

FLORIDA *Catholic*



HOLY WEEK

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LA VOZ CATÓLICA

Marzo de 2021

PERIÓDICO DE LA ARQUIDIÓCESIS DE MIAMI



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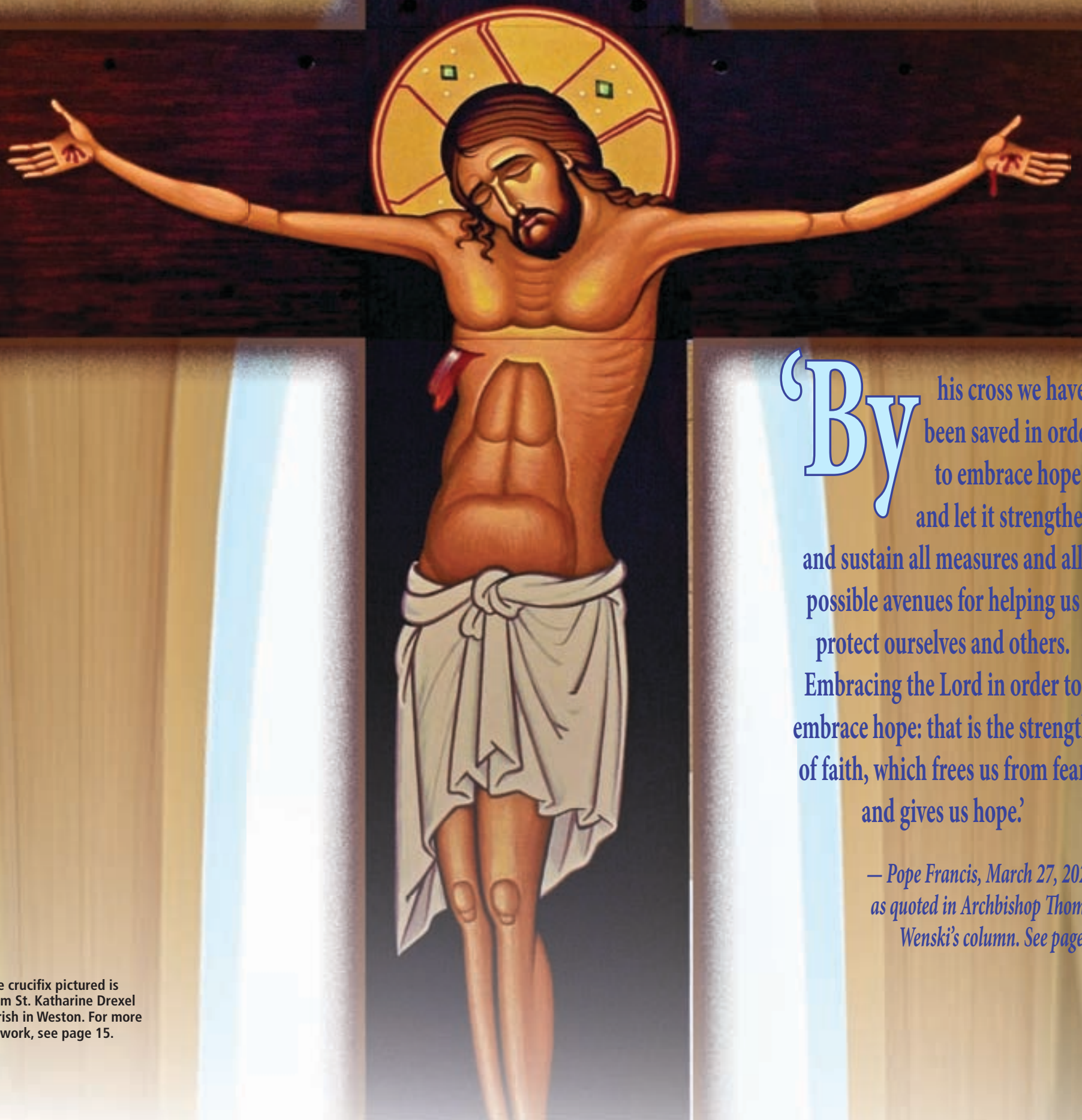
FLORIDA *Catholic*

MIAMI ARCHDIOCESE

HOLY

INRI

WEEK



‘By his cross we have been saved in order to embrace hope and let it strengthen and sustain all measures and all possible avenues for helping us protect ourselves and others. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope: that is the strength of faith, which frees us from fear and gives us hope.’

— Pope Francis, March 27, 2020,
as quoted in Archbishop Thomas
Wenski’s column. See page 4.

The crucifix pictured is from St. Katharine Drexel Parish in Weston. For more artwork, see page 15.



Centro Hispano Católico Ladies Auxiliary first president Emma McCormack poses alongside the group's last president, Esperanza Rollan, and other members in a 2018 gathering in their offices located behind Centro Hispano in Wynwood.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK:

I was a child of Centro Hispano

As Ladies Auxiliary disbands, reporter looks back at family connections to childcare center

CRISTINA CABRERA JARRO
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIAMI | Emma McCormack always enjoyed visiting the children of Centro Hispano Católico Child Development Center, run by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami.

"They were a delight. So entertaining, and very helpful," said McCormack, a former president and treasurer of the Ladies Auxiliary of Centro Hispano, which, since the 1980s, helped raise funds for the center.

I can vouch for the efforts of the Ladies Auxiliary because I was a child of Centro Hispano. In fact, three generations of my family have connections to the center, which was developed as the Church's response to the massive influx of Cuban exiles that arrived in Miami after Fidel Castro came to power.

Officially dedicated Jan. 31, 1960, and run by what was then known as the Catholic Welfare Bureau, Centro Hispano helped newly arrived Cuban refugees acquire clothes, food, job referrals, child care, medical and dental services, in addition to religious and spiritual support from the Catholic Church.

In 1960, my grandfather's first job as a Cuban exile in the United States was as an elevator operator in the six-story building in downtown Miami, behind Gesu Church, that housed Centro Hispano.

As children, my mother and uncle attended the child development center. When they were in grade school at Gesu, they helped sort and separate food, clothing and other goods into care packages that were given to the mostly Cuban immigrants that passed through Centro Hispano.

In 1982, the center relocated to an old firehouse on 27th Avenue in Miami. By that time, the Ladies

FIND OUT MORE

Centro Hispano Católico Child Development Center, located at 125 N.W. 25 St., Miami, is one of six childcare centers operated by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami. All of them offer a psycho-social development program to prepare children ages 3-5 for kindergarten.

All of the centers serve low-income families. Funding sources include Florida's Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten program, Head Start, the United Way, and the City of Miami. There are no more than 20 children per classroom at Centro Hispano, and all receive breakfast and lunch daily.

For more information, call 305-573-9093; email centrohispano@ccadm.org; or visit the Catholic Charities website, www.ccadm.org.



Florida Catholic reporter Cristina Cabrera Jarro pictured as a child of Centro Hispano Católico Child Development Center.

Auxiliary had been created to help with fundraising. As the major Cuban exodus faded, Centro Hispano shifted its focus to child development services. In 1987, my grandmother became a teacher's aide in Centro Hispano, and worked there for 15 years. During the early 1990s, my cousins, my brother and I were students there.

To this day, I am beyond grateful for my time at Centro Hispano's daycare, as well as its teachers and staff. I consider what I learned there as foundational to the rest of my education. We were taught essentials like words, numbers, colors, shapes, days and months of the week, along with a little history, manners, and even etiquette.

McCormack still expresses astonishment and amusement at watching the children eat with hands properly placed on forks. "They were well educated and looked quite elegant," she said.

And true to its institutional name, Centro Hispano taught us the fundamentals of our Catholic faith. I will always remember Sister Praxedes Suarez, of the Sisters of Social Service, then director of Centro Hispano, leading us in praying the Our Father and Hail Mary. Watching family videos of these moments, I cannot help but smile and laugh a little, as an assembly of more than 200 children squeeze

their hands together, as if the tighter they squeezed, the more meaningfully they prayed. We also fumbled words that we were too young to understand, or we merged them to form one very long one ("Hallowed-bethynname").

Although I was not aware of the Ladies Auxiliary as a child, I know as an adult how much was possible because of them. My grandmother recalled their monthly gatherings to discuss fundraising. It's now evident that we were provided for thanks to their efforts. I don't recall a shortage of food, staff, supplies, or any other means essential to running a daycare and child development center.

When Centro Hispano moved a third time, the Ladies Auxiliary helped find its new location in Wynwood. In 1997, they helped to raise funds for the new facility, the Centro Hispano Católico Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh Child Care Center. Its name pays tribute to the late Irish priest and longtime director of Catholic Charities known for his work on behalf of Cuban exiles.

In December 2020, the Ladies' Auxiliary performed their final charitable act by presenting a check for \$63,756.92 to Catholic Charities. Aging members could no longer carry out the work of the auxiliary.

"We decided to transfer the funds so that they could truly continue their work the way it should be," McCormack said.

"The Ladies Auxiliary of Centro Hispano is a wonderful example of a generation that believed in giving back to communities and were willing to invest their time, talent, and treasure to do so," said Peter Routsis-Arroyo, CEO of Catholic Charities. "Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami will forever be grateful for all that they have done to make Centro Hispano what it is today." ■

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Student wins grant for environmental research

JIM DAVIS
Florida Catholic correspondent

FORT LAUDERDALE | Billions of tons of plastic pile up on land and choke the waters of the world: What can one person do?

Kaitlyn Urruela, a sophomore at St. Thomas Aquinas High School, just may be on the track toward a solution: getting microbes to eat the stuff.

The New York Institute of Technology recently looked at Kaitlyn's research project and awarded her a \$300 grant. If her line of work pans out, one of the largest environmental problems may be solved by some of the smallest creatures. Her project — A Novel Microbial Process to Accelerate Degradation and Demineralization of Bioplastics — also won second place at the Broward County Science Fair.

As part of her work in the Honors Independent Research class at Aquinas, Kaitlyn has been investigating ways to speed up the breakdown of old bags, bottles and other containers, which can otherwise pollute the environment for years. Her weapons: fungi and bacteria.

She has the admiration of Diane Enten, who teaches the class along with Laura Shearer. She marveled that Kaitlyn, 15, is still in her first year in independent research.

"She's been amazing," Enten said. "A lot of students just want to jump in and compare stuff, but she understands the science behind it. If this is her first project, imagine what she can do next year."

Kaitlyn got interested in the matter of plastics via a website on science projects — especially after she read some sobering facts. She cited a 2017 study in the journal *Science Advances* that estimated 8.3 billion

metric tons of plastics have been produced since the 1950s — and 6.3 billion have been simply dumped in landfills or elsewhere, such as rivers and oceans.

Scientists have produced "biodegradable" plastics, which can be consumed by germs in the environment; but it can take up to three years, Kaitlyn said. Her experiment explored ways to speed up the process.

"I saw that my family used bags of biodegradable plastics," said Kaitlyn, who lives in Hollywood. "At first I thought we could just bury them, but that wouldn't allow any control over variables."

To attain that control, she built a simple bioreactor with standard lab materials such as beakers, flasks, forceps and petri dishes. From a biological supply company, she bought specimens of a bacterium known as *Pseudomonas* and a fungus called *Aureobasidium pullulans*. She grew the microbes in a solution of dextrose agar, a common substance typically used for such research; then she observed how they acted on two types of biodegradable plastics.

One type of plastic was Polylactic acid (PLA), which she cut into strips and placed in flasks. The other was Polycaprolactone (PCL), which she used in tiny beads, placed on cheesecloth in flasks. To the PLA, she added the bacteria; to the PCL, the fungus. Then she monitored the rate at which the organisms consumed the plastic for two weeks.

Her experiment in November failed, she said. Some agar was left on the plastic, and some of the fungus was left on the cheesecloth. That meant Kaitlyn couldn't get accurate measurements on the weight before and after.

"I had a lot of anxiety that I didn't meet the deadline," she confessed. "I had to come up with a new idea almost the same day."

Part of her solution was to use a rinsing process to remove the excess agar. She also substituted the cheesecloth with petri dishes. The adjustments provide a better measurement of the weight. And they satisfied the institute, which e-mailed her about the grant Jan. 24, 2021.

"I was in shock at first," Kaitlyn said. But she then gleefully called her parents and texted Enten. With the grant money, she plans to upgrade her bioreactor and get a more sensitive scale. The equipment would allow more precise measurements of the rate of degradation, she said.

Kaitlyn's project is just one part of the innovative work being done at the Honors Independent Research class, which supports 15 students in 13 categories. Among their studies:

- Computer hacking and how to combat it.
 - Door grips of copper and brass — determining which metal spreads more infection.
 - Lavender oil as a substitute for triclosan, a common disinfectant in makeup and hand soap.
 - Sociology and the corpus callosum, the bundle of nerves that connects the halves of the human brain.
 - Whether five factors can help predict development of metastatic cancer of the lungs and pancreas.
- Kaitlyn said her science project



Kaitlyn Urruela shows some of the equipment she used in a science project at St. Thomas Aquinas High School to explore how microbes might be used to break down waste plastic. (JIM DAVIS | FC)

blends well with Catholic social teaching on the environment and the economy. This year, in fact, her philosophy class took a look at *Laudato Si'*, the 2015 encyclical by Pope Francis on creation care and social responsibility.

"As Catholics, we should care for the environment," Kaitlyn said. "Because of COVID this year, I couldn't go out and pick up waste plastic. But this (science project) is another way to help." ■

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CORRECTION

Retired Father Raúl Soutuyo's name was incorrect in the Official appointments published in the February 2021 edition. His first name is Raúl, not Rafael. We regret the error.



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A year later: Let us entrust ourselves to the Lord

This month we mark one year since the pandemic dramatically disrupted our lives, ushering in immense suffering for too many. Last year, in the early days of the pandemic, Pope Francis presided over an extraordinary moment of prayer in which he reflected on the apostles and their fears when a tempest overtook them in a boat while Jesus slept. (cf Mark 4)

"The storm," he wrote describing this global pandemic, "exposes our vulnerability and uncovers those false and superfluous certainties around which we have constructed our daily schedules, our projects, our habits and priorities. It shows us how we have allowed to become dull and feeble the very things that nourish, sustain, and strengthen our lives and our communities..."

We have hopefully learned that we are not as powerful or as in control of our lives as we sometimes pretend to be. But, at the same time, we also learned that we all

are "in the same boat." As the U.S. bishops said in their statement this month marking the anniversary of the pandemic: "Rather than being ashamed of this powerlessness or crushed by the fear of what we cannot control, our interconnectedness and dependence on God has been revealed."

This past year has tried us sorely: We faced sickness — our own or that of our loved ones; we mourned the deaths of relatives and friends; we suffered the anxiety of economic uncertainty and experienced loneliness as we were forced to "stay apart"; and, we worried as we saw racial unrest and partisan

bickering threaten the domestic tranquility of our nation's life. Yet, we have proven resilient, for the Lord does not leave us to the mercy of the storm.

And certainly, the many acts of kindness of neighbor to neighbor, the selfless courage of front line workers, the quiet dedication of our teachers, the steady accompani-



Archbishop
Thomas
Wenski

Un año después: Encomendémonos al Señor

Este mes se cumple un año desde que la pandemia trastornó nuestras vidas de forma dramática, dando paso a un inmenso sufrimiento para demasiadas personas. El año pasado, en los primeros días de la pandemia, el Papa Francisco presidió un momento extraordinario de oración en el que reflexionó sobre los apóstoles y sus miedos cuando una tempestad les sorprendió en una barca mientras Jesús dormía. (cf. Marcos 4)

"La tormenta," escribió al describir esta pandemia mundial, "desenmascara nuestra vulnerabilidad y deja al descubierto esas falsas y superfluas seguridades con las que habíamos construido nuestras agendas, nuestros proyectos, rutinas y prioridades. Nos muestra cómo habíamos dejado dormido y abandonado lo que alimenta, sostiene y da fuerza a nuestra vida y a nuestra comunidad".

Esperamos haber aprendido que no somos tan poderosos ni tenemos el control de nuestras vidas como a veces pretendemos. Pero, al mismo tiempo, también hemos aprendido que todos estamos "en la misma barca". Como dijeron los obispos de los EE.UU. en su decla-

ración de este mes por el primer aniversario de la pandemia: "En lugar de avergonzarnos de esta incapacidad o de sentirnos aplastados por el miedo a lo que no podemos controlar, se ha revelado nuestra interconexión y dependencia de Dios".

Este último año nos ha puesto a prueba duramente: Nos enfrentamos a la enfermedad, propia o de nuestros seres queridos; lloramos la muerte de familiares y amigos; sufrimos la ansiedad de la incertidumbre económica y experimentamos la soledad al vernos obligados a "permanecer separados"; y nos preocupamos al ver que los disturbios raciales y las disputas partidistas amenazan la tranquilidad interna de la vida de nuestra nación. Sin embargo, hemos demostrado ser resistentes, porque el Señor no nos deja a merced de la tormenta.

Y, ciertamente, los numerosos actos de bondad del prójimo hacia el prójimo, la valentía desinteresada de los trabajadores de primera línea, la dedicación silenciosa de nuestros profesores, el acompañamiento constante de nuestros sacerdotes —incluso cuando la par-

ticipación pública en la Eucaristía no era posible— fueron rayos de esperanza que disipaban la oscuridad de la desesperación.

Una vez más, como escribió el Papa: "Con la tempestad, se cayó el maquillaje de esos estereotipos con los que disfrazábamos nuestros egos siempre pretenciosos de querer aparentar; y dejó al descubierto, una vez más, esa (bendita) pertenencia común de la que no podemos ni queremos evadirnos; esa pertenencia de hermanos".

El desarrollo de las vacunas "a velocidad de vértigo" supuso el comienzo del fin de esta pandemia mundial. Pero las vacunas deben estar disponibles de forma universal, para que ninguna persona o nación se quede atrás. Y todo el que pueda debería vacunarse, incluso las personas que no tienen mucho que temer de la infección —si no son de alto riesgo y si están sanas, o si su demografía es tal que pueden esperar recuperarse con facilidad. El hecho de que se vacunen será un beneficio para otras personas de su entorno, porque al estar vacunados no serán responsables de que otros se contagien con el virus.

A lo largo de los años, varios ti-

catching the virus.

Various types of vaccines have protected humanity from various diseases over the years — and the vaccines against COVID-19 offer much promise and, as the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith reassures, "all vaccinations recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience."

We look forward to the day when all can meet again in full churches for Mass and the normal life of our parishes can resume.

"Why are you afraid? Have you no faith?" This was Jesus' reproach to the Apostles when they awoke him in the midst of the storm. As we look to get on the far side of this pandemic, let us entrust ourselves to the Lord.

Again, to cite Pope Francis: "By his cross we have been saved in order to embrace hope and let it strengthen and sustain all measures and all possible avenues for helping us protect ourselves and others. Embracing the Lord in order to embrace hope: that is the strength of faith, which frees us from fear and gives us hope." ■

pos de vacunas han protegido a la humanidad de diversas enfermedades; las vacunas contra el COVID-19 son muy prometedoras y, como asegura la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe, "pueden utilizarse todas las vacunas reconocidas como clínicamente seguras y eficaces con conciencia cierta".

Esperamos que llegue el día en que todos podamos volver a reunirnos en iglesias llenas para celebrar la Misa y se pueda reanudar la vida normal de nuestras parroquias.

"¿Por qué tienen miedo? ¿Aún no tienen fe?" Este fue el reproche de Jesús a los apóstoles cuando le despertaron en medio de la tormenta. Mientras buscamos llegar al otro lado de esta pandemia, encomendémonos al Señor.

De nuevo, para citar al Papa Francisco: "En su Cruz hemos sido salvados para hospedar la esperanza y dejar que sea ella quien fortalezca y sostenga todas las medidas y caminos posibles que nos ayuden a cuidarnos y a cuidar. Abrazar al Señor para abrazar la esperanza: esta es la fuerza de la fe, que libera del miedo y da esperanza." ■

ARCHBISHOP WENSKI STATEMENTS

Say 'yes' to any COVID-19 vaccine

Letter to pastors reiterates conclusions of Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith

STAFF REPORT

MIAMI | Hoping to dispel confusion among south *Florida Catholics*, Archbishop Thomas Wenski has written to his fellow priests reiterating that there is no moral objection to receiving any of the COVID-

19 vaccines currently approved for use in the U.S.

The letter, sent March 10, 2021, gives straightforward answers to two questions, relying on the statement issued in December 2020 by the Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith which stated that "all vaccinations... can be used in good conscience..."

"So to the question, can the parish be used as a site for all the currently available vaccinations, the answer is YES," the archbishop wrote. "To the question, should I advise my parishioners to receive any of the three vaccinations available, the answer is also a definite YES."

The archbishop notes that "there has been some confusion" over the issue of vaccinations for COVID, especially since the introduction of the one-shot Johnson and Johnson version.

"You might remember how in our seminary days, moral theology discussions on formal, proximate and remote cooperation with evil, etc. could be quite daunting," the archbishop wrote.

"It's easy to get 'lost in the weeds,'" he noted, pointing to some unfortunate guidance coming from the U.S. bishops and diocesan chanceries "that often do not successfully help lead people out of the

weeds."

He told archdiocesan priests to view the podcast with Father Alfred Cioffi, a moral theologian and bioethics professor at St. Thomas University, which is posted on the archdiocesan website and YouTube channel.

It offers "a helpful and erudite discussion," the archbishop wrote. "But the simplest statement on the matter" came Dec. 21, 2020 from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith: "Notes on the morality of using some anti-Covid-19 vaccines."

The archbishop quotes the pertinent section: "All vaccinations

recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal cooperation with the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive."

The citation from *Vatican News* continues: "The note addresses doubts and questions about the moral aspects of COVID-19 vaccines, including the responsibility of biomedical researchers and drug agencies, the morality of vaccination, vaccine access, and makes clear that these vaccines are not a legitimization of abortion." ■

Stop deporting Haitians: Archbishop tells U.S. government

STAFF REPORT

MIAMI | Archbishop Thomas Wenski has asked the head of homeland security to stop deporting Haitian immigrants, citing moral and legal grounds.

Expulsion would force Haitians back to a land of "political instability and civil unrest, economic stagnation, food insecurity, and the aftermath of natural disasters," Archbishop Wenski wrote in an open letter to Alejandro Mayorkas, secretary of homeland security.

His 1,000-word letter was addressed not only to Mayorkas but to

Anthony Blinken, Biden's secretary of state, and Monty Wilkins, acting U.S. attorney general. It was his second letter on the subject. In June, he wrote to the previous administration on the Haitians' behalf.

In the Feb. 26, 2021 letter, Archbishop Wenski said that Haitians are being deported in defiance of an executive order by President Biden, and in spite of Biden's pledge to take a more humane approach to immigrants and refugees.

The archbishop, who has served and fought for Haitians over nearly all of his nearly 45 years in the priesthood, noted that 200,000 of them live in the Archdiocese of

Miami — the largest Haitian community in the nation. He added that the New York and Boston areas have large Haitian sectors also.

In south Florida, the Haitians are more than mere refugees, Archbishop Wenski said. "They are members of our parishes and enrolled in our schools. They are also essential workers, supporting our nation during this difficult time and contributing to its recovery."

The archbishop argued that expulsion would also worsen the COVID pandemic in Haiti, known for years as the poorest country in the western hemisphere.

"Healthcare infrastructure in Haiti is fragile and ill-equipped to accommodate large numbers of people at once, especially those in need of intensive care," he said.

He also denounced expulsion to Mexico, as the U.S. has tried with some Haitian families. Not only do they face the same dangers as others in refugee camps there, but they have the added handicaps of their race and their inability to speak Spanish. "This leaves them isolated and ripe for exploitation in a region struggling with criminal enterprises, corruption, and human rights abuses," Archbishop Wenski said.

He called for a more permanent resolution than Temporary Protected Status, which can be canceled and lead to deportation. What is needed, he wrote, "is how to best care for Haitians here in the United States, while balancing public health and safety concerns with our country's legal and moral obligations."

The archbishop offered to discuss the situation himself with the federal officials or their representatives. ■

To read the entire letter, go to: http://bit.ly/miami_wenski_haitians_deportation.

Around 300,000 Venezuelans could benefit from TPS

Deferred Enforced Departure granted by Trump administration continued by Biden

ROCÍO GRANADOS
staff of La Voz Católica

MIAMI | An executive order announced March 8, 2021, by Alejandro Mayorkas, secretary of Homeland Security, would grant Temporary Protected Status to around 300,000 undocumented Venezuelans currently living in the U.S.

The protected status is valid for 18 months, through September 2022, and applications must be submitted in the next 180 days. The start date was March 9 and the end date is Sept. 5, 2021.

Those eligible for TPS are Venezuelans living in the U.S. on or before March 8, 2021 who "meet the eligibility requirements" set out by Homeland Security.

This immigration relief was granted by the administration of President Joe Biden a little more than a month after the administration of President Donald Trump granted Deferred Enforced Departure status to Venezuelans.

In announcing TPS for Venezuelans, the Biden Administration "also announced that DED will continue to be valid," said Xinia Bermudez, an attorney with Catholic Legal Services, during an online information session organized by the agency March 11 to explain the legal ramifications of TPS and DED.

Bermudez explained that DED for Venezuelans is an 18-month administrative suspension of their deportation, while TPS is an immigration status that permits beneficiaries to live and work legally in the U.S. for the length of time the measure is in place. It does not grant permanent residency or citizenship.

Both TPS and DED provide protection against deportation and grant temporary work permits.

"DED is the least beneficial of all

immigration reliefs," said Miguel Mora, also an attorney with Catholic Legal Services. He added that DED will end in July 2022 and it is not clear whether it will be extended.

TPS also has an end date. But immigration law allows the administration to extend it for 6, 12 or 18 more months if it determines that the conditions that led to the humanitarian crisis are ongoing in the country, in this case Venezuela, Mora said.

This has already happened with other TPS beneficiaries, Mora said, noting that Haitians have received TPS for 11 years, since the January 2010 earthquake that ravaged their country.

Attorney Bermudez pointed out that many Venezuelans also have pending asylum petitions. She recommended that even those with work permits and pending asylum cases should apply for TPS. "It's an additional protection because if they deny you asylum and you don't have TPS they can deport you."

To benefit from TPS applicants

must register, present their request and pay the designated fees. DED requires registration only if applicants also want a work permit.

The requirements for TPS are:

- Proof of "continuous residency" in the U.S. on or before March 8, 2021 via documents such as rental agreements or property deeds, utility and medical bills, among others. Anyone who arrives after March 8 is not eligible for TPS.

- Payment of the application cost, which is \$50 for those under 14 years of age and \$545 for adults who wish to receive work permits.

- Undergo security and background checks as part of determining eligibility.

Those leading the information session urged applicants to consult an attorney before submitting their TPS application. An application that is filled out incorrectly "could jeopardize TPS benefits such as the work permit," Bermudez said.

They also urged Venezuelans to be careful with notaries, paralegals and immigration counselors who offer to help at very low cost.

FYI

Free or low cost help available

Several organizations such as Catholic Legal Services and the Miami Office of New Americans are helping people fill out TPS applications.

You can contact Catholic Legal Services through social media:
Facebook: @CCLSMiami
Instagram: catholic.legal.services.miami
Twitter: @CLSMiami

To ask for an appointment, call 305-373-1073 ext. 1291 or go to: www.cclsmiami.org/Appointments or www.cclsmiami.org/citas.

The Miami Office of New Americans will be offering free clinics monthly for three months, starting April 8-10. To sign up, go to: <https://ona.salsalabs.org/tps-rsvp/index.html>.

Said Mora: "Our recommendation is to go to a trusted attorney who is competent so as not to be a victim of fraud." ■

OBITUARIES

Salesian Sister Yamile Saieh, 83

Taught Haitians, screened seminarians, 'always joyful, always smiling'

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
of the Florida Catholic staff

MIAMI | When Sister Yamile Saieh came to Miami in 1984, it was to care for her aging mother after her father died. But that didn't mean she stopped working.

Her ever-present smile and her black Salesian habit were soon part of the landscape at Notre Dame d'Haiti Church, where she taught religious education to the children, English to the adults, and ran a summer camp that sometimes enrolled as many as 1,000 kids.

Later, she taught RCIA classes in Spanish to adults seeking to join the Church and prepared children for baptism at St. Martha Church in Miami Shores, where she also volunteered at the gift shop and helped in the office.

When she left Miami nearly five months ago to return to her community's motherhouse in New Jersey, Archbishop Thomas Wenski called her "a mother to us all."

Now the people she left behind are remembering her as "a beautiful sign of love," in the words of Ileana

Roque, administrative assistant in the archdiocesan Vocations Office who also helped in the office of the Vicar for Religious.

Sister Yamile died Valentine's Day, Feb. 14, 2021, after undergoing surgery for a heart problem. She was 83 and had spent 61 years in religious life.

"She never wanted to celebrate her anniversaries as a religious, which was odd to me," Roque said. "I asked her each time when she was up for a jubilee celebration and she would simply brush it off as a bashful nun. But the fact that she died on Valentine's Day, and at her convent, is a big sign for me that we need to celebrate her life the more."

While in Miami, Sister Yamile also found time to become the longest serving member — 14 years — of the archdiocesan Vocations Board, the group that screens potential priests before they are admitted to the seminary.

"Actually, she 'checked out' all the seminarians," said Archbishop Wenski, who hired Sister Yamile at Notre Dame d'Haiti when he was pastor there and to whom she was

devoted.

"She was a good example to me and a friend," the archbishop said. "As auxiliary bishop — and later as archbishop — if I didn't have an engagement to celebrate Mass in a parish, I would say Mass in the chapel of my residence, and she would come faithfully to 'serve' the Mass."

The archbishop explained that, over the years, the Vocations Office would assign seminarians, mostly from St. John Vianney College Seminary, to work as camp counselors at Notre Dame d'Haiti for six weeks during the summer.

"She was a good supervisor and had a good judgment in evaluating the seminarians," the archbishop said, which is why she was asked to join the Vocations Board. "The seminary formation team usually said that Sister's evaluations were right on."

"She had a good eye for good and authentic vocations. She looked beyond the superficial. And all of her feedback, she got it right," agreed Father Elvis Gonzalez, who served as vocations director until the end of June 2020. He is now administrator of St. Michael the Archangel Church in Miami.

He and Sister Yamile also developed a close friendship, and he would often invite her out to lunch.

Her favorite restaurant was a Colombian place — Los Antojos — located on Biscayne Boulevard just north of the archdiocesan Pastoral Center.

They would walk in, he in his collar and she in her habit, and he would tell the servers, "This is my wife."

"She was very joyful," Father Gonzalez recalled. "I never saw her angry. I always saw her smiling."

