to the Cathedral of Santiago de Compostela, the Shrine of St. James the Great. RETA: A Catholic Healthcare Trust sponsors such challenges for employees for whom they provide healthcare. Also receiving medals were Amanda Guerrero, Cheryl Marwitz, Gary Krenek, Jennifer Carson, Kim Lofland, Louise Ellen Barcak, Patricia Krenek, Shadrda Siegel Pastucha, Sister Patti Lohre and Susan De la Garza. The next walking challenge was set to begin Nov. 1.

The Rev. Philip Brune Special to the Lighthouse

Family and friends celebrated the life and legacy of the Rev. Dan Morales Sept. 3 in his hometown of Palacios. They gathered to pray, visit his grave, and celebrate on the fifth anniversary of his death.

Mass was celebrated by Bishop Brendan Cahill and several priests who had once been seminarians when Morales was the vocation director.

After Mass, the group processed to the cemetery to pray and Teddy Hawes presented the Declaration of Trust documents establishing the Father Dan Morales Endowment as a 501(c)3 non-profit entity to provide for the annual needs of Las Obras, the largest healthcare provider in Central America.

Father Morales took many groups from diocese to Las Obras in Antigua, Guatemala, to show our solidarity with them and help in any way possible. These trips of between 20-50 people were always filled with laughter, prayer, hard work, and great food.

Before Father Morales died, he established the group Coram Deo that continues to bring groups down to Las Obras. The next mission trip to Las Obras will be July 17-24, and registration will begin in March. If interested, e-mail frdanendowment@gmail.com and paperwork will be mailed to you closer to registration time.

If you would like to know more about the Father Dan Morales Endowment, or to contribute, visit frdanendowment.org. Contributions can be mailed to: Father Dan Morales Endowment, P.O. Box 393, Port O’Connor, Texas 77982.

The Rev. Dan Morales

Father Dan Morales endowment established

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Sunday Readings from Nov. 7 - Dec. 12

November 7 ~ Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time
1 Kings 17:1-16
Psalms 146:7, 8-9, 9-10
Hebrews 9:24-28
Mark 12:38-44

November 14 ~ Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time
Daniel 12:1-2
Psalms 16:5, 8, 9-10, 11
Hebrews 10:11-14, 18
Mark 13:24-32

November 21 ~ The Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe
Daniel 7:13-14
Psalms 83:1-2, 5
Revelation 1:5-8
John 18:33b-37

November 28 ~ First Sunday of Advent
Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalms 25:4-5, 8-9, 10, 14
1 Thessalonians 3:12-21

December 5 ~ Second Sunday of Advent
Baruch 5:1-9
Psalms 126:1-2, 2-3, 4-5, 6
Philippians 1:4-6, 8-11
Luke 3:1-6

December 12 ~ Third Sunday of Advent
Zephaniah 3:14-18a
Isaiah 12:2-3, 4, 5-6
Philippians 4:4-7
Luke 3:10-18

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

Working for life

The Gabriel Project of the Crossroads and the Bethlehem Maternity Home held its raffle fundraiser drawing Oct. 1 at the Pet Resort in Victoria. The Rev. Dalton Ervin was master of ceremonies and was joined by Joel Novosad and Toni Schaar. The board thanks all donors of the raffle prizes, all the people who sold tickets and everyone who purchased tickets. It was a great success, according to Barbara Williams, board member. The day before the drawing, the community received word that Russell Janecka, president of the Gabriel Project, had died in a traffic accident. The board decided to go ahead with the drawing because, “That is what Russell would have wanted,” according to Williams. “He had worked tirelessly to make it a success. He was dedicated to the Gabriel Project/Bethlehem Maternity Home and all the moms and babies that we help. He was dedicated to the ‘LIFE!’” (Contributed Photo)
Peregrinos en viaje

Los padres de la Iglesia nos animan a centrarnos en el destino final

Queridos hermanos y hermanas,

“La Iglesia de Dios, que vive exiliada en Roma, a la Iglesia de Dios exiliada en Corinto, a ustedes que son llamados y santificados por la voluntad de Dios por medio de nuestro Señor Jesucristo...” (Padres cristianos primitivos, ed. Cyril C. Richardson, Simon y Schuster: NY, NY, 1996, p. 43). Escribiendo en el año 96, el tercer sucesor de San Pedro, como líder de la Iglesia en Roma, comenzó una carta con estas palabras que nos enseñan aún hoy sobre nuestro destino final.

