A time to reflect

Images from the annual priests' retreat at St. Stephen Diocesan Center, page 20

Father Joseph Diaz looks on as Father Dennis McManus preaches during Mass on Jan. 10 at St. Stephen Diocesan Center. Father McManus, a priest from the Archdiocese of Mobile, Ala., led the diocese's annual priests' retreat, Jan. 8-13.
Santo Nino celebration

The Visayan Catholic community gathered at St. Anthony Church in Kalihi on Jan. 15 for a festival of prayer, dinner and dancing in honor of the Feast of Santo Nino, a Filipino devotion to the Child Jesus. Bishop Larry Silva celebrated an afternoon Mass and brought their statues and images of Santo Nino for a special blessing and procession.

Herald photos by Darlene Dela Cruz


These are the chairmen of the eight youth organizations at Star of the Sea parish. The youth from this parish contribute over 150 hours each week to the cause of Catholic action. Some of their activities consist in teaching released time catechism classes and Sunday school, coaching 250 children in Christ-like sportsmanship, welcoming non-Catholics to inquiry classes, spreading devotion to the Sacred Heart, giving to new parents literature on the Christian training of the child, collecting and spreading Catholic literature, caring for the church and altar, and doing secretarial work for the CCD. From left: Patricia Lincoin, Cheryl Cummins, Bernadette Goshima, Susan Malterre, Carol Martin, Sharon Lorey, Priscilla Ramos and Patricia Resentz.

25 years ago – Jan. 23, 1987

New principal announced for Damien High

The Provincial Council of the Congregation of Christian Brothers announced the assignment of Brother Karl J. Walczak, C.F.C., as the next principal of Damien Memorial High School. He will assume his responsibilities at the end of this school year when the term of the current principal, Brother Douglas S. Zlatis, C.F.C., is completed.

Brother Walczak was selected by the Damien Board of Directors after an extensive year-long search.

10 years ago – Jan. 18, 2002

On a mission

Ten years ago, if you told Tony Boquer that his God-given mission was to lead him to be the first principal in Hawaii to win the National Catholic Educational Association’s “Distinguished Principal of the Year Award,” he most likely would not have believed you.

But after a series of remarkable events — starting when he quit his job as general manager of a local television station six and a half years ago to take the reins of Holy Family Catholic Academy in Honolulu — he has come to the conclusion that nearly anything is possible if you believe in your life’s purpose ... A career in education “was the farthest from my mind,” he said with a laugh, after learning he won the award.
Waikiki parishioner leaves a quarter million to isle priests, religious

The trust of the late Hugh W. Brown distributed nearly 300 checks to those serving in Hawaii

By Darlene J.M. Dela Cruz
Hawaii Catholic Herald

A quiet, unassuming parishioner of St. Augustine Church in Waikiki who died in 2010 has given hundreds of priests, brothers and sisters in Hawaii each a sizable monetary gift from his trust fund.

The late Hugh Brown, a native of New York who relocated to Hawaii in the 1970s, left more than a quarter of a million dollars which was distributed in December equally among 293 priests and religious who were serving in Hawaii at the time he died. Each received an individual check for $993.18.

His trust also gave donations to Catholic Charities Hawaii, St. Francis Hospice and St. Augustine Church.

“His trust also gave donations to Catholic Charities Hawaii, St. Francis Hospice and St. Augustine Church,” said Eduardo Zabanal, the attorney who handled Brown’s trust.

Brown’s gifts came as a surprise to many. To some, the initial letter from the trust sounded like some kind of “free money” scam. But in the end, checks were passed out to priests, brothers and sisters at a memorial Mass for Brown celebrated by Bishop Larry Silva on Dec. 18 at the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace. The remainder of the gifts were distributed later to the beneficiaries who were not present at the Mass.

30-year Waikiki resident

Hugh William Brown was born on March 7, 1932, the only child of Joseph and Anne Brown, a Scottish couple who lived in Yonkers, N.Y.

Raised in the Catholic faith, Brown spent his childhood attending Catholic schools in New Jersey. He enrolled at Seton Hall University where he earned a bachelor of science degree in business administration in 1958.

His college career was temporarily interrupted in 1952 when he was drafted into the U.S. Army to serve in the Korean War, which he did with distinction.

After the war, Brown worked for a while in the New York area, but later relocated to San Francisco where he found employment with an insurance firm. In 1976, his company transferred him to Honolulu.

Brown resided in Waikiki for more than 30 years. He was a regular attendee at St. Augustine Church and would walk from his residence to the parish three or four times a week for morning Mass or personal prayer time.

He was an avid traveler with a particular affinity for cruises. He enjoyed the various activities offered on cruise ships, especially dancing. While in his 70s, he was asked to be a dance host on several cruises.


Story behind the gift

In early 2010, Brown had sought the help of Zabanal to arrange his trust. Zabanal, also a Catholic, said Brown found the attorney for his law office in the St. Augustine parish bulletin.

While Zabanal often handles the paperwork for people’s trusts, he said he normally doesn’t “go into the gritty-gritty of handling the dirty job” of distributing and executing them as an actual trustee. He decided to help in this case, however, because Brown had no other friends or family to do the work.

“When I saw him, obviously he didn’t know anybody,” Zabanal said. “So we just decided to take it.”

According to Zabanal’s wife Rose, who works as a paralegal in her husband’s firm, Brown was aware of how intricate a task it would be for Zabanal to manage his trust. Rose said Brown also was very mindful of how he wanted his trust to be handled, and that he definitely wanted to use it to contribute to the Catholic Church in some way.

“He knew the complexity — he knew how big a task it was,” Rose said. “He really saved up for this.”

Brown had mentioned a desire to allocate gifts for priests to use for their retirement. Originally, he had considered giving the money to individual clergy in his home state of New York. However, when Zabanal offered the idea of distributing the money to priests and religious in Hawaii, Brown approved.

As a starting point, Zabanal said, to create the list of beneficiaries they turned to the 2010 Directory of the Catholic Church in Hawaii. They used the diocesan listings, as well as word of mouth, to identify the priests, brothers and sisters serving in the Islands at the time.

If a priest or religious had been listed in the diocesan directory then but had since been reassigned elsewhere, Zabanal said he still included them as intended beneficiaries, “so long as we are able to track them down.”

The list of beneficiaries was finalized around November of 2010, less than two months before Brown died.

The Zabanals mailed letters to each of the priests, brothers and sisters to notify them of the gift. A Mass at the cathedral on Dec. 18, 2011, celebrated by Bishop Silva was chosen as the occasion to pray for Brown and distribute the gifts.

Above left, the late Hugh W. Brown. Above right, Bishop Larry Silva gathers with some of the beneficiaries and friends of Hugh Brown. Left, attorney Eduardo Zabanal who handled the late benefactor’s trust.

Surprise and skepticism

For most local clergy and religious, receiving a monetary gift from a layperson whom they had never met and did not know was not something that happened every day. The news of Brown’s gift was met by skepticism at first by some of the beneficiaries.

“I was certainly surprised at the first notification and like most of us I assumed that it was another phishing attempt,” said Marianist Brother Frank Damman. (Phishing is a common scam where personal information is solicited for identity theft.)

“However, the continuing effort by Eduardo Zabanal and his wife convinced me that it was real,” Brother Damman said.

Many beneficiaries appreciated Brown’s kindness toward those serving a religious life, although a few religious orders did not accept his money.

“I felt so overjoyed not only because it was the first time I ever received such a gift but because of the generosity of the late Mr. Brown,” said La Saletter Father Manny Dela Cruz.

For many of the recipients who belong to religious orders, Brown’s gift was passed on to their community’s retirement fund. Others used the money for school or charity beneficiaries.

Sisters of Mary Help of Christians will use the money to support some of the order’s work back home.

“The fund is going to be used for the education of the poor children of India where our sisters work,” said Sister Marykutty Koruppalil. “We bring them to our boardings and for education and once they are graduated we send them back to the college for higher studies.”

Sister William Marie Eleniki, a Sister of St. Francis of the Newman Communities, said she is not only grateful for Brown’s individual gifts, but also the additional donation he gave to St. Francis Hospice.

Brown was a patient at the hospice before his death, and the money he bequeathed will go a long way to support hospice programs, Sister William Marie said.

“It was a nice gesture,” she said.

“It did help the community.”

The Zabanals are grateful to have helped bring to fruition Brown’s trust and last wishes to help the local Catholic religious community.

Brown said not only is it “beautiful” to see how many people have been touched by Brown’s generosity, but also how many people now know of Brown and continue to keep him in their prayers.

“It’s a beautiful gift to him by the Lord that he had an ‘instant family,’” she said.

Saint Patrick School for 2012-2013

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February 12, 2012
1:30PM TO 3:00PM in the auditorium

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January 21, 2012
February 18, 2012
March 10, 2012
8:30 am Testing for K-Grade 8

Registration for Early Learning

Ages 3.5 - Grade 8
3320 Harding Ave. Honolulu 734-8979

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Night of Praise & Worship

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Friday, January 27, 2012
7:00 p.m.

(Be prepared to provide up-to-date ID & vehicle info.)

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Ordination a live event
for 164 online viewers

By Darlene J.M. Dela Cruz

Hawaii Catholic Herald

On Dec. 30, more than 400 people watched Bishop Larry Silva ordain Anthony Rapozo as the diocese’s newest priest. However, about a quarter of those watching the ordination didn’t trek to the Co-Cathedral of St. Theresa to be a part of the event. Through a live-streaming broadcast on the Hawaii Catholic TV website, www.hctv.com, viewers from 11 states, Washington D.C., and countries such as Japan, Russia, Iraq and Lebanon watched Rapozo receive the Sacrament of Holy Orders.

The ordination was shot with four Sony HD cameras — two stationary and two panning, to get a well-rounded view of the action. Fielding also added a live chat component to the real-time streaming video, which allowed viewers to type in comments and messages to each other as the ceremony unfolded.

“It was amazing to see a lot of reconections with people who moved to the mainland and those still in Hawaii,” Fielding said.

Sister Gioan Linh Nguyen of the Daughters of St. Paul logged on to watch the ordination from Redwood City, Calif. Sister Linh, who was previously assigned in Hawaii, said she set up a laptop in their living room and followed the Mass.