"She very much maintained her sense of humor," said Father Lazarus Gavin, pastor of St. Martha, who noted that after her mother died, she continued to care for several of her sisters and a brother. Only one sibling, Yolanda, survives her.

"She was a woman of faith, but a very realistic faith," Father Gavin said. He noted her "strong character, organization" and how her students "loved and respected her. She was always a woman who worked and solved problems."

Born May 1, 1937 in Cúcuta, Colombia, Sister Yamile was one of 11 children born to very Catholic Palestinian parents. Her mother and father both had been born in Bethlehem and emigrated separately to Colombia.

"She was very proud of the fact that when her father had first emigrated from Palestine, his first stop



Sister Yamile Saieh

was Cap-Haitien, Haiti," Archbishop Wenski said.

"I love them, the Haitians so much. They are beautiful people," she told the *Florida Catholic* at her farewell Mass last year.

Drawn to teaching, Sister Yamile entered the Salesian congregation a few years after high school. She professed her first vows Aug. 5, 1960, in Casanova, Italy, and received a degree in education with a specialization in psychology from the International Institute of Pedagogy and Religious Sciences in Turin, Italy. She taught in her native Colombia before moving on to schools in New Jersey, New York City, Woodstock, Virginia, and Tampa.

Her funeral Mass was livestreamed on the Salesian Sisters' Facebook page: [facebook.com/Salesian.Sister](https://www.facebook.com/Salesian.Sister). She will be buried at the Salesian Sisters' Cemetery in North Haledon, New Jersey. ■

Father Stanislaw Rakiej, 71

Served Polish immigrants across the world

STAFF REPORT

POMPANO BEACH | Funeral services took place March 2 and 3, 2021, for Father Stanislaw Rakiej, a longtime chaplain to Polish migrants who served as pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa Polish Mission until Jan. 1, 2021.

Father Rakiej, 71, died Feb. 27, 2021, in Pompano Beach after a long struggle with pancreatic cancer. He had been a priest for 46 years, and a member of the Society of Christ for 52 years. The Society of Christ is a religious community devoted to the pastoral care of Poles in the diaspora.

"A few weeks ago, I hosted a dinner for him at my residence with several of the Polish priests working in the archdiocese," said Archbishop Thomas Wenski. "Though he knew that the treatments were unable to halt the spread of his cancer, he was in great spirits. His brother, who is a priest working in Poland, was able to be with him these last several days."

Born Oct. 3, 1949 in Ploty, Poland, he entered the Society of Christ Aug. 15, 1967. He made his first religious profession Sept. 8, 1968 in Ziębice, and took final

vows on April 8, 1972 in Poznań. He was ordained a priest on May 15, 1974, in Poznań.

After ordination, he worked as a vicar in Holy Spirit Parish in Szczecin (1974-1977). From 1977 to 1992, he served as chaplain of Poles in Australia and New Zealand.

Beginning in 1992, he served as chaplain to Polish immigrants in the United States and Canada. On Sept. 1, 2015, he was named pastor of Our Lady of Czestochowa Polish Mission in Pompano Beach, where he remained until his passing, serving as parochial vicar the last two months.

As pastor of the Polish mission, besides Masses at Our Lady of Czestochowa in Pompano, Father Rakiej attended to the Polish communities at Holy Spirit Church in Lantana, St. Joseph in Miami Beach and the Basilica of St. Mary Star of the Sea in Key West.

Due to the large number of faithful, Archbishop Wenski celebrated the funeral Mass at St. Ambrose Church, Deerfield Beach, rather than Our Lady of Czestochowa Mission. Father Rakiej was buried in his native Ploty, Poland. ■

Father Seamus Murtagh, 85

Started out in Miami, served as founding chancellor of Palm Beach Diocese

STAFF REPORT

WEST PALM BEACH | Father Seamus Murtagh, 85, a former Archdiocese of Miami priest who became a "founding father" of the Diocese of Palm Beach, died Feb. 16, 2021, in West Palm Beach.

Father Murtagh spent his entire pastoral life in south Florida and was known for his dedication, leadership and for being a longtime advocate for Catholic education for children of all economic backgrounds.

Before retiring in 2011, he served as pastor at two parishes: Holy Name of Jesus from 1983 to 2000, and St. Ann from 2001 to 2011. He also taught at St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary in Boynton Beach from 1971 until 1983.

He is survived by four siblings and 35 nieces and nephews who remember him as someone who enjoyed playing cards with his family, an avid walker and an accomplished Scrabble player. He enjoyed trips with friends and

family, and traveled to Ireland every year. He also was fond of saying he led a blessed life.

Born in Corlis, Castlereagh, County Roscommon, Ireland, Father Murtagh attended seminary at Mungret College and St. Patrick's College in Carlow, and was ordained for the Archdiocese of Miami in 1966. He served parishes in Broward and Palm Beach counties before Miami Archbishop Coleman Carroll sent him to Rome, where he received a doctorate in sacred theology from the Pontifical Gregorian University.

When the Diocese of Palm Beach was established in 1984, Father Murtagh was tapped as chancellor and Moderator of the Curia. His role included working toward the building of the chancery and managing the financial affairs of the new diocese.

He ultimately served the Diocese of Palm Beach in many roles, including chancellor, vicar general, diocesan administrator (1990) and apostolic administrator (2002).



Father Seamus Murtagh is pictured in this file photo visiting with Andrew Floering, a student at St. Ann School in West Palm Beach.

Even after retirement, he remained a fixture in the local Catholic Church. He served at St. Ann Place Homeless Outreach Center, which he co-founded, by making sandwiches for the hungry. He visited Lourdes Noreen McKeen Residence to spend time with seniors there. On Sundays, he traveled to Holy Cross Parish in Indiantown, where he helped with English Masses.

A wake and visitation were held Feb. 22, 2021 at the Cathedral of St. Ignatius Loyola in Palm Beach Gardens, followed by a funeral Mass Feb. 23. Burial followed at Our Lady Queen of Peace Cemetery in Royal Palm Beach. ■

OBITUARY

Adrian Dominican Sister Mary Tindel, 86

Taught music, led choirs, made 'joyful noise unto the Lord' for five decades in Florida

STAFF REPORT

ADRIAN, Michigan | Sister Mary Tindel, an Adrian Dominican who put her musical gifts to work for the Archdiocese of Miami for most of her 67 years in religious life, has died at the age of 86.

Her death was unexpected, and took place Feb. 28, 2021, at Memorial Hospital West in Pembroke Pines.

"She was one with her music, her students and her piano," wrote Sister Mary Ann Caulfield, prioress of the Florida chapter of the Adrian Dominican congregation, in a reflection that was read at Sister Mary's wake, which took place at the motherhouse in Adrian, Michigan, March 3, 2021.

"It appears that most people have blood running through their veins. I wonder if Mary did not have an equal amount of music flowing through hers," Sister Mary Ann wrote, noting that 98% of Sister Mary's religious life was spent teaching music and directing choirs. "At all times, Mary was determined to 'make a joyful noise unto the Lord.'"

Sister Elizabeth Worley of the Sisters of St. Joseph of St. Augustine, who serves as chief operating officer and chancellor for administration in the Archdiocese of Miami, also remembered Sister Mary's talent for turning liturgical music into prayer.

"Sister Mary Tindel was the music director and cantor at the Cathedral of St. Mary when I joined the choir there, and I sung under her direction for several years," Sister Elizabeth recalled. "It was at Sister's invitation that I began

as a cantor at the cathedral and still continue regularly in that role. Skilled on the piano and organ as well as voice, liturgical music well performed as prayer was always her goal and inspiration."



Sister Mary Tindel

Sister Mary was a native Miamian, born April 28, 1934. She attended St. Mary's (now the cathedral) elementary school and graduated from what was then St. Patrick High School in Miami Beach.

According to her brother, John Tindel, who lives in Indianapolis, she turned down full scholarships to Julliard and the University of Miami to join the Adrian Dominicans.

She entered the community Sept. 6, 1952, was received Aug. 8, 1953, and made her first profession a year later. She ultimately received a Bachelor of Music degree from Siena Heights College (University) in Adrian and a Master of Musical Education degree from Florida

State University in Tallahassee.

After initial assignments in Farmington, Michigan, Toledo, Ohio, and St. Petersburg, Sister Mary arrived in Fort Lauderdale and taught music from 1962 to 1964 at Our Lady Queen of Martyrs School. She then served as an elementary and high school teacher in Tallahassee until 1969, when she returned to St. Patrick as a music teacher.

After that, she remained in south Florida except for a brief assignment in Guayama, Puerto Rico. While in south Florida, she taught six years as Barry University, Miami Shores (1970-76), and one year at Carrollton School in Coconut Grove (1976-77).

She spent two years as director of music and liturgy at St. Rose of Lima Parish in Miami Shores (1977-79) before helping to start the archdiocesan Office of Worship, where she served as associate director from 1979 to 1980.

She then served two years as director of music at the archdiocese and St. Mary Cathedral (1980-89); and two years as liturgical director

and school music teacher at St. Agnes Church in Key Biscayne and St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens (1992-94). She remained at St. Thomas as coordinator of liturgical music from 1994 to 2001.

She then worked as director of liturgical music at St. James Parish in North Miami (2002-2003), and 11 years as director of liturgical music at St. Martha Parish in Miami Shores (2003-2014). Even after retiring from fulltime ministry in 2014, she continued to be active in the Adrian Dominicans' Associates program and fill in for church organists and cantors whenever called upon.

In addition to her brother, Sister Mary is survived by a nephew and her Adrian Dominican Sisters, especially her friend, housemate for many years, and fellow liturgical musician, Sister Helene Kloss.

Funeral services were held in Adrian, Michigan, March 3 and 4, 2021, and may be viewed at this link: <https://adriandominicans.org/Meet-Dominicans/In-Memorial/sister-mary-tindel-op-carlmary>. ■

Two archdiocesan leaders announce retirement

Superintendent of Schools, CEO of Catholic Health Services to step down in 2021

STAFF REPORT

MIAMI | The top officials in the archdiocesan Department of Schools and Catholic Health Services announced their retirement at the end of February.

Kim Pryzbylski, secretary of education and superintendent of schools, will retire effective June 30, 2021. Joseph M. Catania, CEO of Catholic Health Services, will step down Sept. 30, 2021.

During her decade long tenure with the archdiocese, Pryzbylski implemented iPad programs and acquired funding for other cutting-edge technological initiatives in Catholic schools, in addition to instituting teacher/instructional observation and accountability procedures. In spring 2020, when in-classroom instruction was interrupted due to COVID-19, her advanced vision had all the necessary technology in place for students' continued learning via online in-

struction.

Pryzbylski's knowledge and expertise also provided increased funding through federal title programs for professional development for teachers and principals as well as additional instruction for students who need extra assistance. She also established special protocols for fiscal accountability in schools.

Pryzbylski said she was grateful for the opportunities that awaited her in the archdiocese's school system and deemed her time here an experience that solidified her education, experience and the joy of working with principals and teachers, bringing her a sense of accomplishment.

"The time has come for my family and I to plan new adventures and look forward to going back to Indiana (her home state)," Pryzbylski said.

Archbishop Thomas Wenski expressed deep gratitude for Pryzbylski's accomplishments over the past decade.

"Dr. Pryzbylski will leave our schools better than when she found

them both by advancing our capacity in the areas of technology, fiscal accountability, the professional development of our teachers and principals, and Catholic identity. She understood that excellence in Catholic education is not just about preparing students to make a good living, but also to help them to learn the ways of being good and living the faith."

The archdiocese has engaged Partners in Mission to assist in the search for Pryzbylski's successor. A search committee has been identified and will begin its task immediately.

Catania is retiring from Catholic Health Services after leading its growth and development over the past 30 years. He is the only chief executive officer Catholic Health Services has ever had, and has spent the last three decades guiding the organization through difficult times into fiscal stability and remarkable growth.

Catania has continually advanced the mission of CHS, built a focused and cohesive team, nurtured community partnerships,

and focused on serving the most vulnerable within the south Florida community. He oversees the management of over 32 facilities in Miami-Dade and Broward counties, including four flagship medical campuses, 17 independent senior housing communities, five early education centers and two Catholic cemeteries.

As a leader, he has always accepted personal responsibility not only for the 6,000 people in the daily care of CHS, but also over 2,500 staff members and their families.

"Having served over three decades as CEO, I feel this is the right time for a leadership change. It has been my honor and privilege to serve the community, the Archdiocese of Miami, and lead the great team at Catholic Health Services. I am proud of the people of CHS and the organization we have built," Catania said.

"On behalf of the board, I want to thank Mr. Catania for his professional and personal commitment and dedication to Catholic Health Services. His remarkable contributions and leadership have been immeasurable. He has led this organization with courage and confidence through a transformative journey and CHS is a strong market leader thanks to Joe. Given the extended timeline before Mr. Catania retires, the board of directors will begin a

thorough and deliberate CEO selection process," said Ralph E. Lawson, chairman of the board of CHS.

Archbishop Wenski also thanked Catania for his years of service and especially for his leadership in providing safe and effective care during this pandemic.

"Catholic Health Services, as a ministry of the archdiocese, makes visible and continues in our south Florida community the healing ministry of Jesus," Archbishop Wenski said. "Joe has overseen a large and complex organization - and its accomplishments did not happen by accident but were made possible in large measure through the servant leadership of Joe and his being able to bring competent co-workers to assist in advancing the mission of Catholic health care."

The Archdiocese of Miami Department of Schools provides a Catholic education to over 32,000 students in 61 elementary and high schools. Its mission is to have children encounter the teachings and traditions of the Catholic Church and work closely with parents in their children's faith journey.

Catholic Health Services is the largest post-acute provider in the southeast United States, providing a full continuum of healthcare and social services to the southeast Florida community. ■



Kim Pryzbylski



Joseph M. Catania

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

Priest in Kenya Partners With Cross Catholic Outreach To Provide Poor With Safe Water

After more than 30 years in the priesthood, Father Fabian's passion for sharing God's mercy has only grown stronger. Originally from Ghana, he was first sent to Kenya by the Society of African Missionaries in 2002. It was there he discovered one of his life's greatest callings: bringing water to people who had none.

"That is one of my biggest dreams. Everyone should have access to clean and good water," Fr. Fabian said.

"Fr. Fabian has asked Cross Catholic Outreach to join him in an ambitious plan to bring safe water to a 275-mile stretch of land shared by the Diocese of Machakos and Archdiocese of Mombasa," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach. "We have completed six water systems so far, blessing about 50,724 people in the region, and we hope to bring safe water to 10 additional communities in the months ahead."



Over the course of six years, Fr. Fabian has collaborated with Cross Catholic Outreach to complete water system projects for 83,000 people in 27 villages throughout the Diocese of Lodwar. More recently, through the Good Samaritan Water Sanitation Services nonprofit he created to expand his mission, other water projects are being undertaken to benefit the poor in other Catholic dioceses. [See story on opposite page.]

When Fr. Fabian first enters a new community to assess its situation, he begins by asking a simple question.

"You start by asking, 'What do you need?'" Fr. Fabian says. "Most of the time water is the first on their list."

According to Fr. Fabian, meeting a community's most critical need — water — is the perfect way to share the love of God. One benefit is the way Fr. Fabian works through local



Fr. Fabian was appalled by the muddy water sources families were using, and he sought help from Cross Catholic Outreach to drill wells and install improved water systems. Working together, they hope to expand these efforts even more this year.

parishes, empowering priests to care for their communities by overseeing water projects and appointing village water committees. This strengthens the relationship between the people and their parish, and many experience a deeper understanding of the abundant life that is available to them in Christ.

Many immediate benefits become apparent once communities gain access to clean water. Improved health and restored faith are often two of the first blessings to reveal themselves.

"It saves the lives of most of these children. It also helps the spirituality of the people, giving them time to go to church," Fr. Fabian explained. "Priests call thanking you, saying, 'You can't imagine how many people are attending Mass!'"

There are other spiritual blessings that come from these projects too. According to Jim Cavnar, U.S. Catholics who help fund the work through Cross Catholic Outreach often share their enthusiasm for supporting mission work and say

the experience gives them a greater appreciation for the impact of Catholic charity.

"Most American Catholics want to be more involved in helping the poor in developing countries, but they want to do something specific and meaningful like this," said Cavnar. "I'm sure they will rally to help Fr. Fabian with the work he has planned — and that they will be blessed by the experience if they do."

Readers interested in supporting Cross Catholic Outreach water programs and other outreaches to the poor can contribute through the ministry brochure inserted in this issue or send tax-deductible gifts to: Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC1667, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168. The ministry has a special need for partners willing to make gifts on a monthly basis. Use the inserted brochure to become a Mission Partner or write "Monthly Mission Partner" on mailed checks to be contacted about setting up those arrangements.

Legacy Giving Provides Catholics With Unique Opportunity To Bless Others

If you are like many Catholics born in the 1950s or before, you have probably begun to think about the spiritual legacy your life and actions represent. What did we care about? What did we value? These are some of the things we hope will be remembered.

"For a growing number of Catholics, this introspection has led to the exploration of 'legacy giving' — the use of one's will, trust, retirement plan or life insurance policy — to leave behind a blessing for others that will reverberate beyond their own lifetime,

hopefully influencing their family and others they cherish," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, an official Catholic relief and development charity with staff dedicated to such estate planning.

According to Cavnar, Cross Catholic Outreach has helped many Catholics establish these legacy gifts and expects them to play a significant role in future ministry missions.

"A will or trust can also reflect a person's special heart for a country or for an area of need. It can be used to

build houses for poor families or to build classrooms to educate children, for example," Cavnar said. "Others simply want to help the poorest of the poor and make their legacy gift for that purpose. It's their way of saying, 'As a Catholic, I value life and support works of mercy. I want my family to understand that calling and believe in it too.' And because legacy gifts can be quite large, they often achieve incredible things. A single one might build an entire school or fund the construction of hundreds of homes. It's producing an amazing

impact and serves as an incredible testament to the faith of the giver."

In addition to this service, Cross Catholic Outreach's staff can also support donors seeking to establish a charitable gift annuity, charitable remainder trust or special endowment. Financial planners can also obtain information to help those who seek professional counsel or have donor-advised funds.

To learn more about these services, the charity recommends readers visit its special online portal at CrossCatholicLegacy.org.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

U.S. Catholics Are Blessing the Poor in Kenya by Addressing Their Urgent Need for Safe Water

Gladys Mghoi is helping to raise her grandchildren in Mokine, a small village situated in the Archdiocese of Mombasa. Every morning, she wakes up at around 4 a.m. to start the long and arduous process of collecting water for the day.

"In Gladys' simple home, there is no tap to turn to get a supply of water. She lives in an impoverished village, and like most everyone else there, she must travel to a distant source to get the water her family needs," explained Jim Cavnar, president of Cross Catholic Outreach, a leading relief and development charity assisting Catholic missions in Africa. "It's tragic, but water scarcity is common in many parts of Kenya. People in remote areas tend to be desperately poor, and their villages have no infrastructure to supply water. To get what they need to survive, they face a lot of hardships."

In Gladys' case, quenching the thirst of her grandchildren means a walk of nearly 2 miles to a dry riverbed. There, villagers have dug a hole that allows water to seep up from the ground. It is a slow process, so Gladys and the others who come to the spot often have to wait in line more than an hour to fill their containers with muddy water from the pit.

The walk home with this "reward" is also a challenge because the jerrycan she uses can become very heavy when it is full.

Because of Gladys' age and health, her older grandchildren usually assist with this exhausting process. When they do, it disadvantages the family again. Water collection often takes so long the children either arrive late to class or miss school altogether.

According to Cavnar, solving the water scarcity problem is a priority for Cross Catholic Outreach because a lack of clean water has a negative impact in so many areas of a poor family's life.

"One of our biggest concerns is the poor quality of the water they currently collect," he said. "The muddy stuff is often tainted with bacteria, parasites and the chemical runoff from local farms."

Gladys is aware of this threat too, but since there is no alternative, she sees no other way to proceed.

"We collect water which is very, very dirty, and then it will become very difficult for us and very unhealthy for our consumption," Gladys admitted. "This water is very dirty. It is very murky. At the same time, because we have no option, we have to drink it the way it is."

As bleak as this situation may seem, Gladys and her neighbors have a reason to feel hopeful. A local priest has become



aware of the village's hardships and is working to provide relief through a partnership with Cross Catholic Outreach. [See story on opposite page.] If this project is successful, the challenges she faces in collecting water may soon be over.

"Our goal now is to get the financial backing of U.S. Catholics to fund this special project," Cavnar said. "If they respond generously, and I believe they will, we can ensure Gladys and her grandchildren have safe water to drink for many years to come."

Addressing specific needs like this is what Cross Catholic Outreach was

Gladys Mghoi and her grandchildren face tremendous challenges obtaining their daily water supply. They currently walk far to collect contaminated water — because they have no other option. With the help of the Church, this hardship can end.

founded to accomplish. For nearly 20 years, the Catholic ministry has partnered with a local Catholic priest, religious sisters or missions to solve the problems of the poor.

"U.S. Catholics have been very interested in helping the poor using our approach because they like funding specific needs and supporting the local Catholic clergy," Cavnar said. "They want their donated dollars to have a profound and lasting impact, so water projects are the kind of outreach they like best. Providing safe water addresses many needs — from quenching thirst to restoring health to supporting educational goals. In this case, it will also bring long-awaited relief to precious people like Gladys."

The grandmother confirmed that fact

as she explained yet another reason she sees the proposed water project as a blessing.

"It is not very safe for me to collect water as an elderly person, but since there is no alternative, we have to risk our lives," Gladys explained. "Sometimes because of my weakness, I can fall down. Sometimes there are also wild animals [such as] hyenas in the area."

These risks will also be eliminated when the water project is completed.

"I can't imagine the joy Gladys will feel when that tap is installed and the clean water flows freely. But I do know one thing — she and the others in her community will praise God," Cavnar said. "And what a joy it will be for us too. There's nothing more gratifying than serving as instruments of God's mercy!"

How to Help

To fund Cross Catholic Outreach's effort to help the poor worldwide, use the postage-paid brochure inserted in this newspaper or mail your gift to Cross Catholic Outreach, Dept. AC1667, PO Box 97168, Washington DC 20090-7168. The brochure also includes instructions on becoming a Mission Partner and making a regular monthly donation to this cause.

If you identify an aid project, 100% of the donation will be restricted to be used for that specific project. However, if more is raised for the project than needed, funds will be redirected to other urgent needs in the ministry.



CONGRATULATIONS FATHER CAPÓ

25th Anniversary of Ordination to the Priesthood



ST. THOMAS UNIVERSITY

St. Thomas University is the only Archdiocesan university in Florida. Our strategic plan, **STU Limitless**, is built on the pillars of Devotion, Opportunity, and Results. It is this Devotion that bolsters our mission to develop ethical leaders for our global community. As Vice President of Mission and Ministry, Father Capó leads our **Institute for Interfaith Leadership**, our **School of Theology**, and our **Campus Ministry**. His personal Faith and Devotion are an inspiration to our STU community. We invite you to tour our beautiful campus, learn about our Campus Ministry Scholarships, and pursue your degree at a Catholic university committed to the academic success of its students, as well as their spiritual growth. Congratulations Father Capó! May the Peace of our Lord always be with you.



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2 bishops, 15 priests mark jubilees

All will be honored at the annual chrism Mass to be celebrated Tuesday of Holy Week

STAFF REPORT

MIAMI | Two bishops and 15 priests are marking anniversaries of ordination this year, with the oldest celebrating 65 years of priesthood and the youngest 25.

The bishops are John C. Favalora, archbishop emeritus of Miami, marking 60 years; and Enrique Delgado, auxiliary bishop of Miami, marking 25. All will be honored at the annual chrism Mass which is celebrated on the Tuesday of Holy Week at St. Mary Cathedral. Following are brief biographies of the jubilarians.



Msgr. Seamus Doyle



Msgr. Vincent Kelly



Archbishop John C. Favalora



Father Francis Akwue, CSSP



Father John Fink



Father Henrick Jose

65 YEARS

MSGR. SEAMUS DOYLE

Born Feb. 12, 1931, in Wexford, Ireland, Msgr. Doyle was ordained June 3, 1956, for the Diocese of Auckland, New Zealand. He served there until 1970, when he went to Denver, Colorado, and then, in 1975, to south Florida. He served as parochial vicar at St. Lawrence, North Miami Beach, and St. Rose of Lima, Miami Shores until 1983, when he was appointed pastor of St. Elizabeth of Hungary in Pompano Beach. He returned to St. Rose as pastor in 1991 and served there until his retirement in January 2012. Msgr. Doyle also served as archdi-

ocesan chaplain to the Knights of Columbus. In 2008, he received the honorary title of monsignor from Pope Benedict XVI.

MSGR. VINCENT KELLY

Msgr. Kelly was born July 21, 1933, in Kilrush, County Clare, Ireland and ordained June 10, 1956 in Thurles, Ireland. He was initially assigned to the Diocese of Nebraska, where he spent 13 years as a teacher and high school principal. After obtaining a degree in education administration from the University of Nebraska in 1969, he came to south Florida and was assigned to the faculty of Cardinal Gibbons High School in Fort Lauderdale. A year later, he

was named principal of St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale, and later supervising principal.

In 1975, he was named acting superintendent of schools for the archdiocese, a position which ultimately became permanent and lasted until 2011. In 2003, he took on added responsibilities as supervising principal at Cardinal Gibbons. In 1980, Msgr. Kelly founded the Archdiocesan Education Foundation (now part of the Catholic Community Foundation), an endowment fund to secure the future of the archdiocese's Catholic schools. Concurrent with his educational work, he has served as parochial vicar at St. Pius X Church in Fort Lauderdale, and


since 1982 as pastor of St. John the Baptist in Fort Lauderdale. Pope St. John Paul II conferred on him the honorary title of monsignor in 1998.


60 YEARS


ARCHBISHOP JOHN C. FAVALORA

Archbishop Favalora was born Dec. 5, 1935, in New Orleans, Louisiana. He studied for the priesthood at St. Joseph Seminary in St. Benedict, Louisiana; Notre Dame Seminary in New Orleans; and the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, where he was ordained

PLEASE SEE **FAVALORA, 12**







Parishioners of St. Henry
in Pompano Beach join their Pastor,
Father Francis Akwue, C.S.Sp.,
in thanksgiving to God for his:
55 years of Consecrated Life
in the Congregation of the Holy Spirit

FEBRUARY 11, 1966 - 2021

&

50 years of Sacerdotal Ordination,
APRIL 17, 1971 - 2021

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Father Bernard
Kirlin



Father Rolando
Medina



Father Michael
Quilligan



Father Rafael
Capó



Father Yader
Centeno



Father Victor
Cortes



Bishop Enrique
Delgado

FAVALORA

FROM 11

on Dec. 20, 1961. Upon his return to New Orleans, he served in various ministries, from parochial vicar to Latin teacher to vice-chancellor, director of vocations, director of the office for the permanent diaconate, and seminary rector, as well as pastor. He was appointed bishop of Alexandria, Louisiana, on June 24, 1986; bishop of St. Petersburg, Florida, on March 7, 1989; and third archbishop of Miami, to succeed retiring Archbishop Edward A. McCarthy, on Nov. 3, 1994. He retired as archbishop on April 20, 2010, but continues to help with confirmations and other archdiocesan activities.

50 YEARS

FATHER FRANCIS AKWUE

Born Feb. 14, 1938, in Ogidi, Anambra, Nigeria, Father Akwue was ordained April 17, 1971 for the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. Sent for further studies at St. John's University in Collegeville, Maryland, he also obtained a master's degree in religious education and a doctorate in moral theology from St. Paul's University and the University of Ottawa, both in Ottawa, Canada. He arrived in the Archdiocese of Miami in February 1990 and was named parochial vicar at Little Flower Church, Coral Gables (1990-93). He later served as parochial vicar at Our Lady of the Holy Rosary (now Holy Rosary-St. Richard), Palmetto Bay (1993-94); St. Andrew, Coral Springs (1994-96); and St. Catherine of Siena, Miami (1996-98). Since 1998, he has served at St. Henry Church in Pompano Beach, first as parochial vicar, then as administrator (2005-07) and since 2007 as pastor.

FATHER JOHN FINK

Born July 2, 1940, in Cleveland, Ohio, Father Fink graduated from the University of Dayton with a bachelor's degree in education. He obtained a master's in theology from St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach and was ordained May 29, 1971 for the Archdiocese of Miami. He has served as parochial vicar at: Nativity Church in Hollywood (1971-72); St. Margaret in Clewiston, now part of the Diocese of Venice (1972-75) St. Hugh, Coconut Grove (1975-77); St. Joseph in Stuart, now part of the Diocese of Palm Beach (1977-78); St. Bartholomew in Miramar (1978-91); and San Isidro in Pompano Beach (1991-92). From 1992 to 2010 he served as chaplain at Broward General Hospital. He also served as spiritual director of the Broward Curia of the Legion of Mary from 1978 to 1985, and as assistant director

of the English Charismatic Renewal from 2004 until his retirement in July 2010.

FATHER HENRICK JOSE

Father Jose was born July 20, 1945, in India, where he attended seminary and was ordained Dec. 22, 1971 for the Archdiocese of Madras Mylapore. He served there until June 2002, when he came to Miami and worked at St. Richard (now Holy Rosary-St. Richard) in Palmetto Bay (2002-03). He returned to St. Richard in 2004 and continued in residence there while serving as chaplain at Baptist Hospital in Miami (2005-13). He then served as parochial vicar at St. Coleman, Pompano Beach (2013-15); chaplain of campus ministry at St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens (2015-16); and parochial vicar at St. Louis in Pinecrest from 2016 until his retirement in June 2019.

FATHER BERNARD KIRLIN

Born May 1, 1945, in Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, Father Kirlin earned a bachelor's degree in philosophy from the Pontifical College Josephinum in Worthington, Ohio, and a master's degree in theology from St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach. He was ordained May 22, 1971, for the Archdiocese of Miami and served as parochial vicar at St. Mary Cathedral, Miami (1971-72) and Our Lady of Guadalupe Mission in Immokalee, now part of the Venice Diocese (1972-75). He served as administrator of San Isidro Mission in Pompano Beach from 1975 until 1977, when he was sent for higher studies at the Gregorian University in Rome (1977-83). Upon his return, he taught at St. John Vianney Seminary in Miami (1983-84) and served as rector there from 1984 to 1987, when he was named administrator of St. Peter in Big Pine Key. In 1988, he was named administrator and then pastor of Holy Family in North Miami. He spent a sabbatical year (1997-98) in Rome, then became parochial vicar at St. Richard (now Holy Rosary-St. Richard) in Palmetto Bay (1998-99); pastor of St. Augustine in Coral Gables (1999-2010); and finally pastor of St. Mary Magdalen in Sunny Isles Beach from 2010 until his retirement in 2019.