El Papa Clemente escribió a una comunidad que estaba dividida y luchando por preocupaciones terrenales, y esta introducción los llamó a recordar mantener sus ojos en el premio: fueron creados para la vida eterna con Jesús, María y los santos. Nuestras prácticas espirituales en el mes de noviembre nos recuerdan cada año que debemos mantener la vista en el premio.

Para cada uno de nosotros, la vida en la tierra es un regalo precioso y hermoso para ser atesorado, y lamentamos profundamente la pérdida de familiares y amigos que han muerto. Al resucitar de entre los muertos y aparecer a sus testigos escogidos, Jesús nos mostró que al otro lado del dolor y el vacío hay una resurrección gloriosa. En la vida glorificada, nuestros cuerpos ya no sufrirán dolor ni tristeza, veremos y nos regocijaremos con nuestros seres queridos (e incluso con muchos de nuestros enemigos) y todo se aclaramiento.

Este año, el Papa Francisco (el 266° Obispo de Roma) ha invitado a toda la Iglesia a pensar y orar sobre cómo nuestras acciones en la tierra se alinean con la voluntad de Dios para nuestro destino final. En este número del Lighthouse imprimiremos las palabras de la homilía del Papa Francisco para el inicio del “proceso sinodal”. Como dijo en esta homilía, el proceso sinodal representa caminar con la gente, escucharse unos a otros y orar por dirección, confiando en última instancia en el corazón misericordioso de Jesús.

Que Dios los bendiga y que sus familias experimenten la paz, la curación y el consuelo de la fe en este mes de recuerdo de nuestros amados muertos; y que todos nuestros difuntos, por la misericordia de Dios, reciban el perdón de sus pecados y el regalo del gozo eterno.

Mantengamos el uno al otro en oración.

+Brendan

Mensaje del Pastor

By Obispo Brendan Cahill

Homilía del Santo Padre Francisco

Basílica de San Pedro

Domingo, 10 de octubre de 2021

Una persona, un hombre rico, corrió hacia Jesús mientras Él “iba de camino” (Mc 10,17). Muchas veces los Evangelios nos presentan a Jesús “en camino”, acompañando al hombre en su marcha y escuchando las preguntas que pueblan e inquietan su corazón. De este modo, Él nos revela que Dios no habita en lugares acépticos, en lugares tranquilos, lejos de la realidad, sino que camina a nuestro lado y nos alcanza allí donde estamos, en las rutas a veces ásperas de la vida. Y hoy, al dar inicio al itinerario sinodal, todos — el Papa, los obispos, los sacerdotes, las religiosas y los religiosos, las hermanas y los hermanos laicos — comenzamos preguntándonos: nosotros, comunidad cristiana, ¿encarnamos el estilo de Dios, que camina en la historia y comparte las vicisitudes de la humanidad? ¿Estamos dispuestos a la aventura del camino o, temerosos ante lo incierto, preferimos refugiarnos en las excusas del “no hace falta” o del “siempre se ha hecho así”? Hacer sínodo significa caminar juntos en la misma dirección. Miremos a Jesús, que en primer lugar encontró en el camino al hombre rico, después escuchó sus preguntas y finalmente lo ayudó a discernir qué tenía que hacer para heredar la vida eterna. Encontrar, escuchar, discernir: tres verbos del Sínodo en los que quisiera detenerme.

Encontrar. El Evangelio comienza recordando un encuentro. Un hombre se encontró con Jesús y se arrodió ante Él, haciéndole una pregunta decisiva: “Maestro bueno, ¿qué tengo que hacer para heredar la vida eterna?” (v. 17). Una pregunta tan importante exige atención, tiempo, disponibilidad para encontrarse con el otro y dejarse interpelar por su inquietud. El Señor, en efecto, no se muestra distante, molesto o alterado, al contrario, se detiene con Él. Está disponible para el encuentro. Nada lo deja indiferente, todo lo apasiona. Encontrar los rostros, cruzar las miradas, compartir la historia de cada uno; esta es la cercanía de Jesús. Él sabe que un encuentro puede cambiar la vida. Y en el Evangelio abundan encuentros con Cristo que reaniman y curan. Jesús no tenía prisa, no miraba el reloj para terminar rápido el encuentro. Siempre estaba al servicio de la persona que encontraba, para escucharla.