“We just was sitting in the sofa watching the whole thing and at a certain point I caught myself saying all the names of faces that I recognized,” said Sister Linh. “It was really special.”

The full video of Rapozo’s ordination can be viewed in the hictv.com archives.

39th annual March for Life
set for Jan. 22 at state capitol

By Patrick Downes

Vicar general Father Gary Secor will represent the Diocese of Honolulu at the 39th annual March For Life Hawaii rally, 1-4 p.m., Jan. 22, at the State Capitol.

The event, which every year protests the U.S. Supreme Court’s 1973 Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion across the United States on the anniversary of that ruling, is being sponsored by Aloha Life Advocates, formerly Hawaii Right to Life. This year the anniversary falls on a Sunday.

Organizers are describing the rally as a family-friendly event with live music, hula, dramatic skits, sign waving, a leiiki poster contest, displays, games and other fun activities.

The event, whose theme is “Aloha: Joyfully Sharing Life,” will end with a march around the State Capitol.

“We want to remember the lives that have been lost and affected by abortion, but more than that, we want to come together to celebrate and cherish life for all people — from conception to natural end,” said Karen DiCostanzo of Aloha Life Advocates in a news release.

“We’re excited about the 2012 March For Life rally because many people and community groups are coming out to show their aloha for life,” she said.

Among the entertainers are Tyler Nakamura, Na Hoku Hanohano award winners Barrett and Tara Awai, and Tony Solis.


For more information on the March For Life, visit www.hclif.org. Aloha Life Advocates is the lead- ing human rights organization in Hawaii focused exclusively on life issues. It is the state affiliate of the National Right to Life Committee.
Blessed Marianne miracle recipient not a Catholic, but a believer

By Darlene J.M. Dela Cruz
Hawaii Catholic Herald

“I didn’t know a thing about Mother Marianne before somebody told me who she was and what she did and why we were praying.”

Sharon Smith, the woman whose unexpected recovery from a deadly illness paved the way for the canonization of Blessed Marianne of Molokai, spoke to the Hawaii Catholic Herald by phone from Chittenango, N.Y. on Jan. 12. Smith was in good spirits, recounting the story of intercession and healing that now connects her to Hawaii’s newest saint.

On Dec. 19, Pope Benedict XVI signed the decree recognizing Smith’s cure as the second miracle needed for the canonization of Blessed Marianne. The pope’s action approves earlier decisions by physicians, theologians and bishops of the Vatican Congregation for the Causes of Saints who studied the case and determined it to be a medically unexplainable recovery attributed to Mother Marianne’s intercession.

“I don’t remember too much about it … because I was in and out of comas and surgery and pain,” Smith said. “I do remember all the lovely sisters coming to see me and pray for me.”

Smith’s “miracle” story stems back to her bout with pancreatitis in 2005. At that time, the infection had spread through her body and become so severe, doctors said her organs were literally being destroyed. Smith was in the hospital for almost a year, with doctors doing all they could to save her.

As Smith battled the infection, many of her friends supported her through prayers and visits at her bedside. However, Smith’s health eventually deteriorated to the point where a doctor told her loved ones to prepare for the worse.

“One of my friends was in the waiting room, and the doctor was telling my roommate that they were going to take me off the respirator in the morning and that he didn’t think that I was going to make it.”

By chance, a woman in the hospital waiting room told Smith’s friend to pray to Mother Marianne Cope for Smith’s healing.

During Smith’s hospital stay, the presence of Mother Marianne Cope would remain with her. Smith recalled how she had met Hawaii-born Sister of St. Francis Michaelleen Cabral one night after a eucharistic minister had suggested that the nun pay Smith a visit. Smith said Sister Michaelleen pinned a small container of dirt from Mother Marianne’s grave in Kalaupapa onto her hospital gown and prayed for her.

“Of course, everybody kept praying,” Smith said. “And I ended up coming out.”

Smith was discharged from the hospital in January 2006 and spent a month in a rehabilitation center before finally being allowed home.

Today, Smith, 65, said she is in fairly good health. She volunteers at Francis House in Syracuse, a home for terminally ill patients. She gladly offers her time as a way of paying forward the kindness and faith that was shown to her by the Sisters of St. Francis.

“That’s something I can do to help these sisters because they were there with me all the time,” Smith said.

Smith is looking forward to traveling to Rome for the canonization of Blessed Marianne, which has not yet been scheduled, but is expected to take place this year. She said she has learned a lot more about Blessed Marianne’s work and admires how “dedicated” the Franciscan sister was to her mission.

“I think she was inspirational herself for that time in her life where it wasn’t easy to get to Hawaii and there was so much devastation there,” Smith said.

Smith is not Catholic, but a baptized member of the Protestant Church of the Nazarene. However, she remains close to the Catholic community in her part of upstate New York and is a regular visitor at St. Vincent Church there.

Smith also continues to be a firm believer in divine providence and the help of saints.

“I’ve always believed in God and I’ve always believed that saints were important and it kind of makes you part of being human with them,” Smith said. “Because they were people too.”

“I’m very happy that I was blessed by other people praying to Mother Marianne Cope and myself, when I was healthy enough. And I’m also very happy for the Franciscan Sisters that they have their saint,” she said.

Smith’s healing is the second of two miracles that were required for the canonization of Mother Marianne Cope. The first miracle attributed to Mother Marianne’s intercession, which led to her beatification in 2005, was the medically inexplicable recovery of Syracuse native Katherine “Kate” Mahoney from multiple organ failure.
Celebrating Our Legacy of Caring

By Patrick Downes
Hawaii Catholic Herald

Bishop Larry Silva transferred Molokai’s two parishes from the Maui vicariate to the central Oahu vicariate starting Jan. 1.

The change was made at the request of Sacred Hearts Father Clyde Guerreiro, pastor of St. Damien Parish on Molokai. The reasons were both practical and reasonable, he said.

Vicariates, the geographical divisions of the diocese, exist for the mutual support, communication and coordination of parishes that are close to each other, primarily through meetings and other joint events.

However, transportation from Molokai to Oahu is “much more frequent and less expensive” than transportation to Maui, Father Guerreiro said.

“It can take a whole day” to attend a meeting on Maui, he said, whether making the trip by plane or ferry.

Father Guerreiro said that the two Molokai parishes, St. Damien and St. Francis in Kalaupapa, also have a greater “affinity” to parishes of central Oahu, such as Resurrection in Waipio and St. John Apostolic and Evangelist in Mililani, which have “adopted” the economically depressed island through annual outreach programs.

The youth ministries of Molokai and central Oahu also have ties, he said.

The diocese is divided into nine vicariates, or geographical sections, overseen by a priest appointed as vicar forane.

Since the system was devised in 1982, Molokai had been part of the Maui vicariate which included all of that island, plus Lanai. The three islands also make up Maui County. The original vicariates numbered seven: Big Island, Maui county, leeward Oahu, windward Oahu, east Honolulu and west Honolulu.

The Big Island was later split into the east Hawaii and west Hawaii vicariates and the leeward Oahu vicariate was divided into leeward Oahu and central Oahu.

The idea of joining central Oahu has been tossed around for “about two years” in discussions at his parish, Father Guerreiro said, and within the bishop’s advisory groups.

The pastor said that Oahu is also the primary destination for Molokai residents for health care and shopping, despite the seeming proximity of Maui.

By Patrick Downes
Hawaii Catholic Herald

Next month will see the first exchange of clergy between the former East coast and Hawaii provinces of the Sacred Hearts Congregation of Fathers and Brothers since they merged last November as the single United States Province.

Hawaii’s Sacred Hearts Father Paul Zaccone is heading for Wareham, Mass., to be the order’s vocation director starting Feb. 1.

The U.S. Province was officially formed at a joint meeting of delegates from the Hawaii and East Coast provinces Nov. 13-18 at St. Anthony Retreat Center.

The new province joins the 15 provinces of the Sacred Hearts Congregation of Fathers in the United States and its India region.

Because the new U.S. province extends across the mainland and into some foreign countries, Father Zaccone expects his new assignment to put him on the road a lot.

“My area will cover the continental U.S., especially the dioceses that we are ministering in,” he said. “I will be traveling to Texas, our region of India, and a new apostolate of Tonga and other places where there is an interest in our Sacred Hearts Congregation.”

He said at least a quarter of his time will be spent in Hawaii. The order will have its novitiate program in the Islands, he said.

Father Zaccone will hold onto his diocesan job as “sole caretaker” of the St. Damien pilgrimage relics, assigned to him by Bishop Silva.

The relic, which belongs to the Diocese of Honolulu, will be housed for central Oahu and St. Francis in Kalaupapa.

The relic, which belongs to the Diocese of Honolulu, will be housed for central Oahu.

Another relic, the “traveling relic” of St. Damien, to locations outside of Honolulu borrowing it for temporary veneration.

Father Zaccone will live at the congregation’s retreat house at Sacred Hearts Seminary in Wareham, the site of the order’s pre-novitiate program.

According to Father Zaccone, the congregation has just enrolled three men into pre-novitiate.

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Hawaii’s oldest, last European Sacred Hearts sister dies at 104

By Patrick Downes

Hawaii Catholic Herald

She may have been the oldest ever.

Sacred Hearts Sister Maria Seraphina Maziliauskaite, who arrived in Hawaii in 1937, the last of her order to come from Europe, died on Dec. 29 at age 104 at her convent in Kaimuki. She was a religious sister for 76 years. Though all the years of her presence and loving service in community and to the people of Hawaii, Sister Maria Seraphina, the last of our remarkable missionaries, never returned home, Sister Regina Mary said.

Her funeral Mass was Jan. 9 at Malia O Ka Maka Convent. She was buried the same day at Hawaiian Memorial Park.

Sister Maria Seraphina was born Marijona Maziliauskaite on July 10, 1907, in Lithuania, in the village of Merguskrakai. At age seven, World War I broke out and her father, conscripted by the Russian Army, died of battle wounds somewhere in Russia.

“Our mother gave us always an example of faith, prayer and love for others,” Sister Maria Seraphina wrote in 1995 in a reflection on her religious vocation. “Thus we were blessed by her solicitude.”

According to her provincial superior Sister Regina Mary Jenkins, she was assigned to Hawaii in 1937. She arrived on March 24 at the historic Sacred Hearts Sisters Fort Street convent and school next door to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace, and was assigned to Hawaii in 1937.