FATHER ROLANDO MEDINA

Born Aug. 28, 1940, in Cuba, Father Medina was ordained Dec. 30, 1971 for the Diocese of Cienfuegos. He arrived in south Florida in May 1987 and began working at Our Lady of Divine Providence in Miami. From 1988 to 1993, he served as parochial vicar at St. John the Apostle in Hialeah. He was incardinated, becoming a priest of the Archdiocese of Miami, in 1992. He then served as parochial vicar at St. Raymond, Miami (1993-96) and helped at St. Thomas the Apostle in Miami (1996-97) until being named parochial vicar at Santa Barbara in Hialeah (1997-98). He served a couple of months at Our Lady of Charity Shrine in

Miami, then returned to Santa Barbara as parochial vicar (1999-2004). His last assignment was parochial vicar at St. Cecilia in Hialeah, from 2004 until his retirement in 2009.

FATHER MICHAEL QUILLIGAN

Born May 26, 1945, in Limerick, Ireland, Father Quilligan was ordained June 12, 1971 in the Cathedral at Thurles for the Archdiocese of Miami. He arrived in South Florida that summer and was named parochial vicar at Immaculate Conception in Hialeah (1971-74). He also served as parochial vicar at St. Rose of Lima, Miami Shores (1974-79) and St. Gregory in Plantation (1979-84). From 1984 until his retirement in June 2019, he served as pastor of Annunciation in West Hollywood.

25 YEARS

FATHER RAFAEL CAPO

Born April 28, 1968, in Puerto Rico, Father Capó was ordained Oct. 12, 1996 for the Piarist Fathers. He has degrees in educational leadership and biology and worked as a high school president, campus minister, teacher and vocations director. While studying theology in Mexico and Rome (1994-1996) he ministered to street children and immigrant youths. He also has a licentiate in systematic theology and a doctorate in practical theology. From Sept. 30, 2011 to July 1, 2020, he served as director of the U.S. bishops' Southeast Regional Office for Hispanic Ministry and its Southeast Pastoral Institute (SEPI) in Miami. During that time, he participated in all major organizations of Hispanic ministry and helped coordinate that ministry throughout the southeastern U.S. He serves as advisor to the board of directors of the National Catholic Network de Pastoral Juvenil Hispana (La Red) and was appointed a Pontifical Missionary of Mercy by Pope Francis. He was incardinated in the Archdiocese of Miami on Jan. 13, 2017 and began serving as vice president for mission and dean of theology at St. Thomas University, Miami Gardens, on March 25, 2020.

FATHER YADER CENTENO

Born Oct. 4, 1965, in Nicaragua, Father Centeno was ordained for the Piarist Fathers on Dec. 20, 1996. He came to South Florida in February 2007 and began working as parochial vicar at St. Timothy in Miami until 2010. He served as parochial vicar at St. Rose of Lima in Miami Shores (2011-13) and Corpus Christi in Miami (2013-14) until being named to his current position as administrator of St. John Bosco Parish in Miami. He was incardinated in the Archdiocese of Miami July 1, 2013.

FATHER VICTOR CORTES

Father Cortes was born April 19, 1965, in

Mexico City, Mexico. He obtained a degree in mechanical engineering from the Universidad Panamericana in Guadalajara, Mexico, before entering the seminary in Mexico City upon graduation in 1988. He completed his seminary studies in Rome and was ordained Sept. 15, 1996 for the Prelature of the Holy Cross (Opus Dei). He has served as chaplain for Opus Dei communities in Monterrey, Mexico (1997-2001), Chihuahua, Mexico (2001-02), Dallas, Texas (2002-04) and currently Miami.

BISHOP ENRIQUE DELGADO

Born Dec. 26, 1955, in Lima, Peru, Bishop Delgado studied industrial engineering and obtained a master's in economics with specialization in accounting and finance. He worked in private industry, including as sub-director of COFIDE, Peru's corporation for development, until entering St. John Vianney Seminary in Miami in 1991. Upon completing his studies at St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach, he was ordained for the Archdiocese of Miami in his native Lima on June 29, 1996. He worked as parochial vicar at St. Agnes, Key Biscayne (1996-99) and Nativity, Hollywood (1999-2003); as administrator and later pastor of St. Justin Martyr, Key Largo (2003-10); and has been pastor of St. Katharine Drexel, Weston, since August 2010. On Oct. 12, 2017, Pope Francis named him Titular Bishop of Aquae Novae in Proconsulari and auxiliary bishop of Miami. He was ordained a bishop on Dec. 7, 2017.

MSGR. ROBERTO GARZA

Born Oct. 2, 1967 in Texas, Msgr. Garza grew up in Clewiston, Florida, and was ordained May 11, 1996, for the Archdiocese of Miami. He served as parochial vicar at St. Mary Star of the Sea in Key West (1996-98), then was sent for higher studies at the Gregorian University in Rome (1998-2000). He served as parochial vicar at Corpus Christi, Miami (2000-03), and then as parochial vicar, administrator and finally pastor of San Isidro Mission in Pompano Beach (2003-09). He was named archdiocesan director of vocations (2009-10), then rector of St. John Vianney Seminary (2010-17). He is currently pastor of St. Joachim Parish in Miami (appointed in 2018) while also serving as director of the archdiocesan radio station, Radio Paz (appointed in 2017).



Msgr. Roberto Garza

PLEASE SEE JUBILARIANS, 13

Around the Archdiocese

COMMUNITY

40 Days for Life, a Lenten prayer campaign thru March 28, Palm Sunday. Gather in front of abortion clinics and pray for the conversion of all those involved in the abortion industry. Your peaceful, prayerful presence changes minds and hearts. 305-299-8840, 40daysforlife.com.

40 Días por la Vida, campaña de oración durante la Cuaresma hasta el 28 de marzo, Domingo de Ramos. Nos reunimos frente a las clínicas de aborto y rezamos por la conversión de todos los implicados en dicha industria. Nuestra presencia pacífica y orante cambia mentes y corazones. 305-299-8840, 40daysforlife.com.

Lenten blood drive, Tuesday, March 23, 3:30-8:30 p.m., Knights of Columbus Council Hall, 3601 S. Miami Ave., Miami (east of Mercy Hospital, north of Immaculata-La Salle High School). Organized by Knights to help alleviate blood shortage in Miami-Dade County. Register at Oneblood.org.

Campaña cuaresmal para donar sangre, martes, 23 de marzo, 3:30-8:30 p.m., Knights of Columbus Council Hall, 3601 S. Miami Ave., Miami (al este del Hospital Mercy, al norte del colegio Immaculata-La Salle). Organizada por los Caballeros de Colón, con el fin de ayudar a aliviar la escasez de sangre en el condado de Miami-Dade. Inscripción: Oneblood.org.

CONCERTS

Martha/Mary Yamaha Series: Emotions in Jazz, Sunday, April 18, 4 p.m., La Merced Chapel plaza and lawn on the grounds of Corpus Christi, 3220 N.W. Seventh Ave., Miami. Featuring The Emmett Cohen Trio. Tickets \$10. Marthamaryconcerts.org or parish office.

FAITH EDUCATION

Natural Family Planning, Tuesday, March 23, 7:30-9:30 p.m., online introductory session for Creighton Model of NFP, a medically safe, morally acceptable, highly effective method of both postponing and achieving pregnancy. conta.cc/3bPOWBY.

Planificación familiar natural, jueves, 25 de marzo, 7:30-9:30 p.m., por internet. Sesión introductoria al Modelo Creighton, un método seguro desde el punto de vista médico, aceptable desde la moral, y muy eficaz tanto para posponer como para lograr el embarazo. conta.cc/3oOPLib.

Christian Life Program begins Saturday, April 10, 7:30 p.m. via Zoom. An integrated course intended to lead program participants into a renewed understanding of God's call to them as Christian couples or individuals. kecheng72.kc@gmail.com.

Grupo bíblico virtual, martes, 7 p.m., Our Lady of the Lakes, Miami Lakes. ollgrupobiblico@gmail.com.

Virtual oratory for children, Saturdays, 2-4 p.m., for ages 6-14, hosted by Salesian Sisters. Meet new friends, play games, pray together and engage in wholesome activities through Zoom. www.salesiansisters.org/weekly-virtual-oratory.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION

Transformed in Love en español: programa oficial arquidiocesano de preparación matrimonial. Debido a las restricciones por el COVID-19, la clase se ofrece en línea como un seminario interactivo con conferencias en vivo. Las parejas deben asistir ambos días al programa completo para recibir su certificado. 305-762-1127/1236, sdiaz@theadom.org. Próximas fechas y enlaces de inscripción:

- 22 y 23 de mayo, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. conta.cc/36sZJZ6.

- 25 y 26 de septiembre, 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m. conta.cc/2XIF44R.

Transformed in Love: official archdiocesan marriage preparation program. Offered online until further notice due to COVID-19. This is a live class with real-time lectures, not a self-paced class; couples must attend the entire program both days to receive their certificate of completion. 305-762-1127/1236, sdiaz@theadom.org. Upcoming dates and registration links:

- July 17 and 18; https://conta.cc/34NZm1i.

- Aug. 28 and 29; https://conta.cc/35WmUQT.

Camino del Matrimonio, programa de preparación matrimonial ofrecido por la Arquidiócesis de Miami. Costo: \$125 por pareja. El programa se ofrece en línea hasta nuevo aviso debido al COVID-19. Información: 305-226-4664, caminodelmatrimonio@gmail.com, www.caminodelmatrimonio.org

MASSES

Virtual Mass Wednesdays of Lent, 12:15 p.m., from St. Vincent de Paul Seminary, Boynton Beach. https://www.svdpc.edu/live.

RETREATS

Be still and know that I am God, April 2, 7 p.m.-April 3, 10 a.m., MorningStar Renewal Center, 7275 S.W. 124 St., Miami. Monthly silent retreat. Limited availability to in-person attendance due to safety procedures. \$50/person. Registration: bit.ly/msrc-msr, info@MorningStarRenewal.org.

Retrouvaille, April 16-18, Southeast Pastoral Institute, 7700 S.W. 56 St., Miami. A program to help couples heal and renew their hurting marriages, with post-weekend sessions for continued learning and support. 305-915-4607, Miami@retrouvaille.org, HelpOurMarriage.org.

Probado, pero no derribado, sábado, 17 de abril vía Zoom. Taller de sanación y

transformación espiritual para hombres. Inscripciones: bit.ly/2L9F7nL. 305-338-5652, 305-599-1343.

Our Lady of Florida Spiritual Center, 1300 U.S. Highway 1, North Palm Beach. Events have limited capacity due to COVID-19 restrictions. Registration required. www.ourladyofflorida.org, reservations@cpprovfl.org, 561-626-1300:

- "From darkness to light; from despair to hope," Saturday, March 27, 9 a.m.-6:30 p.m. Lenten one-day retreat for men and women. \$120.

- "Jesus, I Trust in You," Tuesday, March 30, 10 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Lenten day of reflection; includes presentations, time for private reflection, opportunity for confession, a meal and Mass. \$50.

- Holy Week outdoors: Palm Sunday Mass, March 28, 9 a.m.; Good Friday Service, April 2, 3 p.m.; Easter Sunrise Mass, April 4, Sunrise. Bring your own chairs, maintain social distancing, wear masks.

SCHOOLS

Campus tours, Archbishop Coleman Carroll High, 10300 S.W. 167 Ave., Miami. To schedule a visit, contact 305-388-6700 ext. 1292, admissions@colemancarroll.org.

SEPI: En estos tiempos del coronavirus, ofrece cursos en línea con o sin crédito académico para quienes deseen una formación cristiana en su ministerio pastoral, eclesial o personal. También ofrece maestría en Ministerio Pastoral Hispano. www.sepi.us.

Online degree programs at St. John Vianney College Seminary, for seminarians and laity around the world. Online master's in theology begins spring 2021. 305-223-4561, contact@sjvcs.edu, www.sjvcs.edu.

SPIRITUAL

Year of St. Joseph, Mass and rosary on the 19th of each month, St. Agnes, 100 Harbor Drive, Key Biscayne. Stakb.org, 305-361-2351.

Flourish Your Faith conference, April 23 and 24, DoubleTree by Hilton, 13400 W. Sunrise Blvd., Sunrise. Inspired speakers and worship music to energize your faith. Learn from speakers like Dr. Mary Healy, Deacon Ralph Poyo, Peter Herbeck, and more. All tickets include a delicious hot lunch and dinner. Attendance limited; COVID precautions will be taken. FlourishYourFaith.com, info@FlourishYourFaith.com.

Morningstar Renewal Center, 7275 S.W. 124 St., Pinecrest. Events require a fee, unless otherwise noted. 305-238-4367, info@morningstarrenewal.org, www.morningstarrenewal.org:

- Moonlight Labyrinth Prayer Walk: April 26, May 26, June 24 at sunset. Pray, reflect under the full moon while enjoying acoustic music; weather permitting; masks required. Donations accepted.



Father Fernando Hería



Father Jeff McCormick



Father John Peloso

JUBILARIANS

FROM 12

FATHER FERNANDO HERÍA

Born Oct. 13, 1950, in Cuba, Father Hería came to Miami at age 11. After high school, he enlisted in the Army and served in the Judge Advocate's Office before earning degrees in history and political science from Florida International University. He studied law at Thomas M. Cooley Law School in Michigan and practiced briefly as a prosecutor there. Returning to Miami, he opened his own criminal defense practice until a fateful trip to Medjugorje reminded him of the call to priesthood he first felt at 16. He was ordained a priest of the Archdiocese of Miami on May 11, 1996. He served as parochial vicar at St. Thomas the Apostle in Miami (1996-98) then was sent for higher studies in canon law at the Gregorian University in Rome (1998-2000). He has served as parochial vicar at Little Flower, Coral Gables (2001-02), administrator of St. Justin Martyr, Key Largo (2002-03), and pastor of St. Brendan in Miami (2003-17) as well as supervising principal of St. Brendan High School (2003-09). He also serves as judge in the Metropolitan Tribunal and since 2016 has served

as rector of the National Shrine of Our Lady of Charity in Miami.

FATHER JEFFREY MCCORMICK

Father McCormick was born in Miami and graduated from Cooper City High School in Broward.

Born with cerebral palsy, he was involved with the Schott Center for the Deaf and Disabled as well as young adult ministry while working as a quality control specialist for Sony Professional Products. Because he relies on crutches to walk, he thought he would not be accepted in the seminary. He was wrong.

On May 11, 1996, he became the first person with disabilities to be ordained for the Archdiocese of Miami. He served as parochial vicar at St. Louis in Pinecrest (1996-99) and St. Andrew in Coral Springs (1999-2002) before being named administrator and then pastor of St. Maximilian Kolbe in Pembroke Pines, where he has served since 2002. He is also spiritual director of Couples for Christ.

FATHER JOHN PELOSO

Father Peloso was born in the Bronx, New York, Nov. 11, 1955, but graduated from St. Thomas Aquinas High School in Fort Lauderdale. He worked as a commercial and deep-sea diver, played in a rock band, painted cars, dabbled in farming and was undefeated as a professional kick boxer before entering the seminary.

He was ordained May 11, 1996 for the Archdiocese of Miami. He served as parochial vicar at St. Andrew, Coral Springs (1996-99) and St. Louis, Pinecrest (1999-2002), until being named administrator and then pastor of San Pedro in Plantation Key in 2003. In 2011, he was named to his current position as pastor of St. Edward in Pembroke Pines. ■

FYI

To our readers: Please note that due to the COVID-19 pandemic, many events are taking place online only. Events taking place in person are subject to CDC guidelines, including restrictions on capacity and requirements for social distancing and mask-wearing. For more information, please contact the event coordinators directly.

- Cafecito with Jesus, Monday-Friday, noon, via Zoom. 5 minutes of prayer and an inspirational thought to take into the rest of your day. bit.ly/msrc-cafecito12pm.

- SoulCore: apostolate integrating core strengthening, stretching and functional movement with the prayers of

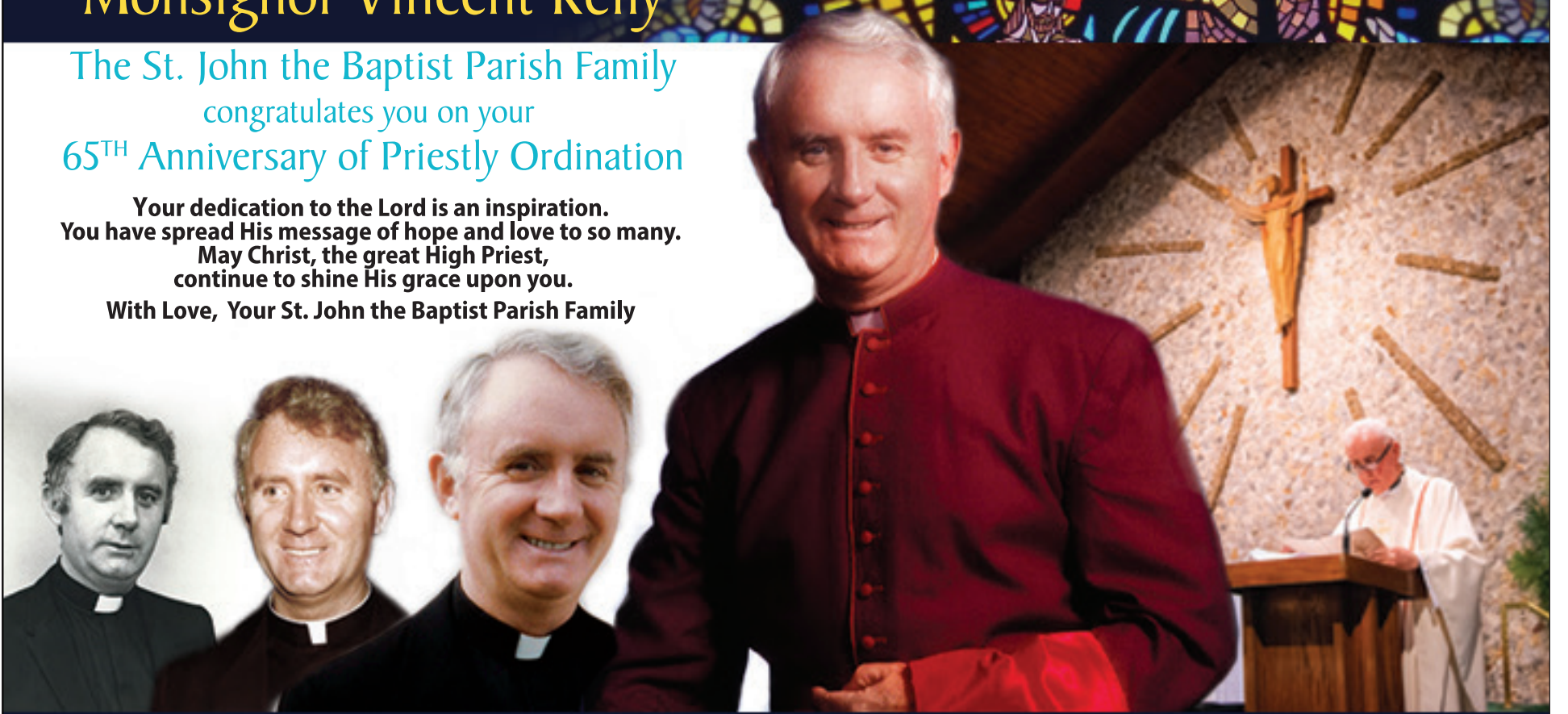
the rosary. Recorded sessions of all mysteries on YouTube: bit.ly/yt-msrc-soulcore.

Catholic Prayer Breakfast, second Tuesdays, 7 a.m. via Zoom. Have your own breakfast while listening to an inspiring local speaker. Hosted by St. Louis, Pinecrest. wvander@law.miami.edu.

Monsignor Vincent Kelly

The St. John the Baptist Parish Family
congratulates you on your
65TH Anniversary of Priestly Ordination

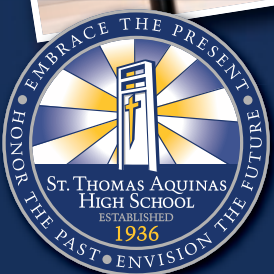
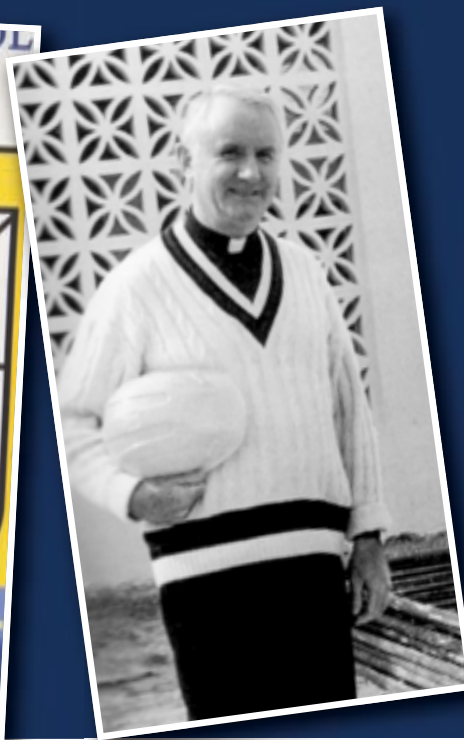
Your dedication to the Lord is an inspiration.
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Clockwise from top left, Jesus with his disciples on the metal doors to the Tabernacle. The patroness of St. Katharine Drexel Church stands to the right of the chancel. Three icons share the chancel area, including a central double icon of Our Lady of the Sign, which is based on the belief that while Mary was pregnant with Jesus her womb itself was a holy sanctuary. Christ Pantocrator, or All-Ruler, gazes from the ceiling of the narthex. A garden on church grounds is dedicated to Our Lady of Schoenstatt. (PHOTOS BY JIM DAVIS | FC)

Art at St. Katharine Drexel Church, Weston

JIM DAVIS
Florida Catholic correspondent

WESTON | “GIVES UP SEVEN MILLION!” screamed a headline in 1889. Katharine Drexel’s decision, shortly after the death of her wealthy father, seemed madness in upper-class Philadelphia.

She didn’t care. She was spending the money on what she wanted: schools and missions for disadvantaged Native Americans and southern Blacks.

Her generosity and compassion, plus her founding of a religious order, eventually earned her the title of St. Katharine Drexel, whose feast falls on March 3.

The family into which Katharine was born in 1858 was wealthy, privileged and well connected. The family lived on a 90-acre estate and traveled in a private railroad car. Her father, Francis Anthony Drexel, was an international banker. Her uncle, A.J. Drexel, founded Drexel University in Philadelphia. Katharine had an excellent education, traveled widely and enjoyed a rich social life.

Her Catholic family also imparted a social conscience in her, with a

blend of faith and philanthropy. Her father spent a half-hour each night in prayer. He and his wife opened their home to the poor each week, giving out money, clothing, blankets, medicine and other necessities. They also endowed schools and churches for the underprivileged in southern and western states.

The Drexels’ comfortable life was shaken as Katharine nursed her mother through a battle with cancer, which the mother finally lost after three years. Katharine saw that even wealth was no shield against pain or death.

The young woman had been shaken also by her tours in the American South and West, witnessing the poverty and lack of opportunities for Blacks and Native Americans. After her father died in 1885, she expanded the family’s aid to the impoverished minorities.

A pivotal moment came in 1887 during an audience with Pope Leo XIII in Rome. She asked the Holy Father to send nuns to staff her mission schools. To her shock, he said: “Why don’t *you* become a missionary?”

After some consideration, Katharine joined the Sisters of Mercy in

Philadelphia; then she founded her own order, the Sisters of the Blessed Sacrament, dedicated to serving Blacks and Native Americans. In getting the new group approved in Rome, she relied on advice from another future saint: Mother Frances Cabrini, founder of her own charitable order.

Her sisters threw themselves into a huge development campaign, founding dozens of schools, missions and convents with tribes as diverse as the Navajo in Arizona, the Sioux in the Dakotas, and the Pueblo in New Mexico. They also launched 50 schools for southern and western Blacks, including Xavier University in New Orleans — the first Catholic university in the United States for African Americans.

Mother Katharine, as she preferred to be called, was tireless in advocating the rights of Blacks and Native Americans as well. She supported petitions to Congress to increase aid to reservations schools and started a letter-writing campaign for a federal law against lynching. Her activism drew occasional arson and a threat by the Klan in Texas.

Only a heart attack at 77 forced

Mother Katharine’s retirement. Even then, her vocation was literally close to her heart. She lived another 19 years in a small room overlooking a mission sanctuary, praying and writing.

Although there are no official figures, St. Katharine Drexel may have given away nearly \$20 million over her lifetime, according to the Washington, D.C.-based Philanthropy Roundtable — which would come out to more than a half-billion dollars today.

By her death in 1955 at the age of 96, there were more than 500 Blessed Sacrament Sisters teaching in 63 schools. She was canonized by Pope John Paul II in 2000, the second native-born American to be declared a saint — after another 19th century educator, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton.

For her twin goals of benevolence and leveling social barriers, St. Katharine Drexel is the patron saint of racial justice and philanthropy.

At Mother Katharine’s namesake parish in Weston one distinctive is the lack of statues and stained glass. Instead, the walls are filled with Greek-style icons — a special love

of Father Paul Edwards, who served the church as pastor from its founding in 2001 until his death in 2006.

Visitors who gaze up in the narthex can see the circular Christos Pantocrator, or Christ the All-Ruler, a common icon for the underside of Orthodox church rotundas. Behind the altar is Our Lady of the Sign, an icon-within-an-icon embodying the concept that Mary’s womb was a holy sanctuary while she carried the unborn Jesus. Mother Katharine herself is honored in an icon.

Some of the artworks were first installed in an office park, where the church worshiped from 2002 to 2014. When St. Katharine Drexel finally got its own home in 2014, the members carefully pried the icons from the walls and moved them to the new 18,000-square-foot building. Several new icons have been added since then.

In 2010, after being served by several priests, the church got its current pastor, Father Enrique Delgado, a businessman who was called to the priesthood after years as an industrial engineer in Peru. He continues his pastorate at St. Katharine Drexel after his appointment in 2017 as auxiliary bishop of Miami. ■





Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 who in his great mercy gave us a new birth to a living hope
 through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. 1 Peter 1:3

Wishing you a Blessed and Joyful Easter!

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Child's excitement about faith journey sets hearts ablaze

Isabella Vasallo is one of 245 catechumens who will join the Church at Easter Vigil

LINDA REEVES
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIAMI BEACH | Isabella Vasallo is a typical 8-year-old. She is spunky and loves dancing and gymnastics, but this ordinary little girl has an extraordinary eagerness to become a full-fledged Catholic and meet the Lord through the sacraments.

"She is so excited to be getting baptized," said Gipsy Lodos, director of religious education at St. Joseph Parish in Miami Beach. "She has been counting down the weeks and telling everyone about her big day that is coming."

Isabella, a second grader at Mater Beach Academy, will be welcomed into the Church and receive the sacraments of initiation at the Easter Vigil April 3, 2021. Mater Beach Academy took over the space vacated when St. Joseph School closed at the end of the 2009-10 school year.

She is the youngest of the six catechumens participating in Rite of Christian Initiation for Adults classes at St. Joseph Parish, and among the youngest of the 245 catechumens being welcomed into the Church this year throughout the Archdiocese of Miami.

Catechumens have never been baptized in any Christian faith. They will receive the three important sacraments that initiate them into the Church family — baptism, confirmation and Communion — during the Easter Vigil in their parishes.

Many have been attending RCIA formation classes for at least a year, and some for much longer. Although geared toward adults who

want to be in full communion with the Church, the RCIA is also the method by which children over the age of 7 — the age of reason — receive the sacraments of initiation.

Also in formation are people called candidates. They don't attend the Rite of Election because they have already been baptized into the Catholic Church or another Christian faith. Their process of formation is completed with the reception of the sacraments of confirmation and Communion.

"In the past we have also celebrated the Rite of Reception at the cathedral, usually in May," explained Rosemarie Banich, director of the Office of Evangelization and Parish Life. "That is where the candidates come to complete their sacraments of initiation, either first Communion and/or confirmation. This year the archbishop has decided that we will not hold that at the cathedral, but instead, he will delegate authority to each pastor to celebrate those sacraments at the parish."

Isabella is a refreshing story in today's world, when many parents struggle to get children interested in church services and in getting to know God and his teachings. "I see such a joy in her," said Lodos. "She loves classes and responds with questions and answers."

The entire Vasallo family will be at the Easter Vigil.

"We are excited," said Mia Vasallo, Isabella's mom. "We did not baptize her when she was a baby because we were waiting to find the right sponsor. We wanted someone who was going to be there for her. We chose my mother-in-law. She is



Isabella Vasallo, 8, seen at left, is excited about being baptized and receiving the sacraments at the Easter Vigil this year. Above Nancy Mowa, far left, sits with Isabella as they wait for the Rite of Election ceremony to begin at St. Mary Cathedral, Feb. 21, 2021. They are seated with Agustina Morales, far right, also from St. Joseph Parish, and her sponsor, Alicia Garcia. (COURTESY PHOTOS)

always there. It is the right choice. She loves her and taught her how to pray."

Nancy Mowa, Isabella's grandmother and sponsor, has been helping her and praying for her from the start. "I will spiritually guide her until my last breath," she said.

In fact, among St. Joseph's catechumens this year is only one adult. The others are youngsters ages 10 to 13.

Father Juan Sosa, pastor of St. Joseph, celebrated the Rite of Sending with all of them during Mass Feb. 21, the first Sunday of Lent. The day before the Mass, Isabella celebrated her birthday.

Father Sosa prayed over the catechumens and assured them that the people of the parish are "with them" and praying for them. "We have to be a support for them on their journey," he said.

That same afternoon, the cat-

echumens attended one of four Rite of Election ceremonies celebrated in the archdiocese: two at St. Mary Cathedral with Archbishop Thomas Wenski, and two more with Auxiliary Bishop Enrique Delgado at St. Bonaventure Church in Davie. The names of the catechumens were written in the Book of the Elect during the ceremonies.

Isabella slowly, carefully, and clearly wrote her long, formal name in the official Church book pledging her commitment and discipleship.

"Isabella wanted her whole name written in the book," said Lodos. "She was taking a long time."

Parents Mia and Ramon Vasallo formally named their little girl Isabella Miracle De La Caridad Vasallo — a tiny girl with a big name that means so much. Isabella carries the name of Our Lady of Charity, also known as Nuestra Señora de la Caridad or la Virgen de la Caridad,

patroness of Cuba and linked to many miracles.