También nosotros, que comenzamos este camino, estamos llamados a ser expertos en el arte del encuentro. No en organizar eventos o en hacer una reflexión teórica de los problemas, sino, ante todo, en tomarnos tiempo para estar con el Señor y favorecer el encuentro entre nosotros. Un tiempo para dar espacio a la oración, a la adoración, esta oración que tanto descuidamos: adorar, dar espacio a la adoración, a lo que el Espíritu quiere decir a la Iglesia; para enfocarnos en el rostro y la palabra del otro, encontrarnos cara a cara, dejarnos alcanzar por las preguntas de las hermanas y los hermanos, ayudarnos para que la diversidad de los carismas, vocaciones y ministerios nos enriquezca. Todo encuentro — lo sabemos — requiere apertura, valentía, disponibilidad para dejarse interpelar por el rostro y la historia del otro. Mientras a menudo preferimos refugiarnos en relaciones formales o usar máscaras de circunstancia, el espíritu clerical y de corte, soy más monsieur que padre, el encuentro nos cambia y con frecuencia nos sugiere nuevos caminos que no pensábamos recorrer. Hoy, después del Ángelas, recibirá a un grupo de personas de la calle, que simplemente se reunió porque hay un grupo de gente que va a escucharlos, solo para escucharlos. Y desde la escucha lograron empezar a caminar. Muchas veces es este justo el modo en que Dios nos indica la vía a seguir, haciéndonos salir de nuestras rutinas desgastadas. Todo cambia cuando somos capaces de escucharnos auténticos con Él y entre nosotros. Sin formalismos, sin falsedades, sin maquillajes.

Segundo verbo: escuchar. Un verdadero encuentro sólo nace de la escucha. Jesús, en efecto, se puso a escuchar la pregunta de aquel hombre y su inquietud religiosa y existencial. No dio una respuesta formal, no ofreció una solución prefabricada, no fingió responder con amabilidad sólo para librarse de él y continuar su camino. Simplemente lo escuchó. Todo el tiempo que fue necesario lo escuchó sin prisa. Y la cosa más importante, Jesús no tiene miedo de escucharlo con el corazón y no sólo con los oídos. En efecto, su respuesta no se limitó a contestar la pregunta, sino que le permitió al hombre rico que contara su propia historia, que hablara de sí mismo con libertad, Cristo le recordó los mandamientos, y él comenzó a hablar de su infancia, a compartir su itinerario religioso, la manera en que se había esforzado por buscar a Dios. Cuando escuchamos con el corazón sucede esto: el otro se siente acogido, no juzgado, libre para expresarse. Y desde la escucha lograron empezar a caminar. Muchas veces es este justo el modo en que Dios nos indica la vía a seguir, haciéndonos salir de nuestras rutinas desgastadas. Todo cambia cuando somos capaces de escucharnos auténticos con Él y entre nosotros. Sin formalismos, sin falsedades, sin maquillajes.

Ver Homilía del Santo Padre Francisco, página 13
Hacer sínodo es ponerse en el mismo camino del Verbo hecho hombre, es seguir sus huellas, escuchando su Palabra junto a las palabras de los demás. Es descubrir con asombro que el Espíritu Santo siempre sopla de modo sorprendente, sugiriendo recorridos y lenguajes nuevos. Es un ejercicio lento, quizá fatigoso, para aprender a escucharnos mutuamente — obispos, sacerdotes, religiosos y laicos, todos, todos los bautizados — evitando respuestas artificiales y superficiales, respuestas prêt-à-porter, no. El Espíritu nos pide que nos pongamos a la escucha de las preguntas, de los afanes, de las esperanzas de cada Iglesia, de cada pueblo y nación. Y también a la escucha del mundo, de los desafíos y los cambios que nos pone delante. No insonoricemos el corazón, no nos blindemos dentro de nuestras certezas. Las certezas tantas veces nos cierran. Escuchémonos.