“As a teenager, I read the book of Father Damien’s life and had the inspiration to become a missionary,” she said. “My wish came true when I entered Sacred Hearts Congregation in 1932 in Holland.”

Two other girls in her family also entered the Sacred Hearts Congregation. Sister Coralie died in 1952 in Rouen and her Sister Benigna died in 2002 in Le Mans.

Sister Maria Seraphina made her profession in Paris in 1935 and was assigned to Hawaii in 1937.

“So my wish to be a missionary was fulfilled,” she said.

She arrived on March 24 at the historic Sacred Hearts Sisters Fort Street convent and school next door to the Cathedral of Our Lady of Peace, and there she began the ministry that would continue until retirement — teaching second graders. Especially dear to her congregational heart was preparing public school children for their First Holy Communion.

The Fort Street school was closed in 1938 and the sisters moved to a new convent in Nuuanu. In 1951, she was sent to Kauai, to help open the new Immaculate Conception Convent and School in Lihue. She moved back to Nuuanu in 1972. Although she kept abreast of the news in Lithuania, Sister Maria Seraphina adopted Hawaii as her home and the United States as her country. She was naturalized a U.S. citizen on Aug. 29, 1946.

In 1987, she joined the Regina Pacis Convent community in Kaimuki, until poor health pressed her into moving in 2000 to the adjacent Malia O Ka Malu Convent, the sisters’ retirement home and infirmary.

“She was really a sweetheart,” Sister Regina Mary said. “She was a wonderful community member. In her attitude toward life, she was one of those who kept active, always doing some ministry if she had spare time.”

Sister Regina Mary recalls Sister Maria Seraphina at nearly 90 years old diligently at work at a sewing machine fashioning colorful potholders to raise money for the missions.

“She turned them out by the hundreds in no time,” Sister Regina Mary said. “I told Sister that she was a one-person cottage industry for the Sacred Hearts missions.”

Sister Regina also described her as a “prolific” letter writer.

“She was photogenic and always looked beautiful in any photo taken of her,” said Sister Regina Mary.

According to her provincial superior Sister Regina Mary Jenkins, she was almost certainly the oldest resident of Malia O Ka Malu Convent, the sisters’ retirement home and infirmary.

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According to her provincial superior Sister Regina Mary Jenkins, she was almost certainly the oldest resident of Malia O Ka Malu Convent, the sisters’ retirement home and infirmary.

“Her Lithuanian friends were scattered across the globe, especially in Chicago and Australia, and she kept in touch with them conscientiously,” she said.

“She was photogenic and always looked beautiful in any photo taken of her,” said Sister Regina Mary. “It was her sweet smile that stood out.”

Postscript

Remarkably, another 104-year-old resident of Malia O Ka Malu died on the same day as Sister Maria Seraphina.

Ruby Letahoko Richard Wood, the mother of Sacred Hearts Sister Helene Wood, had resided for 14 years at the congregational retirement home which accepts family members of the sisters.

The elder Wood, who was born nine days after Sister Maria Seraphina, died nine hours after the nun. She was buried on Jan. 18, nine days after the Sacred Hearts Sister.

According to Sister Helene, Sister Seraphina, who normally would join the rest of the community for meals, had stopped eating and then stopped drinking a few days before she died. Her mother did the same thing.

Ruby Wood was a third grade teacher at Kalahi Waena, Aiea and Ala Wai Elementary Schools, and also at schools on Lanai and Maui.

Other than the coincidences of birth and death, they weren’t particularly close, Sister Helene said.

Postscript 2

The Hawaii Catholic Herald wondered if any other religious connected to Hawaii had reached the 100-year milestone. We found two. There are probably more.

Sister of St. Joseph of Carondelet Regina Catherine Brandt, 101, who was first missioned in Hawaii in 1939, taught in parochial grade schools on Oahu until 1962. She returned two years later to serve as the congregation’s superior for her order in Hawaii. She is alive and well and engaged in prayer and witness ministry at the Nazareth Living Center in St. Louis, Mo.

Franciscan Sister Mary Sylvester Elliott, who lived to be 101 years old, died in 1992 in Manoa. At the time she was the last remaining link to Blessed Marianne Cope.

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Thriving in the “second half of life” will be one of the main topics of discussion at the next Mackey Marianist lecture and workshop. The lecture will be presented in March by Dr. Samuel Johnson, a nationally recognized author and editor in his field and the medical behavioral sciences.

Both presentations will take place in the Mystic Rose Oratory on the campus of Chaminade University and Saint Louis School. Here is the schedule:

**Workshop: “12 Keys to Spiritual Vitality: Living Agelessly in the Second Half of Life”**
- **Saturday, March 10**, 9 a.m.—3 p.m.
- A donation of $20 per person ($25 at the door) covers continental breakfast, coffee and tea, and a boxed lunch for those who register before March 1.
- **Father Mackey Marianist Lecture:** “New Hope & New Vision; Living at the Nexus of Healthcare, Psychology and Faith: A New Vision of the Healing Power of the Divine.” The lecture is free and open to the public.

Dr. Johnson was the director of religious education at the University of Hawaii, the founder and executive director of the Spirituality and Healing Institute, and the Chair of the Department of the Psychology of Religion at the University of the State of New York. He is the author of 15 books and has presented workshops and lectures to thousands of persons in the United States, Asia, Europe, and Canada. Dr. Johnson has earned the confidence and respect of scientists, professors, religious leaders, and other professionals who have worked with him. He has been a leader in the development of a new understanding of the role of the divine in the human experience, and he has been a leader in the development of a new understanding of the role of the divine in the human experience.

In describing the inspiration for his March 10 workshop, Johnson wrote, “God-ordained methods available are a third in the night,” rather, it is one of the three “master teachers” of life (the other two being relationships and sickness). The workshop offers a new narrative of the second half of life as a grace-filled journey of strength that refreshes and renews your view of maturation (aging) from one of loss to one of a crown of glory. For more information or to sign up for the program, visit www.marianisthawaii.org or contact Brother Richard Mondoy at 808-947-5264.
1 PEARL CITY Our Lady of Good Counsel Parish

In accordance with church norms, we joyfully celebrated the Mass as a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. “Singing is the sign of the heart’s joy. Singing is for the one who loves!” With these thoughts in mind, the Samoan Choir braves the dark and chilly weather every Sunday, to lead the assembly at the 6:30 a.m. Mass. Their voices raise to sing Gregorian chants, Latin responses, English and Samoan hymns or patriotic songs when appropriate. The sign of unity is very visible as the members of our community gather for the sacred liturgy. Pictured is song leader Mavis Alaimalo. Members of her family also join her. Husband Ernie is singer and announcer. Her seven-year-old son Saunders was soloist at the Christmas Mass singing “Happy Birthday, Jesus.” And tapping his foot in rhythm is the youngest, Silas, who celebrated his fifth birthday on January 9.

2 WAIMEA Annunciation Parish

The Nativity scene was recreated by some of the youth during the Children’s Christmas Eve Mass. The children processed in with Father Bob Schwartzhaupp at the start of the service. (Reported by Lisa Wells)

3 PAUOA VALLEY Blessed Sacrament Parish

The happy voices of the children brought great joy to parishioners before our beautiful Dec. 24 Ohana Mass as they sang the joyful Christmas with joy to the World.” The enduring Nativity story narrated by several students followed. The actors, dressed in authentic costumes, portrayed their parts with sincere compsure. During the meditation of the Mass, the children sang a very touching song “God Has Come.” It wormed our hearts with God’s love and reminded us of the true meaning of Christmas. Pictured are Joseph and Mary portrayed by Joseph Ta and Megan Petersen. Mahalo to all the catechists who helped to prepare the children! (Reported by Lei Koino)

4 PAPAOI Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish

A lot happened here from November through December. In the two weeks before Thanksgiving, parishioners donated goods to fill Thanksgiving baskets prepared by the High School Youth Ministry and distributed to the homebound in Honoum, Pepekeo and Papaku. Teopista Tulang is pictured here with two very special longtime parishioners who were among those visited. Rose Pinnow, left, who will be 100 this year and Elizabeth “Nana” Ignacio who is 95 years old. The Advent Family Fair, coordinated by Marie Lacro, brought families together to create gingerbread houses, apple cinnamon or- maments, tissue paper stars, and gingerbread houses, apple cinnamon ornaments, tissue paper stars, and Christ Candles and more. The youth told stories and made decoration and grab bags for Christmas. Pictured from left, are Kayla Swid- erski and sisters Aloha, Winhver and Homynae Garo. (Reported by Angela M. Ramos)

6 WAIKIKI Our Lady of Sorrows Parish

Litia Mira and Danyel Pani of the Mauiland Transitional Housing Program accepting over 100 Christmas gifts donated by the parish for the children staying there from project coordinator Jack Kamper. … Pictured are the three wine men, Peyton (Balkha- zar), Caleb (Melchor) and Chaseton (Gaspar), dur- ing the commemoration of the Epiphany on Jan. 9. The three modern wine men, with Amber who carried the Chil- dren’s Bible for our pre-school and kindergarten, offered money for the less fortunate, rather than the original gold, frankincense and myrrh. They placed their gifts at the man- ger at the foot of baby Jesus at the altar. Father Edgar Brillantes called them up to offer their gifts. (Reported by Jack Kamper and Pacita Baron)

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from our Youth Ministry visited Aloha Nursing and Rehab Centre in Kaneohe to spread a little Christmas joy. With the help of the parish’s own, Joyful Noise music ministry group, the carollers warmed up, gathered their courage and lifted their voices in song. The group sang favorite carols bringing smiles to the faces of residents and staff. All felt the blessings and spirit of Christmas. (Reported by Kristie Holman; photo by Jodi Nakakoa)

PAJA
Holy Rosary Parish
Our fifth annual luau-sausa on Oct. 29, organized by John Costales and Cyrilla Pascual was a huge success. The evening started with Mass celebrated by Bishop Larry Silva followed by a feast prepared by the kekkWii Ohana and 500 parishioners and guests. We were blessed with super entertainment by Luuwi Guerrero and others. Holy Rosary Church is blessed. The Holy Spirit lives among the beautiful people of Paia present and past! (Reported by Deacon Pat Contarino)