Mia has a great devotion to her. "When I was five months pregnant, I found out I was carrying Isabella," said Mia, who was 33 at the time and the mother of three energetic and active boys ages 3, 12 and 17. Mia was completely shocked by the pregnancy test indicating she would have the little girl she had been praying for.

"She is our little miracle. She is our princess. We are all excited for her," said Mia.

Isabella may be only 8, but her knowledge about the Lord and God's gift of grace through the sacraments that she will receive at Easter is way beyond her young years.

"I am excited about the Easter Vigil," said Isabella. "It will be amazing. I want Jesus to forgive my sins. I want to be blessed by God. I want to be protected." ■

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HOLY WEEK MASS SCHEDULES 2021

March 28 PALM SUNDAY / Domingo de Ramos
5 p.m. y 6 p.m. (Saturday Vigil), 8 a.m. y 9 a.m. English,
10 a.m. y 11 a.m. Spanish, 2:30 p.m. Igbo – English

MON. y WED. of Holy Week Masses / **Lun. y Mie. de Semana Santa**
7 a.m. y 7:30 p.m.

April 01 HOLY THURSDAY / Jueves Santo
7:30 p.m. Bilingual Mass of the Lord's Supper followed by Adoration until Midnight.
Misa de la Cena del Señor seguida de la Adoración hasta la medianoche.

April 02 GOOD FRIDAY / Viernes Santo
3 p.m. Veneration of the Cross with Holy Communion and Scripture Reading, followed by Station of the Cross.
7:30 p.m. *Servicio: Lectura de las Escrituras y Sagrada Comunión seguido por el Vía Crucis, Procesión y Veneración de la Cruz.*

April 03 HOLY SATURDAY / Sábado Santo
NO CONFESSIONS / *No Confesiones*
8 p.m. Easter Vigil Bilingual Mass / *Vigilia Pascual (Bilingüe)*

April 04 EASTER SUNDAY / Domingo de Resurrección
8 a.m. y 9 a.m. English, 10 a.m. y 11 a.m. Spanish, 2:30 p.m. Igbo - English

1438P-0818



San Pedro Catholic Church

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SATURDAY, MARCH 27

4-5 p.m. – Confessions | 5 p.m. Vigil Mass Palm Sunday

SUNDAY, MARCH 28 – Palm Sunday

Masses: 9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1

Holy Thursday 5 p.m. Mass of the Last Supper

FRIDAY, APRIL 2 – Good Friday

3 p.m. Stations of the Cross followed by the passion of the Lord

SATURDAY, APRIL 3 – Holy Saturday

6 p.m. Easter Vigil

SUNDAY, APRIL 4 – Easter Sunday of the Resurrection of the Lord

9 a.m. and 11 a.m.

1432E-0318

St. John XXIII Roman Catholic Church

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HOLY WEEK SCHEDULE

PALM SUNDAY, MARCH 28 | EASTER SUNDAY, APRIL 4

PALM SUNDAY: Vigil Saturday Mass – 5 p.m., 7 p.m. (Spanish)

SUNDAY MASS: 8 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., 12 noon (Spanish)

HOLY THURSDAY: Last Supper Bilingual Mass – 7 p.m.

GOOD FRIDAY: Bilingual Stations of the Cross – 3 p.m.
Lord's Passion at 6 p.m., Lord's Passion at 8 p.m. (Spanish)

HOLY SATURDAY: Easter Vigil Bilingual Mass at 8 p.m.
(No Confessions on Holy Saturday)

EASTER SUNDAY: Regular Sunday Mass schedule:
8 a.m., 10 a.m., 6 p.m., 12 noon (Spanish)



1438P-0818

LITURGICAL NOTES FOR TRIDUUM

MIAMI | Following are the liturgical notes issued by the archdiocesan Office of Worship for the celebration of Palm Sunday and the Easter Triduum amid the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. The Easter Triduum is celebrated from Holy Thursday evening until evening prayer on Easter Sunday.

Palm Sunday: distribution of palms

Distribution of the palms may occur as normal on Palm Sunday at all Masses. We recommend the following:

The blessing of the palms will take place in the usual manner at the beginning of Mass. Palms may be laid out on tables near the entrance/exit doors of the church or in the gathering space. Stations with hand sanitizer should be placed before the tables with palms. The faithful must sanitize their hands before taking palms. After obtaining the palms, parishioners should then exit the church.

It is recommended that an announcement be made reminding the faithful to remove their palms from the pews if they took them as they entered the church.

Chrism Mass

Currently the chrism Mass is anticipated to occur on the annual date, the Tuesday of Holy Week, March 30 this year. More details will be forthcoming.

Holy Thursday: Mandatum

Washing of the feet is permitted. Those to have their feet washed must be seated six feet apart from one another. For churches that do not have sufficient space to distance 12 people in the sanctuary, the ritual allows for a representative number of people fewer than 12. As a reminder, the washing of feet at the Mass of the Lord's Supper is always optional.

Good Friday: Veneration of the Cross

Veneration of the Cross is permitted on Good Friday. Use the same considerations as those used for the Communion procession, e.g. six-foot social distancing between individuals, etc. Kissing the cross is not allowed. Those who venerate should do so only with a bow or genuflection.

Holy Saturday: Easter Vigil

Holy Saturday is celebrated April 3 this year. The entire Easter Vigil celebration is to begin after nightfall (8 p.m.) and end before the dawn of Easter Sunday. This rule is to be strictly observed to manifest the full meaning of the rites. The Easter Vigil is not to be celebrated at the time of day that is customary to anticipated Sunday Masses.

The sacraments of initiation may be celebrated at the Easter Vigil assuming all usual COVID restrictions are observed.

Confessions

It is recommended that during the Lenten season parishes should provide penitential celebrations that allow for the faithful to celebrate the mystery of forgiveness. These celebrations should take place before the Easter Triduum, and should not immediately precede the Evening Mass of the Lord's Supper. Where there is genuine pastoral need, the sacrament of penance may be celebrated on Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

NEWSbriefs

Outdoor concert at St. Thomas U.

St. Thomas University will host a fun evening of music and testimony on the vigil of Divine Mercy Sunday, April 10, 6 to 10 p.m. This free outdoor concert, an Epic Night of Mercy, will be headlined by Miami-based EPIC the Band, who recently performed for Pope Francis at World Youth Day in Panama 2019. EPIC will be joined by Catholic singer/songwriter Dana Catherine; theology teacher Nico Cabrera, a nationally known worship leader, songwriter, mentor and educator; Veronica (Vero) Macias, co-founder of Mercy Through Mary, a young adult outreach of the Mary and Mercy Center located in Ave Maria, Florida; Father Matthew Gomez, director of vocations for the Archdiocese of Miami; and the Servants of the Pierced Hearts of Jesus and Mary. The evening will conclude with adoration presided by St. Thomas University Vice President for Mission and Ministry, Father Rafael Capó, a Pontifical Missionary of Mercy by appointment of Pope Francis. Attendees should bring their own chairs or blankets. Drive-in style simulcast will be available for those who wish to

listen, watch, and tailgate from their vehicles. Snacks and non-alcoholic beverages will be available for purchase. The concert will take place, rain or shine. St. Thomas University is located at 16401 N.W. 37 Ave., Miami. Gates will open at 5 p.m. First come, first-served seating and parking. COVID-19 protocols will be observed and enforced.

STU professor named to pontifical commission

Roza Pati, a law professor at St. Thomas University in Miami Gardens, has been named by Pope Francis to serve as a member of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

The appointment is for five years. In addition to teaching at St. Thomas, Pati is executive director of the law school's Intercultural Human Rights program, and founder and director of the Brunetti Human Trafficking Academy.

From 2012 to 2017 she also served on the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, appointed by Pope Benedict XVI.

Mass and reflection for vocations

The Broward County Serra Club invites Broward County parishioners to a vocation Mass and reflection Saturday, April 10, beginning at 10 a.m. at St. Gabriel Church, 731 N. Ocean Blvd., Pompano Beach. The Mass will be followed by a talk by Father Matthew Gomez, archdiocesan vocations director, followed by a question-and-answer session and remarks by Malcolm Meikle, president of the Broward Serra Club. The morning will conclude at noon with a box lunch to go for participants. Due to social distancing, reservations are required. Call or text Georgette Meikle at 954-946-2551.

Buy a brick, support the seminary

St. Vincent de Paul Seminary in Boynton Beach will mark the Year of St. Joseph, declared by Pope Francis, while supporting its mission of educating future priests, by accepting donations to place a personalized brick around the St. Joseph statue on campus.

The engraved brick is a way to honor someone or memorialize family and loved ones. Donation is \$500. Find order form and information at www.svdpc.edu/bricks.

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COVID CONFSSIONALS

Pastors get creative to adapt to the ‘new normal’

ANA RODRIGUEZ-SOTO
Florida Catholic staff

MIAMI | When the world shut down a year ago this month, everyone had to adapt to a “new normal.” The Church was no different.

Churches closed but the work of the Church continued. Priests began celebrating Mass in front of cameras, quickly pivoting to livestreams on social media platforms such as Facebook and YouTube.

Confessions were trickier, given the need to hear them in person. Even then, creativity reigned. Drive-through confessions became popular, although the Vatican quickly shut down the use of cellphones to help priests hear penitents’ words while sitting at a distance and outdoors.

Nevertheless, pastors found a way. So the *Florida Catholic* thought it would be fun to gather a sampling of “COVID confessionals” to highlight that sacramental “new normal.”

Some churches have stuck to the outdoors. St. Ambrose Parish in Deerfield Beach continues drive-through confessions, with priests standing near the penitent’s car. At St. Boniface in Pembroke Pines, priest and penitent sit outdoors, masked and distanced and sometimes even separated by a plexiglass barrier.

Others have created indoor confessionals adapted for pandemic times. At San Isidro in Pompano Beach, ushers stand at the ready to wipe down and disinfect the penitent’s side of a wooden partition after each confession. It’s an adaptation of the parish’s early pandemic confessional, with the priest sitting inside the threshold of the church and the penitent outside.

“You brought memories of the early days of the pandemic,” said San Isidro’s pastor, Father Wilfredo Contreras, in response to the *Florida Catholic*’s request for photographs. “At the regularly scheduled times on the weekend, we had ushers standing at a distance ready with disinfectant and sanitized towels so that as each penitent came forward and left, the confessional on the penitent side was sanitized immediately. The confessor remained safely on the inside part of the church, hearing confessions from within.”

“It worked for quite some time,” Father Contreras said.

With the easing of restrictions, he moved the confessional into the chapel “because it has wide space.” People now line up outside the chapel doors, social distancing and wearing masks until their turn for confession arrives. But same as before, the ushers immediately come in and disinfect after each penitent.

At St. Maximilian Kolbe in Pembroke Pines, confessions take place in the narthex by the main entrance to the church. Those who want to confess face-to-face sit at a distance from the priest; the others can confess behind a screen that also protects both priest and penitent. Penitents wait outside the entrance to the church for the priest to unlock the door and let them in. A green or red light on the glass doors lets them know not to knock and interrupt a confession.

At Our Lady of the Lakes in Miami Lakes, the solution is low-tech: A see-through shower curtain hung from a frame on wheels. “It’s cheap and practical,” said the parish administrator, Father Flavio Montes, noting that the confessional has the added benefit of being



Father Antonio Tupiza hears a confession in the kiosk area of St. Rose of Lima Church, Miami Shores, March 28, 2020. Priests in the archdiocese have continued to hear confessions while following social distancing measures to protect themselves and parishioners against COVID-19. (PHOTOS BY MARLENE QUARONI | FC)



The current COVID-19 confessional at San Isidro Church in Pompano Beach, with Father Wilfredo Contreras in the picture. The confessional has now moved inside the chapel but an usher still disinfects the penitent’s side after each confession.



Above, Father Richard Vigoa hears confessions in St. Augustine Church’s parking lot March 26, 2020. Below, sitting behind a screen, Father Christopher Marino, rector at St. Mary Cathedral, hears confessions outside the front door of the cathedral March 25, 2020. A day later, a directive from the Holy See banned the use of cell phones due to concerns about security gaps or electronic eavesdropping that would conflict with the “absolute inviolability of the confessional seal.” The COVID-19 pandemic forced many parishes to invent new “socially distanced” ways of hearing confessions.



Not exactly a confessional, but this portable barrier is being used at Corpus Christi Church in Miami for Communion, to keep both the priest - in this case the pastor, Father Jose Luis Menendez - and the communicant protected.



totally portable.

Want to check out your own parish’s “COVID confessional”? Take part in the sacrament of reconciliation this Lenten season. Because the pandemic is not over, Reconciliation Weekend won’t be taking place this year, but many pastors have extended their hours

for confession. Days and times are posted on every church’s website and on the archdiocesan one as well. Find the nearest parish at miamiarch.org.

And if you want to send us a picture, we’ll be glad to add it to the slideshow that will appear along with this story online. ■



Confessions are being held outdoors at St. Boniface Church in Pembroke Pines, with the priest and penitent socially distant, wearing masks and sometimes even behind a plexiglass barrier.



The confessional at Our Lady of the Lakes Church is low-tech but practical: A see-through shower curtain hung from a frame on wheels. (COURTESY PHOTOS)

‘THE ONLY WAY OUT OF THIS IS WITH THE VACCINE’

STU Forum tackles myths and facts about vaccines

ROCÍO GRANADOS
La Voz Católica

MIAMI | With the arrival of vaccines against COVID-19, the hope of returning to a pre-2020 normal has turned into a reality, but one that may not be as imminent as many would wish.

A year out from the start of the pandemic, it is estimated that between 50 and 70% of the population will need to get vaccinated “to stop transmission of the virus and get us close to community or herd immunity, which would allow us to return to communal life,” said Father Alfred Cioffi, archdiocesan priest and director of St. Thomas University’s Bioethics Institute.

He was speaking during a Spanish-language forum entitled “COVID-19: Mitos y Realidades” (Myths and Facts) that was transmitted live via Zoom Feb. 4, 2021. The forum — the first of its kind in Spanish — was organized by St. Thomas University’s Center for Pandemic, Disaster and Quarantine Research, and featured other experts on medicine and public health. (Watch it here: bit.ly/STUPDQ_Covid_spanish)

A similar forum took place in English Dec. 30, 2020 (watch it here: bit.ly/STUPDQ_Covid_English), and another one is being planned in Creole for the near future.

Although Hispanic, African American and Native American populations have been the most affected by COVID-19, “less than one third of the vaccines have reached these minorities,” said José Rocha, associate professor of business at St. Thomas, co-director of the PDQ center and moderator of the forum.

At the same time, myths and disinformation about the vaccines are spreading in these communities, leading many people to refuse vaccination. The forum was organized for that reason, to better inform the Spanish-speaking community in South Florida.

“False information has been spread through social media. It’s worrisome because it was done to keep people from getting vaccinated,” said forum participant Dr. Olveen Carrasquillo. He is professor of medicine and public health sciences and chief of the division of general internal medicine at the University of Miami’s Miller School of Medicine.

“First it was against COVID, now it’s against the vaccine,” Carrasquillo said. He mentioned some of the myths going around about the COVID-19 vaccine, such as: “They’re injecting chips, so the government can control the population. They’re injecting the 666, the mark of the devil. The 5G towers will detect the vaccine. Or Bill Gates at any time could press a button and kill that person.”

FIND OUT MORE

To learn more about the programs and activities of St. Thomas University’s Center for Pandemic, Disaster and Quarantine Research, visit <https://www.stu.edu/pdq/>.

“We have to educate the population that there are not too many dangers with the vaccine,” said Dr. Marcos Mestre, vice president and chief medical officer for Nicklaus Children’s Hospital in Miami. He noted that the U.S. had vaccinated nearly 30 million people (by early February) “without any big complications.”

FEARS

One of the fears most mentioned is regarding the swift development of the vaccines. While most people believe they were developed this year, scientists have been working on them since 2011, when the MERS epidemic first arose, said Carrasquillo, who has been involved in research on the vaccine being created by Johnson & Johnson.

He also pointed out that while studying the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, which is currently awaiting final approval from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration, he and his team have been working 24 hours a day seven days a week. “It’s 100% focused effort. If we had not had the pandemic, it would have taken us three or four years,” he said.

All the data was measured carefully. “The level of cooperation and scientific integration is unprecedented. This is a pandemic. Everyone helped because we knew we had to do it as quickly as possible, because every day we were seeing the deaths,” Carrasquillo added.

Another fear is that the vaccine will cause people to catch the virus. “That’s another error, because the vaccine does not contain the virus,” said Marina Matute Obispo, who works in Baptist Hospital’s Office of Infection Prevention and is a graduate of St. Thomas University’s master’s program in bioethics.

The COVID-19 vaccines developed by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna use messenger-RNA, which is a copy of a portion of the virus’ genetic code. The symptoms some vaccine recipients experience are related to the response of their immune system. “They resemble flu symptoms, which are not related to the disease,” Matute said.

Studies of the vaccines’ effects show that 80% of recipients feel some pain at the vaccine area for two or three days. Half of them feel tired for a few days and experience muscle aches.

Other fears frequently mentioned are:



Screenshot shows Jose Rocha, associate professor of business at St. Thomas, and co-director of the university’s Pandemic, Disaster and Quarantine Research center, who moderated the webinar on the COVID-19 vaccine aimed at dispelling mistrust and misinformation among African Americans.

- The vaccine will alter a person’s DNA. But m-RNA will never penetrate the cell nucleus where DNA is located.

- If I get vaccinated today, will I become infertile? It’s been shown that no vaccines affect feminine fertility, but the vaccine has not been around long enough so there’s no way to be certain about possible secondary effects.

- If I get vaccinated, will I test positive for COVID? That’s false. What probably happened is that the person was incubating the virus before getting vaccinated.

- If I got COVID, should I get the vaccine? Scientists know that the infection provides protection for a time, but it’s not clear how long. It is recommended that those who have been infected get the vaccine three months later.

People with autism, immunodeficiency, chronic diseases or medical conditions in general are at the highest risk if they become ill with COVID-19. It is important for them to be vaccinated as soon as possible. People with allergies should consult their physicians.

“In general, the sicker people are, the more vital it is for them to get the vaccine,” said Carrasquillo.

In the case of children who get COVID, complications have been seen in those who are obese or suffer from chronic conditions. Studies are being done right now among children 12 and older. The results will probably be available at the end of the year.

Some also fear that the COVID vaccines were developed unethically, using cell lines from fetuses aborted decades ago. Father Cioffi noted that Pfizer and Moderna have stated that does not apply to their vaccines, so being vaccinated with them would not imply cooperation with the evil of abortion.

But even a vaccine that was created using that tissue would not mean the recipient is cooperating formally or materially with the grave evil of that long-ago abortion.

VULNERABILITY

Another factor, aside from the myths and fears that keep minority communities from being vaccinated, is the disparity in their social and economic conditions.

Having no health insurance and suffering from chronic illnesses are factors that combine to create complications which in turn result in higher mortality rates. Living in close quarters, reliance on public transportation and front-line occupations that expose workers to the public all lead to greater risk of contagion.

Those same circumstances affect access to the vaccines.

“Many people don’t have cars to go where the vaccines are being given. They get no time off from work, or get docked for missing work,” said Kimberly Cogdell Grainger, a specialist in minority public health and assistant vice president for Academic Administration at New College of Florida.

Grainger also noted the experi-

ments that were done decades ago on African American and Hispanic communities under false pretenses and without participants’ consent. The medical community has yet to regain their trust.

The last year has been difficult for everyone, Carrasquillo said. “In August, no one knew what to tell people. Now we have vaccines. We are at a very different point in time, but we need more patience. The vaccines are coming and soon we will have enough for everyone. We can’t give up now. We need to continue using masks for a few more months and continue social distancing.”

The experts’ final recommendation, in the words of Carrasquillo: “If we all get vaccinated, we will be in a very different situation by Thanksgiving and Christmas; a little more patience is required; we have almost beaten this virus.”

Or, as Mestre put it: “The only way out of this is with the vaccine.” ■

PARISH HONORS HOSPITAL FOR COVID OUTREACH



Jackson Memorial Hospital representatives stand with priests after the Mass where they were honored by Corpus Christi Parish, Feb. 28, 2021, for their efforts to give the COVID-19 vaccination to the community. See story online: bit.ly/CorpusChristi_Jackson_heroes. (MARLENE QUARONI | FC)

Parish plants 'life garden'

JONATHAN MARTINEZ
Florida Catholic correspondent

TAMARAC | St. Malachy Parish has always been very active in the respect life movement.

Under the guidance of former pastor Father Dominick O'Dwyer, parishioners and the church's respect life ministry engaged in multiple pro-life efforts, including collecting baby items for the Margate Pregnancy Help Center, sponsoring billboards on the highways and taking part in peaceful prayer demonstrations at an abortion clinic located just blocks from the church.

Last month, the parish added another brick to those efforts when members gathered with their parochial administrator, Father Alfredo Rolon, for the blessing of a Respect Life Garden on parish grounds. The blessing took place Feb. 28, 2021.

"I think this is so wonderful because we are pro-life. I mean the Catholic Church is pro-life, from



The Angel of Life statue is shown behind the baby Jesus located at the St. Malachy Respect Life Garden in Tamarac, which was dedicated Feb. 28, 2021.

conception to natural death, and this garden serves as a reminder of it," said Maureen Kilfoile, member of Mary for Life, which is the name of the parish's respect life ministry.

Facing North University Drive for all to see, the garden serves as a reminder to all that walk or drive by of the importance of protecting the God-given gift of life.

The impetus for the garden came from Father Rolon, who was

supported by the parish's Finance Council, Pastoral Council, respect life ministry, John XIII movement and dozens of parish and community volunteers. They donated the plants, the paint, and other elements needed to complete the garden, in addition to making monetary donations.

"I thought this garden would be a beautiful symbol of our support for the protection of life from the first



Father Alfredo Rolon, parochial administrator at St. Malachy Church in Tamarac, incenses his parish's new Respect Life Garden.

moment of its conception to natural death," Father Rolon said.

One of the figures in the garden is a statue of the "Angel for Life" donated by John and Karen Loper in memory of Theresa Banks and restored by Fernando Fernandez. The baby Jesus was donated by Juan Luis and Wanda Perez Raldiris in thanksgiving for the parishioners and benefactors who contributed to the realization of the garden.

"I hope that it (the garden) may lift up people's hearts to the Lord in prayer as Catholic believers, but also that they may remember that we must be active in our Catholic faith and one of the ways is supporting the gift of life," said Father Rolon. "This is a testimony of our faith. I hope that those who visit may be together united in faith knowing that this Catholic church is very active in the gift of life." ■

Knights donate ultrasound to Pregnancy Help Center

MARLENE QUARONI
Florida Catholic correspondent

MARGATE | The Knights of Columbus of St. Katharine Drexel Church donated a new ultrasound machine to the North Broward Pregnancy Help Center on March 3, 2021, the feast day of their patron saint.

"It will give women a clearer picture of the life they are carrying," said Rosita Porras, the center's ultrasound technician. "Seeing the baby almost always changes the mind of women contemplating abortion. Now, they will have an improved image to see and a better photo that I give them."

Porras, who works part-time at the center and fulltime at a south Florida medical center, said that saving baby's lives is her ministry.

The new ultrasound machine has better technology than the previous ultrasound machine that the St. Katharine Drexel Knights donated to the center in 2012, she said. "It's user-friendly and has better software and screen resolution to see the fetus better," she said.

Mario Labella, CEO of Strena Medical Products in Doral, donated the \$40,000 Medisono P12 Expert to the center. Although he is not a current member of the Knights of Columbus, he said he is planning on joining the organiza-

"The St. Katharine Drexel Knights asked me if I could donate an ultrasound machine," he said during the dedication ceremony.

"I was happy to donate the machine. This is part of my faith. It's a most beautiful gift. Count on my company to help out in the future."

The Knights of Columbus have been involved in getting ultrasound machines for respect life centers since 2009, the 36th anniversary of Roe vs. Wade.

"In 2019, the Knights had donated more than 1,000 ultrasound machines to pregnancy centers around the world, fulfilling a 10-year initiative to give millions of babies a chance at life," said Luis Gomez, Grand Knight of St. Katharine Drexel Church's Council 14212.

Auxiliary Bishop Enrique Delgado, who is the pastor of St. Kath-

WANT TO HELP

Volunteers are essential to the Archdiocese of Miami Respect Life Ministry, especially the operations of its five Pregnancy Help Centers. The office trains volunteers to serve in different capacities, according to their interests, talents and abilities.

To learn more, call 954-981-2922 or submit a volunteer application by going to: respectlife.miami.org/volunteer.

arine Drexel Church in Weston, blessed the new ultrasound machine and thanked the St. Katharine Drexel Knights.

"God bless you and your work," he said. "One of the things that the Church is fighting for is the right to life from conception to natural death. Pregnant women need to



Auxiliary Bishop Enrique Delgado sprinkles holy water on the new ultrasound machine at the North Broward Pregnancy Help Center, March 3, 2021. (MARLENE QUARONI | FC)

see and feel that this is a holy life that they are carrying. They will open their eyes and hearts when they see the baby."

Today is a happy day, he added. It's important that a pregnant woman realizes the sanctity of life.

Angela Curatalo, assistant director of Respect Life for the Arch-

diocese of Miami, also thanked the Knights.

"I have to say it took an army of people to get this done," she said. "We would love to see more volunteers at our respect life centers to give us their time, talent and treasure. We couldn't have done this without the Knights." ■

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Leader of successful athletic program retires

STAFF REPORT

FORT LAUDERDALE | St. Thomas Aquinas High School's legendary coach, George Smith, has announced his retirement effective at the end of the 2020-21 school year. Smith has been teacher, coach, athletic director, mentor and friend to thousands at Aquinas for the past 49 years.

He has been the foundation of one of the country's most recognized and successful high school athletic programs, establishing the standard for athletics at St. Thomas.

More than the victories, Smith said he is most proud of the legacy left on the STA campus and the drive he inspired in the hearts of the athletes he has come to know and love. "What happens off the field is the greatest reward," he said.

Denise Aloma, St. Thomas' principal, said Smith set high goals for Raider athletics for almost 50 years, as a teacher, coach and athletic director.

"His leadership and commitment provided the platforms to consistently surpass those goals. His selfless, tireless, extraordinary contribution to the success of the program is etched in the halls of STA," she said. "The hearts and minds of all of us blessed to have known him are strengthened."

Msgr. Vincent Kelly, former supervising principal at St. Thomas, said because of Smith's assistance, athletes went on to prestigious colleges throughout the nation, and he has made a "vibrant contribution" to thousands of students' and adults' lives.

"Through the medium of football and athletics in general, he has given so many the awareness and then the development of their own personal dignity, their natural talent and their potential for leadership in the future," Msgr. Kelly said. "We are truly grateful to George for a life of dedicated service, not only to youth, but to all of us."

Smith was hired as history and



physical education teacher at St. Thomas in 1972. He started the school's wrestling program that same year and continued as head wrestling coach until 1978. Smith posted an overall record of 72-19 and was named Wrestling Coach of the Year in 1973-74 by the *Miami Herald* and twice for the South Atlantic Conference.

In 1975, Smith was named head football coach and the Raiders began an unprecedented sprint towards excellence for the next

33 years. Under Smith's helm, the Raiders went 361-66, amassing 18 district championships, eight undefeated regular seasons and six state championships. Under Smith, St. Thomas led the state in most appearances in the tournament series with a 69-20 record. As head coach, he holds the record for appearances (13) in the state tournament series and is the third-winningest football coach in Florida history. During Smith's years as head coach, 580 players went on to play college football, and 30 continued to the pros.

Smith took on the leadership role as athletic director in 1982. His vision and community development provided the platform for the program's rise towards state and national prominence. St. Thomas is a Nike Elite School and Gatorade Top 25. Raider football appeared on national networks at least once for the last 14 years.

Smith also has been instrumental in renovation efforts on campus, most significantly state-of-the-art

athletic facilities that include: the George Smith Athletic Center (athletic offices, fitness center, varsity locker rooms, weight room, wrestling facility); synthetic track, turf fields (baseball, football/soccer/lacrosse, practice field, and softball), and most recently a practice gym for basketball and volleyball.

More than 1,000 student-athletes participate on 34 teams at St. Thomas. During his 39-year AD tenure, Raider athletics has won 111 Florida High School Athletic Association state championships and 13 national championships plus other Florida and national recognitions.

Smith himself has been inducted into the Broward County Sports Hall of Fame, the City of Fort Lauderdale "Walk of Fame," the Florida Athletic Coaches Association Hall of Fame, the FHSAA All Century Coaching Staff and MaxPreps 12th Best Coach of All Time, among many other recognitions.

The school is planning events later this year in honor of Smith. ■

SOCCKER CHAMPS CELEBRATED IN ARCHDIOCESE

Deborah Bien-Aime, left, Madison Rivard and Erin Pawelczyk show off their gold medals after Cardinal Gibbons' 2-0 victory in the FHSAA Class 4A girls soccer championship. (PHOTOS BY LYNN RAMSEY | FC)



3 times, a charm for Lady Chiefs

On third straight trip to championship game, Cardinal Gibbons wins first state title in soccer

LYNN RAMSEY

Florida Catholic correspondent

DELAND | Cardinal Gibbons led 1-0, a penalty kick staring the Chiefs in the face. Who better to have in goal than Alexis Deveaux - a junior who's been through all three state finals.

Deveaux saved the penalty kick and the Chiefs turned goals by Samantha Fuini and Sydney Polivka into a 2-0 victory over Panama City Beach Arnold in the FHSAA Class 4A girls soccer state championship game, played March 3, 2021. The victory gave Cardinal Gibbons its first state title.

The Chiefs (12-2-1) were in their fourth state final and third consecutive trip to the

championship game. They carried last year's 2-1 loss to Jacksonville Bishop Kenny as motivation. "Coming back, we knew we had a strong enough team to make it here again," Polivka said. "We had to keep our heads straight, keep our focus and use that loss as motivation for coming back here and finally finishing the job."

"I knew luck was on our side and three time's a charm, and this was the year to bring it home," said senior Heather Astle.

But to win, they had to withstand an Arnold team that had averaged more than four goals per game in the district, regionals and state semifinals. They had to snuff out Olivia Lebdaoui, a Florida State commitment who had 25 goals and seven assists this season, and Melissa Sparks, who had 13 goals coming into the final.

Cardinal Gibbons coach Margo Flack said her players shut down Lebdaoui and Sparks with an attacking game. Seniors Deborah Bien-Aime and Madison Young powered the Chiefs' defense. Astle and fellow senior

PLEASE SEE **GIBBONS, 23**



Belen Jesuit's Matias Perinot, left, tries to juke his way past Tampa Jesuit's Brandon Robertson (25) during the first half of the Belen Jesuit Wolverines' 2-1 overtime victory over Tampa Jesuit in the class 5A boys soccer championship.