Por último, discernir. El encuentro y la escucha recíproca no son algo que acaba en sí mismo, que deja las cosas tal como están. Al contrario, cuando entramos en diálogo, iniciamos el debate y el camino, y al final no somos los mismos de antes, hemos cambiado. Hoy, el Evangelio nos lo muestra. Jesús intuye que el hombre que tiene delante es bueno, religioso y practica los mandamientos, pero quiere conducirlo más allá de la simple observancia de los preceptos. En el diálogo, lo ayuda a discernir. Le propone que mire su interior, a la luz del amor con el que Él mismo, mirándolo, lo ama (cf. v. 21), y que con esta luz discierna a qué está apegado verdaderamente su corazón. Para que luego descubra que su bien no es añadir otros actos religiosos sino, por el contrario, vaciarse de sí mismo, vender lo que ocupa su corazón para hacer espacio a Dios.

Y hoy la segunda lectura nos dice justamente que “la Palabra de Dios es viva, eficaz y más cortante que una espada de dos filos: ella penetra hasta dividir alma y espíritu, articulaciones y médulas, y discierne las intenciones y pensamientos del corazón” (Hb 4,12). La Palabra nos abre al discernimiento y lo ilumina, orienta el Sínodo para que no sea una “convención” eclesial, una conferencia de estudios o un congreso político, para que no sea un parlamento, sino un acontecimiento de gracia, un proceso de sanación guiado por el Espíritu. Jesús, como hizo con el hombre rico del Evangelio, nos llama en estos días a vaciarnos, a liberarnos de lo que es mundano, y también de nuestros cerrazones y de nuestros modelos pastorales repetitivos; a interrogarnos sobre lo que Dios nos quiere decir en este tiempo y en qué dirección quiere orientarnos.

Queridos hermanos y hermanas, ¡buen camino juntos! Que podamos ser peregrinos enamorados del Evangelio, abiertos a las sorpresas del Espíritu Santo. No perdamos las ocasiones de gracia del encuentro, de la escucha recíproca, del discernimiento. Con la alegría de saber que, mientras buscamos al Señor, es Él quien viene primero a nuestro encuentro con su amor.

Homilía del Santo Padre Francisco

continuado desde la página 12

Red Mass on Nov. 7
a first for DOV

Bishop Brendan Cahill will celebrate a Red Mass at 9 a.m. on Nov. 7 to pray especially for anyone who is in the judicial system, including lawyers, judges, law students and lawmakers.

According to a letter of invitation from Bishop Cahill to the legal community, priests and faithful of the diocese, “The first recorded Red Mass was celebrated in Paris, France in the year 1245, although it would not be until 1877 that this custom began in the United States. This will be our first Red Mass in the Diocese of Victoria.”

The bishop celebrated a White Mass for all healthcare workers on Oct. 18, the Feast Day of St. Luke, patron of physicians.

He celebrated a Blue Mass on Sept. 29, the feast day of St. Michael, St. Raphael and St. Gabriel, archangels, to bless all police, EMTs and other first responders in the community.

Bishop Cahill prays with one of the Victoria police officers following the Blue Mass on Sept. 29. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)

Evie Valenzuela, who works at Victoria Women’s Clinic, joins in the entrance hymn for the White Mass on Oct. 18. (Janet Jones/The Catholic Lighthouse)
A time to grieve

Coping with loss is a unique journey for each person

On the Table

By Justin Reyes

O

ver years of serving in ministry, I’ve encountered many people going through a time of grief, something we all have to deal with, and, for most of us, it will be several times. Whether it be the loss of a loved one, a lost relationship or even a lost pet, grief is simply part of the human experience.

So how can we make sense of it? How can we walk through it? And how can we help others? I’d like to offer a few suggestions based off my own experiences.

The first thing to understand is that grief takes time, and the amount of time is different for each person. People who are grieving need to walk through it completely. We should never rush someone through grief so they can be “OK” again. Be patient, as Our Lord admonishes us. The Word of God tells us, “A friend is a friend at all times, and a brother is born for the time of adversity.” (Proverbs 17:17)

Be ready to help a grieving loved one. We should think, “This is our moment.” We are called to be there for them, as long as it takes, and however they need us, whether that be a phone call, a note of encouragement or a walk with them as they cry or remain silent. As Our Shepherd waits for us, we need to wait for our friends and accompany them as they encounter the darkness of grief. We may be the only light they see during the most grim times.