13 EWA BEACH
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Parish
On Jan. 8, after the 5 p.m. Mass, our youth ministry Life Teen Program celebrated the epiphany with their fifth annual Christmas musical, Campers’ Dîner’s “Annie Dancar, Joyce Agcaoili and Christian Legaspi coordinated and directed the cast and crew of 28 teens and adults. They dedicated their talents as actors, actresses, musicians and singers to stage dancers, media production, and light operators. They gave thanks for their each other’s work, and even two weeks of winter break to practice lines, sing, play music, dance, build backdrops and props, and reveal their creativity. The Dîner weaves Catholic teachings, Christology, sacraments, social justice, imagination and relationships into songs and dances making it the young and youth adults’ best Christmas musical in the five years. The musicals were born five years ago when the Life Teen participants made a list of their talents. Former Life Teen core member Marites Barangan Galamgam thought this Christmas musical would give the teens an opportunity to give back to God and the community the gifts that God gave them. (Reported by Amy Agcaoili; photo by Sherwin Acidera)

KALAEHO
Holy Cross Parish
Congratulations to our youth who helped make the Misa de Gallo Novena Masses a wonderful success especially those who sponsored each novena and organized breakfast each morning! The average attendance was 188. What a great way to lead into Christmas! … Dec. 24 means child, dren, youth and the Christ mass pageant. Parishioners, family and friends celebrated Jesus’ birthday with the chil dren’s version of the Nativity followed by the children’s Christmas Eve Mass. Birthday cupcakes were enjoyed after Mass. Several hours later, before Midnight Mass, the youth’s version of the Nativity included a sleeping baby, and Christmas carols. As a prelude to the holy mirth, the youth performed a skit about sharing, giving and helping others. Thank you to the Noblemen for the after-Mass soup and rolls. … We again had our Advent Slipper Tree, where parishioners donated slippers and socks for families in need. The items will be distributed in January. … Faith Formation class will continue in January. The topic is church history. Check the bulletin for dates and times. … Computer classes resumed on Jan. 12 in the parish hall. The topic is Open Office, similar to Microsoft Office. … Calling all boys in grades 3-8! You are invited to a night of prayer-filled fun, 6:30-8:30 p.m., Jan. 20, in the parish hall. Check us out online at our Facebook page: Holy Cross Catholic Church Kualii. … The next beginner’s ukulele classes will start Jan. 24 for six weeks. Bring your own uke. Students of the previous class are welcome. … We will host the Kauai Vi- variate Confirmation re- port on the second year Confirmation students, Jan. 27-29, for an expected 60 students and 20 adult leaders. Makana Alona and his team will lead the retreat. Please pray for the at tendees as they continue their faith journey and prepare for the reception of Confirmation. (Reported by Judy Cabangitan)

LANAI CITY
Sacred Hearts Parish
Our Christmas season began with Misa De Gallo, where Novena Masses were celebrat ed every morning, Dec. 16-24, starting at 5 a.m. This Filipino tradition signifies the coming of our Messiah. “Misa De Gal- lo” means “Mass of the Roost er” because it is held in the early morning hours. At each Mass, a family was chosen to light the Advent candle. … Our church choir sang at the annual community Christmas tree lighting and entertained guests at the Lodge at Keoele who had only nice things to say about the singing. Joyah Degamo directed the choir and Garek Eligado accompanied us on the piano. … As they do every year, the religious educa tion students presented the Nativity scene at the 6 p.m. Mass on Christmas Eve. The youth ministry enacted the Nativity scene at Midnight Mass. … The highlight of the month was a special visit by our former administrator Father Raymund Ellorin who was celebrating his ordination anniversary. Everyone welcomed Father Ray with open arms. We had dinner and talk time with him after a special Mass. (Reported by Eleanor Oso)

WAILUKU
St. Anthony Parish
Two RCIA candidates, Jo seph Meno and Joseph Pang Ching Jr., who are seeking to complete their sacraments of initiation, were recently accepted at the 5 p.m. Mass on Jan. 7. Please pray for them that they may come to know the fullness of the love of God. … The Parish Day Mass, Jan. 21, three will be inducted into the Lay Marianist Ministry. … Lynn Dudoit, Dr. Wil liam Mitchell and Angela Walsh. The church and parish schools will celebrate 164 years of quality Catholic education in the Marianist Spirit with open houses on all campuses, great food, a rummage sale, a car wash and entertainers by Misa Alo ha Hula Tori Canha, the Bunda Boomers, Dennis Cabacungan, St. Anthony School students and the Jr.-Sr. High School Band. All are welcome, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. (Reported by Miriam Kahalei)

KAILUAU
Holy Trinity Parish
Thank you to all who have donated to our food bank. We will continue to collect food in the covered basket under the Saint Martin de Pores statue. Through the Angel Network several longtime elderly community members have been helped. The econ omy has taken a toll on many budgets so they are serving about 2,000 people a month. (From the parish bulletin)

EWA
Immaculate Conception Parish
On the outside, our church hasn’t changed much since it was built in the 1920s during Ewa’s heyday as a cane town. Its gothic design stands out quietly amidst the other histor istic plantation-era structures on Renton Road. What chang es the church has seen have mostly been within its walls, with nothing more significant than the growth of its con gregation. In the past year, at every Mass, latercomers have found it hard to find a seat. The resourceful ones grab plastic chairs from the parish hall and position themselves on the walkway on the side of the church. A parishioner

14 KALUAU
St. Anthony Parish
The Sacred Hearts of Jes us and Mary Apostolate started a Penny Drive on July 1, 2010, to raise funds for St. Anthony School Endowment Fund. Mem bers were asked to bring their pennies to every monthly meeting. The humble penny is once again the center of attention as members turn in whatever they have every month. Last Oct. 16 and 23, attendance was 44 and 30 respectively. Parishioners to bring their pennies to church these days? Father Mike confirmed it was not her imagination. He attrib uted the increase to the new Franciscan Vistas nearby and the homes-beings built in Ewa and Ewa Beach. Accordingly, churches ministries have also grown. The Knights of Co lumbus, the Sacred Heart Society and the Youth Min istry continue to add mem bers. Father Mike also noted that those baptizing their children and joining RCIA are becoming more serious about their faith and now come to church. At the end of Mass on New Years Day, he apologized that not every family would get a parish calendar because the parish had underestimated the size of the congregation. He promised to be better prepared next year. Compared to the immeasurable ben efits a growing congregation brings, this is a small problem indeed! (Reported by Vicki Gailam)

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17 HAWAI'I CATHOLIC HERALD

On Dec. 20, our youth min-
istry brought Christmas joy to 12 homebound elderly and sick residents in the Haiku Community. The youth sang Christmas carols, gave each resident a poinsettia plant, and shared their gift of faith. This outreach to those un-
able to join us at Sunday Eucharist was also an op-
portunity for the young ones to interact with our parish 
apusana, enfolding the ideal of 
Christian mindfulness and service. Pictured at Genevieve Gouveia’s place in Haiku: front, Abbey Freeman, Jatina McKeeboy; middle, Stephanie Barrie, Leanne Markham, Genevieve Gouveia (homebound), Isaac Freeman, Veronica Freeman; back, Cheyenne Yap, Ella Markham and Abrianna Markham. (Re-
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18 MILILANI
St. George Parish

Our parish participated again in the Waimanalo Christ-
mas Parade on Dec. 10. Pa-
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We greatly cherished his time with us and will miss him.” 
Our thanks to Father Joe
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tor. (Reported by the parish)

19 HONOLULU
Cathedral Catholic Academy

Students celebrated Voc-
tions Awareness Week on Jan. 11 listening to Father 
Gordon Combs talk about his personal calling to the 
priesthood. Sisters Fay and 
Irene from the Daughters of 
St. Paul also visited and 
spoke with students about the 
special ministry that religious 
life holds for a chosen few. 
A religious bookshop, where 
families could purchase 
items, was open throughout the 
day. We continue to pray for 
vocations throughout the world! (Reported by Michael 
Pickleha)

20 HONOLULU
Maryknoll School

This year marks the centen-
nial anniversary of the Maryknoll Sisters and 
September is the 85th an-
viversary of the founda-
tion of Maryknoll School. Maryknoll School opened in 1927 with 
93 boys and 77 girls. Six 
Maryknoll Sisters, who had 
arrived from New York four 
days before the first day of school, were the first faculty. The 
school was a one-story wooden frame building with four classrooms. Our 
school will celebrate the centennial with monthly themed aimed at 
connecting our community with the sisters and learn-
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global impact. January’s theme is “Tracing the Journey of the 
Maryknoll Sisters.” Today, the sisters have more 
than 500 members from di-
verse cultural backgrounds serving in 30 countries in 
medicine, communications, 
education, agriculture and so-
cial services. Pictured are the teachers and staff at Maryk-
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founders, in 1927, the year 
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21 HONOLULU
Maryknoll School

Two seniors will give 285 
children free bicycle helmets 
at their helmet safety pre-
sentation in February at the 
Maryknoll Community Cen-
ter. For their senior projects, 
Spencer Young, left, and 
Rory Hirayama teamed up to 
educate children about the 
importance of wearing a 
safety helmet when biking. 
Young was inspired by his 
father, who has a master’s in 
public health and works for 
the Honolulu City and County 
Emergency Medical Services 
division. The goal is to hold 
regular helmet safety classes 
 focusing on the younger chil-
dren, who are more easily 
influenced than older students 
and can adopt safety habits 
early on. The helmets were 
bought through a grant the 
students received from the 
Hawaii Medical Service 
Foundation, which he created 
in 1967, has contributed more than $1 mil-
ion over the past 10 years for technology and 
scholarships. Anthony L.W. Wong, a 1931 
graduate, is Harry’s brother. 
The Maristian Grant helps low 
income students who start 
their child to attend a Marist-
ian school. The Maristians have sponsored the Anthony 
Junior-Senior High since 1883 and continue to have a strong influence on their philosophy 
and teaching today. Pictured is 
Provincial Father Bob 
Maher and staff at Maryknoll 
St. Peter’s School. (Reported by 
James Orsini and Kath-
leen Delima of the school’s development office. (Reported by Janice Pruett)