Jesuit vs. Jesuit: Miami wins out

Belen's Wolverines deny Tampa Jesuit's bid for eighth state soccer championship

LYNN RAMSEY

Florida Catholic correspondent

DELAND | Jesuits celebrated the Belen Jesuit-Tampa Jesuit boys soccer final as the first time Florida's two Jesuit high schools competed in a state team-sports final. Stefano Naos made sure Miami's Wolverines carried home the trophy.

Naos put back a rebound with 7:16 left in the second overtime, and Jack Volpe made two big saves in the final minute as the Wolverines defeated defending champion Tampa Jesuit 2-1 in the FHSAA Class 5A boys soccer championship game at Spec Martin Stadium, March 6, 2021.

The victory gave Belen its first title since

their initial win in 2016. Belen (18-3-1) also denied Tampa Jesuit (17-2-2) their eighth title, which would've moved the Tigers out of a tie for second on the all-time list.

Tampa Jesuit, however, tested Belen frequently with a strong midfield game. Belen senior captain Emiliano Sosa said coach Tanger Mendonca warned the Wolverines to expect the midfield battle.

"They were going to send a lot of long balls," Sosa said. "I am so proud of how our team reacted. We won every single 50-50 running hard and didn't give up, which is more important. 1-0 down, we got a little scared. Then we talked together. We wanted this championship and we got it."

The victory capped a season that was jolted by COVID two games in. After opening with wins against Palmer Trinity and Archbishop McCarthy, Belen's roster that day had to be quarantined. Despite that, Sosa said the Wolverines stuck together, going to the beach only to train as a team, not to party. Mejia said that Mendonca pushed his play

PLEASE SEE **BELEN, 23**

BELEN

FROM 22

ers to follow the protocols.

Mendonca also anticipated issues with COVID. From day 1, he worked with a roster of 45 players, playing 23 at any one time. He said that allowed the team to continue working nonstop on soccer. "I only lost one game," Mendonca said. "All the games on the schedule, Belen played. Today closed fantastic. I congratulate all my players."

Belen benefited from the depth. After going 3-3-1 against the middle of the schedule, including a 1-0 loss to 7A finalist Tampa Plant, the Wolverines closed with a 12-game winning streak.

Several players pointed to different points in that streak as a harbinger of a championship to come. Keeper Volpe said it was a 2-1 victory against 7A region semifinalist Columbus.

Junior Matias Perinot said the early season and district tournament gave Belen confidence. "Last year, we actually lost at districts,

and we had a really good team," Perinot said. "After we won districts easily, and in our preseason we were beating teams that were destroying us last year, we just knew we had a chance to win states again."

Sosa said it was a 3-1 region semifinal win against Pembroke Pines Charter that proved to the team they could win. "Before that game, we were a brotherhood, but some of us didn't believe it," Sosa said. "After going 1-0 down and scoring 1, scoring 2 and scoring 3, all of us believed it. We could see the bench going crazy, we could see the fans, our parents, it was just a family. That part of the season was the most important for us."

BAND OF BROTHERS

Many players also pointed to the schoolwide theme of Band of Brothers. Jesuit Father Willie Garcia-Tuñon, president of Belen Jesuit, said that athletics gives students a great opportunity to live that theme.

"The soccer team helped to personify that," Father Garcia-Tuñon said. "That's the aspect of the faith; they're so open to that and realizing what brings them together is the love they have for each other and

the love they have for God. So you take advantage of that and tell them that's only going to make them a better team and better players."

Belen had Father Garcia-Tuñon and recently ordained Jesuit Father Julio Minsal on the sidelines supporting the Wolverines. Perinot talked about the witness that Fathers Garcia-Tuñon and Minsal provided to the team. Father Garcia-Tuñon said the players want the priests to guide them, celebrate Mass and pray for them before and after the game.

Mass before major games was always important, Perinot said. Some Belen students and students' parents also died during the school year, challenging the team to play games in honor of them. "It helped us to grow as a team," Perinot said. "We just bonded over that, and it helped our chemistry."

Charity was also at the heart of this game. Father Garcia-Tuñon and Jesuit Father Richard Hermes, Tampa Jesuit's president, put up a wager that involved donations to charity. Father Garcia-Tuñon's choice, Miami's Missionaries of Charity, received an unspecified donation. The priest added that ci-

gars may have been part of the bet.

Naos said that it was God's plan that Florida's two Jesuit schools would match up in this soccer final. "We're a Catholic school. We're both Jesuits. It's a surreal moment knowing that the team we play in the finals is a Jesuit team," Naos said. "At the end of the day, those are our brothers."

Father Garcia-Tuñon lauded both teams. "Tampa Jesuit put on the field an extraordinary team, probably the toughest team we faced all year long," he said. "I'm proud of our boys. They were persistent, they worked hard and never let down. They kept trying to score, and they did and ended up with the win. It was a great game." ■



GIBBONS

FROM 22

Madison Rivard turned defensive effort into offensive opportunities. Gibbons' early lead was put to the test when Lebdaoui was fouled in the penalty area in the 53rd minute. Deveaux made the biggest of her four saves by blocking it away to preserve the 1-0 lead.

Flack and Astle called that the turning point of the game. "It was, because that could've changed the momentum of the game," Flack said. "It was huge for her, it was huge for the players in front of her."

Polivka gave the Chiefs some cushion by heading in a Rivard centering pass into the left side of the goal for a 2-0 lead in the 75th minute.

Bien-Aime, who had several shots on goal, said that the Chiefs kept pushing because they recalled losing a 1-0 lead in last year's 2-1 loss to Jacksonville Bishop Kenny. Bien-Aime said they learned that they "should keep going and putting all of our grit and hard work and effort to keep going and get more goals. That's what we did today. Instead of getting just one, we got another."

When Cardinal Gibbons lost last year's final, the Chiefs had a mission to return to the final. That final, however, was among the last FHSAA games before COVID-19 morphed into a worldwide pandemic. At that point, no season was guaranteed. Flack said the Chiefs worked to follow protocols when the team was released to begin practice. They practiced in pods. Flack challenged her players to commit to the plan, and they bought in.

They also had to replace seven

seniors off the 2020 team. Polivka said losing all the seniors forced the Chiefs to switch from a 4-4-2 alignment to a 5-3-2. She said this year's team also used wings to create scoring chances. Instead of sending passes over the top of defenses like last year, she said the Chiefs played more of a possession game. That possession game tired out Arnold in the final.

This year's senior class was no slouch, 11 strong. Rivard and Astle were on all three finalist teams, and several more were on last year's team. Several of the juniors - including Polivka and Deveaux - also played roles on all three finalists.

"That crew has been here three years in a row," Flack said. "We can look at this game as it was this year that won it, but it was three years in the making. It's not easy to get here. Some of them have been here three years. They knew what it took, and they were absolutely determined to

get back here this year."

COVID-19 also prevented most of their off-field charity work. However, the team continued to pray together, with COVID being at the forefront of their prayers. Flack said that the Chiefs hosted a game in the Coaches vs. Cancer Classic. The team collected items for the Joe DiMaggio Children's Hospital. This year, they donated the items in memory of Emma Sorensen, who died a little over a year ago.

"That brought them all together, knowing they were able to do something in memory of someone and a family," Flack said.

Polivka had said after last year's final that the team's goal was to give Flack a title.

"I've walked away two other years with silver," Flack said. "I'm extremely proud of those groups, and I'm just as proud this year, but walking away with gold is a lot more fun." ■

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St. Thomas Aquinas claims first championship in girls basketball

'Gritty, tough' team outlasts Wekiva to add another trophy to school's list

LYNN RAMSEY
Florida Catholic correspondent

LAKELAND | St. Thomas Aquinas has won championships in nearly every sport the Florida High School Athletic Association offers. Thanks to senior Samara Spencer and her teammates, the Raiders can add girls' basketball to that list.

Spencer scored 17 points to lead four St. Thomas players in double-figure scoring to help the Raiders outlast Wekiva 62-60 in the class 6A girls basketball championship game, played Feb. 27, 2021.

The Raiders won its first title after making the 1994 class 4A final and 2019 class 8A final. Unlike the 2019 final, which had a heartbreaking ending, Aquinas willed their way to this title. They're the second St. Thomas team this school year to win a title, with football being the first.

"This group has been resilient all year. They've been able to follow game plans and execute them for 32 minutes," said St. Thomas Aquinas coach Oliver Berens. "We never got down even when the game was kind of leaning their way for the majority of it. We just stuck with it, kept fighting one possession at a time. I feel we were really built for this moment, and it showed tonight."

GETTING IT DONE

The Raiders proved in the state tournament they can beat teams in several different ways. In a 62-48 semifinal victory against Punta Gorda Charlotte, the Raiders advanced to the final riding two players who had won titles before. Spencer, who won a 2018 championship with Fort Myers, had 24 points in that game. Sophomore Karina Gordon, who was a seventh-grader on Miami Country Day's 2018 championship team and played a strong role as an eighth-grader on the team's 2019 title, also had 24 points and nine rebounds.

"I didn't want to lose," Gordon said. "Whatever I had to do to help my team win I did, because usually I don't have nine rebounds. I didn't want to lose."

In the final against Wekiva, it took four players scoring in double figures. Spencer had seven rebounds to go with her 17 points. Gordon had 15 points and two assists. Jada Green added 16 points and 10 rebounds, while Breanna Gustave had 14 points and 12 rebounds.

"I told them after the very first game of the year in order for us to reach our goals, we're going to need Bre and Jada to be impacts, because we can't win if they don't play well at the highest level," Berens said. "Both of them played



St. Thomas Aquinas players and coaches celebrate with the championship trophy after their 62-60 victory over Wekiva in the FHSAA Class 6A girls basketball championship game Feb. 27, 2021. (LYNN RAMSEY | FC)

exceptionally well, and we needed every single point and every single rebound."

EXPERIENCE HELPS

STA's victory against Wekiva also came because of several contributions from players who were on the 2019 finalist team. Junior guard Maya Williams teamed with Spencer, both players off the 2019 team, to limit Wekiva's Jada Eads to 19 points.

Unlike the Raiders, Wekiva had the experience of winning a title. The Mustangs were in their third Final Four in four years, trying to win their first title since 2019.

The game stayed close, neither leading by more than 7. Gustave had two big 3-pointers in the first half, which ended with the Mustangs up 31-30. Several more lead changes ensued, leading to

another close ending. Spencer's layup with 57 seconds left in the game put the Raiders up 61-60, but they had to dodge several Wekiva attempts. Finally, Green hit a free throw with 4.8 seconds left, and the Raiders clinched the victory.

NOTHING DENIES RAIDERS

To even reach the state tournament, the Raiders had to battle all season. If COVID wasn't enough, defending 6A champion Pompano Beach Blanche Ely seemed to await every step of the way. A delayed season started with a 57-46 loss to Blanche Ely, and the Raiders lost twice more to the Tigers.

Berens said that returning most of the team from last season's region semifinalist helped the Raiders overcome the loss of two tournaments to COVID. Famil-

arity and following game plans also helped the team. "That's one thing I'm so happy about this team is they like to have fun off the court, but every time it's time to get down to business and play for something big, we're gritty and tough, and we lock in," Berens said.

That mentality helped when the Raiders faced Blanche Ely in the Region 4 semifinals. A 48-46 win avenged a 46-42 loss to Blanche Ely in the same round last year, which eventually led to Ely beating Wekiva for the 2020 state championship. The Raiders then routed fellow archdiocesan team Lourdes 67-37 to journey to their first Final Four since 2019. ■

A longer version of this story appeared online March 3, 2021. Read it here: bit.ly/staquinas_girls_basketball_champs.

ARCHBISHOP MCCARTHY SOCCER



Archbishop McCarthy seniors pose with the runner-up trophy after their 2-0 loss to Ponte Vedra March 5, 2021, in the FHSAA Class 5A girls soccer championship game. Look for the story online at miamiarch.org. (LYNN RAMSEY | FC)

OUR LADY OF LOURDES



Lourdes coach Ramiro Vengoechea consoles goalkeeper Mia Alexander after Our Lady of Lourdes Academy's 0-0, 3-1 penalty-kicks loss to Venice March 5, 2021, in the FHSAA class 6A girls soccer championship game.

Venice's Brooke Moore, left, consoles Lourdes goalkeeper Mia Alexander after the loss. Look for the story online at miamiarch.org. (PHOTOS BY LYNN RAMSEY | FC)



St. Bede's Village: '20-year dream' becomes reality

Archbishop dedicates Catholic Charities' affordable housing complex for workers in Lower Keys

TOM TRACY
Florida Catholic correspondent

KEY WEST | The end of the 20-year journey to bring affordable housing to the Lower Keys signaled the beginning of a new day for working men and women in this tropical community known for its high cost of living.

Archbishop Thomas Wenski led a March 5, 2021, blessing and ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Key West-based St. Bede's Village, which will provide 37 units of affordable housing for employed single adult males; short-term accommodations for qualifying individuals with very low to moderate income levels; and permanent housing for disabled individuals who are capable of independent living.

After an opening prayer from Msgr. Roberto Garza, board chairman for Catholic Charities of Miami, Charities CEO Peter Routsis-Arroyo welcomed the agency's local and senior staff, board members, civic and nonprofit leaders, building and contractor staff, archdiocesan Pastoral Center staff, elected officials and members of the local community, including clergy from the nearby Basilica of St. Mary Star of the Sea Parish.

"A project like this needs support at all levels, and we are happy to say we have had the support of government," Routsis-Arroyo said, noting the presence of Lea Padron, representing U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio; Monroe County Mayor Michelle Coldiron; and City of Key West Mayor Teri Johnston, all of whom took tours of the facility.

St. Bede's Village is nearing completion and staff expect to start screening applications this spring and accepting new residents as early as summer.

"This is a 20-year dream that today is becoming a reality," Routsis-Arroyo said, adding that Catholic Charities of Miami facilitated some \$2 million in aid and relief assistance following 2017's Hurricane Irma. But a tremendous need remains for affordable housing in the region, even apart from the crisis associated with hurricanes or the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

"What we began to realize was the biggest need was safe, affordable housing (for working, single men), and that is where the dream started of doing this workforce housing facility. It took us four to five years to do the planning, permitting and the zoning — it was a

challenge, but I am happy to say the city agreed to it and we moved forward," Routsis-Arroyo said.

St. Bede's Village, located at 2700 Flagler Ave., in the center of Key West's "New Town" district, consists of a \$9 million complex of housing modules and staff office space, with another 10 units yet to be built for the disabled clients.

Key West Mayor Johnston told the gathering that the city has enjoyed a good and collaborative relationship with Catholic Charities and is grateful to the agency for bringing the new housing to fruition.

"It's one of our major challenges in this community: We are on a beautiful '2x4' island, with very little land, in the third most expensive county in the United States, so I can't tell you how much 37 units helps our cause and helps puts people in reliable, acceptable housing," Johnston said.

"But also it reduces our homelessness in the City of Key West," she added. "When you look around it's beautiful and we really do live in paradise, but it's very difficult for many people to sustain in Key West. We are a tourist driven economy. It's historically one of the lowest paying economies that we have."

Monroe County Mayor Coldiron told the gathering that as an elected official she is asked daily by the public: What is she doing to protect the environment, what is she doing to protect residents and what is she doing for workforce housing.

"So it is a day like today that makes mayors like Teri and myself happy and exuberant because we are a part of this magnificent building," Coldiron said.

Padron noted that Sen. Rubio was working in Washington, D.C. and sent a letter to the gathering where he noted, "The countless men and women helped over the years by Catholic Charities of the Archdiocese of Miami is a testament to your commitment to God and his commandment to love your neighbor as yourselves."

"Your commitment here to providing affordable housing for those working in this community as well as your assistance to persons with disabilities helps one another and changes lives for the better. St. Bede's Village will now serve



Exterior view of part of the Catholic Charities-sponsored St. Bede's Village in Key West, which was dedicated March 5, 2021. The affordable workforce housing facility is nearing completion after some 20 years of planning.



Archbishop Thomas Wenski cuts the ribbon for Catholic Charities-sponsored St. Bede's Village in Key West March 5, 2021. Along with him, from left, are Father John Baker, pastor of the Basilica of St. Mary, Star of the Sea Parish in Key West; Miami Catholic Charities CEO Peter Routsis-Arroyo; Orestes Wrvs, a member of the Catholic Charities board of directors; Jules Jones, CFO of Catholic Charities; Devika Austin, chief administrative officer for Catholic Charities; and Msgr. Roberto Garza, board chairman for Catholic Charities. (TOM TRACY | FC)

as a place they can call home in the Keys, and from which dreams can be built together," Sen. Rubio added. "I look forward to hearing of your continued good work in the name of the Lord in the coming years."

Archbishop Wenski noted that a lot of people worked quietly in the background over many years to get all the pieces to come together for St. Bede's Village, a project that at times met with some community reticence.

"This is an example of the community coming together to do good, and of the Church cooperating to do good," the archbishop said.

He recalled the late St. Augustine Archbishop Joseph P. Hurley, who was responsible for much of the growth and expansion of the Catholic churches and facilities in Florida during the 1950s.

"Archbishop Hurley used to say, the Church must do good, but the Church must be seen as doing good. In that sense he was not trying to promote a false pride, but he was saying what Jesus says in the Gospel, that you don't put a light under a bushel basket," Archbishop Wenski said.

"Catholic Charities exists as the institutional expression of the local Church, of the Catholics here in

south Florida in terms of their commitment to do good as individuals, as a parish community — and the Basilica parish here has done great good and their witness for the homeless and needy in this community is unparalleled," the archbishop added, referring to St. Mary Star of the Sea.

He added that it takes institutions like Catholic Charities in society to help put together the pieces and build a project like St. Bede's. "I thank all of you for playing a role in making this possible." ■

For information, visit: www.ccadm.org/sh_projects/st-bedes-village/

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'1,000 Rosaries for Life'

Deacon recruits prayer warriors for new mission aimed at saving lives

LINDA REEVES
Florida Catholic correspondent

MIAMI | Deacon Michael Plummer headed for the mountaintops close to heaven when the global pandemic hit, and there, in the midst of God's beauty and the breathtaking views, he was inspired to carry out a special mission to save lives.

"I began a commitment to pray a thousand rosaries for life using specific mysteries," said the energetic 80-year-old, who has vowed to constantly pray the rosary in honor of the Blessed Mother and to call on her for help in the protection of life.

"I think this is a very interesting and important mission. It has potential," said Deacon Plummer.

He began praying Jan. 1, 2021, and has continued to pray every day since. He is back in Miami now, where he serves at Our Lady of Lourdes Parish. After being nudged by Msgr. Kenneth Schwager, his pastor, he is beefing up his prayer project.

"Msgr. Schwager invited me to share this as a call to others to commit to praying the rosary," said Deacon Plummer. "A thousand rosaries for life may not seem like very many



Deacon Michael Plummer of Our Lady of Lourdes Parish in Miami enjoys an evening with his wife, Mary, July 10, 2020, while staying in the North Carolina mountains during the COVID-19 lockdown. It was during that time in the mountains when Deacon Plummer was inspired to begin a rosary campaign encouraging everyone to pray for respect for life. (COURTESY)

in the grand scheme of things, but think about the power of 100 people saying 1,000 rosaries. Of course, I would rather have one million people praying," he confessed.

Our Lady of Lourdes has announced Deacon Plummer's "1,000 Rosaries for Life" campaign in the parish bulletin, encouraging families and individuals to get involved and to promote the prayerful mission to others, especially those at home still in lockdown because of COVID-19.

Parishioner Ana Perez-Nodarse, a respect life representative at Our Lady of Lourdes, said she supports

Deacon Plummer's idea of encouraging rosary prayer, especially during Lent and the worldwide 40 Days for Life campaign of prayerful witness in front of local abortion clinics, which began Ash Wednesday.

"It is a wonderful idea," she said. "I think we can work together. We can put all our rosaries together in a beautiful bouquet for Our Lady."

As part of Deacon Plummer's vision that manifested while he was "hiding out from COVID" in North Carolina's Appalachian Mountains, participants are asked to meditate on certain mysteries of the rosary or a passage in the life of Christ or

Mary.

"The richness of the 20 mysteries of the rosary became a bit clearer to me," said Deacon Plummer. He explained that he carefully and deliberately selected five meditations with life at the center.

The three joyful mysteries he selected are the Annunciation, Visitation and Nativity. These meditations remind the faithful of the Son of God's joyful coming into the world.

"That is the best pro-life story ever told," said Deacon Plummer. "God brought his only son into the world through the womb. There were other ways he could have come."

The other meditations he selected include the celebration of marriage and family at the wedding feast at Cana, a luminous mystery, and the resurrection, a glorious mystery.

In his nearly 40 years of service as a deacon in the Archdiocese of Miami, Deacon Plummer has taken on many roles. He has been a pro-life advocate for as long as he can remember, quietly praying for respect of life during events and gatherings and during his own personal prayer.

He believes that now, perhaps more than ever in today's world, Catholics are called to step up to put their faith in action and to pray for life, marriage, and family, all of which are threatened by society.

"Human life is sacred from the moment of conception until natural death. It is my argument that you can't separate respect for life from the discipleship of faith," he said.

Deacon Plummer was ordained a deacon in 1984. He is also a husband and father of five children and eight grandchildren. He lost his son, who would have been 47 this year,

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SPIRITUAL READING

SHROUD OF TURIN - Information and updates on the Shroud and the Sudarium of Oviedo. Please contact Shroud Sources, 1010 NE 196 St., North Miami Beach, FL 33179 or call 954-547-1899.

PRAYER

Prayer to Our Lady of Hope

O Mary, my mother, I kneel before you with heavy heart. The burden of my sins oppresses me. The knowledge of my weakness discourages me. I am beset by fears and temptations of every sort. Yet I am so attached to the things of this world that instead of longing for heaven, I am filled with dread at the thought of death.

O Mother of Mercy, have pity on me in my distress. You are all-powerful with your divine Son. He can refuse no request of your Immaculate Heart. Show yourself a true mother to me by being my advocate before his throne. O refuge of sinners and hope of the hopeless, to whom shall I turn if not you?

Obtain for me, then, O Mother of Hope, the grace of true sorrow for my sins, the gift of perfect resignation to God's holy will, and the courage to take up my cross and follow Jesus. Beg of his Sacred Heart the special favor that I ask in this novena.

(Make request)

But above all I pray, O dearest Mother, that through your most powerful intercession my heart may be filled with holy hope, so that in life's darkest hour I may never fail to trust in God my savior, but by walking in the way of his commandments I may merit to be united with him and with you in the eternal joys of heaven. Amen.

to a helicopter accident in 2005.

Born in Pennsylvania, he came to Florida in 1960 when he joined the U.S. Air Force. After the service, he studied at the University of Miami, earning both bachelor's and master's degrees in business. He had a successful career in a Florida utilities business.

In 1967, he married his childhood sweetheart, Mary, fondly known as Roxann. She is her husband's biggest supporter. "I get a crazy idea, and my wife says, 'Go do it,'" said Deacon Plummer, jokingly.

A simple but beautiful emblem has been designed for the prayer campaign, featuring rosary beads in the shape of a heart and a simple prayer to Mary under the title Our Lady of Hope. Our Lady of Hope appeared at Pontmain, France in 1871 wearing blue and white and in her eighth month of pregnancy. The emblem will be used to promote the "1,000 Rosaries for Life" campaign.

"I am trying to plant seeds," said Deacon Plummer. "We are trying to do it in the midst of the COVID pandemic."

Longtime Our Lady of Lourdes parishioner Martha Valladares, involved with the parish respect life initiatives, wholeheartedly supports "1,000 Rosaries for Life."

"It is a wonderful idea," she said. "I pray the rosary every day. I have seen the power of praying the rosary. I have experienced it." ■

For more information, email Deacon Michael Plummer at onthousandrosaries4life@aol.com.

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LA VOZ CATÓLICA

Marzo de 2021

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Un año después: Encomendémonos al Señor



Arzobispo Thomas Wenski

Este mes se cumple un año desde que la pandemia trastornó nuestras vidas de forma dramática, dando paso a un inmenso sufrimiento para demasiadas personas. El año pasado, en los primeros días de la pandemia, el Papa Francisco presidió un momento extraordinario de oración en el que reflexionó sobre los apóstoles y sus miedos cuando una tempestad les sorprendió en una barca mientras Jesús dormía. (cf. Marcos 4)

“La tormenta”, escribió al describir esta pandemia mundial, “desenmascara nuestra vulnerabilidad y deja al descubierto esas falsas y superfluas seguridades con las que habíamos construido nuestras agendas, nuestros proyectos, rutinas y prioridades. Nos muestra cómo habíamos dejado dormido y abandonado lo que alimenta, sostiene y da fuerza a nuestra

vida y a nuestra comunidad”.

Esperamos haber aprendido que no somos tan poderosos ni tenemos el control de nuestras vidas como a veces pretendemos. Pero, al mismo tiempo, también hemos aprendido que todos estamos “en la misma barca”. Como dijeron los obispos de los EE.UU. en su declaración de este mes por el primer aniversario de la pandemia: “En lugar de avergonzarnos de esta incapacidad o de sentirnos aplastados por el miedo a lo que no podemos controlar, se ha revelado nuestra interconexión y dependencia de Dios”.

Este último año nos ha puesto a prueba duramente: Nos enfrentamos a la enfermedad, propia o de nuestros seres queridos; lloramos la muerte de familiares y amigos; sufrimos la ansiedad de la incertidumbre económica y experimentamos la soledad al vernos obligados a “permanecer separados”; y nos preocupamos al ver que los disturbios raciales y las disputas partidistas amenazan la tranquilidad interna de la vida de nuestra nación. Sin embargo, hemos demostrado ser resistentes, porque el Señor no nos deja

a merced de la tormenta.

Y, ciertamente, los numerosos actos de bondad del prójimo hacia el prójimo, la valentía desinteresada de los trabajadores de primera línea, la dedicación silenciosa de nuestros profesores, el acompañamiento constante de nuestros sacerdotes

—incluso cuando la participación pública en la Eucaristía no era posible— fueron rayos de esperanza que disipaban la oscuridad de la desesperación.

Una vez más, como escribió el Papa: “Con la tempestad, se cayó el maquillaje de esos estereotipos con los que disfrazábamos nuestros egos siempre pretenciosos de querer aparentar; y dejó al descubierto, una vez más, esa (bendita) pertenencia común de la que no podemos ni

queremos evadirnos; esa pertenencia de hermanos”.

El desarrollo de las vacunas “a velocidad de vértigo” supuso el comienzo del fin de esta pandemia mundial. Pero las vacunas deben estar disponibles de forma universal, para que ninguna persona o nación se quede atrás. Y todo el que pueda debería vacunarse, incluso las personas

que no tienen mucho que temer de la infección —si no son de alto riesgo y si están sanas, o si su demografía es tal que pueden esperar recuperarse con facilidad. El hecho de que se vacunen será un beneficio para otras personas de su entorno, porque al estar vacunados no serán responsables de que otros se contagien con el virus.

A lo largo de los años, varios tipos de vacunas han protegido a la humanidad de diversas enfermedades; las vacunas contra el COVID-19 son muy prometedoras y, como asegura la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe, “pueden utilizarse todas las vacunas reconocidas como clínicamente seguras y eficaces con conciencia cierta”.

Esperamos que llegue el día en que todos podamos volver a reunirnos en iglesias llenas para celebrar la Misa y se pueda reanudar la vida normal de nuestras parroquias.

“¿Por qué tienen miedo? ¿Aún no tienen fe?” Este fue el reproche de Jesús a los apóstoles cuando le despertaron en medio de la tormenta. Mientras buscamos llegar al otro lado de esta pandemia, encomendémonos al Señor.

De nuevo, para citar al Papa Francisco: “En su Cruz hemos sido salvados para hospedar la esperanza y dejar que sea ella quien fortalezca y sostenga todas las medidas y caminos posibles que nos ayuden a cuidarnos y a cuidar. Abrazar al Señor para abrazar la esperanza: esta es la fuerza de la fe, que libera del miedo y da esperanza”.

Mientras buscamos llegar al otro lado de esta pandemia, encomendémonos al Señor.

—Arzobispo Thomas Wenski

Arzobispo Wenski: Di “sí” a cualquier vacuna anti-COVID-19

Carta a sacerdotes reitera las conclusiones de la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe

Redacción de La Voz Católica

MIAMI | Con la esperanza de disipar la confusión entre los católicos del Sur de La Florida, el Arzobispo Thomas Wenski escribió a sus colegas sacerdotes reiterando que no hay ninguna objeción moral para recibir cualquiera de las vacunas contra el COVID-19, actualmente aprobadas para su uso en los Estados Unidos.

La carta enviada el 10 de marzo de 2021 responde directamente a dos preguntas, apoyándose en la declaración emitida en diciembre de 2020 por la Congregación Vaticana para la Doctrina de la Fe, que afirma que “todas las vacunas... pueden utilizarse con conciencia cierta...”

“Así que, a la pregunta: ¿puede la parroquia ser utilizada como un sitio de vacunación para todas las vacunas actualmente disponibles? La respuesta es SÍ”, escribió el Arzobispo. “A la pregunta: ¿debo aconsejar a mis feligreses a que reciban alguna de las tres vacunas disponibles? La respuesta es también un SÍ rotundo”.

El Arzobispo señala que “ha habido cierta confusión” sobre la cuestión de las

vacunas contra el COVID, especialmente desde la presentación de la versión de una sola dosis de Johnson and Johnson.

“Quizá recuerden cómo en nuestros días en el seminario, las discusiones de teología moral sobre la cooperación formal, próxima y remota con el mal, entre otros, podían ser bastante desalentadoras”, escribió el Arzobispo.

“Es fácil perderse en la maleza”, señaló apuntando a algunas orientaciones inapropiadas procedentes de obispos estadounidenses y de cancellerías diocesanas “que a menudo, no ayudan con éxito a sacar a la gente de la maleza”.

Pidió a los sacerdotes arquidiocesanos que vieran el podcast con el P. Alfred Cioffi, teólogo moral y profesor de bioética de la Universidad St. Thomas, que está publicado en la página web y en el canal de YouTube de la Arquidiócesis.

Ofrece “una discusión útil y erudita”, escribió el Arzobispo. “Pero, la declaración más sencilla sobre el tema” vino el 21 de diciembre de 2020 de la Congregación para la Doctrina de la Fe: “Nota sobre la moralidad del uso de algunas vacunas contra el COVID-19”.

El Arzobispo cita la sección pertinente: “Todas las vacunas reconocidas como clínicamente seguras y eficaces con con-

ciencia cierta que el recurso a tales vacunas no significa una cooperación formal con el aborto del que se obtuvieron las células con las que las vacunas han sido producidas”.