Another thing: Everyone grieves differently. Men and women especially grieve in different ways. One may need time alone, one may want to stay busy, some want to commemorate the loved one they lost. We need to let people be free to experience grief as they need to, so long as they are not harming themselves. Sometimes the best thing we can give people is space and, of course, always prayers. For the true healer is Our Lord. We must always entrust them to the care of our loving God, who wept when His friend died. “And Jesus wept,” (captured in John 11:35 at the death of Lazarus)

The third thing I’d like to add is that peer groups can make a difference. I’ve seen many people experience healing by participating in such groups, especially if the group is for others who have experienced a similar loss. Each loss is unique – a friend, sibling, parent, or child. There are nuances to each loss. I’m so grateful that we have a ministry for parents who have lost a child – Strength for the Journey – here in our own diocese. This group offers monthly meetings, and retreats. More information can be found at www.victoriadiocese.org/grief-support.

I pray this article has been helpful to you. If you’d like to discuss further, or might be interested in getting involved in or helping to lead a grief support ministry, please contact me. God Bless!

• Justin Reyes is the Director of Family Evangelization for the Diocese of Victoria in Texas

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Our postponed pilgrimage from 2020 is back on! Join us as we travel through Munich, Dachau, Our Lady of Altotting, the Passion Play, Innsbruck, Salsburg, Liechtenstein, and Lucerne! The Passion Play in Oberammergau is a must see!

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A Marian Pilgrimage to Paris, Lourdes & Fatima with Father Michael Rother...$3995
We are going to France and Portugal visiting the Marian Shrines in Paris, Lourdes and Fatima! This program will have us based in Paris for 4 nights and then off to Lourdes where we will spend three nights.

We then head to Fatima for three nights with an evening stop at Avila and visit the convent of St. Theresa of Avila. For all the places we will visit see fliers on the website.

The price of these pilgrimages will include the flights, hotels (dbl occ.), tour bus and guides, meals as indicated on the fliers. Land only pricing is available.

Information and online fliers are found at www.selectinternationaltours.com or contact me at ceci.triska@gmail.com and I will email it to you

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Toll Free 1-866-MARY AID 1-866-627-9243
www.victoriagabrielproject.org
Port Lavaca – Our Lady of the Gulf Catholic Church Turkey Dinner will be held Sunday Nov. 7, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at St. Jude Hall. Plates are $12 each, (drive through only). Catered by Werner’s of Shiner. There will also be a raffle and bake sale.

Victoria – Come Shop in Downtown Victoria – St. Mary’s and Our Lady of Lourdes Harvest Bazaars. St. Mary’s Hall (401 S. Liberty St.) on Friday, Nov. 12 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and Saturday, Nov. 13 from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Potato Soup luncheon, $8. Our Lady of Lourdes Hall (105 N. William St.) on Saturday, Nov. 13 from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Sunday, Nov. 14 from 8:30 a.m. to 11 a.m. Will also have a brisket sale. Both locations featuring: handcrafted quilted, crocheted, embroidered holiday items, breads, cinnamon rolls, cakes, cookies and so much more...

Victoria – The Catholic Daughters of the Americas, Court 2665, will have its ninth annual Arts & Crafts and Bake Sale at the Holy Family Catholic Church Activity Center (Bldg. D) 8 a.m.-7 p.m. Nov. 13 and 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Nov. 14. Handmade gift items for adults and children, crafts and homemade goodies for the holidays will be available.

Schulenburg – God’s Embrace Ministries (GEM) has set the date for the Fifth Annual Evening in High Hill for Friday, Nov. 12. This annual fund-raising event supports the Mission of God’s Embrace Ministries which is teaching and empowering Catholics to experience daily the loving embrace of the Triune God. The evening includes a cocktail hour with hors d’oeuvres and drinks, a gourmet dinner and live and silent auction. The evening will feature a founders message from Dr. Michael Fonseca. Tickets are $50 each and are available online at www.GodsEmbrace.org or by contacting the office at 979-561-8883.

Weimar – Join Catholic Rural Life-Victoria for a Harvest Mass celebrated by Bishop Brendan Cahill at 10 a.m. Nov. 20 at the Whistling Duck Vineyards and Winery.

Do you have any calendar of events for the Lighthouse?

Submit to lighthouse@victoriadiocese.org

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**EVENTS**

**November**

**Ministries • Ongoing Activities**

ACTS Retreats – Anyone needing any information regarding ACTS retreats in the diocese should e-mail dovactschapter@victoriadiocese.org.