26 HONOLULU
Sacred Hearts Academy 
Lower School

Lt. Gov. Brian Schatz paid 
a December visit to third 
graders at the Handy-Coloma’s class. His visit as the “Mythmaker” created great excitement. The 
lieutenant governor read the book, “Good Citizen Sar-
na” by Sara Saeks, and 
gave the students a role-playing introduction. He told them that everyone, 
even those as young as third grade, can have a hand in 
their community and make a difference. (Reported by Hay-
ley Matson-Matsumoto)

27 HONOLULU
St. Anthony School

The eighth graders made 
their annual presentation of 
“The Love and Joy of Christmas at Hale Ho Aloa 
Nursing Home” through their service project in the 
community of the parents joined them. (Reported by Janice Pruett)

28 HONOLULU
Damien Memorial School

LEO Club members with fac-
tual and emotional support 
and club president Garret 
Agag 12-13 
play in the Tradition-
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30 PEARL CITY
Our Lady of Good Counsel School
Kindergarten through third grade students recently visited the Foster Botanical Gardens where, amid the chaos and the hustle and bustle of downtown Honolulu, you can find a tropical oasis. Docents led the children around the gardens, pointing out the various trees and plants, explaining where the plants originated and what they are used for. Their hidden jewel would have to be the Butterfly Garden, an open-air habitat that features several species of butterflies and the many phases that each goes through in life, from egg to the beautiful, delicate creature that we all love. Pictured is a third grader holding a monarch butterfly with care. (Reported by Ginger Ronsen Manzano)

31 HONOLULU
Sacred Hearts Academy High School
Sixteen members of our Code Earth Club, with chaperone Jacquelyn Chappell, visited Molokaua Island, a sustainable fishing village located off Sand Island. Inhabitants of Molokaua have lived there since the 1970s, sustained mainly by a fishpond fed by the ocean. Our students paddled out and learned about the island’s history in the process. While there, they helped remove the invasive pickle weed. Making the trip were Amy Tam, Michelle Hahn, Melissa Hahn, Jaxxin Lin, Jordan Harysch, Kahea Leiderbach, Miltye Mun, Monica Ho, Zoiereoe Hill, Bonnie Chapman, Nadia Busekkrus, Nicole Baker, Megan Ballinowski and Cindy Huyng. (Reported by Haley Matson-Mathes)

32 MAKAKAI
St. Joseph Early Learning Center
Christmas blessings abound, praise God! The students rejoice with new books from Santa, a Christmas tree decked by the Gouveia family (grandparents of student Chaya Gomes) and the news of a tuition assistance grant from the Samuel N. and Mary Castle Foundation. On behalf of all the students, families, administration and staff, thank you to all who have blessed our school all year. Wishing you a happy and healthy 2012! (Reported by Helen Sousa)

33 HONOLULU
Holy Family Catholic Academy
Families of our kindergarten through third grade came out for a thought-provoking Math Curriculum Night, taking advantage of a spaghetti fundraiser sponsored by the National Junior Honor Society, and ready to celebrate the wonders of math. Creative activities involving problem-solving skills and challenging math games planned by each homeroom and grade level were highlights of the Rootri, ‘Tootri’ Math Gonz-palooza evening enjoyed by moms, dads and kids alike. (Reported by Christina Malina)

34 HONOLULU
St. Theresa School
Ember and Tiara of grade 1A enjoyed looking at the science fair exhibits. Their favorite was the cotton candy display. They both like eating cotton candy when they go to the fair during the summer. (Reported by Thelma Murphy)

35 WAPAHU
St. Joseph School
Every Wednesday, our school goes to church to worship together in song and prayer. Students in 1A classroom Ronson Manzano, Sheldon Caraang, Shelby Porto and Mrs. Eileen share a smile during school-wide worship on Jan. 11. (Reported by Angelique Sanamu)

36 HILO
St. Joseph Grade School
On Dec. 2, eight students from grades 4-6 answered questions about U.S. and world geography at our school-level preliminary rounds of the National Geographic Bee, sponsored by the National Geographic Society. Participants pictured from left, are Bryn Wilcox (5), Baxter Stone (4), Alexandra Kim-Lee (4), Consuela Rivera (4), Jerid Eyer (6), Christian Pataraay (4), Michael Peruzzo (4) and Fisher McKinney (4). After seven rounds of questioning, Bryn, Alexandra and Baxter emerged as the top three contestants who went on to the school’s final rounds on Jan. 13. The winner of that event will take a written test to qualify for the state-level Bee in Honolulu in March where competition will include nearly 2,100 students from all the islands. The state winner will participate in the National Geographic Bee in Washington, D.C., in May. Congratulations to all the students who were willing to take a risk and study hard to participate in this fun learning activity. (Reported by Rachel Dawson)

37 HILO
St. Joseph High School
Senior Stephanie Tait is all smiles before the Washington, D.C., performance at the Capital Building with the Hawaii All State Marching Band which marched in the Macy’s Thanksgiving Day Parade. (Reported by Rachel Dawson)
Educational alliance offering free SAT/ACT prep software

eKnowledge, along with 20 NFL and MLB athletes, is donating $200 SAT and ACT PowerPrep Programs to military families.

Now in its sixth year, the eKnowledge Sponsorship Alliance has donated over 150,000 SAT/ACT prep programs. The National Catholic Education Association (NCEA) joined the relationship last year and so far more than 1,500 students and families have received the donated preparation programs through this sponsorship.

Phil Robey, the NCEA’s executive director of secondary schools said “The relationship with the eKnowledge Sponsorship Alliance has greatly benefited our students with high quality and very low price SAT and ACT prep and I encourage each school to distribute this information to parents, students and educators.”

The donation eliminates the $200 retail price for the standard program. There is a $17.55 fee per standard program for materials, processing, and customer service.

The PowerPrep Program contains 170 video lessons, hundreds of practice questions with detailed explanations, 18 quizzes and over 40 hours of class work and 3,000 files of test prep material. Students select the training they need and can study at their own pace.

For a donated program go to www.eknowledge.com/FOH. Or call 951-256-4076 (reference the “Hawaii Catholic Herald” newspaper).

Father David Travers to retire as pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul

By Patrick Downes
Hawaii Catholic Herald

After 16 years as pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul Church in Honolulu, Jesuit Father David Travers will retire at the end of the month.

He said that, at age 77, he’s a few years past retirement age, but would like to remain active as a priest in Hawaii, staying involved and assisting where help is needed.

“I love what I do,” he told the Hawaii Catholic Herald, “and I seem to be able to do it.”

“As long as I can help out and my health is good, I will be available,” he said.

Born in Lynn, Mass, on June 27, 1934, Father Travers joined the Jesuits in 1955 and was ordained in 1968. Two years later, in 1970, he joined the Navy Reserves, and in 1976 went on active duty.

His 20 years of active service took him to Okinawa, Guam, Nevada, Maine, California and Hawaii. He spent two-and-a-half years upon the aircraft carrier Enterprise.

Father Travers came to Hawaii in 1990 and spent several years at the Marine Corps Air Station in Kaneohe before being invited to be the pastor of Sts. Peter and Paul.

“Modesty prevents me from saying that it is the best parish in the diocese,” he said.

“It is a very, very friendly parish, the people are active and it has a very active outreach,” he said.

Father Travers is in regular contact with the Jesuits’ New England province to which he belongs.

He is one of two Jesuits working in Hawaii. The other is Father Michael Scully, pastor of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Papakoulo.

“The Jesuits have given me the freedom to stay here,” he said.

“I just thoroughly enjoy being part of the diocese and enjoying being a part of the parish,” he said.

“The people are the nicest people I know.”

Prophesies for These End of Times

A Free Talk with Healing Service

Thursday, February 16, 2012
Waikiki Beach Marriott - Leahi Ballroom
2352 Kalakaua Ave., Honolulu, Hawaii 96815
Doors Open: 6:30pm - Talk Begins: 7:00pm sharp
Contact: Josephine 808-545-3546

Saturday, February 18, 2012
Maui Beach Hotel - Ballroom
170 Kaahumanu Ave., Kahului, Maui, Hawaii 96732
Doors Open: 1:00pm - Talk Begins: 1:30pm sharp
Contact: Tim Maher 310-569-2096

Have you not yet read the Signs of the End of Times?

God in His greatness of Love for us has been sending us warning, after warning asking us to repent. He has been inspiring chosen souls in our times whom he called to transmit His Message as in the time when our Lady appeared in Fatima (May 13, 1917) to warn the world, that unless they repent and return to God, and lead a life of prayer, a great war, greater than the 1st World War will come, and that Russia will spread her errors to her neighboring countries as well. Humanity ignored our Lady’s message and Her prediction came true.

Vassula is a chosen soul to whom God has given messages for our times; of which many have come true, for example: the 2004 Tsunami, the Twin Towers, the world in turmoil and the fall of communism in Russia. These are the last warnings. God is so offended with the actual widespread apostasy that unless we heed His calling, He will chastise the world with a hurricane of fire.

“Those who have ears let them hear, those who do not want to hear let them not hear”, this is what God said to Vassula to tell this generation and to tell all the Churches. For a complete set of the True Life in God books & DVDs of her talks, call The American Assoc. for True Life in God at 1-816-461-8888 and receive one free item.

Note on above ad from the Office of Vicar General, Diocese of Honolulu: The Vatican Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has raised certain questions regarding the teachings of Vassula Ryden. These events are not being sponsored by the Roman Catholic Diocese of Honolulu.

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* The End of Times is NOT the end of the world, it is the end of an era

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HAWAII 13
Public prayer, comfortable and not

When prayer is part of their life, people today tend to seek a comfortable venue to do it. I'm sure there are still those who consider kneeling at length on a stone floor in a solitary cold place as the inspired way to focus on an interchange with God. But aren't we more inclined these days to pray when we are in company with people who use the same words, and in a place with light and music, not to mention cushioned kneelers? We like a public praying experience that's uplifting and not too fraught with discomforting themes of shame or fear.