La cita de Vatican News señala también: “La nota aborda las dudas e interrogantes sobre los aspectos morales de las vacunas contra el COVID-19, incluyendo la responsabilidad de los investigadores biomédicos y las agencias farmacéuticas, la moralidad de la vacunación, el acceso a las vacunas, y aclara que estas vacunas no son una legitimación del aborto”.

NUESTRA PORTADA

Via Crucis, Segunda Estación: Jesús carga con la cruz. Imagen en el vitral de la iglesia St. Rose of Lima en Miami Shores.

La Semana Santa comienza con el Domingo de Ramos, este 28 de marzo, y continúa con el Triduo Pascual - Jueves, Viernes y Sábado Santo - hasta el Domingo de Resurrección.

Esta edición fue a imprenta el 15 de marzo

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Confesionarios COVID

Los párrocos se vuelven creativos para adaptarse a la “nueva normalidad” causada por la pandemia



Fotos por Marlene Quaroni/FC

Sentado detrás de una división de madera, el P. Christopher Marino, rector de la Catedral de St. Mary, escucha confesiones afuera de la puerta principal de la catedral, el 25 de marzo de 2020. Está usando un teléfono celular para poder comunicarse sin gritar debido a la distancia entre él y la penitente.



Arriba: El P. Richard Vigoa escucha confesiones en el estacionamiento de la Iglesia de San Agustín el 26 de marzo de 2020.

Abajo: El P. Antonio Tupiza escucha una confesión en el área del quiosco de la iglesia St. Rose of Lima, en Miami Shores, el 28 de marzo de 2020.



Ana Rodríguez-Soto
 Editora Ejecutiva de LVC y del
Florida Catholic

MIAMI | Cuando el mundo cerró hace un año este mes, todos tuvieron que adaptarse a una “nueva normalidad”. La Iglesia no fue la excepción.

Las iglesias cerraron pero el trabajo de la Iglesia continuó. Los sacerdotes comenzaron a celebrar la Misa frente a las cámaras, cambiando rápidamente a transmisiones en vivo en plataformas de redes sociales como Facebook y YouTube.

Las confesiones eran más complicadas, dada la necesidad de escucharlas en persona. Incluso entonces, reinó la creatividad. Las confesiones en auto se hicieron populares, aunque el Vaticano rápidamente prohibió el uso de teléfonos celulares para ayudar a los sacerdotes a escuchar las palabras de los penitentes mientras estaban sentados a distancia y al aire libre.

Sin embargo, los párrocos encontraron soluciones. Por eso se nos ocurrió que sería divertido reunir una muestra de “confesionarios COVID” para resaltar esa “nueva normalidad” sacramental.

En algunas iglesias, han permanecido al aire libre. La parroquia de St. Ambrose en Deerfield Beach continúa con las confesiones en autos, con sacerdotes parados cerca del auto del penitente. En St. Boniface en Pembroke Pines, el sacerdote y el penitente se sientan al aire libre, enmascarados y distanciados y, a veces, incluso separados por una barrera de plexiglás.

Otros han creado confesionarios interiores adaptados para tiempos de pandemia. En San Isidro en Pompano Beach, los ujieres están listos para limpiar y desinfectar el lado del penitente, separado por un tabique de madera, después de cada confesión. Es una adaptación del confesionario de la parroquia en los primeros tiempos de la pandemia, con el sacerdote sentado dentro del umbral de la iglesia y el penitente afuera.

“Me traje recuerdos de los primeros días de la pandemia”, dijo el párroco de San Isidro, el P. Wilfredo Contreras, en respuesta a la solicitud de fotografías de *Florida Catholic*. “En los horarios regulares del fin de semana, teníamos acomodadores parados



Fotos de cortesía



La “nueva realidad” obligó a la Iglesia a introducir nuevas ideas para continuar su trabajo: En St. Edward (1), interpusieron una barrera de plexiglás; en Our Lady of the Lakes (2) el confesionario es de baja tecnología; y en St. Boniface (3), se apeló al aire libre.



a distancia listos con toallas desinfectadas y desinfectantes para que, a medida que cada penitente avanzaba y se iba, el confesionario del lado penitente se desinfectara inmediatamente. El confesor permanecía a salvo en la parte interior de la iglesia, escuchando confesiones desde dentro”.

“Funcionó durante bastante tiempo”, dijo el P. Contreras.

Con la flexibilización de las restricciones, trasladó el confesionario a la capilla “porque tiene un amplio espacio”. La gente ahora se alinea frente a las puertas de la capilla, distanciándose socialmente y usando máscaras hasta que llega su turno de confesión. Pero al igual que antes, los acomodadores entran inmediatamente y desinfectan después de cada penitente.

En St. Maximilian Kolbe en Pembroke Pines, las confesiones tienen lugar en el nártex junto a la entrada principal de la iglesia. Los que quieren confesarse cara a cara se sientan a distancia del sacerdote; los demás pueden confesarse detrás de una mampara que también protege tanto al sacerdote como al penitente. Los penitentes esperan

afuera de la entrada de la iglesia a que el sacerdote abra la puerta y los deje entrar. Una luz verde o roja en las puertas de vidrio les permite saber que no deben tocar e interrumpir una confesión.

En Our Lady of the Lakes en Miami Lakes, la solución es de baja tecnología: una cortina de ducha transparente colgada de un marco sobre ruedas. “Es barato y práctico”, dijo el administrador parroquial, P. Flavio Montes, y señaló que el confesionario tiene el beneficio adicional de ser totalmente portátil.

¿Quiere ver el “confesionario COVID” de su propia parroquia? Participe en el sacramento de la reconciliación en esta Cuaresma. Debido a que la pandemia no ha terminado, el Fin de Semana de la Reconciliación no se llevará a cabo este año, pero muchos párrocos han extendido sus horas de confesión. Los días y las horas se publican en el sitio web de cada iglesia y también en la arquidiócesana. Encuentre la parroquia más cercana en miamiarch.org.

Y si desea enviarnos una imagen, nos encantaría agregarla a la presentación de diapositivas que acompañará este artículo cuando se publique en línea.

Radio Paz transmite también en FM

Rocío Granados
La Voz Católica

A partir de este año la audiencia de Radio Paz 830 AM, la emisora de la Arquidiócesis de Miami, puede sintonizar sin interrupción su señal también en 96.1 FM.

“Oficialmente se empezó a transmitir en FM desde el 10 de noviembre de 2020”, dijo Jenny Gamito, directora de administración de la estación radial, y agregó que durante noviembre y diciembre del año pasado se realizaron algunos ajustes, pero desde este año se está transmitiendo sin interrupciones.

Para ello se compró una antena nueva para el tipo de sonido que transmite la FM y también se compraron transmisores.

Desde sus inicios, hace 30 años, Radio Paz emite su señal en AM (amplitud modulada). Actualmente, la señal cubre el área desde Coral Springs, en el condado de Broward, hasta Islamorada, en el condado de Monroe.

Debido a cómo funciona la señal de AM, el área de cobertura es más amplia pero se han notado interferencias o incluso no llega la señal a ciertos sectores dentro del condado de Miami Dade. “En AM, aunque se transmite con muy buena señal, siempre hay un poco de

interferencia”, dijo Gamito.

En cambio, la FM (frecuencia modulada) tiene un sonido que es mucho más nítido y de buena calidad, también porque se transmite en un área geográfica más pequeña. “El sonido es bien claro, se escucha la calidad y queríamos hacer esto para los oyentes”, señaló Gamito y agregó que en este momento la FM está siendo repetidora de la AM y aún no se sabe si en el futuro van a transmitir una programación diferente.

“Es bueno que tengamos esas dos señales, porque puede haber muchas cosas más en el futuro”, indicó Gamito.

La señal de FM cubre el área desde Westchester hasta Kendall, en el condado de Miami Dade.

La pandemia y la radio

Radio Paz ha seguido transmitiendo sus programas habituales durante la pandemia de COVID-19. Se hicieron algunos cambios sobre todo en los programas en vivo. Antes, la mayoría de los presentadores iban a la estación radial a realizar los programas; además, los transmitían por los medios sociales

en vivo. Ahora tienen que conectarse por medio de Skype, por teléfono u otros medios para conducir sus programas.

En ese sentido, no fue completamente un cambio, dijo Gamito, porque esa forma de hacer las conexiones siempre lo han hecho, ya que desde hace mucho hay programas que se producen fuera de Miami.

Pero, para sacar la señal al aire, el operador y los técnicos tienen que estar en la estación. La programación incluye diferentes transmisiones como la de Radio Vaticana, transmisiones locales con el Arzobispo Thomas Wenski y eventos en algunas parroquias, y se requiere también a otro personal

además de los operadores. Es un tipo de trabajo que no se puede hacer desde la casa.

Al mismo tiempo, la pandemia fue algo que nadie imaginó. “Y al ser una radio, tenemos que informar a la comunidad. Hay que tener mucha cautela de cómo decimos las cosas, de qué es lo que se dice al aire y cómo se dice, porque tampoco

se puede crear el pánico”, dijo Gamito, quien asumió la dirección de administración hace dos años, pero ha trabajado en diferentes departamentos durante los ocho años que lleva en la estación.

Radio Paz en las plataformas sociales

Desde hace 3 años, cuando Mons. Roberto Garza asumió la dirección de Radio Paz, se ha dado un auge mayor a los medios sociales. Se empezó a crear contenido propio, sobre todo hacer videos y mostrar un poco el detrás de cámaras del personal de la radio, dijo Gamito.

Por un tiempo transmitieron algunos programas a través de Facebook Live, pero por normas y reglamentos sobre los derechos reservados de la música que también se transmitía en algunos programas de la radio, Facebook les quitaba la señal en vivo. Por lo que ahora están transmitiendo a través de su canal de YouTube.

Cuando pase la pandemia, Gamito señaló que van a volver a visitar las diferentes parroquias como lo hacían antes y harán las transmisiones en vivo a través de los medios sociales para que la audiencia, además de escucharlos por la radio, pueda ver el video si así quisiera.

Radio Paz es la única emisora católica
Pasa a la página 5



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Son héroes contra el COVID

Marlene Quaroni

Corresponsal, Florida Catholic

MIAMI | Para vacunarse contra el COVID-19 se necesitan destrezas que muchas personas mayores, discapacitadas e indocumentadas no tienen, como usar o hasta poseer una computadora. Muchos no tienen transporte. Sin embargo, cuando la vacuna se puso a disposición de las personas mayores de 65 años, los feligreses y el personal de Corpus Christi se movilizaron para ayudar.

“Hicimos una lista de los que necesitaban ayuda”, dijo el P. Federico Capdepón, sacerdote arquidiocesano jubilado que ayuda en Corpus Christi y a quien se le ocurrió la idea. “Cuando el personal del hospital de Jackson Memorial nos llama para informar que la vacuna estará disponible en un día determinado, nos comunicamos con las personas de la lista y les decimos que, si lo desean, podemos ir y llevarlas al hospital”.

Fátimo García, coordinador de comunicaciones de la parroquia, recopiló la mayoría de los nombres de los mayores de 65 años. Hasta finales de febrero, 500 personas habían aprovechado la oportunidad de vacunarse, informó.

“No siempre es fácil ponerse en contacto con la gente”, comentó el P. Capdepón. “Somos como los conductores de Uber, disponibles en cualquier momento. El taxista principal es nuestro párroco, el P. José Luis Menéndez”.

Los profesionales de la salud del Jackson han sido una luz en medio de la

oscuridad, aseguró el P. Menéndez.

En un momento dado, Allapattah, la zona alrededor de Corpus Christi, fue el epicentro del virus en Miami, explicó el Diácono Tony Pérez, quien pronunció la homilía en una Misa el 28 de febrero en honor al personal del Jackson Memorial.

“El personal médico del JMH dedicó su tiempo y talento a trabajar por el bien de todos”, aseguró. “Son héroes”.

El P. Menéndez entregó una placa de agradecimiento a JMH por sus esfuerzos en vacunar a la gente. También entregó un cheque de 5,000 dólares a la International Kids Foundation Wonderfund, un programa de Jackson Health Foundation que ayuda a los niños de todo el mundo a tener acceso a tratamientos médicos que pueden salvarles la vida y no están disponibles en sus países. Desde su fundación en 2001, la IKF Wonderfund ha recaudado más de 21 millones de dólares y ha ayudado a más de 650 niños en más de 50 países.

Mariana Martínez, miembro de la junta directiva de Jackson Health Foundation y presidenta del Consejo Asesor de IKF Wonderfund, aceptó el cheque y la placa. Junto a ella estaban Maylén Montoto, directora asociada de Ventas de Eventos y Patrocinios de Jackson Health Foundation, y Madeline Barrios, gerente de alcance comunitario de Jackson Health System.

“Dependemos únicamente de la recaudación de fondos”, informó Martínez. “Muchos de estos países, principalmente en América Latina,

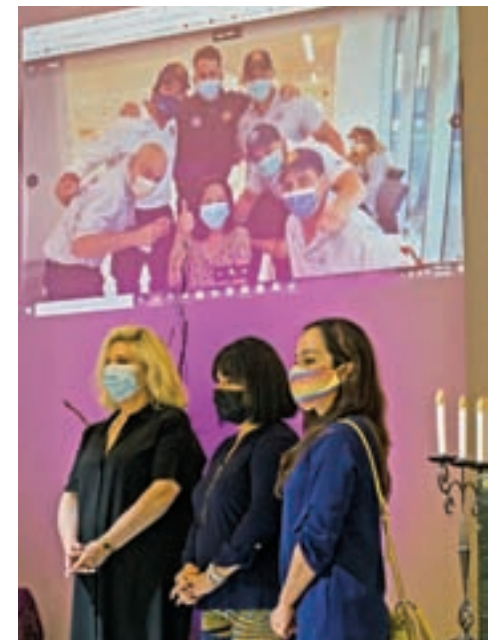
no tienen instalaciones ni médicos especialistas para realizar ciertas cirugías”.

El P. Joseph Jean-Louis, vicario parroquial de la iglesia de Sacred Heart en Homestead, y tío de una niña a la que IKF Wonderfund ayudó recientemente, asistió a las dos Misas, una en inglés y otra en español, en las que se rindió homenaje al personal de Jackson y Wonderfund.

“Los médicos del Jackson salvaron la vida de mi sobrina de 16 años”, declaró el P. Jean-Louis. “Ella vivía en Haití y mi hermana me dijo que tenía un soplo en el corazón y que necesitaba cirugía. Esa cirugía no se realiza en Haití. Allí no pudimos encontrar ayuda para ella. Le hablé al P. Federico sobre mi sobrina y me refirió a la Fundación Jackson”.

Dijo que le tramitaron el visado para viajar y cubrieron todos los gastos. La fundación se encargó de la operación a corazón abierto de 100,000 dólares. La niña se encuentra en el Sur de Florida, y visita el Jackson para seguimiento sin cargo adicional.

“Quiero dar las gracias de todo corazón a la Jackson Foundation y a su personal de cardiología y enfermería por haber salvado la vida de mi sobrina, y a la oficina del senador de los Estados Unidos Rick Scott por haber gestionado una cita en la embajada de los Estados Unidos en Haití. Gracias a la ayuda de la oficina del senador Scott, la embajada concedió el visado sin demora”.



Marlene Quaroni/FC

Los representantes del Jackson Memorial Hospital escuchan de pie, debajo de una foto de los trabajadores de JMH, las palabras de gratitud del P. Federico Capdepón durante una Misa el 28 de febrero de 2021 en la iglesia de Corpus Christi en Miami. De izquierda a derecha: Mariana Martínez, del Consejo Asesor de IKF Wonderfund; Maylén Montoto, directora asociada de Ventas de Eventos y Patrocinio de Jackson Health Foundation; y Madeline Barrios, gerente de alcance comunitario en Jackson Health System.

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ministerios y grupos parroquiales. También tiene el objetivo de llevar la estación a la comunidad con visitas y transmisiones semanales desde diferentes parroquias arquidiocesanas.

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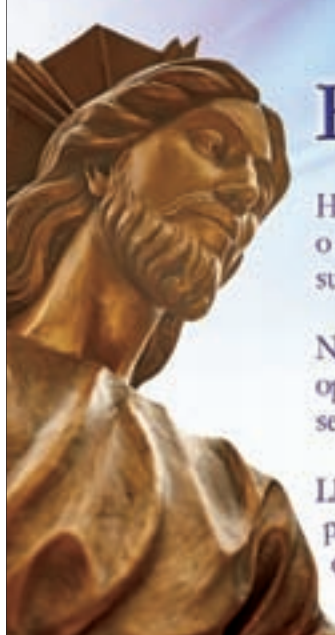
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Dos líderes arquidiocesanos anuncian su retiro

La superintendente de las Escuelas y el director general de los Servicios de Salud Católicos dejarán su cargo en 2021

MIAMI | Los máximos responsables del Departamento de Escuelas y Catholic Health Services (Servicios de Salud Católicos) de la Arquidiócesis anunciaron su jubilación a finales de febrero.

Kim Pryzbylski, secretaria de educación y superintendente de escuelas, se retira el 30 de junio de 2021. Joseph M. Catania, director general de Catholic Health Services, dejará su puesto el 30 de septiembre de 2021.

Durante sus 10 años de servicio en la Arquidiócesis, Pryzbylski implementó programas de iPad y adquirió fondos para otras iniciativas tecnológicas de vanguardia en las escuelas católicas, además de establecer procedimientos de observación y rendimiento de profesores. En

la primavera de 2020, cuando la enseñanza en el aula se interrumpió debido al COVID-19, su visión avanzada tenía toda la tecnología necesaria para que los estudiantes siguieran aprendiendo a través de la enseñanza en línea.

Los conocimientos y la experiencia de Pryzbylski también permitieron incrementar los fondos a través de programas de títulos federales para el desarrollo profesional de profesores y directores, así como instrucción adicional para los estudiantes que necesitan ayuda extra.

También estableció protocolos especiales de responsabilidad fiscal en las escuelas.

Pryzbylski dijo que estaba agradecida por las oportunidades que tuvo en el sistema escolar de la Arquidiócesis y consideró que su tiempo allí fue una experiencia que solidificó su educación, su experiencia y la alegría de trabajar con directores y maestros le dio una sensación de triunfo.

“Ha llegado el momento de que mi familia y yo planifiquemos nuevas aventuras y ver la posibilidad de volver a Indiana (su estado natal)”, dijo Pryzbylski.

El Arzobispo Thomas Wenski expresó su profunda gratitud por los logros de Pryzbylski en la última década.

**“La Dra. Pryzbylski
dejará nuestras
escuelas mejor que
cuando las encontró...”**

—Arzobispo Thomas Wenski



Kim Pryzbylski



Joe Catania

“La Dra. Pryzbylski dejará nuestras escuelas mejor que cuando las encontró al mejorar nuestra capacidad en las áreas de tecnología, responsabilidad fiscal, desarrollo profesional de nuestros maestros y directores e identidad católica. Ella comprendió que la excelencia en la educación católica no consiste sólo en preparar a los estudiantes para tener una buena vida, sino también en ayudarles a aprender las formas de ser buenos y vivir la fe”.

La Arquidiócesis ha contratado a Partners in Mission para que ayude en la búsqueda del sucesor de Pryzbylski. Se ha formado un comité de búsqueda que comenzará su tarea inmediatamente.

Catania se retira de Catholic Health Services, después de liderar su crecimiento y desarrollo durante los últimos 30 años. Es el único director general que ha tenido Catholic Health Services, y ha pasado las últimas tres décadas guiando a la organización en tiempos difíciles hacia la estabilidad fiscal y un notable crecimiento.

Catania ha impulsado continuamente la misión de CHS, ha creado un equipo centrado y cohesionado, ha fomentado las asociaciones comunitarias y se ha centrado en servir a los más vulnerables de la comunidad del sur de La Florida. Supervisa la gestión de más de 32 instalaciones en los condados de Miami-Dade y Broward, incluyendo cuatro campus médicos emblemáticos, 17 comunidades de viviendas independientes para personas mayores, cinco centros de educación temprana y dos cementerios católicos.

Como líder, siempre ha aceptado la responsabilidad personal no sólo por las 6,000 personas que atiende diariamente el CHS, sino también por los más de 2,500 empleados y sus familias.

“Después de haber servido más de tres décadas como director general, siento que este es el momento adecuado para un cambio de liderazgo. Ha sido un honor y un privilegio servir a la comunidad, a la Arquidiócesis de Miami y liderar el gran equipo de Catholic Health Services.

Estoy orgulloso de la gente de CHS y de la organización que hemos construido”, dijo Catania.

“En nombre de la junta directiva, quiero agradecer al Sr. Catania por su compromiso y dedicación profesional y personal a Catholic Health Services. Sus notables contribuciones y liderazgo han sido inconmensurables. Ha conducido esta organización con valor y confianza a través de un viaje transformador y CHS es un fuerte líder del mercado gracias a Joe. Dado el extenso plazo de tiempo antes de que el Sr. Catania se retire, la junta directiva comenzará un proceso exhaustivo y comprometido de selección de director general”, dijo Ralph E. Lawson, presidente de la junta directiva de CHS.

El Arzobispo Wenski también agradeció a Catania por sus años de servicio y especialmente por su liderazgo en la prestación de una atención segura y eficaz durante esta pandemia.

“Catholic Health Services, como ministerio de la Arquidiócesis, hace visible y continúa en nuestra comunidad del sur de La Florida el ministerio de sanación de Jesús”, dijo el Arzobispo Wenski. “Joe ha supervisado una organización grande y compleja —y sus logros no ocurrieron por accidente, sino que fueron posibles en gran medida gracias al liderazgo de Joe y a su capacidad de traer colaboradores competentes para ayudar a avanzar en la misión del cuidado católico de la salud”.

El Departamento de Escuelas de la Arquidiócesis de Miami proporciona una educación católica a más de 32,000 estudiantes en 61 escuelas primarias y secundarias. Su misión es hacer que los niños conozcan las enseñanzas y tradiciones de la Iglesia Católica y trabajar estrechamente con los padres al guiar a sus hijos en el camino de la fe.

Catholic Health Services es el mayor proveedor de servicios post agudos en el sureste de los Estados Unidos, proporcionando una completa gama de servicios sanitarios y sociales a la comunidad del sureste de La Florida.

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Una niña se roba el centro de atención al comenzar su jornada de fe

Isabella Vasallo, de 8 años, es uno de los 245 catecúmenos que se unirán a la Iglesia en la Vigilia Pascual.



Fotos por cortesía



Arriba: Nancy Mowa (extrema izquierda) y su nieta Isabella Vasallo, quien participa en el Rito de Iniciación Cristiana para Adultos (RICA) de la parroquia St. Joseph, esperan que comience la ceremonia del Rito de Elección en la Catedral de St. Mary, el 21 de febrero 2021. Están sentadas con Agustina Morales, en la extrema derecha, quien también está en el programa, y su patrocinadora, Alicia García.

Izquierda: Isabella Vasallo, de 8 años, está emocionada por ser bautizada y recibir los sacramentos en la Vigilia Pascual de este año.

Linda Reeves

Corresponsal del Florida Catholic

MIAMI BEACH | Isabella Vasallo es una típica niña de 8 años. Es valiente y ama el baile y la gimnasia, pero esta niña común y corriente tiene un entusiasmo extraordinario por convertirse en una católica de pleno derecho y encontrarse con el Señor a través de los sacramentos.

“Está muy emocionada por

bautizarse”, dijo Gipsy Lodos, directora de educación religiosa de la parroquia St. Joseph en Miami Beach. “Ha estado contando las semanas y contándoles a todos sobre el gran día que se avecina”.

Isabella, una alumna de segundo grado en Mater Beach Academy, será bienvenida a la Iglesia y recibirá los sacramentos de iniciación en la Vigilia Pascual el 3 de abril de 2021. Mater Beach Academy ocupa el espacio

que quedó vacante cuando St. Joseph School cerró al final del año escolar 2009-10.

Isabella es la más joven de los seis catecúmenos que participan en las clases del Rito de Iniciación Cristiana para Adultos en la Parroquia St. Joseph, y una de las más jóvenes de los 245 catecúmenos que han sido recibidos en la Iglesia este año en toda la Arquidiócesis de Miami.

Los catecúmenos nunca han sido bautizados en ninguna fe cristiana. Recibirán los tres importantes sacramentos que los inician en la familia de la Iglesia –Bautismo, Confirmación y Comunión– durante la Vigilia Pascual en sus parroquias.

Muchos han estado asistiendo a clases de formación de RICA durante al menos un año, y algunos durante mucho más tiempo. Aunque está dirigido a adultos que quieren estar en plena comunión con la Iglesia, el RICA es también el método por el cual los niños mayores de 7 años, la edad de la razón, reciben los sacramentos de iniciación.

También en formación hay personas llamadas candidatos. No asisten al Rito de Elección porque ya han sido bautizados en la Iglesia Católica u otra fe cristiana. Su proceso de formación se completa con la recepción de los sacramentos de la Confirmación y Comunión.

“En el pasado también celebramos el Rito de Recepción en la catedral, generalmente en mayo”, explicó Rosemarie Banich, directora de la Oficina de Evangelización y Vida Parroquial. “Ahí es donde van los candidatos a completar sus sacramentos de iniciación, ya sea Primera Comunión y/o Confirmación. Este año, el Arzobispo ha decidido que no lo llevaremos a cabo en la catedral, sino que delegará la autoridad a cada párroco para celebrar esos sacramentos en la parroquia”.

Isabella es una historia refrescante en el mundo actual, cuando muchos padres luchan para que sus hijos se interesen en los servicios de la Iglesia y en conocer a Dios y sus enseñanzas. “Veo tanta alegría en ella”, dijo Lodos. “Le encantan las clases y responde con preguntas y respuestas”.

Toda la familia Vasallo estará en la Vigilia Pascual.

“Estamos emocionados”, dijo Mía Vasallo, la mamá de Isabella. “No la bautizamos cuando era un bebé porque estábamos esperando encontrar al padrino adecuado. Queríamos a alguien que estuviera ahí para ella. Elegimos a mi suegra. Ella siempre está ahí. Es la elección correcta. Ella la ama y le enseñó a orar”.

Nancy Mowa, la abuela y madrina de Isabella, la ha estado ayudando y orando por ella desde el principio. “La

guiaré espiritualmente hasta mi último aliento”, dijo.

De hecho, entre los catecúmenos de St. Joseph este año hay sólo un adulto. Los demás son jóvenes de entre 10 y 13 años.

El P. Juan Sosa, párroco de St. Joseph, celebró el Rito del Envío con todos ellos durante la Misa del 21 de febrero, primer domingo de Cuaresma. El día antes de la Misa, Isabella celebró su cumpleaños.

El P. Sosa oró por los catecúmenos y les aseguró que la gente de la parroquia está “con ellos” y orando por ellos. “Tenemos que ser un apoyo para ellos en su jornada”, dijo.

Esa misma tarde, los catecúmenos asistieron a una de las cuatro ceremonias del Rito de Elección celebradas en la arquidiócesis: dos en la Catedral de St. Mary con el Arzobispo Thomas Wenski y dos más con el Obispo Auxiliar Enrique Delgado en la iglesia de St. Bonaventure en Davie. Los nombres de los catecúmenos se escribieron en el Libro de los Elegidos durante las ceremonias.

Isabella escribió lenta, cuidadosa y claramente su nombre largo y formal en el libro oficial de la Iglesia prometiendo su compromiso y discipulado.

“Isabella quería que su nombre completo estuviera escrito en el libro”, dijo Lodos. “Ella estaba tomándose su tiempo”.

Los padres Mía y Ramón Vasallo nombraron formalmente a su pequeña Isabella Miracle de la Caridad Vasallo, una niña pequeña con un gran nombre que significa mucho. Isabella lleva el nombre de Nuestra Señora de la Caridad, patrona de Cuba y vinculada a muchos milagros.

Mía le tiene una gran devoción. “Cuando tenía cinco meses de embarazo, descubrí que estaba embarazada de Isabella”, dijo Mía, que en ese momento tenía 33 años y era madre de tres varones enérgicos y activos de 3, 12 y 17 años. Mía estaba completamente conmovida cuando la prueba de embarazo indicó que tendría a la niña por la que había estado orando.

“Ella es nuestro pequeño milagro. Ella es nuestra princesa. Todos estamos emocionados por ella”, dijo Mía.

Isabella puede tener sólo 8 años, pero su conocimiento sobre el Señor y el don de la gracia de Dios a través de los sacramentos que recibirá en la Vigilia Pascual va más allá de sus años de juventud.

“Estoy entusiasmada con la Vigilia Pascual”, dijo Isabella. “Será increíble. Quiero que Jesús perdone mis pecados. Quiero ser bendecida por Dios. Quiero estar protegida”.

Notas de reportera: Fui un

Al despedirse las Damas Auxiliadoras, la reportera recuerda los vínculos familiares con el centro de atención a la infancia



Izquierda: Recortes de periódicos del sur de Florida, incluidos The Voice (predecesor del Florida Catholic) y Diario de Las Américas, muestran los esfuerzos de recaudación de fondos de las Damas Auxiliadoras del Centro Hispano.

Cristina Cabrera Jarro
Corresponsal del Florida Catholic

MIAMI| Emma McCormack siempre disfrutaba visitar a los niños del Centro Hispano Católico de Desarrollo Infantil, dirigido por Catholic Charities (Caridades Católicas) de la Arquidiócesis de Miami.

Los niños “eran una delicia. Tan entretenidos, y tan cariñosos”, dijo McCormack, expresidenta y tesorera de Ladies Auxiliary (las Damas Auxiliadoras) del Centro Hispano, que desde los años 80, ayudaron a recaudar fondos para el centro.

Puedo dar fe de los esfuerzos de las Damas Auxiliadoras porque fui una niña del Centro Hispano.

De hecho, tres generaciones de mi familia tienen conexiones con el centro, que surgió como respuesta de la Iglesia a la afluencia masiva de exiliados cubanos que llegaron a Miami tras el ascenso de Fidel Castro al poder.

El Centro Hispano se inauguró oficialmente el 31 de enero de 1960, y fue dirigido por lo que entonces se conocía como la Oficina de Bienestar Católico. Proporcionaba a los refugiados cubanos recién llegados ropa, alimentos, referencias de trabajo, cuidado de niños y servicios médicos y dentales, además del apoyo religioso y espiritual de la Iglesia Católica.

En 1960, el primer trabajo de mi abuelo como exiliado

cubano en Estados Unidos fue de ascensorista en el edificio de seis plantas, en el centro de Miami, detrás de la iglesia Gesu, que albergaba al Centro Hispano.