Catholic Family Services – To find Catholic organizations that focus on family, visit the Catholic Association of Catholic Family Life Ministers at www.nacflm.org.

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

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

Surviving Divorce – Surviving Divorce will help you work through the emotional upheaval of separation and divorce; find personal healing and hope; discover a deeper understanding of God’s love for you; gain wisdom and comfort from experts and others who share your experience; navigate new concerns like custody, court hearings, and finances. We have a group currently meeting and registration is closed for this season. We plan to host another group in fall 2021. If you have any questions or need support, please contact the Office of Family Evangelization at 361-573-0828 x 2265 or jreyes@victoriadiocese.org.

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


Gabriel Project of the Crossroads – Helps women experiencing a crisis pregnancy as an alternative to abortion. Victoria: Meetings are the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30 p.m. at 101 W. Convent. Light supper included. For angel workshop/training dates, contact Lisa Kainer at 361-676-3264 or lisa_heysquiero@yahoo.com; DeWitt County meetings have changed: For meetings, call or text the coordinator for the Dewitt chapter, Wayne Smith, at 361-491-0339.

i.d.9:16 Ministry – For adults in their 20s and 30s, single or married. Held at Holy Family in Victoria every first Thursday of the month. Starts with 6 p.m. Mass followed by dinner and a talk live streamed from the headquarters in Michigan and fellowship. It is open to all young adults of the diocese. For information, or to RSVP for events, e-mail id916victoria@gmail.com.

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

Mothers of Grace – A mothers’ group at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Victory. For information, contact Leslie Book at book.leslie@gmail.com or visit their Facebook page at www.facebook.com/Mothersofgracevol/.

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 mailto:susannekoch614@gmail.com. Also in the Cuero area contact, Ashley Rodriguez at 361-293-0700 or e-mail ashleyfay09@gmail.com.

Raphael’s Refuge – To build and maintain a memorial in honor of babies, born and unborn. It is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization located in Flatonia. Peer counseling and spiritual direction are available for those suffering a loss of a baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, infant death or abortion. For information, contact Midge Elam at 361-865-3021, 361-258-1514, or visit http://www.raphelsrefuge.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 jbjvov@sbglobal.net or 361-580-2770; or call 800-470-2230; or visit http://www.helpourmarriage.org.

Strength for the Journey – A grief ministry for parents who have lost their child meets monthly at Assumption Church parish hall, 108 6th St., in Ganado from 6:30 to 8 p.m. The upcoming meetings will be Nov. 9 and Dec. 14. For more information, please call Patricia Hoelscher 979-257-9984 or email phoelscher@victoriadiocese.org.

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**Meals • Picnics and More**

**It’s time to prepare for Christmas at Sea**

Last year more than 700 Christmas packages were delivered to seafarers who docked in Point Comfort before they left again on their long sea voyages.

The people working on ships have been hit hard by the pandemic because, in many cases, they have been quarantined on ships, unable to purchase basic comforts during port stops.

Rhonda Cunnings, director of the local seafarer’s ministry, coordinates the gift boxes that donors prepare for the people on ships to show them that they are not forgotten. Delivery of the boxes begins on Dec. 1. Items they need include hygiene products, snacks, socks, sunglasses, games or puzzles. The items are to fit in a regular-size shoebox or a small drawstring ditty bag. For more information about how to participate, visit www.victoriadiocese.org/christmas-at-sea, or email stellamaris@olgulf.org. Packages can be dropped in Victoria at the Diocese of Victoria Chancery, 1505 E. Mesquite Lane, or Holy Family Catholic Church, 704 Mallette Drive; and in Port Lavaca at Our Lady of the Gulf, 415 W. Austin St., or Russell Cain Real Estate, 2225 TX Hwy. 35.

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**Retreat**

**VICTORIA – Amor Meus will sponsor a caregiver’s retreat and workshop titled “The Gift You Give Yourself” on Nov. 13. From 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Deacon Leo Sharron and Terry Robinson will facilitate the discussions. Sharron is clinical director at the Emmaus Counseling Center in Victoria and a chaplain for Hospice of South Texas. Robinson is a part time occupational therapist and retired executive director for Hospice of South Texas. The Amor Meus Center is housed at the Incarnate Word and Blessed Sacrament convent on Water Street. Those interested can get more information from www.amormeusspiritualitycenter.org or by emailing amormeuscenter@gmail.com.**
Synod Phase 1:

The Church is listening

Continued from pg. 1

Vincent said she and the group of delegates are working on a strategy to reach out to every parish in the near future and have representation from each one in various meetings. She said they will have some open-ended questions to ask and want to hear about people’s joys, struggles, obstacles, wounds and histories to help build relationships and see where the Holy Spirit is guiding the Church.