Most Catholics don't stray from their own parish church. But if you were open to the idea, there were chances this week to join an ecumenical commemoration of the justice brought to our nation by the civil rights movement of Martin Luther King Jr. and our own diocese's Red Mass on Thursday to call on the Holy Spirit to rain down wisdom on our public officials. Those, for me, felt good. But I have to admit, I am never comfortable at the annual Jan. 22 event on the state Capitol grounds lamenting the U.S. Supreme Court decision that legalized abortion. A herd of church people will be lined up to hear strident prayers intended to impress legislators with the might of the religious right. There have been a few times already this year when I found public prayer to be outside my comfort zone. But I'm really looking forward to an occasion next month that will take us outside to find others addressing the same God, but in ways strange to us, an event exciting because it is not comfortable.

First, let me confess that the cadence of the Mass has become darn uncomfortable. Do you have the "new" old words down pat? I mean, really... "considerably?" I like praying out loud with my chin up, but now I'm a turtle, chin down reading along lest I say, "And also with you," out of sync with my own prayer. Those used to sitting subdued in our pew, it's more of a curious experience than truly comfortable.

"We ask that they exercise leadership to bring harmony, peace, love and compassion where possible, to the people they serve — especially for the most vulnerable," said Father Gary Secor, vicar general of the Honolulu diocese. The only Catholic clergyman at the event, he led prayers for the most vulnerable, putting hands on the men to ground their extemporaneous prayers aiming to link the pragmatic politicians with the Divine. The largely evangelical Christian crowd raised their hands into the air at the slightest preparation, a vivacious way of joining the prayer and music. For those used to sitting subdued in our pew, it's more of a curious experience than truly comfortable.

"May they not grow weary in doing good," said Pastor Dan Chun of First Presbyterian Church of Honolulu. He prayed that God will give government workers "servant hearts ... and give them the wisdom and restraint to do the right thing." I admit I was there to listen for outright politicking under the guise of prayer: damnation for you who voted for civil unions, God wants you to bring them to the trains.

But the prayers invoked virtues and blessings and were mercifully missing specific political agendas. "We need to get back to civility and get back to values beyond ourselves," said Mayor Carlisle. He spoke of returning to the values of his father's generation focused on planning a foundation for the future. He said, "every prayer people give for me, I appreciate. What I'd like to have is wisdom and patience. That's a real big challenge for me."

I think we have a right to expect civil behavior," said Say last week, anticipating the Wednesday opening session of the Legislature. Scheduled to give the first invocation was a Punahou School student, grandchild of a legislator. We'll have many opportunities to pray together, and Lord knows, many reasons to do so, as the year progresses.

Spirit of God is bigger than us

A truly remarkable effort to give insight into the prayer life of others different from us will take place Feb. 12 under the sponsorship of Chaminade University. Jewish and Muslim religious leaders will take interested outsiders on tours of the Nuuanu synagogue and Manoa mosque. Rabbi Peter Schaktman of Temple Emanu-El and Dr. Ismail el-Shikh, imam of the Muslim Association of Hawaii, will talk about "What is a Good Person?" and "The Concept of Virtue in Judaism and Islam."

The event is part of the university's Fujitani Interfaith Program, a series to explore understanding across cultural and religious differences. Last year, Bishop Larry Silva and Bishop Thomas Okano of the Honolulu Buddhist denominations led tours of cathedral and temple and discussed their faiths.

When the Catholic university launched the interfaith program in 2004 as an offshoot of its curriculum in Buddhist studies, officials said the effort is grounded in the Second Vatican Council in 1965. "The Vatican II document on religious freedom and relationships with other religions focused on the sense that we need to listen and learn from each other," said David Coleman, dean of the Chaminade Humanities and Arts Department.

"We don't reject what is good and what helps us see more fully. We recognize that the spirit of God moves throughout the world and is bigger than us. Following through on that is to create opportunities for listening."
Cathedrals and the homeless

To our delight, our 13-year-old daughter reads newspapers. Sometimes this prompts her to ask religious questions, and today’s was a tough one. The paper says there is a lot of poverty and that the bishops are asking Catholics to help the poor. But it also says, on another page, that a diocese in California wants to spend $57 million to buy a glass church. With so many poor people in the country, how can that be right?

Can you help us to give her an answer? (Turnersville, N.J.)

The Diocese of Orange, Calif., is buying the Crystal Cathedral, and this raises a question: Why not spend the money on the poor? We have some beautiful cathedrals here in Nebraska, too. They keep them warm in the winter and cool in the summer, and then they lock them up at night. Why don’t they let homeless people sleep in the pews? (Arnold, Neb.)

A. The recent purchase by the Catholic Church of the former Crystal Cathedral hasfanned the flames of a simmering debate; whenever the church buys or builds a new facility, the perennial biblical question is: “Why could this money not have been spent on the poor?”

The answer is not a simple one. The church has multiple goals, the overall one being to put people in touch with God so that they can live out the Gospel and progress on the path to heaven. Certainly, part of the mission is to provide dignified and inspiring places of worship that can help lift minds and hearts to God. Just as surely, the church needs to reach out with compassion to those who are vulnerable — especially the poor, the sick and the homeless.

That is why Catholic hospitals serve nearly one-sixth of all patients in America and why Catholic Charities is America’s largest private provider of services to the poor, with a network of hundreds of food pantries, soup kitchens, homeless shelters, etc.

As to the matter of the Crystal Cathedral, those closest to the situation seem to agree with the recent USA Today headline that called the church’s purchase a “sweet deal.” The Diocese of Orange has grown rapidly and now includes more than 1.2 million Catholics.

To meet expanding needs, the diocese was already planning to build a new cathedral, as well as administrative offices for its many projects and programs; the availability of the Crystal Cathedral offered the opportunity for a ready-made 2,800-seat worship space as well as 31 acres of property for office space and a relocated parish school — at a price less than one-third of what construction costs would have been.

As to opening churches at night to house the homeless, worship spaces are not always ideally suited, and alternate Catholic facilities might more readily provide sleeping accommodations, like gyms, showers and bathrooms. But neither a cathedral nor any Catholic church can ignore the needs of its neighborhood for human services.

A good example is the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Wichita, Kan., which last year, during the worst of the winter’s cold, housed 120 homeless men in its gymnasium, with evening meals provided by several parishes throughout the diocese.

Do dogs go to heaven?

Will our cat and dog be with me and my family in heaven? Every day I say the rosary to ask God to help me, but then sometimes I can’t go to sleep at night worrying about what will happen to our pets when they die. I have no one to talk to but you, so I’m hoping you can answer me. (Flemington, N.J.)

I suppose the traditional philosophical position would be that only human beings have immortal souls. On the other hand, the revered British author C.S. Lewis once said that, since the loyalty of pets often exceeds human fidelity, dogs and cats may well find their way to heaven with their masters.

Left to a plebeian, the vote is split. A few years back, ABC News did a poll and found that 43 percent of Americans think that dogs and even turtles go to heavens (that figure goes up to 47 percent among pet owners), 40 percent said no, and the rest were reserving judgment.

The most honest answer is that we do not know what our faith tells us, though, is that the joys of heaven are beyond compare, beyond our poor power even to imagine them. So, it’s safe to say that if in heaven you need your pets to be happy, they’ll be right there with you.

The first reading for this weekend is from the Book of Jonah, an Old Testament writing seldom presented in the liturgy. While Jonah is the central figure in this book, he was not the author. The author is unknown.

Scholars believe that the Book of Jonah was written sometime after the Babylonian Exile of the Jews.

The reading speaks of Jonah’s visit to Nineveh, the capital of the Assyrian Empire, located roughly in the region of modern Syria. He went there at God’s command to preach conversion.

Preaching conversion in Nineveh was a tall order, and the Jews who first heard this reading knew exactly how difficult the assignment was. No city on earth had the image of evil and vice that surrounded Nineveh.

Nineveh, after all, was the capital of Assyria. Over the centuries many neighboring powers invaded and overwhelmed the Holy Land. However, none of the invaders matched the Assyrians for bloodthirstiness and brutality. Yet, the climax of the story is the conversion of the city.

For its second reading this weekend, the church offers us a passage from the First Epistle to the Corinthians. Paul had a challenge in leading the Corinthian Christians to a fully devout Christian life. The city was in reality what Nineveh was symbolically to the ancient Jews. Corinth was known around the Roman imperial world as a center of vice and licentiousness. It was a noteworthy distinction, since vice and lawlessness prevailed throughout the empire.

The apostle calls upon the Corinthians to remember that time passes quickly and that life is short. They have before them two options. The first is life in Jesus, a life that is everlasting, but it requires fidelity to the Gospel and the Gospel’s values. The other option is eternal death, awaiting those who spurn the Gospel.

Paul obviously urges the Corinthians to be holy.

The Gospel of Mark provides the last reading. First is a brief mention that John the Baptist “has been handed over,” a phrase later to describe the arrest of Jesus on Good Friday. The reading continues to say that Jesus was preaching that the “kingdom of God is near.”

Then the Lord calls Simon and Andrew, brothers and fishermen, as Apostles, to be followed by the call of James and John.

For the early Christians, the Twelve were especially important. From the apostles came knowledge of Jesus. It was vital to present their credentials.

The Lord’s call was sudden. They were unprepared, yet Jesus and the offer of salvation caused them to drop everything and follow him. The juxtaposition of the preaching of Jesus and the call of the Apostles is instructive. They were part of the Lord’s plan of salvation. They continued the Lord’s work.

The church called us liturgically to celebrate the birth of Christ. Two weeks later it celebrated the feast of the Epiphany of the Lord. A day later, it offered us the feast of the Lord’s baptism by John in the Jordan River.

All these celebrations taught critical lessons about Jesus. He is human, the Son of Mary. He is the Son of God. He is the Savior, assuring our sins even though Jesus was without sin.

Now, the church tells us that Jesus calls us to salvation, eternal life. He called the Apostles specifically to continue the work of salvation. The Apostles and the church founded upon them invite us and invites us to follow Christ.

These four Apostles’ instant response is a lesson. Nothing is more important in life than being with Christ, answering the Lord’s call to be saved.

Directly and simply, Paul told the Corinthians that they could accept salvation — or not. We have the same choice.