De niños, mi madre y mi tío asistieron al centro de desarrollo infantil. Cuando estaban en la escuela primaria de Gesu ayudaban a clasificar y separar alimentos, ropa y otros artículos de primera necesidad, en paquetes que se entregaban a los inmigrantes, en su mayoría cubanos, que pasaban por el Centro Hispano.

En 1982, el centro se trasladó a una antigua estación de bomberos, en la 27ª Avenida, en Miami. Para entonces, se había formado las Damas Auxiliadoras para ayudar a recaudar fondos. Cuando el gran éxodo cubano se desvaneció, el Centro Hispano cambió su enfoque hacia los servicios de desarrollo infantil. En 1987, mi abuela se convirtió en ayudante de maestra en el Centro Hispano, y trabajó allí por 15 años. A principios de la década de 1990, mis primos, mi hermano y yo fuimos estudiantes del centro.

Hasta el día de hoy, estoy más que agradecida por el tiempo que pasé en la guardería del Centro Hispano, así como por sus maestros y trabajadores. Considero que lo que aprendí allí fue fundamental para el resto de mi educación. Nos enseñaron lo esencial, como las primeras palabras, los números, los colores, las formas geométricas, los días de la semana y los meses del año, junto con un poco de historia, modales e incluso etiqueta social.

McCormack aún expresa su asombro y felicidad al ver a los niños comer con las manos sujetando bien los tenedores. “Estaban bien educados y tenían un aspecto bastante elegante”, comenta.

Y fiel a su nombre institucional, el Centro Hispano nos enseñaba los fundamentos de nuestra fe católica. Siempre recordaré a la Hna. Práxedes Suárez, de las Hermanas del Servicio Social, entonces directora del Centro Hispano, guiándonos en el rezo del Padre Nuestro y del Ave María. Al ver los videos familiares de esos momentos, no puedo evitar sonreír al ver cómo un grupo de más de 200 niños se aprietan las manos, como si cuanto más aprietan, más sentido tiene la oración. También tanteábamos palabras que éramos demasiado jóvenes para entender, o las fusionábamos para formar una muy larga como “santificado-seatunombre”.



La niña del Centro Hispano



Fotos por cortesía



Arriba: La reportera del Florida Catholic Cristina Cabrera Jarro (centro) acompañada por su madre, María Cabrera (derecha), y la directora del Centro Hispano Católico, la Hermana Praxedes Suárez, SSS, después de una celebración en honor a la Virgen María en 1993.

Arriba izquierda: Un montaje de fotos captura la obra, la finalización y la inauguración del Centro Hispano Católico Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh Child Care Center, en el área de Wynwood de Miami.

Abajo izquierda: En el salón de clases con niños del Centro Hispano Católico está la abuela de la reportera del Florida Catholic Cristina Cabrera Jarro, María Jarro, quien fue asistente de maestra en la Guardería Centro Hispano Católico.

sus esfuerzos se nos proporcionó lo necesario. No recuerdo que faltara comida, colaboradores, suministros o cualquier otro medio esencial para el funcionamiento de una guardería y un centro de desarrollo infantil.

Cuando el Centro Hispano se mudó por tercera vez, las Damas Auxiliadoras ayudaron a encontrar su nueva ubicación en el área de Wynwood. En 1997, ayudaron a recaudar fondos para la nueva instalación, el Centro Hispano Católico Msgr. Bryan O. Walsh Child Care Center. Su nombre rinde homenaje al difunto sacerdote irlandés y director de las Caridades Católicas por mucho tiempo, conocido por su trabajo en favor de los exiliados cubanos.

En diciembre de 2020, las Damas Auxiliadoras realizaron su último acto de caridad. Entregaron un cheque de \$63,756.92 a las Caridades Católicas. Las integrantes, ya mayores, ya no podían seguir con la labor de auxiliar a los necesitados.

“Decidimos transferir los fondos económicos para que pudieran continuar con su trabajo como debe ser”, dijo McCormack.

“Las Damas Auxiliadoras del Centro Hispano son un maravilloso ejemplo de una generación que creía en devolver a las comunidades el apoyo que recibieron, y estaban dispuestas a invertir su tiempo, su talento y su tesoro para hacerlo”, dijo Peter Routsis-Arroyo, director ejecutivo de Caridades Católicas. “Caridades Católicas de la Arquidiócesis de Miami estará siempre agradecido por todo lo que han hecho para que el Centro Hispano sea lo que es hoy”, agregó.

Aunque de niña no conocí a las Damas Auxiliadoras, de adulta sé lo mucho que se hizo gracias a ellas. Mi abuela recuerda sus reuniones mensuales para hablar de la recaudación de fondos. Ahora, es evidente que gracias a

PARA SABER MÁS

El Centro Hispano Católico de Desarrollo Infantil, ubicado en 125 N.W. 25 St., Miami, es uno de los seis centros de cuidado infantil operado por Caridades Católicas de la Arquidiócesis de Miami. Todos ellos ofrecen un programa de desarrollo psicosocial para preparar a niños de 3 a 5 años para el kindergarten.

Todos los centros atienden a familias de bajos ingresos. Las fuentes de financiación incluyen el programa VPK del estado de La Florida, Head Start, United Way y la ciudad de Miami.

No hay más de 20 niños por aula en el Centro Hispano, y todos reciben diariamente desayuno y almuerzo.

Para más información llame al 305-573-9093; envíe un correo electrónico a centrohispano@ccadm.org; o visite la página web de Catholic Charities: www.ccadm.org.

St. Malachy planta un “jardín de la vida” “Una imagen más clara de la vida”

El lugar de oración evoca la importancia de proteger el don divino de la vida

Jonathan Martínez

Corresponsal del Florida Catholic

TAMARAC | La parroquia St. Malachy siempre ha sido muy activa en el movimiento de respeto a la vida.

Bajo la dirección del anterior párroco, el P. Dominick O'Dwyer, los feligreses y el ministerio de respeto a la vida de la iglesia se han comprometido en múltiples esfuerzos a favor de la vida, incluyendo la recolección de artículos para bebés para el Centro de Ayuda al Embarazo (Pregnancy Help Center) de Margate, el patrocinio de vallas publicitarias en las carreteras, y la participación en manifestaciones pacíficas de oración en una clínica de abortos situada a pocas calles de la iglesia.

El mes pasado, la parroquia añadió otro ladrillo a esos esfuerzos cuando los miembros se reunieron con su administrador parroquial, el P. Alfredo Rolón, para la bendición de un Jardín de Respeto a la Vida en los terrenos de la parroquia. La bendición se realizó el 28 de febrero de 2021.

“Creo que esto es maravilloso porque estamos a favor de la vida. Quiero decir que la Iglesia Católica está a favor de la vida, desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural, y este jardín sirve como recordatorio de ello”, dijo Maureen Kilfoile, miembro de Mary for Life (María por la Vida), que es el nombre del ministerio de respeto a la vida de la

parroquia.

Localizado frente a North University Drive, para que todos los que caminan o conducen por allí lo vean, el jardín es un recordatorio de la importancia de proteger el don de la vida dada por Dios para todos.

La iniciativa de hacer el jardín vino del P. Rolón, que fue apoyado por el consejo de finanzas, el consejo pastoral, el ministerio de respeto a la vida, el movimiento Juan XIII y docenas de voluntarios de la parroquia y la comunidad. Ellos donaron las plantas, la pintura y otros elementos necesarios para completar el jardín, además de hacer donaciones monetarias.

“Pensé que este jardín sería un hermoso símbolo de nuestro apoyo a la protección de la vida desde el primer momento de su concepción hasta la muerte natural”, dijo el P. Rolón.

Una de las figuras del jardín es una estatua del “Ángel de la Vida”, donada por John y Karen Loper en memoria de Theresa Banks y restaurada por Fernando Fernández. El Niño Jesús fue donado por Juan Luis y Wanda Pérez Raldiris, en agradecimiento a los feligreses y benefactores que contribuyeron a la realización del jardín.

“Espero que (el jardín) pueda elevar el corazón de las personas al Señor en oración como creyentes católicos, pero también que recuerden que debemos ser activos en nuestra fe católica y una de las formas es apoyando el don de la vida”, dijo el P. Rolón. “Esto es un testimonio de nuestra fe. Espero que los que nos visiten puedan estar juntos, unidos en la fe sabiendo que esta Iglesia Católica es muy activa en el don de la vida”.

Marlene Quaroni

Corresponsal del Florida Catholic

MARGATE | Los Caballeros de Colón de la iglesia St. Katharine Drexel donaron una nueva máquina de ultrasonido al Pregnancy Help Center (Centro de Ayuda al Embarazo) de North Broward, el 3 de marzo de 2021, el día de su patrona.

“Daré a las mujeres una imagen más clara de la vida que llevan dentro”, dijo Rosita Porras, la técnica de ultrasonido del centro. “Ver al bebé casi siempre hace cambiar de opinión a las mujeres que se plantean abortar. Ahora, tendrán una mejor imagen y fotografía que les daré”.

Porras, que trabaja a tiempo parcial en el centro y a tiempo completo en un centro médico del sur de La Florida, dijo que salvar la vida de los bebés es su ministerio.

La nueva máquina de ultrasonido tiene mejor tecnología que la máquina de ultrasonido que los Caballeros de St. Katharine Drexel donaron al centro en el 2012, dijo.

“Es fácil de usar, tiene un software más avanzado y mayor resolución de pantalla para ver mejor el feto”, dijo.

Mario Labella, director general de Strena Medical Products, en Doral, donó al centro un Medisono P12 Expert, con un costo de 40,000 dólares. Aunque no es miembro de los Caballeros de Colón, dijo que está planeando unirse a la organización.

“Los Caballeros de St. Katharine Drexel me preguntaron si podía donar una máquina de ultrasonido”, dijo durante la ceremonia de dedicación e instalación de la nueva máquina en el centro. “Me alegra donar la máquina. Eso forma parte de mi fe. Es un regalo muy bonito. Cuenten conmigo para ayudar en el futuro”.

Los Caballeros de Colón están proveyendo máquinas de ultrasonido para los centros de respeto a la vida desde 2009, el 36° aniversario de Roe vs. Wade.

“En 2019, los Caballeros donaron más de 1,000 máquinas de ultrasonido a centros de embarazo en todo el mundo, cumpliendo con una iniciativa de 10 años para dar a millones de bebés una

oportunidad de vida”, dijo Luis Gómez, Gran Caballero del Consejo 14212 de la iglesia St. Katharine Drexel.

El Obispo Auxiliar Enrique Delgado, también párroco de la iglesia St. Katharine Drexel, en Weston, bendijo la nueva máquina y agradeció a los Caballeros.

“Dios los bendiga a ustedes y a su trabajo”, dijo. “Una de las cosas por las que lucha la Iglesia es el derecho a la vida desde la concepción hasta la muerte natural. Las mujeres embarazadas necesitan ver y sentir que es una vida sagrada la que llevan. Abrirán sus ojos y sus corazones cuando vean al bebé”.

Hoy es un día feliz, añadió. Es importante que la mujer embarazada se dé cuenta de la santidad de la vida.

Angela Curatalo, subdirectora de Respeto a la Vida de la Arquidiócesis de Miami, también agradeció a los Caballeros.

“Tengo que decir que se necesitó un ejército de personas para lograr esto”, dijo. “Nos encantaría ver más voluntarios en nuestros centros de respeto a la vida para que nos den su tiempo, su talento y su tesoro. No hubiéramos podido hacer esto sin los Caballeros”.

Respect Life busca voluntarios

Los voluntarios son esenciales para el Ministerio de Respeto a la Vida de la Arquidiócesis de Miami, especialmente para las operaciones de sus cinco Centros de Ayuda al Embarazo. La oficina capacita a los voluntarios para que sirvan en diferentes actividades, según sus intereses, talentos y habilidades.

Para saber más llame al 954-981-2922 o envíe una solicitud de voluntariado a:

[respectlifemiami.org/volunteer](https://www.respectlifemiami.org/volunteer).

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Alrededor de 300,000 venezolanos se beneficiarán del Estatus de Protección Temporal, TPS

Gobierno anuncia que sigue vigente la deportación diferida otorgada por la anterior administración

	Edad del solicitante	Tarifa del Formulario I-821	Servicios biométricos	Tarifa del Formulario I-765	Total
Registra inicio y validez de un permiso de trabajo	Menor de 14 años de edad	100	50	50	200
	Entre 14 y 44 años de edad	300	300	545	1145
Registra inicio pero solicita un permiso de trabajo	Menor de 14 años de edad	100	50	50	300
	14 años de edad en adelante	300	300	545	1145

*Si desea el permiso de viajar (el "Admission Permit"), hay una tarifa adicional de \$225.

PREGUNTAS FRECUENTES SOBRE TPS

¿Tiene estatus vigente de no-inmigrante turista/estudiantil?

Si es elegible, puede aplicar para el TPS pero debe de hablar con un abogado antes de pedir un permiso de trabajo.

¿Tiene doble ciudadanía?

HABLE CON UN ABOGADO (no un notario o un paralegal) porque puede ser que no eres elegible para el TPS.

¿Tiene DACA?

Si es elegible, puede aplicar para el TPS.

¿Importa cómo se entró a EEUU?

No importa si entró por la frontera o con una visa.


Creo que soy elegible para el TPS; ¿cuando lo puedo solicitar?

El periodo de registro de 180 días empezó el 9 de marzo y termina el 5 de septiembre del 2021.

¿Qué necesito entregar?

- Formulario I-821 (TPS)
- Formulario I-765 (permiso de trabajo)
- Prueba Inicial Requerida
- Tarifas de los formularios (o el formulario para la exención de tarifas)

Esto depende en cuáles formularios se entregan



Rocío Granados
La Voz Católica

MIAMI | A través de una orden ejecutiva anunciada el 8 de marzo por Alejandro Mayorkas, secretario del Departamento de Homeland Security (Seguridad Nacional), alrededor de 300,000 venezolanos indo-

cumentados en Estados Unidos se podrán beneficiar del Estatus de Protección Temporal (TPS, por su sigla en inglés).

La medida tiene una vigencia de 18 meses, hasta septiembre de 2022, y las solicitudes deben enviarse dentro de los próximos 180 días. Empezó el 9 de marzo y termina el 5 de septiembre de 2021.

Son elegibles para solicitar el TPS los venezolanos que se encuentren en Estados Unidos al 8 de marzo de 2021 y que “cumplan con los requisitos de elegibilidad”, señala el documento de designación del Departamento de Seguridad Nacional.

Este beneficio migratorio para los venezolanos es otorgado por la actual administración del presidente Joe Biden a un poco más de un mes de que la anterior administración de Donald Trump les haya otorgado el Diferimiento de Salida Forzada (DED, por su sigla en inglés).

Para explicar los alcances legales del TPS y del DED, los abogados de Catholic Legal Services (Servicios Legales Católicos) de Miami organizaron una charla informativa en línea, el 11 de marzo.

El gobierno de Biden, al anunciar el TPS para los venezolanos, “también anunció que el DED va a seguir en vigencia”, dijo Xinia Bermúdez, abogada de Catholic Legal Services.

Bermúdez explicó que el DED para los venezolanos es una suspensión administrativa de la expulsión por 18 meses, mientras que el TPS es una protección migratoria que permite a los beneficiarios residir y trabajar legalmente en Estados Unidos durante el tiempo que dure la medida. No otorga la residencia permanente ni la ciudadanía.

Tanto el TPS y el DED son una protección contra la deportación y ambos otorgan permisos de trabajo temporales.

“El DED es el menos beneficioso de todos los alivios migratorios”, dijo Miguel Mora, abogado de los Servicios Legales Católicos. Agregó que el DED va a terminar en julio de 2022 y no se sabe si será prorrogado.

El TPS, además de otorgar un estatus migratorio legal temporal, también tiene fecha de culminación. Pero la ley de inmigración establece que, si se determina que las condiciones de crisis humanitaria continúan en el país, en este caso Venezuela, hay la posibilidad de extenderlo por 6, 12 o 18 meses más, dijo Mora.

Esto ya ha ocurrido con otros países beneficiarios de TPS en el pasado. Mora mencionó el caso de los haitianos que siguen recibiendo TPS hace 11 años, después del terremoto que azotó a ese país.

La abogada Bermúdez señaló también que muchos venezolanos tienen solicitudes de asilo pendientes. Ella recomienda que “aunque tengas el permiso de trabajo, aunque tengas el asilo pendiente, aplica para el TPS. Es una protección adicional, porque si te niegan el asilo y si no tienes TPS, te pueden deportar”.

Para ser beneficiario de TPS hay que re-

gistrarse y presentar una solicitud y pagar las tarifas instituidas. El DED no requiere registro para obtener ese beneficio, sólo si desea el permiso de trabajo.

Para obtener el TPS es necesario:

- Demostrar “residencia continua” en los Estados Unidos a más tardar el 8 de marzo de 2021, presentando documentos de alquiler o propiedad de la vivienda, facturas de servicios públicos, facturas médicas, entre otros. Cualquier persona que llegue después del 8 de marzo no califica para la designación del TPS.

- Pagar el costo de la solicitud de TPS, \$50 para menores de 14 años y \$545 para adultos que deseen obtener también el permiso de trabajo.

La ley de inmigración establece que, si se determina que las condiciones de crisis humanitaria continúan en el país, en este caso Venezuela, hay la posibilidad de extenderlo por 6, 12 o 18 meses más.

—Miguel Mora,
Abogado de Inmigración

- Aprobar una verificación de antecedentes penales.

Los presentadores de la charla pidieron que consulten con un abogado para presentar su solicitud de TPS. Una solicitud mal llenada “puede poner en riesgo los beneficios del TPS como el permiso de trabajo”, dijo Bermúdez.

También pidieron tener cuidado con los notarios, paralegales y consejeros de inmigración que ofrecen asesoría a muy bajo costo. Dijo Mora: “Nuestra recomendación es ir a su abogado de confianza que sea competente y no caiga en fraude”.

Recursos gratuitos o de bajo costo disponibles

Varias organizaciones como Catholic Legal Services y Nuevos Americanos de Miami están ayudando a llenar la solicitud de TPS.

Puede contactar a los Servicios Legales Católicos a través de las redes sociales:

Facebook: [facebook.com/CCLSMiami](https://www.facebook.com/CCLSMiami)

Instagram: [catholic.legal.services.miami](https://www.instagram.com/catholic.legal.services.miami)

Twitter: [@CCLSMiami](https://twitter.com/CCLSMiami)

Para solicitar una cita puede llamar al 305-373-1073 ext. 1291 o en la página web: www.cclsmiami.org/citas.

Nuevos Americanos de Miami va a ofrecer clínicas gratuitas una vez al mes por los próximos tres meses. La primera clínica será del 8 al 10 de abril. Para inscribirse puede ingresar a: <https://ona.salsalabs.org/tps-rsvp/index.html>.

Los horóscopos y demás agüeros

Cuando el católico entra al lado oscuro

José Antonio Varela Vidal
Especial para La Voz Católica

Cuando uno inicia la carrera de periodismo, conoce muchos secretos de la profesión que te hacen amarla o rechazarla. Entiendes cómo se redacta una noticia, cómo se modulan las voces y dónde están tus fuentes informativas. Hasta allí lo bueno. Pero el cuestionamiento viene al saber que, en el peor de los casos, puede ser una profesión dedicada a la manipulación, la distorsión o el engaño.

De esto último me enteré muy pronto y en varios tópicos. Pero lo que me dio más tristeza fue cuando conocí a un compañero que ya realizaba sus prácticas en un periódico y que le habían asignado la “redacción” de los horóscopos. Recuerdo cómo se reía mientras nos contaba, en medio de un café, la forma en que anticipaba el “futuro” de sus incautos lectores, a quienes les invertía su “suerte” entre uno y otro, cuando se le acababa la creatividad o tenía flojera.

A partir de entonces me empecé a preguntar ¿Qué sería de algunos, si no existieran los horóscopos? Y caí en la cuenta de que muchos no hubieran podido sobrevivir sin este tipo de sortilegios que han acompañado a la humanidad casi desde su inicio. Allí estarían los descifradores de las estrellas o astrólogos, que conseguían trabajo rodeando a monarcas, califas y quizá a algunos papas.

Y habrían navegantes o jefes militares, que no se aventurarían sin saber en qué posición estaban los astros y si su estrella favorita estaba lo suficientemente luminosa como para confiar en su protección. Hay quienes dicen que reyes

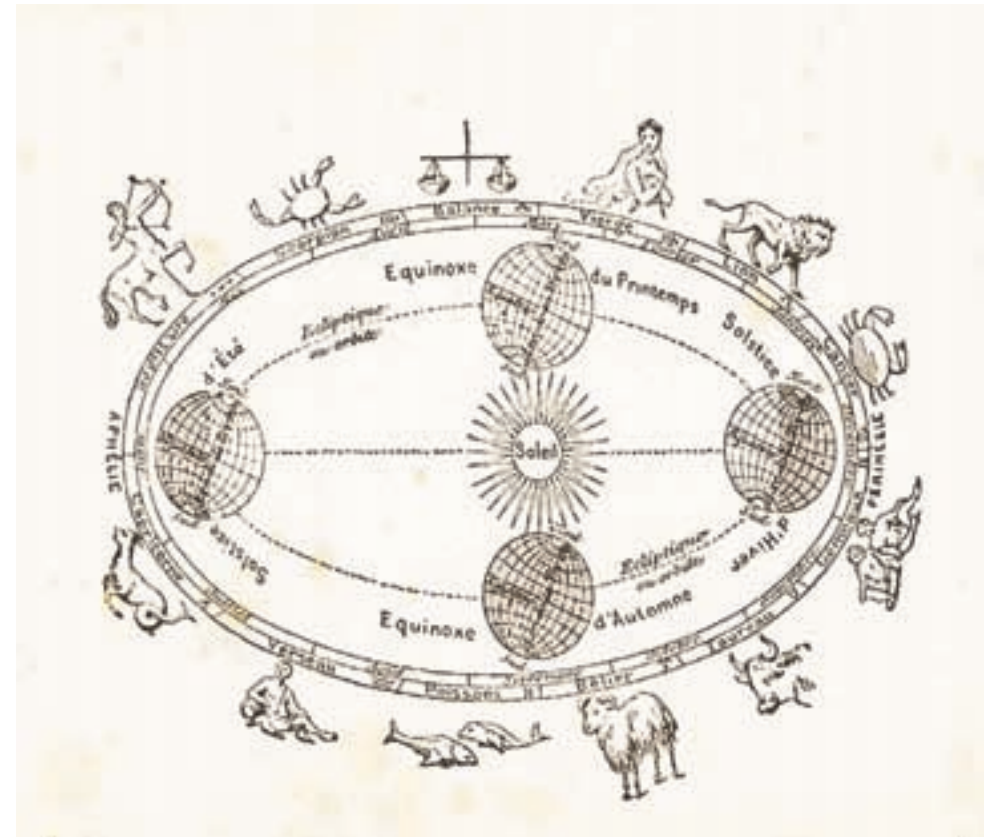
y presidentes contemporáneos siguen teniendo algún tipo de estos consultores, en algunos casos más requeridos que los propios ministros y asesores.

Los astros y su influencia

Es evidente que los astros tienen una influencia en ciertos fenómenos de la naturaleza, como es el mar, que se altera cuando la luna está llena. Se dice también que el cuarto creciente es favorable para la agricultura y que la luna nueva es propicia para la pesca. Realmente parece que los astros y las estrellas tienen una incidencia en toda la creación y sería necio negarlo a rajatabla. Y aunque la astronomía (no confundir con la astrología, que es el desciframiento o adivinación) es una verdadera ciencia, esta no pretende decir —ni científicos como Pitágoras o Galileo lo hicieron— que las posiciones de los astros tengan una influencia tal, que pasen de afectar nuestro entorno natural, a fijar el temperamento o a regir la “suerte” de los que nacieron en esos días cercanos.

Definir el temperamento exacto, de quienes dieron su alarido de nacidos en la semana que corresponden a tal o cual signo del zodiaco, es una grave afirmación y muy rentable charlatanería. ¿Acaso nuestro carácter se impregna el día que nacemos? ¿No es sabido que se forma durante todo el periodo de gestación?

Otro hecho que desbarata esta creencia es la personalidad de muchos de nuestros amigos que son gemelos o mellizos (nacer más próximos, imposible), y que sin embargo son tan diferentes y disímiles en casi todos los casos. Agua y aceite, los llaman algunos; luz y sombra, otros.



Tales casos excepcionales de la naturaleza acostumbran a tener aficiones y gustos distintos, presentan temperamentos opuestos y antagonicos en muchos casos y hasta “suerte” contraria.

Confianzas vanas

Volviendo a nuestro asunto inicial, cabe suponer que muchos no funcionarían si los horóscopos desaparecieran como por decreto. Fulana no saldría de su casa, pues no atinaría qué hacer sin el consejo del horóscopo. Zutano no sabría qué color de la suerte escoger para su corbata y Mengana no sabría qué número de la lotería comprar, porque no habría a quién consultarle, ni cábala que se lo susurre.

Y hasta Perencejo andaría desorientado, al comprobar cómo bajaron las ventas en su puesto esotérico de consejería o cómo los perfumes y dijes portadores de la buena suerte, se le quedaron sin vender.

Esto es el mismo cuento chino para el tarot, la lectura de la mano, del cigarro, de las hojas de té, de las piedras, entre otros negocios que se han convertido en parte de la sociedad del “consumismo”... Con su-mismo discurso, su-mismo amuleto, su-mismo predicador, así como el mismo y trillado consejo para las 10,270 personas que aproximadamente coincidieron en nacer el mismo día en Estados Unidos en el 2019 o los 1,550 en el Perú ese mismo año. Llevado esto a cifras mundiales, sería risible pensar que alguna cábala podría ser coincidente para los nacidos el mismo día, ni siquiera en el mes, como promete el horóscopo.

Adivinación: Un rechazo a Dios

Aunque la Iglesia ha tipificado —y muy bien—, como pecado la entrega confiada a los consejos de los horóscopos, estas costumbres siempre fueron consideradas

como algo desacertado y su dependencia hasta pecado mortal, pues es jugarle a Dios a dos caras e ir contra el primer mandamiento. Pues algunos leen un horóscopo o las cartas, para asegurar mi futuro y poder tomar decisiones precavidas “por si Dios falla”.

La Biblia lo dice claramente en Deuteronomio 18,10-12 y existen pasajes en los que Isaías desafía a los astrólogos babilonios de la época, por ser adoradores de los cielos. Hay que tener claro que Dios no es un azar, sino que Él es la roca firme, el dueño de la vida del creyente. Es quien camina a su lado y aquel del salmo 139: “Señor, tú me examinas y conoces, sabes si me siento o me levanto, tú conoces de lejos lo que pienso”.

Entonces, con tanta seguridad y compañía ¿para qué un horóscopo, un amuleto o un baño de florecimiento? ¿Por qué rechazar a Dios con tal desconfianza? Basta saber que “Él dispone todas las cosas para el bien de los que le aman” (Rom. 8,28). Y de otro lado, ¿por qué no predicar y catequizar un poco más y mejor sobre “el verdadero abrigo” y “la auténtica certeza” que es el mismo Dios? Miremos más bien los astros, incluidas las estrellas, con humildad ante el creador, para admirar su gran obra y agradecerle continuamente. Dios siempre se ha mostrado celoso, no hay razón para pensar que hoy no sienta lo mismo, pues no se puede servir a dos señores ni vivir de supersticiones —un vacío en la fe, del que podremos escribir en otro artículo. Dios quiere que lo amemos y confiemos en Él sobre todas las cosas y en sus enseñanzas, a la vez que escuchamos sus promesas. Esto, en lugar de leer los horóscopos o las líneas de las manos...

Periodista peruano

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REFLEXIONES CATÓLICAS SOBRE LA BIBLIA

V Domingo de Cuaresma, 21 de marzo, 2021

Evangelio según san Juan 12, 20-33. Entre los que habían llegado a Jerusalén para adorar a Dios en la fiesta de la Pascua, había algunos griegos, los cuales se acercaron a Felipe, el de Betsaida de Galilea, y le pidieron: "Señor, quisiéramos ver a Jesús". Felipe fue a decírselo a Andrés; Andrés y Felipe se lo dijeron a Jesús y él les respondió: "Ha llegado la hora de que el Hijo del hombre sea glorificado. Yo les aseguro que si el grano de trigo, sembrado en la tierra, no muere, queda infecundo; pero si muere, produce mucho fruto. El que se ama a sí mismo, se pierde; el que se aborrece a sí mismo en este mundo, se asegura para la vida eterna. El que quiera servirme, que me siga, para que donde yo esté, también esté mi servidor. El que me sirve será honrado por mi Padre. Ahora que tengo miedo, ¿le voy a decir a mi Padre: 'Padre, librame de esta hora'? No, pues para esta hora precisamente he venido. Padre, dale Gloria a tu nombre". Se oyó entonces una voz que decía: "Lo he glorificado y volveré a glorificarlo". De entre los que estaban ahí presentes y oyeron aquella voz, unos decían que había sido un trueno; otros, que le había hablado un ángel. Pero Jesús les dijo: "Esa voz



no ha venido por mí, sino por ustedes. Está llegando el juicio de este mundo; ya va a ser arrojado el príncipe de este mundo. Cuando yo sea levantado de la tierra, atraeré a todos hacia mí". Dijo esto indicando de qué manera habría de morir.

Reflexión:

Aún no ha llegado el momento en que el que el Evangelio deba ser anunciado a los paganos; los griegos que piden ver a Jesús no podrán llegar a conocerlo hasta después de la resurrección cuando los apóstoles salgan a gritar la Buena Nueva a todos los rincones del mundo.

Para Pensar:

► Por toda respuesta, Jesús anuncia solemnemente que se acerca su pasión, el momento

culminante de su vida. Con tres cortas sentencias, se afirma la posición a tomar por los discípulos en este proceso que pasa por la cruz.

Para Profundizar:

► Jesús siente angustia; ya antes la había experimentado frente a la tumba de Lázaro y volverá a sentirla en el huerto de los olivos. Se acerca el momento difícil; hay crisis y muchos de sus discípulos abandona el camino de Jesús ante su aparente derrota; pero la cruz será la señal de la victoria definitiva.

Domingo de Ramos de la Pasión del Señor, 28 de marzo, 2021

Evangelio según san Marcos 11, 1-10 (Entrada de Cristo en Jerusalén). Cuando Jesús y los suyos iban de camino a Jerusalén, al llegar a Betfagé y Betania, cerca del monte de los Olivos, les dijo a dos de sus discípulos: "Vayan al pueblo que ven allí enfrente; al entrar, encontrarán amarrado un burro que nadie ha montado todavía. Desátelo y tráigánmelo. Si alguien les pregunta por qué lo hacen, contéstenle: 'El Señor lo necesita y lo devolverá pronto'". Fueron y encontraron al burro en la calle, atado junto a una puerta, y lo desamarraron. Algunos de los que allí estaban les preguntaron: "¿Por qué sueltan al burro?" Ellos les contestaron lo que había dicho Jesús y ya nadie los molestó. Llevaron el burro, le echaron encima los mantos y Jesús montó en él. Muchos extendían su manto en el camino, y otros lo tapizaban con ramas cortadas en el campo. Los que iban delante de Jesús y los que lo seguían, iban gritando vivas: "¡Hosanna! ¡Bendito el que viene en nombre del Señor! ¡Bendito el reino que

llega, el reino de nuestro padre David! ¡Hosanna en el cielo!"