“We want to be Catholics who live out loud,” Vincent said.

October focused on devotion to Mary

Many rosaries were prayed during the Diocese of Victoria’s Rosary Congress throughout October, the Month of the Rosary.

In El Campo, a group from St. Robert Bellarmine parish had a large gathering to pray as part of the America Needs Fatima movement, which, for 15 years has called on Americans to gather for public square rosaries to promote devotion to the Immaculate Heart of Mary.

Terri Beltran said years ago, she, the Rev. Msgr. Lawrence Matula, Ella and Charlie Merta and Pete Quintana all gathered at the downtown gazebo to pray the rosary and the tradition of the public rosary has continued ever since.

“We are so blessed to live in the United States of America having the freedom to express our faith without fear,” Beltran said. “The community and the parishioners came together praying for America, for the sick, the abused, to stop child trafficking, abortion, pornography and same-sex marriage and all offenses against the Law of God. The balloons were popping left and right as if they were announcing ‘Alleluia! Glory to God in the Highest.’ We watched the true story of ‘Fatima’ afterwards. This was an awesome opportunity to evangelize and we did, which is what Jesus instructed us to do,” Beltran said.

Several groups around the diocese organized America Needs Fatima rosary events during the month of October. Pictured here are groups from St. Robert Bellarmine Catholic Church in El Campo, top photo, and St. Agnes Catholic Church in Edna.

(Contributed Photos)

“I want to be a Catholic who lives out loud,” Vincent explained what he expects from the synodal process — “for churches to encounter one another, listen fully to one another, and discern by opening hearts to the Holy Spirit.”

For the Diocese of Victoria, the process of listening has been an ongoing commitment by its leadership. The late Bishop Charles Grahmann, called by Pope John Paul II to lead the diocese when it was created in 1982, started by organizing reflection groups comprised of clergy and lay people to understand the strengths and challenges of the diocese before laying out a plan for its future.

“In a diocese like this, priests are in touch with their people and people are in touch with their priests. There’s good communication,” said Bishop Emeritus David Fellhauer, who led the diocese for 25 years before retiring. Because it is a smaller diocese, the bishops, too, have always been accessible to its clergy and laypeople, he said.

Under Bishop Cahill’s leadership, new outreach ministries have formed such as a local chapter of Catholic Rural Life and the seafarer’s ministry, Stella Maris. In the past two years, the Family Evangelization office was established and has developed special ministries such as the newly created divorce support ministry.

The first phase of the synod, the local phase, is being led by Jennifer Vincent, pastoral associate for the Our Lady of Victory parish in Victoria and Dr. Glenn Hunter, music director at OLV parish. Joining them are Aldo Camacho, coordinator of Hispanic Ministry for the diocese, and Deacon Tran Dinh, who will be ordained to the priestly ministry in January.

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JANET JONES
The Catholic Lighthouse

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St. Anne and St. Joseph societies of St. Mary’s Church in High Hill also hosted a Fatima rosary crusade on Oct. 16 at the Schulenburg Railroad Park Gazebo. “There was great attendance and support as we prayed for our nation’s sinfulness,” according to Joanna Rogers, one of the organizers.

“It was a calming time in the midst of everything going on in our country and town,” said Millie Diaz, a member of St. Agnes Catholic Church in Edna. “St. Agnes always makes sure to pray a rosary for Fatima at this time of year.”

In Port Lavaca a rosary procession took place on the final day of the Rosary Congress (Oct. 3-10). The Rev. Tommy Chen, pastor of Our Lady of the Gulf and its mission churches, St. Ann in Point Comfort, St. Joseph in Port O’Connor and St. Patrick in Seadrift, said, “The rosary procession was a wonderful experience.”

Because of the cultural diversity in Calhoun County, the rosary was prayed in three languages – English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Chen said the event drew everyone together and the communities gathered for a soup and sandwich meal afterwards.