Msgr. Campion is associate publisher of Our Sunday Visitor.
As well, I have also met people who merely an indication of depression, posteriority, but I have also often been indeed issue forth from a deep in-belief that sadness is a sign of depth, I too tend to look around the room for something original, something for something I could love. I would look among the faces of the students for the giddiness, youthful bravado, of college students but almost impossibly happy and healthy that was sad, and I was angry at myself too reflective in general to enter spontaneously into a dance of soul and laughing it up. Sadness is what's real, an attempt to keep reality and sadness at bay. Like Mary Gordon’s Isabel, an equation that has long influenced Christian spirituality and has an equation that has long influenced Christian spirituality and has grown and matured in both capacity to enter into suffering and renounce worldly joys and in his capacity to thoroughly enjoy the depth of soul arose both from his suffering and from his joy. And his gratitude, I suspect, arose more out of the latter than the former.

In his novel, “The Unbearable Lightness of Being,” the Czech writer Milan Kundera weighs the equation: What is of more value, heaviness or lightness? ... That is the unanswerable: “The heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But ... the heavier the burden, the closer our lives come to the earth, the more real and truthful they become. Conversely, the absolute absence of a burden causes man to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and his earthly being, and become only half real, his movements as free as they are insignificant.”

What then shall we choose? Weight or lightness? ... That is the question. The only certainty is: the lightness/weight opposition is the most mysterious, most ambiguous of all.”

Truly it is.

The Lord’s Prayer

God wants public worship, not merely private devotion. When you say, “Our Father,” you are speaking as one person in the midst of many who are also speaking as one person. The mystical body of Christ is at prayer in the liturgy of the church. Only one person prays, namely Jesus Christ in aggregate with his people. We all bow humbly before the Father giving praise.

We invite him into our hearts, “Thy Kingdom come. Thy will be done ...” It is public worship when the church promises to follow his will.

Still using the plural “us” and “we,” we ask God to give us our daily bread and to forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. We conclude: “Deliver (all of) us from evil.”

The Hail Mary

Jesus wants us to honor his mother, just as he honors her in heaven.

The opening words of the Hail Mary were taken from holy Scripture; they are the words spoken by Elizabeth to Mary when Mary came to visit her. “Hail (Mary), full of grace, the Lord is with you” (Lk 1:28) and then, “Blessed are you among women” (Lk 1:42).

We honor Mary because united with Jesus, we participate in his love for his mother. We also acknowledge the power he gave her to help us: “Pray for us now and at the hour of our death.”

The Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi

This prayer captures the truth that God calls us to be doers of the word and not merely hearers. Jesus said, “Whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me.”

St. Paul clarifies this mission: “Bear one another’s burdens, and so you will fulfill the law of Christ.”

The Prayer of St. Francis reads:

“Lord, make me an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love. Where there is injury, pardon. Where there is doubt, faith. Where there is despair, hope. Where there is darkness, light. Where there is sadness, joy. “O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled, as to console; to be understood, as to understand; to be loved, as to love. For it is in giving that we receive. It is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.”

A prayer of St. Padre Pio

This prayer makes clear the absolute necessity of staying united to Jesus. He is the vine; we are the branches. Without him we can do nothingât

Stay with me, Lord, if you wish me to be stay with me, Lord, so that I hear your voice stay with me, Lord, to show me your will. Stay with me, Lord, for it is necessary to have you present so that I do not forget you. You know how easily I abandon you.

Stay with me, Lord, for you are my life, and without you, I am in darkness. Stay with me, Lord, for you are my light, and without you, I am without fervor. Stay with me, Lord, for you are my light, and without your, I am without fervor.

Stay with me, Lord, for you are my light, and without you, I am in darkness. Stay with me, Lord, so that I hear your voice and follow you.

Stay with me, Lord, for I desire to love you very much, and always be in your company. Stay with me, Lord, if you wish me to be faithful to you.

Stay with me, Lord, for as poor as my soul is, I want it to be a place of consolation for you, a nest of love.”

Father Ron Rolheiser

A haunting equation

As Lewis once said, pain is God’s microscope to a deaf world. There is, undeniably, a connection between suffering and depth of soul. Rumi must be careful not to read too much into this. When we look at Jesus, and many other wonderfully healthy people, we see that depth of soul is also connected to the joyous and celebratory moments of life. Jesus scandalized people equally in both his capacity to enter into suffering and renounce worldly joys and in his capacity to thoroughly enjoy the depth of soul of himself both from his suffering and from his joy. And his gratitude, I suspect, arose more out of the latter than the former.

In his novel, “The Unbearable Lightness of Being,” the Czech writer Milan Kundera weighs the equation: What is of more value, heaviness or lightness? ... That is the unanswerable: “The heaviest of burdens crushes us, we sink beneath it, it pins us to the ground. But ... the heavier the burden, the closer our lives come to the earth, the more real and truthful they become. Conversely, the absolute absence of a burden causes man to be lighter than air, to soar into the heights, take leave of the earth and his earthly being, and become only half real, his movements as free as they are insignificant.”

What then shall we choose? Weight or lightness? ... That is the question. The only certainty is: the lightness/weight opposition is the most mysterious, most ambiguous of all.”

Truly it is.
A few days after Christmas, my kids were preparing to head back to college, jobs, their everyday lives. It was then I took out the packet of thank-you notes, aimed primarily at the two younger ones who I know are the most appreciative. It’s a no-brainer for me, and it’s an inconvenience — and incentive — to have Mom supply notes and stamps. They sit at the same table and, like they had for all their growing up years, spelled out their gratitude in a Emily Post kind of way.

As usual, I delivered my little speech on the importance of the thank-you note. Even when you go for a job interview, I said, it’s appropriate to send a thank you to the person who interviewed you. For some reason, my son-in-law intersected, that’s also done by email.

Ah, yes, I reminded myself, I am of the pen-and-ink generation, and a younger crew has been weaned on email and texting. I have to remember that there are many ways to express thanks — as long as it’s rendered with a touch of gratitude.

So, the evening of Dec. 30, watching the “CBS Evening News,” I was pleased to see a similar discussion in a segment narrated by correspondent Steve Hartman. Hartman said he had sent no thank-you notes for last year’s Christmas gifts, never mind this year.

And he debated the subject with “60 Minutes” correspondent Byron Pitts, who writes out his thanks to people, even when they are strangers. Pitts is a great example of someone who is never embarrassed to take a public stand. Right now, an editor plans her annual piece on reproductive rights. Roe v. Wade was decided 39 years ago. Why do these fanatics keep trying to turn back the clock? She’s got good quotes from some prochoice politicians. She’ll get something from those life-and-death arguments, probably the same thing he always says. How can any woman let a man tell her if she has to have a baby? She’s glad her daughter is growing up at a time when women can make their own decisions.

Thank-you notes are never out of style.

We might have a number of doctorates and diplomas, but when it comes to mission work, we need to humble both and acknowledge the work of the Spirit. We need to start with zero. It’s not about coming to impose, but to learn. Sometimes we say, “I’m here to teach you.” But it is we who are teaching. “I come to help you grow in your faith,” becomes “I’m here to help,” returns to us as the ones being helped. “I come to help you grow in your faith,” becomes “I’m here to teach you.” But it is we who are being taught.

It’s not about coming to impose, but to learn. Sometimes we say, “I’m here to impose,” and then myself, I was denied. Later however, I was sent to Rome to formation as a Sister of St. Paul of Chartres. I also had two Jesuit theology teachers who were sent out as missionaries to China. Struck by their example I said, “I’ll go anywhere, where if I have the chance.” And so, after my first professions of vows, I applied for the missions. But because I was sickly, I was denied. “I come to help you grow in your faith,” becomes “I’m here to help,” returns to us as the ones being taught. “I’m here to teach you.” But it is we who are being taught.

Here in Hawaii, I wanted to make friends first so I asked God, “What are your expectations?” And in my heart I heard God say “Walk in faith.” So, I rode the morning bus to Our Lady of the Mount, I take time to greet people, I always sit in the same seat, so they know I’m there. If I miss a mass, and say “Sister, I’m not here.” It’s a good way to evangelize. As St. Paul said, “I planted, Apollo- los watered, but God causes the growth.” (1 Cor. 3:6) The Lord has supplied me with a good supply of persons, and I know in whom I have believed, and I am certain that he has the power to preserve what was entrusted to me, unto that day.” (2 Tim. 1:12)

Sister of St. Paul of Chartres Clemente Marie Mira lives at St. Anthony Convent in Kahului. She has been a religious for 51 years. She is the religious education coordinator and pastoral associate at Our Lady of the Mount Church in Kahului Valley.

For the Journey

Effe Caldarola

Thank-you notes are never out of style.

It is we who are being taught.

We might have a number of doctorates and diplomas, but when it comes to mission work, we need to humble both and acknowledge the work of the Spirit. We need to start with zero. It’s not about coming to impose, but to learn. Sometimes we say, “I’m here to teach you.” But it is we who are teaching. “I come to help you grow in your faith,” becomes “I’m here to help,” returns to us as the ones being helped. “I come to help you grow in your faith,” becomes “I’m here to teach you.” But it is we who are being taught.

It’s not about coming to impose, but to learn. Sometimes we say, “I’m here to impose,” and then
After her father’s sudden death, Laura’s family left Chile for Argentina, where her mother became the mistress of a wealthy landowner. He initially paid the fees for Laura and her sister to attend a school run by the Daughters of Mary Help of Christians. However, he stopped when Laura rebuffed his sexual advances, and she and her sister worked to pay the fees themselves. She had tried to join the order in 1902 but was rejected because of her mother’s lifestyle. Her death, shortly before her 13th birthday, was caused by stress and a severe beating by the mother’s lover.

Hawaii Catholic Harold’s Quiz

1) Saints
The feast day of St. Sebastian is celebrated on Jan 20. Which of the following is he NOT a patron of?
   a) Archers
   b) Athletes
   c) Soldiers
   d) Fishermen

2) Scripture
The first reading for Sunday, Jan. 22, comes from the book of Jonah. Scripture tells of Jonah traveling to and converting the people of which city?
   a) Bethlehem
   b) Jerusalem
   c) Nineveh
   d) Galilee

3) Hawaii
Catholics on topside Molokai have been blessed with the new St. Damien Church Kaunakakai. Prior to the construction of St. Damien Church, what was the name of the parish that stood on that site?
   a) St. Sophia
   b) St. Elizabeth
   c) St. Athanasius
   d) Our Lady of Hope

4) Religious Orders
Hope you enjoyed identifying the logos of various religious orders in our last issue. Here’s one more. The logo shown below belongs to which order?
   a) Crosier Fathers and Brothers
   b) Trappists
   c) Carthusians
   d) Jesuits

5) Calendar
True or false: There are two periods of Ordinary Time in the liturgical year: one being the time between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday, the other following Pentecost until Advent.
   a) True
   b) False

6) Liturgy
The priest kisses what sacred object at the beginning and end of Mass?
   a) Book of the Gospels
   b) Crucifix
   c) Chalice
   d) Chalice

7) Current events
Pope Benedict XVI announced the creation of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter on Jan. 1. Which specific group of Catholics will this ordinariate serve?
   a) Catholics who live in the rural areas of Italy
   b) Catholics who were former members of the Anglican church
   c) Catholics living in a mixed-faith family
   d) Former members of the clergy who have been laicized

Answers: 1) d, 2) c, 3) a, 4) d, 5) a, 6) a, 7) b

Ordinary Time

The snow came from the clouds, but it was assembled in America.