Reflexión:

En este trozo narrativo se refleja la tensión que poco a poco se va acumulando por la entrada de Jesús en Jerusalén. Marcos prepara a los oyentes para la inevitabilidad de la muerte de Jesús, contando como Jesús pronostica lo que ocurrirá cuando los discípulos vayan en busca del burro.

Para Pensar:

► La escena evoca la profecía de Zacarías sobre la entrada de un rey de paz que llega cabalgando sobre un burro y también del libro segundo de los Reyes cuando Yehú es coronado y el pueblo tiende sus mantos ante su subida al trono.

Para Profundizar:

► El grito de alabanza: "¡bendito el que viene en nombre del Señor!", recuerda el salmo 118; una clara alusión al Mesías anhelado, que sube a la ciudad santa para realizar y cumplir las promesas de la salvación.

Domingo de Pascua de la Resurrección del Señor 7 de abril, 2021

Evangelio según san Juan, 20, 1-9. El primer día después del sábado, estando todavía oscuro, fue María Magdalena al sepulcro y vio removida la piedra que lo cerraba. Echó a correr, llegó a la casa donde estaban Simón Pedro y el otro discípulo, a quien Jesús amaba, y les dijo: "Se han llevado del sepulcro al Señor y no sabemos dónde lo habrán puesto". Salieron Pedro y el otro discípulo camino del sepulcro. Los dos iban corriendo juntos, pero el otro discípulo corrió más aprisa que Pedro y llegó primero al sepulcro, e inclinándose, miró los lienzos puestos en el suelo, pero no entró. En eso llegó también Simón Pedro, que lo venía siguiendo, y entró en el sepulcro. Contempló los lienzos puestos en el suelo y el sudario, que había estado sobre la cabeza de Jesús, puesto no con los lienzos en el suelo, sino doblado en sitio aparte. Entonces entró también el otro discípulo, el que había llegado primero al sepulcro, y vio y creyó, porque hasta entonces no habían entendido las Escrituras, según las cuales Jesús debía resucitar de entre los muertos.

Reflexión:

María Magdalena acude al sepulcro en plena oscuridad de la noche y se encuentra que la gran piedra que cerraba el sepulcro ha sido corrida. Esa piedra simboliza la barrera entre el mundo de los vivos y el de los muertos, que sólo el poder extraordinario del Señor puede remover.

Para Pensar:

► El primer pensamiento humano es el de un robo macabro, un desconcierto inexplicable que no lleva a la fe en la Resurrección, algo que escapa a toda humana lógica. El único signo es el de un sepulcro vacío que guarda la sábana que cubrió el cuerpo del Señor y el sudario de su rostro

Para Profundizar:

► El discípulo amado, que por su juventud llega primero, cede a Pedro el acceso al sepulcro vacío; se ha agachado ante la segunda cámara cuya entrada es mucho más pequeña que la de la entrada a la cámara. Su mirada le ha bastado para comprender, entender y creer.

II Domingo de Pascua, 11 de abril, 2021

Evangelio según san Juan 20, 19-31. Al anochecer del día de la resurrección, estando cerradas las puertas de la casa donde se hallaban los discípulos, por miedo a los judíos, se presentó Jesús en medio de ellos y les dijo: "La paz esté con ustedes". Dicho esto, les mostró las manos y el costado. De nuevo les dijo Jesús: "La paz esté con ustedes. Como el Padre me ha enviado, así también los envío yo". Después de decir esto, sopló sobre ellos y les dijo: "Reciban el Espíritu Santo. A los que les perdonen los pecados, les quedarán perdonados; y a los que no se los perdonen, les quedarán sin perdonar". Tomás, uno de los Doce, a quien llamaban el Gemelo, no estaba con ellos cuando vino Jesús, y los otros discípulos le decían: "Hemos visto al Señor". Pero él les contestó: "Si no veo en sus manos la señal de los clavos y si no meto mi dedo en los agujeros de los clavos y no meto mi mano en su costado, no creeré". Ocho días después, estaban reunidos los discípulos a puerta cerrada y Tomás estaba con ellos. Jesús se presentó de nuevo en medio de ellos y les dijo: "La paz esté con ustedes". Luego le dijo a Tomás: "Aquí están mis manos; acerca tu dedo. Trae acá tu mano, métela en mi costado y no sigas dudando, sino cree". Tomás le respondió: "¡Señor mío y Dios mío!" Jesús añadió: "Tú crees porque me has visto; dichosos los que creen sin haber visto". Otras

muchas señales milagrosas hizo Jesús en presencia de sus discípulos, pero no están escritas en este libro. Se escribieron éstas para que ustedes crean que Jesús es el Mesías, el Hijo de Dios, y para que creyendo tengan vida en su nombre.

Reflexión:

Es domingo y la primera comunidad tendrá la experiencia pascual que cambiará definitivamente su temor por un gozo extraordinario e inagotable. El Resucitado les trae la paz, un don especialmente único que acompañará

siempre su presencia en la Iglesia.

Para Pensar:

► No es un fantasma o una ilusión provocada por el miedo; el Señor Resucitado ha penetrado de manera misteriosa lo que estaba cerrado. Las nuevas cualidades de Jesús no impiden que lo puedan reconocer con exactitud; las huellas de los clavos y la herida del costado permanecen

para dar testimonio de que el Jesús de la historia y el Cristo Resucitado son la misma persona.

Para Profundizar:

► Este encuentro personal inicia una nueva etapa en la existencia de Jesús; de ahora en adelante serán los discípulos los que tendrán la misión que el Hijo del hombre recibiera de su Padre; la Iglesia ahora será encargada de continuar la obra de revelar al Padre en esta primavera de Dios donde todas las cosas se hacen nuevas.



Estimados lectores: Debido a la crisis del COVID-19, muchos eventos se realizan sólo en línea. Los que tienen lugar en persona están sujetos a las directrices de los CDC, que incluyen restricciones de capacidad, requisitos de distanciamiento social y uso de máscaras. Para más información, comuníquense directamente con los coordinadores de las actividades.

COMUNIDAD

40 Días por la Vida, campaña de oración durante la Cuaresma hasta el 28 de marzo, Domingo de Ramos. Nos reunimos frente a las clínicas de aborto y rezamos por la conversión de todos los implicados en dicha industria. Nuestra presencia pacífica y orante cambia mentes y corazones. Visite 40daysforlife.com para detalles e instrucciones. 305-299-8840.

Campaña cuaresmal para donar sangre, organizada por los Caballeros de Colón, con el fin de ayudar a aliviar la escasez de sangre en el condado de Miami-Dade. Martes, 23 de marzo, 3:30-8:30 p.m., Hospital Mercy, Council Hall East, al norte del colegio de LaSalle, 3601 South Miami Avenue, Miami. Inscripción: [Oneblood.org](https://oneblood.org).

Respeto a la Vida necesita voluntarios para servir en diferentes capacidades según sus intereses, talentos y habilidades. Información: <https://respectforlife-miami.org/volunteer>.

Oportunidades de voluntariado en la Clínica San Juan Bosco, en Miami. Como clínica gratuita, un sólido grupo de voluntarios fortalece nuestra capacidad de servicio. Los voluntarios deben estar disponibles por un mínimo de 4 horas a la semana, de lunes a viernes entre 8:30 a.m. y 4:30 p.m. Para conocer los requisitos y obtener información, comuníquense al 305-635-1335, berta.cabrera@ssjhealthfoundation.org.

EDUCACIÓN EN LA FE

Clases bíblicas virtuales, viernes, 7-9 p.m. iglesia de Our Lady of the Holy Rosary-St. Richard, Palmetto Bay. Información: 305-233-8711, 305-799-1626.

Grupo bíblico virtual, martes, 7 p.m., iglesia de Our Lady of the Lakes, Miami Lakes. Información: ollgrupobiblico@gmail.com.

ESCUELAS

Visitas virtuales a la escuela superior de Archbishop Coleman Carroll, 10300 S.W. 167 Avenue, Miami. Para coordinar una cita: 305-388-6700 ext. 1292, admissions@colemancarroll.org.

SEPI, el Instituto Pastoral del Sureste, ofrece cursos en línea con o sin crédito en estos tiempos del coronavirus para quienes

deseen una formación cristiana en su ministerio pastoral, eclesial o personal. También ofrece maestría en Ministerio Pastoral Hispano. www.sepi.us, 305-279-2333.

ESPIRITUALIDAD

Ministerio de Sanación de la iglesia de Holy Rosary-St. Richard, en Palmetto Bay, se reúne todos los jueves a las 6:45 p.m. por Zoom para rezar por las intenciones de sus feligreses y de cualquier persona necesitada que necesite oración. Para acceso: evelynvar@hotmail.com, sblanco@hrsrgs.org.

Adoremus, adoración del Santísimo Sacramento con músicos católicos de la Arquidiócesis de Miami. Para información sobre próximos eventos: <https://www.facebook.com/adoremusMIA>.

Ejercicios espirituales en la vida diaria, jueves, 10 a.m.-12 p.m., en línea desde la iglesia de Our Lady of the Holy Rosary-St. Richard, en Palmetto Bay hasta el 18 de marzo. evelynvar@hotmail.com.

Escuela de Evangelización, iglesia católica de San Isidro, Pompano Beach. Para código de acceso por Zoom, llamar al 954-695-9673 o 954-391-0165.

JÓVENES Y JÓVENES ADULTOS

Voceros de Cristo, grupo de jóvenes adultos de la iglesia de St. Agatha, Miami. Reuniones los miércoles a las 8 p.m. por Zoom. www.facebook.com/vdcmiami.

Apóstoles de Ágape, jóvenes adultos de la iglesia de St. John Neumann, Miami se reúnen los jueves a las 8 p.m. vía Zoom. Para información de acceso, llamar al 786-365-3479.

REPARACIÓN Y ENRIQUECIMIENTO MATRIMONIAL

Camino del Matrimonio, programa de preparación matrimonial ofrecido por la Arquidiócesis de Miami. Costo: \$125 por pareja. El programa se ofrece en línea hasta nuevo aviso debido al COVID-19. Información: 305-226-4664, caminodelmatrimonio@gmail.com, www.caminodelmatrimonio.org.

Planificación familiar natural, sesión introductoria al Modelo Creighton, un método seguro desde el punto de vista médico, aceptable desde la moral y muy eficaz tanto para posponer como para lograr el embarazo. Jueves, 25 de marzo, 7:30-9:30 p.m. Inscripción: conta.cc/3oOPLib.

Transformed in Love, programa oficial arquidiocesano de preparación matrimonial. Debido a las restricciones por el COVID-19, la clase se ofrece en

línea como un seminario web interactivo en vivo con conferencias en tiempo real. Las parejas deben asistir ambos días al programa completo para recibir su certificado. Próxima clase en español: 22-23 de mayo. 305-762-1127/1236, sdiaz@theadom.org.

El Arca de Noé, grupo de apoyo matrimonial de la parroquia de Mother of Our Redeemer, Miami, con cursos y talleres gratuitos que preparan a las parejas para enfrentar las dificultades en el hogar y en su matrimonio. Debido al COVID-19, todo se ofrece en línea. <https://bit.ly/TuArcaDeNoe>, 954 261-0241, 954-812-6020.

Retrouvaille, programa que ofrece las herramientas necesarias para redescubrir una relación matrimonial amorosa y ayudar a reencontrar el propósito de su matrimonio. Miles de matrimonios en una relación con dificultades, incluyendo algunos a punto del divorcio, han logrado superar sus problemas al participar en el programa. Información: www.helpourmarriage.org/es, Miami@retrouvaille.org.

RETIROS

Probado, pero no derribado, taller de sanación y transformación espiritual para hombres, sábado, 17 de abril por Zoom. Inscripciones: <http://bit.ly/2L-9F7nL>. 305-338-5652, 305-599-1343.

La Hermana Salesiana Yamilé Saieh fallece a los 83 años

Ana Rodriguez-Soto

Editora Ejecutiva de *LVC* y del *Florida Catholic*

MIAMI | Cuando la Hna. Yamilé Saieh llegó a Miami en 1984, fue para cuidar a su madre, ya anciana, después de la muerte de su padre. Pero eso no significó que dejara de trabajar.

Su eterna sonrisa y su hábito salesiano negro pronto formaron parte del paisaje de la iglesia Notre Dame d'Haiti, donde enseñaba educación religiosa a los niños, inglés a los adultos y dirigía un campamento de verano en el que a veces participaban hasta 1,000 niños.

Más tarde, impartió clases de RICA (Rito de Iniciación Cristiana) en español a los adultos que querían unirse a la Iglesia y preparó a los niños para el bautismo en la iglesia St. Martha, en Miami Shores, donde también fue voluntaria en la tienda de regalos y ayudaba en la oficina.

Cuando dejó Miami hace casi cinco meses para volver a la casa madre de su comunidad en New Jersey, el Arzobispo Thomas Wenski la llamó: "madre de todos nosotros".

Ahora las personas que dejó la recuerdan como "un hermoso signo de amor", en

palabras de Ileana Roque, asistente administrativa de la Oficina de Vocaciones de la Arquidiócesis, quien también ayudaba en la Oficina de Religiosos.

La Hna. Yamilé falleció el 14 de febrero de 2021, el día de San Valentín, tras ser operada de un problema cardíaco. Tenía 83 años y había pasado 61 de ellos en la vida religiosa.

"Fue para mí un buen ejemplo y una amiga", dijo el Arzobispo Thomas Wenski.

Durante su estancia en Miami, la Hna. Yamilé también encontró tiempo para ser el miembro con más años de servicio —14 años— de la Junta de Vocaciones de la Arquidiócesis, el grupo que examina a los posibles sacerdotes antes de que sean admitidos en el seminario.

"En realidad, ella 'revisaba' a todos los seminaristas", dijo el Arzobispo Wenski, que contrató a la Hna. Yamilé en Notre Dame d'Haiti, cuando él era párroco allí.

El Arzobispo explicó que a lo largo de



Hna. Yamilé Saieh

los años, la Oficina de Vocaciones asignaba a los seminaristas, en su mayoría del Seminario St. John Vianney, a trabajar como mentores de campamento en Notre Dame d'Haiti durante seis semanas en el verano.

"Era una buena supervisora y tenía un buen criterio a la hora de evaluar a los seminaristas", dijo el Arzobispo, por lo que se le pidió que se uniera

a la Junta de Vocaciones. "El equipo de formación del seminario solía decir que las evaluaciones de la hermana eran acertadas".

"Tenía buen ojo para las vocaciones buenas y auténticas. Miraba más allá de lo superficial. Y todos sus comentarios fueron acertados", coincidió el P. Elvis González, que fue director de vocaciones hasta finales de junio de 2020. Ahora es administrador de la iglesia St. Michael the Archangel, en Miami.

"Mantén mucho su sentido del humor", dijo el P. Lazarus Govin, párroco de St. Martha, quien señaló que, tras la muerte

de la madre de la Hna. Yamilé, ella siguió cuidando de varias de sus hermanas y de un hermano. Sólo le sobrevive una hermana, Yolanda.

"Era una mujer de fe, pero una fe muy realista", dijo el P. Govin. "Siempre fue una mujer de hacer trabajo y resolver problemas".

Nacida el 1 de mayo de 1937 en Cúcuta (Colombia), la Hna. Yamilé era una de los 11 hijos de padres palestinos muy católicos. Su madre y su padre nacieron en Belén y emigraron por separado a Colombia.

Atraída por la enseñanza, la Hna. Yamilé ingresó en la congregación salesiana unos años después del bachillerato. Hizo sus primeros votos el 5 de agosto de 1960, en Casanova (Italia) y obtuvo una licenciatura en Pedagogía con especialización en Psicología del Instituto Internacional de Pedagogía y Ciencias Religiosas de Turín (Italia). Enseñó en su país natal, Colombia, antes de pasar a escuelas de New Jersey, Nueva York, Woodstock, Virginia, y Tampa, en La Florida.

Su Misa fúnebre se celebró el Miércoles de Ceniza, y fue transmitida en la página de Facebook de las Hermanas Salesianas: [facebook.com/Salesian.Sister](https://www.facebook.com/Salesian.Sister). Fue enterrada en el cementerio de las Hermanas Salesianas en North Haledon, New Jersey.

Edith Stein

Mártir por amor



Teresa Fernández Soneira

Recientemente vi una conferencia sobre Edith Stein, la judía conversa al catolicismo en las primeras décadas del siglo XX. Me llamó la atención que la conferencia se titulara “Edith Stein, ¿por qué patrona de Europa?”, y comencé a leer más sobre esta mártir católica de nuestros tiempos.

Edith nació en Breslavia el 12 de octubre de 1891, y aunque se había criado en el seno de una familia judía practicante donde se observaban las reglas del Talmud, a sus 21 años se confiesa atea. Decía que no le encontraba sentido a su vida y que abandonaba la religión. Tras el estallido de la Primera Guerra Mundial se pregunta que cómo era posible que existieran personas que padecían tanto mientras ella vivía de manera privilegiada. Decide entonces ayudar al prójimo y trabaja como enfermera en el hospital de Marisch-Weisskirchen en Austria.

Llega a ser una universitaria brillante en la Universidad de Gottingen, a quien el filósofo Edmund Husserl escoge como asistente de cátedra lo cual no sólo confirma su inteligencia, sino que rompe con las costumbres de aquel tiempo en el que pocas mujeres asistían a la universidad, y no se destacaban profesionalmente. Descubre y hace suya la verdad de que además del yo existen los demás. “Es preciso ponerse a la escucha de la realidad, tener capacidad de empatía haciendo propia la experiencia del otro”, decía Stein, y con la tesis “Sobre el problema de la empatía”, se doctora Suma cum laude. También lucha en defensa de los derechos de las mujeres; es miembro de la Asociación Prusiana para el Voto de las Mujeres, y es considerada una de las feministas más relevantes de su época. No es una mujer común; se involucra también en los sucesos y en la actividad política sobre todo de su país.

Pero sigue en un estado de crisis profunda y siente un vacío espiritual muy grande. Sin embargo, su vida daría un vuelco total cuando se encuentra con Dios. Entre el 27 de mayo y el 3 de agosto de 1921 se halla residiendo con sus amigos, Theodor y Hedwig Conrad-Martius, y allí lee la “Vida de Santa Teresa de Jesús”. Relata Edith: “comencé a leer, me sentí cautivada inmediatamente y lo acabé de un tirón. Cuando cerré el libro me dije: ‘Esta es la verdad’”. Por medio de la Santa de Ávila, Dios había hecho que Edith encontrara su camino del que ya no se separaría. Luego de continuar estudios sobre la religión católica, ir a Misa y pedir ser bautizada y confirmada, recibe la primera Comunión en 1922 y poco a poco va brotando en ella la inquietud

vocacional.

Sus consejeros y directores espirituales la alientan a impartir varias conferencias a las que ha sido invitada en Alemania. Los cursos tocan diferentes temas, sobre todo discursiva sobre el lugar de la mujer en la sociedad y en la Iglesia, y la formación de las jóvenes. Sostiene que la mujer tiene tres objetivos fundamentales: el desarrollo de su humanidad, de su feminidad y de su individualidad, y niega la posición imperante de que la mujer debe limitarse solamente a la esfera familiar. En 1928, en la conferencia “El valor intrínseco de la mujer en la vida nacional” que ofrece durante la convención de Maestras Católicas de Bavaria, afirma “nuestra misión es convertirnos en instrumentos flexibles en las manos de Dios y así trabajar hacia donde Él nos lleve. Si cumplimos nuestra misión haremos lo que es mejor para nosotras, para nuestro ambiente, y para la nación”.

Participa en un diálogo entre católicos y protestantes, y gana prestigio y celebridad con su charla “La ética de las profesiones femeninas” en la que proclama que “ninguna mujer es solamente una mujer; cada una tiene rasgos individuales y disposiciones específicas, como el hombre, por la capacidad de ejercer tal o cual profesión en el mundo artístico, científico o técnico”. Se declara contra el nazismo y lanza una llamada hacia la dignidad del ser humano. Hace los Ejercicios Espirituales de San Ignacio de Loyola; analiza a Santo Tomás, medita las Confesiones de San Agustín y estudia a Kierkegaard.

En 1933, cuando tiene 41 años, es admitida en el Carmelo de Colonia, y el 15 de abril de 1934 toma los hábitos y recibe el nombre de Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz. Animada por sus superiores continúa investigando cuestiones filosóficas que luego forman parte de su obra maestra “Ser infinito y ser eterno”. El 14 de septiembre de 1935 renueva los votos temporales. Durante la ceremonia Edith confiesa que “cuando llegó mi turno para renovar mis votos, sentí que mi madre estaba cerca de mí; he experimentado claramente que estaba cerca de mí”. Días después Edith se enteró que su madre había muerto en aquel mismo momento, lo que para ella fue un gran consuelo.

Poco antes de que Hitler anunciara su plan de exterminio de la raza judía en Europa, sor Teresa Benedicta hacía los votos definitivos como carmelita, el 21 de abril de 1938. Escribe entonces al Papa Pío XI pidiéndole auxilio para los hebreos: “esa idolatría de la raza y del poder del Estado, con la que día a día se machaca por radio a las masas, ¿acaso no es una patente herejía? ¿No es la guerra de exterminio contra la sangre judía un insulto a la Sacratísima Humanidad de Nuestro Redentor, a la Santísima Virgen y a los apóstoles?”. Ante el peligro por ser judía, pide autorización de sus superior-



Ícono en Bad Bergzabern. El rollo muestra una cita de sus obras: “La esencia más íntima del amor es el ofrecimiento de uno mismo. La entrada a todas las cosas es la Cruz”.

ras para partir al Carmelo de Echt, en los Países Bajos, junto con su hermana Rosa quien también había entrado en el convento. En Holanda continúa escribiendo y termina su obra “Ciencia de la cruz”. Pero en 1940 los nazis entran en Holanda, y el 2 de agosto de 1942 la Gestapo se aparece en el convento llevándose a Edith y Rosa prisioneras para el campo de concentración de Amersfoort, después al de Westerbork, y posteriormente al de Auschwitz, en Polonia. Relatan que a Edith la condujeron a “ ducharse ” cuando en realidad era para gasarla con ácido cianhídrico, muriendo el 9 de agosto de 1942. Los restos de su incineración fueron arrojados en un campo cercano pero se desconoce la ubicación exacta.

Nos preguntamos, ¿hasta dónde puede llegar la maldad del ser humano cuando pierde de vista la identidad de su propio ser y la de los otros? Lo hemos visto en el martirio, el horror y la tragedia de miles de personas, no sólo judías, en los campos de concentración nazis, y también hoy en día en la crueldad de las guerras, el exilio, la inmigración, la persecución de los cristianos, los maltratos físicos y emocionales

de los regímenes dictatoriales y comunistas; en el pecado de los gobernantes que no brindan a sus habitantes lo más básico que necesitan para vivir. La capacidad de empatía por la que luchaba sor Teresa Benedicta está todavía hoy muy lejos de ser puesta en práctica.

¿Qué emerge de la vida de Edith Stein? En el video que disfruté por internet el conferencista, Francisco Javier Sancho, OCD, director de la Universidad de la Mística en Ávila, España, decía que sor Teresa Benedicta fue consecuente con su fe y con la profesión religiosa hasta el final; hizo suyo el sufrimiento del pueblo judío y a la vez anunció el evangelio de la Cruz, ya que la cruz fue el centro sobre el cual se desarrolló su vida. Sor Teresa Benedicta de la Cruz, hija de Israel y mártir por la fe en Cristo, fue beatificada en 1987; canonizada por San Juan Pablo II en 1998 quien le dio el título de “mártir por amor”, y declarada copatrona de Europa en octubre de 1999. Oremos a ella para que tengamos la capacidad de sentir una empatía verdadera, haciendo nuestra la experiencia del prójimo en un mundo insensible y distante del verdadero Amor.

Koinonía en tiempos de pandemia



P. Eduardo Barrios, S.J.

Las epístolas paulinas y los Hechos de los Apóstoles usan el término griego “koinonía” para expresar el intenso grado de comunión fraterna que vinculaba a los primeros cristianos. Hoy diríamos “solidaridad”.

Gracias a ese amor fraterno “entre ellos no había indigentes” (Hech 4,34), pues no podían tolerar que hubiese hermanos en la miseria. Luego cuando San Pablo comenzó a fundar iglesias locales en torno al Mare Nostrum (el Mediterráneo), siempre se preocupó por hacer colectas para socorrer a la empobrecida comunidad jerosolimitana.

La pandemia del coronavirus ha causado mucho desempleo así como la quiebra de numerosos negocios. Pero en algunos países, los gobiernos han tendido una mano solidaria a los afectados. En Estados Unidos, por ejemplo, el gobierno envió cheque de \$1,200.00 a personas de escasos ingresos en mayo de 2020; luego en enero de 2021 les hizo llegar otro por \$600; y ahora la nueva administración está gestionando enviar \$1,400 para paliar la situación de ciudadanos en penuria. Sin embargo, esos cheques esporádicos no le permiten a muchos norteamericanos llegar a fin de mes.

Es necesario involucrar también al sector privado en brindar socorro a los desfavorecidos. La solicitud del Estado por aliviar la pobreza de sus ciudadanos no es muy antigua en Estados Unidos. El primer cheque por desempleo se firmó en Wisconsin en 1932. La Seguridad Social para las personas mayores de 65

años se debió al gobierno del Presidente Franklin D. Roosevelt en 1935; y el Seguro Médico (Medicare) sólo comenzó a funcionar en 1965.

Curiosamente hay personas que han medrado en medio de la pandemia y no necesariamente por prácticas mañosas o delictivas, según aquello de que “a río revuelto ganancia de pescadores”. Muchas empresas han prosperado honestamente, por ejemplo, los supermercados; como la gente va menos a restaurantes, se han disparado las ventas en los supermercados. No digamos nada de la bonanza de los fabricantes de máscaras y desinfectantes. Y así por el estilo muchos negocios se encuentran ahora mejor que nunca. Toca a esos empresarios velar por los de abajo, como ya algunos lo hacen. También hay profesionales y asalariados que han conservado sus puestos de trabajo sin problema y que pueden sentirse llamados a ayudar a quienes viven en aprieto.

La Historia atestigua que siempre ha habido huérfanos y viudas a causa de accidentes, desastres naturales, enfermedades y defunciones que lograron sobrevivir gracias a sus parientes o amistades compasivas. Nunca han faltado quienes se hiciesen cargo de damnificados o desamparados.

No se le puede dejar a los gobiernos todo el peso de la solidaridad asistencial. Es necesario que las personas individuales se sientan llamadas a arrimar el hombro.

Afortunadamente Dios no sólo ablanda los corazones de los creyentes para que practiquen la caridad fraterna. También toca con su gracia a todas las personas de buena voluntad para que socorran a sus prójimos dolientes. Lo que los cristianos llaman amor fraterno, en ambientes seculares se conoce como altruismo o filantropía.

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Un ejemplo a seguir



Víctor Martell

Estamos celebrando en estos días dos fiestas que tocan a dos hermanas honorables de las Hijas de La Caridad.

Una ya fallecida, Sor Rosalía Rendu, tuvo que ver mucho con la creación de la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paul. Fue la persona que ayudó a nuestro fundador

a conocer a los pobres y la manera de tratarlos, dando lugar a que naciera un grupo de hombres dispuestos a ayudar a los más necesitados en las calles de París de aquel entonces, y que luego se regó por todo el mundo convirtiéndose en lo que hoy llamamos la Sociedad de San Vicente de Paul. Recuerdo la frase de Rosalía: “Nunca yo he orado tan bien como en las calles”.

Aquí en Miami estamos conmemorando y dando gracias a Dios por el cumpleaños de Sor Hilda Alonso. Cien años ayudando a los pobres y dedicando su vida entera a Dios, caminando por el único camino que lleva a la santidad: el pobre, aunque a veces —y ella lo sabe muy bien— es un camino lleno de espinas. Pero entre ellas se encuentran las sonrisas de aquellos que fueron socorridos por ángeles como ella.

Doy gracias a Dios porque trabajé a su lado y supe de todos los sacrificios que hacían las hermanas que en aquel momento estaban a su lado cuando ella era su directora. Como recordaba cuando la obligaron salir de Cuba en el año 1961, los trabajos que tuvo que sufrir para crear la misión de Miami, la cual fue una realidad en el año 1971. Y ella siempre con su famoso lema “La caridad de Jesucristo nos apremia”.

Cuántas familias cubanas han recibido

las ayudas de los contenedores de Sor Hilda. Cuántos haitianos pudieron recibir los contenedores de Sor Hilda y sus Hermanas de la Caridad. Cuántas bolsas de comida se han dado en esa casita del suroeste de Miami. Aquellos desplazamientos de las hermanas a la parroquia de Little Flower en Coral Gables, y St. Michael en Miami, a prestar sus servicios con la catequesis, la formación de grupos bíblicos, ese amor a los niños, a los indocumentados, a todos. Nunca una Hermana de la Caridad es renuente a ayudar a un hermano en desgracia sin importar le raza, religión, ni sexo, ni aunque tenga la enfermedad más contagiosa. Allí están ellas al lado de los enfermos y de todos los que tiendan una mano pidiendo.

Doy gracias a Dios y les pido a ustedes, mis hermanos, que se unan en esta oración porque nos han dado el privilegio de tener entre nosotros una verdadera hermana que va camino a la santidad y a la que pido que me dé su bendición. Una vez más, gracias por haberme enseñado el único camino de la felicidad que es a través de la ayuda que le prestes a tu prójimo.

Hoy San Vicente de Paul y Santa Luisa de Marillac se regocian por haber creado las Hermanas de la Caridad, ese conjunto de flores que adornan a nuestra Iglesia. Y entre ellas una flor viva, llena de luz, que nos guía con amor hacia el que nada tiene y que nos ha durado 100 años. Cuídate mucho Sor Hilda, y que Dios te tenga entre nosotros otros 100 años más.

El autor lleva más de 35 años como miembro de la Sociedad San Vicente de Paul y dirige el programa de la Conferencia Radio Paz, que se escucha en vivo todos los domingos de 3:30 a 4:30 p.m. por Radio Paz 830AM/96.1FM.

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