Quizzers! Although the holiday festivities have tapered off, I hope your desire to celebrate our faith only increases. Let’s kick off Ordinary Time with a lively hodgepodge of Catholic trivia.

Hawaii Catholic Herald’s Quiz

1) Saints
The feast day of St. Sebastian is celebrated on Jan. 20. Which of the following trades is he NOT a patron of?
   a) Archers
   b) Athletes
   c) Soldiers
   d) Fishermen

2) Scripture
The first reading for Sunday, Jan. 22, comes from the book of Jonah. Scripture tells of Jonah traveling to and converting the people of which city?
   a) Bethlehem
   b) Jerusalem
   c) Nineveh
   d) Galilee

3) Hawaii
Catholics on topside Molokai have been blessed with the new St. Damien Church Kaunakakai. Prior to the construction of St. Damien Church, what was the name of the parish that stood on that site?
   a) St. Sophia
   b) St. Elizabeth
   c) St. Athanasius
   d) Our Lady of Hope

4) Religious Orders
Hope you enjoyed identifying the logos of various religious orders in our last issue. Here’s one more. The logo shown below belongs to which order?
   a) Crosier Fathers and Brothers
   b) Trappists
   c) Carthusians
   d) Jesuits

5) Calendar
True or false: There are two periods of Ordinary Time in the liturgical year: one being the time between Epiphany and Ash Wednesday, the other following Pentecost until Advent.
   a) True
   b) False

6) Liturgy
The priest kisses what sacred object at the beginning and end of Mass?
   a) Book of the Gospels
   b) Crucifix
   c) Chalice
   d) Chalice

7) Current events
Pope Benedict XVI announced the creation of the Personal Ordinariate of the Chair of St. Peter on Jan. 1. Which specific group of Catholics will this ordinariate serve?
   a) Catholics who live in the rural areas of Italy
   b) Catholics who were former members of the Anglican church
   c) Catholics living in a mixed-faith family
   d) Former members of the clergy who have been laicized

Answers: 1) d, 2) c, 3) a, 4) d, 5) a, 6) a, 7) b

Ordinary Time

The snow came from the clouds, but it was assembled in America.

Quizzers! Although the holiday festivities have tapered off, I hope your desire to celebrate our faith only increases. Let’s kick off Ordinary Time with a lively hodgepodge of Catholic trivia.

Hawaii Catholic Herald’s Quiz

1) Saints
The feast day of St. Sebastian is celebrated on Jan. 20. Which of the following trades is he NOT a patron of?
   a) Archers
   b) Athletes
   c) Soldiers
   d) Fishermen

2) Scripture
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Ordinary Time

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I

I have always been an optimist. I hope for the best but, as they say, I also prepare for the worst, since life doesn’t always work out the way I want it to. Optimism means looking at the positives in life rather than the negatives, and being happy with what we are given. It means not to be vicarious victims of anxiety.

Being an optimist can make you more resilient to life’s difficulties. I’ve gone through rough times when it seemed like everything was falling apart. But I made it I trust that God doesn’t give us more than we can handle and believes that doesn’t kill us will make us stronger. I have had my doubts, but I always hope and pray things will work out, and oftentimes they do, even when it seems all hope is lost. What keeps me going is my faith. Optimism isn’t being naive. Evil exists. Terrible things can happen. But optimism provides the hope that things will change for the better and that there is redemption in a trial.

People like to be around happy people. If we’re optimists, we’re happier, and we can share joy with others, as we are called to as Christians. Like we’re always told, a smile can brighten up someone else’s day and change their mood. Optimism helps others by disabling depression and self-pity. We spread hope, not despair. We can make an impact.

I like the message contained in Carrie Underwood’s song “So Small”: “While you’re picking round thinking about what you can’t change, and worrying about all the wrong things, time is moving, by moving so fast, you better make it count ’cause you can’t get it back.”

If we waste our time in self-pity, we’re ultimately going to lose out, because worry, self-pity and pessimism steal one of our most valuable gifts, time. I recently came across a Bible passage — Isaiah 30: 21–25 — that says it well.

“Do not go in to sadness, torment not yourself with brooding;...”

Rays of sunshine

By John Mulderig Catholic News Service

Divas duel and a red-state Romeo and Juliet for each other in “Joyful Noise” (Warner Bros., rated PG).

Though it gives a pass to an incidental out-of-wedlock fling, and showcases some humor and vocabulary that make it unsuitable for youngsters, writer-director Todd Graff’s film, over all part of a celebration of traditional values emphasizes trust in God and illustrates the positive effects of unpretentious and forgiving behavior.

Set in the small, recession-ravaged fictional community of Pecashau, this vibrant, faith-driven blend of comedy, drama and music focuses on the spirited, mildly prodigal grandchild, Pacashau’s Divinity Church Choir. (Queen Latifah) and G.G. Sparrow (Keke Palmer), are both a rap tuneward kid, and his taste for such dub-ious musical selections as a rap.

While the two jostle over whether to alter the group’s repertoire and turn out to have musical gifts that are exemplary manner.

(With a kind of Andy Hardy, let’s-put-on-a-show inevitability, all three of the aforementioned characters are once more deployed for the greater glory of God and the exultation of Pecashau’s Divinity Church Choir.)

Though burdened with a difficult lifestyle — she’s effectively separated, against her will, from her absent Army officer husband, Marcus (Jesse L. Martin), and works long hours as a nurse — Vi Rose’s faith never falters. She gives eloquent expression to it both in a non-nonsense dialogue and in song; her rendition of the traditional spiritual “Fix Me, Jesus” is one of the movie’s emotional highlights.

Catholic viewers may be a bit put off to find Vi Rose, G.G. et al., eventually competing against a choir from “Our Lady of Perpetual Tears.”

This month we adjust to a new year and celebrate the prophet of Christian faith and Gospel values, however “Joyful Noise” is unapologetically, unabashedly affirmative to a degree rarely seen in contemporaryollywood settings.

The film contains a premarital situation, occasional sexual references and jokes, about a half-dozen crude expressions and some crass language.

The Catholic News Service classification is A-II — adults.

The Motion Picture Association of America rating is PG-13 — parents strongly cautioned. Some material may be inappropriate for children under 13.

Dolly Parton and Kris Kristofferson star in a scene from the movie “Joyful Noise.”

Randy proves himself, in most re-

pects, a model teen.

Not only does his relationship with Olivia unfold in a respectful and restrained manner, but he also takes the opportunity to befriended Olivia’s vulnerable brother, Walter (Dexter Darden), whose Asperger’s syndrome renders him an Outcast. Additionally, Randy has a flirtation with a competitor for Olivia’s affections, he later reconciles with the lad in an exemplary manner.

“We write new year and celebrate the patron saint of writers, St. Francis de Sales, and whether the happens in 2012 has you feeling ambitious or overwhelmed, I can think of no better response than writing.”

But writing is not just an intellec-

tual exercise. It can be a religious one.

I recently interviewed Mitch Albom, author of “Tuesdays With Morrie,” the bestselling memoir in history. The Detroit journalist told me that writing is an inherently spiritual endeavor. “You need to be infused with a certain spirit in order to be able to create,” he said, “and I believe all our talents come from God.”

We write to make sense of our lives and our world, to examine who we have been and who we hope to become.

That’s what Anne Bradstreet did. Among the Brit-

ish colonists settling in America, she was the first to have a book of poetry published. She chronicled her first impressions, having found “a new world and new manners, at which [her] heart rose.” She wrote about her pregnancy, her granddaughter’s death and the burning of her home. In a poem honoring Queen Elizabeth, written 13 years after Bradstreet had arrived in Massachusetts, she wrote of “terra incog-

nir” — Latin for “unknown territory,” “unexplored land.”

Stepping into 2012 with private struggles and secret hopes, our Catholic faith and our piecemeal education, each of us faces terra incognita, and we owe it to ourselves to process it on paper. Each jour-

ey requires a journal.

Christina Capceci

Resolves to write the new year

We write to make sense of our lives and our world, to examine who we have been and who we hope to become.

Benjamin Franklin was 27 when he dipped his pen in red ink, drew a seven-column, 13-row chart and resolved to master all the moral virtues.

It was Sunday and the first day of July. The last of the 13 British colonies to be founded, Georgia, was being settled, and each colony was working out its own system of self government.

Young Franklin was ready to look within and devise his own self government. He broke down his day — eight hours of work, seven hours of sleep, a two-hour lunch break — and dedicated one week to each of the 13 virtues he had identified, begin-

ning with temperance.

“I was surprised to find myself so much fuller of faults than I had imagined,” he wrote in his autobi-

ography, “but I had the satisfaction of seeing them diminish.”

It is an impulse that returns each January; to systematically detect and diminish one’s faults, day by day, row by row, like yanking weeds or drilling cavities.

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Christina Capceci is an award-winning writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn. She can be reached at www.

ReadChristian.com.
Priests on retreat

Local priests left behind parish duties and other responsibilities to gather at St. Stephen Diocesan Center, Jan. 8-13, for some rest and reflection time.

“The Conversations of Jesus” was the theme for the annual priests retreat, organized by the diocesan Office of Clergy.

The retreat was led by Father Dennis D. McManus, a priest from the Archdiocese of Mobile, Ala.

Father McManus is the Consultant to the Secretariat for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, and also serves as a visiting assistant professor of theology at Georgetown University.

HCH photos by Darlene Dela Cruz